Transnational Rubble Literature
A Comparative Study of German and British Post-War Texts

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Abstract

In this PhD thesis I analyse and compare German and British texts of the immediate post-war years. By identifying common topics and themes, motifs and symbols, as well as elements of a transnational aesthetic of post-war literature, I argue that there is one transnational genre of post-war literature, which I call rubble literature, instead of two very distinct genres of German post-war literature and British post-war literature. Although the new, transnational genre derives its name from the existing German genre of 'Trümmerliteratur', it differs from it and significantly broadens it. It does so not only by including non-German texts, but also with regards to contents. According to my concept of the transnational genre of rubble literature, the central motif of rubble does not just refer to the physical ruins of German and British cities, but also to the psychological ruins of post-war individuals, as well as to the social, political, and ideological ruins of the post-war societies they are living in. I argue that the motif of rubble, fragmentation and disintegration is inscribed in the form, as well as the content of German and British post-war literature. My research ties in with the national analyses and interpretations of the literature of the post-war years, but at the same time my comparative approach allows me to identify new and transnational characteristics of post-war texts. In doing so, my thesis offers novel and unique perspectives on the literature of the immediate post-war years, revealing that which takes place beyond and across national categories.

Contents

Introduction

> Millionen von Toten säumen den Weg dieses Krieges, Gefallene, Erschossene, Gehängte – und mit den Toten wuchs das Leid der Überlebenden. Sie gingen den Weg dieser Massenapokalypse und sie gehen ihn noch immer, durch Hunger und Elend, durch Krankheit und Not, durch Lazarette und Spitäler, durch Konzentrations- und Gefangenenlager. Die Apokalypse hat die Lebenden verändert. Was vor dieser Zeit war, ist nicht mehr faßbar, erscheint wie ein Märchen, das versunken und verklungen ist. Ein anderer Ton bestimmt das Leben, ein Ton, der aus der Welt der Trümmer geboren wurde.[1]

It is the aim of this thesis to uncover the 'different tone', which, as Hans Werner Richter describes above, was born out of the rubble of a destroyed world. I do so by analysing and comparing literary texts of the immediate post-war years, and arguing that, indeed, the images of rubble, fragmentation and disintegration are inscribed into post-war texts on many different levels, in explicit as well as in more abstract ways. This is what a large proportion of the literature not just of Germany but of Britain has in common: it is born out of and represents the rubble of the post-war world, and is therefore an expression of a distinct post-war tone.

In this thesis I aim to establish rubble literature as a genre and to argue that it is not a national, but a transnational one, as it encompasses British as well as German post-war texts. Hans Magnus Enzensberger is right when he stresses the persistence of differences in Europe after the war: 'Eine Sprengbombe ist eine Sprengbombe, ein Hungerödem macht keinen Unterschied zwischen Schwarz und Weiß, Gerechten und Ungerechten, aber weder die Zerstörungskraft der Luftwaffen noch die Misere des Nachkriegs war imstande, Europa zu homogenisieren und seine Unterschiede auszulöschen.'[2] By presenting a transnational genre of rubble literature I am not trying to argue for a homogenized Europe and to erase all differences between post-war Germany and Britain. But the findings of my research point to the fact that Stephen Spender is also correct when he describes a shared post-war reality, which moves beyond differences and

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[1] Hans Werner Richter, 'Vorwort', in *Deine Söhne, Europa: Gedichte deutscher Kriegsgefangener*, ed. by Hans Werner Richter (München: Nymphenburger Verlagshandlung, 1947), pp. 5-6 (p. 5) [Unless otherwise stated all translations in this thesis were done by the author: 'The path of this war is lined with millions of dead, dead soldiers, people who have been shot and people who have been hanged – and with the number of dead the suffering of the survivors increased. They walked this path of mass-apocalypse and they are still walking on it, through hunger and misery, through illness and hardship, through military hospitals and infirmaries, through concentration camps and prison camps. The apocalypse changed the living. What has been before this time is not comprehensible anymore, it seems like a fairytale which has sunken and faded away. A different tone dominates life, a tone which is born out of the world of rubble.'].

[2] Hans Magnus Enzensberger, 'Europa in Trümmern: Ein Prospekt', in *Europa in Trümmern: Augenzeugenberichte aus den Jahren 1944-1948* (Frankfurt a.M.: Eichborn, 1990), pp. 5-23 (p. 16) ['An explosive bomb is an explosive bomb, a hunger oedema does not differentiate between black and white, the just and the unjust, but neither the destructiveness of the air forces nor the misery of the post-war times were able to homogenise Europe and to erase its differences.'].

which is also transnationally inflected: 'After five years of the breakdown of communications through war there has never been a time when countries were so isolated within their own separate experience, and yet never a time when they shared so completely the same realities.'[3]

In this thesis, then, I argue that the shared realities of area bombings and ruins, of fighting at the front and struggling to survive on the home front, of ideological disillusionment and disappointment on returning to a country very different from the victorious and abundant country people expected, have left their traces in the literature of the post-war years. By identifying common topics and themes, motifs and symbols, as well as identifying elements of what I come to call a transnational aesthetic of post-war literature, I want to bridge the gap between the national literatures of Germany and Britain, and lay the foundations for a transnational genre of rubble literature. According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, a genre can be described as 'a category of artistic, musical, or literary composition characterized by a particular style, form, or content'.[4] In the following, I will demonstrate that the analysed German and British post-war texts share significant characteristics, particularly as regards content and form, and can therefore be tied together as representatives of a specific, transnational literary genre.

A number of key research questions underpin the investigations of my thesis: Are there two very distinct genres of German post-war literature and British post-war literature, or is there one transnational genre of rubble literature? Are there themes, motifs and forms that are shared by German and British post-war texts? If yes, what are they and what can they tell us about a shared German and British post-war reality?

'Trümmerliteratur' has traditionally been seen as defined by Heinrich Böll in his 'Bekenntnis zur Trümmerliteratur' from 1952, where he stresses the German texts' realistic approach to the post-war topics of war, homecoming and rubble.[5] However, I will not only consider those texts that comply with Böll's definition of the German 'Trümmerliteratur' as belonging to the transnational genre of rubble literature. Rather, I argue that what has previously been a category or concept of post-war texts only in the German tradition has to be expanded to allow for a wider comparison of German and British texts of the immediate post-war years. According to my concept of the transnational genre of rubble literature, the central motif of rubble does not

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[3] Stephen Spender, *European Witness* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1946), p. 96.
[4] <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/genre> [accessed 08 July 2018].
[5] See Heinrich Böll, 'Bekenntnis zur Trümmerliteratur', in *Heinrich Böll: Widerstand ist ein Freiheitsrecht: Schriften und Reden zu Literatur, Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, ed. by René Böll (Köln: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 2011), pp. 9-14.

just refer to the physical ruins of German and British cities, but also to the psychological ruins of post-war individuals, and to the social, political, and ideological ruins of the post-war societies they are living in. I will argue that the motif of rubble, fragmentation and disintegration is inscribed in the form, as well as the content of German and British post-war literature. In doing so, I will identify and uncover fundamental similarities in German and British texts of these years, and begin to define and categorise these texts as belonging to the new transnational genre of rubble literature.

My project ties in with the national discussions, analyses and interpretations of post-war literature, but at the same time it fundamentally broadens these through a comparative approach. By expanding the corpus of national texts and providing new objects for comparison, all texts, German and British, can be seen in a different light and can be understood as being born out of a transnational post-war reality. This leads to a questioning and attenuation of former fixed binary oppositions, like for example the one between the victor and the defeated, which influenced and shaped the narration, interpretation and remembrance of the war and post-war times in its immediate aftermath.

Germany and Britain fought on opposite sides in the Second World War: while Germany was defeated, Britain belonged to the victorious nations. While national socialist Germany fought an aggressive, destructive, inhumane and highly unjust war, the British allegedly fought a just war for undisputable aims. This is the most basic, but not the only difference between the war and post-war experiences in Germany and Britain. A further core difference can be determined when one compares the total number of losses in both countries. According to Ian Kershaw, the total of Germany's dead amounts to around 7 million, while Britain's military deaths amount to around 770,000 and 'civilian deaths in Britain, mainly from bombing, were under 70,000'.[6] While the beginning of the war may have been relatively comfortable for the majority of the German population – except, of course, for those groups of people who were persecuted by the Nazis, such as Jews, homosexuals, communists and other political opponents –, supporting its initial popularity, 'the last two years of the war saw the horror that the Nazis had inflicted on most of Europe rebound upon ordinary Germans themselves.'[7] They faced area bombings, the invasion of the Allied forces, in the case of the Red Army often accompanied by mass rapes, and finally occupation at the end of the war. In contrast, Kershaw describes British civilians as 'the most fortunate of any belligerent country in Europe'.[8] Although they faced food rationing,

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[6] See Ian Kershaw, *To Hell and Back: Europe, 1914-1949* (London: Penguin, 2016), p. 346.
[7] See Kershaw, p. 402.
[8] Kershaw, p. 387.

German bombing attacks and the hardships of a country at war, with men gone and women having to care for the family and support the war effort, the country was never occupied and the number of British losses remained lower than expected.[9] Despite all these obvious differences, I will still argue and demonstrate in this thesis that Germany and Britain also shared elements of a transnational post-war reality, which shaped their post-war literature.

The differences in the historical situation of the two countries are mirrored in the different perceptions and interpretations of their respective post-war literatures. In Germany, there exists the well-known, but actually little researched concept of 'Trümmerliteratur', which was retrospectively introduced by Heinrich Böll. While he attested to the value of German texts of the immediate post-war years by characterising them as pieces of realism, opposing the more general trend in Germany of playing 'Blindekuh', at the end of the twentieth-century 'Trümmerliteratur' was still heatedly discussed and under attack by figures such as Hans Magnus Enzensberger and W.G. Sebald, who criticised not only the quantity but also the quality of German post-war literature.[10]

In Britain, by contrast, there is no equivalent term for the literature of the immediate post-war years. The literary products of this period are not recognised as a distinct and unique phase in British literary history at all. This is also due to a much more general lack of interest in and appreciation of British texts of the years after the Second World War. Andrew Sinclair speaks of the 1940s in Britain as 'a lost decade' and describes how the whole British war and post-war culture 'sank without trace between the Scylla and Charybdis of modernism and post-modernism'.[11] It was only in recent years that there has been a noticeable renewed interest and effort in understanding and conceptualising British war and post-war literature.[12] But these efforts remained focused on British literature only. Up to now, the literary products of the immediate post-war years in Germany and Britain have not been systematically analysed and compared across national borders.

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[9] See Kershaw, pp. 387-89.

[10] Böll, 'Bekenntnis zur Trümmerliteratur', p. 10 ['blind man's buff' (Heinrich Böll, 'In Defense of Rubble Literature', in *Heinrich Böll: Stories, Political Writings, and Autobiographical Works*, ed. by Martin D. Black, trans. by Leila Vennewitz (London: Continuum, 2006), pp. 269-73 (p. 270))]; see Enzensberger, p. 7 and W.G. Sebald, *Luftkrieg und Literatur*, 6th edn (Frankfurt a.M.: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 2013), pp. 17-19.

[11] Andrew Sinclair, *War Like a Wasp: The Lost Decade of the Forties* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1989), pp. 10-11; p. 9.

[12] See for example Leo Mellor, *Reading the Ruins: Modernism, Bombsites and British Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011) or Marina MacKay and Lyndsey Stonebridge, 'Introduction: British Fiction after Modernism', in *British Fiction after Modernism: The Novel at Mid-century,* ed. by Marina MacKay and Lyndsey Stonebridge (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp. 1-16.

This is what I will do in this thesis, thereby not only questioning the German belief in the uniqueness of German post-war literature, but also challenging the long-standing neglect of British post-war literature. On the one hand, rubble literature, through its unique transnational approach, provides new perspectives on well-known and well-researched texts. On the other hand, though, it also opens up possibilities for the analysis and comparison of authors and their texts which do not fit the national concepts and categories of post-war literature, and have therefore, up to now, often been ignored and forgotten.

Literature Review

German literature of the immediate post-war years was criticised and attacked right from 1945. Heinrich Böll's essay 'Bekenntnis zur Trümmerliteratur', which coined the term and retrospectively established what I call a genre, though it can also just be seen as a specific mode of writing, is a defence of the literary texts' value, confirming their right to exist in the post-war context.[13] Böll postulates a strict realism as a necessary and valuable characteristic of German 'Trümmerliteratur'. The authors he defends, and with whom he also aligns himself, do not follow a general trend of playing 'Blindekuh', instead they keep their eyes open and write about what they see: 'aber wir hatten keine Binde vor den Augen und sahen es: ein gutes Auge gehört zum Handwerkszeug des Schriftstellers.'[14] Therefore, what the authors saw and see constitutes the new literature's topics: 'Wir schrieben also vom Krieg, von der Heimkehr und dem, was wir im Krieg gesehen hatten und bei der Heimkehr vorfanden: von Trümmern.'[15] According to Böll, the typical authors of 'Trümmerliteratur' are therefore men of the younger generation, who had just returned from war, and who did not succumb to the more general trend in post-war Germany of fleeing from the grim reality.

Böll places his 'Trümmerliteratur' in a transnational context in order to demonstrate that there is literary value in its themes and style. He draws connections to the writing of Charles Dickens, who also employed realism in his works, and to Homer:

> Der Name Homer ist der gesamten abendländischen Bildungswelt unverdächtig: Homer ist der Stammvater europäischer Epik, aber Homer erzählt vom Trojanischen Krieg, von der Zerstörung Trojas und von der Heimkehr des Odysseus

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[13] See Böll, 'Bekenntnis zur Trümmerliteratur'.
[14] Böll, 'Bekenntnis zur Trümmerliteratur', p. 10 ['blind man's buff' (Böll, trans. by Vennewitz, p. 270)]; p. 10 ['But we were not blind-folded, we did see these things: and a sharp eye is one of a writer's essential tools.' (Böll, trans. by Vennewitz, p. 270)].
[15] Böll, 'Bekenntnis zur Trümmerliteratur', p. 9 ['So we wrote about the war, about coming home, and about what we had seen during the war and were faced with on our return: about ruins' (Böll, trans. by Vennewitz, p. 269)].

> – Kriegs-, Trümmer- und Heimkehrerliteratur – , wir haben keinen Grund, uns dieser Bezeichnung zu schämen.[16]

These connections established by Böll already pave the way for a comparison of war and post-war literature across national borders. A very important difference from my concept of a transnational genre of rubble literature, though, is that Böll draws connections to authors from the past, but not to his contemporaries writing in other countries and languages. Therefore, while Böll does suggest a universality of the topics and mode of writing of 'Trümmerliteratur', which transcend borders of time and space, he does not conceptualise a transnational genre of rubble literature specifically for the time after the Second World War. While Böll stresses the connection between the Second World War and other times of conflict and change, I am focusing on the Second World War and its consequences as a unique event with specific characteristics, which are similar across nations, but differ, in some cases substantially and in others insignificantly, from earlier times.[17] That Böll was correct, however, to suggest a universal appeal of stories such as Homer's *Odyssey* that transcend temporal borders is proven by later works such as Bernhard Schlink's *Die Heimkehr* (2006), which, according to Sebastian Matzner, connects Homer's epic to the historic events of the post-war years and the years of German reunification.[18]

Silke Hermanns stresses the fact that 'Trümmerliteratur' is, and in fact has always been, a vague term, which refers to or can refer to at least three different aspects. First, it refers to the context of production of literary texts; it is literature produced in ruins. Secondly, it refers to a specific scope of content and themes dealt with in the texts; it is literature which describes and deals with life in the ruins. Thirdly, the term also refers to the idea of a programmatic renewal of literature, as it describes the younger German authors' aspiration to break with literary traditions.[19] Therefore, the vagueness of the term itself allows for a broadening of the group of authors and texts which can be connected to it, nationally but also transnationally. Soldiers experienced and were influenced by the ruins and rubble of the Second World War as well as

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[16] Böll, 'Bekenntnis zur Trümmerliteratur', p. 14 ['Throughout our Western Culture the name of Homer is above suspicion: Homer is the progenitor of the European epic, yet Homer tells of the Trojan War, of the destruction of Troy, and of Ulysses' homecoming – a literature of war, rubble, and homecoming. We have no reason to be ashamed of these labels.' (Böll, trans. by Vennewitz, p. 273)].

[17] Specific characteristics of the Second World War are for example the widespread use of aerial bombings against civilians and its consequences, as well as the targeted use of mass media to spread propaganda and carry the war into homes across the globe.

[18] See Sebastian Matzner, 'Diagnosis: Overdose. Status: Critical: Odysseys in Bernhard Schlink's "Die Heimkehr"', in *Ancient Greek Myth in World Fiction since 1989*, ed. by Justine McConnell and Edith Hall (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), pp. 147-61.

[19] See Silke Hermanns, *Trümmer (in) der Erinnerung: Strategien des Erzählens über die unmittelbare Nachkriegszeit* (Bielefeld: Aisthesis, 2006), p. 30.

people on the home front, emigrants as well as so called inner emigrants, Germans as well as British.

'Trümmerliteratur' is only one of several popular terms used to describe German literature of the immediate post-war years, all of which are 'nachträgliche[..] Metaphern' and initially expressed three different concepts.[20] The origins of 'Trümmerliteratur' in Böll's essay and its focus on realism have been described above. The second central term describing German post-war literature, 'Kahlschlag', was established by Wolfgang Weyrauch and above all stresses the new beginning of German literature after the war and the reduction of language to the most basic elements of everyday life, while the third term, 'Nullpunkt', was coined by Hans Egon Holthusen and has a strong nihilistic meaning.[21] In the early 1960s those terms were then melted together and subsumed under the term 'Nachkriegsliteratur', as analysed by Helmut Peitsch.[22] Another central concept for the interpretation of post-war literature is that of the 'Stunde Null', which expresses the idea of the end of all traditions and the beginning of something radically new in post-war Germany.[23] This concept has since come under critique: a debate about whether German post-war literature is characterised mainly by a caesura or by continuity developed.[24] This debate continued over a long period of time. Ursula Heukenkamp, for example, challenges the 'immer wiederholte Feststellung, es habe 1945 keine "Stunde Null" gegeben' in her study on post-war Berlin, to which I will return later.[25]

Today, the concept of 'Trümmerliteratur' is widely established and accepted as a typical German form of post-war literature, although there is little actual research on it and the term seems to be connected to a handful of authors, like Heinrich Böll, Wolfgang Borchert and Günter Eich. This relative neglect of the further study of 'Trümmerliteratur' might be connected to the ongoing ambivalent evaluation of the texts which persisted despite Böll's attempts to defend and to justify them.

The most prominent examples of later critics of 'Trümmerliteratur' are Hans Magnus Enzensberger and W.G. Sebald. In his collection of eye-witness accounts of the years 1944-

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[20] Helmut Peitsch, *Nachkriegsliteratur 1945-1989* (Göttingen: V&R unipress, 2009), p. 12 ['retroactive metaphors'].

[21] See Roland Berbig, 'Kahlschlag-Literatur', in *Metzler Lexikon Literatur: Begriffe und Definitionen*, ed. by Dieter Burdorf, Christoph Fasbender and Burkhard Moennighoff, 3rd edn (Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler, 2007), p. 371 and Peitsch, p. 12 ['clear cutting'; 'ground zero'].

[22] See Peitsch, pp. 11-12.

[23] ['zero hour'].

[24] See Peitsch, pp. 9-10.

[25] Ursula Heukenkamp, 'Vorbemerkung', in *Unterm Notdach: Nachkriegsliteratur in Berlin 1945-1949*, ed. by Ursula Heukenkamp (Berlin: Erich Schmidt, 1996), pp. 11-15 (p. 12) ['constantly repeated declaration that there was no "zero hour" in 1945'].

1948, *Europa in Trümmern*, Enzensberger writes about the failure of most of the post-war authors to give a truthful and lively image of post-war Europe:

> Es ist in der Tat schwer, und es wird von Jahr zu Jahr schwerer, sich ein Bild vom Zustand unseres Kontinents am Ende des Zweiten Weltkriegs zu machen. Die Erzähler haben, abgesehen von Ausnahmen wie Böll, Primo Levi, Hans Werner Richter, Louis-Ferdinand Céline und Curzio Malaparte, vor diesem Thema kapituliert; die sogenannte Trümmerliteratur ist über das Schlagwort kaum hinausgekommen.[26]

The list of authors, who, according to Enzensberger, represent exceptions to the broad failure of post-war literature, is interesting because of its heterogeneity. Enzensberger combines German authors with authors from France and Italy. He refers to a Jewish author, who survived and wrote about Auschwitz, as well as to an anti-Semitic collaborator with the German occupation forces. Though I think that it is very important to differentiate between and carefully contextualize texts by these very different authors, Enzensberger's list still chimes with my approach of searching for similiarities in the representation of the post-war reality across borders of nationality, age, gender, faith and political affiliations and of going beyond what has traditionally been seen as part of German 'Trümmerliteratur'.

W.G. Sebald picks up Enzensberger's critique and expands it considerably in his lectures about aerial bombings and literature, which he delivered in the late autumn of 1997 at the University of Zürich and which were published later in a slightly extended form.[27] Like Enzensberger, Sebald also claims that most German post-war authors failed in writing about the bombing of Germany and about German ruins. According to Sebald, although Böll made realism a constitutive characteristic and mode of writing for 'Trümmerliteratur', the texts and their authors contribute to a general German trend of amnesia, self-censorship and silence about the German post-war situation:

> Selbst die vielberufene, programmatisch einen unbestechlichen Wirklichkeitssinn sich vorsetzende Trümmerliteratur […] erweist sich bei näherer Betrachtung als ein auf die individuelle und kollektive Amnesie bereits eingestimmtes, wahrscheinlich von vorbewußten Prozessen der Selbstzensur gesteuertes Instrument zur Verschleierung einer auf keinen Begriff mehr zu bringenden Welt.[28]

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[26] Enzensberger, p. 7 ['It is indeed hard, and becomes harder each year, to imagine the state of our continent at the end of the Second World War. Apart from exceptions like Böll, Primo Levi, Hans Werner Richter, Louis-Ferdinand Céline and Curzio Malaparte, the authors surrendered to this topic; the so-called "Trümmerliteratur" has remained a mere slogan.'].

[27] See Sebald, *Luftkrieg und Literatur*.

[28] Sebald, *Luftkrieg und Literatur,* p. 17 ['Even the frequently cited "literature of the ruins", of its nature presupposing an unerring sense of reality […] proves on closer inspection to be an instrument already tuned to individual and collective amnesia, and probably influenced by pre-conscious self-censorship – a means of

Writing about German suffering seemed to be inadequate and almost impossible in face of German guilt and the pain Germany inflicted on the world. Sebald's critique is one of quantity as well as quality of post-war texts. He names only a few authors whose works deal with the bombings and ruins at all, but even when these authors thematise the right things, they still do not write about these topics in a way that Sebald approves of:

> Außer Heinrich Böll haben nur wenige andere Autoren wie Hermann Kasack, Hans Erich Nossack, Arno Schmidt und Peter de Mendelssohn es gewagt, an das über die äußere und innere Zerstörung verhängte Tabu zu rühren, zumeist freilich, wie noch zu zeigen sein wird, auf eine eher fragwürdige Weise.[29]

Sebald favours a documentary style of writing and 'unprätentiöse[…] Sachlichkeit', while he criticises 'die Herstellung von ästhetischen oder pseudoästhetischen Effekten aus den Trümmern einer vernichteten Welt'.[30]

Sebald's lectures about German post-war literature provoked a lively debate in Germany about 'Trümmerliteratur', which Timm Menke analysed in 2006.[31] According to Menke, Sebald's claim of the low quantity of texts about the bombings of Germany and the ruins was rebutted by most critics such as Volker Hage, as there are many works about these topics, though they have not been widely read.[32] Sebald's second claim of a taboo of writing about German suffering and destruction has been more favourably received by critics such as Hage and Andreas Huyssen, but, as Menke states, it is also seen more as a problem of the reception of the literary texts than of their production.[33] Sebald's claim of the texts' low quality of representation was very much criticised for expressing an author's aesthetic judgement of texts representing an experience which he himself did not have.[34] Even though Sebald's critique ended up being

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obscuring a world that could no longer be presented in comprehensible terms.' (W.G. Sebald, *On the Natural History of Destruction: With Essays on Alfred Andersch, Jean Améry and Peter Weiss*, trans. by Anthea Bell (London: Hamish Hamilton, 2003), pp. 9-10)].

[29] Sebald, *Luftkrieg und Literatur*, pp. 18-19 ['Apart from Heinrich Böll only a few other authors – Hermann Kasack, Hans Erich Nossack, Arno Schmidt and Peter de Mendelssohn – ventured to break the taboo on any mention of the inward and outward destruction, and as we shall see, they themselves generally did so rather equivocally.' (Sebald, trans. by Bell, p. 11)].

[30] Sebald, *Luftkrieg und Literatur,* p. 59 ['unpretentious objectivity', 'the production of aesthetic or pseudo-aesthetic effects from the rubble of a destroyed world'].

[31] See Timm Menke, 'W.G. Sebalds "Luftkrieg und Literatur" und die Folgen: Eine kritische Bestandsaufnahme', in *Bombs Away!: Representing the Air War over Europe and Japan*, ed. by Wilfried Wilms and William Rasch (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2006), pp. 149-63.

[32] See Menke, pp. 150-51 and Volker Hage, *Zeugen der Zerstörung: Die Literaten und der Luftkrieg: Essays und Gespräche* (Frankfurt a.M.: S. Fischer, 2003), pp. 119-20.

[33] See Menke, p. 162, Hage, pp. 125-27 and Andreas Huyssen, 'On Rewritings and New Beginnings: W. G. Sebald and the Literature about the Luftkrieg', *Zeitschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Linguistik*, 31 (2001), pp. 72-90 (pp. 84-85).

[34] See Menke, pp. 152-53.

heavily criticised itself, Sebald's lectures and the subsequent debate about them nevertheless revealed the still precarious status of German post-war texts at the end of the twentieth-century.

One of the most interesting points emerging from the discussion and reaction to Sebald's lectures is the gap between production and reception of works. There are many nearly forgotten authors and texts of the post-war years, in Germany as well as in Britain, which, as I will argue, provide important and interesting contributions to post-war literature, but which nevertheless have been neglected to date. Therefore, it is an aim of this thesis to work against the neglect of lesser known works and to broaden the canon of post-war literature. By including texts of authors such as Ilse Langner, Elizabeth Taylor, Robert Henriques and Otto Erich Kiesel, I want to provide a more complete picture of the literary products of the immediate post-war years. In doing so, my project also tackles some of the criticism of post-war literature which stems from issues of reception.

In his work *Die kurze Geschichte der deutschen Literatur*, Heinz Schlaffer joins the trend of a critical evaluation of German post-war literature, but his points of critique are different from those voiced by Enzensberger or Sebald.[35] Schlaffer speaks of a 'Niedergang der modernen deutschen Literatur', which begins already after the end of the Second World War and takes full shape in the 1950s.[36] According to Schlaffer, what is missing from German post-war literature are not realistic and truthful accounts of the post-war reality, but rather original imagination, creation and experiment. One reason for this lack is, according to Schlaffer, a series of 'Sprachverbote[…]' which followed political changes like the end of the First and Second World War.[37] The German language suffered from the ideological control which was exercised, among others, by the occupying allies in post-war Germany, and which made the language of German literature 'ängstlicher und ärmer'.[38] Controlling and trying to purge the German language from influences like Nazism took away the writers' courage and confidence and did not allow them to become good writers: 'Die "Umerziehung", von den Siegermächten 1945 in West- und Ostdeutschland eingeleitet, geht – nun unter eigener deutscher Regie – weiter: Aus gelehrigen Zöglingen wurden gewiß bessere Menschen, jedoch keine guten Dichter.'[39] Schlaffer claims that German post-war authors, learning from their occupiers,

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[35] See Heinz Schlaffer, *Die kurze Geschichte der deutschen Literatur* (Köln: Anaconda Verlag, 2013).
[36] Schlaffer, p. 146 ['downfall of modern German literature'].
[37] Schlaffer, p. 146 ['language prohibitions'].
[38] Schlaffer, p. 147 ['more fearful and poorer'].
[39] Schlaffer, p. 147-48 ['The "re-education", which was initiated by the winning nations in West and East Germany in 1945, continues under German control: docile pupils certainly turned into better people, but not into good poets.'].

committed their literature to social and moral aims, and claims that 'politisches Engagement gehört seit 1945 zum Metier des deutschen Schriftstellers'.[40] He therefore characterises German post-war literature as 'predigend' and full of 'Moralismus', which diminishes its literary quality.[41]

This view of German post-war literature is not limited to Schlaffer. The German author Dieter Wellershoff voices a very similar critique in an interview, stating that: 'Die deutsche Nachkriegsliteratur stand unter einem ganz bestimmten Legimitätsbedarf, sie mußte sich mit dem Nazi-Unrecht, dem Krieg beschäftigen, und deshalb war sie in gewisser Weise wie eine stark moralisierende, pathetische und auch didaktische Literatur, die mich überhaupt nicht interessierte.'[42]

The discussion and evaluation of German post-war literature seems to follow a circular form. While Böll feels that he has to defend the realistic approach to post-war reality taken by 'Trümmerliteratur' against his contemporaries who favour a more escapist approach, Enzensberger and Sebald attack German post-war literature for doing exactly the opposite, for allegedly not portraying the whole truth of post-war reality. Critics like Schlaffer and Wellershoff then, in a way, return with their critique to Böll, criticizing the engagement of post-war literature with the social and political reality of the post-war years and claiming a lack of literary quality, similarly to the contemporary critics against whom Böll originally tried to defend 'Trümmerliteratur'.

While the long running debate described above on themes, style and quality of German post-war literature provides the general background for my analyses of post-war texts, there are two studies on different aspects of German post-war literature that, in particular, share more specific ideas and concepts with my own study and approach. The first is the collection *Unterm Notdach: Nachkriegsliteratur in Berlin 1945-1949*, edited by Ursula Heukenkamp.[43] This collection uses the city of Berlin, the former capital and cultural metropole, as a case-study of how German literature after 1945 developed.[44] One major research question Heukenkamp poses

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[40] See Schlaffer, p. 148; p. 149 ['political engagement is part of the profession of German writers since 1945'].
[41] Schlaffer, pp. 149-50 ['preaching', 'moralisation'].
[42] 'Alle Dinge sprechen: Dieter Wellershoff im Gespräch mit Fritz Gesing über den Legitimationsbedarf der deutschen Nachkriegsliteratur, den O-Ton, die Flut von Literaturpreisen und Faction sowie die Postmoderne', *Neue Rundschau,* 108 (1997), pp. 123-38 (p. 124) ['German post-war literature faced a very specific need to legitimise itself. It had to deal with the national socialist injustice and the war, and that is the reason why it was, in some ways, like a strongly moralising, declamatory and also didactic literature, which did not interest me at all.'].
[43] See *Unterm Notdach: Nachkriegsliteratur in Berlin 1945-1949*, ed. by Ursula Heukenkamp (Berlin: Erich Schmidt, 1996).
[44] See Heukenkamp, p. 11.

is why there was a split into two German literatures only a very few years after the end of the war. The narrow focus on Berlin means that there are only very few overlaps with my own study on German and British post-war literature. There are, however, two interesting ideas outlined by Heukenkamp. First, she stresses the fact that there were more contacts and relations between authors, publishers and literary organisations in the four different zones of occupation in Berlin than is commonly assumed.[45] Although these 'innerliterarische[…] Berührungen' in the divided Berlin cannot be called transnational, they still point in the same direction as my transnational approach, questioning an isolation of Western post-war literature in the immediate post-war years.[46] The second interesting idea is her negation of the renunciation of a 'Stunde Null' in the case of Berlin.[47] Heukenkamp claims that in Berlin there indeed was a very strong sense of starting anew, connected with the idea of a 'schonungslose Neuorientierung'.[48] Although these attempts were not successful in the end, the attempt was still there and has to be recognised. Heukenkamp therefore seems to be pointing to a possible compromise between continuity and 'Stunde Null'.

In my study, I focus only on the literature of the immediate post-war years and do not study its relation to war or pre-war literature. However, my study is based on the idea that rubble literature is highly influenced by the wartime and post-war reality in Germany and Britain. This does not mean that there must have been a radical break with pre-war traditions as 'Stunde Null' implies, but it does imply that there is something distinctive to be found in the analysed texts, influenced and brought about by the unique historical context of the Second World War and its aftermath – and this distinctive tone is strong enough to shine through in German and British literature alike, providing the basis for a transnational post-war genre of literature. At many points in my study it becomes clear that the analysed texts do not employ totally new motifs, themes and forms, but that they make use of and allude to older traditions. I therefore argue that you can neither speak of a complete continuity in the literature after the Second World War, nor of a radical 'Stunde Null'. According to my study, the distinctive post-war tone of transnational rubble literature is created by a unique implementation and combination of new elements and traditional elements, inspired by the post-war realities in Germany and Britain.

I argue that the central motif of disintegration and fragmentation in the analysed texts is closely connected to, evoked and inspired by the European cities and societies 'in ruins' in post-war

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[45] See Heukenkamp, pp. 11-12.
[46] Heukenkamp, p. 12 ['inner-literary contacts'].
[47] See Heukenkamp, p. 12.
[48] Heukenkamp, p. 12 ['ruthless reorientation'].

times. Nonetheless, the fragment already has a rich history in the context of German Romanticism, as well as in connection to modernism and post-modernism. The Romantic fragment was used to call concepts into question 'die auf eine Totalisierung der Identität und auf eine umfassende Systematisierung des Denkens ausgerichtet waren'.[49] While modernism, according to David Palumbo-Liu, 'has been depicted as struggling to integrate the fragmented modern world in its aesthetic vision, harking back to the vision of a wholeness inherent in the premodern while recognizing at once its absence from the world' the postmodern narrative is 'one similarly characterized by fragmentation and loss, but without that recuperative capacity to at least imagine a whole'.[50] While the texts analysed in this thesis are certainly influenced by – and partly build upon – these earlier concepts of fragments and fragmentation, as can for example be seen in their use of intertextuality or in references to Romantic images of the child, they reveal a new dimension to this motif in their treatment of the new historical context of the post-war reality and its physical fragments, which I analyse in this thesis.

The second relevant study is by Burkhard Schäfer who writes on ruderal sites in magic realism and rubble literature.[51] The most interesting idea in this work is that of the existence of 'Trümmerliteraturen' in the plural:

> Im Widerspruch zur gängigen Meinung, daß es in Deutschland nur *eine* Trümmerliteratur gegeben habe – nämlich die zum Zweiten Weltkrieg (von Böll, Eich, Lange etc.) –, wird hier die These vertreten, daß es im deutschen Sprachraum vier Trümmerliteraturen gegeben hat: die zum Dreißigjährigen Krieg […], dann die zum Ersten Weltkrieg und die zum Zweiten Weltkrieg und dann noch die zum Mauerfall.[52]

According to Schäfer, there might even be a fifth 'Trümmerliteratur', the one which was written by the second generation after the Second World War.[53] To justify his claim, Schäfer retraces elements of magic realism and the topos of ruderal sites in literature throughout these years, thereby turning the classical post-war 'Trümmerliteratur' into 'eine Wieder-holung von Texten, d.h. ein intertextuelles Ereignis'.[54] In a way, Schäfer's study does something similar to my own

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[49] Cori Mackrodt, 'Fragment', in *Metzler Lexikon Literatur: Begriffe und Definitionen*, ed. by Dieter Burdorf, Christoph Fasbender and Burkhard Moennighoff, 3rd edn (Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler, 2007), pp. 250-51 (p. 251) ['which aimed at a totalisation of identity and a comprehensive systematisation of thinking'].

[50] David Palumbo-Liu, 'Modernisms, Pacific and Otherwise', in *Pacific Rim Modernisms,* ed. by Mary Ann Gillies, Helen Sword and Steven Yao (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), pp. 34-50 (p. 35; p. 41).

[51] See Burkhard Schäfer, *Unberühmter Ort: Die Ruderalfläche im Magischen Realismus und in der Trümmerliteratur* (Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang, 2001).

[52] Schäfer, pp. 219-20 ['In contrast to the common opinion that there was only *one* Trümmerliteratur in Germany – that of the Second World War (by Böll, Eich, Lange etc.) – here the assumption is put forward that there were four Trümmerliteraturen in the German-speaking area: that of the thirty years war […], that of the First World War, that of the Second World War and finally that of the Fall of the Wall.'].

[53] See Schäfer, p. 220.

[54] Schäfer, p. 218 ['a repetition of texts, i.e. an intertextual incident'].

thesis; it broadens the concept of 'Trümmerliteratur'. But while I am sticking to the temporal margins and extending it geographically, Schäfer extends the genre temporally but sticks to the national context of Germany. These are two different, but at the same time similar approaches to the 'traditional' genre of 'Trümmerliteratur'.

British post-war literature shares with German 'Trümmerliteratur' the need to be defended and revaluated, but it differs from it in not being recognised as a distinct, unique phase in British literary history. There is no equivalent term to 'Trümmerliteratur' in Britain for the literature of the immediate post-war years. This is also due to a much more general lack of interest in and appreciation of British texts of the years after the Second World War. This leads to further research questions: Why has there, for a long time, been a neglect of British as well as German post-war literature? Could this neglect maybe be due to the texts' unique subjects and forms, and to them not fitting into existing categories?

In her study on *Narratives of Memory: British Writing of the 1940s* Victoria Stewart analyses the situation of the novel in the 1940s and its critical reception. She describes the persistent 'idea that the war years were a literary hiatus' and sets out to 'consider the origins of this resilient attitude'.[55] Firstly, there is the 'practical question of whether it would be possible for authors to continue to produce extended prose works under war conditions'.[56] There are practical difficulties to consider like paper rationing, but also the overwhelming nature of the war renders it a topic out of which it is difficult to make art or draw inspiration from.[57] Secondly, there is also 'the question of engagement'.[58] Some critics fear 'for the future vitality of the novel if content takes precedence over formal, aesthetic and imaginative concerns' and see 'the war as restricting creativity'.[59] These concerns about the social, political and moral engagement of literature in the war and post-war years is very similar to the critique that Schlaffer voices about German post-war literature, which he describes as 'predigend[…]'.[60] He also worries about the writers' creativity and ability to experiment. Therefore, this critique of war and post-war literature is shared by German and British texts, and in both national contexts it contributes to their low reputation.

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[55] Victoria Stewart, *Narratives of Memory: British Writing of the 1940s* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), p. 3.
[56] Stewart, p. 133.
[57] See Stewart, p. 2.
[58] Stewart, p. 133.
[59] Stewart, p. 133; p. 134.
[60] See Schlaffer, p. 149 ['preaching'].

Andrew Sinclair's reinterpretation of the decade of the forties, or more exactly of the period that begins 'in September 1939, with the declaration of the Second World War, and ends twelve years later in 1951 with the Festival of Britain and the loss of power by the Labour Party', is an early example of an attempt to revaluate British war and post-war literature.[61] Sinclair strongly opposes and criticises the former neglect of the whole British war and post-war culture, which, according to him, was consigned to 'the depths of irrelevant insignificance'.[62] Sinclair therefore speaks of the 1940s as 'a lost decade', which he aims to revaluate and reinterpret as 'the *anni mirabiles* of a national culture'.[63] Sinclair argues for a much more favourable look at the literature of the war and post-war decade, seeing in it more new and radical aspects than have so far been acknowledged by most other critics and readers: 'The decade of the nineteen-forties led to a sea-change in the arts in Britain.'[64] Writers of the older generation were influenced in their works by their war and post-war experiences, but also many new writers emerged, which is why Sinclair calls the forties the 'only democratic and popular decade of modern British culture'.[65]

I share Sinclair's aim of re-evaluating the literary works of the immediate post-war years. The comparison with German post-war texts reveals indeed that also the British texts of these years contain specific and unique characteristics which justify their retrieval from neglect and the establishment of a new, transnational genre, which includes British texts that have so far been lost in the dark, undefined space between modernism and postmodernism. It is especially the comparative approach of my thesis which enables me to have a fresh look at the texts, outside of their more narrow national contexts, and which allows me to see different characteristics and motifs, and to reach new conclusions.

In this context it is also interesting to note that Britain and Germany had very different relationships to literary modernism in the immediate post-war years. While in Britain, the dominant idea was that of an approaching end of a modernist phase, 'modernism and after, into which the 1940s disappear as afterthought or hiatus', German authors had been detached from the canon of world literature during the years of the Nazi reign, which necessarily led to a different approach to modernism as well as other traditions and influences.[66] According to

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[61] Sinclair, p. 286.
[62] Sinclair, p. 10.
[63] Sinclair, pp. 10-11; p. 9.
[64] Sinclair, p. 9.
[65] Sinclair, p. 9.
[66] Gill Plain, *Literature of the 1940s: War, Postwar and 'Peace'* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015), p. 5.

Erhard Schütz, German post-war culture was shaped by 'staatliche, institutionelle wie private, materielle wie geistige Sicherungen und Versicherungen'.[67] In the cultural sphere as well, there were various different attempts at finding and ensuring safety and stability. According to Schütz, the referring back to modernist forms and themes can be seen as part of this effort: 'Selbst die künstlerischen Avantgardismen waren ja eher Rückversicherungen im Avantgardistischen der klassischen Moderne oder der internationalen Standards denn Durchbrechungen kultureller Sicherheiten.'[68] All in all, Schütz describes the cultural landscape in post-war Germany as 'eine uneinheitliche Mischung aus restituiertem künstlerischem Avantgardismus der Vorkriegszeit, Existentialismus und Sozialismus' paired with 'Konservatismus und Traditionalismus der Rückbesinnung auf das Religiöse und Kirchliche […], auf das Klassische und Abendländische'.[69] Although Germany and Britain had different relationships to modernism, both countries shared the characteristic of a diverse blend of tendencies and influences in the immediate post-war years. Gill Plain describes a continuing influence of modernism on British writers, while at the same time stressing 'the very diverse voices and literary developments of the period': 'The Second World War really does change everything. Perversely, it brings homogeneity of purpose while fracturing established literary coteries, generating new confluences of influence and fresh discursive modes.'[70]

In recent years, several studies of British war and post-war literature have been published, which all seem to support the view that there is a lot more still to discover about this period and these texts than has previously been acknowledged.

Some of these recent studies focus on war literature. In his article about literature of the Second World War and about the city in ruins, Michael North states that 'it is not usually suggested that this is an especially distinguished period for British literature'.[71] One reason for the rather critical look at British literature of the Second World War, which influenced the study of it for many years, is the constant comparison with the literature of the First World War, which has a

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[67] Erhard Schütz, 'Nach dem Entkommen, vor dem Ankommen: Eine Einführung', in *Handbuch Nachkriegskultur: Literatur, Sachbuch und Film in Deutschland (1945-1962)*, ed. by Elena Agazzi and Erhard Schütz (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2013), pp. 1-139 (p. 2) ['national, institutional and private, material and intellectual safeguards and assurances.'].
[68] Schütz, p. 2 ['Even the artistic avantgardisms were rather reinsurances in the avantgardistic of the classic modern age or the international standards than breaks with cultural securities'].
[69] Schütz, p. 28 ['an inconsistent mixture of restituted artistic avant-gardism of the pre-war times, existentialism and socialism', 'conservatism and traditionalism of the return to the religious and ecclesiastical, the classic and occidental'].
[70] Plain, p. 5.
[71] Michael North, 'World War II: The City in Ruins', in *The Cambridge History of Twentieth-century English Literature*, ed. by Laura Marcus and Peter Nicholls (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 436-52 (p. 441).

huge regard: 'for what seems most conspicuously missing from the roster of World War II literature is not poetry or fiction per se but the kind of radical innovation on poetry and fiction that is so characteristic of the period during and immediately after World War I.'[72] Nevertheless, North finishes his article on a more balanced note, giving credit at least to the existence of a few important and interesting works of war literature:

> British literature has recorded its own ruins in a fair number of literary and cultural forms, and though it is hard to think of a literary example with anything like the influence of Churchill's speeches or the formal originality of the Crown Unit films, it does seem that there is in a very few literary works of this time a unique acknowledgement of the 'subtly degrading effects of war', even on the righteous.[73]

Adam Piette studies British fiction and poetry from 1939 to 1945 and calls into question the traditional undervaluation of Second World War literature.[74] He looks at 'the consequences of wartime isolation on the private imagination'.[75] By analysing text forms like 'essay, poem, novel, diary, letter', Piette 'focuses on the private imagination, the inside story of the war'.[76] One of the accomplishments of his study is to uncover the surprising 'variance between the public stories we feel we all know and the private stories told by the writers and poets'.[77]

Another interesting study of Second World War literature is Sara Wasson's *Urban Gothic of the Second World War: Dark London*.[78] As the title already suggests, her study focuses on the 'Gothic mode' in 'the texts of wartime London'.[79] There are some interesting potential connections between Wasson's and my own study, for example in regard to my analysis of the ghost as a recurring motif in writing about returnees.

In his study, *British Writing of the Second World War,* Mark Rawlinson also takes a closer look at 'war, and the pity of war'.[80] The study 'sets out to read imaginative, memorial, documentary, and critical literature of the war years', dealing with topics such as violence, the figure of the airman and the London Blitz.[81] Although the studies by North, Piette, Wasson and Rawlinson are all focused on war literature, they are still relevant to my own study, as they contribute to the critical revaluation of war literature, which can be expanded to post-war literature. In

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[72] North, p. 442.
[73] North, p. 452.
[74] See Adam Piette, *Imagination at War: British Fiction and Poetry, 1939-1945* (London: Papermac, 1995).
[75] Piette, p. 1.
[76] Piette, p. 1; p. 4.
[77] Piette, pp. 4-5.
[78] See Sara Wasson, *Urban Gothic of the Second World War: Dark London* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).
[79] Wasson, p. 1.
[80] Mark Rawlinson, *British Writing of the Second World War* (Oxford: Clarendon, 2000), p. 1.
[81] Rawlinson, p. 3.

general, the cut between war and post-war literature is not as clear and definite in Britain as it is in Germany, where the end of the war brought fundamental changes to all aspects of life. In Britain, transitions were smoother and therefore studies of post-war literature are often folded into larger studies of war-literature, of the 1940s, or of the mid-century, as shown in the following discussion.

In the collection of essays Marina MacKay edited together with Lyndsey Stonebridge, *British Fiction after Modernism: The Novel at Mid-century*, the two editors aim to 'restore some significance to a critically awkward phase of twentieth-century writing' and therefore focus 'on the years between the late 1930s (just after modernism) and the late 1960s (just before postmodernism)'.[82] In their attempt to revaluate British mid-century writing, MacKay and Stonebridge try to 'get beyond the formalist distinction between experimental and realist fiction that has dominated accounts of this period and which has also, and not always merely incidentally, stamped many mid-century writers as irretrievably and disastrously minor'.[83] While MacKay and Stonebridge's main interest lies with the novel and the development of modernism between the pre- and post-war years, my study comprises all forms of literature in the immediate post-war years.

Leo Mellor's *Reading the Ruins* is another more recent, and, for my thesis, important example of a work, which joins in the 'sustained critical re-evaluation' of the literature of the Second World War.[84] Mellor's study focuses on the British ruins of the Second World War and 'stems from a belief that such material conditions provide the subject of many works, whether overtly or implicitly'.[85] The findings of my thesis seem to concur with this idea of the creative potential of the ruins. Furthermore, Mellor argues for recognition of 'the significance of the more abstracted values of these spaces (whether theological, metaphorical, allegorical) for the narratives and iconographies of British culture'.[86] Mellor's engagement with the British ruins of the Second World War thus chimes with my concept of rubble literature, which explicitly includes texts that display more abstract manifestations of ruins. Another affinity between Mellor's and my work is that he is also aware of the transnational scope of the motif of the ruin: 'For the continuing significance of the ruin in a wider European tradition […] must include

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[82] MacKay and Stonebridge, p. 1.
[83] MacKay and Stonebridge, p. 3.
[84] Mellor, p. 2.
[85] Mellor, p. 2.
[86] Mellor, p. 2.

figures as disparate as Freud and Hegel, Spengler and Mary Shelley, Piranesi and Anselm Kiefer.'[87]

What makes my thesis unique and different from Mellor's 'study of a particularly British cultural response', though, is firstly my comparative approach.[88] The mirror of the German post-war texts enables me to have a different approach to the British texts and to identify new significant topics, motifs and forms. Secondly, Mellor's study is very much focused on the urban space of London and its physical ruins.[89] While Mellor focuses on space, my thesis is constructed around and centred on figures; my main interest lies with the individuals who inhabit the space, interact with it, interpret and reconstruct it. And thirdly, Mellor's study proceeds chronologically and includes chapters about the pre-war and war years, while my thesis focuses only on post-war texts.

In his study, Andrzej Gasiorek focuses on British post-war literature.[90] He examines 'the conflict between realism and experimentalism as it manifests itself in the work of a wide range of writers'.[91] His concern is with realism and 'responses to the modernist legacy'.[92] The overlap between our studies is minimal, as the only post-war author that we are both dealing with is Henry Green.

Although there have been many studies in recent years dealing with different aspects of 1940s British literature, most of them have a different and much wider temporal focus than my study of literature of the immediate post-war years. And most of them, at the same time, have a more narrow thematic focus, dealing mainly with certain text forms, such as the novel, or with specific modes of writing, such as realism, modernism or the Gothic. While there are occasional overlaps and shared interests in authors, texts and topics with many of the studies above, my unique combination of a narrow temporal and wide thematic focus allows me to create a unique corpus of texts. In this corpus, I can then compare texts, which have not been compared before, and set them in contexts, which are new and original. Adding the German texts to my corpus, and using them as objects of comparison, adds a further layer of complexity and originality.

There is one collection of essays which, when looking at the title, seems to be doing something very similar to this study, which is to look at early German post-war literature from a

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[87] Mellor, p. 3.
[88] Mellor, p. 6.
[89] See Mellor, p. 203.
[90] See Andrzej Gaşiorek, *Post-War British Fiction: Realism and After* (London: Edward Arnold, 1995).
[91] Gaşiorek, p. v.
[92] Gaşiorek, blurb.

comparative perspective. The collection, edited by Günter Butzer and Joachim Jacob, is called *Berührungen. Komparatistische Perspektiven auf die frühe deutsche Nachkriegsliteratur.*[93] However, on closer inspection this does not have much in common with my own thesis. Firstly, the editors state that 'die Beiträge behandeln die frühe deutsche Nachkriegsliteratur aus verschiedenen komparatistischen Perspektiven', but they fail to give any explanation or justification for their comparative approach to the German post-war texts.[94] Secondly, the essays in this collection are not concerned with comparisons in a direct sense, as my study is with respect to German and British post-war texts. Rather, as the title indicates, the collection deals with 'Berührungen', contacts between different literatures. At the centre of attention is Germany, and then the different essays deal with topics such as looking at Germany from the outside, contacts with the neighboring literatures of Switzerland and Austria, appropriation and mediation. Furthermore, there is no article dealing with any aspect of German and British post-war contacts.

The approach of my thesis to directly compare German and British literature of the immediate post-war years, looking for transnationally shared themes, motifs and forms as expressions of a transnationally shared post-war reality, is therefore unique and unprecedented. It will thus add something fundamentally new to the national discourses on post-war literature, and will define rubble literature as a new transnational genre of post-war literature.

'Beyond Enemy Lines'

The direct and detailed comparison of German and British post-war literature undertaken in my thesis is a starting point for the wider study of transnational rubble literature. It is a first case-study which can, and hopefully will, be followed by studies focusing on literature of the immediate post-war years in other languages and by authors with other nationalities, such as, for example, Japanese literature. My own focus on Germany and Britain is founded on my ability to read the relevant texts in the original languages, but it is also connected to the research project that I was a part of during my PhD studies. 'Beyond Enemy Lines: Literature and film in the British and American zones of occupied Germany, 1945-1949' is a research project funded by the European Research Council and based in the English Department at King's

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[93] See *Berührungen: Komparatistische Perspektiven auf die frühe deutsche Nachkriegsliteratur*, ed. by Günter Butzer and Joachim Jacob (München: Wilhelm Fink, 2012).

[94] Günter Butzer and Joachim Jacob, 'Vorwort', in *Berührungen: Komparatistische Perspektiven auf die frühe deutsche Nachkriegsliteratur*, ed. by Günter Butzer and Joachim Jacob (München: Wilhelm Fink, 2012), pp. 11-14 (p. 11) ['the contributions consider the early German post-war literature from different comparative perspectives'].

College London. The members of the team work on different aspects related to culture at the time of the Allied occupation of Germany, such as important figures, literature, media, film and international institutions. There have already been some publications by team members on these topics and there will be more in the future.[95] The 'Beyond Enemy Lines' project is interdisciplinary, which is mirrored in my thesis being co-supervised by members of the English and the German department at King's College London. It is due to this set-up and to the focus of my project that my study not only contributes to the fields of German studies and English studies, but also to the field of comparative literature.

Methodology and Structure

The concepts of the national and the transnational are central to this thesis. On the one hand, the Second World War strengthened the concept of nation states, as nationalistic ideas were used to justify the war, and as the necessity of fighting to either expand or protect the fatherland played a central role in war propaganda. On the other hand, though, the Second World War and its aftermath also revealed the 'abnehmende Prägekraft der nationalen Grenzen'.[96] The misery and destruction of war did not stop at national borders and did not differentiate between citizens of different nations. Nation states were falling apart during and after the war: Germany was divided by the victorious Allies and the British Empire lost India. National borders were uncertain and constantly shifting. Furthermore, in order to win the war it became necessary to form alliances across national borders. All in all, I therefore argue that the Second World War and its aftermath represent a move away from the national and towards the transnational. It was a time in which it became especially clear that nation states are 'weder geschlossene noch unabhängige Vergleichseinheiten', but rather 'miteinander in Austausch stehende und teilweise voneinander abhängige Gebilde'.[97] According to Wessler and Brüggemann, the term transnational describes phenomena that happen 'nicht mehr nur zwischen Ländern […] ("inter"), sondern auch jenseits von und quer zu Nationalstaaten und Nationalkulturen ("trans")'.[98] It are these kind of transnational phenomena in German and British literary texts

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[95] See Lara Feigel, *The Bitter Taste of Victory: Life, Love and Art in the Ruins of the Reich* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), Lara Feigel, '"The Sermons in the Stones of Germany Preach Nihilism": "Outsider Rubble Literature" and the Reconstruction of Germany, 1945-1949', *Comparative Critical Studies*, 13 (2016), pp. 233-53 and Elaine Morley, 'Intercultural Experience, the Anglo-American Occupation and UNESCO in Germany 1945-1949', *Comparative Critical Studies*, 13 (2016), pp. 193-213.

[96] Hartmut Wessler and Michael Brüggemann, *Transnationale Kommunikation: Eine Einführung* (Wiesbaden: Springer VS, 2012), p. 3 ['decreasing influence of national borders'].

[97] Wessler and Brüggemann, p. 43 ['neither self-contained nor independent units of comparison', 'communicating and partly interdependent entities'].

[98] Wessler and Brüggemann, p. 3 ['not only between countries […] ("inter"), but also beyond and crosswise of nation states and national cultures ("trans")'].

of the immediate post-war years, which are not primarily determined and influenced by national categories, that I set out to analyse in this thesis. Transnationality does not imply, however, that everything becomes the same; there are still differences, which justify and demand a comparative approach. According to Wessler and Brüggemann, the nation state functions as a pointsman and a filter that influences the interpretation and moulding of transnational phenomena: 'Im Ergebnis führt dies nicht zu global uniformen Phänomenen […]. Es kommt zu einer national gefilterten Umwandlung globaler Antriebskräfte in vielfältige lokale Ausprägungsformen.'[99] It is the aim of this thesis to not only uncover transnational phenomena in post-war literature, but also to analyse and compare their various different implementations in German and British texts.

This thesis is based on the close and critical reading of German and British literary texts. The texts are, if possible, presented together with a short biography of the author and set in their respective historical contexts. The texts are then compared with texts of their own language as well as across languages, with the aim of identifying common themes, motifs and images, which are used to structure the different chapters of the thesis. The aim is to demonstrate that there are transnational themes and motifs, and to analyse and compare how these are employed in the different texts, stressing similarities, as well as ever-present gradual or even broader differences. The structure of the thesis with four thematic chapters allows for a comparison of texts across borders of age, nationality, gender or political affiliations. It enables me to describe similar or related themes, topois and images in texts by German and British authors, by authors who belonged to the older generation and those who started writing only after the end of the war, by authors who emigrated from Nazi Germany and those who remained as inner emigrants. The focus is not primarily on the biography of the authors or on broader cultural and political categories of literary production, but the texts speak for themselves and therefore dictate the structure of the thesis. Furthermore, the thematic focus also provides a first common ground for a comparison of the historical contexts of German and British texts, revealing shared topics of post-war debates in Germany and Britain.

All of the analysed texts can be seen as emerging from their time of production and publication; the connections to wider historical debates, and the concerns and hopes of writers and readers are always drawn in my analysis. This also reflects the primary agenda of the thesis, which is two-fold. Above all, this work is a literary study of post-war texts across borders of language

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[99] Wessler and Brüggemann, p. 44 ['The result is not globally uniform phenomena […]. National filters transfom global driving forces into local variations.'].

and nationhood that aims to introduce and establish a transnational genre of post-war literature. But it also has a historical aim: to shed light on the German and British post-war reality, which is shown to have more in common than has been identified previously, and to share some central themes.

The number of texts which can be analysed within this thesis is limited and the choices made may seem arbitrary at some points. Nevertheless, there are basic considerations and a range of criteria, which guide and underpin the composition of the corpus. The first criterion is temporal. The thesis focuses on literature of the immediate post-war years. The start date for relevant publications could therefore be set at 1945, although there are two British texts included in the corpus which have been written and published already in 1944. Even though these texts differ from those written after the official end of the war in terms of teleology and how they can deal with readers' knowledge and expectations, they are still relevant. First, because they have a clear focus on post-war times. They are written in the certainty of a British victory, set in the post-war years and concerned with post-war topics, both predicting, and maybe even warning, about what the situation of returnees in Britain could be like. Secondly, because a clear definition of *the* post-war period is very difficult in Britain, as described by Plain: 'Similarly, we might note that the "postwar" does not wait for the signing of a treaty, and that the cultural symptoms of war's end are manifest in advance of its actual conclusion.'[100] According to Plain, 'this phenomenon is particularly marked in the case of the Second World War', as different stages of the war before its official end had diverse consequences for different groups of people, such as soldiers still fighting, POWs, who were repatriated as early as 1943, and those people who were part of the home front, in itself a concept which disintegrated during the course of the Second World War.[101] In Germany, books which – through their outlook, content and themes – can be associated with the post-war period are very unlikely to have been written or published in the last phase of the war and even in the very early post-war years. The earliest German texts included in the corpus therefore date from 1947.

Finding an end point for relevant texts for the corpus is even harder. In the German context, an obvious cut-off would be 1949, the end of the occupation and the founding of the two new German states. Yet the distinction between pre-1949 and post-1949 literature is not as easy to draw as it seems. There are texts which the authors might have started writing in 1949 or earlier, but which could not be published till after 1949, in the case of Heinrich Böll's *Der Engel*

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[100] Plain, p. 10.
[101] See Plain, pp. 10-11.

schwieg even not until the author's death. Although this is an extreme example, in the post-war years with all the difficulties connected to writing and publishing of literature (licencing, paper-rationing etc.) works that have been published slightly after 1949 but clearly refer to or are connected to the immediate post-war years should always be given the benefit of the doubt. Furthermore, the cut-off point of 1949 is not a natural one in the British context. Here, one could either conceptualise the culmination of a post-war period at the end of the decade of the 40s, which would coincide with the popular German periodisation of 1949, or, following Sinclair, extend the post-war period until 1951, or, if one was to follow MacKay's and Stonebridge's concept of the mid-century, the post-war period might continue until the late 1960s. There is thus no obvious cut-off point for a British post-war period. As my objective for this thesis is to look at the immediate post-war literature, in the selection of texts I simply aim to remain as close to 1945 as possible, mainly focusing on the second half of the 1940s.

The second criterion for text selection is that I want to capture as wide a range of different works and authors as possible. As my claim is that of a whole new genre of literature, this demands that a large number of different authors and texts be considered. Therefore, in every chapter I discuss between four and seven different texts, ideally equally balanced between German and British ones. I discuss only one work of literature by each author; no author turns up twice in the corpus. This provides the best possible support of my claim of a new literary genre. My corpus of texts is also characterised by an openness towards many different text forms. I analyse novels, short-stories, plays and a film-script. In this regard, the same rule applies as above: the broader the objects of analysis, the better. There is a strong tendency, however, towards a specific way of writing: I am mainly looking at texts with a naturalistic and non-experimental writing style. This is due to the primary agenda of the thesis to interpret the texts as, in Hermanns words, 'mögliche Zeugnisse der Realität kurz nach Kriegsende'.[102] Texts with a clear narrative structure and a relatively stable concept of language as a medium to describe and interpret the reality are therefore most suited to the overall aim of this thesis. This, in conjunction with the thematic structure of the thesis, leads to questions of form being dealt with only in the analysis of some of the texts.

The focus on narrative texts and text forms also leads to poetry not being included in the corpus of this thesis, although, as noted by Alexander von Bormann, Böll's appeal for a 'engagierten Realismus' chimes with contemporary trends in the field of poetry and a specific mode of

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[102] Hermanns, p. 32 ['potential testimonies to the reality just after the end of the war'].

writing characterised by a 'lakonische Kürze'.[103] The inclusion of poetry, however, would go beyond the limitations of this thesis, as it would require a much stronger focus on form and would have to show language in the post-war years as coming under different and much stronger kinds of pressure. In much of the poetry of these years, language and the 'Erfahrung vom Versagen der Sprache, der Strophen, Rhythmen und Bilder' is thematised and displayed much more blatantly than in most of the narrative texts I analyse in this thesis.[104] My strong thematic and also historical focus is more suited to narrative text forms and would struggle to do justice to the interesting developments in the field of post-war poetry.

Film is a further art form which will not be considered in any greater detail in this thesis, although I am sure that a comparative view could provide interesting insights, as hinted at by the film 'Irgendwo in Berlin' (1946), which I will mention briefly in the chapter on the figure of the child. Especially in the German context, films extensively displayed and dealt with the ruins and rubble of the destroyed cities. According to Schütz, 'der Trümmerfilm war zeitweilig ein eigenes Genre', which shared some characteristics with literary texts of these years, such as the dominant position of the figure of the returnee and the topic of reconstruction.[105] As film, similarly to poetry, uses a quite specific (visual) language, which differs from the form and language employed in most of the prose texts of my corpus, a comparison across these art forms would need much more preparation and framing than is possible within this thesis.

There are texts included in the corpus by authors who do not immediately and neatly seem to fit the criteria. One criterion is set out very clearly already by the thesis' title: the national one. I claim to be looking at German and British texts. In the case of Ilse Aichinger, however, I include an Austrian author in the corpus, thereby expanding the characterisation of German from a national one to a language-based characteristic. Other authors like Robert Neumann or Peter de Mendelssohn seem to fall between the categorisations of German and British, transcending the borders between nations as well as languages. This characteristic makes these authors especially relevant to my thesis. They already carry the transnationality of their texts, which I set out to analyse, in their own biographies.

There is one group of German intellectuals and writers which is almost completely absent from this thesis: authors who lived in the Soviet part of occupied Germany or, later, in the GDR.

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[103] Alexander von Bormann, 'Frühe Nachkriegslyrik (1945-1950)', in *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur von 1945 bis zur Gegenwart*, ed. by Wilfried Barner (München: C.H. Beck, 1994), pp. 76-89 (p. 77) ['committed realism', 'laconic brevity'].

[104] Von Bormann, p. 80 ['experience of the failure of language, of verses, rhythms and images'].

[105] Schütz, p. 15 ['the rubble film was temporarily a genre of its own']; see Schütz, pp. 15-16.

Though there are some exceptions, such as Victor Klemperer or Wolfdietrich Schnurre, who initially returned to East Berlin before moving to the Western part of the city, the best known authors living in the Eastern part of post-war Germany, such as Anna Seghers or Bertolt Brecht, are not part of my corpus.[106] This is mainly due to the fact that the situation of the authors and the context of literary production differed enormously between the Eastern part of Germany on the one hand, and the Western parts of Germany and Britain on the other hand. Christian Adam states that there were 'zwei völlig getrennte[…] Literaturen in Deutschland'.[107] Though the separation between West and East German literature was a long process and there are no simple and clear-cut lines to draw, some basic differences can already be noticed in the immediate post-war years. Schütz mentions two symptoms for the 'Auseinanderdrift von Ost und West, gerade auch in künstlerischen Dingen': the boycott of Brecht and his production of 'Mutter Courage und ihre Kinder' by Western media in January 1949 and the different treatment in both parts of Germany of Thomas Mann in the Goethe-year of 1949.[108] These are only the visible symptoms of a much more fundamental drifting apart of the Eastern and the Western part of Germany, which complicates a comparison across this inner-German border. Therefore, I am mainly going to compare British literature to texts originating from the Western parts of Germany and Austria.

Nevertheless, in the following I would still like to give a small overview of the situation in the Soviet zone of occupation and the GDR and highlight some of the basic differences to the Western zones of occupation, the FRG and ultimately also Britain. The most important difference between Western and Eastern parts of Germany in the post-war years lay in the amount of freedom given to artists, writers and all other people active in the field of cultural production. While in the Western parts the initially strong allied control of cultural life was soon replaced by a free market of cultural products with a huge number of different authors, publishers and distributors, in the Eastern part of Germany the state kept a firm grip on cultural life and instead of a free market there was established a 'dirigistisch gelenkte[r] Buchmarkt'.[109] Wolfgang Emmerich describes the GDR literary system as 'based on a state-sponsored notion

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[106] See Dorlis Blume, Regina Haunhorst and Irmgard Zündorf, 'Biografie Wolfdietrich Schnurre', in *LeMO-Biografien, Lebendiges Museum Online, Stiftung Haus der Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* <https://www.hdg.de/lemo/biografie/Wolfdietrich-schnurre.html> [accessed 13 July 2018].
[107] Christian Adam, *Der Traum vom Jahre Null: Autoren, Bestseller, Leser: Die Neuordnung der Bücherwelt in Ost und West nach 1945* (Berlin: Galiani Berlin, 2016), p. 14 ['two completely separate literatures in Germany'].
[108] Schütz, p. 37 ['drifting apart of East and West, especially as regards artistic topics']; see p. 37.
[109] See Adam, p. 56; p. 42 ['dirigistically managed book market'].

of all-encompassing homogeneity'.[110] This homogeneity rested on 'the dual foundation myth of antifascism and socialism' and found expression through 'the dogma of socialist realism'.[111] Adam argues that this system can be seen as a continuation or modification of 'Strukturen und Methoden des gelenkten Literaturmarkts der NS-Zeit'.[112] The situation in the GDR was not static. Emmerich describes a development from 'a willing "literature of conviction" ("Gesinnungsliteratur")', into 'a "literature that sought to give meaning" ("Sinngebungsliteratur")', until, towards the end of the GDR, 'conviction gave way to something that came close to despair and which increasingly led to a sense of hopelessness'.[113]

The second major difference between Western and Eastern parts of Germany concerns the question of who occupied powerful positions in the cultural sphere and influenced contemporary debates. Adam sums up the opposing tendencies: 'ein größerer Einfluss von Emigranten und Widerständlern im Osten, der Inneren Emigration und der NS-Belasteten im Westen.'[114] While emigrant writers were welcomed in East Germany and actively encouraged to return, in the Western parts emigrants faced a critical group of authors who had remained in Germany as more or less silent followers of the Nazi regime or so called inner emigrants, allegedly in passive opposition to the regime, who were still very active and influential. According to Adam, the FRG was characterised by 'personelle Kontinuitäten', while important cultural figures in East Germany were former emigrants who signaled a stronger break with war and pre-war times, such as Anna Seghers or Bertolt Brecht.[115]

Though representatives of the older generation were indeed still very active and powerful in the Western part of Germany, they were not the only important category of authors. According to Karnick, there was also the opposing younger generation, authors who, in 1945, were between twenty and forty years old, who had been soldiers during the war, and who did not favour continuity but who wanted to distance themselves and their writing from traditions, from the generation of their fathers and also from the 'Kalligraphie' of some of the inner emigrants.[116] It are these authors who Böll primarily figured as representatives of his 'Trümmerliteratur'. Still,

[110] Wolfgang Emmerich, 'The GDR and its Literature: An Overview', in *Rereading East Germany: The Literature and Film of the GDR*, ed. by Karen Leeder (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 8-34 (p. 10).
[111] Emmerich, p. 24; p. 19.
[112] Adam, p. 19 ['structures and methods of the regulated book market of the time of National Socialism'].
[113] Emmerich, p. 25.
[114] Adam, p. 19 ['in the East, a greater influence of emigrants and former opponents to the regime, of inner emigration and those with a Nazi past in the West'].
[115] Adam, p. 18 ['continuities of personnel'].
[116] See Manfred Karnick, 'Krieg und Nachkrieg: Erzählprosa im Westen', in *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur von 1945 bis zur Gegenwart*, ed. by Wilfried Barner (München: C.H. Beck, 1994), pp. 31-75 (p. 38 and p. 54). 'Kalligraphie'['calligraphy'] is a term coined by Gustav René Hocke.

my transnational genre of rubble literature incorporates texts by authors belonging to different categories. Works by older authors such as Marie Luise Kaschnitz, Hans Erich Nossack and Ilse Langner sit next to works by younger authors such as Wolfgang Borchert, Wolfdietrich Schnurre, Walter Kolbenhoff and Heinrich Böll, as all of their texts deal with and thematise the physical or metaphorical ruins of post-war Germany, albeit sometimes in different ways. The same is true for texts by emigrants such as Peter de Mendelssohn and Robert Neumann. While there are certainly differences between these groups of authors, as regards for example the insider or outsider perspective or the question of guilt, those differences become an issue of secondary importance through the thematic focus of the thesis, which enables me to uncover some unexpected similarities as well as differences beyond biographical categorisations.

A final guideline for the selection of texts for the corpus is to achieve a balance between well-known and well-researched texts and forgotten and under-researched texts, which have to be retrieved in order to convey a more complete and truthful picture of the German and British post-war literature.

The thesis itself is structured around different figures. I am mainly interested in the human condition. How has the concept of what it means to be a human being developed and changed during the war and its aftermath? What influence does the surrounding space of ruins and rubble have on the individuals who inhabit it? What are the thoughts, feelings and struggles of different individuals portrayed in literary texts? How does the post-war reality influence and shape them? What characterises the living together of individuals in post-war times? Which debates are dominant in the German and British post-war societies and how do these play out in literature?

The first chapter is on the figure of the returnee. In it, I argue that fragmentation is a transnational motif used in the depiction of returnee figures. It can be found in the texts' content, as well as in their form, mirroring the ruins and rubble of the post-war cities. The motif of social fragmentation can be found in both German and British texts, but it is interpreted in very different ways. While for returnee figures in British texts, social fragmentation is negative and is something that can and should be reversed, for returnee figures in German texts social fragmentation is positive and irreversible. The fragmentations of identity and time are portrayed as phenomena affecting returnees quite similarly in German and British texts. The returnees struggle with a splitting or multiplication of their own identity or of the identity of other people around them. In addition, all the returnee figures struggle with a fragmentation of time, meaning that their past has abundant power over their present and they are not able to move on and begin a new life. Texts about returnees display a fragmented structure, often related to intertextuality.

In this chapter, I complicate and challenge the supposed binary opposition between the victorious British and the defeated Germans, arguing instead that the British could also be seen as defeated victors, as the British returnee figures share many characteristics with their German counterparts. The texts analysed in this chapter are: Heinrich Böll's *Der Engel schwieg,* Wolfgang Borchert's 'Draußen vor der Tür', Henry Green's *Back,* Robert Henriques's *The Journey Home,* Norah C. James's *There is Always To-morrow,* J.B. Priestley's *Three Men in New Suits* and Wolfdietrich Schnurre's 'Ausgeliefert'.

The second chapter considers the figure of the woman and contested gender roles in the post-war years. Using Gilbert and Gubar's *The Madwoman in the Attic* as a starting point, I argue in this chapter that references and allusions to older texts like myths and fairy-tales and to archetypal female figures are a transnational motif in the discussion of post-war gender roles.[117] By engaging in a process of deconstructing, criticising and refashioning female archetypal figures, German and British authors critically deal with the topic of the relationship between the sexes and women's role in society after the Second World War. All of the analysed texts express very different opinions on the topic of post-war gender roles. This reveals how open the discussion of gender roles in the post-war years is, at least in literature; that the traditional roles and figures are really broken apart, like the cities turned into rubble; and that they can be reunited and reassembled in many different ways. The texts analysed in this chapter are: Ilse Langner's *Klytämnestra*, Hans Erich Nossack's *Nekyia. Bericht eines Überlebenden*, Stephen Spender's 'The Fool and the Princess', and Elizabeth Taylor's *Palladian.*

The third chapter is on the figure of the child. The analysed texts show the social institution of the family as crumbling and falling apart in post-war times; what is left are children as isolated fragments of a post-war society that has yet to be reconstructed. In this chapter I argue that the figure of the child is explored in post-war texts through the transnational theme of the children's innocence or guilt, of the child as either hope or threat. All of the child figures in German and British texts oscillate between these two extreme poles. The shared theme of the child's ambiguous status in post-war times is explored through the application of three transnational motifs: the child and animal imagery, the child and play, and the child and language. The chapter also reveals the symbolic significance of the child figure in the post-war years, as it is used to explore more general aspects of reconstruction and re-education. Therefore, the figure of the child in literature is shown to be a mirror of fundamental post-war questions. The texts

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[117] See Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-century Literary Imagination*, 2nd edn (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).

analysed in this chapter are: Ilse Aichinger's *Die grössere Hoffnung*, Graham Greene's 'First Treatment The Basement Room', Walter Kolbenhoff's *Von unserm Fleisch und Blut*, Rose Macaulay's *The World my Wilderness*, and Robert Neumann's *Children of Vienna.*

The fourth chapter focuses on the figures of the occupiers and the occupied. While the approach is still comparative and I continue to look for transnational phenomena, the topic of this chapter differs slightly from the other chapters of the thesis as it is an international one; the chapter is concerned with the literary depiction of the relation between occupiers and occupied in German and British texts. I argue in this chapter that the figures of the occupier and the occupied – and their relationships – are explored in German and British texts through the use of three transnational themes or tropes: the theme of a search for similarities, the trope of performance, and a pool of images for exploring shifting relations of power. The findings of this chapter suggest that there is no clear binary opposition between occupiers and occupied – drawing a clear line between the two groups is not as easy as expected. The post-war picture is not a clear-cut one, but rather a complex mosaic made up of unexpected contacts, neighbours and movements. This blurring of boundaries, however, does not lead to a rapprochement of the two parties; not one of the analysed texts displays a successful relationship between occupiers and occupied. The texts analysed in this chapter are: Geoffrey Cotterell's *Randle in Springtime*, Marie Luise Kaschnitz's 'Das fremde Land', Otto Erich Kiesel's *Die unverzagte Stadt*, Peter de Mendelssohn's *Die Kathedrale: Ein Sommernachtmahr* and John Prebble's *The Edge of Darkness*.

Throughout the whole thesis, but especially in chapter one on the figure of the returnee and in chapter three on the figure of the child, I consider questions of form and language. Do the post-war texts display any signs of disintegration or fragmentation in their structure? What happens to language as a reliable system of reference in massively uncertain post-war times, following years of war during which language was used for ideology and propaganda? This exploration of the post-war texts' form in conjunction with a detailed exploration of their content allows me to characterise and paint a concrete picture of the distinct tone which permeates literary texts of the immediate post-war years and therefore justifies my introduction of the transnational genre of rubble literature.

1) The Figure of the Returnee

Introduction

When the nurse Jane, the protagonist of Robert Henriques's *The Journey Home*, returns from the war to her home in the British countryside, she receives a rather unspectacular welcome: 'If people must return from war upon a Sunday, they must fetch for themselves the joint that cooked in the kitchen oven – done to a turn at one o'clock precisely.'[1] Is this the victorious nation's jubilant reception of its men and women, who have fought and worked hard for many years for the glory and survival of all its people and values? Is this what the returnees expected to find back home, a society that already seems to have returned to the routines of pre-war life, which has forgotten about the achievements of the returning men and women?

At the end of the Second World War the roles were clearly assigned. Britain belonged to the victorious nations while Germany was defeated, destroyed and under occupation by the Allied Forces. This distinction influenced and shaped the narration, interpretation and remembrance of the war and post-war times in its immediate aftermath. Looking at the almost opposite situations of Germany and Britain, one would expect these to strongly influence the reception of the men and women returning from war and would also expect to find very different representations of returnee figures in literary texts.

At first sight it appears that the British returnees had all the advantages on their side. Britain seemed to face a much smaller task in dealing with the returnees and in reintegrating them into society, because, first of all, Britain was, according to Alan Allport, 'a poor and tired country, but one in which the basic political and social institutions had survived the severe test of six years of total war', which was of course not the case in Germany.[2] Secondly, the number of British returnees, which stood at approximately five million, was much smaller than the number of German returnees, which was around eleven million.[3] Additionally, the British returnees had a clear psychological advantage, as they had been fighting successfully for a victorious country in a cause that most of the men were proud of.[4] The feelings of defeat, disillusionment and often guilt, which were typical for German returnees and also for the German people they found at home, were alien to most Britons. Another factor to influence the returnees' experience is the

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[1] Robert Henriques, *The Journey Home* (London: Heinemann, 1944), p. 157.
[2] Alan Allport, *Demobbed: Coming Home after the Second World War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), p. 219.
[3] See Allport, p. 3 and Giles MacDonogh, *After the Reich: From the Liberation of Vienna to the Berlin Airlift* (London: John Murray, 2007), p. 392.
[4] See Allport, pp. 219-20.

length of their absence. Although the process of demobilisation was judged as too slow, the majority of British soldiers still returned home much earlier than the majority of German soldiers; the 'Spätestheimkehrer (latest homecomer)', for example, returned as late as 1956.[5] Finally, another important aspect likely to influence the experience of returning was what the returnees found once they arrived back home. The level of destruction in Britain was far more contained than in Germany. While in Britain over 200,000 houses had been totally destroyed, in Germany the number of destroyed homes stood at 3.6 million, representing 20% of the total.[6]

All of the factors outlined above point in the direction of a binary opposition between returnees of the victorious Britain and returnees of the defeated Germany. But, as the quotation above from Henriques's text already suggests, things might not have been as simple as that. One senses a feeling of disappointment and disillusionment on the part of the British returnee Jane, which one would perhaps rather expect to find in a German returnee figure. This leads us to question whether the return in Britain was really going as smoothly as one might expect. Indeed, aside from the different situations at home and the different outcome of the war, did the returnees from both countries not share the traumatic experiences of fighting, which very often hindered an unproblematic transition to civilian life?

In addition, Gill Plain describes two rather unexpected emotions which were present in post-war Britain: grief and nostalgia. While the war meant stability – albeit often a terrible and painful one – peace led to a fundamental 'loss of structure'.[7] Therefore, Plain characterises the post-war years in Britain as 'a period of disappointment and uncertainty, in which the work of reconstruction is permeated by a necessary and painful negotiation of grief.'[8] The war provided British people with a common goal which brought many communities closer together and created 'an unexpected nostalgia for the "purposefulness" of conventional war' in post-war times.[9] These emotions are also reflected on in literature, for example in Nicholas Monsarrat's short story 'The Ship that Died of Shame' (1952). The protagonist, a former soldier, has positive memories of the war and experiences a deterioration of his personal situation in post-war times: 'What sort of men were we, that the war had been so good to us and the peace so rotten? […] Why was I, in peace-time, such a dead loss?'[10] While he is proud of what he did during the war,

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[5] MacDonogh, p. 395.
[6] See Allport, p. 74 and MacDonogh, p. 1.
[7] Plain, p. 177.
[8] Plain, p. 177.
[9] Plain, p. 15.
[10] Nicholas Monsarrat, 'The Ship that Died of Shame', in *The Ship that Died of Shame & Other Stories* (London: Cassell, 1959), pp. 1-45 (pp. 11-12).

when the war is over he finds himself unemployed, without purpose in life and therefore willing to join a former comrade in the illegal business of smuggling. They smuggle anything, without moral constrictions strong enough to stop them, until 'honour had caught up with him – with both of us'.[11] On their last voyage their ship sinks, which the protagonist interprets as a reflection of his own moral degradation since the war's end: 'Perhaps it was I, and not the ship, that was at fault […] perhaps I was ashamed of the frightful things we did, and the shame became translated into action – or lack of action. It may have been my fault we were wrecked.'[12] Though the protagonist seems to accept some responsibility for his actions, he also hints at the existence of more general problems in the British post-war society and its handling of the returnees, which might not have given him any other options: 'I was always trying my very best, I'm afraid.'[13]

In this chapter, then, I will explore how great the differences between German and British literary representations of returnee figures really are, and in this way challenge the expectation of a binary opposition.

The overarching motif which holds all the texts about returnees together and therefore runs like a thread through my textual analyses is fragmentation. Fragmentation is the most emblematic image of the post-war times. Houses and whole cities had been turned into ruins and rubble, as had once firm and stable beliefs and ideologies. Moreover, nations and states were disintegrating and falling apart. Germany was carved up by the Allied nations, and the British Empire lost India and with it part of its status as a Great Power. It is characteristic of the post-war years that everything seemed fragile and in flux. This is expressed through the image of fragmentation, whose use in three different fields I will trace in the sections of this chapter, thereby arguing that fragmentation is a transnational motif, used in German and British literature alike to illustrate the returnees' experiences. I will firstly look at the texts' engagements with questions of society. Which concerns, but also hopes for the future of post-war societies are revealed in the representation and interpretation of social fragmentation? I will then move on to the individual and consider how the often traumatic war and post-war experiences influence the individuals' identity and their sense of time, producing different phenomena of fragmentation. In all of these sections I will also assess the formal aspects of the texts. To what extent are they firmly rooted in their national contexts, or do they display

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[11] Monsarrat, p. 44.
[12] Monsarrat, pp. 44-45.
[13] Monsarrat, p. 45.

characteristics of a transnational aesthetic of rubble literature, drawing on the same traditions and referring to transnational themes and motifs?

In this way, this chapter will nuance the apparent binary opposition between post-war German literature and post-war British literature and bring into focus the similarities that have, up to now, been underestimated and overlooked. Therefore, the comparison serves two specific aims. On the one hand it questions the assumption of a uniqueness of the German post-war experience and literature, which is expressed in the term 'Trümmerliteratur', for which, as noted in my introduction, there is not an equivalent in British literature. But on the other hand the comparison also questions the concept of a stronger continuum in British literature, which leads to the British texts of the immediate post-war years not being ascribed a voice of their own, with common themes, motifs and a specific language. Comparing texts from both national contexts sharpens the view and enables a new approach to, and new interpretations of all the texts. In doing so, we can also begin to question more specifically the opposition between post-war Germany and post-war Britain, perhaps even beginning to bridge the gap between the national histories.

Fragmented Societies: Curse or Blessing?

Life in the army is life as part of a group. The individual subordinates himself to the greater aims of the community. Thus he loses part of his freedom and individuality, but he also gains the benefits of being part of a group with clear rules and hierarchies. The individual in the army is never alone, there are always other people around with the same ambitions. Life in the army enables deep friendships and close relationships, as everyone has to entrust their comrades with their life. The army is able to bridge the gaps between classes and other forms of segregation, which are powerful in civilian life. Furthermore, the hierarchical structure of army life relieves the subordinated individual from personal responsibility for its actions, which can be as problematic and dangerous as it is comfortable.

This is the life that the German and British returnees left behind them when the war was over and they returned to their civilian life. Now they were suddenly individuals again, lacking an affiliation to a group. This phenomenon of social fragmentation is described in each of the texts about returnees in this chapter. Through close textual analysis I aim to determine if the way that the social fragmentation is handled and interpreted is similar in the German and the British texts, and to ask which ideas of a future post-war society arise from the war and post-war experiences. Do the above mentioned positive aspects of life in the army dominate and create a nostalgia for soldierly comradeship, similar to the broader nostalgia described above for the

war as a time of purpose and community? Is there a belief in a positive legacy of the war and a wish to continue soldierly life and transfer its values into civilian life? Or are the above mentioned negative aspects of life as a soldier, like losing individuality and freedom, dominant in remembering and interpreting life in the army? Are the returnees therefore eager to be individuals again?

Norah Cordner James (1896-1979) was born into a wealthy family, and was a politically interested and active woman. A supporter of women's suffrage, she began her career as a Trades Union organiser at the Pensions Issue Office, and later served on the Executive Committee of the Save the Miners' Children Fund. James started writing articles and short stories while recovering from an operation in the mid-1920s, and published some of these works in women's magazines. Although her first novel was censored in Britain because of obscenity, James became a highly productive writer, while at the same time continuing to be politically active. Her novel *There is Always To-morrow* (1946) includes many returnee figures who experience social fragmentation.[14]

There is Always To-morrow celebrates and promotes unity and soldierly comradeship as the positive legacy of the war, and presents these as a basis for a new post-war society. The text begins by introducing returnee figures, who are not able to manage their lives alone. First, there is Rob, who comes home to his loving wife and two children but cannot settle into his old life anymore. He has no ambition to find a job, spends all days at the pub and when he meets Mavis again, the woman with whom he had an affair during his service, his wife and children leave him. Secondly, there is Sid, who returns from the war physically maimed, is unable to find a job, and is very frustrated because of this. Both of these returnee figures rely on the army life and their former comrades to bring stability back into their lives. Sid lives in a tiny apartment, which he keeps extremely clean and tidy. When he takes Mavis home to live with him, Sid makes her follow military rules: 'And see your kit's all stowed away neat and proper. You've been in a barrack room before, haven't you? […] There'll be a room inspection by me every morning at ten o'clock and if there's anything out of place you'll be for it.'[15] Additionally, both Rob and Sid turn to their former superior in the army, Dick Edge, for advice and relief from personal responsibility, which they receive: 'It was like the old days when he'd been a private and had done something stupid and had been up for an orderly room. He felt the sense of relief

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[14] See Neil Pearson, *Obelisk: A History of Jack Kahane and the Obelisk Press* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007), p. 66 and pp. 412-13.
[15] Norah C. James, *There is Always To-morrow* (London: MacDonald, 1946), pp. 105-06.

at having got his misdemeanour off his chest.'[16] Sid also compares this soldierly relationship to being a child again: 'Sid wished he could go back fifteen years, he'd still be about the age of those nippers. Gawd, what an easy time you had as a kid. Always someone to go to when things went wrong. He thought, when I get back to Tree Farm I'll have a talk with the Major, he makes me feel that it doesn't matter.'[17]

While Rob's and Sid's life is falling apart when they are alone, then, their safe-haven is the Major and his farm, where they come to live and work. The farm is built up and run by Dick and his wife Phoebe, both returnees themselves. Dick is an idealist, who fears that returnees will feel let down when coming back home to confront the many unfulfilled promises lingering from before and during the war, and he wants to give ex-servicemen an opportunity for starting a new life: 'He believed that the country owed a debt to the men who had fought that they would never be able to repay.'[18] The life on the farm follows the structures of life in the army. The employees continue to use their military titles with each other and especially with their bosses Dick and Phoebe: '"What's happened, Major?" Sid asked. They all called him Major. Dick hadn't liked it at first, but by now he was used to the title.'[19] In this way clear hierarchies are established and maintained.[20] In a weak moment Phoebe complains to Dick about this: '"Everything O.K.?" "Rather. You know, I think the thing that really gets me down sometimes is the feeling that I'm still in the Service. Having all ex-service people round and running this place the way we do, well, it isn't unlike being on the station."'[21] But this is the only occasion where the characters hint at a slight negative touch to life on the farm, and Phoebe immediately plays it down herself by laughing and calling herself a moaner.[22]

Dick believes that men have benefitted from war because they learned about soldierly comradeship: 'If you knew you could trust a man in battle, she said, you could trust him out of it, but was she right? Did war do something to a man that peace destroyed?'.[23] This quotation inverts the first associations one has about war and peace. War is not seen as the destructive force, but it builds up something which is then threatened and destroyed by peace. The life on the farm enables all of the returnees to live a happy life again with their families, to marry and to have children. And even the attack on the farm by a mentally confused returnee, who escaped

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[16] James, p. 94.
[17] James, p. 186.
[18] James, p. 33.
[19] James, p. 129.
[20] See James, p. 143.
[21] James, p. 172.
[22] See James, p. 172.
[23] James, p. 85.

from a psychiatric clinic, just before the end of the novel, only serves to strengthen and affirm the community once more by purging it from a disruptive member and by bringing the rest of them closer together. James's text thus presents a nearly utopian post-war life which is organized by military rules and hierarchies and held together by soldierly comradeship. Being part of a group, having clear rules to follow, and someone superior to turn to for advice and relief from personal responsibility, is presented as completely positive in *There is Always To-morrow*.

The situation of the returnees described in J.B. Priestley's *Three Men in New Suits*, which was written before the end of the war and published in 1945, is very similar to that found in James's text.[24] Priestley (1894-1984) spent his childhood in Bradford and worked in an office until the First World War broke out and he volunteered. He was sent to the Front twice, in 1915 and 1917. The first time he returned with a serious injury and the second time he had been gassed. After the war he studied at Cambridge, but then decided to pursue a career as a writer. During the Second World War Priestley became widely known as the voice of the BBC 'Postscripts' broadcasts, in which he also revealed his political and social commitments, calling for changes after the war.[25]

In *Three Men in New Suits* the returnees Herbert, Eddie and Alan also, just like Rob and Sid, experience a problematic return. They feel to different extents lonely, frustrated and misunderstood. This makes them reform as a unit, after having been separated, and seek advice and relief from one another, but especially from Alan, who had been the highest rank:

> 'No', said Herbert firmly, 'I'm coming with you, Eddie. I want to see Alan Strete too. One or two things I want to talk over. So if you don't mind, I'll come too. All right to you?' Eddie produced rather carefully the ghost of one of his old wide grins. 'You an' me, Corporal Kenford, we'll go an' report to the Ser'nt. An' let's get cracking or something else'll start 'appenin' to me, an' next time I don't know what the 'ell I might do.'[26]

What can be noticed in this quotation is that the returnees in this text also continue to use the military titles to address one another, and use military vocabulary to describe their actions. They do not just have a conversation, but instead give a 'report'. Herbert, Eddie and Alan find a comfort in the company of each other, which they were not able to obtain from their own families and friends.

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[24] See John Atkins, *J.B. Priestley: The Last of the Sages* (London: Calder, 1981), p. 102.
[25] See <http://www.jbpriestleysociety.com/biography-3/> [accessed 6 November 2017].
[26] J.B. Priestley, *Three Men in New Suits* (London: Heinemann, 1945), p. 131.

The text ends with a grandiose speech by Alan, who is in this way, similarly to Dick, also presented as a returnee who is a possible leader for a change in society: 'Alan was now on his feet, erect, towering, almost transfigured, and he stared into the dusk as if it held a vast invisible audience.'[27] In this last address Alan clearly expresses his belief in the good that lies in the structures of the army, which can function as a role model for the future: 'Armies are huge machines that don't make anything. You move in them from one piece of destruction to another. But if it's the right kind of army, there's something good inside it, working between men and men. You do at least move together towards one common objective. It's better than civvy life has been up to now.'[28] And he stresses the power of soldierly comradeship to implement change: 'If we can work together to destroy and to kill, then surely to God we can work together to build up and to create new life.'[29]

Both the British texts discussed so far call for change in the post-war society. They present soldierly comradeship as the positive legacy of the war and try to establish life in the army as providing a model for civilian post-war life. These tendencies must clearly be seen and understood in the light of the national context. In Britain the planning for post-war times began as early as 1941.[30] In the following months the consensus that a common effort was needed to make life better for everyone after the war emerged.[31] Documents like the Beveridge Report or R.A. Butler's Education Act that appeared over the next years set out a post-war agenda of massive changes not only in education, but also in health care and social security. In these years the foundations for Britain as a welfare state were laid. When the war was drawing to its end the British seemed to be prepared and eager to change and improve their society. According to David Kynaston: 'To all appearances the reforming, forward-looking tide was running fast.'[32] When the Labour Party won the elections which were held in July 1945, the path to post-war reforms seemed clear. These mainly socialist reforms can be understood as working against the phenomenon of social fragmentation. They were the expressions of a trend in British politics to strengthen the communal ties of the society and to try to erase inequalities and bridge the gap between the classes, just as had happened in the army. Furthermore, the concept of a welfare state included a shift away from personal to a more communal responsibility.

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[27] Priestley, p. 169.
[28] Priestley, p. 167.
[29] Priestley, p. 167.
[30] See David Kynaston, *Austerity Britain 1945-51* (London: Bloomsbury, 2008), p. 20.
[31] See Kynaston, p. 21.
[32] Kynaston, p. 21.

Both James and Priestley can be considered politically engaged authors who notably shared socialist tendencies. Though unfortunately there is no information about James's political commitment during and after the Second World War, her earlier affiliation with the Trade Union hints at a socialist orientation. Priestley quite openly supported the Labour party to the extent that Kynaston describes him as one of Labour's cheerleaders.[33] Both the texts contain a strong political and social message, which, in Priestley's case, according to Ladislaus Loeb, dominates the text and even makes it appear less like a novel and more like a didactic essay.[34] The strong momentum of change and the great hope for reforms are only one aspect of post-war politics to which the authors refer in their texts. Both James and Priestley, but also Robert Henriques, whose text I will analyse at the end of this section, are at the same time revealing fears anticipating an imminent disillusionment, created by the many grand promises which were made before and during the war. For Priestley and Henriques, whose texts were written prior to VE-Day and the 1945 election, the doubts and fears about post-war Britain were merely apprehensions. James, whose text is from 1946, might already have discovered what Kynaston describes as the 'pervasive sense of disenchantment that the fruits of peace were proving so unbountiful'.[35] The three texts call for action and change and at the same time are warnings about what might happen, if post-war society cannot live up to its wartime promises of a better life for everyone.

In the texts by James and Priestley I have identified a common interpretation of social fragmentation as a negative phenomenon, which has to be prevented. By revealing correspondences between the messages of the literary texts and the historical and political context I have furthermore demonstrated that both British texts are firmly rooted in the national context of wartime and post-war Britain. I will now analyse the interpretations of social fragmentation in German texts. If these are as firmly rooted in their national context as are the British texts, their attitudes towards social fragmentation should be very different from the British ones.

This is indeed the case in Wolfgang Borchert's 'Draußen vor der Tür'. Borchert (1921-1947) was an aspiring actor when in 1941 he was conscripted as a soldier and sent to the Eastern Front. Having been injured during the war and having spent some time in hospitals, and also having been incarcerated, he was sent back to fight on the Western Front in 1945. In March the same year he was taken prisoner by the French army, but escaped on foot to Hamburg. Borchert

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[33] See Kynaston, p. 181.
[34] See Ladislaus Loeb, *Mensch und Gesellschaft bei J.B. Priestley* (Bern: [n. pub.], 1962), p. 77.
[35] Kynaston, p. 104.

had already experienced bad health throughout the war, and continued to deteriorate after it. From his sickbed, in the late autumn of 1946 he wrote the play 'Draußen vor der Tür'. The play was first broadcast on 13 February 1947 by the NWDR (Northwest German Broadcasting). The stage premiere took place on 21 November 1947, one day after Borchert's premature death at the age of 26.[36] His play is considered one of the major works of German post-war literature and his name is synonymous with the genre of 'Trümmerliteratur' in German culture.

On experiencing a problematic and disappointing return, the protagonist Beckmann also, just like the British returnees, feels the need to go and see his Oberst from the army to relieve his feelings of guilt and responsibility. But while the British returnees find the old bonds still intact, Beckmann learns that the Oberst has already begun a decent life with his family again and has no interest in the fate of his former soldier. He cannot understand Beckmann's problems and laughs about him: 'Diese blödsinnige Brille, diese ulkige versaute Frisur! Sie müßten das Ganze mit Musik bringen (*lacht*). Mein Gott, dieser köstliche Traum! Die Kniebeugen, die Kniebeugen mit Xylophon! Nein, mein Lieber, Sie müssen so auf die Bühne! Die Menschheit lacht sich, lacht sich ja kaputt!!!'.[37] For the German returnee Beckmann there is no comfort in soldierly comradeship. He is alone and has to deal with the miserable present on his own.

His isolation is also articulated in a dream scene at the beginning of the play after Beckmann has jumped into the river to kill himself. In this scene Beckmann is talking to the river Elbe and telling her about his miserable life and his wish to die, while the Elbe, personified as an old woman, denies Beckmann a right to commit suicide. The Elbe compares Beckmann to a small child, who tries to evade problems and responsibility by giving up and seeking relief from the river, who takes on the role of the mother. The Elbe calls Beckmann 'Grünschnabel', 'Anfänger', 'Kleiner', 'Säugling' and 'mein kleiner Menschensohn'.[38] The image of the child evoked here is also present in James's text. There the returnees turn to their former boss of the army for relief from their pain and responsibility and they receive it. Beckmann also tries to gain relief and comfort from a parent-figure, but in contrast to the British returnees, Beckmann's

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[36] See Michael Töteberg, 'Nachwort', in *Wolfgang Borchert: Das Gesamtwerk*, ed. by Michael Töteberg, 3rd edn (Hamburg: Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag, 2013), pp. 547-70 (pp. 547-55).

[37] Wolfgang Borchert, 'Draußen vor der Tür: Ein Stück, das kein Theater spielen und kein Publikum sehen will', in *Wolfgang Borchert: Das Gesamtwerk*, ed. by Michael Töteberg, 3rd edn (Hamburg: Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag, 2013), pp. 115-92 (pp. 148-49) ['Those absurd glasses, that ridiculous haircut! You should do the whole thing to music! *(Laughs)* Oh Lord, that priceless dream! The knees-bends, the knees-bends to xylophone music! Really young man, you must go like that on the stage! Humanity will laugh till it cries!' (Wolfgang Borchert, 'The Man Outside', in *The Man Outside: Selected Works by Wolfgang Borchert*, trans. by David Porter (London: Marion Boyars, 1996), pp. 75-131 (pp. 99-100))].

[38] Borchert, p. 123 ['greenhorn' (Borchert, trans. by Porter, p. 82)]; p. 123 ['beginner' (Borchert, trans. by Porter, p. 82)]; p. 124 ['child' (Borchert, trans. by Porter, p. 83)]; p. 125 ['suckling' (Borchert, trans. by Porter, p. 83)]; p. 124 ['my little manchild' (Borchert, trans. by Porter, p. 83)].

wish is rejected: 'Nein. Du Rotznase von einem Selbstmörder. […] Glaubst du etwa, weil deine Frau nicht mehr mit dir spielen will, weil du hinken mußt und weil dein Bauch knurrt, deswegen kannst du hier bei mir untern Rock kriechen?'.[39] This easy way out is blocked for Beckmann, the Elbe throws him back into the world and makes him live on. For Beckmann there is no chance any more to hand over his personal responsibility to someone else like a child, he has to grow up now: 'Laß dir das von einer alten Frau sagen: Lebe erst mal. Laß dich treten. Tritt wieder.'[40] Borchert's text reveals that social fragmentation is not to be prevented or reversed. German returnees, in contrast with the analysed British returnees, have to accept responsibility for their own lives and actions. This represents a move towards a more individualistic society, which is also present in other German texts, resulting from a general distrust in groups and mass movements.

Wolfdietrich Schnurre (1920-1989) fought for six and a half years as a soldier in the Second World War and began to write literature in 1945, when he had returned to Berlin. Today he is still known mainly for his short stories, although he also wrote poetry and novels. Schnurre was a founding member of the 'Gruppe 47' and his text, 'Das Begräbnis', was read out at its first meeting.[41] In Schnurre's short story 'Ausgeliefert'[42] the protagonist recognises his connection with other German returnees, but belonging to this group does not make him happy. Instead he wants to separate himself from them: 'Ich kapsle mich ab. Ich werde menschenscheu. Statt nun aber, wie es logisch wäre, mich selber zu hassen, hasse ich die andern; die "Kameraden" vor allem, die "Kumpel", die ewigen "Du-Sager."'[43] The protagonist hates the other returnees for what they are, because he actually hates himself and sees his own reflection in the other returnees:

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[39] Borchert, p. 124 ['No. You snotty-nosed little suicide. […] Do you really suppose that because your wife won't play with you any more, because you've a limp and your stomach rumbles, that entitles you to creep in here under my skirts?' (Borchert, trans. by Porter, p. 83)].

[40] Borchert, p. 124 ['Take an old woman's advice: live first. Take the kicks. Kick back.' (Borchert, trans. by Porter, p. 83)].

[41] See Peter Nusser, 'Schnurre, Wolfdietrich', in *Metzler Lexikon Autoren: Deutschsprachige Dichter und Schriftsteller vom Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart*, ed. by Bernd Lutz and Benedikt Jeßing, 4th edn (Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler, 2010), pp. 701-02.

[42] The text 'Ausgeliefert' by Wolfdietrich Schnurre is included in a collection of his short-stories, which does not include any dates of genesis or publication of the texts: *Wolfdietrich Schnurre: Funke im Reisig: Erzählungen 1945 bis 1965* (Berlin: Berlin Verlag, 2010), pp. 23-26. In this collection, 'Ausgeliefert' is assigned to Schnurre's work *Man sollte dagegen sein*, which was first published in 1960 and contains short-stories written immediately after the end of the war, between 1945 and 1947. However, the original first edition of Wolfdietrich Schnurre's *Man sollte dagegen sein* (Olten: Walter-Verlag, 1960) does not include 'Ausgeliefert'. Therefore, I was not able to determine the exact year in which this specific short-story was written. But due to its attribution to the other short-stories from *Man sollte dagegen sein* in the collection of 2010, and also due to its topic and tone, I believe 'Ausgeliefert' to originate from the immediate post-war years, sometime between 1945 and 1947.

[43] Schnurre, p. 24 ['I shut myself off. I become unsociable. But instead of hating myself, which would be logical, I hate the others; especially the "comrades", the "mates", the eternal "you-sayers."'].

> Ich weiß, gerade in ihnen sehe ich mich selber. Ich rede mir zwar ein, ich will nicht an die Vergangenheit erinnert werden. Aber ich spüre: Dieser hohlwangige Stoppelbart, dieser zotenselige Einbeinige, dieser schweißstinkende Weißt-du-noch-Mann, sie sind ja auch alle in mir. Ihre Unsicherheit ist meine Unsicherheit. Ihre Verkommenheit ist meine Verkommenheit. Ihre Erlebnisse sind meine Erlebnisse. Ich gehöre zu ihnen.[44]

There are two reasons for the protagonist to hate the other returnees and for trying to distance himself from them. Firstly, the other returnees mirror his own pain and shabbiness, of which he does not want to be reminded. There are no positive recollections of victory and success for German returnees; all they share is their defeat. Secondly, the protagonist also reveals a general distrust in group feelings and herd instincts. He wants to be an individual again: 'Aber ich *will* nicht zu ihnen gehören. Ich will wieder "ich" und nicht dauernd "wir" denken müssen. Ich will raus aus der Herde. Ich habe sie satt, die Kameradschaft der Unseligen.'[45] This suspicion of groups and a 'we' is the opposite of what can be found in the British texts about returnees described above. The German returnee does not see the comradeship of soldiers as a positive legacy of the war and as a tool for building up and changing society. This demonstrates how the German texts are also firmly situated in their particular national and temporal contexts.

National Socialism had turned the Germans into a 'Volksgemeinschaft', the radical implementation of group-feelings and masses by means of a strong ideology and the exclusion of others. The Germans were sent into the war as a strong community and told that they were fighting for the right values. This massive group-project failed dramatically. At the end of the war the Germans were defeated and had to realise and accept that they had been fighting for the wrong things, and that they were guilty of allowing themselves to be turned into a mass and by blindly following orders, as the life in the army stipulates. The aversion towards groups and masses, and towards emotions like soldierly comradeship, which is present in the German literary texts, has to be read against the background of this German national context. For German returnees to call for a continuation of soldierly life and values, which only brought them defeat and guilt, does not seem possible, while it is a logical reaction for British returnees, who saw the benefits of army life, which brought them victory.

Furthermore, both German texts by Borchert and Schnurre reveal connections to existentialist ideas, which are not present in the texts by James and Priestley. Jean-Paul Sartre was the

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[44] Schnurre, p. 24 ['I know, I see myself especially in them. Although I talk myself into believing that I don't want to be reminded of the past, I still feel: This hollow-cheeked stubbly beard, this obscenity-blessed one-legged, this sweat-stinking Do-You-Remember-Man, they are all in me as well. Their uncertainty is my uncertainty. Their corruption is my corruption. Their experiences are my experiences. I belong to them.'].

[45] Schnurre, p. 24 ['But I don't *want* to belong to them. I want to think "I" again instead of constantly having to think "we". I want to get out of the herd. I am fed up with the comradeship of the unfortunate.'].

'founding father' of modern existentialism, which he started to develop in the first half of the 1930s and which, according to Sarah Bakewell, 'came of age during the Second World War' and then 'went on to fill its sails with wild expectations for the post-1945 world'.[46] Although Sartre's existentialist writing had not yet been translated into German, in the immediate post-war years 'his reputation was enough for his ideas to inspire intense excitement and revulsion' even before, as Lara Feigel puts it, 'existentialism came to postwar Germany in the guise of Sartre's play "The Flies"' in 1947 and 1948.[47] It is not necessary, however, to assume a direct influence of the French thinker in order to establish a connection between the German texts analysed here and ideas which will later be called existentialist, as Sartre's philosophy can itself be seen as 'a new blend' of older ideas, with the Dane Søren Kierkegaard, but also many German thinkers, acting as 'precursors' and 'heralds', among them Friedrich Nietzsche, Martin Heidegger and Karl Jaspers.[48] But while these older philosophers had already lost influence and authority, as especially Heidegger was discredited because of his Nazi past, Sartre reformed their ideas and opened up the possibility to politicise them in the war and post-war context.

Sartre put the individual and its freedom at the centre of his philosophy.[49] According to existentialist thinking, humans have no fixed character but they are free to choose who and what they want to be at any time.[50] This, on the one hand, 'imbues us with limitless freedom', but at the same time 'the need to keep making decisions brings constant anxiety', especially as freedom to choose always 'comes with total responsibility'.[51] Consequently, 'if you avoid this responsibility by fooling yourself that you are the victim of circumstance or of someone else's bad advice, you are failing to meet the demands of human life and choosing a fake existence, cut off from your own "authenticity".'[52] This focus on the individual and its freedom is present in the texts by Borchert and Schnurre, and their returnee figures can be read through the lense of existentialist thought, thus representing individuals who used to live an inauthentic life as part of the German 'Volksgemeinschaft' and who after the war wake up to a more authentic, but frightening existence as individuals. In contrast, the British returnee figures analysed so far hang on to their life as members of a group much more determinedly.

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[46] Sarah Bakewell, *At the Existentialist Café: Freedom, Being & Apricot Cocktails* (London: Vintage, 2017), p. 5; p. 31.
[47] Feigel, *The Bitter Taste of Victory,* p. 265; p. 264.
[48] Bakewell, p. 5; p. 17; p. 20.
[49] See Bakewell, p. 8.
[50] See Feigel, *The Bitter Taste of Victory,* p. 266.
[51] Feigel, *The Bitter Taste of Victory,* p. 266; Bakewell, p. 10; p. 204.
[52] Bakewell, p. 10.

The German texts analysed in this section thus seem to reveal a wish or a need for a much more individualistic model of society which could lead to people taking more responsibility. It has to be stressed, though, that the general popularity in post-war Germany of the existentialist concept of the freedom of the individual can be seen in a more critical light as well. Feigel analyses the success of Sartre's play *The Flies* in Germany after the war and states that 'Sartre's ideas had particular appeal for those anxious to classify 1945 as a "zero hour"'.[53] The denial of an individual's fixed character and the constant opportunity to choose provided the Germans 'with a way forward' and seemed 'to offer a path out of collective guilt'.[54] Critics of Sartre claimed that many Germans readily took to the idea of a possible new beginning, while not understanding or ignoring the need to take full responsibility for their actions and their lives.[55] Similar tendencies can also be found in the texts by Borchert and Schnurre, as the returnee figures do not thematise any personal responsibility for what they did during the war and for what happens to them now, once the war is over.

So far, this section seems to comply with the expectation of an opposition between British and German returnee figures. There is, however, one text which seems to bridge the gap between these national blocs, not least because it presents an ambivalent image of returnees and a fragmented society.

Robert Henriques (1905-1967) was an Oxford graduate who served in the regular army from 1926 to 1933. He then resigned and settled down as a farmer, but re-joined the Royal Artillery in 1939 to serve in the Commandos as a staff planner and an adviser. He started to work on *The Journey Home* in North Africa in May 1943 and completed it in June 1944.[56] Therefore, the text is actually giving 'forecasts' about what might happen on the return of British soldiers from the Second World War.[57] The book's title alludes to a survey, undertaken in wartime, on the topic of demobilisation.[58] The text contains many returnee characters, giving a wide picture of their possible conditions. Robert Henriques expresses an ambivalent attitude towards a society based on soldierly comradeship in *The Journey Home*. On the one hand the female returnee Jane seeks the companionship of returned soldiers and finds a home and safety only with them. In this way the text connects to the praise of life as part of a group which I noted in the preceding

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[53] Feigel, *The Bitter Taste of Victory,* p. 266.
[54] Feigel, *The Bitter Taste of Victory*, p. 267; p. 270.
[55] See Feigel, *The Bitter Taste of Victory,* pp. 271-72.
[56] See Mark Goldman, 'Robert Henriques, "The Journey Home"', *Modern Language Studies*, 21 (1991), pp. 22-36 (p. 22).
[57] Allport, p. 181.
[58] See Goldman, p. 24.

British examples. But on the other hand the text also presents the returnees as dangerous to others and as a threat to the rest of the society if they form groups, thereby also arguing for a more individualistic society.

When Jane comes back to England she sets out on the journey back to her home somewhere in the British countryside. Jane meets a group of returnees consisting of Bill, Charlie, Ginger and Joe who are heading in the same direction and accept her as a travel companion and member of their group. At first Jane is not really sure what to think about these men and their behaviour. Charlie in particular always seems to be on the brink of violence and insanity, which frightens Jane: 'Once more that sinister taste, evoked by Charlie's laugh, caused fear; almost the warning odour, the warning that the men had learnt to know and to remark with ribald comment because its beastliness was thereby less oppressive.'[59] But at the same time Jane is also dreaming of being part of a group again: 'She wanted people, warm and worn-rough: Robert's little bands of men, of soldiers, or nurses, banded together to strive for the next mental milestone, the next mail, the next brew of tea […] members of one body, one with another; soldiers!'.[60] She finds comfort in returning to a soldierly life in the company of the male returnees: '"I'm again a soldier," she thought with joy.'[61]

After being uncertain at the beginning, Jane's affection for the returning men and their soldierly comradeship eventually take her over completely. When just before the end of her journey the group has to split up again, this leaves Jane very sad and lonely: 'When they were gone, and the train had moved onwards from the lights of the station, she was racked by the chill of loneliness. They had left her and she was forlorn.'[62] The whole purpose of Jane's journey had always been to get back home and to her fiancé David, but when then she finally meets him, she is disappointed and does not feel at home at all. She only becomes happy again when her travel companions turn up at her house, following her invitation. They have become her new, true family now. This part of Henriques's text mirrors James's and Priestley's praise of soldierly comradeship and the strength of group-identity.

Nevertheless, there is another side to the text, which also reveals a distrust of group-feelings and crowds. This critical aspect in *The Journey Home* is presented through the character of Robert, who describes soldiers much in the same way as they are also shown in the other British texts. They are sticking together, depending on each other and willing to blindly follow orders:

[59] Henriques, p. 88.
[60] Henriques, p. 72.
[61] Henriques, p. 84.
[62] Henriques, p. 134.

'That's how they *had* to be; sharing sorrows and pleasure and diversion and interest, getting an order and thanking God for release from decision, fulfilling that order by communal effort, living as members of their own strange family, dying together.'[63] He analyses the structure of these groups of soldiers as oriented towards one leader, with many men who simply follow: 'In each little group, you'll find a leader, thrown up by the war. And the rest of the group will be – just those who follow, pushed down by their need to be led.'[64] Robert creates the dark vision of an army of soldiers in England, fighting for their own ends and establishing a similar movement to what they just fought against in Germany: 'Bands of soldiers, led by a soldier – the bands conjoined by a soldier's words – become so quickly an army; an army in England, lacking uniform, lacking arms perhaps, but ranged on one side with the rest of the world on the other!'.[65] Robert's fears seem to come true in part when at the end of the text his brother David assumes the role of the leader for himself and, in Allport's words, 'yearns to lead an English "Freikorps" of disaffected veterans, playing on demagogic themes of fear and resentment.'[66] What ultimately becomes of David and his plan is left unresolved in the text, but none of the returnees who Jane met on her journey and who are present at his 'undisguised fascist appeal' are willing to join him.[67]

Published in 1944 *The Journey Home* expresses the author's fear about what might happen in England after the war if the returnees were left to their own devices. These fears contrast with more hopeful ideas about the war's potential legacy, as well as positive assessments of the role of soldierly comradeship in the creation of a new society as they are expressed in the texts by James and Priestley. While Henriques does not argue against the need for social changes and reforms in British post-war society, he still does not share James's and Priestley's enthusiasm for army life and soldierly comradeship as providing the basis for these changes. Henriques's text reveals a similar antipathy to obedient masses as expressed in the texts by German authors like Borchert and Schnurre. This British author seems to be more aware of the dangers and drawbacks of a blindly following mass, and therefore also more in favour of an individualistic society. In this way, Henriques's text already hints at the possibility of a rupture in the expected binary opposition between German and British texts about returnees.

The next sections of this chapter will move away from the level of society and on to the individual, aiming to establish if the national contexts are still as powerful on this micro-level,

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[63] Henriques, p. 62.
[64] Henriques, p. 63.
[65] Henriques, p. 65.
[66] Allport, p. 182.
[67] Allport, p. 182.

producing differences and oppositions in the literary texts, or if there are more similarities between German and British returnee figures on this personal level.

Fragmented Identities: Of Inner Battles and Doppelgänger

In German and British texts the return is described as a predominantly problematic personal experience with serious consequences for the returnees' sense of self and perceptions of the outside world. In the next two sections of this chapter I want to compare the descriptions of the returnee experience to find out if the national contexts, which are powerful in influencing the interpretation of social fragmentation, are also capable of shaping the individuals' perceptions of time and identity. Do the texts describe very different personal problems of German and British returnees, resulting from the diverse national contexts? Or are there similar phenomena, which can be seen as universal human consequences of war, independent of national or cultural backgrounds? By demonstrating that the fragmentation of identity and the fragmentation of time are dominant motifs in both German and British texts, I will argue that the texts are more similar than we might expect. German and British texts about returnees describe such phenomena as the fragmentation, splitting and also doubling of identities; what used to be one, becomes many. Therefore, this section of the chapter analyses many different forms of multiple identities.

In Borchert's 'Draußen vor der Tür' there are two different kinds of fragmented or disintegrated identity. The first aspect of Beckmann's fragmentation is that he seems to be split in two, his own self and 'der Andere', who describes himself as someone who is always there and who has many different faces: 'Du wirst mich nicht los. Ich habe tausend Gesichter. Ich bin die Stimme, die jeder kennt. Ich bin der Andere, der immer da ist. Der andere Mensch, der Antworter.'[68] 'Der Andere' is Beckmann's complementary part: 'Der lacht, wenn du weinst. Der antreibt, wenn du müde wirst, der Antreiber, der Heimliche, Unbequeme bin ich.'[69] Throughout the whole text Beckmann is in a dialogue with 'der Andere' who tries to fulfil the task he has set himself at the beginning, which is to be optimistic and persuade Beckmann to stay alive. A fight develops between the two parts of Beckmann's identity, illustrating his inner conflict: 'Der Andere: Wach auf, Beckmann, du mußt leben! Beckmann: Nein, ich denke gar nicht daran,

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[68] Borchert, pp. 126-27 ['You cannot escape me. I have a thousand faces. I am the voice that everyone knows. I am the other, who is always there. The other self, the answerer.' (Borchert, trans. by Porter, p. 84)].
[69] Borchert, p. 127 ['Who laughs when you weep. Who drives you on when you're tired, the slave-driver, the secret, disturbing one.' (Borchert, trans. by Porter, p. 84)].

aufzuwachen. Ich träume gerade. Ich träume einen wunderschönen Traum. Der Andere: Träum nicht weiter, Beckmann, du mußt leben. […] Steh auf, sag ich! Lebe!'[70]

The second aspect of Beckmann's fragmented or disintegrated identity is less obvious, but always present. Beckmann's unity of self is threatened by a state of in-between-ness, which even puts in doubt his human identity. The woman who finds him next to the river Elbe after his attempted suicide calls Beckmann a fish several times: 'Kommen Sie, Sie alter stummer nasser Fisch.'[71] Beckmann in her eyes is a mixture between human and animal, a 'Fischmensch'.[72] Another hybrid form is referred to by Beckmann himself, who says that the glasses he is wearing make him look like a robot, which is a machine that mimics a human: 'Man kriegt so ein graues Uniformgesicht davon. So ein blechernes Robotergesicht.'[73] Another image which in the text is often connected to Beckmann is that of the ghost. Beckmann describes himself as a ghost: 'Vielleicht bin ich auch ein Gespenst. Eins von gestern, das heute keiner mehr sehen will. Ein Gespenst aus dem Krieg, für den Frieden provisorisch repariert.'[74] But other characters like the Direktor also use this image for him, describing him as a 'Gespenst aus der Unterwelt'.[75] A ghost is, just like a 'Fischmensch' and a robot, something without a clear identity. It is neither alive, nor dead, but something in between. By turning Beckmann into a hybrid form, not completely human and alive anymore, his identity, which is already fragmented by the split in Beckmann and 'der Andere', becomes even more disintegrated and questionable.

Additionally, by dehumanising Beckmann, the text also raises the question of what it means to be human at the time. There were many reasons to doubt the concept of humanity in post-war times. The machinery of war took away the soldiers' humanity, the way that the people in post-war times lived in the ruins and rubble of Germany resembled more the existence of animals than the life of humans, and the crimes which were committed during the war by the Nazis had pushed all limits of what it was believed humans could do to other humans. How could the

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[70] Borchert, p. 172 ['The Other: Wake up, Beckmann, you must live. Beckmann: No, I wouldn't think of waking up. I'm just dreaming. I'm dreaming a wonderful dream. The Other: Dream no longer, Beckmann, you must live. […] Get up, I say! Live!' (Borchert, trans. by Porter, p. 116)].
[71] Borchert, p. 130 ['Come, my old dumb, wet fish.' (Borchert, trans. by Porter, p. 87)].
[72] Borchert, p. 134 ['fishman' (Borchert, trans. by Porter, p. 90)].
[73] Borchert, p. 132 ['You get a sort of grey standardised face. A sort of leaden robot's face.' (Borchert, trans. by Porter, p. 88)].
[74] Borchert, p. 133 ['Perhaps I am a ghost. Yesterday's ghost that no one wants to see today. A ghost from the war, temporarily repaired for peace.' (Borchert, trans. by Porter, pp. 88-89)].
[75] Borchert, p. 154 ['a ghost from the underworld' (Borchert, trans. by Porter, p. 103)].

Holocaust be the act of civilised human beings? The concept of humanity became destabilised and questionable during and after the war, and this is reflected in the returnee figure Beckmann.

In Schnurre's short story 'Ausgeliefert' the returnee experiences a fragmentation of identity similar to the one portrayed through Borchert's Beckmann. The nameless protagonist is also split in two and fights a battle against himself. But he is not split into a pessimistic and a more optimistic part of himself, but instead split along temporal lines. His conflict is between his post-war self and his soldierly self, which he calls 'der Muschkote', the private. While the post-war self wants to move on, the soldierly part of him is still there and influences his behaviour and his thoughts: 'Denn das bin ich nicht selber, das ist der Muschkote in mir. Vor dem bin ich machtlos. Ja, er meldet sich wieder; er hat ausgeschlafen, er war gar nicht tot. Ich merke es, wenn ich mich unterhalte; wie er da beipflichtet; wie er sich da an die Wand drücken läßt.'[76] Similar to 'der Andere', the Muschkote is also described as always being there and as having many faces: 'Ja, wenn man ihn abwürgen könnte, den zählebigen Befehlsempfänger in einem. Aber das ist es ja: Er ist gefeit. Er hat hundert Gesichter. Eins demoliert man ihm; gleich grinst er mit einem Dutzend andrer. Ich erkenne sie wieder; oft genug haben sie sich im Krieg verzerrt.'[77]

The part of himself which the protagonist calls the Muschkote incorporates all the character traits and habits which the protagonist does not like about himself anymore, like his obedience and inferiority complex, and by speaking about it in the third person he is trying to distance himself from the negative things attached to his past: 'Er ist die Unsicherheit, er ist die Prahlsucht. Er ist die Verwahrlosung, er ist der Argwohn. Er ist die Zähigkeit, er ist die Schwäche. Er ist die Niedertracht, er ist die Feigheit. Unterwerfung, Befehlslust; Grausamkeit, Selbstmitleid; Knechtssinn und Herrenallüre – alles geht auf sein Konto.'[78] While Beckmann and 'der Andere' are purely fighting with words and 'der Andere' only wants the best for Beckmann, in Schnurre's text the inner battle is described with more violent images. It is not about achieving the best for both of them, but about power and victory; the protagonist is at war with himself: 'Ich weiß das; ich spüre ja mein andres Ich noch; ich merke, wie es sich wehrt.

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[76] Schnurre, p. 23 ['Because that's not myself, it's the private in me. In the face of him I am powerless. Yes, he comes forward again; he had a good sleep, he wasn't dead at all. I notice it, when I have a chat; how he then agrees; how he then lets himself be pushed against the wall.'].

[77] Schnurre, p. 24 ['Yes, if you could cut him off, the hardy subordinate in yourself. But that's precisely the thing: He's immune. He has a hundred faces. If you demolish one of them, he immediately grins with a dozen others. I recognize them; often enough they have distorted in war.'].

[78] Schnurre, p. 24 ['He is the uncertainty, he is the boastfulness. He is the neglect, he is the suspicion. He is the toughness, he is the weakness. He is the baseness, he is the cowardice. Submission, desire to command; cruelty, self-pity; servility and supremacism – all of this is his fault.'].

Aber er hetzt es zu Tode, dieser Kasernenhofschinder, er schlägt mir's zusammen. Immer häufiger werden die Tage, an denen es zu schwach ist, um wieder auf die Beine zu kommen. Dann beherrscht nur er mich.'[79]

The traits which Schnurre's text shares with Borchert's are the splitting up of oneself, and the inner conflict that this unleashes. But what is only present in Schnurre's text is the tendency of the returnee to distance himself from parts of his identity. Although the fact that the protagonist is fighting against his negative parts shows that he is aware of their existence and that he wants to change, the splitting could also be seen in a more critical light, as the returnee simply 'outsources' negative aspects and problems within himself.[80] This could be interpreted as an easy way out of responsibility and as an excuse for not changing or dealing with the past properly.

In Priestley's *Three Men in New Suits* the returnee figures also describe a split in their identity, which runs along temporal lines, as in Schnurre's text. The returning men have changed a lot during their absence and on their return home they cannot seem to fit in anymore. They struggle to reintegrate and correlate their past with their present to form one coherent identity:

> The sight of the old house split Alan into two men. One, who had been born there, recognized with affection every window pane and worn brick, and simply came home. The other, who had been away for years and had fought his way from the African desert into the middle of Europe, stared at this rambling old building, huddled deep into its green hillside, and began to wonder what this remote place meant to him.[81]

Suddenly there are two parts of Alan's identity, a new soldierly self and his old civilian self, which do not seem to be part of the same identity anymore: 'If one man came home, the other still arrived at a billet at the end of a long march. Sergeant Strete of the Banfordshires had come from his Army Group. And young Alan Strete, younger son of Lady Strete and the late Sir William, of Swansford Manor, had come home. This split, this sudden double vision, was more than confusing.'[82] The words 'double vision' in this quotation already reveal that the split is at the same time a multiplication. Eddie, another returnee figure, seems to be doubled on his return as well: 'Sometimes it seemed too as if there were two Eddie Molds.'[83]

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[79] Schnurre, pp. 24-25 ['I know it; I still feel my alter ego; I notice, how it fights back. But he chases it to death, this barrack yard-oppressor, he smashes it. More frequent are the days, on which it is too weak to get back on its feet. Then he is the only one to rule me.'].

[80] This tendency is shown much more clearly in Anna Segher's text 'Der Mann und sein Name', in which the returnee protagonist deliberately assumes a new identity to escape from his past and his guilt.

[81] Priestley, p. 11.

[82] Priestley, pp. 11-12.

[83] Priestley, p. 64.

The texts by Borchert, Schnurre and Priestley all share the motif of a fragmented identity, which is primarily caused by a process of splitting, which then indirectly also leads to a multiplication. What is missing in the British text describing a split, though, is the aspect of a conflict or a fight between different parts of the identity. The British returnees' reintegration into their families and wider social environment is seriously impeded and partly even prevented by their fragmented identities. But unlike the German returnees who remain alone, the British returnees at least have the support of each other which seems to provide them with some stability and security. Another difference between the German and the British texts is that the split in Priestley's case is clearly a metaphorical one, while especially in Borchert's text the split is more literal. On the one hand this difference is caused by the different forms of the texts. Borchert's text is a play, in which the inner conflict of the character cannot be described by a narrator but has to be put directly on stage. On the other hand, especially when also taking into account Schnurre's short story, which still seems more experimental than Priestley's novel, the difference might also be explained by the fact that the German authors whose texts I analyse in this chapter are all younger than the British ones and, although aware of traditions, want to produce something radically new.

When Heinrich Böll (1917-1985) returned to Germany in 1945 after having been a soldier for six years, he struggled to make a living as a writer, especially as he also had a family to provide for. He began to work on the novel *Der Engel schwieg* in 1949 and sent the first manuscript to his publisher in August 1950. The book was announced for publication in spring 1951, but although Böll made some changes and amendments to the first version of the novel, the publishing house in the end decided against publishing it. In the following years several episodes or even chapters of the novel were published separately, but the novel as a whole was only published posthumously in 1992.[84]

In Böll's *Der Engel schwieg* there are two different aspects of a fragmented and questionable identity. Firstly, the novel's protagonist and returnee Hans is changing his identity constantly as a necessary method of surviving. This begins before the end of the war when he is supposed to be shot and another man takes his place and is killed instead.[85] On his subsequent way back to his hometown Hans then develops a system of creating false identities and gets used to leading illusionary lives: 'fast dreiviertel Jahre hatte er eine winzige Urkundenfabrik mit sich herumgeschleppt: einen Dienststempel und einen Packen Formulare, die viel bedeuteten: [...]

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[84] See Werner Bellmann, 'Nachwort', in *Der Engel schwieg*, by Heinrich Böll, 8th edn (München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 2013), pp. 193-211 (pp. 196-206).
[85] See Heinrich Böll, *Der Engel schwieg*, 8th edn (München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 2013), p. 48.

Namen, soviel er sich geben wollte.'[86] When Hans then finally returns to his hometown, the first thing he has to do again is to find good papers and a different identity. Therefore, he asks a doctor at the hospital for the papers of a dead person. He is lucky, yet again receiving a new name and a new identity: 'Fünfundzwanzig Jahre, völlig wehrunfähig wegen eines schweren Lungenleidens. Sie heißen dann Erich Keller.'[87]

Hans's method of constantly changing identities and names serves to illustrate two different aspects of post-war times. First, it is a comment about the power of bureaucracy. The concept of a stable identity, which you are born with and which is then slowly shaped over the period of your lifetime was called into question during the war and after. Official papers were assigned the power to define, change and end identities and lives. Böll alludes to this recent change in the concept of identity and to the power of bureaucracy when he describes how Hans receives the postcard which informs him that he has to join the army. This is the moment in which Hans loses his own, stable identity. He is turned into a number and in this way is stripped of his unique qualities as an individual: 'Er war die Einschreibenummer 846, sonst nichts mehr.'[88]

Secondly, Hans's multiple identities also illustrate the conflict between the fake and the authentic, which is typical for the post-war years and which I have already mentioned above as a main topic and concern of existentialist philosophy. Hans's identities are only fake, his lives are lies. He knows that and describes his own method of surviving as a 'Hochstapelei des Nichts'.[89] But what Hans is actually looking for is authenticity. This becomes obvious at the very beginning of the text, when Hans first sees the statue of the angel. The angel is described to have a 'gipserne Lilie' in his hands.[90] This flower identifies him as Gabriel, who is not only the angel of the annunciation, but also the angel of birth and of all new beginnings.[91] Initially, Hans is fascinated, believing it to be an original statue made of stone, but then he discovers that it is only a copy made of plaster: 'und plötzlich sah er, daß das Lächeln aus Gips war. Der Schmutz hatte den Zügen die Hoheit des Originals verliehen.'[92] Hans continues to clean the statue of the dirt and dust, which covers it, but his excitement about it abates the more he

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[86] Böll, p. 51 ['For almost nine months he'd carried a small document factory about with him: an official rubber stamp and a packet of forms that offered everything, […] all the names he wanted to give himself.' (Heinrich Böll, *The Silent Angel*, trans. by Breon Mitchell (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), p. 47)].

[87] Böll, p. 21 ['Twenty-five years old, totally unfit for service due to serious lung disease. Your name is Erich Keller.' (Böll, trans. by Mitchell, p. 16)].

[88] Böll, p. 36 ['He was registration number 846, nothing else' (Böll, trans. by Mitchell, p. 31)].

[89] Böll, p. 52 ['this con game of the void' (Böll, trans. by Mitchell, p. 47)].

[90] Böll, p. 6 ['plaster lily' (Böll, trans. by Mitchell, p. 2)].

[91] See Christine Hummel, *Intertextualität im Werk Heinrich Bölls* (Trier: WVT, Wissenschaftlicher Verlag, 2002), p. 50.

[92] Böll, p. 6 ['and suddenly he saw that the smile was made of plaster. The grime had conferred upon its lines the nobility of the original' (Böll, trans. by Mitchell, p. 2)].

discovers its flashy colours: 'die Freude, die ihn beim Anblick des lächelnden steinernen Gesichtes erfüllt hatte, erlosch, je mehr die grellen Farben sichtbar wurden, der grausame Lack der Frömmigkeitsindustrie, die goldenen Borden am Gewand.'[93] The statue is richly decorated and under the dust still intact, but for Hans it has now lost all its appeal, because it is too perfect.[94] Hans would have preferred the statue to be an imperfect original, associated with a 'Hoheit', to being a perfect but 'grausam' fake. He is looking for authenticity but cannot find it here. In a way the statue of the angel mirrors Hans's own way of life. He, too, is only living fake lives with fake identities. Hans's struggle between the fake and the authentic illustrates a more general problem in a disillusioned German post-war society. For Germans it was difficult to distinguish between what is real and what is not, because everything which they had been told to be true and had believed to be true had turned out to be only propaganda and lies. Furthermore, the angel Gabriel being only a cheap forgery can also be understood as a pessimistic comment about the hope for a new beginning for Germany.[95]

Aside from these issues of multiplication of identities, there is another aspect of identity in Böll's text, which is very similar to the features of Beckmann's identity in Borchert. Hans is characterised by a state of being in-between different identities and forms of existence. When he is first introduced in the text, his shadow is described as having the form of a ghost, an image which is also used to describe Beckmann: 'dann ging er langsam weiter, seinem eigenen Schatten entgegen, der oben an einer unversehrten Wand höherstieg und wuchs und breiter wurde, ein schwaches Gespenst mit schlackernden Armen, das sich aufblähte und dessen Kopf schon über den Rand der Mauer hinweg ins Nichts gekippt war.'[96] In this quotation Hans is shown as a liminal existence, always on the verge of falling into nothingness. Like a ghost, Hans is a transitory being, somewhere between life and death. But the returnee does not only experience himself as a liminal existence. In his perception, the people around him are affected also by this phenomenon and are therefore similarly described as ghosts: 'Allmählich sammelten sich Leute an der Station; es war nicht ersichtlich, woher sie kamen, sie schienen

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[93] Böll, p. 6 ['The joy that had filled him at the sight of the smiling stone face died away as the garish colors came into view, the ghastly paint of the piety industry, the golden borders of the robe.' (Böll, trans. by Mitchell, p. 2)].
[94] See Böll, p. 6.
[95] See Hummel, p. 50.
[96] Böll, p. 5 ['then he continued slowly on toward his own shadow, which mounted higher along an undamaged wall above him, spreading and growing, a pale phantom with dangling arms, inflating, its head already angled into the void beyond the top of the wall.' (Böll, trans. by Mitchell, p. 1)].

aus den Hügeln zu wachsen, unsichtbar, unhörbar, schienen aus dieser Ebene des Nichts aufzuerstehen, Gespenster, deren Weg und Ziel nicht zu erkennen war.'[97]

A sense of in-between-ness is also found in the representation of female characters. Hans often sees women as dolls, drawing this comparison when he sees Frau Gompertz: 'das Haar war sehr hell, fast farblos, es schien lose und dünn zu sein und erinnerte ihn an die Perücken blasser Puppen.'[98] A woman on the street, who is selling coupons for bread, is described in the same way: 'Sie riß ihre Augen empört auf und klapperte mit den Lidern wie eine Puppe.'[99] Regina too is noted as displaying 'etwas Puppenhaftes'.[100] The image of the doll corresponds to the picture of the robot, which was used in Borchert's text. Both the robot and the doll are lifeless things which imitate living beings and are therefore mixed identities of in-between-ness. But they also again pick up the topic of the fake and the authentic, as dolls and robots both imitate living beings. They are impostors like the statue of the angel and like Hans with his multiple identities.

As these images suggest, Hans and Regina are existing in a state between life and death when they first meet each other; they actually wish to be dead. Hans complains to Frau Gompertz that her husband has stolen his death: 'Er hat mir meinen Tod gestohlen, ihr Mann hat mir meinen Tod gestohlen.'[101] And Regina nearly envies her baby its death: 'Ich kann nicht traurig sein […] – ich beneide es fast – diese Welt ist nichts für uns, verstehst du?'.[102] After Hans has found a place to stay with Regina, who also provides him with food, he completely stops participating in life. He does not leave the bed for several weeks and loses all sense of time.[103] It takes a conscious act by Hans to step out of this space in-between life and death, to leave his transitional state behind him and to fully begin to live again: 'er war aus dem Bett aufgestanden, hatte etwas Unwiderrufliches getan, etwas, was nicht rückgängig zu machen war: er hatte das Leben angenommen.'[104] For Hans this step is not an easy one. Deciding to live and love gives him back obligations and something to lose: 'er wußte wohl, was es bedeuten würde, wenn er in die

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[97] Böll, p. 55 ['Gradually people gathered at the tram stop. It wasn't clear where they were coming from, they seemed to sprout from the hills, invisibly, inaudibly, seemed resurrected from the empty plain of the void, ghosts whose path and goal could not be ascertained.' (Böll, trans. by Mitchell, p. 50)].

[98] Böll, p. 46 ['her hair was very blonde, practically colorless. It seemed thin and disheveled, and reminded him of the wigs on pale dolls.' (Böll, trans. by Mitchell, p. 40)].

[99] Böll, p. 53 ['She raised her eyebrows indignantly and blinked her eyes like a doll.' (Böll, trans. by Mitchell, p. 48)].

[100] Böll, p. 138 ['something doll-like' (Böll, trans. by Mitchell, p. 133)].

[101] Böll, p. 47 ['He robbed me of my death; your husband stole my death.' (Böll, trans. by Mitchell, p. 42)].

[102] Böll, p. 61 ['I can't be sad […] I almost envy it – this is no world for us, do you understand?' (Böll, trans. by Mitchell, p. 57)].

[103] See Böll, p. 71.

[104] Böll, p. 136 ['He had risen from his bed, had done something irrevocable, something he could never undo. He had accepted life.' (Böll, trans. by Mitchell, p. 131)].

Küche trat: er würde leben müssen: eine unendliche Last von Tagen auf sich nehmen, die nicht mit ein paar Küssen zu bezahlen war.'[105]

For both Hans and Regina, their developing relationship is the way back into life. The text uses breathing, the ultimate sign of being alive, to express the change which their relationship brings about in them. The first time that Hans sleeps in a room together with Regina, he is not able to hear her breathing: 'Sie schwieg plötzlich und drehte sich zur Wand; sie lag ganz still, er hörte nicht einmal ihren Atem und ihre Schultern erschienen steif und unbeweglich wie Holz.'[106] But later on, Hans and Regina actually comfort and caress each other with their breathing, indicating that they have both decided on a life together: 'Er legte seinen Arm um ihre Schulter, zog sie ganz nahe an sich heran und schlief ein, sein Gesicht an ihres gepreßt, und sie wechselten im Schlaf ihre warmen Atemstöße wie Zärtlichkeiten.'[107] Hans and Regina could therefore be interpreted as figures whose identities have been fragmented and disintegrated during and after the war, but who manage to overcome their liminal existences and rebuild their identities.

Henry Green's *Back* explores similar confusions of identities. Green (1905-1973) was the pen-name for Henry Vincent Yorke, who studied at Oxford before entering the family business and becoming the managing director of a manufacturing company. The critic Leo Robson states that Green presented himself as 'a Sunday writer', although he wrote and published a total of nine novels. During the Second World War Green served in the voluntary Fire Service in London, while his family lived in the countryside.[108]

Back was published in 1946 and is about Charley Summers, who returns to London from a prisoner of war camp before the end of the war. He does not only return physically injured, as he is missing a leg, but he is also mentally confused. Rose, the married woman he had an affair with before the war has died while he was away, and Charley suffers from this loss. When he then meets Nancy, Rose's half-sister of whose existence he was not aware, he believes her to be Rose: 'He pitched forward, in a dead faint, because there she stood alive, so close that he could touch, and breathing, the dead spit, the living image, herself, Rose in person.'[109] He

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[105] Böll, p. 136 ['He knew well what entering the kitchen would mean: he would be forced to live, to take upon himself the infinite burden of days that couldn't be paid for with a few kisses' (Böll, trans. by Mitchell, p. 131)].

[106] Böll, p. 58 ['She suddenly fell silent and turned toward the wall. She lay totally still. He couldn't even hear her breathing, and her shoulders looked stiff and immobile, like wood.' (Böll, trans. by Mitchell, p. 55)].

[107] Böll, p. 147 ['He put his arm around her shoulder, pulled her close to him, and fell asleep, his face pressed against hers, and in their sleep, they exchanged warm breaths like caresses.' (Böll, trans. by Mitchell, p. 141)].

[108] See Leo Robson, 'The Novelist of Human Unknowability: Henry Green's Greatness as a Writer Came from his Conviction that We Can Never Really Know What Anyone Is Thinking or Feeling', *New Yorker,* 17 October 2016 <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2016/10/17/the-novelist-of-human-unknowability> [accessed 6 November 2017].

[109] Henry Green, *Back* (London: Harvill, 1998), p. 43.

suspects an evil plot: that she has taken on a new identity and is pretending not to know him, and it takes him a very long time to understand and believe that Rose is really dead and that Nancy is a different woman, though he eventually falls in love and marries her.

In Green's text therefore it is not the identity of the returnee himself which is fragmented, but his confused mental state makes him mix up the identities of other people around him. Nancy for him is Rose, playing a foul game. This leads to a multiplication of both of the women. Firstly, Nancy acquires two possible identities, her own and that of the dead Rose: 'I mean everyone has their own life, that only stands to reason, and here's me has two, my own and someone else's.'[110] Secondly, according to Kristine Miller, Rose's identity is even tripled: 'the three Roses – the dead girlfriend, her living sister, and his sexual memory.'[111] That these multiplications are caused by fragmentation is shown in the text by the use of a metaphor. Because Charley wants to have Rose's and Nancy's handwriting compared, he cuts old letters from Rose to him to pieces and rearranges the parts into a new text: 'He found his nail scissors, got the letters again, and began, without thinking, to cut those sentences out which he thought would not give him away. He worked fast, laying each snippet on a sheet of newspaper to which he proposed to paste the bits like a telegram.'[112] This resembles what Charley does with the women's identities. He takes bits and pieces of his memories of Rose and tries to rearrange them with Nancy, the new woman in his life, resulting in the women's multiplication.

Charley's confusion about Rose's and Nancy's identities is the most prominent, but not the only aspect of fragmented identities in *Back*. There are even more ways in the text of turning one identity into many, which are analysed by Michael North. First, he describes how all characters seem to have multiple identities and change depending on the vantage point of the observer. For example Nancy has a very different view of her father, Mr. Grant, from Charley at the beginning, because she, as his illegitimate child, knows about his unfaithfulness to Mrs. Grant, while Charley knows nothing about his secret life.[113] Secondly, North also points out that characters can alter identities by adjusting their memory: 'Identity is malleable in "Back". It is a characterization that others can manipulate by altering their recollection of events.'[114]

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[110] Green, p. 67.
[111] Kristine Miller, 'The War of the Roses: Sexual Politics in Henry Green's "Back"', *Modern Fiction Studies*, 49 (2003), pp. 228-45 (p. 239).
[112] Green, p. 117.
[113] See Michael North, *Henry Green and the Writing of his Generation* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1984), p. 128.
[114] North, *Henry Green and the Writing of his Generation,* p. 129.

Green's *Back* thus shares with the other texts discussed so far the motif of a multiplication of identities. Furthermore, the topic of the fake and the authentic reveals even more similarities to Böll's *Der Engel schwieg*. As Marius Hentea points out, Charley's problems have been interpreted by many critics as a search for authenticity.[115] At the beginning, Charley believes himself to be surrounded by fakes and forgeries, he is not able to distinguish between what is real and what is not. Is Nancy really just Nancy or is she Rose, lying to him about her true identity? Therefore, Böll's and Green's texts reveal a basic distrust about what is true and what is fake. In the German context this can easily be explained by a general disillusionment with Nazi ideology and war propaganda. But why can this theme also be found in the literature of the victorious British, who, one might expect, at the end of the war should find themselves reassured about their own identity and their basic beliefs and perception of the world?

Hentea mentions two small-scale quotidian examples of the presence of the topic of fakeness in British post-war society: the forging of ration coupons and the introduction of the new five pound note to abate forgery.[116] But a sense of disillusionment was also present in post-war Britain on a broader scale. As I described in the first section of this chapter, during the war there was much discussion of plans for a better post-war society, and the soldiers left Britain on the promise of a better life on their return. Unfortunately, though, the post-war reality was not able to deliver on such huge expectations and promises. What the soldiers returned to was not a glorious, victorious country, thanking them and celebrating them as war-heroes, but a country of austerity, in which rationing continued for many more years, and was even expanded. The rationing of bread, for example, only began in 1946.[117] The post-war years turned out to be less years of enthusiastic changes, but rather hard years of disillusionment and broken promises. Instead of moving forward, British society seemed to contract and to an extent disintegrate. Kynaston states that: 'It is not fanciful to argue that within a year of VE Day there had set in not only a widespread sense of disenchantment – with peace, perhaps even with the Labour government – but also a certain sense of malaise, a feeling that society, which broadly speaking had held together during the war, was no longer working so well, was even starting to come apart.'[118] These post-war experiences can have contributed to the sense of disillusionment and to a general distrust in reality which can be sensed in Green's *Back*. Although the post-war situations in Germany and in Britain differed enormously in many aspects, for returnees there

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[115] See Marius Hentea, 'Fictional Doubles in Henry Green's "Back"', *Review of English Studies,* 61 (2010), pp. 614-26 (p. 616).
[116] See Hentea, p. 616.
[117] See Kynaston, p. 117.
[118] Kynaston, p. 109.

was a shared experience of disappointment and a shared feeling of having been let down on their return to a post-war society, which they had expected to be very different. Therefore, the aspect of the fake and the authentic is a transnational theme of rubble literature: the war and post-war times turned former hopes, truths and certainties into possible fakes and lies across national borders.

In this respect there are also similarities between Green's text and Robert Henriques's *The Journey Home*. It also describes how a returnee figure, Jane, confuses and mixes up the identities of people around her, thereby multiplying them. Jane's fiancé is the writer David, who returned from the war with a head injury that greatly altered his character. Jane confuses him with Robert, David's younger brother, another returnee. Robert seems to replace the old and lost David. On the one hand this happens at a professional level, as Robert takes on a job, which was actually meant for David.[119] On the other Robert also seems to replace David on the personal level, as in Jane's eyes the two characters seem to melt together; she is not able anymore to clearly say if she loves David or Robert: 'Only fragrance and happiness survived; and remembering the man she loved, David, Robert, she forgot the wound, forgot altogether the future and kissed him with joy, Robert, David. Robert, David! For the spell wasn't cast by Robert, the man, in his sovereign right, but perhaps by proxy for David.'[120]

Similar to Charley in *Back*, who sees Rose in Nancy and fragments and rearranges their identities, Jane sees Robert as a double or doppelgänger of David, the David who is lost because of the head injury and because of the change this brought about in his personality. When Robert, as part of his new job, speaks on the radio, Jane hears not only his voice but also the voice of David: 'She scarcely heard him [i.e. David]; for the voice of Robert Sloane, the voice of David, quiet and low but again urgent, came into the room as though the dead were speaking.'[121] In Jane's eyes Robert is not just Robert anymore, but somehow also a double of the dead part of David. What is remarkable in the quotation above is that the voices of the dead evoke the image of the ghost again, which was already so present in Borchert's, as well as Böll's texts about the returnees, and illustrates their state of in-between-ness.

I now want to take a closer look at the formal aspects of the texts in order to identify characteristics of a transnational aesthetic of rubble literature. There are two interesting aspects about the texts' form. First, many of them seem to mirror their content in their form, as the

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[119] See Henriques, p. 36.
[120] Henriques, pp. 30-31.
[121] Henriques, p. 182.

motif of fragmentation is also applied to the texts' structure. One way to explore this is through the lense of intertextuality. This term was coined in 1966 by Julia Kristeva who described texts as mosaic structures, consisting of fragments of other texts and contexts, between which there then develops a dialogue, much the same way as in Borchert's and Schnurre's texts the fragmentation also leads to a dialogue.[122] In 1968, the French philosopher Roland Barthes described texts accordingly: 'Ein Text ist aus vielfältigen Schriften zusammengesetzt, die verschiedenen Kulturen entstammen und miteinander in Dialog treten, sich parodieren, einander in Frage stellen.'[123] The text in this chapter with the most obvious intertextual structure is Green's *Back*. The author inserts a passage of another text, *The Souvenirs* by the Marquise de Créquy, into his own.[124] This intertextual reference enhances Green's text in multiple ways. First, the insertion of a translation of the French text turns *Back* into a fragmented structure: much like a mosaic, which from far away looks like one, but when looked at closely, reveals its composition of many small pieces. Secondly, *The Souvenirs* also serve as a mirror story, doubling the text's content in the same way as Charley believes Nancy to be a double of Rose. But the intertextual reference in the case of *The Souvenirs* is even further connected to the text's content, as it also picks up the topic of the fake and the authentic. Charley reads *The Souvenirs* as an autobiography, which is a genre that is based on the assumption that what it tells is not fiction, but the – if very subjective – truth. Seeing his own story doubled in *The Souvenirs* could therefore help and support Charley in his search for authenticity.

While all of this happens on the level of the characters of *Back*, for the reader of Green's text everything gets more complicated because of the additional factor of the inserted text. It is a translation by Green of an actual French text, which was discovered to have been a forgery of an autobiography. Hentea argues that Green must have known about his source being a fake, when translating the French original and inserting it into his own text.[125] Therefore, this intertextual reference can be understood as another way for Green to develop the conflict between authenticity and forgery and to draw the reader in closer to Charley's search for authenticity, which is mirrored in the reader's own experience when he begins to discover the

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[122] See Scarlett Baron, *'Strandentwining Cable': Joyce, Flaubert, and Intertextuality* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 8.
[123] Roland Barthes, 'Der Tod des Autors', in *Texte zur Theorie der Autorschaft*, ed. by Fotis Jannidis and others (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2000), pp. 185-93 (p. 192) ['A text consists of manifold scriptures, which emanate from diverse cultures and enter into a dialog with each other, which parody and question one another.'].
[124] See Green, pp. 87-99.
[125] See Hentea, p. 619.

real nature of the intertext employed. Neither for Charley, nor for the reader is it easy to determine what is authentic and true and what is a forgery.

I have already analysed the use of an intertextual reference in a similar context in Böll's text, as the statue of the angel strongly refers to religious imagery.[126] That it is connected to the theme of the fake and the authentic, just like Green's intertext, is telling and establishes links to the intertextual writing of other authors such as James Joyce who, according to Scarlett Baron, asserts 'the inevitable adulteration involved in the making of literature' and realizes 'that writing can never escape its own ineluctable second-hand status'.[127] In a way, the analysed post-war texts therefore, through their questioning of ownership as well as authorship, seem to anticipate the debate on intertextuality of the 1960s which saw some participants 'denying the possibility of originality in writing'.[128]

The texts by Böll and Green contain even more intertextual references, for example to works by Léon Bloy (Böll) or the medieval *Romance of the Rose* and the Tristan Saga (Green).[129] Even Borchert's 'Draußen vor der Tür' displays an intertextual and fragmented structure, with its connection to expressionistic, as well as existentialist traditions.[130] These multiple and manifold connections comply with Baron's differentiation between the study of influence and the paradigm of intertextuality. While influence suggests a 'binary structure' of relations between texts, through intertextuality 'the spectrum of literary connectivity broadens out from a binary into infinity'.[131] The concept of intertextuality not only increases the number of relevant connections though; it also diversifies the ways in which these connections can be established and elaborated. Intertextuality incorporates 'traditional manifestations of influence, such as quotation, imitation, echo, and allusion, whether accidental or intentional or merely perceived' as 'subsets within the overarching field of intertextuality'.[132] Therefore, a fragmented structure can be identified as the first of several characteristic features of a transnational aesthetic of rubble literature. A second feature of this transnational aesthetic might in turn be the authors' situating of their texts in a transnational and European context and

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[126] See Hummel, p. 50.
[127] Baron, p. 279; p. 278.
[128] Baron, p. 278.
[129] See Hummel, p. 49 and Edward Stokes, *The Novels of Henry Green* (London: Hogarth Press, 1959), pp. 117-18.
[130] See Hans van Stralen, *Choices and Conflict: Essays on Literature and Existentialism* (Brussels: P.I.E.-Peter Lang, 2005), p. 135 and p. 138.
[131] Baron, p. 9.
[132] Baron, p. 10; p. 11.

tradition, rather than in a specifically national one. It is remarkable that nearly all the intertextual references found in the analysed texts reach across national borders.

Apart from discovering these formal similarities, I have demonstrated in this section that in German and in British texts the returnees struggle with the phenomenon of fragmented identities. Regardless of whether the emphasis is put on a split of the returnees' identity (Borchert, Schnurre, Priestley) or on a multiplication (Böll, Green, Henriques), the motif of fragmentation is visible in each of the texts and is used to reveal uncertainties about identity present in post-war Germany and post-war Britain alike. In rubble literature identity is transnationally shown as an unstable construct, which disintegrates and falls apart under the pressures of the war and post-war times. The defeated Germans whose worlds collapsed and whose beliefs were shattered were not the only ones struggling with new realities, trying to hold themselves together and searching for authenticity in a world of fakes. The victorious British returnees did not return from war as self-confident, celebrating men, reassured about their identity by the victory either. Rather, they also came back with an awareness of the instability of identities and with an insecurity about reality, which also resulted from feelings of disillusionment about the post-war society. They also found and experienced fragmentations of their soldierly and civilian selves, between the world that they left behind them when they went to war and the world that they found when they returned.

Therefore, the fragmentation of identity can be considered a universal human consequence of war, independent of national or cultural background. War calls former certainties and truths into question across national borders. In the final section of this chapter, I will look at time as another of these former stable entities: time as a continuum loses its reliability and solid state, as it is affected by the same phenomenon of fragmentation which has already been shown in this section.

Fragmented Time: A Broken Continuum

Time is a dynamic factor of human life, but its movement is stable. Although Albert Einstein's theory of the relativity of time teaches us something else, our personal, day-to-day experience of time is still that it can be measured and classified, that it always moves in the same speed and can therefore be considered a reliable basis for individuals to narrate, interpret and plan their life. The past is over, the future has not yet come and the present is the place where the individual resides. However, in the following section I will demonstrate that one consequence of the war and post-war years is that this perception of a stable and linear time changed. Many returnee figures have fallen out of the normal continuum of time. They experience the

phenomenon of a fragmented time, which means that the present and the past have crumbled and are then reassembled into new mosaic forms. In this section I will analyse the production and the shape of these new structures to find out how the fragmentation of time influences the returnees and if there is a basic difference between the German returnees' experience of time and that of the British returnees. Is the persistence of the past a typically German phenomenon connected to feelings of guilt and the process of 'Vergangenheitsbewältigung'? Are British returnees less bound to the past and able to live in the present and plan a future? Or is the fragmentation of time another transnational consequence of war, which is experienced in very similar ways by German and by British returnees?

Beckmann is haunted by his past as a soldier and the guilt he feels. His suffering can be seen most clearly in his recurring nightmarish dream, in which the dead soldiers rise up from their graves: 'Dann stehen sie auf aus den Massengräbern mit verrotteten Verbänden und blutigen Uniformen. Dann tauchen sie auf aus den Ozeanen, aus den Steppen und Straßen, aus den Wäldern kommen sie, aus Ruinen und Mooren, schwarzgefroren, grün, verwest.'[133] In his dream these zombies then scream his name and Beckmann's feeling of guilt and responsibility overwhelms him: 'Beckmann, brüllen sie. Unteroffizier Beckmann. Immer Unteroffizier Beckmann. Und das Brüllen wächst.'[134] Tortured by this horrible dream and by the past which is still so present, Beckmann desperately tries to distance himself from his own past: 'Beckmann (*schreit auf*): "Das bin ich nicht! Das will ich nicht mehr sein! Ich will nicht mehr Beckmann sein!"'[135] As another possible way out Beckmann also tries to transfer his guilt to his superior in the army, who once placed the responsibility for the other men on him: 'Oberst: Was wollen sie denn von mir? Beckmann: Ich bringe sie ihnen zurück. Oberst: Wen? Beckmann (*beinah naiv*): Die Verantwortung. Ich bringe Ihnen die Verantwortung zurück.'[136] But Beckmann's attempts at separating himself from his past fail and he remains haunted.

His situation even aggravates itself when there is another victim added to Beckmann's conscience, as the husband, whose wife Beckmann was in bed with after his return, has killed himself because of this betrayal. This dead man visits Beckmann and pleads with him not to

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[133] Borchert, p. 145 ['Then they rise up out of their mass graves with rotting bandages and bloodstained uniforms. They rise up out of the oceans, out of the steppes and the streets, they come from the forests, from the ruins and marshes, frozen black, green, mouldering.' (Borchert, trans. by Porter, p. 97)].

[134] Borchert, p. 146 ['Beckmann, they roar. Corporal Beckmann. Always Corporal Beckmann. The roaring grows.' (Borchert, trans. by Porter, p. 97)].

[135] Borchert, p. 137 ['Beckmann: *(Screams)* I'm not! I'm not Beckmann. I won't be Beckmann any more!' (Borchert, trans. by Porter, p. 91)].

[136] Borchert, p. 146 ['Colonel: What is it you want of me? Beckmann: I'm bringing it back to you. Colonel: What? Beckmann: *(Almost naïve)* The responsibility. I'm bringing you back the responsibility.' (Borchert, trans. by Porter, p. 98)].

forget him: 'Jetzt bin ich erst einen ganzen Tag tot – und du hast mich ermordet und hast den Mord schon vergessen. Das mußt du nicht, Beckmann, Morde darf man nicht vergessen […] Du vergißt mich doch nicht, Beckmann, nicht wahr?'.[137] Beckmann's subsequent promise to remember forever binds him to his past.[138] Beckmann's strong connection to the past is not only a great psychological problem for himself, but it also hinders his reintegration into society, as is revealed by the image of the ghost. Beckmann frightens and even horrifies living people, because he is a walking reminder of the past. He unsettles the other Germans who have already moved on and believe that they have put the past properly behind them. In this way, Beckmann could also be understood as the suppressed unconscious of a Germany, which in the post-war years tried to move on and begin anew without further pursuing its 'Vergangenheitsbewältigung'. Beckmann and the memories of the past he carries with him are unwanted in post-war Germany, and seem to find no place in it.[139]

Beckmann being haunted by his past when actually trying to free himself from it is one feature of the phenomenon of fragmented time in the text. When Beckmann goes home to find his parents, he actually hopes for this persistence of the past to continue. He finds the house in which he grew up undamaged and has soothing recollections of his childhood. Beckmann has by now lost his sense of time and believes that this positive part of his past is still present, just like the negative memories are always with him: 'Das ist unsere Tür. Dahinter röppelt sich ein Leben ab von einem ewigen Knäuel. Ein Leben, das schon immer so war, dreißig Jahre lang. Und das immer so weitergeht. Der Krieg ist an dieser Tür vorbeigegangen.'[140] But this time, when Beckmann wishes time not to have passed and the past still to be present, he finds that things have changed. His parents are dead and the door to his old home will remain closed to him: 'Sind sie denn tot? Sie haben doch eben noch gelebt. […] Sie sollen tot sein? Eben waren sie doch noch da.'[141] Beckmann has to discover that only some unpleasant fragments of the past have made it into the present, but not all of the past is still accessible. His problem is that he has fallen out of the normal continuum of time. The past that he wants to leave behind him is a

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[137] Borchert, p. 190 ['I have only been dead for a day – and you murdered me and you've already forgotten the murder. You must not do that, Beckmann, you shouldn't forget murders […] You won't forget me, will you, Beckmann?' (Borchert, trans. by Porter, p. 129)].

[138] See Borchert, p. 190.

[139] See Dirk Niefanger, 'Die Dramatisierung der "Stunde Null": Die frühen Nachkriegsstücke von Borchert, Weisenborn und Zuckmayer', in *Zwei Wendezeiten: Blicke auf die deutsche Literatur 1945 und 1989*, ed. by Walter Erhart and Dirk Niefanger (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1997), pp. 47-70 (p. 52).

[140] Borchert, p. 162 ['That is our door. Behind it a life is rolled off an endless reel. A life which has been always thus, for thirty years. And will always continue thus. War has gone past this door.' (Borchert, trans. by Porter, p. 109)].

[141] Borchert, p. 165 ['Are they dead? But they were alive just now! […] They're dead? But they were here just now!' (Borchert, trans. by Porter, p. 111)].

torturing part of his present, and the past which he wants to be present and to go on forever is really over and lost.

The protagonist in Schnurre's short story 'Ausgeliefert' experiences similar effects of a fragmented time as Beckmann. He is also paid visits by his dead comrades: 'Meine gefallenen Freunde, die mich manchmal besuchen, verscheuche ich dann.'[142] But his past also lives on in another way. The protagonist cannot escape his former habits which, as a soldier, saved his life. When he takes a walk, he is transported to his time at war and acts again like he is back in the field:

> Kürzlich glaubte ich, ich wäre dem Muschkoten in mir entkommen. Ich machte einen Spaziergang. […] Eine Zeitlang ging alles gut […] Und da regte er sich, da wurde er wach: Ich fing an, den Horizont abzusuchen. Ich zählte die Bodenwellen. Ich registrierte Senken und Bachbetten. Ich taxierte plötzlich die Gegend ab nach der Möglichkeit, sich vor Panzern zu schützen. Aus mit der Schönheit der Landschaft. […] Ich hatte Geländedienst.[143]

A very similar experience is described in James's *There is Always To-morrow*. But in this case the situation is much more dangerous than in the texts by Borchert and Schnurre. The mentally ill returnee, who attacks the farm, believes himself to be still at war, with a duty to fight the Germans: 'That was why he had to pay back the Germans by setting fire to their homes and property. His mind was suddenly tired. He felt there was something wrong, but could not remember what it was. How had he got to Germany anyway. Never mind that, time was slipping away.'[144] This returnee is transported back to a violent time. Unlike Beckmann, his present not only mixes with his past, but he is completely stuck in his past, which therefore becomes his present. Furthermore, while the persistence of the past turns Beckmann into a danger to himself and makes him suicidal, the returnee who is caught in his past in James's text is a danger to people around him, to his former comrades and fellow returnees. Only after the attack, when he is caught, does the man suddenly return to the present, having no memory of the immediate past and of what he did: '"Can't remember where I was before this. What have I been doing?" He put his head down and pressed his hands over his eyes.'[145] A few moments later, when finally his memory returns, the returnee is shocked about himself: 'I remember what I was doing now. I was going to burn down the farm over there. […] God, what have I done?'[146] Like Schnurre's

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[142] Schnurre, p. 25 ['Then I chase my dead friends away who sometimes visit me.'].

[143] Schnurre, p. 25 ['Recently I believed that I had escaped from the private in me. I went for a walk. […] For some time, everything was fine […] And then he stirred, then he woke up: I began to search the horizon. I counted the bumps. I registered sinks and streambeds. Suddenly I scanned the area for an opportunity to protect oneself from tanks. The beauty of the landscape was over […] I was on field service.'].

[144] James, p. 214.

[145] James, p. 218.

[146] James, p. 219.

returnee, this returnee jumps from present to past and back to present, creating a mosaic structure. In addition, although the text does not say what becomes of this figure, one can imagine that he, from now on, will have to fight two pasts haunting him: his experiences during the war, which initially caused the fragmentation of time, and the consequences of his flashback, making him guilty of killing two men. This, then, would be another parallel to Borchert's Beckmann, who also struggles with multi-layered guilt.

Charley's confusion about Rose and Nancy in Green's *Back* also has a lot to do with an experience of fragmented time, because Charley tries to stick to the past and is unable to accept the present and live in it. He keeps thinking of the good times he had with Rose and tries to keep the past alive by keeping Rose alive. In the texts discussed so far, the returnees' experience of a fragmented time is that they are caught in their past and haunted by the memories they cannot escape. They are bound to remember and even re-live the past, though they do not want to. In Green's text Charley does almost the opposite. He cannot stand the present and is therefore escaping into comforting memories of his past, while the present keeps haunting him. North points out that: 'Rose is resurrected less by a desire to relive the past than by a desire to evade the present, to reconstitute it forcibly in a familiar form.'[147] The negative aspects of Charley's past, like memories of his injury and his life in the prisoner of war camp, are strongly suppressed, locked within and hardly ever reach the surface. In this aspect Charley differs from the German returnee figures, who are not able to suppress their memories of war and to escape from their past.

Another point in which Charley differs from the other returnees is the amount of control that he seems to have over memory and time. The question of how much power people have over their memories and perception of time is brought up by the character of Rose's mother Mrs Grant, who seems to fake amnesia. The discussion around her also makes Charley's problem appear in a different light, giving the impression that his escape into the past is a much more active one than what the other returnees in Borchert's and Schnurre's texts experience. Charley seems to actively manipulate his sense of time and cause the fragmentation himself, while the other returnees seem to suffer passively from a broken continuum of time. North supports this reading by stating that: 'The self-serving nature of these amendments of the past points up more than anything that memory is active in Green's novel, not passive, and that memory for Green is an act of creation rather than of retention.'[148] Interestingly, though, this point also reveals another

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[147] North, *Henry Green and the Writing of his Generation,* p. 131.
[148] North, *Henry Green and the Writing of his Generation,* p. 127.

parallel to Böll's returnee figure. For Charley, the active fragmentation of time seems to be a desperate method to survive and cope with the present, just as for Hans the active multiplication of his identity is also a method of surviving.

A final aspect about time, which is very prominent in Green's text and which reveals a difference between German and British texts, is the constant comparison in *Back* of the Second World War to the events and consequences of the First World War. Mrs Grant confuses Charley with her brother who died in the earlier conflict: '"John, to think you're back at last," she said. "There you are," the husband explained, "she thinks you're her brother who was killed in seventeen."'[149] But also other characters, such as Rose's husband, use the First World War as a point of reference for narrating and interpreting the most recent war: '"I know," James went on, "I realize how it is. I remember after the last war when I got home."'[150] The past, which is in this way still very close for most of the characters of *Back*, serves as an aid to understanding the present.

The comparison with and the presence of the First World War is not only present in *Back*. In James's *There is Always To-morrow* Dick's plans to build up the farm and help the returnees are partly also based on the negative example of the period after the First World War, which he does not want to see repeated: 'And he was afraid that they would forget about the debt and that service men would find themselves forgotten again as they were after the last war.'[151] Allport describes the last post-war period as a time of great disappointments: 'Just over twenty-five years earlier Britain had demobilized another victorious generation of citizen-soldiers, only to see the dreams of the post-war settlement sputter out in anger and despair.'[152] He argues that this negative example burned itself into the memory of the British population, producing concerns and fears at the end of the Second World War: 'Many men and women remembered this period only too well and feared a recurrence of its broken promises and desperate unemployment, war heroes reduced to selling matches or singing in the streets.'[153]

The First World War in general seems to be less present in German rubble literature than in the British one. But one example for its hidden presence can be found in Borchert's 'Draußen vor der Tür'. In the conversation with the Oberst Beckmann mentions the name of the place where they met in battle: 'Haben Sie das ganz vergessen, Herr Oberst? Den 14. Februar? Bei

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[149] Green, p. 13.
[150] Green, p. 9.
[151] James, p. 33.
[152] Allport, pp. 4-5.
[153] Allport, p. 5.

Gorodok.'[154] As Niefanger points out, this is an intertextual reference to a poem by Georg Trakl, *Grodek*, about a battle in the First World War.[155] In this more implicit way 'Draußen vor der Tür' also draws a connection to the First World War and uses this experience as a pattern to present and understand the Second World War.

The different significance of the First World War in the German and the British texts can be explained biographically. Jeremy Treglown points out that during the second half of the First World War Green's parents 'had turned part of their country house […] into a convalescent home for officers' and that Green's 'encounters with these gassed, shell-shocked, terrified visitors during school holidays' had a great impact on him.[156] And Green is not the only one of the British authors who had been born before the First World War and who felt an impact of the war on his or her personal life. James left the Slade School of Art in 1915 six weeks after she began studying there to support the war effort.[157] And Priestley even fought as a soldier in the First World War. In contrast, Böll, Borchert and Schnurre were all born after the end of the war or, in Böll's case, were too young at the time to have memories of their own about the war and post-war years. Therefore, there is a temporal gap between the authors of German rubble literature and the authors of British rubble literature whose texts I have analysed in this chapter. While for the German authors the Second World War was the first war they experienced, the British authors had already lived through one themselves, which seems to have influenced their literary representation of the aftermath of the Second World War.

Time and memories also play an important role in the content and the form of Henriques's *The Journey Home*. Jane is constantly confronting memories of the past and imaginations of the future, which greatly influence her life by distracting her from the present: 'How hard it was to regain the present, to live only in the living hour; without recollection or prospect, to live wholly in experience that was itself alive. You couldn't, it seemed, couldn't ever escape the past; not for one instant of actual living. Nor could you ever escape your predictions and dreams with their false promise.'[158] Jane speaking of an impossible escape here implies that she is haunted by her past; she is drawn to past events by tiny details evoking memories, establishing connections and in this way opening windows to the past: 'The handsome banisters were slightly sticky with polish, and it was possible to make a hand squeak with friction. This recalled

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[154] Borchert, p. 146 ['Have you completely forgotten, sir? The 14th February? At Gorodok.' (Borchert, trans. by Porter, p. 98)].
[155] See Niefanger, pp. 53-54.
[156] Jeremy Treglown, 'Introduction', in *Back*, by Henry Green (London: Harvill, 1998), pp. v-xv (p. v).
[157] See Pearson, p. 412.
[158] Henriques, pp. 168-69.

visits to the dentist, lit up with a *click* as if a switch had been pressed in a gallery of minor recollections.'[159] The text is dominated by this recurring structural and stylistic device of intercutting periods of her memories into her present, which creates, yet again, a fragmented structure:

> But she heard no more. For now she was caught in the flight of her own remembrance.
>
> '*I* have sixpence,' Jane answered, opened her handbag, and thus withdrew, a dozen years into the past, standing again on a London pavement.
>
> Thus, for Jane, the past could recur once more, as it did whenever the process of living required no effort on her part.[160]

These jumps in time occur when Jane is awake, but are also described as typical for the moment before falling asleep and beginning to dream: 'Time, and snatches of thought, passion and words, from the past, the far past, the scarcely discernible past, and the dreams of the future […] all whirled in her mind […] These were the times when a girl lost the sense of time, not only of hours but of years, of age and of status in space and time.'[161] The difference between Jane's and the German returnees' situation is that while for the German returnees the memories are haunting them with pain and guilt, for Jane the memories that keep springing up are not really unpleasant and many times even comforting. This is comparable to Charley's relationship to the past.

What clearly separates Jane from Charley, though, is that she does not want to escape into the past. For her, her recollections are most of the time a burden from which she wants to escape. She fears the power that her past might have over her present and future and therefore feels the need to cut connections to it: 'She was tired of littering her trail with the spoor of personal possessions to which she might one day return […] In this way, the past remained potent; but the past, she said, was to have no further claims upon her future […] No lightest thread […] should tug her backwards.'[162] Jane recognises the danger of getting lost in the labyrinth of your own memories: 'Thus she retraced her steps wondering, yet again, if a woman might ever escape her memories. To fulfil one burning remembrance was no more than to open the door upon another; the corridor was endless.'[163] Jane shares this feeling of the danger of the past and the wish to escape from it with the returnee figures in the texts by Borchert and Schnurre.

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[159] Henriques, p. 15.
[160] Henriques, p. 4; p. 11; p. 115.
[161] Henriques, p. 116.
[162] Henriques, p. 27.
[163] Henriques, p. 162.

In this section of the chapter I have shown that returnees in German and in British texts experience time as a broken continuum. The past has abundant power over the present. Either negative aspects of the past are haunting the returnees, or positive aspects of the past function as a means to evade and escape the daunting present. In all of these cases, the present appears weak in the face of a past, which is still so dominant and powerful. German and British returnees are restrained by their pasts to wholly live in the present and to start building their futures. It was not only the German returnees with the burden of defeat and guilt who struggle to overcome the past and accept and tackle the present, but also the British returnees who find it difficult to come to terms with the past and to move on.

Conclusion

The motif of fragmentation is omnipresent in the German and the British texts about returnee figures and characterises their content as well as their form. Still, the comparison of the texts reveals two different tendencies. On the one hand, the specific national contexts of Germany and Britain turn out to be decisive and powerful factors influencing the literary representations and interpretations of fragmentation on a social level. This finding complies with the expectation of a binary opposition between German and British texts, which stood at the beginning of this chapter. On the other hand, however, when comparing the descriptions and interpretations of the fragmentation of identity and time, the result is quite the contrary. The many similarities which I have identified on this more personal, individual level bring forth a questioning of the binary structure and necessitate a deconstruction of the experience of victory and defeat. The disappointing return of the nurse Jane from Henriques's text turned out to be not an exception but a typical experience for British returnees.

Therefore, I propose the concept of Britain as the defeated victor. In spite of different national backgrounds, the enormous horrors of the Second World War did not produce any true victors as they challenged the keystones of everyone's human existence. The concept of the defeated victor might also help us in understanding the preconditions for the rapprochement between Germans and British that was achieved after the war. Similar experiences, thoughts and emotions can be a useful foundation for successful cooperation across national borders.

2) The Figure of the Woman: Exploring Post-War Gender Roles

Introduction

'Woran denkt eigentlich so ein Mann jetzt? Seit sie nicht mehr arbeiten sind sie schlapp. Ein Mann ohne Beruf ist wirklich wie eine leere Erbsenschote!'.[1] These words spoken about men by a female character in Ilse Langner's *Flucht ohne Ziel* demonstrate how perceptions of the relationship between the sexes changed during and after the war. As women obtained new positions and statuses, they were empowered, and permitted, to look critically at the men returning from war. The women were no longer only housewives and mothers; with their men gone, the survival of the whole family depended on the women, while they, at the same time, also actively supported the war effort, taking on jobs in areas that before the war had been exclusively occupied by men. Women became so important an asset in the war that Elizabeth Wilson even claims that in Britain 'the housewife was *the* heroic figure of the Second World War'.[2] A similar importance was attributed to German women of the post-war years, as expressed in the figure of the 'Trümmerfrauen', who cleared away the debris and allegedly rebuilt Germany while their men were still absent. The immediate post-war years were thus a time of exceptionally open discussions regarding gender roles. During this brief period opinions were heard and figures created which had been supressed and ignored before, and which would again fall silent soon after.

In this chapter I will analyse how the exploration of gender roles after the war takes place in a group of literary texts, which, to different degrees, make use of references or allusions to female archetypes from myths and fairy tales. I will argue that traditional, pre-war gender roles lost their stability and reliability after the war, that they broke apart into pieces, resembling the ruins and rubble on the streets of the bombed out cities. However, through allusions and references to literary female archetypes, I will demonstrate how post-war authors appear to be trying to reassemble the pieces. By referring to older texts and female figures, they discuss, deconstruct, criticise and refashion post-war gender roles.

In Germany and Britain the end of the war offered great potential for changes to women's situation in society. In Britain, feminist hopes for women's equality were strongly tied to the

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[1] Ilse Langner, *Flucht ohne Ziel: Tagebuch-Roman Frühjahr 1945* (Würzburg: Bergstadtverlag Wilhelm Gottlieb Korn, 1984), p. 243 ['What is such a man thinking about now, anyway? Since they are not working anymore, they are floppy. A man without a job really is like an empty pea pod!'].

[2] Elizabeth Wilson, *Only Halfway to Paradise: Women in Postwar Britain 1945-1968* (London: Tavistock, 1980), p. 16.

wider aims of the new Welfare State, described in the previous chapter as linked to the figure of the returning soldier. As the proposed social changes included equal rights for all citizens, women hoped for an improvement in their general situation, and there were campaigns by women's organisations, demanding ameliorations in various fields.[3] Their demands included equal pay, welfare benefits, child allowances and maternity rights.[4] That there was some effect of the war on the relationship between men and women in Britain can also be deduced from the number of divorces in the immediate post-war years, which 'hit an all-time high of 60,300 decrees absolute in 1946'.[5] There were many possible causes for strains on marital relationships, one of them being a newfound, stronger position of women: 'a couple might not have seen each other for several years; he expected to return to his familiar position as the undisputed head; she had become more independent (often working in a factory as well as running the home).'[6]

In Germany, after the end of the war the preconditions for a longer-lasting change of women's positions were also present. The Germany of the immediate post-war years has been described as a 'Frauengesellschaft (women's society)', as there were many more women than men.[7] The war had taken its toll on the male population and led to a 'Männermangel', often also described as a 'Frauenüberschuss'.[8] Women made up two thirds of the German population and their importance and influence was visible in the first years after the end of the war, not only in social but also in political spheres.[9] Women founded numerous 'Frauenausschüsse', in whose meetings the female members debated the political future of Germany and the future relationship between the sexes.[10] Anette Kuhn goes so far as to state that German post-war society was dominated by women's activities and their moral claim to leadership.[11]

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[3] See Deborah Philips and Ian Haywood, *Brave New Causes: Women in British Postwar Fictions* (London: Leicester University Press, 1998), p. 4.

[4] See Philips and Haywood, p. 4.

[5] Plain, p. 210.

[6] Kynaston, p. 97.

[7] Anna Richards, 'Change and Fidelity in One: Women, Mourning and the Reconstruction of Germany in the Works of Elisabeth Langgässer and Ilse Langner', in *War-torn Tales: Literature, Film and Gender in the Aftermath of World War II*, ed. by Danielle Hipkins and Gill Plain (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2007), pp. 65-80 (p. 67).

[8] Leonie Treber, *Mythos Trümmerfrauen: Von der Trümmerbeseitigung in der Kriegs- und Nachkriegszeit und der Entstehung eines deutschen Erinnerungsortes* (Essen: Klartext Verlag, 2014), p. 207 ['absence of men', 'surplus of women'].

[9] See Richards, p. 67.

[10] Anette Kuhn, 'Die stille Kulturrevolution der Frau: Versuch einer Deutung der Frauenöffentlichkeit (1945-1947)', in *Kulturpolitik im besetzten Deutschland 1945-1949*, ed. by Gabriele Clemens (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1994), pp. 83-101 (p. 86) ['Women's Committees'].

[11] See Kuhn, p. 87.

Today, however, one has to conclude that the eventual reality in post-war Germany and Britain fell short of this vision of a substantial and sustained change in women's roles, although the clock could not be rewound completely to pre-war conditions either. Ultimately, the dominant theme in both societies was the return of the women to their traditional roles of housewife and mother, and the reestablishment of a patriarchal society.[12] This, however, is not to deny the fact that some things did change; that, for example, working women were a reality in 1950s Germany, and that also a considerable number of British women continued working after the war, even as they found themselves trapped in the so called 'dual role' of mother and working woman.[13]

A striking, and in the context of this chapter very interesting, similarity between the German and the British understanding and representation of the gender politics and realities of these years is the development of myths and stereotypes; of generalised stories and figures that seem to obscure and distract from the much more diverse reality. These stereotypes become very powerful because they proliferate quickly and because they not only influence how women are perceived by men, but they also influence the women's own behaviour and thinking. In Germany, the most prominent female figure of the time was the 'Trümmerfrau', which Leonie Treber has exposed as a myth.[14] She reveals that women actually only had a minor role in clearing the city of rubble and in the physical rebuilding of Germany, and she also points out that the 'Trümmerfrau' was only a phenomenon in Berlin and in the Soviet zone of occupation. Only many years later did the 'Trümmerfrau' become a representative figure for all German post-war women. Treber also draws out another truth which was obscured by the dominant discourse of the time: although German women, especially wives and mothers, were not supposed to work, the working woman was a common reality in post-war Germany.[15] In Britain there are similar mechanisms of the formation of stereotypes, which obscure the more conflicted, complex reality. Wilson describes how in post-war Britain myths were built up around the full emancipation of women, and how 'myths and stereotypes proliferated so that the woman wielding the hoover could become the symbol of the social revolution that had obliterated inequality'.[16] Wilson argues in her study that, although 'myth and ideology operated

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[12] See Richards, pp. 68-69, Wilson, pp. 2-3 and Monika Melchert, 'Mann und Frau nach dem Krieg: Wie die Heimkehr der Männer die Geschlechterverhältnisse verändert', in *Schuld und Sühne?: Kriegserlebnis und Kriegsdeutung in deutschen Medien der Nachkriegszeit (1945-1961)*, ed. by Ursula Heukenkamp (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2001), pp. 275-81 (p. 281).
[13] See Treber, p. 317, Philips and Haywood, p. 2 and Wilson, p. 188.
[14] See Treber.
[15] See Treber, p. 317.
[16] Wilson, p. 12.

to create a counter-belief that feminists had achieved their goals', British women still knew and felt that they 'remained in many ways subordinate and oppressed'.[17] Philips and Haywood point out another, seemingly opposed case of stereotyping, which suggests that all women returned home after the war. Fitting in nicely with the aforementioned phenomena, they describe this prevailing stereotype as 'an ideologically conceived distortion of real social experience'.[18]

This accumulation of myths and stereotypes is particularly significant for the present chapter because it is similar in many ways to a technique in the group of post-war texts under consideration here. In these texts, the contemporary debate about women and gender roles is explored against the background of female archetypal figures from myths and fairy tales. Indeed, it is almost as if post-war German and British authors, while dealing with and sometimes even contesting certain female archetypes, are subjected by their own contemporaries to a similar process of the formation of myths and stereotypes. Consciously or unconsciously, the authors seem to reflect this process in their own work.

However, references to myths are not only employed in texts of the post-war period primarily dealing with the question of gender roles and women's position in society. Rather, there seems to be a more general trend towards antiquity and myths, as, for example, in Elisabeth Langgässer's short story 'Die getreue Antigone', Marie Luise Kaschnitz's short story 'Am Circeo', Joachim Haecker's play *Der Tod des Odysseus*, Arno Schmidt's novels *Leviathan* and *Aus dem Leben eines Fauns*, Rose Macaulay's *The World my Wilderness*, Elizabeth Bowen's short story *The mysterious Kor*, and also Jean-Paul Sartre's play *Les mouches*, which, according to Stephen Brockmann, 'became one of the most influential theatrical works in Germany during the immediate postwar period.'[19] This could be a reaction to the physical surroundings of post-war authors, to the bombsites and rubble which are evocative of ancient ruins: remnants, of another perished world. Myths, as elemental and timeless stories, might also function as the only safe harbours in a world where everything is disappearing and falling apart. When the present is too hard to bear and there appears to be no hope for a better future, people turn to the past for comfort and guidance.

Inge Stephan argues for a general increase of reworkings and references to mythical stories in times 'wenn die nationale Identität bedroht und das Subjekt in seinem Selbstverständnis

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[17] Wilson, p. 3; pp. 2-3.
[18] Philips and Haywood, p. 2.
[19] Stephen Brockmann, *German Literary Culture at the Zero Hour* (Columbia: Camden House; Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2004), p. 228.

verunsichert ist'.[20] Stephan describes this tendency in Germany after the Second World War and the collapse of fascism, as well as after the end of the Cold War and German reunification. Furthermore, Stephan also argues that debates on gender roles played a central role in defining and building up national identities in these times of uncertainty and change: 'Die Wiederbelebung von mythischen Helden und Heldinnen vollzieht sich im Zeichen eines genealogischen Diskurses, in dem die Beziehungen zwischen den Geschlechtern zum eigentlichen Bezugspunkt nationaler Identitätsbildung werden.'[21] I will show in this chapter that especially in the analysed German texts, the debate on gender roles is part of a wider discussion on other issues of the war- and post-war years, much like the question of guilt.

In German literary studies, the return to traditional figures and patterns of narration, especially from antiquity, is understood as a typical characteristic of texts by authors belonging to the so-called 'Innere Emigration'. The term is described as having a 'Janusgesicht' by Stephan, because this kind of texts can either be a critical examination of the present shrouded in the cloak of antiquity, or they can represent a flight from the present and from personal and political responsibility, or even both at the same time.[22] I, however, will argue in this chapter that references and allusions to past texts and figures in relation to the exploration of gender roles must not only be seen as a characteristic of the typically German phenomenon of 'Innere Emigration', but also as a transnational motif in the writing after the Second World War, as the comparison with British post-war texts will reveal. Two key questions that will be addressed in the course of this chapter are thus: To what extent do these texts represent evasions of the present or critical examinations of it? And is there a difference in this regard between German and British texts, given that British authors were less explicitly involved than German authors in discussions of guilt and failure?

Elizabeth Wilson suggests that many British women writers of the post-war era set their texts in the past, because the dominant narrative of how women's emancipation had been achieved did not allow them to write about their real living-conditions in a more direct way.[23] Niamh

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[20] Inge Stephan, 'Die bösen Mütter: Medea-Mythen und nationale Diskurse in Texten von Elisabeth Langgässer und Christa Wolf', in *Schreiben nach der Wende: Ein Jahrzehnt deutscher Literatur, 1989-1999,* ed. by Gerhard Fischer and David Roberts (Tübingen: Stauffenburg, 2001), pp. 171-80 (p. 171) ['when the national identity is threatened and the subject is uncertain about its self-conception'].

[21] Stephan, 'Die bösen Mütter', p. 171 ['The resurrection of mythical heroes and heroines happens as part of a genealogical discourse, in whose course the relations between the sexes become the actual point of reference for the formation of a national identity.'].

[22] Inge Stephan, 'Weiblicher Heroismus: Zu zwei Dramen von Ilse Langner', in *Frauenliteratur ohne Tradition?: Neun Autorinnenporträts* (Frankfurt a.M.: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1987), pp. 159-89 (p. 181) ['Janus face'].

[23] See Wilson, p. 151.

Baker suggests that there is a subversive character to British post-war texts by women writers; figures, who on the surface complied with traditions, while at the same time 'expressing subversive ideas and depicting a true reality'.[24] According to Baker, 'the questioning of traditional roles assigned to women had, to a certain extent, to go underground in the face of the overwhelming push back to the home that occurred in the immediate postwar period.'[25] This is a convincing explanation for British writers setting their texts in the past and referring to inherited traditions, but I want to propose another, slightly different reason for this tendency. I think that it cannot only be understood as an evasion of contemporary conventions, but also as a more direct act of rebellion and innovation.

In their famous study *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-century Literary Imagination*, Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar describe the female authors' fight against male attempts to define them, which are metaphorically described as 'those mythic masks' that men have put over their faces.[26] In order to move beyond male definitions of women and to create a new image, according to Gilbert and Gubar, a woman writer must indulge in a 'uniquely female process of revision and redefinition', in the course of which they are engaged in 'assaulting and revising, deconstructing and reconstructing those images of women inherited from male literature'.[27] Gilbert and Gubar suggest that female writers are 'revising male genres, using them to record their own dreams and their own stories in disguise', which turns their texts into palimpsests, 'simultaneously conforming to and subverting patriarchal literary standards.'[28] Gilbert and Gubar name myths and fairy tales as the kind of texts which need to be revised, as they 'both state and enforce culture's sentences with greater accuracy than more sophisticated texts'.[29]

Out of this theoretical approach come further core questions that I will address in this chapter. Can, for instance, the German and British post-war writers' way of referring to and retelling traditional stories also be understood as actively engaging in a revisionary process similar to that described by Gilbert and Gubar, updating and deconstructing dominating archetypes as a fundamental precondition to opening up possibilities for debating new female roles and figures? Furthermore, for Gilbert and Gubar, the revisionary process is a uniquely female way of writing

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[24] Niamh Baker, *Happily Ever After?: Women's Fiction in Postwar Britain, 1945-1960* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989), p. 21.
[25] Baker, p. 21.
[26] Gilbert and Gubar, p. 17.
[27] Gilbert and Gubar, p. 73; p. 76.
[28] Gilbert and Gubar, p. 73.
[29] Gilbert and Gubar, p. 36.

in the nineteenth-century. In this chapter I am looking at texts from female and male authors of the post-war period. Can we thus view Gilbert and Gubar's revisionary process as an equally valid form of expression for both male and female authors? Is there still a fundamental difference between the way male and female authors engage with the references, and also in their aims when doing so? I will demonstrate in the course of the chapter that male authors also employ references to female archetypes in their texts. It was not only the women who changed because of the war, but also men who had their world view turned upside down by the horrors which were most directly produced by male actions and were closely connected to the patriarchal structure of the pre-war and war society. Therefore, male authors also saw a need for a shift in gender roles, which they expressed in their texts.

'My Shoes Fit' – No Princess Anymore

Stephen Spender's (1909-1995) short story 'The Fool and the Princess' (1946 and 1957) is one of Spender's lesser known works. The only reference to it in John Sutherland's Spender biography is that the selling of the film rights in 1947 earned Spender 250 pounds.[30] Later Merton Park Studios produced a film with William Sansom as script writer, which Sutherland describes as 'rather inferior'.[31] Besides the exploration of gender roles, Spender's text also critically depicts the state of post-war Germany and the attitude of the allies. These insights might be derived from Spender's own experiences in post-war Germany, where he went after the war as part of the Allied Control Commission with the task of reconstructing libraries and universities. The text tells the story of a returnee from the Second World War, Harvey Granville, who is struggling to integrate back into his life in London. One reason for this is that he is caught between two women, his wife Kate and Moura, also called the princess, who is an inmate at the DP camp in Germany where Harvey used to work.

Although Spender develops a complex net of intertextual references to explore post-war gender roles, including references to Shakespeare's characters Hamlet and Ophelia and religious imagery, I will concentrate on his references to female archetypes deriving from fairy tales, which are woven throughout the text and fundamentally contribute to its structure. That fairy tales are the central intertext of 'The Fool and the Princess' is indeed already suggested by its title, which alludes to actual fairy tales like Beauty and the Beast, Brother and Sister or Hänsel and Gretel. But the reference to fairy tales and the archetypal gender roles of prince and princess is also made explicit in the text by Kate, after Harvey has told her about his experiences in

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[30] See John Sutherland, *Stephen Spender: The Authorized Biography* (London: Penguin, 2005), p. 332.
[31] Sutherland, p. 332.

Germany and his connection to another woman. Kate unmasks Harvey's understanding of his relationship with Moura as being based on fairy tale gender roles: 'I see. You imagine you're a sort of fairy-prince who slips the glass slipper or something on the foot of the princess who's a beggar-maid.'[32] Here, Kate's words suggest clearly that Cinderella forms a possible intertext for 'The Fool and the Princess'. Yet Spender does not just retell this old story in a more contemporary setting; he changes it significantly and uses it to advance, ridicule and ultimately to destroy the traditional gender roles it promotes, thereby actively engaging in a revisionary process similar to that theorized by Gilbert and Gubar.

The three different scripts for gender roles put forward in Cinderella, and adopted and reinterpreted by Spender, are the prince, the princess and the ugly step sisters, who want to become princesses as well. These roles are clearly distributed among the characters of the short story.

First, Harvey obviously sees himself in the role of the fairy tale prince, a noble and powerful man, desired by all women, able to change their lives and help them fulfil their only goal in life, which is to get married. That there is a strong ambivalence in Harvey's role, however, is already suggested in the title, which characterises him not as a prince, but rather as a fool. Throughout the whole text, the narrative voice seems to undermine and even work against Harvey's idealised image of himself. By, for example, describing Harvey's reaction to a completely understandable question by Kate as 'a faintly superior, embarrassed, handsome smile', or his feeling towards himself as 'this deadly self-satisfaction', the narrator has already implicitly sown doubts about Harvey's character, which Kate makes explicit later.[33]

What exactly turns Harvey into a fool, then? One aspect of Harvey's foolishness, and one of his flaws, is that he lives more in his own fantasies than in reality. In fact, his relationship with Moura, which later develops into at least a close friendship, is initially a figment of his imagination. He describes to Kate how for quite a long time after having seen Moura for the first time, he did not actually want to meet her and talk to her. He preferred the image he had of her and the two of them together in his mind: 'Sometimes I feel that I knew her before we met […] Thinking about her and imagining being with her became such a joy that it was another reason for not trying to meet her. I felt that I could wait. I wanted to wait. I even felt that I knew her better through just waiting.'[34] By describing their relationship like this Harvey already

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[32] Stephen Spender, 'The Fool and the Princess', in *Stephen Spender: Engaged in Writing and The Fool and the Princess* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1958), pp. 157-239 (p. 167).
[33] Spender, p. 164; p. 173.
[34] Spender, p. 163.

reveals that the close connection which he sees between him and Moura is actually based more on his fantasy than on Moura as a person, or on any actual interaction between them.

More than anything else, Moura offers Harvey a role, which he is more than happy to accept. He wants to be the prince of a fairy tale, saving a woman in need, having power over, and responsibility for her life. Therefore, Harvey is very proud of having managed to keep Moura and her family in the camp, and of having saved them from being sent back to the East, which they dread: 'I wangled for them not to be sent back. I can't even tell you how I did that. It all depends, though, on my keeping an eye on their situation.'[35] Harvey has a sense of responsibility for the women in the camp, which makes him feel strong: 'I am the only person who has the power to dispel the cloud for them. Yes, that's it, owing to the luck of my situation, I can bring some light into their lives.'[36] The war years have boosted Harvey's confidence in himself and his abilities: 'It isn't that I've bettered myself at all, he said, but with the same irrepressible flare of satisfaction that made the room seem suddenly too small to hold such triumph.'[37] This quotation again reveals how the narrative voice, in its description of Harvey and his metaphorical 'flare', undermines his self-portrayal.

The role Harvey assumes at the camp and in relation to Moura fits in nicely with a more general change in Harvey, which he claims had already begun before he left for Germany. In Harvey's eyes he became a better person in the moment that he met the acclaimed author Duncan Ballard in a hospital, who showed interest in Harvey's writing and became a mentor of him: 'I began to educate myself.'[38] Harvey's sense of superiority grows as he talks to Duncan and is supported in his writing: 'Then he made an effort to shake off once more this deadly self-satisfaction which parodied a change which he felt really an improvement in himself, parodied even his love.'[39] For Harvey, his story of the war and post-war years is the success story of a man who became more educated, more important and more powerful. But Spender makes clear that Harvey is actually more of a fool than a hero. He greatly overestimates his own strengths and abilities, and is blinded by the fantasy image of himself that he has created. This, for example, becomes clear in a story which Duncan Ballard relates, who wanted to support Harvey's wish to become a teacher. When he offers Harvey a real opportunity to teach, Harvey suddenly declines the offer, because 'he had discovered himself to be too good for education'.[40] Harvey

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[35] Spender, p. 166.
[36] Spender, p. 167.
[37] Spender, p. 172.
[38] Spender, p. 173.
[39] Spender, p. 173.
[40] Spender, p. 183.

and a group of friends have realised, all by themselves, that they are destined for far more than just teaching: 'they all knew from certain extraordinary conversations they had had that they were "geniuses."'[41]

The only change that Harvey really has undergone in the war years is that he has become arrogant, and developed an unrealistic picture of himself and of the people around him. There is one highly comical scene which brings out in the clearest way how the text ridicules Harvey's character and his understanding of himself. His infatuation with his own greatness and ambitions becomes obvious when he worries about his little son's exposure to other children beneath his own, and especially his father's, social standing and level of educational achievement:

> When Geoff saw Dunky he let out a kind of yell, a blood-curdling D-o-n-k! threw himself on to the ground in a horrible way and started rolling about, shouting 'Donkee!' And Dunky became transformed at the same moment into Geoff's utterly base and vulgar world. It wasn't important, but I saw very clearly then what I am afraid of – I am afraid of little Duncan being sucked down into that world.[42]

It is Kate who, at this point and in many other cases, questions Harvey and reveals his foolishness: 'Oh, but boys must be boys! Do have some sense, Harvey!'[43] It is ridiculous that Harvey expects to find great education and decorum in a toddler who is hardly able to speak or walk. That the meeting of these two toddlers for Harvey represents a frightening vulgarity reveals that he is out of touch with his own son's development and also that Harvey has no understanding of real greatness and empathetic education.

Harvey's foolishness is a combination of an overestimation of his own capabilities and of his living in fantasies rather than in reality. By turning the fairy tale prince into a fool, Spender ridicules and destroys the traditional male role of the strong, superior sex. Men may feel even more empowered by war and by the roles they take on in it, but they are actually only fools, dazzled by the spell of the traditional male gender role as portrayed in fairy tales. Spender also reveals these roles to be outdated through his portrayal of the female characters in his short story, which contrast with Harvey and lay open his flaws and weaknesses, as I will now demonstrate.

Kate originally finds herself in the role of the ugly stepsister whose only aim in life it is to marry the prince, and who would do everything to be the prince's chosen one, while the prince is

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[41] Spender, p. 183.
[42] Spender, p. 173.
[43] Spender, pp. 173-74.

actually only looking out for his true princess. The role ascribed to Kate by Harvey is one of a weak, dependent woman, turning evil and ugly over a man's rejection of her. But Kate is the very opposite of an ugly stepsister from the fairy tale. She defies traditional stereotypes and the gender role assigned to her by Harvey and instead becomes a new, positive image of a strong, independent and realistic woman. After having uncovered Harvey's fairy tale staging, she immediately realises her own supposed role in this story, which she then clearly declines and opposes: '"I hope I'm not hurting you too much, Kate." "Oh no, my shoes fit," she said, a bit acidulously.'[44] While the stepsisters in Cinderella either cut off their own toes or have them cut off by their mother, in order to fit in the shoes of the future princess – desperately trying to comply with male expectations – Kate's own shoes fit. She refuses to change or hurt herself only to win a man or to fulfil his expectations. Kate is not willing to take on the role which is envisaged for her by Harvey and the fairy tale. In the course of the whole text she is portrayed as a strong woman.

One of Kate's positive characteristics, which also contrasts her with the fool, Harvey, is her firm grasp of reality. She prefers to hear all about her husband's adventures in Germany with another woman rather than not knowing anything and being left to imagine the worst: '"I hope that I don't make you feel too miserable." "I don't mind so much now you've told me the truth. It's what I imagined that makes me so miserable."'[45] Kate recognises Harvey's foolishness, and questions him and the picture he has created of himself as a man in the prince's role. For example, Kate questions Harvey's plan to go back to Germany every six months to see Moura, and points out to him the necessity of working and earning money in order to be able to travel, something which Harvey, up to this point, had not considered necessary: '"I'd like very much to know what you're waiting for." He flushed. […] "How will you afford all this? How will you afford the travelling you plan to do, for one thing?"'[46] Furthermore, Kate disavows Harvey of the notion that he is highly intelligent and very well educated, as well as of the belief that he has a special relationship to Duncan Ballard, which falls apart in the course of the story as Ballard realises Harvey's actual lack of skill: 'Duncan Ballard can write novels and earn good money from them. He may have taught you to read but he can't teach you to write and be clever like he is. Yet you talk like him and try to write. But Duncan Ballard won't make you into a J. B. Priestly.'[47] Finally, Kate tries to destroy all of Harvey's fantasies about him and the princess in Germany by providing a realistic take on it: 'It's absurd for a Displaced Person to be a

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[44] Spender, p. 167.
[45] Spender, p. 168.
[46] Spender, p. 171.
[47] Spender, p. 174.

Princess. I'm very sorry for her, but the fact is that she's a beggar and she's nothing more. […] She can't make you a prince but she may make you and all of us beggars.'[48] What might seem like a lack of sympathy is actually only Kate's hard realism.

All of these examples show that Kate is the strong and realistic person in the marriage. She sees everything clearly and is able to identify and challenge Harvey's foolishness. There are moments in the text when even Harvey seems to admit to Kate's superiority over him. It is then that he fears her: 'Her calm made him feel frightened'; 'She looked steadily at him with wide eyes in which there was an expression which terrified him.'[49] Kate is the first female figure in the text to free herself from the traditional, fairy tale gender role assigned to her. She is not the ugly stepsister and would-be princess, doing everything to get the prince; she is not the dreamer in the relationship, still believing in obsolete gender roles. At the end of the text, when Duncan has brought Kate with him to Paris, where they want to meet up with Harvey on his way back from Germany, Kate's position has been strengthened even more, which Harvey cannot fail to notice: 'She was completely absorbed in the task, very self-possessed, and seemed protected by a glow of independence, an invisible shirt of flame.'[50] By contrasting Harvey's negative 'irrepressible flare of satisfaction' with Kate's positive 'glow of independence', the opposition of the characters is also stressed metaphorically.[51]

Whether the couple will remain together is left open at the end of the text. There are conflicting signs pointing in different directions. On the one hand, Harvey seems to have come to the understanding that Kate is not the woman he always believed her to be, that she has freed herself from his definition of her: 'It was as though he had never known her, as though she stood always at the end of a long tunnel which was their botched marriage.'[52] This could be the first step to a new relationship between them. On the other hand, though, Harvey still does not seem to be able to let go of his fairy tale dreams, now placing Kate in the role of the princess, which, as the reader knows by now, she will never accept: 'In one of those flashes that seem perfect in their own instant and then meaningless immediately afterwards, his relationship with Moura, who had just gone away, and this other woman lying, like a princess, on her bed in the satin of her flesh, seemed identical.'[53] The fact that Harvey speaks of Kate, his wife, only as 'this other woman' again stresses the point that he feels alienated from her and sees her in a different

[48] Spender, p. 174.
[49] Spender, p. 169; p. 175.
[50] Spender, p. 219.
[51] Spender, p. 172; p. 219.
[52] Spender, p. 237.
[53] Spender, p. 238.

light.[54] But this new light does not seem to be more realistic than the previous one. The princess, lying on the bed, recalls the fairy tale setting of The Sleeping Beauty, who has to be wakened and saved by a kiss from a prince. Therefore, all that Harvey seems to have changed is the fairy tale intertext. His princess is no longer Cinderella, but The Sleeping Beauty. Moura, who left him, is replaced by Kate.

The second central female character in the text is Moura, who in the German DP camp is known by other inmates and the Allied personnel as the princess. Although this sobriquet seems to have been spread mainly by Moura's mother and its validity is unclear, in Harvey's eyes it, nonetheless, puts Moura quite naturally in the role of the poor but beautiful fairy tale princess, who is only waiting for her prince to save her from her miserable life and fulfil all of her dreams. It is true that Harvey helps her and her family to stay in the camp and that she is really thankful for this, but still Moura is not the princess that Harvey imagines her to be. First of all, Moura seems to be educated, and establishes herself as an important and well-liked figure in the camp. Moura, who speaks multiple languages, used to be a teacher and takes on the job as interpreter in the camp, which makes her an important and necessary person for enabling the men's work.[55]

When Harvey, against all odds, returns to the camp in Germany for the first of his many envisaged visits to Moura, he is forced to admit that things have changed and are not at all the way he had imagined them to be. While he was so proud of having enabled Moura and her family to stay in the DP camp, and obviously believes this to be a durable solution, Moura and her family have other plans. They will be going to Australia soon to begin a new life. Moura is not just accepting passively, what Harvey has arranged for her, but she moves on and creates a different future for herself. Moura is probably less dependent on Harvey than he is on her, as he reveals when he tells her how much he needs her to make him a better person:

> I came back for selfish reasons, because I can't do without you. With you, I am quite different from what I am with anyone else. You just said that you have never known me selfish: that is because you have only known me as I am with you. When I'm away from you, I'm someone quite different. Obviously I'm selfish to my own family, in my life I'm just as dishonest as everyone else I know.[56]

But Moura refuses to be just the object of Harvey's self-improvement. She has thought about their relationship as well, which surprises Harvey: 'Don't you realize that I have thought of things too?'[57] Again it is the woman who sees things realistically and who bursts Harvey's

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[54] Spender, p. 238.
[55] See Spender, p. 165.
[56] Spender, pp. 211-12.
[57] Spender, p. 213.

dream-bubble. Moura points out that they do not really know each other, that their relationship owes more to the unnatural surroundings of the camp and to Harvey's fantasy, than to any reliable reality: "'But we don't really know one another. Harvey, we don't know one another –'" He could only protest, idiotically: "But haven't I just been saying that I do know you?" "You know me as I am here, and you've been saying that I know you as you are here. But that's different. Until now, you haven't even known me as I am at this very moment. You are very surprised…"'[58] By leaving the camp and showing Harvey the hollowness of their relationship, Moura steps out of the princess-role Harvey had assigned to her. She surprises him by rejecting his control and power over her definition of self. There is much more to her than Harvey has ever realised. Just as Kate strongly refused the role of the ugly stepsister, Moura refuses the role of the fairy tale princess. When Harvey asks her about the origin of her soubriquet, he is shocked by her fierce reaction:

> 'Fairy stories of that crazy old woman!' she exclaimed. 'What old woman?' 'My mother!' […] 'She lives on dragging the past into the present! She does just what I want you to swear never to do.' But he had never heard her speak before with this fury. […] A door on to a wide world had been thrust open, and he realized that once outside it, Moura would be an extremely different person.[59]

Moura makes clear that she does not live in the past. She, just like Kate, lives in the reality of the present, and will neither join in nor succumb to her mother's or Harvey's dreaming of the past and fairy-tale fantasies.

The above analysis of Spender's short story provides an example of how post-war gender roles are explored through the referencing of older, traditional texts and female archetypes. The male author engages in the revisionary process later described by Gilbert and Gubar. He reveals fairy-tale-based gender roles to be ridiculous and outdated by turning the prince into a fool and by creating strong female figures who step out of and refuse the role of princesses. Post-war women have moved on, rebelling against traditional gender roles. This text shows that they no longer are, or want to be, fairy tale princesses or ugly step-sisters, giving up everything and completely relying on a man for their happiness. They are strong and realistic, and trying to escape gender roles constructed by men. By referring to older figures and patterns of narration, Spender takes a critical look at the present of post-war Britain, seemingly crossing the line between the sexes, by criticising his own and supporting and empowering the opposite sex.

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[58] Spender, p. 213.
[59] Spender, pp. 215-16.

'He Will Do to Fall in Love With' – From Jane Eyre to Fairy Tale Princess

The writer Elizabeth Taylor (1912-1975), not to be confused with one of the most famous actors of her time, has only been rediscovered by readers and critics in the second half of the 2000s. Her texts often have domestic settings, influenced by her own life which, after she worked as a governess and librarian, was dominated by an attempt at balancing her role as mother and wife with her ambitions of being a writer. But her texts also explore deeper levels of meaning, dealing critically with women's lives and problems under the cover of conventionality and satire.[60]

Taylor's novel *Palladian* (1946) tells the story of a young woman who takes on a job as a governess, falls in love with her employer, and ends up marrying him. As Nicola Beauman points out, the text contains intertextual references to a number of different authors and texts, like Jane Austen, Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights*, novels by E.M. Forster, and also mirrors the writing style of Ivy Compton-Burnett.[61] It is very easy, though, to recognise the story line of Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre* (1847) as the key intertext against which this post-war novel is mainly constructed. Unlike Spender's short-story, Taylor's story is not set in a recognisable post-war surrounding, but rather in an undefined time. Like German authors of the 'innere Emigration', Taylor feared she would be criticised for not directly relating her novel to post-war Britain: 'she still thought she would be censured for sidestepping the post-war world.'[62] While Taylor's biographer Beauman sees *Palladian* as first and foremost 'a romantic satire' and an intellectual game with literary references, and writes that 'the title also warns the reader that the author has no pretensions to political engagement', Taylor's novel can also be read in a very different light: as a highly critical, but also innovative, text about post-war gender roles.[63] While Spender's short story was based on traditional, patriarchal gender roles from fairy tales, Taylor sets out to retell and renew a very different female figure: Jane Eyre. A plausible setup for a novel, following Spender's path, might have been to take this famous literary heroine, an example of a woman's successful fight for emancipation, as a positive role-model for women after the Second World War, but this is not at all what Taylor does. Instead, she deconstructs the positive, strong female archetype that Jane Eyre represents and turns hers back into a story of oppression in marriage, of a sad and dependant life of a wife. In this way, Taylor provides a

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[60] See Namara Smith, 'How the Other Elizabeth Taylor Reconciled Family Life and Art', *New Yorker,* 16 June 2015 <http://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/how-the-other-elizabeth-taylor-reconciled-family-life-and-art> [accessed 6 November 2017].
[61] See Nicola Beauman, *The Other Elizabeth Taylor* (London: Persephone Books, 2009), pp. 161-63.
[62] Beauman, p. 161.
[63] Beauman, p. 158; p. 161.

strong critique of marriage in her time. But Taylor not only criticises and debunks old female archetypes, she also develops a new, strong female figure, which she contrasts with her deconstructed Jane Eyre figure as a signal for the beginning of a new time.

Although the general lines of the plots are very similar, *Palladian* is not a direct retelling of *Jane Eyre*. Cassandra, the main character, is not really a modern Jane, but rather a young woman, who is strongly influenced by her reading of books. What she reads shapes her character, thoughts and actions: 'Cassandra, with all her novel-reading, could be sure of experiencing the proper emotions.'[64] Therefore, when she is offered the position of a governess, she immediately imagines herself in Jane Eyre's shoes. While Harvey in Spender's text is not aware of the fairy-tale setting underlying his relationship to women, Cassandra is very aware of the connection to *Jane Eyre*, which she establishes herself, and she actively aspires to this role. Cassandra understands the profession of a governess in the following way: 'She was setting out with nothing to commend her to such a profession, beyond the fact of her school lessons being fresh still in her mind and, along with that, a very proper willingness to fall in love, the more despairingly the better, with her employer.'[65] In the moment in which Cassandra accepts her new position as governess, her life becomes predestined by her own expectations. It is pointed out by some critics that Cassandra's name could be an allusion to Jane Austen's sister, but Cassandra also is the name of the ancient seer, whose fate it was to know and tell the future but not to be believed.[66] In a way, Taylor's Cassandra also is a seer. She knows what her future is going to look like, because she herself models it from her imaginings as derived from books.

So when Cassandra gets to Cropthorne Manor, a name which recalls Bronte's Thornfield, her first meeting with her new employer Marion is overshadowed by Cassandra's expectations drawn from her reading of Jane Eyre, expecting Marion to act like Mr. Rochester: 'She was hollowed by the fear of his cold, dissecting glance, the probability of calm sarcasm, of utter ruthlessness in conversation.'[67] She also expects herself to act like Jane does in the novel, but already fails in the first meeting to live up to the aspired role: 'She knew that Jane Eyre had answered up better than that to her Mr. Rochester.'[68] But that does not stop Cassandra from following the plot and from being relieved that Marion seems feasible material to fall in love

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[64] Elizabeth Taylor, *Palladian* (London: Virago, 2011), p. 1.
[65] Taylor, p. 13.
[66] See Beauman, p. 161.
[67] Taylor, p. 32.
[68] Taylor, p. 32.

with, which she then, of course, does: '"He will do to fall in love with," Cassandra thought with some relief.'[69]

While on the surface Taylor's novel seems to follow the plot of Jane Eyre, there are also early signs of a change in the story: an incipient deconstruction and reinterpretation of it. Before arriving at Cropthorne Manor, Cassandra, the seer, has a dark premonition of her future life, which is associated with pain: '"Marion Vanbrugh is not a name that promises well," she thought, as she got into bed and struck her toe upon the stone bottle.'[70] Her exploration of her new room as governess is connected to an image of confinement: 'She crossed the threadbare, pink-wreathed carpet and looked out of the window, learning her new limits, like a prisoner going for the first time into his cell.'[71] As the story unfolds further, it transpires that Cassandra is no Jane Eyre and Marion no Mr. Rochester, and that the story of their love and marriage is not one of successful female emancipation. Taylor's story is very different from Bronte's story, which Gilbert and Gubar describe as an 'optimistic portrait of an egalitarian relationship'.[72]

While Mr. Rochester, in his first meeting with Jane Eyre 'appears the very essence of patriarchal energy, Cinderella's prince as a middle-aged warrior', Marion's most prominent characteristic is his effeminacy, which is already inherent in his name: '"His!" I thought, "Marion! His!" But I discovered that it was one of these names like Evelyn or Hilary or Lindsay that can be either. With an "o", you see. But "o" or not, I think it rather girlish for a grown man.'[73] Marion's lack of manly appearance and behaviour had caused him to have a tough time at school: 'Marion, with his gentleness, his cleverness, his girlish ways was such fair game at school, among other boys.'[74] But also later on in his life, his girlishness continues to be remarked upon: '"The bridegroom is charming?" "Well […] He was very civil and… he is not a very masculine type. By that I mean he looks delicate in a girlish sort of way."'[75] It is one of Taylor's ironic turns that Marion, of all possible types of men, who is described as being quite unfit for the role of imposing patriarchal power, takes on the dominant role in his relationship with Cassandra. While Jane Eyre first leaves Mr. Rochester because of her lack of independence and equality in their relationship, and only returns to him later, once she has gained complete independence

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[69] Taylor, p. 35.
[70] Taylor, p. 10.
[71] Taylor, p. 17.
[72] Gilbert and Gubar, p. 369.
[73] Gilbert and Gubar, p. 351; Taylor, p. 9.
[74] Taylor, p. 69.
[75] Taylor, p. 184.

and their relationship can be one of equals, the relationship between Cassandra and Marion turns out to be very different.

Like Jane, who appears childish to Mr. Rochester when they first meet, Cassandra is often figured as childish by Marion: '"She is like a good child – curiously empty," he decided.'; 'She was a child merely, to be led into so dark, so lonely a wilderness as his heart.'[76] Cassandra shows no signs of a rebellion against this construction of her, even when she discovers how much Marion is still, and will always be, clinging to the idealised image of his dead wife, Violet: 'She guessed that the dead one was an undisputed barrier between him and life, a barrier he would never challenge, a fixed standard by which all else would inevitably fail.'[77] Cassandra's only objective is to follow Jane Eyre's steps as a governess and marry her employer. To her, this is all the happiness she can ever ask for. She does not seem to have understood the existential fight for emancipation that Jane had to engage in before marrying. When Cassandra leaves Cropthorne Manor after the death of her pupil Sophy, hers is not a flight into independence. Her only other option to being married is to end up as an old, lonely schoolmistress, like Mrs. Turner. This, again, mirrors Jane's acceptance of her role in the village school, but while this position offers Jane an opportunity of growth and independence, there seem to be no such hopes connected to Cassandra's possible life as a schoolmistress. For Cassandra, there are no better options than marriage, as Baker puts it, 'Cassandra flees from one dead-end only to embrace another.'[78] Cassandra and Marion's reunion after her flight echoes the reunion of Jane and Mr. Rochester, only under reversed signs. It is not Jane leading the blind Mr. Rochester into an egalitarian relationship, but rather Marion taking hold of his possession, Cassandra, and leading her like a blind person into their stilted relationship: 'Taking the book from her hands, he carried it to the counter and paid for it and then, with her elbow in his hand, brought her out – as if she were a sleep-walker, or blind – into the quiet iris-coloured dusk and along the pavement.'[79]

The prospects for the married couple seem dim. Cassandra, who never got to know anything else, believes their rather cold and passionless relationship to be real love: '"It has happened to me," she thought, combing her hair away from her temples. "Love has happened to me." And she laid down the comb and moving stiffly as if she were frozen went downstairs.'[80] The couple

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[76] Taylor, p. 48; p. 138.
[77] Taylor, p. 48.
[78] Baker, p. 47.
[79] Taylor, pp. 176-77.
[80] Taylor, p. 134.

will stay in Cropthorne Manor, a house which has always been closely associated with death.[81] This is affirmed again in the final scene of the novel, which suggests a very negative outlook for the inhabitants' future: 'The hen pecked between the cracks of the terrace paving stones and wandered into the hall. But as the dark shadows of indoors fell coldly across it like a knife, it turned and tottered back into the sunshine.'[82]

By taking away from it all her emancipatory effort and success, Taylor deconstructs the positive and strong female figure of Jane Eyre. In some way, she therefore does the opposite of what Gilbert and Gubar describe as female writers' revisionary process and also the opposite of what Spender does in his text. While Spender deconstructs patriarchal gender roles by showing women stepping out of and freeing themselves from the role as fairy tale princesses, Taylor turns the story of Jane Eyre back into a typical fairy tale story, in which a patriarchal understanding of gender roles dominates. Taylor reveals her critical view on these gender roles, however, by suggesting a future for her characters which does not seem to comply with the typical 'happily ever after' ending of fairy tales. According to Baker, *Jane Eyre* can be read as a reversal of *The Sleeping Beauty*, 'where Rochester plays the distressed maiden and is first "rescued" by Jane […] at Ferndean, a house surrounded by dense woods and hidden away from the world, where Rochester, confined by his blindness and half dead, awaits Jane to bring him back to life.'[83] This reversal of the original fairy tale by Bronte is reversed again by Taylor. Her text also makes this connection to fairy tales, as a second intertext, explicit: '"She has made the change from governess to mistress of the house very charmingly," said Tinty. "It is like one of the fairy-tales."'[84]

Although Taylor's deconstruction of a positive female archetype at first sight seems to oppose Gilbert and Gubar's revisionary process, it actually follows the same aims. With her text, Taylor expresses her doubts about successful past emancipations and stresses the point that in these post-war days, marriage is still, or again, more of a prison for many women than the fulfilment of an independent life and egalitarian relationship. Taylor's text therefore is a critique and maybe also a warning regarding traditional, patriarchal gender roles addressed to women lapsing back into a hollow vision of the past, or into imagination.

In *Palladian*, Taylor criticises or warns against female archetypes and stereotypes, even if they are inspired by seemingly positive ones like Jane Eyre. Cassandra's downfall is partly grounded

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[81] See Baker, p. 90.
[82] Taylor, p. 191.
[83] Baker, p. 170.
[84] Taylor, p. 189.

in her excessive reading, but also misreading of books. This, on the one hand, is a critique of Cassandra, who sticks to role models she finds in books, instead of thinking for herself. Her false reading of Jane Eyre as a simple love-story between a governess and her employer, without the struggle for emancipation, delivers her to her unfortunate fate. But Taylor not only criticises Cassandra's reading of the text, but also the text itself and the dubious power of female archetypes in general. Such archetypes can be deceptive if an individual cannot decipher them correctly, but also if the reality that the individual lives in does not offer the idealised path of Jane Eyre's growth to independence. Not everyone has a rich uncle, passing on a small fortune, and not everyone, when running away from oppression, ends up by sheer luck on the doorstep of a long-lost, but finally loving and supporting family. By showing its devastating effect on Cassandra, Taylor indirectly also questions the practicability and value of Bronte's book as a role model to aspire to. The path of a governess only very rarely leads to emancipation.

But Taylor does not leave her readers with only the negative image of Cassandra, a Jane Eyre turned back into a fairy tale princess. Instead, she also creates a new, strong female figure, similar to, but possibly even more independent than, Kate and Moura in 'The Fool and the Princess'. The doctor Margaret, Marion's cousin, is not a dreamer, but a strong and independent woman, who does not share the fate of many more independent female characters who end up as lonely spinsters. Although she admittedly only plays a minor role in the context of the novel as a whole, I still want to stress her centrality as a female figure, which sharply contrasts with Cassandra, and which also is not modelled on any of the other female characters of the intertext, *Jane Eyre.*

Margaret lives in Marion's house, but she is eager to stress the fact that she is not his guest, she does not receive favours from him. She pays for her stay, and in this way actually aids him with his financial difficulties: '"After all, you live here…" "No. I am staying here… there is a difference." "If you are a guest then your sarcasm is all the more awkward." "How can I be a guest when I pay him thirty-five shillings a week?"'[85] Margaret lives outside of the patriarchal hierarchy of Cropthorne Manor: 'Margaret seemed to have established herself with or without Marion's permission.'[86] She is neither afraid of telling Marion her true opinion nor of standing up for her own beliefs: '"Now", she said, polishing her engagement ring […] "Well, I wish you would speak to Tom." "Speak to Tom! He is a person, not a child. Even if he were a child, I am not his nurse." "Then don't behave like one."'[87] Margaret analyses Marion's faults very clearly

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[85] Taylor, p. 20.
[86] Taylor, p. 42.
[87] Taylor, pp. 71-72.

and is not afraid to point them out to him openly: 'You draw on the old stuff, but you lay nothing down. Like everything else you do. You just hope it will last you out – this house, your bit of money, your mode of life, your wine.'[88] Margaret is the person who keeps the family together and whose good reputation shines on the whole family, especially on the men, as Marion and Tom also know:

> 'Margaret makes up for us both,' he said aloud. 'Look at her energy and her worthiness and her public spirit – all the Committees and the petitions and the campaigns.' 'And now a baby', said Tom.
>
> 'You must remember his cousin, Margaret Vanbrugh?' 'Ah, she was a capable, nice girl.' So Margaret made everything right for Marion, her capability cancelled his effeminacy.[89]

In addition to being a strong and independent woman, Margaret is also a loving wife in an apparently happy marriage, and is expecting a child. She is married to Ben, who is almost completely absent from the text. He never appears in person and is only mentioned very rarely. But when he is mentioned by Margaret, it is always very positively. She seems to love and miss him, and she also sees him as a better man than Marion or Tom: '"How typical!" cried Margaret. "A houseful of young men and no one can mend a fuse." […] "Oh, Ben!" She thought. "How I miss you! You would have had the house ablaze with light ages ago."'[90] Margaret does not share the fate of many women who were unwilling to succumb to the traditional female stereotypes of housewife and mother who became spinsters, but she combines the best of both worlds, a seemingly happy marriage and independence.

While Marion lives in the past, Margaret lives in the present, as well as looking to the future through her pregnancy. Margaret deals with her pregnancy in a very rational way: 'She was very brisk and ordinary about her pregnancy; it made no difference, she seemed to infer.'[91] But her mother, Aunt Tinty, would prefer her daughter to behave in a more traditional way, suffering more from her separation from her husband and being more reliant on her: 'Tinty had gone to see if Margaret needed anything; would have been so happy to have found her lying on the bed and wanting a cup of tea or eau-de-cologne, weeping for Ben, maybe ("Mother, you are all I have"), softened miraculously by approaching motherhood. The bed had not been lain upon.'[92] But Margaret complies neither with her mother's expectations, nor with the traditional female role in general. It is interesting to note that in both Spender's and Taylor's texts, mothers are

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[88] Taylor, p. 99.
[89] Taylor, p. 63; p. 184.
[90] Taylor, p. 125.
[91] Taylor, p. 49.
[92] Taylor, p. 51.

portrayed as supporting more traditional, patriarchal gender roles, as seen above in the cases of both Margaret's and Moura's mothers, the latter clinging on to the image of her daughter as a princess. Therefore, both texts seem to be critical of women from the older generation, who do not support their daughters' fight for a different role and more independence.

That Margaret and Cassandra are diametrically opposed characters is made clear in the text by Margaret's old blue dress, which she hands on to Cassandra, because it does not fit her anymore. But Cassandra, and everybody else in the house, see that the dress from Margaret just does not suit her: 'But the frock was Margaret and could not be otherwise.'; '"That dress. Don't be made to wear it out of kindness. It is so much Margaret. Not you."'[93] The dress makes it outwardly clear to everyone that Cassandra and Margaret are two very distinct types of women. While Cassandra is trapped in her books and has even regressed from Jane Eyre back to a fairy tale princess in the trapped, Grimm sense, Margaret seems to be Taylor's ideal of the new woman, combining strength and independence with love and maternity, completely free from the confinements of female archetypes. However, when taking into account the only marginal role of Margaret in the novel, compared to Cassandra, Taylor's text overall is still dominated by her critique of her time and a pessimistic view of the situation of women. Her positive image is less visible and therefore stays weak.

Like Spender, Taylor criticises and opposes traditional, patriarchal gender roles, and contrasts them with a new, stronger and more independent type of woman. Taylor also uses a reference to female archetypes to express her criticisms and her vision, but unlike Spender, and Gilbert's and Gubar's original revisionary process, Taylor expands the process by deconstructing a seemingly positive, female-authored archetype to critique her time, and uses it as a negative foil for her new, empowered woman. As the above analysis has revealed, though, the general method and motif of referring to past examples and figures in order to comment on, criticise and potentially change gender roles in post-war times can be found in Spender's, as well as Taylor's, texts.

'Denn diesmal werd ich nicht das Opfer bringen' – Violent and Fanatic Women

Ilse Langner (1899-1987) received the nickname 'Penthesilea' after having written her first big literary success, the drama *Frau Emma kämpft im Hinterland* (1929), which caused a sensation because it focused on the fate of women during war, instead of male experiences in the midst of the battle. As an ironic reaction to her critics, Langner set her next drama, called *Die*

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[93] Taylor, p. 82; p. 96.

Amazonen (1933), in antiquity. Although her works could not be published or performed in Nazi Germany, Langner continued to write plays, some of which were published after the war. Langner's prose drama *Mord in Mykene*, which she wrote during the fascist period, is the only one of Langner's mythological dramas which was ever performed.[94] It is the earliest version of Langner's verse drama *Klytämnestra* (1947).[95] Langner received some literary prizes in post-war Germany, but she and her works are mostly forgotten today.[96]

Klytämnestra is the only one of the texts discussed in this chapter which not only employs references or allusions to older texts and female archetypes, but which is an actual retelling of the original myth, set in antiquity with the original characters. Langner's text retells the story of how Agamemnon, returning to his home Mykene after ten years of battle for Troy as a victor, is killed by his wife Klytämnestra and her lover Aegisth. Langner changes some things about the original story – most importantly, although the myth focuses on the fate of the hero Agamemnon, Langner, as the title already suggests, shifts her focus to the queen. This changing of mythical stories is not a phenomenon exclusive to the post-war years; myths have been revised since antiquity. According to Vöhler, Seidensticker and Emmerich the possibility of variation is a generic characteristic of myths: 'Mythen sind traditionelle Geschichten, die sich dadurch auszeichnen, daß sie immer wieder neu erzählt werden können. Sie existieren nicht, wie heilige Texte, in einer geschützten, unveränderbaren Form sondern grundsätzlich im Modus der Variation.'[97]

Clytemnestra as a female archetype is a conflicted figure. There are two different traditions of her portrayal. In the classical Aeschylean tradition, Clytemnestra belongs to 'the damned in Western civilization', she is a destructive and inherently evil female figure.[98] In a second, feminist tradition, however, Clytemnestra has been revised and reinterpreted as a woman suffering under patriarchy. Her deed is explained and in many ways also excused.[99] Edith Hall explains that 'feminist authors have read Clytemnestra's criminality as a response to unbearable

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[94] See Stephan, 'Weiblicher Heroismus', p. 181 and Catherine C. Marshall, 'Ilse Langner's "Klytämnestra": A Feminist Response to the Rhetoric of War', *Women in German Yearbook*, 14 (1998), pp. 183-99 (p. 184).
[95] See Marshall, p. 184.
[96] See Stephan, 'Weiblicher Heroismus', pp. 159-64.
[97] Martin Vöhler, Bernd Seidensticker and Wolfgang Emmerich, 'Zum Begriff der Mythenkorrektur', in *Mythenkorrekturen: Zu einer paradoxalen Form der Mythenrezeption*, ed. by Martin Vöhler and Bernd Seidensticker (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2005), pp. 1-18 (p. 2) ['Myths are traditional stories that are characterised by the fact that they can be told anew again and again. They do not exist, like holy texts, in a protected and unchangeable form but they, as a matter of principle, exist in the mode of variation.'].
[98] Marshall, p. 185.
[99] See Stephan, 'Weiblicher Heroismus', p. 182.

patriarchal oppression'.[100] This second, more positive figure of Clytemnestra can already be understood as a product of a revisionary process similar to the one described by Gilbert and Gubar.[101] And this process did not just begin with the rise of feminism, but Michelakis stresses the fact that 'we can already see the tendency to correct the moral and narrative framework of Aeschylus's *Agamemnon* in fifth-century Athens', as 'the redefinition of Clytemnestra not as a victimizer but as a victim of Aegisthus and her passions […] are evident in the work of Sophocles and Euripides'.[102] This interpretation of Clytemnestra can also be found in the work of Seneca.[103] Ilse Langner in her post-war version of Klytämnestra interestingly does not follow the line of positive and feminist interpretations and revaluations of the figure, but her Klytämnestra is much closer to the traditional, patriarchal portrayal of her as a negative and dangerous female archetype, as 'a challenge to patriarchy unparalleled in Greek tragedy'.[104] Therefore, Langner's writing can be interpreted in two different ways. First, one could say that Langner, in contrast to the other authors discussed, deliberately refrains from engaging in the revisionary process of female archetypes. Or, secondly, Langner employs the same method, but instead of refashioning the traditional, patriarchal Clytemnestra figure, she deconstructs the more positive, feminist figure of Clytemnestra.

While, by referring to female archetypes, Spender and Taylor mainly criticise patriarchal gender roles, Langner, as I will demonstrate, uses the mythical figure of Clytemnestra primarily to express a strong critique of women and to question their behaviour during and after the war.[105] However, this does not mean that Langner supports a patriarchal society; men are at least as guilty as women. Langner expresses her negative opinion about women in times of war not only in her literary text, but also in her essay 'Mutter Berlin an ihre Töchter' (1946), which contains a strong indictment of women's complicity with men:

> Unserer Zeit gebührt Menschlichkeit. Ihr aber glaubt immer noch an die Heilkraft der Männlichkeit. Das Leben, das ihr lebtet, war ja das Leben des Mannes. Ihr führtet es nach seinen Ideen, ihr strebtet danach, euch nach seinen hehren Idealen zu vervollkommnen. Seine Kriege […] seine mordlüsternen Angriffsattacken, sie waren euch selbst heilig und unabwendbar geworden.[106]

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[100] Edith Hall, 'Aeschylus' Clytemnestra versus her Senecan Tradition', in *Agamemnon in Performance 458 BC to AD 2004*, ed. by Fiona Macintosh and others (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 53-75 (p. 55).
[101] See Marshall, p. 185.
[102] Pantelis Michelakis, 'Introduction: Agamemnons in Performance', in *Agamemnon in Performance 458 BC to AD 2004*, ed. by Fiona Macintosh and others (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 1-20 (p. 8).
[103] See Michelakis, pp. 8-9.
[104] Hall, p. 54.
[105] See also Kutch, p. 190 and p. 201.
[106] Ilse Langner, 'Mutter Berlin an ihre Töchter', in *Berliner Almanach 1947*, ed. by Walther G. Oschilewski and Lothar Blanvalet (Berlin: Lothar Blanvalet, 1946), pp. 18-30 (p. 28) ['Our time requires humanity. But you still believe in the healing power of masculinity. The life, that you lived, was the life of a man. You led it according

Superficially, though, Langner's play begins with the description of an almost utopian reign of Klytämnestra in Mykene. The queen is, at first sight, a positive figure. During Agamemnon's absence, she has ruled Mykene wisely. Even men have to respect her for her increasing the fertility of the land: 'Verwalter: "Hieß golden einst Myken nach seinen Schätzen, | Jetzt heißt es golden nach des Weizens Gold!" | So reden längst die Alten dir zum Lobe.'[107] Klytämnestra has not just successfully continued ruling Mykene the way that Agamemnon did before his departure, but she has put her very own stamp on her reign by banning violence from her kingdom and by promoting peace as the basic principle of her state.[108] She even forbids war and battle games played by children, including her own son Orest: 'In meinem Haus herrscht unverbrüchlich Frieden! | Der Königssohn soll nicht mit Schwertern klirren | Und Kampfeslüste spielerisch erwecken, | Die ich zehn Jahre mühsam hab gebannt.'[109] Klytämnestra says that she hates war and violence, as she sees their negative consequences every day: 'Allein den Krieg vergöttern, den ich hasse! | Weil er der Griechen Land um Sagen reicher, | Um Männer und um Wohlstand ärmer macht!'.[110]

This description of Klytämnestra's reign seems to chime with debates in post-war Germany about 'women's inherently peaceful nature', to which Langner's theoretical and non-literary writing contributed.[111] In her writings, paradoxically, Langner advocates the peaceful nature of women and their moral superiority, which derives from such an attitude.[112] This seems contradictory to the critique Langner voices of women during the Second World War, for example in her essay quoted above. Although Langner, in general, believes in the peaceful nature of women and in their superiority, she is very critical of the women in wartime and post-war Germany. Kutch describes Langner's theory 'as a smooth and durable line of necessarily female-led peacemaking initiatives marred by intermittent peaks of female-supported violence'.[113] In Langner's eyes, the period of the Second World War definitely is one of the violent peaks in history, which in part had its roots in women's failure to fulfil their task of

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to his ideas, you sought to perfect yourself according to his noble ideals. His wars [...] his murderous attacks, had become sacred and inevitable to you.'].

[107] Ilse Langner, *Klytämnestra* (Berlin: Aufbau Verlag, 1949), p. 22 ['Administrator: Once Mykene was called golden because of its treasures, now it is called golden because of its wheat. The eldest already praise you like this for a long time.'].

[108] See Stephan, 'Weiblicher Heroismus', p. 183.

[109] Langner, *Klytämnestra*, p. 11 ['Peace reigns steadfastly in my house! The king's son is not allowed to rattle with swords and to playfully reawaken bellicosities, which I have laboriously banished for ten years.'].

[110] Langner, *Klytämnestra,* p. 14 ['Only to idolise the war that I hate! Because it enriches the land of the Greeks with legends, but robs it of men and wealth!'].

[111] See Lynn Marie Kutch, 'Like Agamemnon and Clytemnestra: Ilse Langner's Gendered Perspective on the Politics of War and the Prospects for Peace', *Peace & Change*, 34 (2009), pp. 184-207 (p. 186).

[112] See Kutch, p. 186.

[113] Kutch, pp. 186-87.

making and keeping peace.[114] This contradiction in Langner's view of women between their general peaceful nature and their complicity in the war leads to Kutch identifying a 'pervasive sense of paradox' in Langner's work.[115] *Klytämnestra* is also paradoxical in a sense, as, indeed, there are hints at Langner's Klytämnestra figure and her seemingly perfect and peaceful reign being flawed right from the beginning, even before Agamemnon returns and Klytämnestra's violent nature becomes more obvious.

First of all, Klytämnestra has failed to gain the love and support of her children, Orest and Elektra. Although she raised them on her own for ten years, they have not accepted her as queen or even as mother. Orest engages in plays enacting the Trojan war, although this is forbidden by his mother: 'Heil, Troja fiel! Die starken Mauern sanken! […] Der Feind geschlagen! Agamemnon siegte!'.[116] Orest worships his warrior-father Agamemnon and flees successfully from his mother's influence: 'O ewge Niederlage aller Mütter! | Uns flieht der Sohn, den wir so innig hegten, | Die Liebe hält ihn nicht, die ihn gebar, – | Die Güte schützt ihn nicht vor kühnen Taten, | Ihn lockt des eigenen Geschlechtes Schicksal | Und Tod wie Leben zeugt er gleich entbrannt.'[117]

Elektra is even clearer and more radical in her denial of her mother and worship of her father. She completely rejects the idea of having a mother: 'Pallas Athene, Tochter unsres Zeus, | Du Vatertochter, ohne Mutterblut, | Des Gottes Haupt mit Waffenglanz entsprungen, | Erhör Elektra, Agamemnons Tochter, | Und send den Vater endlich wieder heim.'[118] In the figure of Elektra, Langner shows the strong power that patriarchy and its gender roles have over women, but also the complicity of women in the war effort and in promoting the male stereotype of the warrior. Elektra is completely under the spell of patriarchal ideals: 'Ich bin ein Mädchen, Helden sind mein Traum! | Mein liebster Spiegel ist der blanke Schild.'[119] Elektra eagerly awaits her father's return. But when he finally comes back home, he at first is not the father and the strong, dominant male figure she expected. Agamemnon comes back from war tired of fighting and actually prepared to recognise the benefits of Klytämenstra's peaceful principles:

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[114] See Kutch, p. 187.

[115] Kutch, p. 188.

[116] Langner, *Klytämnestra*, p. 11 ['Hooray, Troy fell! The big walls came tumbling down! […] The enemy beaten! Agamemnon won!'].

[117] Langner, *Klytämnestra*, p. 14 ['Oh, everlasting defeat of all mothers! The son, who we so dearly nourished, flees from us, the love, which gave birth to him, does not hold him back,- the kindness doesn't protect him from bold deeds, he is lured by the fate of his own sex, and he fathers death and life in an equally feverish way.'].

[118] Langner, *Klytämnestra*, p. 12 ['Pallas Athena, daughter of our Zeus, you daughter of a father, without a mother's blood, originating from the god's head with the glamour of arms, answer Elektra's prayers, Agamemnon's daughter, and finally send the father back home.'].

[119] Langner, *Klytämnestra,* p. 12 ['I am a girl, I dream of heroes! My dearest mirror is the bare shield.'].

'Im Krieg lehrt sie mich Frauenart erst schätzen! | Was wir als männliches Geschäft gerühmt, | Lenkt sie in weiblich-weiser Ruhe weiter. | Seid stolz auf eurer Mutter hohe Klugheit.'[120] Initially, Agamemnon is willing to share power with his wife, but it is his daughter Elektra who demands from him to fulfil the traditional, patriarchal male role, and to dominate his wife: 'O wie ersehnt ich deine Heimkehr, Vater! | Des Rachegottes sengendes Gewitter | Mit Blitzesleuchten reinigt es die Schwüle, | Vertreibt der Leidenschaften dumpfes Wühlen, | Und klar erstrahlet wieder unser Haus. | Was hat der Krieg aus dir gemacht, mein Vater!'.[121]

Elektra is a very negative female figure and functions as a mirror for German women who, in Langner's eyes, also made themselves complicit with the men by sharing their heroic ideals. But Elektra's behaviour also reflects badly on Klytämnestra and casts shadows of doubt over her reign in general and her skills as a mother. Although Agamemnon was absent for ten years, she was not able to influence her child's thinking. One reason for this is also her infidelity as a wife, as she shares her bed with Aegisth, which does not go unnoticed by Elektra and only spurs her hatred for her mother even further.

Klytämnestra's failure to gain the love and support of her children is indicative of another characteristic and flaw of her reign. It is only based on rationality, thought and hard work. Klytämnestra suppresses all her emotions and passion towards her lover Aegisth and towards her children. Aegisth complains about this at the very beginning of the text: 'Du liebst nicht menschlich mehr, liebst nur dein Werk, | Des eignen Selbstes irdischen Beweis! | Die Liebe und Aegisth, – Orest, Elektra | Sind dir nur Opfer deines größren Tuns. | Nur einmal, Klytämnestra, schenke mir | In schwelgender Umarmung echte Liebe.'[122] Furthermore, Klytämnestra not only suppresses her own feelings and passion, but her reign over others is also based on trying to supress their emotions: 'Die Büffelweiber, meine Riesinnen! | Hielt ich sie nicht in harter Zucht der Arbeit, | Sie wühlten wohl von Männersucht ganz toll | Die Erde mit den bloßen Fäusten auf | Und sprengten ihre Kraft in nackt Gestein!'.[123] At one point, Klytämnestra herself mentions her rationality and strict work ethic as one of the reasons for her failure with her

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[120] Langner, *Klytämnestra*, p. 50 ['Only in times of war she taught me to appreciate the ways of the women! What we praised as a masculine enterprise, she continued with wise, feminine calm. Be proud of your mother's deep wisdom.'].

[121] Langner, *Klytämnestra*, p. 88 ['Oh, how I longed for your return, father! The torrid storm of the god of revenge clears up the sultriness with flashes, drives off the hollow rummaging of passion, and our house blazes again clearly. What did the war turn you into, my father?'].

[122] Langner, *Klytämnestra*, pp. 9-10 ['Your love is not human anymore, you only love your creation, the earthly proof of your self! Love and Aegisth, - Orest, Elektra are but sacrifices of your greater act to you. Just once, Klytämnestra, give me true love in an indulging embrace.'].

[123] Langner, *Klytämnestra*, p. 20 ['The buffalo-women, my giantesses! If I wouldn't keep them in the tough confinement of work, they would churn up the earth with their bare fists and project their force into bare stones, maddened by their addiction to men.'].

children: 'Die Arbeitsstrenge war mein großer Fehler: | Den Frieden hätt ich friedlich schmücken sollen.'[124] Klytämnestra does not use her own, female qualities to reign, she does not set free emotions, warmth and passion, but tries to suppress these with work and rationality. A similar charge of turning into a male herself is held against Clytemnestra in Aeschylus's 'Agamemnon', which is a main intertext of Langner's work. Aeschylus's text begins with a speech by the 'Wächter', who compares Clytemnestra's rational thinking to that of a man: 'Denn so gebraucht der Macht | Das vorbedachte, männlich planende Herz der Frau.'[125] Later on, the 'Chorführer' repeats this comparison: 'Nach weisen Mannes Art verständig sprichst du, Frau.'[126] Clytemnestra herself objects to being seen as a weak woman: 'Ihr wollt mich prüfen wie ein unbedachtes Weib. | Mit unerschrockenem Herzen aber, das ihr kennt, | Red ich zu euch.'[127]

According to Kutch, it is Langner's belief that women have superior qualities over men, but that the way of putting them to everyone's best advantage is not for women to engage in politics.[128] Langner strongly criticises women's emancipation, which only leads to women turning into men themselves and actually loosing influence:

> die emanzipierte Frau aber vermännlichte, wurde sachlich und beraubte sich damit selbst ihres wirksamsten Reizes: des Geheimnisvollen. Statt mehr bestimmen zu können als während ihres Sklavinnendaseins, hatte sie weniger zu sagen. Das unterirdische Geraune verstummte; die Tischgenossin, die Arbeitsgefährtin hatte geringeren Einfluß als das Bettgesponst.[129]

In her article on evil mothers and the Medea-myth, Inge Stephan makes clear that it is not only Langner who is critical of feminist ideas because she fears that women will lose their feminine qualities and turn into men themselves.[130] Stephan cites a work by Johannes R. Gascard, who is influenced by ideas of the psychiatrist C. G. Jung.[131] In his work on the myth of Medea, Gascard, according to Stephan, blames the – in his eyes – wretched state of the current world

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[124] Langner, *Klytämnestra*, p. 15 ['The strictness of work was my big mistake: I should have peacefully adorned peace.'].

[125] Aischylos, 'Agamemnon', in *Aischylos*: *Die Orestie*, trans. by Emil Staiger (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2014), pp. 3-62 (p. 5) ['Because that is how the deliberate and manly-planning heart of a woman uses power.'].

[126] Aischylos, p. 15 ['Woman, you talk like a wise and knowledgeable man.'].

[127] Aischylos, p. 52 ['You try to put me to the test like an inconsiderate woman. But I am talking to you with an unflinching heart.'].

[128] See Kutch, p. 186.

[129] Ilse Langner, 'Credo quia absurdum', *Deutsche Rundschau,* 69 (1946), pp. 51-56 (p. 53) ['but the emancipated woman became masculinised, became pragmatical and in this way deprived herself of her most effective allure: the mysterious. Instead of being able to exercise more control than during her life as a slave, she had less influence. The underground mumbling fell silent; the table companion, the fellow worker had less influence than the mistress.'].

[130] See Stephan, 'Die bösen Mütter', pp. 179-80.

[131] See Johannes R. Gascard, *Medea-Morphosen: Eine mytho-psychohistorische Untersuchung zur Rolle des Mann-Weiblichen im Kulturprozess* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1993).

on a growing lack of love and motherly feelings on the part of emancipated women.[132] Mythical female and mother figures like Medea and Clytemnestra offer literary representations of these ideas.

Though Langner is sceptical of women's engagement in politics in general, it also has to be stressed that Klytämnestra's (and with it German women's) attempt at reigning is even more complicated. Marshall points out that Klytämnestra was actually never able to fully extinguish patriarchy in Mykene and that her reign was always weakened by being understood as only a provisional one.[133] Klytämnestra was only able to build up her peaceful 'anomalous' world as an artificial situation that was understood, by everyone else but her, as temporary.[134] This is stressed by the following comparison of the Verwalter: 'Du gleichst der Mutter, die uns warm umfängt, | Doch der wir Kinder ungestüm entlaufen, | Wenn sich der Vater naht, im Prunk des Sieges | Mit goldner Beute, seltnen Kostbarkeiten.'[135] By displaying the problematic structure of Klytämnestra's power, Langner also questions the success story of the powerful and independent women in war times. She seems to be sceptical of the changes which took place during the exceptional years of war having any long-lasting impact. Post-war women, like Klytämnestra, tried to build a new system on the still living, only sleeping remnants of the old, patriarchal system, and this attempt was doomed to fail.

In her text, Langner explores the topic of women and politics, but she also, as already described in the case of Elektra, questions women's general peaceful nature and criticises their complicity in the war. It is one more of Klytämnestra's flaws that she also, although outwardly opposing everything to do with war, actively supports the war effort of the men by sending ships to Troy with essential provisions for the soldiers. Klytämnestra openly admits her own complicity and therefore her share in the guilt, and explains her actions in two ways. She says that, on the one hand, she felt compassionate towards the soldiers, which is a stereotypically female and motherly feeling, but on the other hand she also sent the ships out of pride, because she wanted to prove and demonstrate to Agamemnon how well she ruled Mykene: 'So nährte ich den Krieg, den ich verachte? | O widersinnig bleibt das eigne Werk. | Der Ehrgeiz trieb mich und wohl auch das Mitleid. | Was ich den Kindern eben heiß verwehrte: | Ich spielt nicht nur den Krieg,

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[132] See Stephan, 'Die bösen Mütter', pp. 179-80.
[133] See Marshall, p. 191.
[134] Marshall, p. 194.
[135] Langner, *Klytämnestra*, p. 19 ['You are like the mother, who surrounds us with warmth, but who we impetuously run away from when the father approaches, in the splendour of victory, with golden booty, rare treasures.'].

– ich mischt mich ein!'.[136] In the same way as Langner's female figures Elektra and Klytämnestra are accomplices in the men's war efforts, so, Langner is saying, the German women also have a responsibility for the Second World War, and have to deal with their share of the guilt. Langner uses Klytämnestra as a mirror and as a negative intertext for German women of her time. They, in her eyes, were aberrant women, not preventing, but even supporting violence.

Langner indirectly already identifies Klytämnestra as a figure with violent tendencies before Agamemnon's return, at which time she first falters and tries out all different kinds of traditional gender roles, before in the end instructing Aegisth to kill her husband, mainly because he plans to try her for infidelity and in this way force her back into her role as his subordinate wife.[137] Without Klytämnestra's knowledge, Aegisth has built up a mother-cult in Mykene, based on worshipping a wooden statue resembling Klytämnestra and on hunting down and killing animals. When Klytämnestra becomes aware of this cult through the Verwalter, she forbids it and orders the statue of her to be destroyed. Then she talks to Aegisth and accuses him of having betrayed her. But Aegisth defends himself by claiming that the cult was only an outlet for everyone's, but especially Klytämnestra's darker, so-far suppressed side: 'Ließ ich dich je allein in einer Nacht, | Dann nur, um dir im Tiefren zu begegnen, | Wohin dein Stolz dich nie entgleiten läßt.'[138] Aegisth claims that the statue, which Klytämnestra had ordered to be destroyed, had actually absorbed her own evil addictions, and thereby allowed her rule to flourish peacefully: 'Sie, die stille Meisterin der Tiefe, | Die du aus Hochmut jäh zerstören ließest, | Hat deine argen Wünsche, bösen Süchte | In sich gesogen und dich selbst bewahrt.'[139] This is an exposure of Klytämnestra's darker, violent and repressed side. She, and maybe women in general, are split in two. Violence, at least in the time of Klytämnestra and the time of the Second World War, is not only a male characteristic, but equally present in women.

What is indirectly hinted at by Aegisth's cult, is made explicit at a different point in the text. Klytämnestra warns Agamemnon of her Janus-faced character. As a ruler, she is dominated by rationality, but deeper inside her, as a mother, there is also still a lot of rage about Agamemnon's sacrifice of their daughter Iphigenie. Klytämnestra advises Agamemnon to choose carefully

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[136] Langner, *Klytämnestra*, p. 21 ['In this way I nurtured the war, which I despise? O the own doing remains paradoxical. I was driven by ambition, as well as compassion. What I just hotly denied the children: I did not just play war, – I took a hand in it!'].

[137] See Kutch, p. 194.

[138] Langner, *Klytämnestra*, p. 34 ['If ever I left you alone at night, it was only to meet you at a deeper level, to which your pride never lets you slip.'].

[139] Langner, *Klytämnestra*, p. 35 ['She, the silent master of the depth, who you suddenly ordered to be destroyed because of arrogance, sucked your dire wishes and evil longings into herself and in that way she saved you.'].

which side of her he prefers to come to the surface: 'Vor dir steh ich in tausend Feuern brennend, | Doch haßt ich dich um Iphigeniens Mord, | Und nur Vernunft beherrscht mich, wenn ich herrsche: | Wähl du nun weise, welche du dir wünschst!'.[140]

At the end, when Klytämnestra learns of Agamemnon's plan for her trial, her dark, violent side emerges and dominates her. By connecting this to Aegisth's mother-cult, Langner makes clear that Klytämnestra's behaviour is not just a reaction to Agamemnon's behaviour towards her. Violence is nothing alien to her, but was always a part of her, although it was steered along different lines during Agamemnon's absence by Aegisth and his statue, which is now broken and can no longer keep Klytämnestra's inherently dark side in check: 'Wehe, sie verändert ihr Gesicht, | Sie erstarrt, - ist sie noch Fleisch und Blut? | Jenem Bild im Mondwald Dianas gleicht sie, | Gütelos und grausam rätselhaft.'[141] The relationship established between Klytämnestra and the statue is reminiscent of the relationship between Dorian Gray and his portrait in Oscar Wilde's novel from 1890.[142] In both cases, the artistic image is the expression of the person's real character and of their darker side. But there is also a clear difference. While in Wilde's text the portrait mainly seems to record Gray's development, Langner goes a step further: the statue not only records but also, for as long as it is intact, controls Klytämnestra's violent side: it provides an outlet for these negative emotions, without Klytämnestra's knowledge. When the statue is broken, Klytämnestra betrays all of her peaceful principles and commands Aegisth to kill Agamemnon. The play then ends with a dark outlook on the future. Orest will return one day to avenge his father's murder and kill his mother, and Elektra swears life-long allegiance to her father and the ideas of revenge and hatred: 'Haß du krönst mich und verschönst mich furchtbar! | Haß ich schüre deine schwarze Flamme! | Haß erhalt ich unserm Rächer wach! | Ich aber dien.'[143]

Although I have focused so far on the description of the female characters in Langner's text and on her very strong critique of them, it is important to point out that the text is of course also very critical of men's role in the war. They are in no way excused for their behaviour by the complicity of the women. But interestingly, it is Aegisth, as opposed to one of the female characters, who most clearly and openly criticises Agamemnon's war: 'Ja, ihr opfertet der

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[140] Langner, *Klytämnestra*, pp. 57-58 ['I am standing in front of you, burning in a thousand fires, but I hated you for the murder of Iphigenie, and when I rule, only rationality rules me: Now choose wisely, which one you desire!'].

[141] Langner, *Klytämnestra*, p. 115 ['Woe, her face is changed, she freezes, - is she still flesh and blood? She resembles the image in the moon-forest of Diana, without benevolence and cruelly mysterious.'].

[142] See Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (Ware: Wordsworth Classics, 2001).

[143] Langner, *Klytämnestra,* p. 128 ['Hate, you crown me and terribly beautify me. Hate I fan your dark flame! Hate I will preserve in our avenger! But I serve.'].

eignen Rache | Eure Völker – und für Menelaos | Starben Griechen, Väter, junge Männer, | Deren Liebe nicht betrogen war! | Dieser Krieg, der sich gewaltig ausnahm, | Ist durch keinen blutgen Zwang entschuldigt. | Euer Land war nicht bedroht, verwüstend | Brach kein Feind in euren Frieden ein!'.[144] In keeping with the critical view on women in the whole text, it is Aegisth who verbally attacks Agamemnon and who tries to support Klytämnestra's different system by aiming to control her violent, dark side. But his attempts fail.

Langner's portrayal of Aegisth significantly differs from his role in Aeschylus's 'Agamemnon'. In this intertext, Aigisthos calls himself the 'Anstifter dieses Mordes'.[145] While Aegisthos does not kill Agamemnon himself, he claims that he used Klytaimestra and her female qualities to reach his goal and it is Aigisthos who demands the role as the new leader of Argos after Agamemnon's death: 'Der Trug, versteht sich wohl, war das Geschäft der Frau. | Verdächtig war ich auch als Feind von alters her. | Jetzt aber nutz ich dieses Mannes Reichtum, um | Den Bürgern zu gebieten.'[146] In Langner's play, Klytämnestra instigates the murder, while Aegisth tries to stop her and suggests the more peaceful option of simply running away: 'Neue Sommer werden um uns blühen, | Wenn wir in mein Land ziehn, fern Mykene'; 'Rase, tobe, doch entsag dem Mord!'.[147] In the end, it is Aegisth who kills Agamemnon, but by proxy of Klytämnestra, which Aegisth makes clear when he says: 'Führt ich den Stoß, hast du die Hand gelenkt?!'.[148] Langner therefore inverts the roles of Aegisthus and Klytaimestra as they are described in Aeschylus's intertext. In 'Agamemnon', Klytaimestra kills Agamemnon herself, but by proxy of Aigisthos, while in Langer's text Aegisth kills Agamemnon, but by proxy of Klytämnestra. By deviating from the intertext in this way, Langner makes Klytämnestra appear even guiltier than she does in the original, which leaves room for more positive interpretations of her motives and behaviour.

Ilse Langner's play is anything but a flight from reality or from discussions of guilt and responsibility, even though her biography attributes her to the 'innere Emigration'. Langner expresses a very strong critique of women's behaviour during and after the war through the negative mirror of Klytämnestra. She portrays women as accomplices with flawed, violent

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[144] Langner, *Klytämnestra*, p. 73 ['Yes, you sacrificed your own peoples for your revenge – and for Menelaos died Greeks, fathers, young men, whose love was not betrayed! This war, which took on enormous proportions, cannot be excused by any necessity to spill blood. Your country wasn't threatened, no enemy broke your peace with devastation!'].

[145] Aischylos, p. 59 ['instigator of this murder'].

[146] Aischylos, pp. 59-60 ['The deceit, of course, was the task of the woman. I would always have raised suspicion as an enemy. But now I will make use of this man's wealth to command the country.'].

[147] Langner, p. 119 ['We will see many more summers when we go to my country, far away from Mykene']; p. 120 ['rage and rant, but renounce the murder!'].

[148] Langner, p. 124 ['Did I hold the sword, did you lead my hand?!'].

characters, deeply entangled in questions of guilt. Langner's text demands that women engage in a critique of their own roles, and reform themselves. Furthermore, the text seems to suggest that women should abstain from politics and instead concentrate again on their qualities as peace-makers and -keepers, in which Langner paradoxically, in the long run, still seemed to believe.

Langner reinforces her own views by reverting to the ancient female figure of Clytemnestra. By using the much debated mythical figure as a point of reference, Langner makes clear that the topic of evil and dangerous women is not specific to the post-war years, but touches on more general and potentially timeless discussions about relationships between the sexes. The mythical story allows Langner, on the one hand, to make use of the cultural capital and meaning, with which it is already charged, but on the other hand its malleability also allows her to express her own opinion by writing her own variation of the myth. While she, in general, sticks to the classical portrayal of Klytämnestra as 'a murderer, an adrogyne, a liar, an orator, and executor of a palace coup', she does invert the roles of Aegisth and Klytämnestra in the murder of Agamemnon, which attributes even more guilt to the woman.[149] As the mythical story has already been retold and reinterpreted by many people since its original creation, it also offers Langner the possibility to comment on more recent events and ideas. By either deliberately not following a more positive, feminist line of reinterpretation of the Klytämnestra figure, or by revising this already recast, improved feminist female archetype again, Langner expresses her doubts about feminist emancipation and women engaging in politics.

This approach to revising a positive female figure is very similar to what Taylor does to the formerly emancipatory female archetype of Jane Eyre. Furthermore, both Langner's and Taylor's texts can be seen as 'second order' revisions, as they revise a positive female archetype, which is already the product of another revisionary process undertaken by other authors. This might be interpreted as a way for the authors to express their belief in a circular development of gender roles. Advances once achieved can be reversed again, and past hopes can turn out to have been exaggerated. In this way, a line of development might end at its beginning. A clear difference between the two British texts and Langner's text is, though, that they place their explorations of post-war gender roles in very different contexts. While Spender's and Taylor's texts concentrate on the personal and comparatively peaceful realm of

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[149] Hall, p. 53.

marriage, Langner's text deals with gender roles in the political and violent realm of war and post-war times, debating questions of violence, guilt and power.

'Man muß den Frauen danken; denn sie retteten uns' – Reconciliation between the Sexes

Hans Erich Nossack (1901-1977), who spent the war years working in his father's firm, continued writing during the war, although, due to his association with the Communist Party, he was banned from publishing in 1933. Nossack's best known work from this period is his report, *Der Untergang* (1943), about the Hamburg firestorm. After the war Nossack gave up his work as a businessman and became an independent writer, taking a critical view of the German society of the '50s and '60s.[150]

Nossack's text *Nekyia: Bericht eines Überlebenden* (1947), described by Stephen Brockmann as a 'novella', is not a linear narration of events, but rather consists of many different interlaced levels of narration and time.[151] According to Andrew Williams, the text has thus been seen as a 'siebenfach chiffriertes Rätselbuch'.[152] While there are some parallels between Nossack and his protagonist with respect to their difficult relationship with their mother, a purely autobiographical reading does not do justice to his highly complex text.[153] The story begins in an unspecified time and place, after an unspecified catastrophe. The male narrator is one of the few survivors, who have gathered on a hill outside of a city. The other remaining people only lie in the mud, not doing anything, and are described as only hardly still resembling human beings; the narrator is the only active one of them. He sets out on a journey back to the empty city, which at the same time is a quest for his own identity. The narrator has lost his name, his image in the mirror and with it his past: 'Hüten wir uns davon zu reden. Ich habe es auch nur gesagt, weil ich keinen Namen mehr habe, der etwas über mich aussagt, und nichts mir einen Namen gibt, der mich etwas vorzustellen zwingt'; 'Auf die andere Möglichkeit kam ich nicht, ich meine, daß mein Bild zugrundegegangen wäre.'[154] There are some links to the exploration

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[150] See Bernd Lutz, 'Nossack, Hans Erich', in *Metzler Lexikon Autoren: Deutschsprachige Dichter und Schriftsteller vom Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart*, ed. by Bernd Lutz and Benedikt Jeßing, 4th edn (Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler, 2010), pp. 594-96.

[151] Brockmann, *German Literary Culture at the Zero Hour*, p. 76.

[152] Andrew Williams, *Hans Erich Nossack und das Mythische: Werkuntersuchungen unter besonderer Berücksichtigung formalmythischer Kategorien* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2004), p. 126 ['seven-time encrypted book of riddles'].

[153] See Susanne Bienwald, *Hans Erich Nossack: Nachts auf der Lombardsbrücke* (Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 2007), pp. 8-9 and Johannes Hilgart, 'Hans Erich Nossacks Erzählung "Nekyia" (1947): Versuch einer autobiographischen Inventur', in *Hans Erich Nossack: Leben, Werk, Kontext*, ed. by Günter Damann (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2000), pp. 135-48 (pp. 144-45).

[154] Hans Erich Nossack, *Nekyia: Bericht eines Überlebenden* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1964), p. 18 ['Let's beware of talking about it. I only said it because I don't have a name anymore, that reveals something about me, and because nothing gives me a name, that forces me to imagine something.']; p. 28 ['I did not conceive of the other possibility: that my image might have perished.'].

of identity issues articulated in my previous chapter about the figure of the returnee, as the protagonist seems to have a similarly fragmented sense of self. In the empty city, the narrator settles down in an apartment and through various narrative levels of dreams and flashbacks, he is able to rediscover his own name and identity: the narrator is the mythical figure of Orest.

The catastrophe has led to a break in time, which is very similar to the fragmentation of time explored in the previous chapter. There is no difference and no barrier anymore between what used to be and what exists in the present:

> Früher gab es nichts Zuverlässigeres als die Zeitrechnung. Es war alles genau eingeteilt und ließ sich in Zahlen ausdrücken. Einer war dreißig Jahre alt und ein anderer hatte vor tausend Jahren gelebt. Die Rechnung stimmte wohl auch, aber die Voraussetzung ist nicht mehr die gleiche. Die Zeit ist zerbrochen. […] Ich brauche mich ja nur hinzuwenden zu denen, die vor tausend Jahren lebten, und kann mich mit ihnen unterhalten.[155]

Nossack employs a different way of connecting his story to the mythical text than all the other authors so far. His is not a direct retelling of the myth, set in antiquity, like Langner's play, but he takes his reference further than Spender and Taylor, who employ references more as a means for comparison. Nossack's approach is more direct than this. His contemporary character is at the same time the mythical figure of Orest, and the mythical story of Agamemnon's and Clytamnestra's conflict is also the basic story of his life. Langner and Nossack both draw on myth to interpret and understand the present. Langner employs myth to illustrate the present situation and to stress the point that something similar has already happened before, that what happened to women during and after the war is not unique but somehow already part of the most basic human stories. Nossack's text, however, suggests a continuation of the myth, and a simultaneity of mythical past and present: now is a mythical time, the story of the past indeed has never ended. The myth is not just an exemplary story used as a point of comparison or illustration, but it provides an explanation for the current post-war reality.

Nossack's and Langner's texts share the reference to the same mythical story, but they refashion and reinterpret it in very different ways. Langner uses the figure of Klytämnestra mainly to reveal women's guilt and complicity in the men's war, and to explore their violent characteristics. Nossack's text explores the male perspective of the relation between the sexes.

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[155] Nossack, p. 35 ['There used to be nothing more important than the calculation of time. Everything was exactly classified and could be expressed in numbers. One person was thirty years old and another one had lived a thousand years ago. Probably the calculation was correct, but the premise isn't the same anymore. Time is broken. […] I only have to turn towards those who lived a thousand years ago and then I can talk to them.'].

His main interest does not lie with Klytämnestra, but with her son Orest.[156] Nossack's text tells the story of the reconciliation of mother and son, of women and men after the catastrophe. Women are given back their place in society and in the lives of men, their guilt is lessened. The catastrophe is not only the women's fault and could not be prevented by their former banishment. But it was also not really the men's fault either. Ultimately, Nossack traces the violence back to the eternal fight between the sexes, which began long before the characters had a chance to influence or change anything.[157] Therefore, *Nekyia* is the only text analysed in this chapter which expresses a tendency of the author to flee from personal responsibility, as his retelling of the mythical story can also be read as an implicit comment on the origins of the Second World War and on post-war questions of guilt.

In *Nekyia*, the initial description of the relationship between the sexes is dominated by a very negative image of women. The narrator despises female guests and is almost afraid of them:

> Die meisten meiner Besucher waren übrigens Männer, aber es kamen auch Frauen. Vor einigen hatte ich Angst; denn es war ihnen nichts recht zu machen, und ich kam mir ganz wertlos vor. Sie mäkelten höhnisch an allem herum, und ich war ein mißratenes Kind. Sie traten sehr gewalttätig auf, angriffslustig den Busen vorantragend, blickten sie mich über ihre Nase von oben her an.[158]

The men in the text also express a very negative attitude towards mothers: 'Weißt du, Bruder, ich sah, daß die Frauen schwanger wurden und Kinder gebaren. Aber sie waren unwillige Gebärerinnen. […] Sie ließen es auch die Kinder fühlen, die sie großziehen mußten. Sie trieben es so weit, daß sie Dankbarkeit von den Kindern dafür forderten, daß sie sie geboren hatten. Das ärgerte mich.'[159] The narrator and his friend, who can be understood as representing another aspect of himself, take the denial and exclusion of women to the extreme of completely negating their own mother: '"Diese Frau gibt es gar nicht. Das hat sich nur ein Weichling ausgedacht!"'; 'Ich tat so, als gäbe es keine Mutter.'[160] The narrator's denial of his mother is later explained by him being revealed as Orest. His mother Klytämnestra killed his father Agamemnon, and

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[156] Originally, the text was also supposed to have the title 'Orest' (See Hans-Gerd Winter, 'Bürokratisches Großunternehmen oder Ausgangspunkt einer Reise zum Ursprung: Hans Erich Nossacks Auseinandersetzung mit dem Tod in "Interview mit dem Tode" und "Nekyia"', in *Hans Erich Nossack: Leben, Werk, Kontext*, ed. by Günter Damann (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2000), pp. 115-34 (p. 127)).

[157] See Winter, pp. 130-31.

[158] Nossack, pp. 53-54 ['Most of my visitors were men, by the way, but women came as well. I was afraid of some of them; because they were impossible to please and I felt completely worthless. Sneeringly, they criticised everything and I was an ill-bred child. They acted very violently, aggressively carrying their breasts forward, they looked down on me from above their noses.'].

[159] Nossack, pp. 120-21 ['You know, brother, I saw that women became pregnant and gave birth to children. But they were reluctant birth-givers. […] They made the children, who they had to raise, aware of it. They even demanded gratitude from the children for having given birth to them. This made me angry.'].

[160] See Winter, p. 129; Nossack, p. 67 ['This woman doesn't exist at all. This was only made up by a softy!']; p. 67 ['I pretended that there was no mother.'].

although Nossack changes the mythical story so that Orest does not have to kill his mother, who is instead banished, Orest has at least murdered her symbolically, by erasing her from his life.[161] His suppressed feeling of guilt, which becomes visible when he describes the fear of a dead body being discovered in his garden, hints at this symbolic murder: 'Ich entsinne mich nun, daß ich dann und wann träumen mußte, es läge im Keller oder im Garten unter einem Busch verscharrt, nicht sehr tief [...] eine Leiche. Es quälte mich und ich lebte in dauernder Angst, daß man sie finden könnte.'[162] Therefore, a complete negation of the mother figure and a very negative attitude towards women in general is conveyed as typical of the time before the catastrophe.

In the absence of his real family and his mother, the narrator has created for himself a new family, consisting of ghosts who visit him at night in his chamber and who each represent his intellectual and spiritual ancestors. The members of this family are only men, and they fulfil classical patriarchal roles.[163] They are the father, the brother, the teacher, the master and the forefather. Some scholars set out to identify who these roles might allude to but I do not think that this rather flat approach to such a complex text advances our understanding of it.[164] After the catastrophe, on one of the many interlaced narrative levels, a meeting takes place between the narrator, Orest, and his family, in the course of which they discuss the narrator's mother. They set up a trial to withdraw her banishment and to enable Orest to visit his mother in order to seek a reconciliation with her. The members of the family, representing patriarchal power, explain that at the time when Klytämnestra murdered her husband Agamemnon, it seemed to be the best and necessary solution to banish her, to keep the women under control and avoid matriarchal power: 'Das Urteil mag einst berechtigt gewesen sein, wer wagt daran zu zweifeln. Ihre Tat erweckte solchen Abscheu und brachte allen die Gefahr, der man die Welt aussetzte, wenn man diese Frau weiter frei schalten ließe, so sehr zum Bewußtsein, daß strenge Gesetze notwendig waren, um den Anfang eines neuen Weges zu finden und einen Rückfall zu vermeiden.'[165] The verdict to banish Klytämnestra, and also the verdict to free the son Orest

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[161] See Winter, p. 127.

[162] See Williams, p. 135; Nossack, p. 16 ['I remember now that I had to dream now and then that there lay a corpse in the cellar or in the garden, hastily buried under a bush, not very deep. It agonised me and I lived in permanent fear that it could be discovered.'].

[163] See Winter, p. 127.

[164] See Karl G. Esselborn, *Gesellschaftskritische Literatur nach 1945: Politische Resignation und konservative Kulturkritik, besonders am Beispiel Hans Erich Nossacks* (München: Fink, 1977), p. 100: Esselborn identifies the members of the family as the following: the father is Barlach, the teacher is Hebbel, the master might be Händel, the younger brother is Kleist and the forefather is Aischylus.

[165] Nossack, p. 87 ['The verdict may once have been justified; who dares to doubt this. Her act aroused such revulsion and brought the danger to everyone's attention, that the world would be in, if this woman was still allowed to do as she pleased, that strict laws were necessary to find the beginning of a new path and to avoid a relapse.'].

from the pursuit of the Erinyen, were meant to establish peace and to allow for a fresh start, without guilt. But the way that things have turned out, with the catastrophe that has happened now, the court of men has to acknowledge that its attempt has failed and that they may have punished Klytämnestra too harshly:

> Der Weg, den es wies, ist durchlaufen, und das Ergebnis ist so, daß man heute versucht ist, ihre Tat zu billigen.
>
> Man hat diese Frau aus dem Leben ausgeschlossen, an dem sie sich auf ihre Weise einen Anteil sichern wollte. Man wollte nicht schuldig werden wie sie, sondern sein Schicksal meistern. Der Versuch war anzuerkennen, aber er ist mißlungen.[166]

That is why the members of Orest's male family now ask his forefather, who once delivered both verdicts, to allow Orest to visit his mother, to achieve a reconciliation: 'Söhne müssen wieder von Müttern geboren werden, nicht von Sklavinnen. […] Unsere Pflicht ist es, das Urteil, das unter anderen Voraussetzungen gefällt wurde, aufzuheben.'[167] After the catastrophe, the men long for peace: 'Wir haben Streit genug gehabt, mit uns selbst und mit der Welt. Es wäre schön, einmal auszuruhn.'[168] The forefather agrees to the proposal and the narrator, Orest, sets out on the journey to his mother.

When mother and son finally meet, Klytämnestra, unlike in the original myth, has the chance to explain herself. She tells Orest how she suffered because Agamemnon took her daughter and her son away from her: 'Ich aber wurde betrogen um alles Glück.'[169] When Agamemnon then returned home, he suggested that they both commit suicide together by drinking poisoned wine, in order to give their story a peaceful ending and to make it appear like the end of a tragic love story. Klytämnestra rejected his offer and instead killed Agamemnon, together with Agamemnon's half-brother Aegisth. Nossack does not change or deny Klytämnestra's violent act, which she chose over another, more peaceful option. But he does give her a voice of her own to explain the reasons for her behaviour, and he further revaluates her as a mother figure as, after the murder, she protected Orest from Aegisth, and indirectly helped her son to kill him. Klytämnestra, in the end, is completely refashioned as a mother, because she commits suicide. By sacrificing herself, she saves Orest from the fate of having to kill his mother, from the

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[166] Nossack, p. 87 ['The path that it pointed to is crossed and the result is thus that one is tempted today to approve of her act.']; p. 87 ['One excluded this woman from the life in which she wanted to secure a share for herself in her own way. One didn't want to become guilty like her but master one's fate. The attempt was worthy but it failed.'].

[167] Nossack, p. 88 ['Sons have to be born again by mothers, not by slaves. […] It is our obligation to abolish the verdict which had been passed under different premises.'].

[168] Nossack, p. 89 ['We have had enough conflicts, with ourselves and with our world. It would be nice to rest for once.'].

[169] Nossack, p. 142 ['But I had all my happiness taken away from me.'].

resulting guilt and the pursuit of the Erinyen. Klytämnestra responds to her son's words – 'Ich habe keine Mutter mehr […] Denn wenn sie noch leben würde, müßte ich sie ja töten. Das aber tut sie mir nicht an' – by killing herself: 'Da trank ich die Schale mit dem Wein.'[170]

Orest, after having heard the whole story, peacefully falls asleep in his mother's lap and forgives her. The conflict in Nossack's text is resolved in a way that, in the end, no one person is to blame. Klytämnestra makes clear that Orest also bears some responsibility for what happened, as he insists on leaving his mother behind, against her wishes, which destroys something in her: 'Du saßest an der Spitze des Schiffes und blicktest in Richung des Krieges. […] Und du wandtest dich nicht ein einziges Mal um. Als sich das Schiff knirschend von der Hafenmauer losmachte, wurde etwas in mir zermalmt.[171] As everyone, Klytämnestra, Agamemnon and Orest, is assigned a share of the guilt, no one is ultimately guilty anymore. All that happened seems inevitable. Klytämnestra explains it as a natural result of the conflict between men and women in general: '"Ach, warum habe ich das alles nicht vorher gewußt." "Weil du ein Mann bist", sagte sie. "[…] Wußten die Frauen es denn?" […] "Wissen sie es von dir?" "Sie wissen es auch so", sagte sie. "Wenn der Mond wechselt, wissen wir es, eine wie die andere."'[172]

Hans-Gerd Winter interprets the cryptic meeting between mother and son and the subsequent reconciliation as a sign of Orest having understood that all the violence in the world is grounded in the basic fight of the sexes, which is neither the men's nor the women's fault. He describes it as a vicious circle, to which also the motto, which Nossack put at the front of the text, alludes: 'Post amorem omne animal triste.'[173] All love stories inevitably end in violence and sadness. The woman as a lover helps the man to understand himself and to keep his violent tendencies in check, but as soon as the lover becomes the mother of a son, she changes and demands power over him.[174] In turn, the son has to break free from his mother's power over him, and in order to achieve this, the son has to use violence against his mother. On the one hand this establishes the son's archetypal tendency to use violence, which Klytämnestra criticises and describes in a metaphorical way: 'denn nie wird er die Waffen ablegen und mein Sohn werden, die Waffen

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[170] Nossack, p. 149 ['I don't have a mother anymore. […] Because if she would still be alive, I would have to kill her. And she would never do this to me.']; p. 150 ['Then I drank the cup of wine.'].

[171] See Winter, p. 126; Nossack, p. 135 ['You were sitting at the head of the ship and looked towards the war. […] And you did not turn around once. When the ship, creaking, left the wall of the harbour, something inside of me broke.'].

[172] Nossack, p. 143 ['"Why did I not know about all of this earlier?" "Because you are a man," she said. "Did the women know?" […] "Did you tell them?" "They know it anyway," she said. "When the moon changes, we know, everyone of us."'].

[173] See Winter, p. 131; Nossack, p. 7.

[174] See Winter, pp. 130-31.

sind an ihm festgewachsen.'[175] On the other hand, the violent separation of mother and son also evokes feelings of revenge, and a willingness to use violence on the part of women, as Klytämnestra herself demonstrates. This is how all the violence comes into the world in the first place.[176]

This explanation, on the one hand, relieves women from the exclusive guilt and indeed makes their banishment seem unjustified and false, but on the other hand, at the same time as the guilt and responsibility is attributed to both sexes, both of the sexes are relieved from direct, personal guilt. There seems to be no way for the individual to avoid the consequences of the eternal fight of the sexes. In the context of post Second World War debates it is therefore understandable that Nossack's text was criticised for evading an exploration of concrete political and personal guilt and responsibility.[177] This is not primarily due to the reference to a mythical story, but due to how Nossack portrays and resolves the mythical conflict, which, as we have seen in Langner's text, could also have been used to convey a very different message.

It is also central to Nossack's depiction of gender relations that women, all banished and damned like the figure of Klytämnestra, have to be brought back into society. They are forgiven, as life without them did not improve the general situation or prevent the inevitable violence. Instead, the text even hints at potential benefits in allowing women to be part of men's lives. Firstly, Nossack introduces the positive figure of the woman in the apartment in the empty city, who fulfils many different roles for the narrator and who helps him to find his way to his own identity, as well as to reach a reconciliation with his mother.[178] Secondly, the generally positive, maybe even utopian ending of the text, is closely associated with women. After the narrator, Orest, leaves his mother and is reborn, promising that he will not forget what he learned from her, he returns to the other survivors outside of the city as a changed and better person. He ascribes this to women's influence, probably thinking of the woman in the house who helped him find his identity, but also of his mother, who opened his eyes to the eternal fight of the sexes, explaining her actions: 'Man muß den Frauen danken; denn sie retteten uns, als wir unsrer überdrüssig waren und uns vernichten wollten.'[179]

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[175] Nossack, p. 142 ['Because he will never discard his arms and become my son, the arms are an integral part of him.'].

[176] See Winter, p. 127.

[177] See Winter, pp. 131-32 and Esselborn, p. 106.

[178] See Winter, p. 130.

[179] Nossack, p. 154 ['One has to thank the women; because they saved us when we were weary of ourselves and wanted to annihilate us.'].

When the narrator had left the other people on the hill to go back to the city, he did not feel responsible for them in any way and rejected their wish that he lead them: 'Auch glaube ich, sie verlassen sich darauf, daß ich derjenige sein werde, der ihnen eine Meinung erfindet'; 'Soll ich ihnen nun irgend etwas erfinden, woran sie glauben können? Und wozu? Ich selber brauche diese Menschen nicht.'[180] After the reconciliation with his mother, the narrator's attitude towards the other people and towards his own responsibility is changed. He now accepts the role as their leader and, motivated by the birth of a baby, believes in a better future for all of them: 'Zu den Leuten, die um mich herumliegen, werde ich nur sagen: Geht dort hinaus und sucht einen Fluß. Da wascht euch, daß ihr euch erkennt. – Denn wenn sie erst ihre Gesichter wieder sehen, werden sie einander auch Namen geben. Und wenn die Namen erschallen, wird die Erde davon erwachen und denken: Nun muß ich Blumen und Bäume wachsen lassen.'[181] The narrator has received access to his feminine origin, and is now acting as a whole person, caring and taking responsibility for others.[182] Already in the trial about the forefather's verdicts the men agreed that one of the reasons their attempt at establishing peace failed was that they were only living as half persons after the banishment of the women: 'Der Versuch war anzuerkennen, aber er ist mißlungen, und wir wissen nun, daß er mißlingen mußte, da man nur mit der Hälfte seines Wesens ans Werk ging.'[183] As the narrator has now been restored to a complete person, there is a new prospect for peace. The text ends with a positive note: 'Ich glaube, es hat aufgehört zu regnen.'[184]

While the female author Ilse Langner uses the figure of Klytämnestra as a negative foil for war and post-war women, revealing through her their guilt, faults and complicity, the male author Nossack is actually the one trying to reinstate Klytämnestra as a more positive female figure, subjecting her to Gilbert and Gubar's revisionary process by letting her speak for herself and convincing Orest of the failure of a world based only on patriarchy and the banishment of mothers and women. Nossack promotes reconciliation with the husband-murdering Klytämnestra and stresses women's contribution to a hopefully better and more peaceful world. However, at first reading it seems contradictory that although Nossack tries to improve

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[180] Nossack, p. 47 ['I also believe that they rely on me to invent an opinion for them.']; p. 48 ['Should I now invent something that they can believe in? And for what? I myself don't need these people.'].
[181] Nossack, p. 152 ['I will only say to the people lying around me: Walk out there and search for a river. Wash yourselves in it so that you will recognise yourselves. – Because once they see their faces again, they will also give each other names. And when the names ring out, the earth will reawaken and think: Now I have to let flowers and trees grow.'].
[182] See Hilgart, p. 144.
[183] Nossack, p. 87 ['The attempt was worthy, but it failed, and we know now that it was bound to fail because the task was tackled with only one half of a person's character.'].
[184] Nossack, p. 153 ['I think the rain has stopped.'].

women's reputations, he does not describe Klytämnestra as peaceful or without guilt. The change he proposes, though, is that she is only as violent and as guilty as men. What seems to be necessary, for Nossack, is a common effort by both sexes at a new beginning. They should learn from their past experiences to avoid a repetition of the catastrophe. In addition, because Nossack traces the source of violence in the world back to an eternal fight between the sexes, which is ultimately unavoidable, *Nekyia* displays the exculpatory tendencies other texts also using references to the past have unjustly been accused of.

Furthermore, although Nossack sets out to improve women's situation and to rescue them from banishment, he is still far from promoting or supporting more emancipated women, as for example is the case in Spender's and Taylor's texts. It may not be necessary to completely exclude women, but it is still a man, in contact with his female origin and self, who will be the leader and creator of a new world. Therefore, in the context of discussions of women's role in the new German post-war society, Nossack's text continues to paint a more traditional image of gender relations.

Conclusion

The above analyses of two German and two British post-war texts demonstrate that references and allusions to myths and fairy tales and to archetypal female figures are a transnational motif informing discussions of post-war gender roles. By engaging in a process of deconstructing, criticising and refashioning female archetypal figures, German and British authors critically dealt with the topic of the relationship between the sexes, and the role of women in society after the Second World War. Of the four analysed texts, only Nossack's *Nekyia* shows an exculpatory tendency, and avoids direct discussion of concrete post-war realities. Therefore, the chapter also demonstrates that not all texts drawing on figures and stories from the past are evasions of the present and the reality.

While all of the analysed texts employ the same motif, they still express very different opinions on the topic of gender roles. They range from displaying strong, independent post-war women to describing marriage as a cage for weak and dependent women, from a strong critique of women's violent character and their complicity with men in war times to an attempt at a reconciliation of the sexes and a revaluation of women. All of these different opinions and points of view reveal the open and varied nature of discussions of gender roles in the post-war years, they reveal that the traditional roles and figures really had collapsed, like the cities turned into rubble, and that they could be reunited and reassembled in many different ways.

Gilbert and Gubar's revisionary process serves as a helpful starting point for the analysis of the texts in this chapter, but it has to be adapted to the German and British post-war texts. First, I demonstrated in this chapter that after the Second World War male and female authors were critical of female archetypes and set out to refashion them. Secondly, it was not only negative, patriarchal female archetypes that underwent a revisionary process, but, as in the case of Elizabeth Taylor's Jane Eyre, positive, emancipated female figures were also refashioned. In her drama, Langner either, like Taylor, refashions the positive, already revised figure of Klytämnestra, or she expresses her critique by a deliberate rejecting of a revised ideal of the damned female figure of Klytämnestra. This illustrates a third option of adapting and expanding Gilbert's and Gubar's revisionary process for the discussion of post-war gender roles.

It is also striking that in the case of the four texts analysed in this chapter, an unexpected pattern of the relation between the author's sex and their handling of female archetypal figures emerges: the male authors criticise and revise female figures derived from patriarchal thinking, while the female authors seem to be more critical towards their own sex and towards former positive female figures. It is Nossack who reinterprets Klytämnestra in a more positive light, while Langner employs her as a strong negative foil, and it is Spender who declares the end of the era of fairy tale princesses and turns the remaining princes into fools, while Taylor turns Jane Eyre back into a fairy tale princess and creates a new, strong female figure to oppose her.

As has been demonstrated in this chapter, then, myths and archetypal figures can be used to different ends in literary texts. On the one hand they can serve to simplify, illustrate and explain certain aspects of reality. But on the other hand they can also be used to obscure certain aspects, and distract from them. These function in the same manner as the socio-historical myths of the post-war years I described in the introduction. They simplify facts, but at the same time they complicate them by hiding a more nuanced reality.

3) The Figure of the Child

Introduction

> Der Postmeister wurde auf einmal fassungslos wild; er ballte eine Faust gegen die hoffnungsvollen Jünglinge und schrie (lauter als der Satansakt hinter uns): 'Schämt ihr Euch nicht, diese verfluchte Uniform zu tragen?! Hört ihr denn nicht?! Oh, die Lumpen, die Lumpen!!' Auf stand Deutschlands Zukunft; sie fragten erstaunt und giftig: 'Wieso denn? Das ist doch prima! Da kann der Russe wenigstens nicht nachstoßen!' - Der eine, ältere, sagte ruhig und drohend: 'Sehen Sie sich nur vor. Es sind noch viel zu wenig im KZ.' Und der andere (kindlich und eifrig – war es nicht nur eine Art modernen Spiels? Man brauchte doch nur ein heiteres Knöpfchen zu drücken -): 'Schieß doch den verdammten Verräter über den Haufen!'[1]

The above scene from Arno Schmidt's 'Leviathan' introduces the main theme of this chapter: the ambiguous status between innocence and guilt, hope and threat as regards the figure of the child in German and British post-war literature. The text is set in Germany just before the end of the war and the children mentioned are members of the Nazi organisation the Hitler Youth. The characteristics that describe them best are fanaticism and brutalisation. While the adult questions the uniforms they are wearing and what they stand for, the children stick to the ideology of war and violence. To them, people are either for them or against them. There is nothing in between. And if someone seems to be against them, they display no restraint at all in using their weapons, which seem to be just a modern form of a toy; everything is like a carefree game to them. By calling the two boys from the Hitler Youth the future of Germany, Schmidt states a fact: the future always belongs to the younger generation. But he also refers to the hope that is normally connected to children: you invest in them, you educate and prepare them for what is going to come in order to enable them to create a better future for themselves and their country. By framing this inevitable progression ironically, Schmidt undermines this hope and with it questions the fitness of Germany's youth at this point in time to lead the country. Schmidt's child figures actually seem to represent more of a threat than a hope to the future.

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[1] Arno Schmidt, 'Leviathan oder Die beste der Welten', in *Arno Schmidt: Leviathan und Schwarze Spiegel*, 15th edn (Frankfurt a. M.: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 2011), pp. 7-39 (p. 31) ['The postmaster suddenly became unbelievably wild; he clenched his fist towards the hopeful teenagers and screamed (louder than the act of Satan behind us): "Aren't you ashamed of wearing this damned uniform?! Aren't you listening?! Oh, these rascals, these rascals!!" The future of Germany stood up; they asked astonished and venomous: "But why? It's super! That way at least the Russian can't follow up!" - The older one said, calm and threatening: "You should be careful. There are still too few people in concentration camps." And the other one (childlike and keen – wasn't it just a form of a modern game? You only had to press a cheerful button -): "You should shoot down the damned traitor!"'].

This ambiguity surrounding the figure of the child at the end of the war is summed up by Eva Simonsen, who describes how children in post-war times 'were conceptualized as both endangered and dangerous'.[2] On the one hand, children can represent a hope for a better future. Unlike the majority of adults, their age might be seen to shield them from war guilt, especially in the German context. Their age might also have prevented them from being too strongly influenced and even damaged by the more general circumstances of war and bombings. On the other hand, children can also be seen as the greatest danger to a better future, either because of their early indoctrination into a dangerous ideology, or because of damage they suffered at the hands of the war, for instance from witnessing violence and pain, being separated from their families, or witnessing a general decline in morality. Nicholas Stargardt sums up this ambivalent position of children in the post-war years when he states that: 'Children were neither just the mute and traumatised witnesses to this war, nor merely its innocent victims. They also lived in the war, played and fell in love during the war; the war invaded their imaginations and the war raged inside them.'[3]

At the centre of all five texts analysed in this chapter are children and teenagers who are left alone, trying to survive and remain upright without the protective frame of a family. The social institution of the family is shown as transnationally crumbling; what is left are children acting as isolated fragments of a post-war society which has yet to be reconstructed. The post-war family is, in effect, itself 'in ruins'. I will analyse and compare the representation of the figure of the child in German and British post-war texts, questioning whether the authors characterise their child figures as hopes or threats, as innocent or guilty. Is it useful to think in such extreme dualisms, or are the texts more nuanced in their representation of the child figure? Which motifs do the authors use to explore the figure of the child, and are there transnational motifs connected to the literary representation of the figure of the child in post-war literature – or is this figure explored in a specific and unique national context?

Humanitarian concerns about children were a pan-European topic in the post-war years. Simonsen gives an idea of the scale of these problems when she describes how, by the time the war was over, about 13 million children were scattered all over Europe, 'homeless, hopeless, starving and stealing.'[4] While this is the bigger picture which one definitely has to keep in mind, what I want to look at is not the large-scale humanitarian problem, which was collectively

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[2] Eva Simonsen, 'Children in Danger: Dangerous Children', in *Children of World War II: The Hidden Enemy Legacy*, ed. by Kjersti Ericsson and Eva Simonsen (Oxford: Berg, 2005), pp. 269-86 (p. 281).

[3] Nicholas Stargardt, *Witnesses of War: Children's Lives under the Nazis* (London: Pimlico, 2006), p. 17.

[4] See Simonsen, pp. 274-75; p. 275.

European, but the more specific circumstances of children's lives in post-war Germany and Britain. This is significant, as at first sight, there seem to be huge and fundamental differences between the situations in the two European countries.

In Germany, worries and uncertainties about the country's youth firstly stemmed from the fact that almost every child, to some degree, had a first-hand experience of bombing, war and occupation on the home front. Secondly, anxiety also stemmed from a fear of the targeted indoctrination of children during the Third Reich. Debbie Pinfold states that 'children were the first casualties of the vigorously waged Nazi propaganda war' and describes how the normal socialization process, in which 'every child will unconsciously adopt the values of the society it is born into', was 'accelerated and emphasized by systematic indoctrination from a very early age' in the Third Reich.[5] The best known and probably most effective spearhead for this indoctrination were the Nazis' youth organisations. According to Jaimey Fisher, 'in 1939, with the advent of Hitler Youth (Hitler-Jugend) and the Association of German Girls (Bund Deutscher Mädel), 98 percent [of German adolescents] were involved in such groups.'[6] Therefore, it was only logical that the Allies, as Simonsen points out, already before the end of the war should begin to concern themselves with the future of the German youth and develop the idea of targeted re-education as an essential part of the democratic redevelopment of the country.[7] Fisher similarly interprets re-education as the most important foundation for the other central Allied goals of denazification and democratisation, and characterises it as 'a catchall term, a synecdoche for the occupation in general'.[8]

At first sight, the impact of the war on children in Britain seems to have been far more contained than in Germany. British children had been neither indoctrinated with a dangerous ideology, nor had there been a nationwide first-hand experience of war and occupation. Still, in post-war Britain too there were concerns about the country's children and youth, as the war was seen to have a huge effect on all people on the British home front, on family and home life, as well as gender relations – aspects of the Second World War all stressed by Michal Shapira.[9] The extent of the focus on the child in post-war Britain is further analysed by Roy Kozlovsky, who describes the 'child-centeredness of the postwar welfare state', naming several important

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[5] Debbie Pinfold, *The Child's Eye View of the Third Reich in German Literature: The Eye among the Blind* (Oxford: Clarendon, 2001), p. 6.
[6] Jaimey Fisher, *Disciplining Germany: Youth, Reeducation, and Reconstruction after the Second World War* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2007), p. 4.
[7] See Simonsen, p. 276.
[8] See Fisher, p. 65; p. 15.
[9] See Michal Shapira, *The War Inside: Psychoanalysis, Total War, and the Making of the Democratic Self in Postwar Britain* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 114.

elements of post-war legislation, like the 1944 Education Act, the 1945 Family Allowances Act and the 1948 Children Act, which, according to his analysis, 'amounted to the extension of citizenship to the child.'[10] These innovations were at the same time an expression and a cause of the growing importance assigned to children in post-war Britain.

The first major source of concern about children in post-war Britain was the practice of evacuations from those areas that were most heavily affected by bombings. Michael W. Boyce states that 'throughout World War II, 827,000 British children were evacuated from major urban centers to rural areas in order to escape the German bombings'.[11] Boyce describes the opinion of British psychologists and psychiatrists who feared that 'even the necessary removal of children, especially young children, from the care of their parents could have serious repercussions on the development of those children'.[12] Therefore, 'evacuations from cities and the war at large were seen by many Britons to create a "family crisis."'[13] Other factors contributing to this perceived crisis were separations from the parents due to other causes, such as fighting fathers and working mothers. Shapira describes how psychology became an ever more important factor in determining how the British state and the public looked at their children, explaining that psychoanalysts, 'in a period of increased employment for women, […] claimed that maternal deprivation might cause delinquency and social disorder.'[14] Furthermore, worries were spurred on by, on the one hand, 'a sharp rise in reported incidents of child neglect and cruelty', but on the other hand by 'fears about asocial and uncivil behaviour' and a perceived increase in cases of juvenile delinquency.[15] Although in Britain it was rather the unintended and unavoidable side-effects of war than any targeted indoctrination that led to concerns about children in post-war times, slightly different causes led to similar concerns and worries as in post-war Germany. In both cases, these similar concerns influenced literary representations of the figure of the child.

The figure of the child in post-war literature cannot only be understood as a representation of real-life children in Europe. Instead, children are turned into abstract symbols and representatives of a whole society and its struggle to adapt to the new post-war world. The symbolic value of children in the post-war period is identified by critics in the German, as well

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[10] Roy Kozlovsky, *The Architectures of Childhood: Children, Modern Architecture, and Reconstruction in Postwar England* (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2013), p. 2.
[11] Michael W. Boyce, *The Lasting Influence of the War on Postwar British Film* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p. 145.
[12] Boyce, p. 145.
[13] Shapira, p. 58.
[14] Shapira, p. 19.
[15] Boyce, p. 148; Shapira, p. 181.

as in the British context. For example, in his analysis of the post-war German youth crisis Fisher argues that there was a 'potential for a youth crisis to displace other issues of the occupation' and describes how the question of German culpability was addressed through the representation of children as the most convinced Nazis and therefore also as the bearers of the greatest guilt: 'Making the young guilty for Nazism and the war proved particularly useful (that is, discursively operable) because it allowed Germans to understand themselves as victims of a group that, in its youth, could nonetheless be […] redeemed.'[16] Therefore, 'mastering the German past became in large part a disciplining of the "German youth."'[17] An understanding of the youth as 'partially innocent of and partially complicit with the crimes of the regime' further served to turn the Nazi youth into a symbolic figure for the whole of German society.[18]

An example of a symbolic value of children in post-war Britain is given by Kozlovsky, who analyses the British debate about children playing on bombsites and ruins. He argues for 'the meaning that underlies the English discourse of play and ruins, in which violence is redeemed by the regenerative play of children'.[19] The natural behaviour of children becomes a symbolic and 'cathartic' act for the whole nation: 'In the playground, postwar reconstruction is represented in miniature as both a healing process in which the physical and psychological damage of the war are cured, and as a model for how a free, democratic society could emerge out of its ruins. It established a correspondence between the reconstruction of the nation and the self.'[20]

The symbolic significance of children in post-war debates is not only noticeable in literary texts, but also in films of these years. One interesting example in this context is Gerhard Lamprecht's 'Irgendwo in Berlin' (1946), which connects a strong call for reconstruction with the symbolic sacrifice of a child's life. The film depicts children playing in the ruins of Berlin, waiting for their returning fathers to take back control and to begin rebuilding their home. But it takes the unfortunate death of one of these boys to turn the attention of the other boys as well as of the melancholic members of the older generation towards the only task that really seems to matter: reconstruction. Manuel Köppen, therefore, describes the death of the boy as a 'kathartische Erfahrung'.[21]

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[16] Fisher, p. 68; p. 14.
[17] Fisher, p. 16.
[18] Fisher, p. 14.
[19] Kozlovsky, p. 58.
[20] Kozlovsky, p. 77; p. 82.
[21] See Manuel Köppen, 'Irgendwo in Berlin', in *Handbuch Nachkriegskultur: Literatur, Sachbuch und Film in Deutschland (1945-1962)*, ed. by Elena Agazzi and Erhard Schütz (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2013), pp. 156-59 (pp. 156-59; p. 158 ['cathartic experience']).

Due to this symbolic value of the figure of the child, a further aim of this chapter is to explore those larger questions of post-war life, beyond the children's immediate scope of relevance, which might be addressed through the figure of the child in literary texts. What can the symbolic struggle of the child figure poised between innocence and guilt, hope and threat tell us about post-war projects like reconstruction, denazification and re-education, and about the state and status of even greater entities like society, humanity and reality?

Post-war representations of the child built upon and had to position themselves against older, traditional figurations of the child, as outlined by Debbie Pinfold.[22] Her survey of the history of the figure of the child demonstrates that the post-war theme of children positioned between innocence and guilt is neither new nor exclusive to this time period. Instead, the ambiguity and contrast is written into the child figure from its beginning – and this is the case transnationally, as is shown by the fact that many of the phenomena described by Pinfold are European ones or have a Europe-wide influence, such as Romanticism, new developments in psychology and psychoanalysis, and the influence of Rousseau's work. [23] The blend of different traditions and influences affecting the literary representation of children is another parallel to Lamprecht's film 'Irgendwo in Berlin', which is described by Köppen as 'eine Melange', a mixture of symbols and narrative patterns which were already present in films of the Weimar Republic, in 'Hitlerjunge Quex' (1933), a 'nationalsozialistische[r] Bewegungsfilm[…]', and which are also employed again later in 'sozialistischen Aufbaufilm[en]'.[24]

While keeping in mind the traditional frame of reference, in the following chapter I want to identify a pool of transnational motifs, which are used specifically in German and British texts of the immediate post-war years, and I want to find out, whether these motifs support a simplistic dualism of the child as either hope or threat.

<u>Child and Animal</u>

A key feature of all the texts to be analysed in this section is the exploration of the relationship between child and nature. While this theme is clearly already part of the traditional discourse surrounding literary representations of children, I will focus my analysis on a prevalent and original moulding of the traditional motif, which seems to be characteristic especially of the

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[22] See Debbie Pinfold, pp. 10-21.

[23] See Debbie Pinfold, p. 18 and Pat Pinsent, 'The Post-war Child: Childhood in British Literature in the Wake of World War II', in *The Child in British Literature: Literary Constructions of Childhood, Medieval to Contemporary*, ed. by Adrienne E. Gavin (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), pp. 212-24 (p. 213).

[24] Köppen, p. 159 ['a mélange', 'film serving the National Socialist movement', 'films serving socialist reconstruction'].

analysed post-war texts: animal imagery.[25] Is the use of animal imagery mainly associated with threat, or can it also function as a symbol of innocence? Does animal imagery in connection to the figure of the child open up questions about what it means to be human in post-war times?

In Rose Macaulay's *The World my Wilderness* (1950) the motif of nature is highly present and closely connected to the main protagonist Barbary, a seventeen-year old girl, who spends the years of the war together with her mother and half-brother Raoul in France and is then, when the war is over, sent to London to live with her father. Macaulay (1881-1958) had produced the majority of her writings already before the Second World War. She started writing after she failed to complete her studies at Oxford, and her best-known novels were published during the 1920s and 1930s. The period of the Second World War was 'the background to various personal cataclysms' for Macaulay: a severe car accident, the death of her sister, and the destruction of her flat along with all her belongings in the Blitz.[26] Macaulay produced no novels between 1940 and 1950. Therefore, *The World my Wilderness* was her first novel to appear 'after 10 years of fictional silence', although, according to Leo Mellor, Macaulay was already working on the text in 1948-9.[27] Crawford describes *The World my Wilderness* as 'the accumulation of her experiences in the Second World War', but, taking into consideration that the novel was written at the end of the 1940s, it could also be influenced already by Macaulay's experiences of reconstruction in post-war Britain.[28]

There is a definite closeness between the child figures of Macaulay's text and nature, but, in opposition to the Romantic tradition, in Macaulay's text the close relationship between children and nature is not seen in a positive light, nor as a sign of innocence. Rather, Macaulay seems to suggest that the children are too close to nature and therefore also too far removed from civilisation, which might even turn them into a threat. There is a close connection between the ruins, which are taken over by nature, and the idea of a dangerous barbarism. According to Macaulay, barbarism springs from nature and threatens civilisation: 'Barbarism prowled and padded, lurking in the hot sunshine, in the warm scents of the maquis, in the deep shadows of the forest.'[29] This barbarism is not only inscribed in the protagonist's name but is also

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[25] See Debbie Pinfold, p. 11.

[26] Alice Crawford, *Paradise Pursued: The Novels of Rose Macaulay* (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press; London: Associated University Presses, 1995), p. 18.

[27] Charles Lock, 'Once Was This a Spirit's Dwelling: Rose Macaulay and the Church in Ruins', *International Journal for the Study of the Christian Church*, 12 (2012), pp. 324-41 (p. 332); see Mellor, p. 173.

[28] Crawford, p. 19; see pp. 17-19.

[29] Rose Macaulay, *The World my Wilderness* (London: Collins, 1950), p. 149.

irrevocably carved into her soul and character: 'Caelum non animum mutant qui trans mare currant: the maquis is within us, we take our wilderness where we go.'[30]

In line with this interpretation of nature, Barbary herself is described as an animal or a creature on several occasions:

> Something defensive, puzzled, wary about her, like a watchful little animal or savage.
>
> Barbary slipped from the room, as quiet as a despondent breath. She and Raoul had acquired movements almost noiseless, the slinking step, the effected furtive glide, the quick, wary glancing right and left, of jungle creatures.
>
> 'A nearly grown-up young woman.' She did not look that; more like a small trapped creature, wary, apprehensive.
>
> Finding their way, with the instinct of jungle animals, to the waste places, the ruined holes, the rat alleys, the barbaric wrecked hinterland, which were what they recognised as home.[31]

These excerpts reveal different aspects of Barbary's character. On the one hand, she is portrayed as small, wary and apprehensive. This, as well as her being compared to a rat, make her appear rather weak and in need of protection. On the other hand, though, she is also characterised as savage and compared to a jungle creature, which only follows its instincts. This reveals another, more dangerous side of her character. This part of the animal imagery is in line with Barbary's more general depiction in the text: she is clearly not innocent. She has acquired guilt by not preventing the murder of her stepfather Maurice, a collaborator, by the French Maquis.

In Macaulay's text, children being too close to nature and therefore being compared to animals is only one sign of a barbarism that has actually befallen large parts of the post-war society. The strongest connection is made between the childlike protagonist and nature, but barbarism is actually a feature also of parts of the post-war adult world, which is why animal imagery is not limited to Barbary and Raoul. It is also used in connection to Helen: 'Parents are untamed, excessive, potentially troublesome creatures.'[32] Consequently, the children are also witnesses to the barbarisms of their parents, and it is this all-encompassing barbarism which destroys families.[33]

The image of the jungle is closely connected to the animal imagery and can be found in some of the quotations above. The jungle, a natural place far from civilisation on the one hand

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[30] Macaulay, p. 210; see Mellor, p. 194 and Crawford, p. 142.
[31] Macaulay, p. 14; p. 20; p. 41; p. 238.
[32] Macaulay, p. 154.
[33] See Macaulay, p. 199.

contrasts with the city of London which is intensely developed, overlayed with concrete. On the other hand, in post-war times, in Macaulay's work, the contrast has been abolished, as the jungle and the city have become one. Nature and the jungle have invaded London and they brought barbarism with them: 'Having crossed Gresham Street, the road became a lane across a wrecked and flowering wilderness, and was called Noble Street. Beyond Silver Street, it was a still smaller path, leading over still wilder ruins and thicker jungles of greenery, till it came out by the shell of a large church.'[34]

Barbary, who is the wildest creature described in the text, feels at home in the forests of France and in the urban jungle of London and is, at best, uninterested in civilisation: 'Civilised. Odd word, it did not seem here to apply: Barbary glanced at it with uninterested eyes.'[35] However, as Lara Feigel points out, for the narrative voice in *The World my Wilderness* 'civilisation is a questionable good' in itself and the distinction between good civilisation and bad barbarism and ruins does not seem to be clear-cut for Macaulay.[36] But, while Macaulay in her later work, *The Pleasure of Ruins*, even establishes the idea of a consolation found in ruins and of a redemptive power of nature, in *The World my Wilderness* Barbary is still unable to find this consolation in the post-war ruins of London, which are 'too raw' and still 'smell of fire and mortality'.[37] It is exactly this ambiguity which also characterises the relation between child and animal in *The World my Wilderness*. While the dominant interpretation of the motif is that of a dangerous connection between child and nature, there are, at the periphery, also more nuanced images of the child as a weak and defenceless animal, dangerous and endangered at the same time.

A similar but still different use of animal imagery can be found in Robert Neumann's *Children of Vienna.* Neumann (1897-1975), an Austrian Jewish author, was a successful writer especially known for his parodies, and as a result when Hitler came to power in Germany his books were blacklisted and burned. Following a job offer, Neumann came to London in August 1933, intending to stay until the end of the year, but due to the political developments in Austria Neumann's way back to Vienna was blocked. He remained in Britain for the next twenty five years, firstly as an émigré and later as a stateless refugee. During his time in England, Neumann began to write in English and managed to have some recognition as an English author. In May 1940, Neumann was briefly interned as one of 25,000 Austrians and Germans living in Britain

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[34] Macaulay, pp. 51-52.
[35] Macaulay, p. 137.
[36] Lara Feigel, *The Love-charm of Bombs: Restless Lives in the Second World War* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), p. 441.
[37] See Feigel, *The Love-charm of Bombs,* p. 439; p. 445; p. 438.

but he finally acquired British citizenship in February 1947 and remained in Britain until 1959, when he moved to Switzerland. *Children of Vienna* was published in 1946 as Neumann's third novel written in English. The novel was translated by the end of the year into French, Italian, Danish and Norwegian, and later on into many more languages. The first German publication was in 1948.[38]

As in Macaulay's text, in *Children of Vienna* animal imagery is not only used in connection with children, but a lack of humanity seems to be characteristic of almost all the characters in the text and a more general feature of the post-war world, as is, for example, shown in the description of the man who is coming to the basement to look for Eve: '"Hullo", he said, coming down soft and heavy, like a bear.'[39] However, most notably the animal imagery is used in connection with the description of the child characters. For example, the two men who want to requisition the basement at the very beginning of the text confuse the children with rats: '"Maybe all you've seen was rats." "I've seen kids. Not rats," said the other man, a Jew.'[40] This use of animal imagery is telling, as the two man indeed want to get rid of the children as if they are vermin. This image of the rats is also picked up again later, when two men try to get hold of Curls, in order to gain possession of the house: 'Yes, there was something rat-catching about the way he shoved round the table after the fleeing boy.'[41] The image of the rat we have already seen in connection to Barbary, who is said to inhabit 'rat alleys'.[42] It is no coincidence that the image of the rat can be found in more than one text, as rats were a common occurrence in the ruins of the Second World War, no matter in which country. Hans Erich Nossack, for example, writes in his report of the bombing of Hamburg that after the bombs had dropped 'Ratten und Fliegen beherrschten die Stadt'.[43]

The children's fight with the man who comes to the basement looking for Eve and then beats up Yid is described with proliferating animal imagery. At the beginning, the man is described as a hunter several times, which indirectly characterises the children as prey animals: 'The man gave a short exclamation, like a hunter.'[44] When the man wakes up again, after having been

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[38] See Richard Dove, 'Ein Experte des Überlebens: Robert Neumann in British Exile 1933-45', in *Aliens – Uneingebürgerte: German and Austrian Writers in Exile,* ed. by Ian Wallace (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1994), pp. 159-73 and Franz Stadler, 'Robert Neumann als Autor der "Children of Vienna": Texte und Kontexte im Nachlass', in *Einmal Emigrant, immer Emigrant?: Der Schriftsteller und Publizist Robert Neumann, 1897-1975,* ed. by Anne Maximiliane Jäger (München: Edition Text + Kritik, 2006), pp. 231-55.

[39] Robert Neumann, *Children of Vienna* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1946), p. 18.

[40] Neumann, p. 10.

[41] Neumann, p. 91.

[42] Macaulay, p. 238.

[43] Hans Erich Nossack, *Der Untergang* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1963), p. 52 ['rats and flies ruled the city'].

[44] Neumann, p. 20.

knocked out, the children, in their scared reaction to him, are compared to mice: 'They scuttled; it was like mice scuttling for their holes the moment the cook comes in.'[45] Then, the animal imagery is developed even further, turning the man into a beast of prey: 'The man in the pants just pulled. It was like the action of a polypus seizing and pulling close a panicky minor beast. Even the man's eyes were a polyp's – empty of emotion and businesslike.'[46] In reaction to that, the child is characterised even more strongly than before as a prey animal: 'The minor beast too acted true to type. Panic in his eyes, clutching the table with his one free hand, he started chattering.'[47]

In all instances in which animal imagery is used so far, the children are either characterised as vermin or prey animals. This evokes the image of a post-war world where no one cares for children; they are at best ignored and at the worst hunted, and they are truly endangered. In these cases, the animal imagery and the children's closeness to nature does not, as dominantly in Macaulay's text, represent something negative or dangerous per se. The children do not necessarily lose their innocence by being compared to animals. Rather, the animal imagery, as long as children are compared to prey animals, stresses their status as victims and therefore also the idea of their innocence and endangerment.

This interpretation of the post-war child is supported in Neumann's text by animal imagery expanding to a religious context: 'Not a jungle – it is the flood! All of you, take what you like. Know the story of Noah's Ark? That jeep out there: it is Noah's Ark!'[48] Smith identifies himself with Noah, who on his ark saved two members of every animal species on earth before the big catastrophe of the flood: 'I'll be Noah, kid, sitting on the wheel of that jeep outside. Ever heard the story of Noah? He was a big noise when he set out, owning two thousand one hundred something, I am sure. After the flood he had to think of something new!'[49] Equating Smith to Noah equates the children to animals, which makes Noah's ark part of the wider motif of animal imagery. The story of Noah's ark is one of a new beginning, as Smith also stresses in the above quotation. In the biblical story, the majority of people on earth have lived sinfully and therefore the earth has to be purged of them. Noah only rescues that which is innocent, in order to build

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[45] Neumann, p. 69.
[46] Neumann, p. 74.
[47] Neumann, p. 74.
[48] Neumann, p. 131.
[49] Neumann, p. 134.

up a new world after the flood. Therefore, the image of the ark indirectly characterises the children as innocent and as worthy of being saved.[50]

There are passages in Neumann's novel, however, where we see a quite different use of animal imagery. When Smith enters the basement for the first time and gives his sandwiches and all other 'valuable' possessions to the children, he at first feels afraid of the children, who seem to turn into beasts of prey in their hunt for food and in their struggle for survival: 'It was not the hold-up, not the circle of earnest and mirthless beasts closer and closer bearing in on him – it was that sudden newness which caused the faint fright in him.'[51] At first, Smith uses the image of the circus to describe the children: 'What was this, the man asked himself, frightened suddenly. Circus, it crossed his mind. Those cages you sneaked round to as a boy whenever the circus came. The stench of wild beasts. Yes, wild animals close to feeding time had that sort of mute threat in them.'[52] This image is very interesting, especially in connection to the image of the jungle, which can be found in Macaulay's text, but which is also mentioned by Smith, directly following the circus image: 'The voice of the Yid boy stood out against the silence like monkey chatter, uninterruptedly. That jungle fear, long forgotten, buried deep in the by-streams and still pools of his negro blood, let go of the man after a second.'[53] The images of both the circus and the jungle turn the children into wild, dangerous and scary beasts. The difference is, though, that in the circus, the animals are under control, they are kept in cages and made to work for the people, they are trained and, to a certain degree, tamed. In the circus, the animals are on human territory, while the jungle is animal territory. There, beasts are wild and free to act according to their instincts. If a human tries to enter into this space, it can become very dangerous. The two images of the circus and the jungle represent two different levels of fear for Smith. He feels safer in the circus than in the jungle.

These two images do not remain separated but there is also a blurring of the boundaries between circus and jungle: 'It broke the spell. You would stand in a circus cage and face the beasts, and as long as you faced them and didn't move you were safe. But now there was that sentence and the spell was broken.'[54] There are still circus cages, but now Smith is not on the outside anymore, but inside of the cage, which puts him in a similar danger to the one in the jungle. There are no protective barriers anymore. That might symbolize Smith's doubts about whether

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[50] See Elisabeth Freundlich, 'Die Welt Robert Neumanns', in *Robert Neumann: Stimmen der Freunde: Der Romancier und sein Werk: Zum 60. Geburtstag am 22. Mai 1957* (Wien: Kurt Desch, 1957), pp. 63-131 (p. 79).
[51] Neumann, p. 59.
[52] Neumann, p. 55.
[53] Neumann, p. 55.
[54] Neumann, p. 57.

he should come too close to the children, whether he should engage with their problems, as this might mean danger for him. Smith does not have to help the children but he makes the conscious decision to step into the lion's cage and face the new, frightening and sometimes also dangerous post-war reality. This can be seen as a symbolic act of a representative of the American occupation forces. Furthermore, the image of the circus also seems to reflect the special view that a member of the occupation forces has of the occupied subjects: they might be tamed and trained, but still represent a threat.

Smith's fear of the children does not last for very long. The children are momentarily turned into beasts by their most basic needs for food, but they are not really dangerous. They wait for Smith to give them his possessions, they distribute them evenly and fairly and they even queue for their share of the sandwiches, which suggests a precisely human form of socialisation: 'Two more seconds: one when they tried not just to dive for them, but to queue up. Grotesque. What was there to queue? Just a few kids. But the queuing was in their blood; how can you get a thing if you don't queue for it?'.[55] By using the animal imagery earlier, Neumann first shows the degrading effect of the war and hunger on children, and secondly he also makes the reader aware of the potential of the children to turn into a real threat, if they are not treated properly and if they receive no help. But as the last quote reveals these children in the basement are not wild, dangerous beasts yet. They still bear civilisation and humanity in them, which is emphasised by their ultimately being the heroes of the text. While Smith tries to save them and fails, the biggest act of heroism in the end comes from the children as Yid takes all responsibility for Smith's actions on himself and therefore saves him from prosecution.[56] While Smith's superior tries to turn the children into animals and uncivilised beasts again – 'They asked for it, did they not. They are butcher birds. They are born killers. They started killing' – Smith defends their innocence and stresses the impossibility for them to repent:

> And if they did ask for it, these kids I mean, and are guilty by some refinement of your moral machinery a coloured man like myself wouldn't understand, and if they are as guilty as I think they are guiltless: so what, my Lord? What do you want them to do? Repent? My Lord, they are too hungry to repent, my Lord Jesus Christ. They are too lice-ridden and too bug-ridden and they are too frost-ridden altogether to say a single fifty words' prayer to your greater glory.[57]

The image of the jungle appears once more towards the end of the text, just before the planned escape. One of the kids wants to take a bazooka with them, and Smith agrees: '"A bazooka?"

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[55] Neumann, pp. 55-56.
[56] See Neumann, p. 141.
[57] Neumann, p. 147; p. 149.

he said, wild-eyed. "All right then, take that bazooka! Maybe it'll come in handy, maybe, in a land like this, in a jungle like this. There hasn't been any shooting for too long. Take that bazooka; maybe there'll be wild beasts about!'"[58] Smith still perceives the post-war city as a jungle, but this time the jungle is what is outside of the basement. It is not the children that are beasts, but the other people outside of the basement.

Neumann uses animal imagery in an ambiguous way in his novel, even more so than Macaulay. On the one hand, it symbolizes a general lack of humanity stemming from the war. As a consequence of this the children, if they receive no help, might develop into wild, dangerous beasts; they might become part of the jungle. But on the other hand, the children are also shown to be victims and endangered prey, who can be and have to be saved. They have the potential for good in them, which they demonstrate in their behaviour towards Smith. Therefore, Neumann's ideas do not seem quite as negative as Macaulay's. The danger is not perceived as that insurmountable. There is still a lot of goodness in the children.

Another rather ambiguous use of animal imagery can be found in Aichinger's *Die grössere Hoffnung*. Ilse Aichinger was born in Vienna in 1921. Her family became split as a consequence of the Anschluss of Austria to the Third Reich. Her Jewish mother lost her flat, as well as her work as a doctor, while her twin sister was able to emigrate to England. Ilse Aichinger spent the years of the Second World War together with her mother in Vienna. She was mobilised and only able to begin studying medicine at the university after the end of the war. She abandoned her studies in 1947, though, to work on her first novel, *Die grössere Hoffnung*, which was published in 1948.[59] The text is about the experiences of the half-Jewish girl Ellen and her Jewish friends in a place which is never clearly named but probably represents Vienna before and during the Second World War.[60]

Pinfold's interpretation of the novel as a story about 'the moral triumph of an innocent child over Nazism' at first sight appears to be coherent, as there seems to be no real doubt that in Aichinger's text the Jewish and half-Jewish children are portrayed and understood as innocent.[61] This is, for example, made clear in the text by the image of Noah and his ark. When the two groups of children, the (half-)Jewish ones and those in uniform, fight against each other, the old man, who teaches Ellen and her friends English, steps between them to stop the fight.

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[58] Neumann, p. 131.
[59] See 'Biographie', in *Die größere Hoffnung*, by Ilse Aichinger (Frankfurt a.M.: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1991), p. 3.
[60] See Nicole Rosenberger, *Poetik des Ungefügten: Zur Darstellung von Krieg und Verfolgung in Ilse Aichingers Roman 'Die grössere Hoffnung'* (Wien: Wilhelm Braumüller, 1998), p. 10.
[61] Debbie Pinfold, p. 104.

Like Smith in Neumann's text, the old man is compared to Noah: 'Die in Uniform hatten die Messer gezogen. Der Alte warf sich dazwischen. Um der Kinder willen verließ Noah die Arche. In diesem einen Fall, mein Gott!'.[62] This can be interpreted in a very similar way as in Neumann's text: the children are innocent, worthy of protection and saving, as well as potentially crucial for a successful new beginning. By talking about children in general, this quotation also supports Miriam Seidler's statement that 'alle Kinder sind Opfer', even the 'Kinder mit Uniform', who are members of the Hitler Youth.[63]

Although seemingly clearly portrayed as innocent, Ellen and her friends still, at some specific points in the text, are compared in their behaviour to wild and aggressive animals, to beasts of prey. One particularly disturbing example occurs when Ellen meets her father and bites him in order to save her friends, who have been caught sitting on a bench, although this is forbidden for Jews:

> Die beiden Soldaten hatten sich verblüfft zurückgewandt, erhielten aber keinen Befehl, da Ellen den Mund ihres Vaters wütend und zielbewußt mit Beschlag belegt hatte. Sie verbiß sich darin und ließ ihn nicht zu Worte kommen. Sie hing an seinen Schulterklappen wie ein kleines, lästiges Tier.
>
> Ihr Körper war geschüttelt von Schluchzen, dazwischen aber lachte sie, und bevor es ihrem Vater gelang, sich zu befreien, biß sie ihn in die Wange.[64]

In a different scene in the cemetery the children try, violently, to stop carriers of a coffin: 'Die Kinder stürzten sich von allen Seiten auf die Träger. Sie schlugen mit den Fäusten auf ihre Schultern, zogen sich an ihnen hoch wie an Laternen und umklammerten ihre Arme.'[65] Still, in the subsequent pursuit, it is the children who are hunted like 'Treibwild'.[66] At a different point in the text, the children are similarly described as prey animals, which stresses their victim status: 'Mäuse in der Falle, das sind wir!'[67] Another example of the use of this motif is their

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[62] Ilse Aichinger, *Die grössere Hoffnung* (Amsterdam: Bermann-Fischer, 1948), p. 140 ['The ones in uniform had drawn their knives. The old man threw himself between them. For the sake of the children Noah left the arc. In this one case, God!'].

[63] Miriam Seidler, *'Sind wir denn noch Kinder?': Untersuchungen zur Kinderperspektive in Ilse Aichingers Roman 'Die grössere Hoffnung' unter Einbeziehung eines Fassungsvergleichs* (Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang, 2004), p. 128 ['all children are victims']; Aichinger, p. 130 ['children with uniform'].

[64] Aichinger, p. 68 ['The two soldiers had turned back puzzled, but they didn't receive an order, because Ellen had angrily and purposefully occupied her father's mouth. She bit him and didn't let her father say a single word. She clung to his epaulettes like a small, annoying animal.']; p. 68 ['Her body was shaken by sobs, but in between she laughed, and before her father managed to free himself, she bit him in his cheek.'].

[65] Aichinger, p. 92 ['The children lunged at the carriers from all sides. They hit their shoulders with their fists, hoisted themselves up on them as on lanterns and clasped their arms.'].

[66] Aichinger, p. 94 ['game in a hunt'].

[67] Aichinger, p. 127 ['We are mice sitting in a trap, that's what we are!'].

comparison with animals in the following quotation: '"Nichts!" schrien die Kinder. Ihr Schreien war wie das Schreien geängstigter Tiere.'[68]

Therefore, in a manner quite similar to Macaulay and especially Neumann, Aichinger on the one hand uses animal imagery to stress the children's status as victims by comparing them to prey animals. On the other hand, there are also unsettling scenes in which the children become excessively violent and display behaviour that would be more suited to beasts of prey. What triggers these shifts in Aichinger's child figures seems to be an immediate danger to life. In these moments, the children do not seem to be completely free of the darker stain of violence, which calls into question and complicates Pinfold's interpretation of the novel which I quoted at the beginning of this discussion.

Further ambiguous implementations of animal imagery can be found in Walter Kolbenhoff's *Von unserm Fleisch und Blut*. Kolbenhoff (Walter Hoffmann, 1908-1993) was an active member of the communist party. He had to leave his home after the Kristallnacht, and fled first to Amsterdam and from there on to Denmark, which remained his country of exile for nine years. When Denmark was invaded and occupied by the Nazis, Kolbenhoff accepted an order by the communist party, from which he had been expelled in 1933, to join the German soldiers and subversively support the fight against Hitler. Kolbenhoff was sent to Yugoslavia and Italy. In 1944 he was captured by the Americans and transported as a POW to Norfolk, Virginia in the United States. This was only one of the several American camps Kolbenhoff was in until his release in 1946. He wrote his novel *Von unserm Fleisch und Blut*, which was first published in 1947, during his time as a POW in America. Unlike most of the other authors, Kolbenhoff therefore wrote his text without any personal experiences of post-war Europe. When he finally returned to Germany Kolbenhoff worked as a journalist and was one of the founding members of the 'Gruppe 47'.[69] The protagonist of *Von unserm Fleisch und Blut* is a teenage boy from the Hitler Youth, who continues to fight in the ruins of a German city, although Allied soldiers have already entered and taken over the area. He is fanatic and heavily influenced by Nazi propaganda.

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[68] Aichinger, p. 183 ['"Nothing!" the children screamed. Their screaming was the screaming of scared animals.'].

[69] See Werner Brand, *Der Schriftsteller als Anwalt der Armen und Unterdrückten: Zu Leben und Werk Walter Kolbenhoffs* (Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang, 1991), pp. 16-43.

The first use of animal imagery in the text appears when the protagonist actively uses animal imagery to stylise himself as a strong, potent and dangerous fighter. It is his way of pushing himself emotionally and of stopping himself from thinking:

> 'Ich bin ein Wolf', sagte er. 'Ich bin ein reißender Wolf und ich töte, weil der Befehl lautet: Töte!'
>
> Ich bin ein Wolf, dachte er, und ich werde kämpfend untergehen.
>
> Ich bin ein Wolf, ich bin ein Wolf, ich bin ein Wolf.[70]

In this case, the Romantic motif of a closeness between child and nature is turned on its head as it does not symbolise innocence any more, but aggression, danger and guilt. To the protagonist, being like a beast of prey is an ideal that he aspires to and which he was instructed about by the Nazis. They need the members of their youth organisations to be like dangerous animals, to stop thinking and to lose all human restraints that might deter them from using violence. What to Macaulay represents barbarism, is shown by Kolbenhoff to be an ideal in the Nazi society.

The inherent barbarism in National Socialism is further stressed by the hidden layer of meaning which is contained in the protagonist's use of the ideal of a wolf. This, clearly, alludes to the Nazi youth gangs that were conceptualised as a last line of German defence in the final months of the war. Members of these groups were called werewolves. Victor Klemperer points out how this name of the German youth ultimately reveals the barbarity inherent in National Socialism itself:

> die Bandenkämpfer nennen sich im offiziellen Rundfunk 'Werwölfe'. Das war nun doch wieder ein Anknüpfen an Tradition, an allerälteste sogar, an den Mythus, und so offenbarte sich am Schluß noch einmal in der Sprache die ungeheuerliche Reaktion, das absolute Zurückgreifen auf die primitive, die raubtierhaften Anfänge der Menschheit und damit das demaskiert eigentliche Wesen des Nazismus.[71]

The protagonist of Kolbenhoff's text is too heavily influenced by this propaganda to change. At the very end of the text, when he is completely alone, but still a fanatic believer in the Nazi ideology, the protagonist once again reaffirms his loyalty to his Nazi assignment as a werewolf:

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[70] Walter Kolbenhoff, *Von unserm Fleisch und Blut* (Frankfurt a.M.: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1978), p. 20 ['"I'm a wolf", he said. "I'm a seizing wolf and I kill because the order is: Kill!"']; p. 71 ['I'm a wolf, he thought, and I will go down fighting.']; p. 74 ['I'm a wolf, I'm a wolf, I'm a wolf.'].

[71] Victor Klemperer, *LTI: Notizbuch eines Philologen*, 10th edn (Leipzig: Philipp Reclam jun., 1990), pp. 257-58 ['On the official radio station the warriors refer to themselves as "werewolves". This amounted to yet another link with tradition, with the oldest of them all in fact, with mythology. And thus, at the very end, an extraordinarily reactionary outlook was exposed yet again through language, the notion of falling back entirely on the primitive, most predatory beginnings of mankind, which thus revealed Nazism in its true colours.' (Victor Klemperer, *The Language of the Third Reich: LTI, Lingua Tertii Imperii: A Philologist's Notebook*, trans. by Martin Brady (London: Athlone Press, 2000), p. 244)].

'Ich werde wie ein Wolf unter ihnen leben, dachte er frohlockend, zum Teufel mit ihren Gesetzen, ich habe alle Stricke zerrissen.'[72] Kolbenhoff therefore expresses strong doubts about a possibility to save and re-educate the German youth, which has been turned into wild animals by Nazi propaganda and which therefore poses a dangerous threat to a peaceful post-war society.

Animal imagery in the context of Nazi ideology is also used by Neumann in *Children of Vienna*. The text contains a very direct reference to werewolves: the boy Goy describes his short affiliation with this group:

> 'H.J. leader camp. Werewolves.' 'You been a Werewolf?' Yid said. […] 'Yes.' said Goy. 'Went to an Ordensburg first, because I'm so good as a Race, something marvellous; […] Doctor said I was the best Race ever. Then the Russians came; so they said we must smash the Russians; so I was Werewolves, but not long. Two days. All ran away. Just liberated a lorry, and a shop, then away. That was Werewolves.'[73]

Being a werewolf is just one small, quite minor part of Goy's journey through the war and post-war period. He seems to be flattered by the Nazis characterising him as a member of a superior race, but the ideology does not really seem to have sunk in very deep in his case. To Goy, his time as a werewolf is more like an incidental occurrence than a true vocation, as it is for Kolbenhoff's protagonist.

The image of the werewolf is not the only example of a connection drawn between children, nature and Nazi Ideology in Neumann's text, though. In the following second case, the children do not compare themselves to animals nor are they compared to animals by others, but instead, the children compare other people to animals in reference to Nazi Ideology. Especially Ate, the former member of the Association of German Girls, describes people, who – according to Nazi ideology – are beneath her own race, as animals. This is an expression of the Nazis' method of devaluing and dehumanising their perceived enemies:

> 'You got a Yid here?' Ate asked […] 'They stink and have short legs. Only thing that is long with them is their noses. They are like monkeys. Like bugs, really. Tread on them. And they stink.'

> Ate said: '[…] I hate the Russians. They are sub-human. Like bugs. The best thing, tread on them.'[74]

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[72] Kolbenhoff, p. 186 ['I will live among them like a wolf, he rejoicingly thought, damn their laws, I have torn all cords.'].
[73] Neumann, p. 42.
[74] Neumann, p. 30; p. 33.

In these cases, animal imagery is used by the author to stress the indoctrination of the children by Nazi ideology and therefore their at best ambiguous status somewhere between innocence and guilt, hope and threat. Furthermore, Neumann might also have incorporated the above references to Nazi ideology into his text as an ironic comment on war and post-war developments. His text actually displays an ironic reversal of Nazi ideology: Germans like Ate, who treated others like animals, are the ones who now, in post-war times, live like animals, like rats in a basement, fighting for bare survival. The tables have clearly been turned.

In Kolbenhoff's text, the protagonist's stylising of himself as a wild and dangerous beast in accord with Nazi ideology is only one example of animal imagery. The protagonist's behaviour is also compared to that of animals by the narrator, in order to stress his degradation and dehumanisation, in a similar fashion to what happens to the children in Neumann's text:

> Durch die Schatten pürschend wie ein Tier, dachte er an Kruses Worte.
>
> Er blieb wie ein Tier mit allen vier Gliedern am Boden hocken.
>
> Von Zeit zu Zeit aufrecht gehend, die meiste Zeit jedoch auf allen Vieren kriechend, wie ein Tier, legte er Meter auf Meter zurück.[75]

What is interesting about this use of animal imagery is that it reveals a lot about the protagonist's situation and his own feelings; the animal imagery changes according to the shifting power relations in the text and also according to the protagonist's unstable emotional state. When his comrades are attacked by Allied soldiers, the protagonist compares them to animals, who have been hunted down: 'Sie haben sie gestellt, wie man ein Tier bei der Jagd stellt, und sie sind vielleicht schon alle hin.'[76] When the net draws tighter and tighter around the protagonist himself, he turns from a beast of prey into a prey animal, from a wolf into a rabbit: 'Er hoppelte wie ein erschreckter Hase in den Schutz der nächsten Mauer'; 'Sie werden mich abschießen wie einen Hasen, sobald sie mich sehen, dachte er.'[77] In Kolbenhoff's text, Nazi ideology turns children into animals in two steps. First, the child is stylised as a wild beast and therefore loses his humanity. Secondly, when the Nazis lose the war, the indoctrinated and dehumanised children become prey animals and are hunted down. A similar shift between prey animal and beast of prey happens in Aichinger's text, triggered by an immediate danger to life, and in Neumann's text, triggered by the most basic need for food. Therefore, the children's ambiguous

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[75] Kolbenhoff, pp. 79-80 ['Stalking through the shadows like an animal, he thought of Kruse's words.']; p. 86 ['He remained crouched on the floor, like an animal, with all four limbs.']; p. 100 ['Every now and then walking upright, but most of the time crawling on all fours, like an animal, he covered meter after meter.'].
[76] Kolbenhoff, p. 24 ['They caught them, like you catch an animal on a chase, and maybe they are all dead already.'].
[77] Kolbenhoff, p. 96 ['Like a scared rabbit he hobbled towards the savety of the next wall.']; p. 148 ['They will shoot me like a rabbit as soon as they see me, he thought.'].

status between prey animal and beast of prey seems – transnationally – to reflect their ambiguous status between innocence and guilt, although one clearly has to keep in mind that the extent of guilt and threat is different in each of the analysed texts. While Kolbenhoff's protagonist as well as Barbary in *The World my Wilderness* reveal a greater level of danger and guilt, the child figures in Neumann's and Aichinger's texts are merely shown to have the potential to be dangerous, but their guilt is not yet real or concrete.

What is important for a thorough understanding of Kolbenhoff's text is that he does not just describe the protagonist as a monster and inherently evil. Instead, he tries to understand and psychologically explain his development into a fanatic supporter of the Nazis.[78] This offers Kolbenhoff the opportunity to explore the nature and effectiveness of fascism in more general lines and gives his text a greater depth, as has been noted by Werner Brand.[79] Everything is not just black-and-white, but there are also some grey areas. Similarly to Aichinger, Neumann and Macaulay, Kolbenhoff therefore also tries to expose the deeper causes for the development of his child figure, and for his status between innocence and guilt.

One interesting similarity between the texts by Kolbenhoff, Macaulay and Neumann is the shared motif of the jungle. In Kolbenhoff's text, the jungle is used as a metaphor for the urban ruins and, in a more abstract way, the post-war society. The first one to mention the jungle is the character of the deserter, who also connects it to the image of the wolf: '"Wir werden wie die Wölfe leben müssen", sagte er. "Wie die Tiere im Dschungel. Jeder muß aufpassen, daß er nicht erschlagen wird und daß er den größten Bissen kriegt."'[80] The second reference to the jungle in Kolbenhoff's text is even more reminiscent of Macaulay's description of the urban jungle in London and of her fear of barbarity, which is closely connected to it: 'Die Stadt war ein Dschungel, im Dickicht ihrer Ruinen lauerte der Tod. Die Menschen wußten ihm zu entgehen. Sie lebten wie Tiere, und der tausendfache Tod um sie hatte in ihnen die Jahrtausende versunkene Instinkte erweckt. Sie lebten, und die stärksten von ihnen wußten, daß sie leben bleiben würden, solange sie die Kräfte nicht verloren.'[81] The urban jungle is a place where only the law of the survival of the fittest applies. All other acquisitions of society are irrelevant. But it is not just this aspect that links the ruins to the jungle; there is also a similarity in landscape,

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[78] See Brand, p. 117.
[79] See Brand, pp. 121-26.
[80] Kolbenhoff, p. 61 ['"We will have to live like wolves", he said. "Like animals in the jungle. Everyone has to make sure that he isn't slain and that he gets the biggest mouthful of food."'].
[81] Kolbenhoff, pp. 76-77 ['The city was a jungle, death lurked in the thicket of its ruins. The humans knew how to evade it. They lived like animals, and the thousandfold death around them had awoken instincts in them, which had been buried for thousands of years. They lived, and the strongest of them knew that they would stay alive, as long as they didn't lose their strength.'].

another aspect which is similar to Macaulay's green London ruins: 'Wie im Urwald die Lianengewächse an fremden Bäumen, hingen über ihm verrenkte Eisenstangen, zerbrochene Stahlbänder, das Riesenblatt einer durchlöcherten Blechscheibe.'[82] Although Brand traces the image of the urban jungle in Kolbenhoff's text back to Bertolt Brecht, the comparison with Macaulay's, but also Neumann's text, demonstrates that the jungle is not just a national motif in the description of the post-war world, but a transnational one.[83] This assumption is supported by the following analysis of another British text.

Graham Greene (1904-1991) was, according to Barbara Crowther, an author who, 'unlike some of his contemporaries in the 1930s and 1940s, […] considered film an art form worthy of serious criticism.'[84] It is therefore not surprising that he wrote film scripts himself and also turned many of his own literary texts into film scripts.[85] One of these works was his short story 'The Basement Room', which Greene wrote in 1935 during a journey from Liberia to England.[86] In the post-war years, Greene turned his short story into a film script both for and with the help of the director Carol Reed.[87] The result of this collaboration was the film *The Fallen Idol*, which was released in 1948. As Crowther points out, 'a significant change has taken place between the story and the film', and it was even impossible for Greene himself, in the end, to determine which changes were his ideas and which were Reed's.[88] The basis for my textual analysis is the unpublished first treatment of 'The Basement Room' by Graham Greene, dated 10th July, 1947.[89] Greene's first treatment of 'The Basement Room' is the text in this chapter which is furthest removed in its setting and characters from the war and post-war realities; it features no ruins, no fighting, no visible signs of war at all. This fact makes the similarities that I have identified between Greene's and the other post-war texts even more interesting, and it supports my definition of rubble literature as explicitly including texts which do not feature physical ruins, but rather psychological and social ruins, such as the family 'in ruins' displayed in the texts analysed in this chapter.

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[82] Kolbenhoff, p. 140 ['As lianas in the jungle hang on to other trees, above him were hanging dislocated iron rods, broken steel strappings, the huge blade of a perforated tin disk.'].
[83] See Brand, p. 112.
[84] Barbara Crowther, 'Fiction and Film Adaptation: A study of Narrative Structure and Style in Graham Greene's "The Basement Room" and Carol Reed's "The Fallen Idol"' (unpublished Master's dissertation, University of Liverpool, 1982), p. 5.
[85] See Crowther, p. 6.
[86] See Gene D. Phillips, *Graham Greene: The Films of his Fiction* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1974), p. 47.
[87] See Crowther, p. 7.
[88] Crowther, p. 9; see Phillips, p. 52.
[89] I accessed this unpublished document at the British Film Institute in London.

There are some very few examples of animal imagery in the text. Its first application can be seen when Felipe visits the zoo together with Baines and Emmy. The boy is compared or at least consciously connected to a lion. This is made clear in Greene's directions for the filming: 'We cut from a lion yawning through the bars to Felipe yawning outside them.'[90] Another connection is implicitly established between Felipe and the animals, when the lions' behaviour seems to mirror his own impatience: 'The boy watches him [i.e. Baines], and the lions beginning to be stirred by hunger pace and roar and neither pays them any attention.'[91] This connection made between the boy Felipe and wild, dangerous animals in the zoo might be understood as a way for Greene to indirectly characterise his child figure. He alludes to or foreshadows Felipe's lack or loss of innocence and how his behaviour and his lying seriously endanger Baines, as they make him appear guilty of the murder of his wife, a crime which he did not commit. The zoo furthermore seems to be connected to the images of the jungle and the circus, which I identified in other post-war texts. The zoo with its cages for dangerous animals, which are exhibited, closely watched, and studied by humans, but not tamed and trained as in the circus, seems to be a further model of post-war society and its children.

Another instance in which Greene employs animal imagery to characterise Felipe as not totally innocent and potentially dangerous can be found in the choice of a pet for him. Felipe is very attached to his pet Voojoo, a grass snake: 'He suddenly stops being the Pathfinder and whispers "Voojoo". No reply "Voojoo". He opens the top of a battered railway station and puts his hand inside; out it comes with a grass snake, which he puts into his pocket.'[92] The choice of a pet appears symbolic, although this theme can also be found in other texts of the time. A snake is connected to cunning and wit, but also, in a more religious context, to the fall of mankind in the Garden of Eden and therefore also to the concept of original sin. Therefore, the pet snake might be another example of an indirect connection between Felipe and guilt, sin or threat, expressed through the use of animal imagery. We have already seen the religious context as a source for animal imagery deployed in the texts by Neumann and Aichinger.

Finally, the third image used in Greene's text which speaks to the child's relation to nature is the image of the jungle, which is also present in many of the other texts analysed thus far. When, in the night, Baines argues with his wife and Felipe flees from the house in a confused and terrified state, he runs through a garden in the city, which suddenly appears like a wild jungle,

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[90] Graham Greene, 'First Treatment "The Basement Room", 10th July 1947' (London, British Film Institute, Special Collection), p. 21.
[91] Greene, p. 21.
[92] Greene, pp. 1-2.

reflecting the boy's fear: 'He is terrified and runs slap across the road towards the railings of the square garden, climbs them and crouches down under a bush' ; 'we have seen it [i.e. the garden] in daylight and know how small it is, but at night it seems illimitable with a jungle life of its own.'[93] In this text passage, Felipe's fear seems to imply that he is not the lion anymore, who should feel right at home in the jungle. Instead, Felipe is a scared little human being, thrown out into a wild and dangerous world, which is completely alien to him. It seems remarkable that the image of the jungle, which might be an obvious one in a landscape of ruins as in Macaulay's, Neumann's and Kolbenhoff's texts, is also present in Greene's text, which has such a different setting and set of characters. It might hint at Greene having similar concerns about a diminishing civilisation and the state of children in the post-war world as the other authors. Indeed, what his text shows us is, once again, an ambiguous child figure: Felipe is not innocent, but corrupted by the adult world, and somehow becomes entangled in the guilty affairs of the adults. The animal imagery and the image of the jungle therefore articulate Felipe's status between innocence and guilt, hope and threat.

In the above, I have demonstrated that animal imagery is a transnational motif in post-war texts used to explore the transnational theme of the children's innocence or guilt. The child figures in all the texts oscillate between innocence and guilt, hope and threat. Sometimes they are portrayed as endangered prey animals, while at other times they are cast as dangerous beasts of prey. They are portrayed at the same time as agents of Nazi ideology and as victims of this ideology and its strategy of dehumanisation. The children are compared to the innocent animals on Noah's ark as well as connected to the sinful snake. The post-war world is metaphorically described as jungle, circus and zoo, with all three images ascribing a different level of threat and endangerment to child figures and those who interact with them. This constant oscillation between different roles of the child figure mirrors the great uncertainty about children in post-war years, which was present in Germany and Britain alike. The manifold forms of animal imagery employed in the analysed texts also demonstrate that the texts are not committed to any specific tradition, but that what instead characterises texts belonging to the transnational genre of rubble literature is the unique combination of traditional elements and fragments, which are turned into new mosaic structures and images.

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[93] Greene, p. 31.

<u>Child and Play</u>

Bearing in mind my findings above, one area that has not been explored, but which is often associated with children, is the notion of play. In the following, I therefore want to analyse how the theme of innocence or guilt, hope or threat is explored in the German and British post-war texts through the motif of playing. In many texts, children engage in some form of a game. There are different types of games with different meanings and effects. In his work, Kozlovsky describes how the understanding and interpretation of play developed and changed in the course of time.[94] At the beginning, according to Kozlovsky, 'play was regarded as a trivial, marginal and even sinful activity.'[95] This only changed in modern times due to two different developments. Firstly, authors like Schiller and Rousseau shaped a Romantic, positive and even idealized interpretation of playing: 'In this romantic tradition, play is civilizing and noble, and by definition is opposed to the realm of labor and necessity as it has no other purpose than being pleasurable for itself.'[96] Play becomes 'a realm of freedom and agency'.[97] In this tradition, Johan Huizinga in 1949 stressed the idea of the important and positive civilizing power of play as he explained 'the rise of Fascism and Capitalism as a symptom of the decay of the play principle' and suggested the use of play's 'civilizing power to counter the destructiveness and intolerance inherent to modern culture'.[98] The second major development, which, according to Kozlovsky, influenced modern concepts of play stems from works of Herbert Spencer and Karl Groose, who defined play in more 'biological and teleological terms as an innate instinct that prepares the organism for later life, or allows the discharge of surplus energies'.[99] Tying in with these new ideas, psychoanalysts promoted the concept of a 'cathartic potential of play', which was seen 'as a mechanism for purging disruptive emotions'.[100] Referring to these two traditions, Kozlovsky defines play in modern times as 'a self-initiated, liberating activity, and at the same time, an instrument of social and educational policy'.[101]

On the one hand, play is a natural, instinctive behaviour, which is free, liberating, and idealized in the Romantic tradition. It can therefore be connected to concepts of innocence. On the other hand, play socialises children. Therefore, it can also actively be used to corrupt children and potentially destroy their innocence. Furthermore, if play is understood as a way of purging the

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[94] See Kozlovsky, pp. 51-52.
[95] Kozlovsky, p. 51.
[96] Kozlovsky, p. 51.
[97] Kozlovsky, p. 51.
[98] Kozlovsky, p. 51.
[99] Kozlovsky, p. 52.
[100] Kozlovsky, p. 52.
[101] Kozlovsky, p. 52.

children of destructive and harmful emotions, this can either mean that children always have these negative tendencies in them and are therefore not idealized and completely innocent beings, or play can also be used to re-educate children and their learned negative behaviour.

Ilse Aichinger's *Die grössere Hoffnung* contains a number of instances of playing: Ellen imagines herself playing tag with her mother, who has left her; Ellen and her friends play waiting next to the river for a child to fall into the water so that they can save it; and Ellen and her friends play a game of hide-and-seek at the cemetery.[102] These games reveal some shared characteristics. Firstly, there is a strong tendency of the external reality to invade and break into the children's games. Instead of playing freely and independently, the children cannot escape their world. For example, the children's game at the river is, right from its beginning, initiated and dominated by the children's wish to overcome their stigmatisation through Nazi ideology: '"Wir spielen warten." […] "Wir warten, daß hier in der Gegend ein Kind ertrinkt!" […] "Dann werden wir es retten!" […] "Dann werden wir wieder sein wie alle andern! Dann dürfen wir wieder auf allen Bänken sitzen!"'[103] The children pretend that their waiting for a child to fall into the water indeed paid off, that they were able to save the child and are handing it back to the mayor, who is played by Ellen. At this point, reality takes over the children's game completely as Ellen refuses to take the saved child, because it is 'ein unnützes Kind' just like herself: 'Du meinst dich selbst, Ellen!'[104] This failure of play can be interpreted as a comment by the author on how much the children are endangered and also damaged by the persecution of the Nazis. It is the racial categories of Nazi ideology that turn Ellen into a highly questionable child, as she has two Jewish grandparents: 'Halt - und da stimmt ja auch irgend etwas mit den Großeltern nicht: Zwei sind richtig und zwei sind falsch!'.[105] The children are unable to play freely, the reality is too powerful. In the course of the whole text, the children state several times that playing is impossible when one is afraid: 'Wir haben Angst, und wer Angst hat, kann nicht spielen!'.[106] This motif of the children's inability to play stemming from fear emphasises the children's victim status. The rule of the Nazis and the conditions of war are so harmful to the children that they are unable to stay children and to keep doing things that are essential for children, like playing.

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[102] See Aichinger, p. 31, p. 44 and pp. 71-72.
[103] Aichinger, p. 42 ['"We play waiting." […] "We wait for a child to drown close-by!" […] "Then we will save it!" […] "Then we will once again be like everybody else! Then we will once again be allowed to sit on all the benches!"'].
[104] Aichinger, p. 44 ['a useless child']; p. 44 ['You are talking about yourself, Ellen.'].
[105] Aichinger, p. 44 ['Stop – there is something wrong about the grandparents as well: two of them are correct and two of them are incorrect!'].
[106] Aichinger, p. 170 ['We are afraid, and if you are afraid, you cannot play!'].

Secondly, the children change the rules of well-known games like hide-and-seek and playing tag. Instead of searching for each other, the children search for themselves, and instead of one person trying to catch another, both run in a circle and try to catch each other. This might symbolise two things. It demonstrates to the children, as well as to the reader, that traditional rules do not apply anymore in the war and post-war world. Seidler states that the games in the novel are a way for the children to deal with the state's orders and prohibitions.[107] This socialising function of the games is expressed through their changed rules. The changing of traditional games might also symbolise that the children are stepping out of a purely passive role and instead actively changing and adopting their games to their new reality. Their games, with the new rules, and also with the – maybe not invading but actively incorporated – reality, offer the children the possibility to come to terms with, as well as record and document their own, new reality. Tanja Hetzer writes that the children's games constitute a 'Versuch, historische Realität zu formulieren, ohne jene Sprache der Erwachsenen zu gebrauchen'.[108] This interpretation sees the children less as passive victims and more as active reporters of their times; a task which they fulfil through their games.[109]

In addition to these aspects, though, the most central context for Aichinger's understanding of play is the religious: playing is a way for the children to serve God, to enter his kingdom, to have access to the greater hope and therefore also a way for them to demonstrate and keep intact their innocence and purity. As Purdie points out: 'for Ilse Aichinger, the difficult "Spiel" played by these children becomes an illustration of Christ's commandment in Matthew 18:3 ("Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven").'[110] Purdie further explains that the children, by playing, 'are serving God, which is the primary purpose of creation.'[111] This can be seen when the children are performing the nativity play and notice the danger that is building up and approaching them from the outside. They try by all available means to continue playing, in order to lose their fear, but also in order to serve God:

> Sie spielten und erfüllten so in der letzten Stunde das erste Gebot. Wie die Perle in der Muschel lag die Liebe in diesem Spiel, die einzige wirksame Waffe des Menschen gegen sich selbst. 'Weiter, spielt weiter!'

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[107] See Seidler, p. 98.
[108] Tanja Hetzer, *Kinderblick auf die Shoah: Formen der Erinnerung bei Ilse Aichinger, Hubert Fichte und Danilo Kiš* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1999), p. 76 ['attempt to express the historic reality without using the language of the grown-ups'].
[109] See Seidler, p. 97.
[110] Catherine Purdie, *'Wenn ihr nicht werdet wie die Kinder': The Significance of the Child in the World-view of Ilse Aichinger* (Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang, 1998), p. 17.
[111] Purdie, p. 61.

Spielen sollst du vor meinem Angesicht! 'Spielt weiter!'[112]

Playing means salvation for the children. Only when the danger cannot be ignored any longer do the children abandon their game: 'Keines der Kinder beachtete ihn. Sie stürzten zur Tür. Wie eine große, tanzende Flamme schlug ihr Spiel über ihnen zusammen.'[113] While the children are left alone and even betrayed by adults, they manage to save themselves by playing. They keep their integrity and humanity intact and reach a kind of freedom through their game. Pinfold points out that, despite the strong religious overtones, Aichinger's conception of play is also in accord with the Romantic tradition, as 'she too is using the myth of the Romantic child who has access to knowledge and symbolizes a hope derived from a transcendent dimension'.[114]

Aichinger's text thus uses the motif of playing to explore the theme of the children's status in post-war times: the children are shown as pure and innocent, their play is idealised as a way of serving God. In this way, the children create a greater hope for themselves beyond life. Furthermore, the children's games can also be seen as a way of recording and preserving an important part of history, which turns the children into the bearers of a more earthly task and broader hope as well.

In Greene's first treatment of 'The Basement Room' there are references to playing as well, which reveal an understanding of the figure of the child that is very different to Aichinger's. Greene describes the toys that can be found in Felipe's room: 'In his playroom, a mess of damaged railway lines, a truck filled rather incongruously with charging Zulus, the scattered parts of a Meccano set.'[115] The toys offer an image of destruction. They are turned into a symbol of the post-war world. It is significant that a child's toys are used to symbolise the destructiveness of war. The toys, as objects closely associated with play, have presumably been destroyed by Felipe himself. Therefore, what this image hints at is the destructive force of the child, his potential for violence. The motif of the toys is used effectively to indirectly characterise the child and make a statement about his status between innocence and guilt: this child figure is not only innocent and pure, but bears the potential for corruption, guilt and violence.

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[112] Aichinger, p. 202 ['They played, and in doing so they fulfilled the first commandment in the last hour. As the pearl lies in the shell, the love lay in this play, the only effective weapon of the human against himself. "Keep on playing!"']; p. 222 ['In front of me, you shall play! "Keep on playing!"'].
[113] Aichinger, p. 234 ['None of the children payed any attention to him. They ran to the door. Their play collapsed onto them like a big, dancing flame.'].
[114] Debbie Pinfold, p. 108.
[115] Greene, p. 1.

Felipe then makes his way downstairs 'looking in at open doors as he goes, flattening himself against walls when anything stirs, playing a private scout game of his own'.[116] Although the text compares him to a scout, there is also a military air to his behaviour, as indeed there is to the activities of scouts in general. What Felipe's behaviour in this scene shows to the reader is that the war and fighting have found their way into his play, into his fantasy; this is how Felipe has been socialised. The society he grew up in and that created and informed his play is a society at war and this has influenced the child. There is not much innocence in games of war.

Another instance of playing is described in the evening, when Felipe is at home with Baines and Emmy: 'After supper they play games, with him all over the house, until he is dropping with sleep and Baines carried him upstairs in his arms and Emmy puts him to bed.'[117] Felipe later on specifies their game further as hide-and-seek. The three of them playing together seems innocent enough at first, but the play is shaded with a different, more sinister meaning when one reads between the lines. The reader gets the impression that the adults use the excessive playing to get the child tired so that they will later on be able to spend the night together undisturbed, committing adultery. That represents the corruption of the child's play by the adult world with their darker aims and wishes. The marble that Felipe is given by a policeman, presumably in order to gain the boy's trust and sympathy, before being questioned by him about the death of Baines's wife, symbolises something quite similar. When Felipe cannot stand the questioning anymore, as he thinks he has betrayed Baines by making him reveal Emmy's presence on the night of the death of his wife, Felipe runs away, leaving the marble violently behind: 'Felipe picks up the marble and suddenly dashes it to the floor. Runs out, and through the door they can see him making blindly and miserably for the stairs. He has let Baines down.'[118] The marble symbolises yet another attempt at corrupting the child. Felipe receives the marble from Crowe, and then, in the following, unwillingly reveals Baines's secret to him. The marble symbolises the way the adults vie for Felipe's trust, thereby putting him into a conflicted situation, which forces him to betray one of them. The toy is abused and corrupted and stands in for Felipe, who similarly gets used and drawn into an adult world he does not understand, which leads to him losing at least part of his innocence.

In Greene's text the motif of the child and play is used to stress the theme of corrupted innocence, as Felipe is in danger of being corrupted by the adults surrounding him who use play

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[116] Greene, p. 2.
[117] Greene, p. 30.
[118] Greene, p. 61.

and toys to influence him. Furthermore, the motif of play also serves to illustrate a latent potential of danger and destruction connected to the child Felipe.

Macaulay's variation of the motif of the child and play manifests itself in a contrast between an assumption of playing on the one hand, and an absence of real play on the other. The adult characters in the text speak about playing in connection to the children's actions more than once, for example when they are describing them being out in the woods with the maquis or in the ruins of London: '"Maurice supposed they were out playing. Boy Scouts, Girl Guides," she added in English. "Red Indians."'; 'It was more that she felt, I think, at home there. And liked playing at houses; and playing at the maquis. And, quite simply, liked ruins.'[119] What the adults interpret or understand as play, though, is not a game at all for the children. They are not playing; to them this is serious, dangerous and painful reality. The reader gets glimpses of what especially Barbary has seen and lived through during the occupation, as she, for example, describes a questioning under torture.[120] As a consequence of these traumatic experiences, Barbary and Raoul have developed protective instincts. And these instincts kick in, even in a quiet 'normal' and non-threating conversation: 'Barbary said nothing: one did not give information of that kind when caught; not a word, whatever they did to one; that was the first principle of the maquis.'; '"I know nothing." Raoul repeated the maquis formula.'[121] The adults seem to have no idea of the actual traumas of the children, which the author makes clear by having them identify the children's behaviour and their newly acquired habits play.

Another example of Barbary and Raoul not playing, but actually having been conditioned and socialized for a far more dangerous reality, is their – in Mellor's words – 'semi-military' behaviour when they find some big bells lying on the floor in the London ruins: they only think of them in a context of fighting, noting that they make good hiding places: '"We could get into those." They did so, curling up small. It was their maquis training; they had learnt to look for and find cover everywhere.'[122] Although what Barbary and Raoul do in London could be understood as a game, as the actual danger no longer exists when they recreate the maquis war world, I would still argue that there is a different dimension to their behaviour than that of play. It would seem like what is shown here is two teenagers who are traumatised and therefore forced to relive their past, and hence stick to their old ways. This does not happen in a playful manner, but instead it is serious. They have been caught by the enemy, questioned and tortured and the

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[119] Macaulay, p. 12; p. 213.
[120] See Macaulay, p. 107.
[121] Macaulay, p. 102; p. 192.
[122] Mellor, p. 183; Macaulay, p. 56.

text even contains indications that Barbary might have been raped by a German soldier in France.[123] In addition, they have also been involved in a murder. These children are not playing war, but they are still at war. The war has shaped and socialized them, it has taught them the correct behaviour and as this is the only thing they know, they revert to it.

The children in Macaulay's text are characterised as damaged and shaped by the war in ways that might not be reversible. They are not pure and innocent, but deeply entangled in the business of war, which leaves neither adults nor children free of guilt. There are some parallels here with the children's initial inability to play in Aichinger's text, but there is a difference in emphasis: while Aichinger focuses on the hope for children that stems from a religious understanding of play, Macaulay focuses on the possibly irreversible damage that has been done to children. There is also a parallel to Greene's depiction of Felipe's scout games: the war and fighting are part of Felipe's, as well as Barbary's and Raoul's socialisation, and this becomes obvious in the 'games' they play.[124]

The motif of the child and play can also be found in Kolbenhoff's text. The first reference to playing is made by Moller, one of the protagonist's superiors, who realises how vain their attempts at continuing the fighting are. He therefore characterises their behaviour, and ultimately the protagonist's behaviour over the course of the whole text, as a game: 'Wir haben verspielt. Selbst der größte Fanatiker kann das jetzt sehen. Was tun wir noch? Wir verkriechen uns in die Löcher und fallen sie von hinten an. Was ist das weiter als ein gefährliches Indianerspielen?'[125] To Moller their fighting turns into a game, because its real purpose cannot be fulfilled anymore. They cannot ultimately win the war, which turns their behaviour into play-acting of a fight. But still, the protagonist has to keep on fighting, or keep on doing what now might be a very sinister, dangerous form of playing. This is a clear parallel to Macaulay's *The World my Wilderness.* In both texts, the children have learnt their ways in the war; that is how they have been socialised. Even if their actions in peacetime are considered as play they still cannot simply snap out of it. They have to keep playing what for them is not a game at all, but deadly serious reality. Therefore, the texts pose interesting questions about the boundary and the difference between imaginative play and reality. On the one hand, the texts present playing as an action in which you can fully immerse yourself, up to the point that you cannot get out of it anymore. That is one dangerous aspect of playing: if you get in too deep, the game becomes

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[123] See Jane Emery, *Rose Macaulay: A Writer's Life* (London: Murray, 1991), p. 258 and Mellor, p. 186.

[124] Lamprecht's film 'Irgendwo in Berlin' depicts children play-acting and imitating war as well (See Köppen, p. 158).

[125] Kolbenhoff, p. 31 ['For us, the game is over. Even the biggest fanatic can see that now. What is it we are doing? We hole up in the pits and attack them from behind. What else is that but a dangerous game?'].

your reality and you cannot stop anymore. On the other hand, though, what once was reality is turned into a game only by the changing outside world. A once necessary and fruitful behaviour is rendered futile and suddenly becomes a game. This transition, the texts seem to say, is a hard one to make for children. They might get stuck in what once was reality and is now called a game, because that is what they learned and were taught to do.

A second reference to playing in Kolbenhoff's text is made by the returnee character: 'Aber sie lebten, und es bedeutete nichts, daß sie in einem Verschlag inmitten des Spielplatzes des Todes lagen.'[126] By describing post-war Germany metaphorically as the playground of death, the returnee associates playing with death, and indirectly also children with death. The innocent act of playing becomes dangerous and children, who are the main 'players' in life, are turned into a possible threat. This can be linked very directly to the text's protagonist, who represents a great danger to the German post-war society. The image of the playground of death also reminds me of Greene's use of toys as a symbol of the destruction of the war. In both cases, the motif of playing is connected to destruction and violence and therefore used to express a rather pessimistic view on the children's status in post-war times.

The last of my analysed texts that includes the motif of playing is Neumann's *Children of Vienna.* At the beginning of the text, the children's 'games' are infected by their war and post-war experiences. Contextualising or interpreting difficult aspects of their reality as play seems to be a method used by the children to handle and soften reality. This is for example shown in connection to Tiny, the little sick girl in a handcart, whose suffering is interpreted as playing by Curls, who is clearly worried about her state:

> 'I thought they'd wake Tiny.' 'Why have you covered her with sheets?' 'It's the old newspaper sheets from last week', said Curls. 'Playing at funerals.' He lifted one of them. A very small girl was lying there, with a too large face, like a moon. 'She isn't sleeping', said Yid. Her eyes were wide open. 'No.' Curls put the sheet back to cover her. 'She likes it. It's warm, playing at funerals.'[127]

Another instance of playing is shown in connection to Yid, who plays with a razor: 'His fingers played a razor out of his inner pocket. He let it sail up in the air. Snatched it. Let it sail, left hand. In the air it opened, elegant as a swallow. He snatched it, elegant. It was gone.'[128] Yid is still a child with a drive or instinct to play, but instead of playing with a normal, safe toy, he plays with a razor, a dangerous weapon. This image implies two things at the same time. On

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[126] Kolbenhoff, pp. 89-90 ['But they were alive and it had no significance that they lay in a shed in the midst of the playground of death.'].
[127] Neumann, p. 7.
[128] Neumann, p. 8.

the one hand, it shows Yid as endangered. He could hurt himself in his own game. A lack of safe toys makes him play with a dangerous one. On the other hand, Yid is also shown as potentially dangerous. He is able to handle the weapon well. One wonders what else he could do with it, and what other games involving a razor he could think of. The ease with which Yid, a child, handles a weapon is frightening.

The children's behaviour changes in many regards once they meet Smith and he promises to help them. Not being alone any more gives them hope, which also has a huge effect on their play. Tiny, who at the beginning of the text only played at funerals, later plays a game with Goy and the dog. Her hand-cart, which is presented as her coffin earlier on in the game, is transformed into a coach and Goy and the dog act as her horses. The little girl, who was close to dying just a few days earlier, is alive, full of energy and happy in the play, although the text also reminds the reader of the fragility of her state:

> She was seated in her hand-cart, or rather on it: a piece of wood was laid across its side walls as a seat, and she sat on it. […] She sat on it bolt upright, and with quite an end of uprightness and elasticity to spare. She was so elastic, springs were in her, coiled metal springs; if her skin were to burst anywhere, they would show, shining with patented double elasticity like a divan bed straight from the furnishers. Her skin was not burst, though; her skin was washed, with soap, U.S. Army soap.[129]

Tiny now even has a real toy, which contrasts Yid's earlier use of a razor as a toy: '"Heyahuh", she yelled, with eyes polished like a pair of bloody brass buttons on parade, and holding a bridle with little tinkling bells on it, a toy bridle for kids to play with, as new as new.'[130] This carefully constructed scene of positive and free playing in the text characterises the children indirectly as innocent and not beyond saving. They are not lost yet as they can still play, the text seems to say. Just give them a real toy and some hope for the future and they will begin to play again; and this play is free of the traces of the war; it is a very positive and relieving act, recalling Romantic traditions. Although the motif of play in Neumann's text bears no religious implications, the positive image of playing which expresses an optimistic view of the children's status in post-war years is still a clear parallel to Aichinger's text.

Through the motif of playing, the text expresses a threat and a hope at the same time. It seems to pose a question to the 'men and women of the victorious countries' to which it is addressed: Would you prefer the children in post-war Europe to play with razors or real toys?[131] Can we afford to leave them to themselves and let them potentially turn into a threat, or do we have the

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[129] Neumann, p. 105.
[130] Neumann, pp. 105-06.
[131] Neumann, preface.

obligation to give them hope and a future, to give them back their childhood and use their positive potential? This is the context in which Neumann's ambiguous interpretation of the figure of the child, as a symbol of hope as well as a potential threat, has to be understood.

While Neumann wants to rouse attention and support for children in post-war Europe, through the ending of his text he also makes clear that help will already come too late for many children: Tiny, who had been revitalised by the play, dies at the end of the text, when the children's hope of leaving the country with Smith is destroyed by the interference of other Allied personnel: 'There was also some dead kid lying in a hand-cart, covered with newspaper. But it was just dead; it had just died, as kids do.'[132] The horse-coach has turned into a coffin again, and Tiny's game of funerals has become actual death. For her, playing is over. But her inability to play and live is not connected to a lack of innocence or purity on her part, but more a commentary on the deficiencies of the outside world: the conditions of post-war Europe do not offer her the opportunity to play. She is the ultimate victim: a child, who is not able to play anymore, because it is dead.

In this discussion I have analysed how the motif of playing is used in many post-war texts to explore the theme of the children's innocence or guilt, of their potential to be either a hope or threat to post-war society. Play can be an innocent, free and independent act, offering the children a way to understand, express and preserve their own reality, as well as offering them a hope for a better future, as playing is an act in service of God. At the same time, play can also reveal dangerous tendencies and potential threats associated with post-war children. Play can be associated to death and destruction. All of these manifold facets of the motif of playing are contained in the analysed German, Austrian and British post-war texts. The similarities for example between Aichinger's and Neumann's, or Kolbenhoff's and Macaulay's use of the motif, clearly do not follow national lines, but are transnational. Furthermore, the motif of the child and play poses questions about the shifting state of reality in post-war times. Questions about reality and authenticity seem to be a dominant feature of transnational rubble literature, as already discussed with respect to the figure of the returnee, and as they will also be present again in the last chapter on the figures of the occupier and the occupied.

Child and Language

In the following section, I will analyse the use and representation of language in German and British post-war texts, as the child and language is a further key motif used to explore the theme

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[132] Neumann, p. 159.

of innocence or guilt, hope or threat. My analysis will focus on those forms of language associated with children's development, contact and engagement: stories and fairy tales, songs, nursery rhymes and poems.

In his work *LTI: Notizbuch eines Philologen*, Victor Klemperer stresses the major importance of language for understanding the past and creating a better future. He analyses the way that language was used in Nazi Germany to inculcate the people, and especially children and youth, with Nazi ideology.[133] Klemperer stresses the point that for a true and successful eradication of Nazism, the German language also has to be analysed critically and purged from the influences of the previous years: 'denn zu verschwinden hat ja nicht nur das nazistische Tun, sondern auch die nazistische Gesinnung, die nazistische Denkgewöhnung und ihr Nährboden: die Sprache des Nazismus.'[134] Language, according to Klemperer, is not only a tool for expressing oneself, but it also, often unconsciously, forms the people's character: 'Sondern der Nazismus glitt in Fleisch und Blut der Menge über durch die Einzelworte, die Redewendungen, die Satzformen, die er ihr in millionenfachen Wiederholungen aufzwang und die mechanisch und unbewußt übernommen wurden.'[135] Klemperer compares language to poison: it is dangerous and even able to kill: 'Worte können sein wie winzige Arsendosen: sie werden unbemerkt verschluckt, sie scheinen keine Wirkung zu tun, und nach einiger Zeit ist die Giftwirkung doch da.'[136]

As games offer a possibility for children to learn about the society they are living in and to be socialised, stories and songs also serve the aim of teaching children something about traditions and morals. In this sense, language forms the children, but children can also form the language, in that they can invent their own stories and sing their own songs, in this way expressing their own, new reality and replacing or overwriting older and traditional patterns of narration and interpretations of childhood. Therefore, the motif of language can be used in the post-war texts either to emphasise or illustrate the children's innocence, or to convey danger and guilt.

Kolbenhoff's *Von unserm Fleisch und Blut* is the post-war text which represents Klemperer's understanding of language most directly. The adolescent protagonist is influenced and completely controlled by the language of German Nazism, Lingua Tertii Imperii. Kruse is the

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[133] See Klemperer.
[134] Klemperer, p. 8 ['because it isn't only Nazi actions that have to vanish, but also the Nazi cast of mind, the typical Nazi way of thinking and its breeding-ground: the language of Nazism.' (Klemperer, trans. by Brady, p. 2)].
[135] Klemperer, p. 21 ['Instead Nazism permeated the flesh and blood of the people through single words, idioms and sentence structures which were imposed on them in a million repetitions and taken on board mechanically and unconsciously.' (Klemperer, trans. by Brady, p. 15)].
[136] Klemperer, p. 21 ['Words can be like tiny doses of arsenic: they are swallowed unnoticed, appear to have no effect, and then after a little time the toxic reaction sets in after all.' (Klemperer, trans. by Brady, pp. 15-16)].

most important and influential factor for the protagonist's development into an extremely fanatical member of the Hitler Youth. He is a propagandist, who uses language to attract people and to inculcate them with his ideas. Before, but even after Kruse's death, the protagonist is fascinated and highly influenced by his language, and follows him unconditionally:

> Schwarz oder weiß, – nur nicht grau! Kalt oder heiß – nur nicht lau! Kruse hatte es geschrieben. Kalt oder heiß – nur nicht lau. Welch wunderbare Worte!
>
> Der Hass besiegte alle Zweifel und Einsamkeit. Hassend töten, hassend vernichten, hassend sterben – das war die Erfüllung. Kruse hatte es gesagt. Kruse war einer der größten Männer aller Zeiten. Er hatte ihm den Weg gezeigt.[137]

After Kruse's death the realist Moller unmasks him as the hypocritical propagandist that he is: 'Er hat jahrelang davon geschrieben, wie herrlich es sei, im Kugelregen zu sterben. Jetzt hat er es mal probiert.'[138] But the protagonist keeps on defending Kruse, as the residual influence of his words on him is too great: 'Ein Mann, der so schreiben konnte wie er, ist kein Schwein.'[139] In the course of their conversation, Moller realises that he cannot talk sense with the protagonist; all the years of ideological indoctrination cannot be reversed in a few moments and through a few sentences: '"Du bist blöde", sagte er, "mit dir ist nicht zu reden. In dich haben sie zu viel hineingestopft, du hast zu viel von Kruses Mist geschluckt."'[140]

In addition to the very concrete and sustained influence of the writing of Kruse the text also describes another form of language having an enormous influence on the protagonist. All through the text, the protagonist remembers and constantly repeats songs and chants from the Hitler Youth, glorifying fighting and death and promoting a specific image of heroism. These are forms of language to which children are especially susceptible, and to which they are exposed in the most direct and targeted way through the youth organisations. There are endless examples of the presence of these songs, rhymes, poems and chants; the following is only a selection:

> Während der Lauf der Pistole auf die Gasse zeigte, flüsterte er lautlos: 'Ein Jüngling auch, ein Knabe noch, der heut das erste Pulver roch, er mußte dahin. Wie hoch er auch die Fahne schwang, der Tod in seinen Arm ihn zwang – er mußte dahin!'

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[137] Kolbenhoff, p. 79 ['Black or white, - everything but grey! Cold or hot – everything but lukewarm! Kruse had written it. Cold or hot – everything but lukewarm. What wonderful words!']; p. 83 ['Hate conquered all doubts and loneliness. To kill loathingly, to crush loathingly, to die loathingly – that was fulfilment. Kruse had said it. Kruse was one of the greatest men of all times. He had shown him his path.'].

[138] Kolbenhoff, p. 29 ['For years he wrote about how wonderful it would be to die in a hail of bullets. Now he got a taste of it.'].

[139] Kolbenhoff, p. 29 ['A man, who could write the way he did, is not a swine.'].

[140] Kolbenhoff, p. 30 ['"You are stupid", he said, "it's impossible to talk to you. They've stuffed too much into you, you've swallowed too much of Kruse's rubbish."'].

> Er lag zitternd da und sagte lautlos: 'Du junges Gras, du stehst so grün, sollst bald wie lauter Purpur blühn – mein Blut soll dich ja färben!'
>
> Deutschland, heiliges Wort, ich werde kämpfend fallen. Werd' tot ich fortgetragen, sollst Liebste du nicht klagen, zieh an dein schönstes Kleid, zieh an dein schönstes Kleid.[141]

The protagonist is spurred on in his continuing fight by these bits and pieces of language. He uses them to reassure himself of the correctness of his actions when they are difficult, or in the rare moments when he begins to doubt them.[142] The language comforts him and makes him strong. Through words the protagonist creates an 'Erlebnis' for himself.[143] Klemperer characterises this term as a 'Gefühlswort' of the LTI, as it infects everything with very strong emotions, which replace thinking.[144] The language makes the protagonist feel very euphoric and almost high; he pumps himself up through the power of words: 'Er hockte im Dunkeln und ballte die Fäuste und murmelte: Wir werden weiter marschieren, wenn alles in Scherben fällt – denn heute gehört uns Deutschland und morgen die ganze Welt! – Verflucht, das tat gut. Plötzlich war das Erlebnis wieder da. Er wurde stark und groß. Er hatte keine Angst mehr.'[145]

In his text, Kolbenhoff shows that language is more than just a way of expressing oneself. Instead it changes the way how people think and feel. In doing so, Kolbenhoff also comments on the theme of children's guilt or innocence. The child's use of language reflects the deep corruption of the child in post-war Germany. As long as his language is not purged of harmful influences, the child is corrupted and presents a danger to post-war society. This lasting infection of the language goes in hand with the ending of the text, as the protagonist is not able to let go of his mission; he hides and wants to keep fighting. This is a clear warning by Kolbenhoff to the post-war society to be careful of Germany's corrupted and deformed youth. Language at the same time expresses this corruption, and perpetuates it.

Aichinger's *Die grössere Hoffnung* is another text which employs the motif of the child and language. At first sight, the depiction of 'die Kinder mit Uniform', the members of the Hitler

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[141] Kolbenhoff, p. 20 ['While the gun pointed to the alley, he silently whispered: "A teenager, still a boy, who smelled the first gunpowder today, he had to leave. No matter how high he raised the flag, death still forced him into his arm – he had to leave!"']; p. 22 ['He lay there shaking and silently said: "You youthful grass, now you are so green, but soon you'll be blossoming in purple – because my blood will stain you!"']; p. 97 ['Germany, sacred word, I will die fighting. When I'm dead and they carry me away, don't wail, my love, put on your best dress, put on your best dress.'].

[142] See Brand, p. 117.

[143] Kolbenhoff, p. 72 ['experience'].

[144] Klemperer, p. 258 ['word utilized […] for emotional effect' (Klemperer, trans. by Brady, p. 244)]; see p. 259.

[145] Kolbenhoff, p. 75 ['He crouched down in the dark, clenched his fists and muttered: We will march on, even if everything goes into pieces, because today we own Germany and tomorrow the whole world! – Damn, that felt good. Suddenly the experience was back again. He became strong and tall. He wasn't afraid any longer.'].

Youth, seems to be very similar to Kolbenhoff's text.[146] In both texts, these children are controlled and have been socialised by language. In Aichinger's text, the children in uniform are closely connected to a song, the 'Lied von den blauen Dragonern'.[147] When singing this song, the children turn into the Dragoner themselves: 'Das Lied von den blauen Dragonern brach ab. Schweigen schwang sich über die Feuermauer. In diesem Schweigen war das Stampfen ihrer Pferde, das Klirren ihrer Säbel und das Wehen ihrer Mäntel. […] Das Lied von den blauen Dragonern brach ab. Die blauen Dragoner hielten an.'[148] Seidler says that this was a popular scout-song during the Third Reich, but also could be found in songbooks in the concentration camps, as it has an ambivalent ending: it can be interpreted both as a song of war and an anti-war song.[149] The children in uniform directly refer to the song's ending and stress the point that they do not want to be alone, although the song suggests this conclusion: 'Die letzte Strophe endet: "Morgen, da bin ich allein!" "Nein! Wir nicht!" Deshalb tragen wir die Uniform, daß wir nicht allein sind!"'[150] The song reveals the reasons for the children's behaviour, as it might be the origin of their fear of being alone, which they counter by wearing their uniform and by singing the song together. To them, it is a warning of what might happen if they started thinking for themselves, and thus step out of the group: 'Wer keine Uniform trägt, der bleibt allein, wer allein bleibt, denkt nach, und wer nachdenkt, der stirbt. Weg damit! Das haben wir gelernt! Wo käme man hin, wenn jeder etwas anderes für richtig hielte?'.[151] It is not only the content of the song, though, which reveals something about the children's socialisation, but also its form. The structured, systematic and harmonious form of a song with perfect rhymes symbolises to the children a perfect, homogenous order of society: 'Alles muß sich reimen: Eine Strophe auf die andere und ein Mensch auf den anderen. Das haben wir gelernt! Weil wir leben müssen!'.[152] There can already be seen a gradual difference between the texts by Kolbenhoff and Aichinger. In both texts, the children are highly influenced and possibly corrupted by language, but while the child figure in Kolbenhoff's text is controlled by emotions

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[146] Aichinger, p. 130 ['the children with uniform'].
[147] Aichinger, p. 115 ['song of the blue Dragoner'].
[148] Aichinger, pp. 115-16 ['The song of the blue Dragoner stopped. Silence vaulted over the fire-proof wall. This silence contained the pounding of their horses, the clangour of their swords and the wafting of their cloaks […] The song of the blue Dragoner stopped. The blue Dragoner stopped.'].
[149] See Seidler, p. 126.
[150] Aichinger, p. 118 ['The last stanza ends: "Tomorrow I will be alone!" "No! We won't!" That's why we are wearing the uniform, in order to not be alone!'].
[151] Aichinger, p. 118 ['Those who wear no uniform, stay alone, those who stay alone, think, and those who think die. Leave us alone! That's what we learned. Where would we end up if everyone had different beliefs?'].
[152] Aichinger, p. 118 ['Everything has to rhyme: One stanza to another and one human to another. That's what we learned! Because we have to live!'].

like hate and a desire for strength, the children in Aichinger's text are controlled by fear and weakness.

This is not the only point of difference between the two texts. There is a scene in *Die grössere Hoffnung* which reveals a basic difference to Kolbenhoff's depiction of the child figure. The children in uniform are not only controlled and influenced by a song, but also by a loudspeaker, which distributes news, music and always the same warning: 'Wer fremde Sender hört, ist ein Verräter, wer fremde Sender hört, verdient den Tod!'.[153] While the children in uniform are under the control of the loudspeaker at first, later on they listen to the other children and the old man, who teaches them English, and are fascinated by this foreign tune, although listening to it is punishable by death. Listening to the foreign tune transforms them, and their uniforms are symbolically covered with bright, potentially innocent white shirts: 'Die Kinder in Uniform stemmten ihre Köpfe fester gegen die eiserne Tür. Diese Stimme riß die Schnüre von ihrer Brust und nahm ihnen den Rang. Diese Stimme hüllte helle, lange Hemden über ihre Uniformen. Sie war wie Musik aus dem Nebenzimmer, beruhigte sie gegen ihren Willen und nahm ihrem Mut die Angst! Still – ein fremder Sender!'.[154] This image of the children in uniform listening to a new voice and being transformed by it, can be interpreted as a way for Aichinger to express her opinion that these children are not beyond saving. They have been formed and corrupted by language, but they can also be changed and rescued by language. There is hope, even for the children in uniform. This is an important difference to Kolbenhoff's child figure.

Another part of Aichinger's text in which language plays a central role is the chapter about the death of Ellen's grandmother. Ellen begs her grandmother to tell her one last story: '"Großmutter", sagte Ellen sanft, "ich wollte, du würdest dich jetzt zu mir setzen und mir eine Geschichte erzählen, eine ganz neue, die ich noch nie gehört habe, aber es kann auch ein Märchen sein!"'[155] But the grandmother is unable to think of one. Her fear of being taken by the police before she is able to kill herself makes it impossible for her to access her fantasy and to create and narrate a story: 'Wo waren sie alle, diese Geschichten, die sie zu Hunderten aus den Manteltaschen gezogen hatte, unter dem Hut hervor, und im Notfall auch aus dem aufgetrennten Seidenfutter, wie ein Hamster das Fett. Die große Polizei war über sie gekommen

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[153] Aichinger, p. 130 ['Those who listen to foreign tunes are traitors, those who listen to foreign tunes deserve to die!'].

[154] Aichinger, p. 130 ['The children in uniform pressed their heads against the iron door even harder. This voice tore away the strings around their breast and took away their rank. This voice put long bright shirts over their uniforms. It was like music coming from the room next door, it calmed them down against their will and relieved their courage from their fear! Hush – a foreign tune!'].

[155] Aichinger, p. 250 ['"Grandmother", Ellen said softly, "I wish you would sit with me and tell me a story, a totally new one that I've never heard before, but it could also be a fairy tale!"'].

– die Finsternis hatte alles verschlungen!'.[156] There is a parallel drawn here between story-telling and playing; both activities are impossible in a state of fear. When Ellen notices that her grandmother will not be able to tell her a story anymore, she takes the task on herself: '"Dann", erklärte Ellen entschlossen, "dann werde ich eben die Geschichte erzählen!"'[157]. The traditional roles between grandmother and child, and between narrator and listener, are reversed. Hetzer interprets this change of roles as a highly symbolic act, representing a passing over of the task of narrating, remembering and preserving stories from the older generation to the younger one. The generation of the grandmother and mother will not survive the Shoah, which is why the children have to take on a great responsibility.[158] This concept endows the children with a huge importance and significance. They are the bearers and agents of traditions and stories, and they have to ensure their survival. In this sense, the children come to represent an enormous hope for the future. However, the fact that Ellen is only able to tell the fairy tale to her grandmother, who then dies, and the fact that Ellen herself dies before she is able to further spread the story, in my eyes, dampens Hetzer's more hopeful interpretation of Aichinger's text.

Another important factor for the interpretation of Ellen's story-telling is what she actually narrates. Her story begins as the fairy tale of Little Red Riding Hood, a story which, as Purdie points out, already mirrors Ellen's own story.[159] But Ellen does not tell the well-known fairy tale; instead, she ends up telling her own story.[160] There are two parallels here to Aichinger's depiction of playing. First, reality invades and takes over Ellen's story in the same way as it invaded and took over the children's games. Secondly, in playing and story-telling Ellen does not follow set rules or patterns, but creates her own games and stories. Hetzer interprets Ellen's deviation from the fairy tale and her narration of her own story as a comment on the impossibility of poetic narration after Auschwitz.[161] It is the task of the children to tell stories and keep memory alive. They should not tell fairy tales and other fantastic stories, but they should report their own lives, to keep the memory of them and their dead family members alive.

Aichinger thus uses the motif of the child and language to explore the question of the post-war child's status between innocence and guilt, hope and threat. On the one hand, the children in uniform are hurt and corrupted by language, but on the other hand they are also shown to be

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[156] Aichinger, p. 257 ['Where were they, all of those hundreds of stories that she had pulled out of her coat pockets, pulled out from underneath the hat, and in an emergency also out of the silk lining, like a hamster pulled out the fat. The great police had come upon her – the darkness had swallowed everything!'].
[157] Aichinger, p. 260 ['"Then", Ellen determinedly declared, "then I will tell the story!"'].
[158] See Hetzer, p. 115.
[159] See Purdie, p. 80.
[160] See Aichinger, pp. 260-63.
[161] See Hetzer, p. 115.

able to change through language. Furthermore, (half-)Jewish children represent hope for the future, as they take over the task of narrating and passing down the true stories of their time.

In Neumann's *Children of Vienna* the children care for each other like members of a family, and the older children take care of the younger ones like parents. This is especially the case in connection to Tiny, who is not only the smallest of them, but also very sick. The other children look after her in a very attentive and loving manner. And what they seem to remember as part of the parent-child-relationship is the ritual of story-telling and reading to children from books. Curls reads to Tiny from newspapers and leaflets from the occupation authorities, although Yid tells him that this is not the right thing to read to her: '"What are you reading?" asked Yid. "From the paper. Tiny likes being read to; she doesn't mind what. Don't you, Ty? Don't you?" "You ought to read to her from the book."'[162] Yid points out that the paper contains information which is neither relevant to nor suitable for Tiny: 'You oughtn't to read about air raid sirens to Tiny. Read from the book. There. What sort of a paper is this? A Military Government order; everybody ought to dig graves. Do you want Tiny to dig graves?'[163] Yid tries to keep the horrors of war and the post-war reality away from Tiny and to protect her. A similar behaviour is also on show in another scene, when the children in the basement hear music coming from outside. Yid recognises the tune as one that was played in a camp he was at. Therefore, he states that this is not the right music for a girl like Tiny: '"That's not a tune for Tiny", Yid said. "Blue Danube. They used to play that tune on loud-speakers at Oswiecim. To Tiny you ought to read from the book."'[164]

The caring attitude that the children have towards one another, and which is symbolised by their story-telling, shows that although they might outwardly look bedraggled, these children are still good and loving inside. Secondly, Curl's and Yid's attempts at reading to Tiny, and of protecting her indirectly stress the point that the children have no one but themselves to fulfil the role of adults, and no one who protects them or has protected them in the past. They have been exposed to all the horrible things that happen during war, and no one was able to keep these away from them. That the children now seem to be trying to achieve for Tiny what others have failed to do for them can be read as a way for Neumann to bring home to his contemporaries first that they failed in the past and are partly responsible for the children's current situation, and secondly how they should treat children in the future. That is another hope connected to the figure of the child in Neumann's text: these children can become adults and

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[162] Neumann, p. 11.
[163] Neumann, p. 12.
[164] Neumann, p. 12.

parents who will protect their children better than they were protected themselves, and hopefully raise them in peace.

Later on in the text, when the children are full of hope again due to the arrival of Smith with his plan to save them, another instance of story-telling is described. This time, a revitalised Tiny demands that Goy tell her a story: '"Tale!" said Tiny. "Tale!" Let her open that mouth of hers by another split inch: a coil will shoot out of her. "Tale!!!" she yelled.'[165] Goy gives in in the end and begins to tell Tiny a tale, which is an account of their own story and of how they met Smith: '"All right," Goy said, too weak with laughter to shield his head against that stick of hers. "All right, a tale! Once a Smithy Rev. a nigger came to a joint and he gave the kids sandwichies."'[166] Through her constant questioning and demanding of details, Goy and Tiny eventually tell the story together, in their very own language: '"Which?" said Tiny. "Which sanchies?" "Ham sanwichies", Goy said, "and cheese wiches, and bully santswitchies, and –" "And shite", said Tiny.'[167] There are some parallels here to the story-telling in Aichinger's text. Firstly, a child takes on the role of an adult story-teller. Secondly, instead of inventing a story or telling a fairy tale, the children narrate their own story and their shared experiences. This could be interpreted along the same lines as in Aichinger's text, as a statement about literature after Auschwitz or as a symbolic way of showing how damaging the war is on children, as it blocks or destroys their own, childish imagination. Neumann's text also offers an alternative interpretation. You could argue that Goy tells Tiny their own story, instead of a fairy tale, because what happens to them is like a fairy tale to them. It is an imaginative story, too good to be true. Unfortunately, this is confirmed by the ending of the text, as, indeed, Smith's plan fails and the children are left alone again. Neumann's text has been described by critics such as Elisabeth Freundlich as 'eine schaurige Märchenidylle' and a 'Fabel'.[168] Goy makes this connection between the text's form and the genre of fairy tales explicit by telling his own story as a fairy tale in the text.

There are two further interesting aspects of language presented by Neumann. Firstly, the text makes clear statements about the Allied project of re-education and the usefulness of books, newspapers, literature and especially poetry for this purpose. While some of the children use books and announcements from the occupation forces only as toilet paper, Yid seems to be quite interested and eager to learn the political announcements:

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[165] Neumann, p. 107.
[166] Neumann, p. 107.
[167] Neumann, p. 107.
[168] Freundlich, p. 77 ['a spooky fairy tale-idyll']; p. 78 ['fable'].

Eve said: 'And two pages, Yid? Two? I like this book, it is so soft, Yid. Please, Yid.' […] Yid said: 'Not these pages. They are an announcement by both Führers, English, American, both together. Listen. We, the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom –' Eve took the pages from his hand. Yid said: 'I know it by heart, anyway.'[169]

Yid, who seems to see at least some value and interest in the newspapers and other forms of practical and political writing is completely puzzled by the literature and poems he is later offered by Smith. He sees absolutely no use for them and does not understand their function:

'It rhymes,' said the man. 'That is poems.' 'It rhymes', Yid said, 'it rhymes', as if learning the word by heart. And asked: 'Why?' 'Why?' said the man. 'It rhymes because it is a poem. That's what a poem is.' 'But why', Yid asked, urgent. 'What's the good of it?' The man looked at him helplessly. 'Don't you think it is beautiful?' 'Beautiful?' Yid asked, puzzled. 'What does it want to be beautiful for?' The man sat down, and shrugged his shoulders.[170]

In his text, Neumann not only questions the role of literature and poetry in the project of re-education, but also the relevance of it all: '"What have I come for?" he said. "To help. To educate? Re-educate? Educate?" He said it so quietly, he all but said it to himself. "Re-educate?" Yid said. "We are re-educated."'[171] Re-education does not seem to be what the children in Neumann's text need most, or need at all.

This point is stressed further in another scene of the text. A clear parallel between Kolbenhoff's, Aichinger's and Neumann's texts is that they all thematise the influence of language on the children in the form of Nazi propaganda. Ate, the member of the Association of German Girls, recites a poem she has learnt from the Nazis: '"I know a poem. Ueber allen Gipfeln ist Ruh, in allen Wipfeln spürest du die Reihen fest geschlossen, S.A. marschiert mit stolzem festem Tritt, die toten Brüder die Rotfront und Reaktion in unsern Reihen mit.'[172] In this case it does not take Smith, or other representatives of the Allied nations and their programme of re-education, to unmask the Nazi propaganda. While Ate combines the first lines of a poem by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe with lines from the 'Horst-Wessel-Lied', a popular battle song of the Nazis, it is Curls who corrects her and recites the correct version of the poem: '"She got that wrong, sir." […] "The Horstwessel one. It is like this." He said quietly: "Ueber allen Wipfeln ist Ruh. In allen Gipfeln spürest du kaum einen Hauch. Die Vögel schweigen im Walde. Warte nur, balde ruhest du auch."'[173] This scene in Neumann's text expresses the author's opinion that

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[169] Neumann, p. 36.
[170] Neumann, pp. 65-66.
[171] Neumann, p. 65.
[172] Neumann, p. 66.
[173] Neumann, p. 67.

not every child is corrupted by the Nazi language, and not everyone needs re-education. Instead, some children still have access to older traditions and a language before the LTI. Therefore, at least some of the children in Neumann's basement represent a hope for the future and not a threat. This positive outlook, expressed through the motif of the child and language, separates Neumann's text from Kolbenhoff's and positions it closer to Aichinger's *Die grössere Hoffnung*.

The last aspect of language in Neumann's text that I want to look at is the miscommunication taking place between Smith and the children. Smith learned German in preparation for his stay in Europe but in his first conversation with Yid they still do not seem to understand each other, which puzzles Smith, to whom everything appears 'to happen behind a wall of glass'.[174] That Smith and Yid, although both speaking German, still seem to be speaking different languages is an implicit way of showing how different these children are from children before the war. Their reality has changed, they had experiences which no other child has had before, and this has changed their use and understanding of language. Therefore, the motif of the child and language is used to characterise the child figure as changed. Neumann's text does not express a judgement, though, on whether the children have changed for the better or the worse. Therefore, this point is not directly connected to the theme of innocence or guilt, hope or threat. Nevertheless, it reveals another more general feature of language in Neumann's text, as it is not just Smith who is confronted with the fact that the children speak a quite new and different language. Rather, also the reader of Neumann's text is confronted with a very specific use of language, as the language is a mixture of many elements and fragments. Stadler describes the language of Neumann's text as a 'Slang-Mischmasch', which is already present in the original, English version of the text, but which, according to Stadler, is even more emphasised in Neumann's German version of the text.[175] In this way, the children are not only characterised through language inside of the text, but also through the form and language of the text itself, which adds another interesting dimension to the motif and can be connected to my general analysis of the aesthetic of rubble literature. As already shown in the first chapter on the figure of the returnee, fragmentation is a formal feature of the analysed post-war texts. While in the texts about returnees the authors mainly used intertextuality to create a fragmented structure, Neumann uses different languages and slang to create a mosaic form, consisting of fragments.

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[174] Neumann, p. 49.
[175] Stadler, p. 247 ['a slang-mishmash'].

The last text I would like to mention briefly in this subchapter on language is Macaulay's *The World my Wilderness*. One significant feature of the church in ruins, which Barbary and Raoul repeatedly visit in London, is the books lying around on the floor which have been torn into pieces: 'Fragments of hymn-books, torn and charred, were scattered about the church and belfry floor.'[176] These fragmented texts are picked up and used by Barbary: 'Out of one of the cracked bronze bells lying on their sides Barbary picked a grimy clump of pages, spread open at the Dies Irae. "Day of wrath," she read aloud, "O day of mourning! See fulfilled the prophet's warning, Heaven and earth in ashes burning! Oh what fear man's bosom rendeth when from Heaven the Judge descendeth…"'[177] This torn and fragmented language speaks to Barbary and her deep-going concern about hell and redemption, which is why it remains her companion: 'Looking up at it, Barbary sang from the torn hymn-book in her hand.'[178] These books constitute Barbary's and Raoul's quasi-religion, they reflect and symbolise their own torn, damaged and fragmented state, which Macaulay, in other parts of the text, describes with the term barbarism. Therefore, language in this text also characterises the children, their role and status in the post-war world.

Mellor points out in connection to the torn and fragmented books, that they also symbolise the structure of Macaulay's text in general.[179] Macaulay's text consists of fragments, quotations from and references to other texts, described by Mellor as 'structural debris under an artfully deceptive surface'.[180] *The World my Wilderness* shares with all other texts in this subchapter the use of the motif of language to make a statement about the child protagonists. Furthermore, it shares with Neumann's text the characteristic that this statement is not only made on the level of the text's content, but also through its own form as a text consisting of fragments. In addition, Macaulay's text can be connected to my discussion of intertextuality and authenticity in the first chapter on the figure of the returnee. Mellor points out that Macaulay, consciously or unconsciously, thematises 'the problem of dramatized falsification or creation' by combining intertextual references to 'real' intertexts with references to texts, which are 'the work of Macaulay herself', and by including a character like Helen, who is described as a 'literary forger'.[181]

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[176] Macaulay, p. 65.
[177] Macaulay, p. 65.
[178] Macaulay, p. 165.
[179] See Mellor, p. 191.
[180] Mellor, p. 191.
[181] Mellor, p. 193.

In this discussion, I have demonstrated how the motif of language is used to explore the status and role of children in war and post-war times. Language is either a symbol of the children's irreversible corruption or of their resilient goodness and innocence. On the one hand, language is what hurt and corrupted the children in the first place, but on the other hand it might be language that will save them and provide hope for the future. Some of the texts furthermore express a quite clear opinion on the post-war projects of denazification and re-education, which are either characterised as futile and unnecessary or as promising and absolutely vital for Germany's future. These ambiguous interpretations do not follow national lines.

Conclusion

'After the Second World War, Western Europe concentrated on rebuilding its future through a shared concern for children.'[182] That the topic of children in post-war times indeed is a transnational one, as Kozlovsky claims in the above quotation, has been demonstrated in the course of this chapter. My analysis of German, Austrian and British texts has shown that they all explore the theme of the child's innocence or guilt, of the child as either hope or threat, and that they do so through the application of three clearly transnational motifs: the child and animal imagery, the child and play and the child and language.

What has also become clear, though, is that the texts actually are much more nuanced in their representation of child figures than the two extremes of hope vs. threat, and innocence vs. guilt suggest. Rather than ascribing their child figures a fixed position on a scale between these two poles, the authors present the reader with child figures that are constantly shifting between the two poles and that are moving along a spectrum. This constant oscillation is an expression of the huge uncertainty surrounding the figure of the child in the post-war period, in Britain and Germany alike. The authors play and experiment with different implementations of motifs into various contexts because there is no longer a secured interpretation of the child figure; former roles are 'in ruins', along with the families and cities surrounding the children. The authors try to rearrange the fragments and in doing so construct new images, which then become characteristic of the transnational genre of rubble literature.

The differences that I have found between the child figures in the analysed texts do not follow any national lines; the texts only differ in their tendency towards the one or the other end of the spectrum. This does not change the fact that all the child figures are ambiguous in their status; the difference only lies in the extent and range of their movement along the scale. The child

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[182] Kozlovsky, p. 18.

figures in *Die grössere Hoffnung* are primarily displayed as innocent victims with a few subtle fluctuations towards danger and guilt, while the child figures in *The World my Wilderness* and *Von unserm Fleisch und Blut* are mainly characterised as dangerous and guilty with a few fluctuations towards victimhood. The children in the first treatment of 'The Basement Room' and *Children of Vienna* appear to be balanced evenly between danger and hope, between perpetrator and victim.

A factor which you would expect to have a huge influence on the representation and interpretation of the child figure is the belonging of the children to different groups, especially in the German and Austrian context: surely it makes a difference, whether the child is Jewish, as in Aichinger's text, or a member of the Hitler Youth, as in Kolbenhoff's text. Although the importance of this factor in general cannot be denied, my analysis has still shown that the texts do not strictly follow these kind of divisions. For example, although the text by Aichinger features children belonging to opposing groups, her optimistic and positive image of the child includes all of her child figures. Furthermore, although in the British context there is no equivalent to the German phenomenon of the Hitler Youth, there are still clear parallels between the depiction of the child figure in Macaulay's, Greene's and Kolbenhoff's texts. Therefore, the factor of a child's belonging to a specific social group does not automatically translate to a specific presentation and interpretation of the child figure by the author.

Furthermore, my analysis of the literary texts also supports the notion of the symbolic significance of the child figure in post-war years, as it is used to explore more general aspects of reconstruction and re-education. The figure of the child reflects fundamental post-war questions about the distinction between human and animal, and the distinction between reality and play.

4) The Figures of the Occupier and the Occupied

<u>Introduction</u>

The Swedish journalist Stig Dagerman recounts a joke he heard in post-war Germany:

> He is able to tell jokes. He tells me the one about the four occupiers of Berlin who rule over a pond and each has his own goldfish. The Russian catches his goldfish and eats it up. The Frenchman catches his and throws it away after pulling off the beautiful fins. The American stuffs his and sends it home to the USA as a souvenir. The Englishman behaves most strangely of all: he catches his fish, holds it in his hand and caresses it to death.[1]

This joke about the relation between occupiers and occupied must have been popular in post-war Germany as multiple versions of it can be found in other primary and secondary literature. In Dagerman's version quoted above, what all the occupying powers have in common is that they kill their goldfish. What varies, though, is the way in which the fish dies and the intentions of the occupiers. For example, while the Russian occupier kills deliberately and uses the dead fish as food, the British occupier seems less intent on actually killing the fish but it is his excessive expression of care and sympathy which nevertheless ends the fish's life. The joke sheds light on the highly complex topic of this chapter: the relationship between the German occupied and their occupiers. While in the other chapters so far the two spheres of post-war Germany and post-war Britain were compared, but remained separate, this chapter goes a step further and brings the two national spheres closer together by exploring an international relationship. Alan Bance describes the occupation as a 'unique political-cultural moment which brought a large number of Britons into official, social and intellectual contact with the defeated German enemy'.[2]

In this chapter I want to take a closer look at this unique moment in time. By analysing and comparing German and British literary texts I aim to find out what members of the two national groups thought about each other; if and how contact between them is established; and how the occupation plays out in the minds and hearts of occupiers and occupied. What are the predominant feelings: hatred or sympathy, revenge or pity? What characterises the power relations between Germans and British? Do the German and the British texts reveal similar views on the occupation, the occupiers and the occupied, or is there a strong national divide in perception and interpretation? Do occupiers and occupied live separate lives in post-war

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[1] Stig Dagerman, *German Autumn*, trans. by Robin Fulton (London: Quartet Books, 1988), p. 49.
[2] Alan Bance, 'Introduction', in *The Cultural Legacy of the British Occupation in Germany: The London Symposium*, ed. by Alan Bance (Stuttgart: Hans-Dieter Heinz, 1997), pp. 7-36 (p. 8).

Germany, or is there a common and shared understanding of post-war relations? These questions lead us back to central post-war topics already discussed in the previous chapters, such as identity, authenticity and humanity. While historical sources tend to only look for cases of direct contact, literature enables us to analyse broader perceptions of 'the other' which are held by all members of the two groups, whether they experience a direct contact or not. In this way, literature can expand and broaden our understanding of the occupation.

There are many different ways of describing and interpreting the relationship between occupier and occupied. While Pauline Elkes simply states that in May 1945 'the "enemy" became the "occupied"', the following list of terms used in secondary literature demonstrates the variety of terms used in connection with the occupier and the occupied: victor, defeated, enemy, friend, liberator, conqueror, partner, cousin, pariah or slave.[3] All of these, and many more, allude to possible facets of the complex relationship between Germans and British. What also needs to be taken into account is that the relationship was not static, but changed over time. Bance quotes a rather optimistic German commentator who said: 'Die Engländer waren als Eroberer gekommen, sie wurden unsere Helfer und Berater, und sie gingen als Freunde.'[4] Pinfold stresses 'a major shift' in the relationship between occupiers and occupied as a consequence of the beginning Cold War dynamic 'from treating Germany as a defeated enemy to building her up as a potential ally'.[5] The supposedly simplistic opposition of occupier and occupied does not cover up or erase all those many different mouldings of the relationship between Germans and British which are present in the post-war texts. In contrast, the most neutral and factually correct terms of occupier and occupied offer me the opportunity to analyse in detail and always in relation to concrete texts the complex and emotional relationships underlying and accompanying the political and historical reality of the occupation.

In the following three subchapters I will analyse and compare the literary representation of the figures of the occupiers and the occupied in German and British post-war texts. In the first subchapter I will explore similarities between occupiers and occupied. In the second subchapter

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[3] Pauline Elkes, 'Wartime Images of Germany and the Genesis of British Occupation Policy: The Reports of the Political Warfare Executive', in *The Cultural Legacy of the British Occupation in Germany: The London Symposium*, ed. by Alan Bance (Stuttgart: Hans-Dieter Heinz, 1997), pp. 37-66 (p. 37); see Michael Ahrens, *Die Briten in Hamburg: Besatzerleben 1945-1958*, 2nd edn (München: Dölling und Galitz, 2011), p. 313, John Pinfold, 'Preface', in *Instructions for British Servicemen in Germany 1944* (Oxford: Bodleian Library, 2007), pp. 1-8 (p. 8), *Instructions for British Servicemen in Germany 1944* (Oxford: Bodleian Library, 2007), p. 3 and p. 31, Bance, p. 13 and p. 9, *Instructions for British Servicemen in Germany 1944*, p. 34, Victor Gollancz, *In Darkest Germany* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1947), p. 95 and p. 99.

[4] Bance, p. 13 ['The British arrived as conquerors, they became our supporters and advisors, and they left as friends.'].

[5] John Pinfold, p. 8.

I will focus on questions of performance, exploring how both the occupiers and the occupied reveal a certain degree of artificiality and dishonesty through their shared play-acting and pretending, while the third subchapter considers shifting distributions and relations of power. I will argue that the relationship between occupiers and occupied can neither be explained in simple binary oppositions, nor by making use of clear divisions and definitions. Instead, the borders are shifting and there is an oscillation between different positions: something I will demonstrate to be the case when looking at the occupation not only from the angle of the distribution of power, but also from the more emotional angle afforded us by literature, which is well placed to capture shifting, oscillating or uncertain borders between reality and artificiality, between lies and honesty. Ultimately, it is my contention that this process of the liquidation of solid binary oppositions and clear distinctions happens transnationally, in German as well as British post-war texts.

Victor Gollancz describes his impression of the situation in occupied Germany with the following words: 'The plain fact is that there are two worlds in Germany today, the world of the conquered and the world of the conquerors. They meet at the peripheries, but their hearts beat in an inhuman isolation.'[6] Where might Gollancz's feeling of isolation originate from and is this the only possible impression to be gained about the occupation?

According to John Pinfold, the principal aim of the booklet *Instructions for British Servicemen in Germany 1944*, which British soldiers were given before entering Germany, 'was to condition the troops against the effects of German propaganda, and to restrict the contacts between the occupiers and the occupied to the minimum.'[7] This restriction of contacts goes hand in hand with the policy of non-fraternisation which was given in March 1945 and barred the British from all contact with Germans.[8] According to Michael Ahrens, it was defined as 'the avoidance of mingling with Germans upon terms of friendliness, familiarity or intimacy, whether individual or in groups, in official or unofficial dealings'.[9] Although Ahrens states that the policy of non-fraternisation established a 'mentale wie physische Kluft zwischen Briten und Hamburgern', he also stresses that the policy was only ever strictly adhered to in the first days of the occupation.[10] It took only a few weeks for everyone to realise that the policy was impossible to follow or to enforce, especially as regards contact with German children, and that it even counteracted the British plans of indirect rule and re-education, which required a certain

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[6] Gollancz, p. 98.
[7] John Pinfold, p. 1.
[8] See Ahrens, p. 70.
[9] Ahrens, p. 70.
[10] Ahrens, p. 123 ['psychological as well as physical gulf']; see p. 76.

amount of interaction between Germans and British.[11] The sheer facts of the reality of living in Germany and the tactical plans mentioned above led to an initial step-by-step attenuation of the strict policy until, finally, the policy of non-fraternisation was cancelled, with very few exceptions, at the end of September 1945.[12]

Right from the beginning of the occupation there were established points of contact between the occupiers and the occupied: Germans and British participated in the huge Black Market, manifold relationships developed between British men and German women ranging from prostitution to love-affairs, and there were also contacts between Germans and British at shared workplaces. Nonetheless, Rainer Schulze stresses that 'the number of Germans who had direct contacts of more than a casual or accidental kind, i.e. relationships which could be considered personal, with a member of the British occupation apparatus no matter what rank always remained very small. Surveys indicate that about three quarters of the German population had no such contacts at all'.[13]

However, even if there were no direct and personal contacts between occupier and occupied, members of these two groups were nevertheless put into relational spheres to each other, and will have had a certain opinion and feeling towards the other, whether they met each other in person or not. In this chapter, this is especially obvious in the text by Otto Erich Kiesel, whose German protagonists have neither any personal nor official direct contact with British occupiers, but who nevertheless have very strong opinions about them and feel their lives connected to them in a very direct way.

Bance sums up the more general significance of studying the occupation: 'the occupation cannot fail to offer a fascinating insight into British self-understanding, into corresponding German preconceptions and subsequent enlightenment concerning the occupiers, and into the interaction of perceptions on each side.'[14] So what are these conceptions of the self and the other which come into play during the occupation?

The booklet for British soldiers sums up what the British believed to be the German conception of their British occupiers: 'The British do not work so hard as the Germans or take their work so seriously. The British do not organise as well as the Germans. […] But on the whole the

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[11] See Ahrens, pp. 125-26 and Rainer Schulze, 'A Difficult Interlude: Relations between British Military Government and the German Population and their Effects for the Constitution of a Democratic Society', in *The Cultural Legacy of the British Occupation in Germany: The London Symposium*, ed. by Alan Bance (Stuttgart: Hans-Dieter Heinz, 1997), pp. 67-109 (p. 73).
[12] See Ahrens, p. 126.
[13] Schulze, p. 77.
[14] Bance, p. 28.

Germans admire the British. […] It is probable that of all the occupying troops of the United Nations we and the Americans will be the least unwelcome.'[15] Although such generalisations are always to be treated very carefully, especially as the booklet is a work of propaganda, they nonetheless offer preliminary insight into the topic. In the following section, I therefore ask: Is this a realistic evaluation of the German sentiment towards the British? And, consider the other side, what were important factors determining the British view of the Germans during, but also before the occupation?

A central feeling of Germans at the beginning of the occupation was relief. The Germans were relieved that the bombings were finally over and also that the propaganda disseminated at the end of the war, warning them about the allies, turned out to be exaggerated, at least in the case of the Western Allies.[16] In contrast to the Soviet Zone of occupation, according to Schulze, 'looting and rape were no mass phenomena in the British Zone', which does not mean, however, that these things did not happen at all in the British Zone.[17] All in all, Schulze sums up the development of the relationship between British and Germans in the first eight to ten months as 'quite remarkable: even though the two sides were still a long way from partnership or friendship, of course, the original antagonism had given way to a relatively smooth and cooperative way of dealing with each other.'[18] Schulze also supports the assumption expressed in the booklet for soldiers that the British 'at the end of year 1945, […] were the most welcome and the most respected of the four occupying powers'.[19]

The British, on entering Germany, were also relieved on some level, as they were not facing any great resistance or Nazi underground activity.[20] But there were also other, strong feelings among the British at the end of the war. Many British soldiers entered Germany after years of fighting, away from their families, having lost comrades and friends, in a war for which the responsibility lay with the people they were occupying. They were also aware of the German bomber attacks on Britain. Another factor possibly on the minds of the British occupying soldiers might have been the spreading knowledge of German atrocities, brought to light at the liberation of the concentration camp at Belsen and the discovery of 'numerous other camps and

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[15] *Instructions for British Servicemen in Germany 1944*, p. 33.
[16] See Schulze, pp. 68-69.
[17] Schulze, p. 69; see Ahrens, pp. 80-81.
[18] Schulze, p. 79.
[19] Schulze, p. 79.
[20] See Schulze, p. 71.

mass graves'.[21] These factors, according to Schulze, led to an intensification of anti-German feelings among the British soldiers at the beginning of the occupation.

While the relations between occupier and occupied initially appeared to be slightly better than expected, the situation began to deteriorate in early 1946 owing to a number of developments.[22] Important factors were a change and increase of personnel on the British side, along with the deterioration of the economic situation, in part due to British dismantling of German factories, as well as the food situation and the Allied procedure of de-nazification of the German population.[23] All of these factors contributed to a loss of prestige by the British occupier. The belief spread in Germany that 'Britain's sole aim as an occupying power was to cripple the German economy and exploit German resources'.[24] In short the saying went: 'The Tommies want to finish us off.'[25] This shift, described and analysed in secondary sources, was also witnessed by observers on the ground like Victor Gollancz: 'Our prestige here is pretty near the nadir. The youth is being poisoned and renazified. We have all but lost the peace – and I fear that this is an understatement.'[26] A further change in the relations between occupiers and occupied was brought about in 1948 by the Berlin Airlift. This event, in which the Germans stood up for democracy and were supported by the British, brought the two groups closer together again.[27]

Although 'in an opinion poll conducted in June 1950, 41 per cent of those questioned who experienced the British occupation said they noticed very little of it, only 37 per cent viewed it negatively, and an impressive 16 per cent characterized it as pleasant', still, anti-British sentiments in Germany prevailed in the long run and the British lost out against the Americans in public opinion: 'In 1951, 55 per cent of the West German population said that American action since the war had been to the advantage of Germans, whereas only 13 per cent felt the same about Britain.'[28] For the years following the occupation, Schulze concludes that 'British and Germans drifted apart again'.[29] In the following, I want to find out how the relationship between occupiers and occupied developed over the course of the occupation, and whether literature can offer any explanations for Germans and British drifting apart.

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[21] Schulze, p. 71.
[22] See Schulze, p. 79.
[23] See Schulze, pp. 79-81.
[24] Bance, p. 11.
[25] Schulze, p. 83.
[26] Gollancz, p. 29.
[27] See Schulze, p. 87.
[28] Schulze, p. 70; p. 90.
[29] Schulze, p. 92.

When Germans and British met in occupied Germany, or were indirectly confronted with each other, they met as members and representatives of two opposed and supposedly fundamentally different groups. The booklet for British soldiers is keen to stress the differences between the occupiers and the occupied as part of its general aim to restrict contact between the two groups: 'When you meet the Germans you will probably think they are very much like us. They look like us, except that there are fewer of the wiry type and more big, fleshy, fair-haired men and women, especially in the north. But they are not really so much like us as they look.'[30] This message is repeated again and again in the booklet:

> So you will not be surprised if the German proves to be less like us than he appears at first sight.
>
> The likeness, if it exists at all, is only skin-deep. The deeper you dig into the German character, the more you realise how different they are from us. So don't be taken in by first impressions.[31]

How important it is to the makers of the booklet to stress this difference, is made clear again at the end, as a warning of false impressions of similarities is even included in the final list of Do's and Don'ts: 'Don't be taken in by surface resemblances between the Germans and ourselves.'[32] But is the distinction between occupiers and occupied really as simple and clear-cut as the booklet – a piece of propaganda – tries to teach the British soldiers? Are there really no similarities between occupiers and occupied? And what would it mean, if there were similarities? Would they lead to a greater sympathy and maybe even friendship? Or might they also foster greater hatred between members of the two groups? These are some of the questions I will consider in this subchapter as I analyse and compare literary texts, which can provide the reader with a much more nuanced picture of the post-war reality than historical accounts, which often only scrape the surface of human and emotional relationships.

In Marie Luise Kaschnitz's (1901-1974) short story 'Das fremde Land' (1948), the search for similarities between occupiers and occupied plays a central role. The short story describes a brief meeting between two soldiers of the occupation and some German men and women. It is not clear exactly where the story takes place, nor is it clear which nationality the occupiers have. The story is not about the relations between Germans and representatives of a particular other nation, but it is about the relation between occupiers and occupied in general.

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[30] *Instructions for British Servicemen in Germany 1944*, p. 25.
[31] *Instructions for British Servicemen in Germany 1944*, p. 30; p. 34.
[32] *Instructions for British Servicemen in Germany 1944*, p. 50.

Born in 1901, Marie Luise Kaschnitz grew up in Berlin in an aristocratic family and trained as a bookseller. In 1924 she visited Rome for the first time, where she met her future husband and had her only daughter. In the next years, the family moved around a lot, and Kaschnitz accompanied her husband on expeditions through the occident. She only began to write quite late in her life. She spent the years of the Nazi-reign in Germany, where free creative production was impossible. Therefore, most of her writing of this time remained unpublished. After the war, at the age of 44, she had not yet published any of her poetry and only very few of her novellas. Her biographer Dagmar von Gersdorff describes her position after the war as that of an outsider. Only after 1945 did Kaschnitz begin to write and publish poetry and became one of the most important German poets of the post-war era. She also wrote pieces of prose, which are often characterised by autobiographic content.[33] Although Kaschnitz's life displays many characteristics of an inner migrant, Kaschnitz herself was very careful about this label, as it was later used by many as an excuse for their life as 'Mitläufer' or follower during the Nazi years. Von Gersdorff quotes Kaschnitz:

> Worin soll sie denn bestanden haben, unsere sogenannte innere Emigration? Darin, daß wir ausländische Sender abhörten, zusammensaßen und auf die Regierung schalten, ab und zu einem Juden auf der Straße die Hand gaben, auch dann, wenn es jemand sah? Daß wir prophezeiten, zuerst den Krieg, dann den totalen Krieg, dann die Niederlage und das Ende der Partei?[34]

The dominant emotion described in 'Das fremde Land' is fear, and especially fear of the unknown. The narrator of the story begins by describing a process in which things that were formerly clear, stable and definite disappear or become uncertain, turn into shadows and nothingness. This characterises the situation of the occupied Germans, whose beliefs and certainties, after having lost the war, are shattered and broken: 'Es ist natürlich nicht so, daß die Gegenstände wirklich verschwinden. Sie werden nur fremd, in dem Maße, in dem sie ihren Sinn verlieren, verzerrt sich ihre Gestalt. Mitten in unseren eigenen vier Wänden sind wir von Schemen umgeben, von einem Nebel, einem Nichts.'[35] The imagery used in this quotation is

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[33] See Dagmar von Gersdorff, *Marie Luise Kaschnitz: Eine Biographie*, 2nd edn (Frankfurt a.M.: Insel Verlag, 1993), pp. 155-59 and Uwe Schweikert, 'Kaschnitz, Marie Luise', in *Metzler Lexikon Autoren: Deutschsprachige Dichter und Schriftsteller vom Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart,* ed. by Bernd Lutz and Benedikt Jeßing, 4th edn (Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler, 2010), pp. 404-05.

[34] von Gersdorff, p. 175 ['What, then, is our so called inner emigration supposed to have consisted of? Of us listening to foreign radio stations, of sitting together and scolding the government, of now and then shaking hands with a Jew on the street, even if someone saw it? Of us prophesizing, first the war, then the total war, then the defeat and the end of the party?'].

[35] Marie Luise Kaschnitz, 'Das fremde Land', in *Marie Luise Kaschnitz: Erzählungen,* ed. by Walter Jens and Marcel Reich-Ranicki (Stuttgart: Deutscher Bücherbund, [n.d.]), pp. 265-72 (p. 265) ['Of course, the things do not really disappear. They only become strange, their shape becomes distorted as they lose their meaning. In the middle of our own four walls we are surrounded by shadows, by a mist, by nothingness.'].

natural, but dark, expressing an existential fear of objects losing not only their meaning, but their very form. This state of fear is not exclusive to the occupied, but is compared to the situation of the occupier who is not in his own home but far away, in a strange and unknown country: 'Und ehe wir uns versehen, gleichen wir einem, der sich in einem Lande befindet, dessen Sprache er nicht versteht, in einem unheimlichen, überaus fremden Land.'[36] Although the strangeness in this quotation seems to be based more on practical considerations than existential ones, there is still a basic similarity: occupiers and occupied share a state of constant fear, caused by an uncanniness of the unknown, the loss of certainties and firm ground beneath their feet. The title of the short story, 'Das fremde Land', the strange country, can therefore be read in two ways. In the first, more direct way, it describes the situation of the occupier, who lives in a strange country which is not his own. In the second, more indirect way, though, the text seems to suggest that also the occupied, in some way, live in a strange country. Post-war Germany is as strange and unknown to them as it is to the occupiers.

The narration in Kaschnitz's story is characterised by a huge effort of empathy. It is one of the occupied, who has not been there herself but imagines what it would have been like, who introduces the reader to the whole storyline of what happened in the dark woods, of how the occupiers became frightened and suspect enemies close to their parked car. The reader only comes to understand the narrator's perspective on what might have happened out there. She transposes her own experiences of the woods onto the occupiers, thereby demonstrating a great amount of empathy: 'Ich kann natürlich nicht genau sagen, was sich da oben abgespielt hat. Ich weiß nur, wie es manchmal ist im Wald in der Nacht, wie da plötzlich ein Wind aufkommt, Gott weiß woher, und wie es dann raschelt, als zögen ganze Rudel gespenstischer Tiere durch das Unterholz.'[37] Empathy is only possible if one assumes a basic similarity between oneself and the other. The narrator is able to imagine what the occupiers must have felt and thought, because she assumes them to be similar to herself.

The basic story of two occupiers being too scared in the dark to get their own car and demanding help from the occupied has the potential to be used to humiliate and degrade the figure of the occupier. The occupiers do not reveal themselves to be particularly brave or in control, which undermines their power. This is supported by a description of the occupiers' outward appearance as 'kleine Männer in schäbigen Uniformen' which does not demand a lot of respect

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[36] Kaschnitz, p. 265 ['And before we even notice it, we resemble someone who is in a foreign country, whose language he does not understand, in a scary, extremely strange country.'].
[37] Kaschnitz, p. 267 ['I obviously cannot tell you what exactly happened up there. I only know what it is like sometimes in the forest during the night, when there suddenly arises a wind, God knows from where, and then it rustles as if packs of ghostly animals were moving through the underwood.'].

either.[38] But the narrator of Kaschnitz's story chooses a very different angle to tell the story. She is sympathetic to the occupiers. She understands their fear, and even shares it, and therefore does not use this situation to raise herself above them. Instead, in the story, the occupied and the occupier are clearly placed onto the same level. They are bound together by the shared feeling of fear. This is stressed again through the figure of the mayor, who is afraid of leaving his wife alone with the occupiers.[39] In a similar way as the occupiers out in the dark forest fear an act of violence or sabotage by the occupied, the occupied man fears an act of violence against his wife by the occupier. Therefore, occupiers and occupied are shown to be united in their fear of each other.

When the narrator and her friend are left alone with the two occupiers to wait for their car, the contact between them develops in three different stages. First, there is a great distance between the two groups. The occupiers are distrustful, there is no real conversation and the fronts between the two groups are also expressed physically when they sit down at the table on different ends of a corner seat: 'Die beiden Männer wechselten rasche Blicke, und dann setzten sie sich nebeneinander auf die eine Seite der Bank, die über Eck stand, und Carl und ich setzten uns auf die andere Seite und legten die Hände auf den leeren Tisch.'[40] The body language of the occupied is telling here: they put their hands on the table, as if to assure the occupiers that they have no violent intent or hidden weapons. Theirs is an open body language. The narrator assumes the role of a mediator, trying to establish a conversation between occupiers and occupied.[41] She suffers from the strained atmosphere and stresses their basic similarity and shared humanity as a ground for a better relation: 'Wir sind doch alle Menschen, nicht wahr?'.[42]

The narrator manages to bring about the first turning point in the contact between occupiers and occupied by mentioning the name of a pilot and an author, who is known to both of the groups. This establishes a common ground for them to talk and exchange experiences: 'Saint-Exupéry, sagte ich in die Stille hinein.'[43] The occupiers have known him personally, while the occupied have read his literature. This name serves as a bridge, momentarily able to span the gulf between them: 'Die Männer hatten miteinander zu reden begonnen, sie sahen sich nicht mehr auf die Brust oder auf die Hände, sondern in die Augen und mitten im Zimmer stand der tote Flieger

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[38] Kaschnitz, p. 268 ['short men in shabby uniforms'].
[39] See Kaschnitz, p. 268.
[40] Kaschnitz, pp. 268-69 ['The two men exchanged quick glances and then they sat down next to each other on the one side of the bench, which ran around the corner, and Carl and I sat down on the other side and put our hands on the empty table.'].
[41] See Kaschnitz, p. 269.
[42] Kaschnitz, p. 269 ['We are all humans, right?'].
[43] Kaschnitz, p. 270 ['Saint-Exupéry, I said into the silence.'].

wie eine Flamme.'[44] It is significant that the author presents literature as the means to, at least temporarily, bridge the gap between members of the two groups. This could be read as a comment by Kaschnitz on the role that literature in general, and maybe even her literature in particular, could play in the post-war years: the role of an intermediary working towards establishing understanding and peace.

A reference to Saint-Exupéry's text *The Little Prince* is used to introduce a new concept to the relationship between occupiers and occupied: the concept of friendship. The little prince travels the world and visits strange and unknown planets in search of friends. One of the friends he makes is the fox. This is what the narrator thinks of while talking to the occupiers: 'Und immer, wenn er eine Pause machte, hörte ich den kleinen Planetenwanderer sprechen, der auf der Erde einen Fuchs zum Freunde gewinnt. J'en ai fait mon ami et il est maintenant unique au monde, sagte der kleine Prinz.'[45] This seems to be the context in which the narrator, the occupied, views the meeting with the occupiers: through a transformation from an unknown mass into a personal and unique individual there is established a friendship. The occupied assumes that this is what has happened between her and the occupiers, that they have become friends: 'Ich hatte eine kleine Schuld im Nachbarhaus zu bezahlen, ich konnte das schnell erledigen, jetzt, da wir so gute Freunde waren, durfte ich wohl gehen und kommen, wie es mir gefiel.'[46] But hers turns out to be a false and premature assumption of friendship.

The reader does not know what the occupiers think, whether they, at any time, are intending a friendship as well, or whether this is only the occupied's desire and assumption. But what is certain is that there follows the next turning point in the contact between occupiers and occupied and that all ideas or impressions of friendship are destroyed: 'Aber dann geschah etwas, das diesen zarten Schein der Menschlichkeit auf die beschämendste Weise auslöschte und vertrieb.'[47] When Carl, the narrator's friend, lets a torch bang loudly onto the table, the occupiers draw their weapons. The distrust is back, or might even have never been gone, and, most importantly, the fear is back as well. Instead of building a bridge over the gulf, the fronts are strengthened and additional armour is put on: 'Die beiden Männer sprangen mit einem Ruck auf, es klang, als seien sie ganz und gar gepanzert, aber sie hielten nur plötzlich ihre Revolver

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[44] Kaschnitz, p. 271 ['The men had begun to talk to each other, they no longer looked at their chests or their hands, but in their eyes, and in the middle of the room stood the dead aviator like a flame.'].
[45] Kaschnitz, p. 271 ['And always when he paused, I heard the small wanderer of planets speak, who finds his friend, the fox, on earth. The little prince said: J'en ai fait mon ami et il est maintenant unique au monde.'].
[46] Kaschnitz, p. 271 ['I had to pay off a small debt in the neighbouring house, I could get this done very quickly, now that we were such good friends, I assumed I was allowed to come and go as I pleased.'].
[47] Kaschnitz, p. 271 ['But then something happened which, in the most shameful way, wiped out and drove away this delicate glow of humanity.'].

in der Hand. Natürlich sprangen wir auch auf, wir standen uns alle vier gegenüber, rasch atmend und stumm.'[48] At the end of the text, the rapprochement between occupiers and occupied has clearly failed. When the mayor returns with the occupiers' car, the parting is impersonal and silent: 'Wir hätten uns wohl zum Abschied die Hände geben und uns eine gute Nacht wünschen können. Aber wir gingen sehr schnell auseinander, ohne uns anzusehen, und stumm.'[49]

As already mentioned before, Kaschnitz's 'Das fremde Land' is told exclusively from the viewpoint of the narrator, which is why this story is all about the occupied's thoughts and feelings towards the occupiers, while the reader gets to know close to nothing about the occupiers' emotions. All one knows about them is what can be read in their actions and their body language: their distrust, but also temporary willingness to talk to the occupied. The occupied clearly searches for and stresses similarities between the occupied and the occupiers. Her wish seems to be to establish a friendship with them. The narrator, as well as the reader, does not know whether the occupiers have any similar intentions. But what is definitely clear is that in the end there is no lasting rapprochement between the two parties, not to mention a friendship. Instead, the shared emotion of fear is what ultimately seems to separate occupiers and occupied.

John Prebble's (1915-2011) *The Edge of Darkness* (1947) is told from the perspective of the British occupiers. Its protagonist is the soldier Jones, who is part of the occupation army which advances from liberated Holland into defeated Germany. Born in Middlesex, Prebble spent most of his childhood in Canada, until his family returned to England. He firstly began to write in 1934, as a journalist, while his first novel was published in 1944. A member of the Communist party of Great Britain until the end of the war, Prebble fought in the Second World War as an artilleryman. The unlikely soldier, described by Dennis Barker in his obituary as 'a bespectacled communist culture-vulture with a serious manner and chilling politeness', joined an invasion boat heading for Holland and advanced with the army into Germany, joining the British army newspaper unit in Hamburg at the end of the war.[50]

Jones's first personal encounter with Germans occurs in Holland, when he and some of his comrades capture three German soldiers. The Germans are taken prisoner and Jones's superior

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[48] Kaschnitz, p. 272 ['The two men jumped up with a jerk, it sounded, as if they were armoured throughout, but they only suddenly held their guns in their hands. We, of course, jumped up as well; all four of us stood facing each other, breathing rapidly and in silence.'].

[49] Kaschnitz, p. 272 ['I guess we could have shaken each other's hands and wished each other a good night. But we parted very quickly, without looking at each other, and in silence.'].

[50] See Dennis Barker, 'John Prebble: Historian and Writer Who Dramatised Scotland's Struggles', *Guardian*, 31 January 2001 <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2001/jan/31/guardianobituaries.filmnews1> [accessed 6 November 2017] and <https://www.panmacmillan.com/authors/john-prebble> [accessed 6 November 2017].

asks his men to give the Germans some tea, which enrages Jones. Smith justifies his demand by stressing the similarity between the Germans and themselves, employing the same argument that was also mentioned in Kaschnitz's text: the shared existence as human beings. But this point is opposed by Jones: 'Hope I'm a bit more human than a Jerry, anyway.'[51] This already reveals a contrast between the texts by Kaschnitz and Prebble. While the first was dominated by feelings of empathy and sympathy, the latter is dominated by a strong feeling of hatred and revenge. Jones has lost his wife and the mother of his daughter due to a German bomber attack in London, and the memories of comrades killed in battle are very fresh, as is the impression of the people in liberated Holland. Jones rejects all claims to similarities by his superior, as well as by the captured Germans: '"Your pardon," said the German gently, "You do not like the Germans?" "I love 'em," said Jones. "That's right, isn't it. We're all Aryan brothers?"'[52] At the beginning, a friendship between the occupier Jones and the German occupied seems highly unlikely. Instead, he makes friends in Holland, which the British liberated from the Germans. The young Dutch girl Nelly calls him and his comrades: 'My beste vriendchen!'[53]

The dominant feelings of not only Jones, but of most of the occupying army towards the Germans, are hatred and revenge: 'And the Troop spoke of these things with a surprising unanimity of hatred and contempt, because hatred of the Germans seemed to be in the very earth of Europe.'[54] Connected to the hatred of the occupiers is their perception of the occupied Germans as a characterless and featureless mass. They do not perceive them as individuals, which is not surprising, as depersonalisation is a classic military training technique to aid soldiers in war:

> And, like shadows against the background, were the people of Germany, the people with whom speech was a crime; characterless, featureless people who peered palely from their cellars, and Jones remembered with bewilderment that these people whom he hated had as yet held no interest for them. They blew like seared leaves before the high, confident wind of the invading army.[55]

This quotation uses surprisingly peaceful imagery to describe the occupation of Germany. Leaves fluttering in the wind are a natural phenomenon and other than being moved around involuntarily and uncontrollably, no harm is done to the leaves or anybody else. This contrasts with Jones's actual behaviour in occupied Germany, as his initial feelings towards the Germans culminate in him setting fire to a house in front of the woman and children who used to live in

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[51] John Prebble, *The Edge of Darkness* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1947), p. 57.
[52] Prebble, p. 59.
[53] Prebble, p. 87.
[54] Prebble, p. 99.
[55] Prebble, p. 108.

it: 'Suddenly, consumed by a fierce and almost unprecedented anger, he turned and stumbled back to his Jeep […] He dragged a full jerrycan of petrol from the floor of the vehicle and carried it unsteadily to the house.'[56] And not even a crying girl, wanting her doll back, is able to stop his outburst of hatred and revenge.

Later on, when all fighting has stopped, Jones is posted to Hamburg, where his attitude towards the occupied gradually changes. He attends a party with British occupation personnel and German civilians and at first remains distant and sceptical, although outwardly differences between the British occupiers and the German occupied seem to diminish over the course of the party. That it is not a perfectly harmonious homogeneity, however, is already apparent in the adjectives used in the following quotation: 'But now these barriers had worn away and the two groups, Germans and British, had merged into a peculiar, frenzied homogeneity.'[57]

It is at this party that Jones meets a German woman, Kaethe Lenz, with whom he begins to argue. Although Jones and Kaethe are both talking about similar experiences of bombings, these similarities do not lead to sympathy and understanding between them, but only to a greater division. When Jones talks about how his wife was killed by a bomber attack and Kaethe tells him about her experiences of being bombed, he feels like having to stress the fact that Germans killed his wife and in doing so to devalue her experiences of suffering as well as to attribute guilt: '"My wife was killed by a flying-bomb." She nodded slowly. "It is cruel. In the shelters here during the raids it was horrible. […] "A German flying bomb," persisted Jones bluntly.'[58] The occupier and the occupied do not come to any kind of agreement and instead reinforce their opposed identities, which none of them is ready to give up or compromise on: '"You think I am asking for your sympathy? You forget I am the wife of a German officer!" "And you forget I'm a British soldier!"'[59] There is no rapprochement between the two at the beginning, no bridging of the gulf separating them.

Still, the two keep meeting and talking to each other. A relationship develops between them, but a very complicated one. Jones is thrust into confusion by his contact with Kaethe. He realises that suddenly, as soon as he has to deal with individuals and no longer only with a distant mass of people, his position and opinion lose their stability and inevitability, everything becomes more complicated, including keeping up his hatred for the Germans: 'eighty million

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[56] Prebble, p. 153.
[57] Prebble, p. 159.
[58] Prebble, p. 171.
[59] Prebble, p. 172.

people without features or characters, just "the enemy". It had been easier to hate them then.'[60] I already mentioned this transnational trope of the difference between a negative relationship to a mass of people and a more positive relationship to an individual in connection to Kaschnitz's text. Kaschnitz relates the assumed friendship between occupiers and occupied to the relationship between Saint-Exupéry's little prince and the fox, who describes the process of taming, which is the basis for a friendship, as a similar process to what Jones is going through in Germany:

> To me, you are still nothing more than a little boy who is just like a hundred thousand other little boys. And I have no need of you. And you, on your part, have no need of me. To you, I am nothing more than a fox like a hundred thousand other foxes. But if you tame me, then we shall need each other. To me, you will be unique in all the world. To you, I shall be unique in all the world.[61]

What Jones experiences in Germany forces him to think and makes him realise that the distinction between occupiers and occupied might not be as clear-cut as the distinction was between the enemies in wartime: 'The guns had stopped and in their place had come the clamour of voices, incoherent, raceless, a babel of confusion obscuring the clear-cut, uncompromising outlines of the war.'[62]

Jones is surprised to find that there are indeed obvious similarities between him and Kaethe, between occupiers and occupied: the shared emotions of hatred and a thirst for revenge. The British are as hated by the Germans, as are the Germans by the British: 'It had been surprising to find them with their hatreds, their bitterness, even their desires for revenge too, a nation looking inward and never beyond the limits of their personal suffering.'[63] Although Jones feels unjustly hated, when he tries to justify his behaviour and feelings towards the Germans, he notices that he behaves just like the Germans themselves:

> He wanted to explain, to tell the Germans of the enormity of their crimes, but while they were resilient they were unconvinced, and he had realised that it was because they did not think he was himself immune from the accusations he made. He wanted to exonerate himself, to proclaim his inviolability and his innocence, and his mind was brought up with an unpleasant jerk when he realised that he was doing precisely the same as every German.[64]

Being confronted with this common hatred, Jones's opinions and feelings about the occupied change. In another heated discussion with Kaethe he proclaims that he does not hate the

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[60] Prebble, p. 175.
[61] Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, *The Little Prince*, trans. by Katherine Woods (London: Egmont, 2009), p. 64.
[62] Prebble, p. 176.
[63] Prebble, p. 180.
[64] Prebble, pp. 180-81.

Germans anymore and that sooner or later the occupiers and the occupied will have to become friends:

> 'Sooner or later the rest of you have got to be friends with us.' She laughed and he was surprised by the cynical bitterness of it. 'Do the English want to be friends with us? They hate us. You hate us…' 'No!' he said quickly. 'Yes, we killed your wife. You told me at the dance. It hurt. A German killed your wife. You hate us.' 'I used to,' he said slowly […] 'But hatred makes you sick after a while. It frightens you.'[65]

Jones, the occupier, is shocked by the shared hatred and wants to end it. He has realised that hatred will not get any of them anywhere, that it hurts and destroys the one who hates and therefore he wants to give the Germans a chance.[66]

Although Jones is able to change his attitude and symbolically turns from someone who intentionally burns down a house into the builder of a doll's house, his relationship with Kaethe remains very shaky and their discussions do not lose the 'sharp edge of old antagonisms'.[67] On the one hand, it is not easy for Jones himself to let go of his anger: 'On these occasions Jones was surprised to find that he did not feel sorry for her, only angry. His sympathy was anchored to a sandy bottom.'[68] But on the other hand, rapprochement is also to a great extent prevented by the behaviour of Kaethe and the other Germans. Unlike Jones, they are not able or willing to let go of their anger and hatred of the British. Kaethe justifies this by arguing that the only thing that the Germans have left is their self-respect. If they admitted to their own mistakes and let go of blaming the occupiers, they would have nothing left at all. Losing their self-respect would kill them: '"It is a queer thing this self-respect, you would say, but it helps us. If we say like Pastor Niemoller." Her face darkened. "He is a bad German that! If we say we are all responsible for the 'Konzentrationslager' we would kill that self-respect and we would die."'[69] Kaethe is not able or willing to forgive: 'And you do not forgive us for it. You do not think that perhaps we will not forgive.'[70] This clash of different attitudes, with one person, the occupier, trying to give up on his anger and hate, while the other person, the occupied, desperately tries to hang on to hers, opens up a huge gulf between the two.

Jones's offer or demand of friendship is clearly rejected by Kaethe, who continues to stress their differences: 'You have been kind to me Ted. You have been kind because you are sorry, and it hurts you to see people in pain. A lot of things you have taught me, but never have I

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[65] Prebble, p. 188.
[66] See Prebble, pp. 188-89.
[67] See Prebble, p. 205; p. 208.
[68] Prebble, p. 208.
[69] Prebble, p. 213.
[70] Prebble, p. 214.

forgotten that I am German.'[71] It is interesting to note that in this quotation a theme can be noticed which was also present in Kaschnitz's text: empathy between occupiers and occupied. But in Prebble's text the roles are reversed as it is the occupier Jones who is empathetic towards the occupied, while in 'Das fremde Land' the occupied express empathy towards the occupiers.

When Jones is demobilised and sent home, the paths of the occupied and the occupier split irreversibly. While Jones seems to go back home wiser and more stable, cured from his hatred, Kaethe commits suicide. Her position of not giving up or compromising on her German identity and hatred of the British is a path without a future. The only way forward for her is death.

As in 'Das fremde Land', *The Edge of Darkness* also contains an attempt at friendship that fails. In Kaschnitz's text it is the occupied who is empathetic, searching for positive, connective similarities and grounds for friendship, while in Prebble's text it is the occupier who reveals empathy towards the occupied, overcomes the negative, disruptive similarity of a shared hatred and offers a friendship. A pattern – albeit an admittedly limited one at this stage – which can be deduced from these two texts is that in both cases the members of the nation writing the text present themselves in the positive light. It is members of the author's own national group who are shown to be open and willing to change and make amends in order to establish a positive relationship. Therefore, both of the authors, Kaschnitz and Prebble, could be said to ponder to the expectations of their own readers, which we would expect to be mainly fellow Germans or British.

In *Die unverzagte Stadt* (1949) Otto Erich Kiesel (1880-1956) portrays the thoughts and emotions of the occupied in a similar way to Prebble: dominated by hatred and resentment. A basic difference between Kiesel's and all the other texts is, though, that there is barely any direct contact between occupier and occupied. In this text, the reader only gets to see the point of view of the occupied, who are reacting to the abstract and impersonal relationships that have been established between them and the occupiers, which, nonetheless, have very real and direct consequences for their own lives. Kiesel was a journalist and writer from Hamburg, who wrote plays, novellas and novels.

In *Die unverzagte Stadt* it is the occupied who are very eager to, again and again, stress the similarities between themselves and their occupiers. While the British, according to the Germans, do not want to compare themselves to anyone and in doing so try to position themselves above everyone else, the occupied try to pull the occupiers down from their pedestal

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[71] Prebble, p. 227.

by comparing them to themselves.[72] The occupied feel that they are being treated unjustly and attempt to negate the difference between what the Germans did under the Nazis and what the British do now in the name of democracy:

> Und immer lauter und tönender wurde von Menschenrechten und Würde gesprochen, und im Namen der Menschlichkeit wurden immer mehr Unmenschlichkeiten begangen und geduldet. Und die großen Mächte der Welt gaben sich rechte Mühe, auch den entlegensten Völkerschaften den Begriff der Demokratie beizubringen, ohne ihn ihnen aber vorzuleben.[73]

In the occupied's eyes, the British are no better than the Germans were: 'Sie tun bei uns genau das, was sie uns vorwerfen, bei anderen getan zu haben.'[74] It is an essential part of the dangerous effect of Kiesel's text that his argument follows, at least superficially, a clear and simple logic which often, but not always, starts to fall apart only once you dig deeper into the text, which many of his readers were probably not able or willing to do.

There are various aspects of the occupiers' behaviour during and after the war which are seen in a very critical light by the occupied. The novel contains a very long and detailed description of the British bombings of Hamburg and the Hamburg fire-storm. Although these episodes of German suffering are connected to the German bombing of Coventry, they are also accompanied by questions about the necessity and justification of these bombings, stressing the German victim status: 'Weshalb haben sie zu einer Zeit noch, da sie ihres Sieges schon gewiß waren, deutsche Städte zerstört?'.[75] The occupied clearly accuse the occupiers of spurning supposedly universal human rights.

Next, when one of the main characters in the novel, Herr Berger, loses his job due to Allied denazification policy, the process of dismissing him without a hearing or without giving him any chance to explain or defend himself, is compared to unjust methods used by the Nazis. Although the blame for this injustice, in Herr Berger's eyes, lies mainly with his fellow Germans, who want to get rid of him and settle old scores, the British occupation authorities approve of these methods and do not stop what he views as an injustice: 'Genau die gleichen

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[72] See Otto Erich Kiesel, *Die unverzagte Stadt* (Hamburg: Ernst Kabel, 1985), p. 695.

[73] Kiesel, p. 860 ['And the calls for human rights and dignity became ever louder and more resounding, and in the name of humanity more and more barbarities were committed and tolerated. And the great powers of the world tried very hard to teach even the remotest nations on earth the concept of democracy, without however practicing it themselves.'].

[74] Kiesel, pp. 746-47 ['They are doing exactly the same things to us which they accuse us of having done to others.'].

[75] Kiesel, pp. 828-29 ['Why did they still destroy German cities at a point in time when they were already sure of their victory?'].

Methoden wie bei den Nazis: Urteil ohne Vernehmung! Verurteilung ohne Verhandlung! Wo ist da ein Unterschied?'[76].

Furthermore, in the Germans' eyes, another example of the injustice of the Allied treatment of them is the trial at Nuremberg. They complain about the Germans being accused and convicted for crimes which did not exist when the crimes occured. The Germans claim that this retrospective making of laws is against basic democratic principles, and the trial is therefore compared to a 'Standgericht der Sieger'.[77] Therefore, the Germans in Kiesel's text accuse the British occupiers of hypocrisy.

In Kiesel's text, the occupied's search for similarities is not meant to foster understanding, sympathy or friendship. Instead, it reinforces the occupied's hatred of the occupiers, who, in their eyes, proclaim themselves to be better than the Germans and who claim to occupy the moral high ground, but who are actually no better than the occupied themselves.

The occupied Germans' very dangerous and highly questionable strategy of excuses distracts from and relativizes their own mistakes and guilt. The huge majority of characters in Kiesel's text can be characterised as 'Mitläufer' or followers, whose attitudes are tellingly summed up by the advice that Rathenau gives to Berger: 'Sehen Sie, was soll ich mich beunruhigen! Kann ich's ändern? Alles hören, alles sehen, nichts sagen!'.[78] Even if the 'Mitläufer' knew what the Nazis did to Jews and their other enemies, they could not or did not want to believe it, and they argue that they definitely could not have done anything to stop it. Herr Berger, in a discussion with his wife Else, refuses any responsibility for what happened in Germany: 'Alfred rappelte sich zusammen: "Du tust gerade so, Else, als sei ich mitverantwortlich an diesen Schrecken." "Du! Und ich! Wir alle, die wir uns diese braune Herrschaft haben gefallen lassen!" "Das alte Lied! Was hast du dagegen getan? Nichts! Was hättest du tun können? Auch nichts!"'[79]

Another way of using a comparison to relativize the German crimes and German guilt is to stress German suffering and crimes committed by others against Germans, as done in the description of the Allied bombing of Germany, but even more clearly in the following quotation:

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[76] Kiesel, p. 707 ['Exactly the same methods as were used by the Nazis: Verdict without hearing! Conviction without trial! Where is the difference?'].
[77] Kiesel, p. 746 ['drumhead court martial of the victors'].
[78] Kiesel, p. 182 ['Look, why should I worry! Can I change anything? To hear everything, to see everything, to say nothing!'].
[79] Kiesel, p. 311 ['Alfred picked himself up: "You are implying, Else, that I share responsibility for these barbarities." "You do! And so do I! All of us, who put up with this brown reign, do!" "The same old story! What did you do? Nothing! What could you have done? Nothing either!"'].

Hunderte von Deutschen hat man bei der Befreiung von Prag zu Tode gehetzt, sie an Laternen gebunden, sie mit Benzin übergossen und angezündet. Waren das nicht auch Vergehen gegen die Menschlichkeit? Und wie haben die Polen in deutschen Gebieten gehaust. Und wie sind deutsche Soldaten in Frankreich, Belgien und Holland mißhandelt worden?[80]

These comparisons are dangerous and false, but it is not just Kiesel who employs them.

Stephen Brockmann analyses the German handling of its Nazi past and states that there are two possible outcomes: Germany can either 'try to erase or relativize Auschwitz and the Nazi crimes against humanity' or 'try to create a non-conventional identity that is based on remembrance, not on forgetting, of that which is horrible in the nation's past'.[81] According to Brockmann, both of these strategies were attempted in Germany, but the second one eventually came to dominate.[82] The Holocaust memorial in the centre of Berlin is a testament to the path chosen: Brockmann describes it as 'a permanent monument not to national pride but to national shame'.[83] Nonetheless, there have been attempts to take the first path of 'relativizing or even erasing Auschwitz'.[84] And these attempts in the late 1990s and into the 2000s reveal significant similarities to Kiesel's rhetorical strategy in *Die unverzagte Stadt.* According to Brockmann, the 'Historikerstreit' from 1986 is an example of the first rhetorical strategy attempting to relativize Auschwitz: 'the *tu quoque* ("you too") defense, that is, the assertion that not just Germany but also many other nations have been guilty of genocide or other crimes against humanity.'[85] The second rhetorical strategy mentioned by Brockmann is the 'focus from the late 1990s on German victimization', which he sees evidence of, for example, in the debates following the publication of Jörg Friedrich's *Der Brand* and Günter Grass's *Im Krebsgang* in 2002.[86] These strategies, to which Brockmann ascribes 'relative success', are shown by Kiesel to already have been present much earlier, in the years immediately after the end of the Second World War.[87]

All in all, Kiesel's text uses the method of comparison and a search for similarities to highly dubious ends. The text paints a very dark picture of the relationship between occupiers and

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[80] Kiesel, pp. 744-45 ['Hundreds of Germans were hunted to death during the liberation of Prague, they were tied to lampposts, dowsed with petrol and set on fire. Weren't that crimes against humanity as well? And how did the Poles behave in German areas. And how have German soldiers been maltreated in France, Belgium and Holland?'].
[81] Stephen Brockmann, '"Normalization": Has Helmut Kohl's Vision Been Realized?', in *German Culture, Politics and Literature into the Twenty-first Century: Beyond Normalization*, ed. by Stuart Taberner and Paul Cooke (Rochester: Camden House; Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2006), pp. 17-29 (pp. 25-26; p. 26).
[82] See Brockmann, '"Normalization"', p. 26.
[83] Brockmann, '"Normalization"', p. 27.
[84] Brockmann, '"Normalization"', p. 26.
[85] Brockmann, '"Normalization"', p. 26.
[86] See Brockmann, '"Normalization"', p. 26.
[87] Brockmann, '"Normalization"', p. 27.

occupied dominated by emotions of anger, hate and revenge. It is alarming and reassuring at the same time that, according to Volker Hage, *Die unverzagte Stadt* had considerable success at the beginning of the 1950s, but is mostly forgotten today.[88] This could be seen as proof of Brockmann's claim that today Germany as a whole mainly follows the path of remembering and actively acknowledging the Nazi past as part of its national identity.

So far we have seen that the theme of drawing similarities between occupiers and occupied is a transnational one and can be found in German and British literature alike. Perhaps unsurprisingly, in each of the cases analysed so far, the national origin of the text is important; the authors cast their countrymen and women in a positive light and as the ones willing to make amends. This pattern is disrupted by the fourth and final text to be analysed in this section of the chapter.

Howard Randle, the protagonist of Geoffrey Cotterell's (1919-2010) *Randle in Springtime* (1949), is a British soldier stationed in Hamburg during the occupation. His main characteristics are that he is unmotivated, non-descript, dispensable and overlooked. When he is posted to the city, his old battery commander cannot even remember him, and when Randle is sent to work for the Sociology Division in Hamburg no one knows he is coming and there is nothing there for him to do; once again, Randle is superfluous.[89]

What characterises Randle most of all, though, is that he is very easy to influence, as he does not have strong opinions or moral principles of his own. He wants to be liked and to belong to someone or to a group of people. In this way, Randle is indirectly compared to Germans under the Nazis, to the typical 'Mitläufer' or follower. In Cotterell's text the search for similarities between occupiers and occupied is not taking place explicitly, but implicitly through the characterisation of the main character Randle, who shares some of the negative character traits of the Germans during and after the war. Therefore, in this text the similarity between occupier and occupied is a frightening one. It is not the basis for sympathy or friendship, but it drags the occupier down to the level of the defeated. Randle, the occupier, is not a positive hero in the text, as I would argue Jones is in Prebble's text, but more of an anti-hero, urging the reader to question the moral high-ground that the occupiers claim to occupy. In this way, Cotterell's text differs from the other texts, as he does not portray members of his own nation in a positive light. Therefore, although I unfortunately have been unable to locate any information about

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[88] See Volker Hage, 'Nachwort', in *Hamburg 1943: Literarische Zeugnisse zum Feuersturm,* ed. by Volker Hage (Frankfurt a.M.: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 2003), pp. 283-317 (p. 298).
[89] See Geoffrey Cotterell, *Randle in Springtime* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1949), p. 3.

Cotterell's political affiliations, he seems to position himself as much more anti-establishment than the other authors discussed so far.

When Randle first arrives in Hamburg, he is proud of himself because he has always followed the rules, and has never been active on the Black Market before. But when he comes to Hamburg and meets Charlie Morton, who is very active on the Black Market and encourages him to participate as well, Randle begins to be swayed. In fact, he is torn between wanting to be liked by two different groups of people: firstly, there are Charlie and his friends, and secondly there are Hemsleigh and Styles, who despise the Black Market but who, unlike Randle, can afford to do so. Randle, with his lack of strong guiding principles, oscilates back and forth: 'He was rather resenting his companion's high powered methods, which gave him no opportunity of offering his own opinions; all the more as he had none, but could only let himself be swayed as usual by whatever stronger personality was around.'[90] Howard has not avoided the Black Market so far because, as he claims, he has principles, but simply because the other people around him did not get involved in profiteering either and because the fear of being caught was too great: 'Throughout his life his actions had been influenced by other people, never private principle or determination. He had always been dominated and he had always been resentful about it.'[91]

In the end, Randle's greed and Charlie's influence over him win out and he becomes very active on the Black Market, supported by his German lover Hilde and her brother Otto. It is another aspect of Randle's moral descent that he has an affair with Hilde, even as he has a fiancé back in England. But Randle only hits rock bottom after he, as naïve, greedy and easily influenced as he is, is fooled by Hilde and Otto into accompanying Otto out of Germany over the border to Holland, where they allegedly want to sell a car and earn a lot of money to take back to Germany. Once they arrive in Holland, though, Otto tricks Randle, takes the car and leaves him behind. When Randle returns to Germany, it dawns on him what he has done. He realises that Otto is a criminal on the run, accused of having worked in a concentration camp. Howard, unknowingly, helped a German war criminal escape the occupiers.

When Howard finally realises the full extent of his actions, his first impulse is to give himself up and help the British authorities to catch Otto and bring him back to Germany. But this conviction only lasts for as long as Howard thinks that he will be caught anyway. When he realises that no one noticed anything, and that no one would ever have to find out, he decides

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[90] Cotterell, p. 101.
[91] Cotterell, p. 109.

not to tell anyone, demonstrating – once again – a lack of moral responsibility: 'But now that he realised it was possible Otto might get away undetected, his sense of duty and of resignation vanished, replaced by a bounding optimism. He had always believed what he wanted to believe; never more strongly than now.'[92] Cotterell's text, therefore, portrays an occupier who shares all the faults which the occupiers ascribe to the occupied and who turns into a criminal himself while stationed in Germany. It is important to note, though, that this is not only due to German influence on him, although of course Hilde and Otto play a very important role. It is fellow occupiers like Charlie who introduce him to and push him onto the Black Market. Wanting to be liked is a very common motivating factor for peoples' behaviour, no matter where they come from, and I have already demonstrated in the first chapter through the figure of the returnee that obeying orders is not only a feature of the Germans under fascism but can also be found in the British army. The negative similarities between occupiers and occupied that Cotterell stresses in his text are therefore not totally unanticipated.

Hemsleigh and Styles represent another questionable and more unusual attitude of the occupiers. After they have watched a concentration camp trial, they speak to Randle about what they think they see in the spectators: 'John and I only go to watch the spectators. Most interesting! Everybody looking jealous at the unfortunate prisoners. Never seen so much envy in my life.'[93] Although Hemsleigh and Styles pretend to be analysing the German spectators, it is very clear that, in fact, they are the ones who envy the indicted Nazis, as they speak enthusiastically of their doings, calling them 'the most privileged people in the world':

> Hanging! It's a cheap price for all the fun they've had; that's why they're so calm about it. Think of their position! They were actually ordered and paid by the State to let loose every repression they had. These boys could commit any crime they liked without even thinking about punishment. Every little sensual whim could be satisfied. The whole fabric which governs everybody else didn't apply to them at all![94]

Hemsleigh and Styles make it very clear that they think that there is only a very small difference between themselves and the Nazis: it is purely a difference of opportunity: 'How do you know what some of us would have done, if we'd had such a chance? Opportunity's a fine thing.'[95]

In *Randle in Springtime*, the comparison between occupiers and occupied is used to demonstrate that there is only a very fine line separating the two groups from each other and that some of

[92] Cotterell, p. 273.
[93] Cotterell, p. 173.
[94] Cotterell, p. 174.
[95] Cotterell, p. 174.

the British occupiers, had they lived under the same circumstances as the Germans, would have been more than capable of committing the same crimes, and potentially even of enjoying them. The critical look at the occupiers, which stems from identifying similarities with the occupied, in Cotterell's text is similar to the one offered in Kiesel's text. But the focus is different. While Kiesel's aim is to distract from and relativize German crimes and German guilt by pointing to British mistakes, Cotterell seems solely to be concentrating on critiquing the occupiers. That they are, or could be, just as bad as the occupied, does not make the Germans any better or excuse their behaviour in any way. I read Cotterell's text as a warning to the occupiers about feeling too safe and too superior towards the occupied.

The analysis of two German and two British texts in this subchapter has revealed that the search for similarities between occupiers and occupied is transnationally present in post-war texts. At the same time, though, it has become clear that this theme is used in different ways and to different ends. In 'Das fremde Land', the occupied search for similarities in a failed quest for understanding and friendship. In *The Edge of Darkness*, the occupier and the occupied at the beginning share a common feeling of hatred, but when the occupier changes and overcomes his hatred, suggesting a friendship to the occupied, the occupied are not able to make the same step and change accordingly. In *Die unverzagte Stadt*, the occupied stress the similarities with the occupiers in order to distract from and relativize their own guilt, while in *Randle in Springtime* the figures of the occupiers display similarities with the occupied, in order to warn the occupiers against being too sure of their moral high-ground and their immunity from what took place in Germany. While the first three texts present favourable views of the authors' home nations (albeit in different ways), the text by Cotterell stands out because it seems sharply critical of his fellow countrymen and women.

‘Wot, no Nazis?’ – Performing the Occupation

In this section I will consider the trope of performance, which can be found in many texts on the occupation of Germany. First, some of the analysed texts employ references to actual theatre or film performances. These references are connected to the figure of the occupier as well as to the figure of the occupied. Through these moments, it would appear that a feature of the occupation is (at least the suspicion of) play-acting and pretending, artificiality and hypocrisy in the presentation of oneself as well as in the relationships between occupiers and occupied. Secondly, irony, sarcasm and humour are frequent features of these post-war texts. These could be seen as a way of concealing one's real emotions, of pretending to take the situation lightly

or of trying to take the sting away by making a joke out of the post-war reality. This is a form of indirect communication which is used by occupiers and occupied alike.[96]

Kiesel's *Die unverzagte Stadt* gives a strong impression of the occupiers being engaged in a performance. This is clearly expressed in connection to the British art of politics. Before the outbreak of war, Mr. Bury, a Swiss citizen, says that England has 'die feinste, die es geben kann'.[97] What, at the beginning, sounds like unencumbered praise for the British later seems to be peppered with sarcasm and indirect critique, as the art of politics means that the British always manage to appear innocent and to put the blame on somebody else.[98] Furthermore, according to Bury, Britain manages to make everybody else believe that they only engage in conflicts and wars in order to safeguard human rights or other higher aims, but never for their own benefit: 'Sehn Sie, daß England die Welt an seine Uneigennützigkeit glauben zu machen versteht, das ist Staatskunst.'[99] On the stage of world politics, Britain takes on the role of a holy warrior, only fighting for the best of humanity: 'England versteht es, die Welt zu überzeugen, daß seine Kriege eine Art heilige Kriege seien, zu denen Gott das Britenvolk als das getreueste seiner Getreuen aufgeboten habe.'[100] Although Britain, like every other nation, pursues its own – mostly economical – goals, this is, according to Bury, successfully hidden from the rest of the world, which only sees the false and artificial cover created by the art of politics: the role of Britain in self-sacrifice.[101]

Secondly, the biggest metaphor of performance in Kiesel's text is the vaudeville show with the title 'Die Metamorphosen des Magiers Churchill unter Mitwirkung namhafter Desillusionisten' recounted freely 'nach Aufzeichnungen der "Times" Februar 1944'.[102] It is a 'varieté der Weltpolitik', taking place in the British House of Commons.[103] This circa 3-pages-long, extensive performance-metaphor is inserted into the text without any explanation. It is therefore unclear, whether this is what one of the characters reads in the 'Times', whether one of the characters read the underlying facts in the British newspaper and creates the performance-

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[96] There are obvious links here to psychology and social sciences and to their concepts of identity as performances of various roles. However, as space here is limited and as this is a literary and historical study, I will not explore these connections in any greater detail.
[97] Kiesel, p. 82 ['the finest possible'].
[98] See Kiesel, p. 82.
[99] Kiesel, p. 83 ['Look, that England knows how to make the world believe in its altruism, that is the art of politics.'].
[100] Kiesel, p. 83 ['England knows how to make the world believe that its wars are some kind of holy war to which God has summoned up the British people as his most faithful followers.'].
[101] See Kiesel, p. 83.
[102] Kiesel, p. 478 ['The metamorphoses of the magician Churchill with the collaboration of reputable desillusionists']; p. 478 ['according to records from the "Times" of February 1944'].
[103] Kiesel, p. 478 ['a vaudeville show of world politics'].

metaphor himself, or whether this is actually a piece of German propaganda against Britain, published in some German newspaper, which claims to have based its metaphor on something published in the 'Times'. That there are a lot of German newspapers and propaganda quoted in *Die unverzagte Stadt* seems to support the last of these explanations. But no matter where this metaphor of performance originates from, it is clear that it portrays British politics as a show, led by the magician Churchill, who lies, fakes and is a hypocrite.

In the first section of the show, Churchill is shown to be killing the Atlantic-Charter, personified as a sheep.[104] The disillusionist McGovern therefore declares the Atlantic Charter to have been revealed as 'ein grandioser und dramatischer Schwindel' and the spectators echo: 'Churchill-Schwindler?'.[105] The second section concerns the Polish hopes for the integrity of their borders, which are stifled by the magician Churchill.[106] Disillusionist McGovern now calls Churchill 'Meister des Ausweichens' and 'Stalins Untergebene'.[107] The spectators, again, are in shock and disbelief. The topic of the third section is the British policy of the bombing of largely civilian areas in Germany. McGovern declares that this policy has revealed the British as hypocrites.[108] At the end, there is a special event, in which Churchill temporarily abolishes the immunity of foreign diplomats.[109] This is called a 'Völkerrechtsbruch' by disillusionist Berner Bund.[110] Unconscious spectators are carried into a bunker and planes arrive for an attack.

Taken as a whole, the performance expresses a belief in a lack of honesty on the side of the British occupiers, not only towards the occupied, but towards their own people, as well as towards people from other nations like Poland. Berger later repeats the point that politics are like theatre. It is hard to know and to understand what is real and what is fake. Therefore, there is also a direct connection between politics and propaganda: 'Diese Propaganda der Russen und die Reden Churchills und Edens […] weckten in Berger die Vorstellung, daß hinter den Kulissen des politischen Theaters ein anderes Spiel agiert wurde als davor.'[111]

However, it is not only the occupiers who, at least in the eyes of the occupied, are play-acting and pretending in order to obscure the reality. The occupied put on a kind of show as well, for themselves but also for the occupiers. First, the occupied are very determined not to reveal any

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[104] See Kiesel, p. 478.
[105] Kiesel, p. 479 ['a terrific and dramatic con']; p. 479 ['Churchill-cheater?'].
[106] See Kiesel, p. 479.
[107] Kiesel, p. 480 ['master of evasion']; p. 480 ['Stalin's subordinate'].
[108] See Kiesel, p. 481.
[109] See Kiesel, p. 481.
[110] Kiesel, p. 481 ['breach of international law'].
[111] Kiesel, p. 714 ['This Russian propaganda and the speeches by Churchill and Eden gave Berger the idea that behind the scenes of the political theatre a different play was performed than on stage.'].

weakness or dependency in front of the occupiers. Although Berger and his wife have to sell some items to the British on the Black Market in order to have enough to eat, they would rather die than say thank you to the British: 'Um Gottes willen nicht klein vor den Leuten! Vor ihnen katzbuckeln und um Hilfe betteln! Lieber in die Elbe! Nicht, Alfred? Uns soll'n sie nicht klein kriegen!'[112] The occupied pretend to themselves and to the occupiers that they are only engaging in economical transactions and that there is no further meaning to the exchange, that they are not fundamentally relying on the occupiers and that they are not, to a certain degree, dependent on them: 'Die Hauptsache: Kopf hoch! Braucht keiner zu merken, daß es uns dreckig geht.'[113]

Secondly, another aspect of the occupied's performance is their humour. There is an astounding amount of mostly black humour and jokes, with which the occupied try to soften hard realities. By laughing and being sarcastic they can avoid the harsh realities of life in the post-war period. The humour, in a way, functions as a mirror and shield to conceal the reality. This kind of black humour, therefore, is different to the revue sketch I described above because it is less aggressive. It is not a straightforward lie, but rather a coping-mechanism of the occupied, functioning as a means of protection for themselves. This is only one of many examples:

> Berger schmunzelte: 'Gestern hat mich jemand gefragt, ob ich wisse, wie lange eine der mit Eisenträgern gespickten Barrikaden den vordringenden Feind aufhalten würde. Und als ich meinte, das käme jeweils drauf an, sagte er: 'Genau zweiundsechzig Minuten! Sechzig Minuten braucht der Feind, um vor Lachen über diese Sperren zu sich zu kommen und zwei Minuten, um drüber zu sein!' 'Ein bitterer Scherz, Alfred. Er tut weh!'[114]

Kiesel's text also contains a version of the joke with the goldfish, which I quoted in the introduction. In *Die unverzagte Stadt* the anecdote goes as follows:

> In einem Aquarium fristet ein einsamer Goldfisch sein Leben. Es kommt ein Amerikaner, klopft gegen das Aquarium und hat seinen Spaß an dem verstört hin und her schießenden Fisch. Damit begnügt er sich. Ein Russe kommt: er scheucht den Goldfisch hin und her, bis das arme Vieh ermattet bäuchlings an der Oberfläche treibt. Damit begnügt er sich. Ein Engländer kommt. Er nimmt den Goldfisch aus dem Wasser, streichelt ihn und bedauert, daß man ihn geängstigt hat und setzt ihn ins Wasser zurück. Der Goldfisch, wieder zu sich gekommen, schwimmt geruhsam, merkt aber dann, daß er immer weniger Wasser unter den Flossen hat. Schließlich

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[112] Kiesel, p. 713 ['For Heaven's sake, never kow tow to these people! Never fawn on them and beg for help! I would rather go into the Elbe! Right, Alfred? We will never let them get us down!'].

[113] Kiesel, p. 723 ['The most important thing is: Hold your head up! No one needs to notice that we are suffering.'].

[114] Kiesel, p. 647 ['Berger smiled: "Yesterday, somebody asked me if I knew for how long one of the iron barricades would hold the approaching enemy. And when I said that it depends, he said: "For exactly sixty-two minutes! It takes the enemy sixty minutes to come around again after laughing about these barricades and a further two minutes to overcome them!" "That is a bitter joke, Alfred. It hurts!"'].

liegt er auf dem Trocknen, jappt ein paarmal und stirbt. Damit begnügt der Engländer sich. Er hatte den Ablaufhahn des Aquariums aufgedreht.[115]

In this version of the joke it is significant that there is a clear increase in cruelty and violence rising from the American occupier, to the Russian, and finally to the British, who seems to be the worst. It is also interesting to see that what characterises the British handling of the fish is that the British pretends to be nice and caring, while actually deliberately killing the fish. This mirrors the already analysed image of the British being false, deceitful and putting on a show behind which they hide their real notorious feelings and intentions.

Cotterell's *Randle in Springtime* offers a similar trope of performance and artificiality. Another version of the fish-joke is told to Randle at a party:

> 'Do you know the story of the goldfish?' 'No.' 'A Russian had this bowl of goldfish. So he tooks the fish out and eats them.' […] 'Then an American has this bowl and he takes the fish out till they are dead and then puts them back into the water.' […] 'And then – and then an Englishman has the bowl and he cries and says I will not be so cruel as the others and so he leaves the goldfish in the bowl, but he drains out all the water and goldfish die just the same! Is it not very, very good?'[116]

While the Russian and the American are pretty straight-forward in killing the goldfish, it is the Englishman who first claims that he does not want to be cruel, but who then kills the goldfish all the same. Both versions of the fish joke quoted above refer critically to the draining of German resources by the occupiers, as this is what kills the fish. In fact, Schulze explains how a change in the economic situation of occupied Germany led to a drastic deterioration in the relationship between the German occupied and the British occupiers. According to Schulze, while in the first summer of 1945 the British's main aim was to encourage the modest recovery of German industry, over the course of 1946 and 1947 'the policy of restitutions, reparations and dismantling stiffened considerably', leading to loss of many German jobs and consequent protests by the occupied.[117] The implementation of a relatively late, but rigorous dismantling programme led to some Germans saying that 'they preferred the policy of the Russians in their zone, i.e. taking away everything they wanted right at the beginning of the occupation period instead of only going ahead with the bulk of the dismantling programme four years after the

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[115] Kiesel, pp. 839-40 ['A lonely goldfish lives in an aquarium. An American comes up, knocks on the aquarium and enjoys watching the disturbed fish darting back and forth. He leaves it at that. Next is a Russian: He shoos the goldfish back and forth, until the poor creature floats exhaustedly on the water's surface, belly up. He leaves it at that. Last is an Englishman. He takes the goldfish out of the water, caresses it and regrets that it was scared and puts it back into the water. The goldfish, having recovered, swims calmly, but then it is running out of water beneath its fins. Eventually, it is aground, gasps for air a few times and dies. The Englishman leaves it at that. He had opened the outlet valve of the aquarium.'].

[116] Cotterell, pp. 55-56.

[117] Schulze, p. 81.

war was over and the first signs of an economic recovery were visible'.[118] This view of the behaviour of the British occupiers – interpreted by the occupied as false and deceitful play-acting – is clearly reflected in the wide-spread fish joke.

The trope of performance is also present on different levels in *Randle in Springtime.* While in *Die unverzagte Stadt* it was politics that is compared to a performance, in Cotterell's text the image of performance is used most clearly in connection with the related concentration camp trial that Howard and his colleagues from the Sociology Division visit as spectators in their lunch break. For the British occupiers the trial is pure and first-class entertainment, as already described with respect to Hemsleigh and Styles in the first section of this chapter. This rather unusual attitude is also shared by Kay who enjoys the trial very much and invites Randle to join them, promising good entertainment: 'I believe it will be very interesting today.'[119]

Stig Dagerman describes sessions of the denazification courts in the American zone of occupation as a 'fairly common amusement' for the occupied.[120] He compares a man, who comes to watch these cases again and again to 'a theatre enthusiast who has come here to satisfy his craving for the stage'.[121] This turns the court-case into 'a stately and engrossing piece of drama' and ultimately 'the performance can seem like an example of applied existentialism'.[122] There are some similarities between Dagerman's and Cotterell's descriptions of trials in Germany as an entertaining performance. However, there are also significant differences: the first one is that Dagerman talks about a denazification trial, while Cotterell describes a concentration camp trial with much more serious content. The second difference is that Dagerman describes the courts to be cheap entertainment for the occupied, while in *Randle in Springtime*, although there are also German spectators present, the trial is mainly shown as a form of entertainment for the occupiers themselves.

Furthermore, Cotterell does not compare the trial to a theatre performance, but rather to a film: 'Kay paid no attention to him; she was leaning forward, listening intently, like a film fan.'[123] Kay is following the trial in a positively excited state:

> Kay gave Howard an intimate little smile and settled down again to listen. The smile did not disappear entirely and her hands were clasped tightly on her lap, as if from excitement.

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[118] Schulze, p. 88.
[119] Cotterell, p. 157.
[120] Dagerman, p. 73.
[121] Dagerman, p. 74.
[122] Dagerman, p. 74.
[123] Cotterell, p. 167.

'He's one of the worst,' she went on, shuddering. 'Horrible things!' Her eyes were bright, as if she were really enjoying herself.[124]

Kay dwells on the details of the storyline and is able to recount them to Howard, as if they were watching her favourite soap-opera: '"This ought to be very interesting!" Kay whispered. "Kaminski's going into the box. He's very important. The others were jealous of him because he used to sleep with the Kommandant's wife and he's been getting his own back by telling everything. A man in War Crimes told me."'[125] To Kay, the whole trial and what the men are accused of only seem to be another form of very interesting gossip: 'Kay answered him at once. "Oh, Helmcke? That's the one they never caught. He used to sleep with Pätzel, the Kommandant, who was number one, of course, the one with silver hair. Helmcke and Kaminski had that camp in their pocket." "You see?" Hemsleigh said. "She's revelling in it. How can anyone go back to the *News of the World* after all this?"'[126] When the group of occupiers leaves the trial behind, Randle sums up the experience, returning to the film metaphor: '"What did you think of it?" Kay asked. "Better than an 'H' film," Howard said with a shiver. "Christ."'[127] And Hemsleigh follows along the same lines: '"Enjoy the show?" Hemsleigh asked. "It's quite a hit."'[128]

This episode portrays the efforts of the occupiers to seek justice and convict the occupied of serious crimes from the viewpoint of the occupiers themselves, and in doing so it is revealed as an entertaining performance, a show, a film or a soap-opera. The courtroom is a perfect place to engage and revel in gossip. The occupiers watching the trial are not really interested in justice and not deeply engaged in the inhumanity of the German crimes. They enjoy the entertainment and light shiver of horror it gives them, but their concern does not go any deeper than that. Again, Cotterell appears to be expressing some strong anti-establishment views, as he is clearly critiquing the occupiers' efforts at denazifying Germany by providing an almost satirical view of them.

A further aspect of performance in *Randle in Springtime* can be detected on a more personal level: Randle is constantly engaged in performing and play-acting the role of the superior, powerful and confident occupier, which in reality he is not. The booklet for British soldiers in Germany reminds the soldiers of their role as 'representatives of Britain' and instructs them about the correct self-portrayal: 'It is important that you should be smart and soldierly in

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[124] Cotterell, p. 169.
[125] Cotterell, p. 168.
[126] Cotterell, p. 174.
[127] Cotterell, p. 172.
[128] Cotterell, p. 173.

appearance and behaviour. The Germans think nothing of a slovenly soldier.'[129] Randle seems to be trying to follow this advice. During a very uncomfortable incident at the very beginning of the text, when he and his driver are stuck on a road behind a lorry full of Germans, Randle feels the need to demonstrate strength and confidence in front of the occupied: 'Howard set up as the jeep came close, conscious that in front of Germans one ought not to slouch. He tried to stare back at them with composure.'[130] Although he feels it to be a disgrace to his occupier-status that they should have to follow the German lorry, Randle tries not to show any weakness or anger and not to lose his composure in front of the occupied: 'Still the lorry went on, and in the jeep Howard felt himself perspiring, while the driver became more and more angry. It was not only inconvenient to stay behind the lorry, it was also a matter of prestige. Howard tried to look as if he was quite content and interested in its wheels in an objective way, as if he were studying a German make.'[131]

A bit later in the text, at a train station, Randle once again feels challenged by the Germans' behaviour and feels the need to show off and perform in front of them: 'Howard tried to stride in a military way, hoping that he looked every inch an officer.'[132] Similarly, when Randle drinks too much alcohol at a party where Germans are present as well, he faints and instantly worries about his loss of prestige: 'what a display in front of Germans; what an officer.'[133] For Randle it is all about projecting an image of confidence and superiority to the occupied. But because he actually does not fulfil any of the criteria of a model occupier, he is forced to pretend and to play-act. For him the position of the superior occupier can be nothing more than a role he assumes because he lacks the substance for it to be real.

However, as in *Die unverzagte Stadt,* it is not only the occupiers who revert to pretending and play-acting, but the occupied engage in this activity as well. Firstly, there is the deception of Randle by Hilde and Otto, who pretend to be somebody else – Randle's lover and friend – while actually only using him for their own ends. Secondly, there is an element of self-deception in the behaviour of the occupied, who desperately try to cling on to their beliefs and self-respect, although there actually is not much left to cling on to. Howard describes this behaviour of Hilde in the following way: 'She was like someone swept away in a catastrophe, who was still managing to sit on a raft with a few bits of her old furniture, trying to ignore the huge swirling

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[129] *Instructions for British Servicemen in Germany 1944*, p. 34; p. 27.
[130] Cotterell, p. 5.
[131] Cotterell, p. 6.
[132] Cotterell, p. 19.
[133] Cotterell, p. 62.

waters of the flood around her.'[134] The imagery in this quotation might also refer to the biblical flood, sent by God to punish all sinners on earth, from which only Noah saved the innocent on his arch. I have already shown this to be a popular point of reference for post-war texts in the chapter on the figure of the child. That Hilde seems to have survived the flood means – in Randle's eyes – that she does not really belong to the sinners and the guilty people in Germany.

There exists in these texts another form of pretending, although it is not entirely clear whether it is about self-deception, or about a deception of others, or possibly even both. There was a very prominent strand of thought in Germany, observed by many of the occupiers, which argued that, in fact, there were hardly any Nazis at all in Germany before and during the war. Howard also encounters this mind-set in his meetings with the occupied: 'It was quite true what everyone said, he reflected, with an inward grin: you never by any chance met a Nazi; they'd all hated it, every minute.'[135]

This is a phenomenon which is very present in Prebble's *The Edge of Darkness* as well. The unbelieving question of 'Wot, no Nazis?' expresses the occupiers' ironic reaction to the German denial of their past and their guilt.[136] For Jones, this form of pretending, which is obviously a form of lying, reinforces his general feeling of uncertainty about what is real and true in occupied Germany.[137] The communal denial of the reality and the immediate past on the part of the occupied also plays a role in Jones's relationship with Kaethe, as her response to his confronting her with gas chambers and concentration camps is met with a line of denial: '"We did not know of these things." It was the forbidden subject, the nightmares, the German schizophrenia to be forgotten. "Funny", he said sarcastically, "None of you did!" and he got up and walked away.'[138]

Furthermore, there is also clearly a similar theme of self-deception on the part of the occupied as in Cotterell's text. Prebble includes a metaphor in his text, which is similar to the one quoted above from *Randle in Springtime*, where Hilde is said to be sitting on a raft after a flood and trying to ignore the catastrophe around her. Jones, in *The Edge of Darkness*, describes Kaethe as follows: 'You've got your pretty feet ankle-deep in bones and suffering and horror and you're too high and mighty or afraid to look down and see them.'[139] There are, however, also important differences between the two quotes. While Hilde survives a potentially biblical flood and is

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[134] Cotterell, p. 143.
[135] Cotterell, p. 68.
[136] Prebble, p. 161.
[137] See Prebble, p. 160.
[138] Prebble, p. 168.
[139] Prebble, p. 189.

therefore metaphorically relieved of her guilt, Kaethe is trying to ignore a man-made horror, for which she clearly seems to be bearing some of the guilt, as is also revealed by her arrogance. While Randle is unable to see through Hilde's performance of innocence, Jones's view of Kaehte is more pessimistic, but in the end also a lot more realistic.

Peter de Mendelssohn's (1908-1982) *Die Kathedrale* (1948 and 1981) contains similar variations on the trope of performance as the texts already discussed in this subchapter. The German writer de Mendelssohn left Germany in 1933 for political reasons, living in France and Austria, before finally emigrating to Britain in 1936. He spent the war years in Britain and even started to write and publish novels in English. De Mendelssohn returned to occupied Germany from 1945 to 1949, working for the Allied military government. In 1948 he began to write a novel with the English title *The Fortunate Voyage*, which he neither published nor finished. Only in 1981 did de Mendelssohn himself translate this fragment of a novel into German. It was published, in its unfinished state, under the title *Die Kathedrale: Ein Sommernachtmahr.* After the end of the war, except for this fragment, de Mendelssohn did not write any more fiction. Instead, he became very well known as an expert on Thomas Mann.[140]

The protagonist Torstenson constantly compares the occupiers' behaviour to a theatrical performance. He describes it as a 'Schauspiel', which reminds him of the prologue of a 'Tragödie'.[141] Torstenson connects the 'performance' of the occupiers to a theatre performance of Shakespeare's *King Richard III,* from which he also quotes twice in the text: 'Plötzlich erinnerte die Szene ihn an etwas, das er vor langer Zeit auf der Bühne gesehen hatte. Die Ebene bei Tamworth! rief er theatralisch aus.'[142] The two tents which the occupiers put up on the town square remind Torstenson of a theatre performance. I am not going to explore the intertextual reference to Shakespeare's play here in any more detail, as it is used more to characterize the relationship between the two occupiers than the relationship between occupiers and occupied. However, the two tents also allude to a different kind of performance and entertainment when they are compared to 'Zirkuszelte'.[143] The circus-metaphor is connected to the theme of politics as a performance, which is also present in Kiesel's *Die unverzagte Stadt*:

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[140] See Hilde Spiel, 'Der Erzähler Peter de Mendelssohn', in *Die Kathedrale: Ein Sommernachtmahr*, by Peter de Mendelssohn (Hamburg: Albrecht Knaus, 1983), pp. 237-64 (pp. 238-59) and Sarah Pogoda, *Demiurgen in der Krise: Architektenfiguren in der Literatur nach 1945* (Berlin: Ripperger & Kremers, 2013), pp. 37-38.
[141] Peter de Mendelssohn, *Die Kathedrale: Ein Sommernachtmahr* (Hamburg: Albrecht Knaus, 1983), p. 50 ['play']; p. 53 ['tragedy'].
[142] de Mendelssohn, p. 141 ['Suddenly, the scene reminded him of something he had seen on stage a long time ago. The plain near Tamworth! he exclaimed theatrically.']; see Peter de Mendelssohn, 'Nachschrift', in *Die Kathedrale: Ein Sommernachtmahr* (Hamburg: Albrecht Knaus, 1983), pp. 234-36 (p. 236).
[143] de Mendelssohn, p. 109 ['circus tents'].

> Wäre nicht die nicht sehr vielversprechende Umgebung gewesen, so hätte ein argloser Kopf daraus schließen können, daß ein Wanderzirkus eingetroffen sei und sich eiligst für eine Galavorstellung heute abend installiere. Torstenson war jedoch klar, daß keine solche ablenkende Unterhaltung geplant war, sondern vielmehr wichtige Geschäfte hochoffiziellen, wenn nicht gar historischen Charakters sich zu vollziehen im Begriff waren.[144]

The circus tents are said to give the atmosphere of the afternoon 'einen Anflug von fröhlicher, wenn auch etwas billiger und geschmackloser Improvisation'.[145] Therefore, the comparison of the occupiers' behaviour with a circus performance devalues the occupiers' prestige.

All in all, the trope of performance in *Die Kathedrale* shows the occupiers to be putting on a show for the occupied as well as potentially for the other occupying power. Torstenson and his friend Kafka are the surprised and not very impressed spectators of these performances, which seem not to have much to do with their own lives and problems. The occupiers seem to be putting on a show for themselves and as a general political statement, but this artificial behaviour, which is designed to convey a specific outward appearance, does not lead to any kind of contact between occupiers and occupied, and is not beneficial to the high tasks of the occupation.

However, it is not only the occupiers who engage in some kind of a performance. Three high-ranking occupied stage their death in front of the two tents of the occupiers:

> Dann griff der kleine General seelenruhig und beinahe gemächlich mit der Rechten in die äußere Uniformtasche, zog einen blitzblanken kleinen Revolver heraus und sah seine Kollegen fragend an. Beide, Admiral und Luftmarschall, nickten ernst. Der General erschoß daraufhin zuerst den Admiral, dann den Luftmarschall und schließlich sich selber. Es ging alles sehr schnell und still vor sich, und als die Wachtposten herbeistürzten, lagen alle drei bereits auf dem Pflaster und waren tot.[146]

Torstenson correctly identifies this as a meaningful act, as a demonstration meant to convey a message, but he is not sure about what the message is: 'Und doch war sich Torstenson bei nochmaliger Überlegung nicht sicher, daß ihr erstaunliches Vorgehen nicht als ausdrückliche

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[144] de Mendelssohn, p. 79 ['If it had not been for the not very promising surroundings, a guileless person might have concluded that a travelling circus had arrived and was preparing hastily for a gala performance this evening. But Torstenson knew that no such distracting entertainment was planned, but instead important business of a highly official or even historic character was about to unfold.'].

[145] de Mendelssohn, p. 109 ['a trace of happy, albeit slightly cheap and tasteless improvisation'].

[146] de Mendelssohn, p. 132 ['Then the small general placidly and almost leisurely reached for the outer pocket of his uniform with his right hand, he drew out a shining small gun and looked at his colleagues questioningly. Both, the admiral and the air marshal nodded seriously. Thereupon, the general first shot the admiral, then the air marshal and finally himself. It all happened very quickly and silently, and when the guards came running all three of them already lay on the ground and were dead.'].

Demonstration beabsichtigt war, und zwar weniger als Demonstration abgelegter Macht und Autorität, als vielmehr erschöpfter Selbstachtung und versiegter Zuversicht.'[147] Instead of being a demonstration of weakness and defeat, as the occupiers would probably prefer, it could also be a demonstration of resistance and a warning and accusation directed towards the occupiers. Did the general and his men want to turn themselves into martyrs? Far from being unambiguous, their performance is certainly open to interpretation: 'Die geschwinde und sachkundige Art und Weise, in der die drei Herren sich beseitigt hatten, konnte gleicherweise Stolz, Selbstsicherheit und hochfahrende Überlegenheit bedeuten […] Sie konnte weise Einsicht und eine feierliche Warnung bedeuten. […] Wer konnte es wissen?'.[148]

This theme of an ambiguous performance also seems to refer the reader to a text by Franz Kafka, who is obviously very present in *Die Kathedrale* as an intertext; after all the old bookseller carries his name. Kafka's novella 'Auf der Galerie' describes two versions or readings of a circus performance by a woman riding a horse, just as de Mendelssohn in his text offers his reader two possible and very different interpretations of the occupied's performance.[149] This is another example of post-war authors turning their texts into mosaics consisting of fragments. As shown in the first chapter focusing on the figure of the returnee, this effect is achieved through intertextuality as de Mendelssohn clearly alludes to Kafka's use of the trope of performance as well as to the motif of the circus, which is present in many of Kafka's texts.[150] Furthermore, 'Auf der Galerie' is about power and agency, which are also central topics of post-war texts displaying the relation between occupiers and occupied.

It seems that in de Mendelssohn's text both parties, the occupiers and the occupied, engage in different types of performances, attempting to convey different emotions and messages. What they both seem to share, though, is the fact that their performances are rather fruitless and empty. As the whole population of the town, except for Torstenson and his old friend Kafka, is hiding in the cathedral, not many people have witnessed either the performance of the occupiers or the performance of the occupied. Also, the messages and intentions behind both of the performances remain relatively vague and open to interpretation.

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[147] de Mendelssohn, p. 137 ['And still, when thinking about it again, Torstenson was not sure, whether their astounding behaviour was not an explicit demonstration, in fact less a demonstration of discarded power and authority, but rather of exhausted self-respect and of confidence which has run dry.'].

[148] de Mendelssohn, pp. 137-38 ['The quick and competent way in which the three men had eliminated themselves could signify pride, self-confidence and cocky superiority alike […] It could signify wise insight and a ceremonial warning […] Who knew its real meaning?'].

[149] See Franz Kafka, 'Auf der Galerie', in *Franz Kafka: Sämtliche Erzählungen*, ed. by Paul Raabe (Frankfurt a.M.: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1978), p. 129.

[150] See also, for example, Kafka's novella 'Ein Hungerkünstler'.

This description of the occupiers' performance complements the depiction of their occupation in general. Neither of the two occupiers seem to be interested in doing many of the things that the reader would expect them to do: there is no discussion of projects like denazification, re-education or democratisation. Of course, the time of their occupation is cut extremely short by the fatal illness, which forces the occupiers to leave the town the day after they arrive. But still, for example the slapdash way that Torstenson is appointed the mayor of the town – only because he happens to be standing outside of the cathedral – does not imply that the occupiers are overly worried about possibly having put a man in charge who might have been a Nazi or a war criminal. These larger concerns do not seem to be at the forefront of the occupiers' minds. Furthermore, when they have to leave the town behind, they only demand that Torstenson organise reconstruction, and do not even mention democratisation, de-nazification or re-education. Therefore, what in the end remains of the occupation in de Mendelssohn's text is an empty performance of questionable quality and a night of fun for the occupiers in a German brothel. There is no real contact between occupiers and occupied, and no sincere effort by the occupiers to encourage anything except reconstruction. The old leaders of Germany behave in a similar futile way. Their performance is as devoid of consequences and clear, deeper meaning as the occupiers'. All in all, in *Die Kathedrale* the occupiers and the occupied are performers in a show depicting an incomplete and, in a sense, failed occupation.

In this discussion I have explored the ways in which the trope of performance is present in German and British texts of the post-war years which deal with the topic of the occupation. It is the occupiers as well as the occupied who are shown to be engaged in different kinds of performances with different aims. There are cases of self-deception, as well as performances designed to trick and deceive others. There are political performances and trials, but also very personal performances by individual occupiers and occupied. In all of the analysed texts, the performances and instances of pretending and play-acting are judged negatively: they are lies, fakes, empty and futile. The analysis of this trope has revealed that there was a fair amount of falseness and artificiality present in post-war Germany. This might be one possible explanation of why, in all the analysed texts, there never develops any lasting and positive relationship between occupiers and occupied. Occupier and occupied seem to never honestly and truly meet each other.

<u>'Who's occupying this country?'</u> – Shifting Relations of Power

This subchapter deals with the depiction of the relations of power between occupier and occupied in post-war Germany. In the analysed texts there is a transnationally shared pool of

images to describe these power relations. What is interesting about the texts is that the 'roles' allocated to the figures of occupier and occupied, quite often, neither follow the expected distribution nor are they static: there are challenges, shifts and swaps, which speak to much more complex relations of power than the binary opposition between occupier and occupied suggests.

On the one hand, Randle, the protagonist of Cotterell's text, feels important and powerful for the first time in his life: 'He felt like giggling. The sensation of power was delightful.'; 'He wasn't as good as they were, he was better.'[151] His position of power in occupied Germany gives Randle an elevated image of himself, very similar to what happens to the main protagonist in Stephen Spender's short story 'The Fool and the Princess'. On the other hand, though, Howard comes to Germany with a great consciousness of class and of his own low position. In Germany, two systems of hierarchies and power collide: on the one hand there is the clear distinction between occupier and occupied, but on the other hand there are also still class distinctions. And when Howard meets the German higher classes like Hilde and her friends, his old feeling of inferiority returns: '"You're not an Oxford man?" "No." Here he was, the victorious lieutenant, feeling jealous, feeling inferior. It was crazy.'[152] These conflicting positions confuse Howard and sometimes make him feel like a 'fool'.[153] At other times, though, it is especially the difference in class between him and the Germans he meets that makes him even more proud and sure about himself:

> All the same it amused him to be walking along with a girl from the German aristocracy. Lucky she didn't know what a punk she was out with, he thought.
>
> It was obvious that this was an extremely pleasant couple, the sort of people you saw from your bus, in London, driving in large and comfortable cars. The feeling that they treated him as on their own social level pushed nationality, war and politics aside.[154]

These class distinctions and Randle's feelings of inferiority turn him into an even easier victim for Hilde and her brother in their plan to manipulate him. They flatter him, in order to make him feel safe and in control, when they are actually only using him for their own purposes. At the end of the text, Randle's change of roles from powerful occupier, even able to transcend class differences, to a fool is obvious to the reader and even to Randle himself: 'He was a failure

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[151] Cotterell, p. 67; pp. 130-31.
[152] Cotterell, p. 132.
[153] Cotterell, p. 148.
[154] Cotterell, p. 67; p. 75.

at everything, and a fool into the bargain.'[155] Even worse than that, the figure of the occupier not only turns into a fool, but into a criminal: 'He looked and felt like a criminal about to be arrested after a chase.'[156]

These shifting relations of power become very obvious and explicit at the end of Cotterell's text, but there are also earlier signs of reversed roles and of Randle's position of power being very fragile. One indication of this is the comparison with a child, which is introduced in connection with Randle early on in the text: 'Howard moved about for an hour like a shy, sullen small boy at a children's party.'[157] This comparison is repeated when Randle realises how he has been tricked by Hilde and Otto: 'He ignored it, he looked up into her eyes with the gaze of a child.'[158]

The roles of student and teacher are similarly used to describe the relationship between occupier and occupied: 'Looking through the darkness at the ghostly, broken brickwork Howard felt a little complacency. "Bloody well teach them not to start anything again," he said to himself.'[159] Randle is not the only occupier in the text who imagines this role for himself. Kay pictures her relationship with the Germans in a very similar way: 'She often spoke of the Germans as if she were a schoolmistress and they were her pupils.'[160] It is for this reason, then, that Otto pretends to be taking on and accepting the role of the pupil, in order to flatter Randle: 'But believe me, Mr. Rondle, we will learn – the Germans will learn democracy! Yes! I am confident.'[161] And, just as intended, Randle buys into this image of his relation with the occupied: '"It seems to us that so much time is lost on words. We have yet to learn your patience and toleration." "It'll come, old boy." Howard enjoyed this master-pupil relationship.'[162] That, in fact, Randle is not the teacher in this relationship, but the student, is made clear when he is fooled in the end. Although the occupiers like to imagine themselves in the role of the grown-up and the teacher, in fact, in Cotterell's text, they are rather children and students, who are taught a lesson by the occupied. In this way, the power relations are clearly inverted in *Randle in Springtime*. Randle does not attain any position of authority and is not able to make decisions of his own: 'He was

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[155] Cotterell, p. 268.
[156] Cotterell, p. 259.
[157] Cotterell, p. 54.
[158] Cotterell, p. 262.
[159] Cotterell, p. 69.
[160] Cotterell, p. 163.
[161] Cotterell, p. 196.
[162] Cotterell, p. 203.

like a customer whose sales resistance has just collapsed, convincing himself that he has really made a bargain.'[163] In this example, it is the occupied who all along are really in control.

The relations of power described in Prebble's *The Edge of Darkness* are considerably different to those in Cotterell's text. At the beginning, on entering Germany and assuming the role of the occupier, Jones feels a rush of power, which is similar to what Randle experiences: 'These past days, the rush into Germany and the battle that was fought there so viciously, had given him an elation he never before believed possible, a feeling of unqualified self-satisfaction and confidence.'[164] Although enjoying his position, Jones, in contrast to Randle, is at least aware of the danger of his emotions and appears to be trying to control them:

> It was hard to avoid the pleasant sensation of absolute power that membership of a conquering army gave him, the knowledge that nobody, whatever his previous station or importance, could now claim superiority over him. That in this ravaged country there was nothing of more importance than his stained battledress, his dusty, shaking vehicle. His whistle grew louder and as he caught the notes of it above the noise of his engine he pursed out his lips and lifted the tune into a jaunty rant of arrogance.[165]

Furthermore, as opposed to Randle, Jones does not fall victim to the occupied and preserves his position of authority, although it is challenged by the occupied. The power relations in the text are, once again, expressed through specific images. First, right from the beginning, the Germans are compared to animals:

> The German pulled himself on to his knees like an animal and then, without warning, vomited on the ground in deep, agonized retching.

> Feeling that he was playing with three wild animals Jones flicked his cigarette-end down the road and the boy ran after it delightedly, picking it up quickly and dusting out its end with his thumb.[166]

The use of animal imagery here is similar to the one I described in the previous chapter in connection to the figure of the child: it calls into question the humanity of those described and also establishes and stresses a fundamental difference between 'us' and 'them', as seen in the first section of this chapter.

The Germans challenge the occupiers' comparison of them to animals by calling the occupiers barbarians: 'There was a knock on the door and Frau Meyer's head […] and her face […] poked

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163 Cotterell, p. 75.
164 Prebble, p. 115.
165 Prebble, p. 147.
166 Prebble, p. 57; p. 150.

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itself round the jamb. "It is your barbarian," she smiled, and then frowned.'[167] The term barbarian is meant to imply that the British are uncivilised. Jones is able to counter this accusation and therefore successfully defends his moral high-ground: 'She spoke casually, with a defensive, mocking tone. "In England you have open fires, yes?" he nodded. "That is not very civilised, we think," she said. Anger and resentment burnt suddenly at the back of his head. "In England we don't think it's very civilised to have gas chambers and concentration camps!" he said hoarsely.'[168]

The fight for power between Jones and Kaethe remains solely rhetorical. Another indication for this is the use of the image of a child, which is also present in Cotterell's text. By calling herself a child, Kaethe tries to play to Jones's self-assurance, in a similar way to how Otto and Hilde have with Randle. But Jones spots Kaethe's dishonesty: '"It does not matter," she said, "Perhaps you were right. We Germans are children now." It was not so much the unimpassioned defeatism of the sentence that disturbed Jones, but the feeling that it was not sincere.'[169] While Jones does not believe that Kaethe really sees herself in the role of a child, Kaethe and other German women are compared to children at other points in the text, clearly casting them in an inferior position: 'And as she stood there, silently jeering at him, pathetically childish in her defiance'; 'They laughed at her when she called them barbarians, and wore her admiration for Hitler with a childish frankness.'[170] Although, at one point, Kaethe tries to counter-attack by comparing Jones to a child, Jones, overall, remains the victor in this battle for power: 'She smiled at him pityingly. "You are very simple. I think you are a boy."'[171]

In *The Edge of Darkness* the occupier and the occupied engage in a pacifist battle for power through language. The contrast to Cotterell's text is obvious. The roles of child and grown-up, but also of animal, barbarian or civilised person, are reversed. Ultimately, it is the Germans who are childish and behave like animals and barbarians, while the occupier holds on to his position of power and superiority.

In *Die unverzagte Stadt,* Otto Erich Kiesel uses the same imagery as Prebble in *The Edge of Darkness*. Berger complains about being unjustly called a barbarian by the British: 'Aber wir Deutsche, wir sind Barbaren, die Judenschlächter.'[172] Furthermore, Berger also feels that he is treated like an animal: 'Und das, meinst du, nehmen wir hin? Wie ein Hund, den man

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[167] Prebble, p. 186.
[168] Prebble, p. 167.
[169] Prebble, p. 169.
[170] Prebble, p. 188; p. 201.
[171] Prebble, p. 191.
[172] Kiesel, p. 176 ['But we Germans, we are barbarians, the slaughterer of Jews.'].

schlägt?'[173] This image of the dog in connection with the occupied is also repeated at a later point in the text: 'Zuerst hieß es immer: kein Zutritt für Deutsche. Dann hatte man's abgewandelt, weil irgendwo jemand angeschlagen hatte: Forbidden for dogs and Germans.'[174] The British also assume the position of the teacher:

> Und die 'London Illustrated News' kurz vorher: 'Deutschland muß mit grausamen und furchtbaren Erfahrungen beigebracht bekommen, wie England Krieg führt. Wir wollen dabei seine Schulmeister sein, und zwar mit Bomben und mit Feuer.'
>
> Ich fürchte, Mr. Montgomery hat sich reichlich viel vorgenommen. Gut gemeint, aber du lieber Gott, mir kommt es vor, als glaubte ein Lehrer mit ein paar Stunden Nachsitzen aus einem schlechten Schüler einen Musterknaben machen zu können.[175]

In the eyes of the occupied, the occupiers try to claim the most powerful roles for themselves: 'Der Engländer hält sich für Gottes liebstes Kind.'[176] This distribution of roles is clearly challenged by the occupied: 'Wir sind Gottes liebstes Kind – wir wissen es nur noch nicht!'[177] However, the resistance of the occupied remains solely emotional and oriented towards the future: 'Hassen? Ich hasse sie nicht! Belachen! Unser Tag kommt doch einmal. Ja, sieh mich nur an! Er kommt, weil keiner von allen eine Schraube einzuziehen versteht wie wir. Das ist es nämlich. Und wenn sie uns fressen, werden sie gegen den Bauch klopfen und uns nach dem Weg fragen.'[178]

Another trope used by the occupied in Kiesel's text is one of Germans as prisoners and of Germany as a jail: 'Die Sieger haben aus ganz Deutschland eine Strafanstalt gemacht, in der alle Gefangenen auf Wassersuppe und Wassergrütze und knappes Brot gesetzt sind.'[179] The Germans also compare themselves to convicted: 'Selbst wenn die Welt uns hörte, wird man uns nicht glauben. Sie sind die Sieger, wir die Besiegten. Besiegte sind Verurteilte.'[180] These

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[173] Kiesel, p. 706 ['And you think we simply accept this? Like a dog who is beaten?'].

[174] Kiesel, p. 731 ['At first it said: Forbidden for Germans. Then it was changed because somewhere someone had posted: Forbidden for dogs and Germans.'].

[175] Kiesel, p. 450 ['And the "London Illustrated News" a bit earlier: "Germany has to be taught by cruel and horrible experiences how England wages war. We want to be its schoolmasters, with bombs and fires."']; p. 799 ['I fear that Mr. Montgomery attends to achieve too much. With good intentions, but, oh my God, it seems as if a teacher would believe that he could turn a bad pupil into a prig with a few hours of detention.'].

[176] Kiesel, p. 695 ['The English believe themselves to be God's favourite child.'].

[177] Kiesel, p. 718 ['We are God's favourite child – we just don't know it yet!'].

[178] Kiesel, p. 851 ['Hate them? I don't hate them! I laugh at them. Our day will come. Yes, look at me! It will come because no one knows how to insert a screw like we do. That's the thing. And when they eat us, they will knock on their bellies and ask us for directions.'].

[179] Kiesel, p. 744 ['The victors turned the whole of Germany into a prison, in which all prisoners only receive water and scarce bread.'].

[180] Kiesel, p. 747 ['Even if the world could hear us, we will not be believed. They are the victors, we are the defeated. The defeated are convicted.'].

images turn the occupied collectively into convicts. I read these comparisons as the politically correct and careful way of criticizing the situation of the occupied.

However, there are extensions of the images described above which have different implications and are less politically correct. The first extension is that the occupied are compared to slaves, instead of prisoners, as in the following quotation from *Die unverzagte Stadt*: 'Am Nachmittag wurden die Maueranschläge überklebt. Ausgehverbot aufgehoben. An allen Käfigen gingen die Gitter hoch. Vom Hafen herüber gellten Sirenen. Der Mensch ist frei und wär' er in Ketten geboren! Der gute, gute, gute Schiller!'.[181] Victor Gollancz also compares the occupied to slaves, in order to question the occupiers' policies for occupied Germany: 'I reply […] that if you censor a man's reading you make him a slave, and therefore excellent raw-material for the first shoddy fanatic that may be out to manipulate him.'[182] This quotation by Gollancz shows how the image of the slave is used by people from diverse political backgrounds and for various different aims. While in Gollancz's case, the author is worried about the deprivation of universal human rights and a consequential susceptibility to fanaticism, in Kiesel's case, the image of slavery implies a complete deprivation of rights of the occupied and is mainly used to undermine characterisations of the guilt of the occupied: a prisoner has been put to jail because he committed a crime, while a slave is born a slave and bears no responsibility for what he is.

Kaethe in *The Edge of Darkness* even goes one step further in her challenge of the occupiers' superiority: she compares occupied Germany to a concentration camp: '"All Germany is a concentration camp now," she said.'[183] This, of course, turns the actual situation on its head. This image implies, in a similar way to the image of the slave in Kiesel's text, that the occupied, the Germans, are victims, while the British occupiers take on the role of concentration camp guards; they are cast as the same people who they have put on trial for being war criminals. The fact that this comparison can be found in Prebble's text reveals that in *The Edge of Darkness* there is an even greater challenge to the established relations of power than in the texts by Cotterell or Kiesel. The difference is, of course, that while the loser Randle in Cotterell's text does not stand up to the challenge by the occupied, and while in Kiesel's text there is no British character who could question or oppose the occupied's views, Jones in Prebble's text is able to successfully counter the occupied's challenge to his power and moral authority, and is therefore portrayed as an even greater hero. That the comparison of occupied Germany with a

[181] Kiesel, p. 732 ['In the afternoon the announcements on the walls were pasted over. Curfew was abolished. The grids on all cages were lifted. From the port yelled sirens. Humans are free, even if they were born in chains! The good, good, good Schiller.'].
[182] Gollancz, p. 102.
[183] Prebble, p. 171.

concentration camp is not only a figment of Prebble's imagination is testified to by Schulze, who writes that 'bitter jokes and gibes, like the one about the Ruhr being "a concentration camp without a barbed-wire fence", showed the strong anti-British Military Government mood especially among the German population in the worst hit areas'.[184]

Peter de Mendelssohn's *Die Kathedrale* contains many of the images of power already analysed in the other texts, but in many cases it swaps and reverses them. First, there is the comparison with animals as in the texts by Prebble and Kiesel. In this case, however, it is the occupiers and not the occupied who take on the roles of animals, as they are compared to busy ants and bugs: 'Die Soldaten drunten arbeiteten wie die Besessenen. Sie hatten den Platz vor der Kathedrale und die umliegenden Trümmerberge in einen Ameisenhaufen hektischer Geschäftigkeit verwandelt. […] Jetzt war die Stille in Lärm umgeschlagen, die Totenruhe war dem ungezieferhaften Leben einer Pestbeule gewichen.'[185]

In his text, de Mendelssohn clearly portrays a swap of roles and reversal of power. It is the occupiers who have to remove the rubble, while Torstenson, the occupied, watches them:

> Obgleich die Sonne zu sinken und ein feuriger Hauch das Meer zu vergolden begann, schwitzten, schimpften und fluchten die Soldaten, und obwohl Torstenson ein schwaches Gefühl der Genugtuung nicht unterdrücken konnte, daß sie diese ekelhafte Arbeit zu verrichten hatten, denn schließlich waren sie es doch wohl gewesen, die dieses Chaos angerichtet hatten, und es geschah ihnen recht, daß sie es jetzt wieder aufräumen mußten, auch wenn sie bis an die Ohren in diesem Morast versanken, so taten sie ihm im ganzen genommen doch leid.[186]

The occupied has a feeling of gratification but also pity towards the occupiers who have to work so hard to rebuild his town.

In his speech to the population of his hometown at the very end of the text, Torstenson declares himself to be a slave: 'Also seien wir uns darüber klar: ich habe niemand befreit. Ich habe, wie ihr sehen könnt, nicht einmal mich selber befreit, sondern bin noch viel ärger in die Sklaverei geraten als ihr.'[187] But the conditions under which the occupiers leave the occupied display very

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[184] Schulze, p. 81.
[185] de Mendelssohn, p. 102 ['The soldiers beneath worked like the possessed. They had turned the square in front of the cathedral and the surrounding heaps of rubble into an anthill of hectic bustle. […] Now the silence had turned into noise, the dead silence had yielded to the vermin-like life of a plague-spot.'].
[186] de Mendelssohn, p. 103 ['Although the sun began to sink and a fiery breeze began to gild the sea, the soldiers sweated, grumbled and swore, and although Torstenson could not suppress a mild feeling of satisfaction that they had to do this disgusting work, because it had been them, who had created this chaos, and it was only fair that they now had to tidy it up again, even if they sank up into their ears into this swamp, he still, on the whole, felt sorry for them.'].
[187] de Mendelssohn, p. 205 ['So let us be clear about this: I have not liberated anyone. I have, as you can see, not even liberated myself, instead, I became even more of a slave than you.'].

few of the characteristics of slavery. Torstenson himself, at an earlier point in the text, indicates a swap of roles, comparing the occupiers to slaves: 'Habt Mitleid mit den Siegern; sie sind die einzigen, die Mitleid verdienen, denn sie sind die Sklaven ihres Sieges.'[188]

Another swapping of roles occurs when Torstenson instructs the occupiers that, by talking to him and following him around, they are acting against their own law of fraternization: 'Was Sie vorhaben, ist ordnungswidriges Verhalten, was sage ich, es ist ein strafbares Vergehen, ein Verbrechen. Sein Name ist Fraternisierung, meine Herren. Fraternisierung!'[189] Although the occupiers claim to have special approval, this is most certainly not intended to be used for a visit to a brothel. Therefore, Torstenson reverses the roles of occupier and occupied as they are portrayed in *Die unverzagte Stadt* or in *The Edge of Darkness*: for him, it is the occupiers who are the criminals, not the occupied. This is a clear similarity between de Mendelssohn's and Cotterell's texts. Both express a critical view of the occupiers, and reverse the roles of occupiers and occupied, thereby demonstrating that there is no fundamental and natural division between members of the two groups.

In the whole text it is very clear that Torstenson does not feel at all inferior to the occupiers. Rather, he maintains his sense of superiority: 'Das konnte ihm jetzt wenig ausmachen, denn er wußte sich ihnen längst wahrhaft überlegen, noch um einiges mehr als zu irgendeiner Zeit vorher, so wie der Überlebende sich stets jenem überlegen fühlen muß, dessen mörderischer Schlag daneben gegangen ist.'[190] Just how great, in fact, Torstenson's self-confidence is becomes clear in the following quotation, in which he compares himself firstly to God and then to Adam, both very powerful creators: 'Jetzt seid ihr Adam und Eva, sagte er kauend, und ich bin Gott, der euch erschaffen hat. Aber er war nicht Gott. Mehr noch, er hatte nicht den geringsten Wunsch, Gott zu sein. Er war Adam, und er würde Eva nach seiner eigenen Phantasie erschaffen.'[191] This new image proves again that in de Mendelssohn's *Die Kathedrale* the relations of power between occupier and occupied are clearly reversed. The power lies with the

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[188] de Mendelssohn, p. 104 ['Take pity on the victors; they are the only ones who deserve pity because they are the slaves of their victory.'].

[189] de Mendelssohn, p. 150 ['What you intend to do is disorderly behaviour, what am I saying, it is a punishable offence, a crime. Its name is fraternisation, gentlemen. Fraternisation!'].

[190] de Mendelssohn, p. 136 ['This could not bother him now, because he knew himself to be superior to them, even more than at any other time, in the same way as the survivor always feels superior to the person whose murderous blow has missed.'].

[191] de Mendelssohn, p. 49 ['Now you are Adam and Eve, he said while chewing, and I am God who created you. But he wasn't God. Even more, he did not want to be God at all. He was Adam and he would create Eve according to his own fantasy.'].

occupied, who assume transcendental significance. The occupiers are animals, slaves and criminals.

This subchapter has revealed that the analysed texts use a pool of transnational images to explore the relations of power between occupier and occupied in post-war Germany. In some texts, the role allocations follow expected patterns, in others the anticipated distribution of roles is challenged; sometimes the roles are even swapped and reversed. Although there are no physical battles anymore in occupied Germany, the distribution of power between occupiers and occupied is not definite, but remains a linguistic battle ground.

Conclusion

I have shown in this chapter that the figures of the occupier and the occupied are explored in German and British texts through the use of three transnational themes, tropes and images: the theme of a search for similarities, the trope of performance, and a pool of images exploring shifting relations of power. This does not mean, however, that the themes and tropes are used in all texts in the same ways and to express the same ideas or concepts. It makes, for example, a great difference whether the authors are searching and stressing similarities between occupiers and occupied in order to find a basis for understanding and friendship, or whether they do so in order to justify and relativize war crimes and guilt. The trope of performance is employed in different ways, referring to different groups. I have revealed in my analysis that occupiers and occupied both, for different reasons, perform, pretend and play-act the occupation. Performance might be a tool to gain, establish or retain power, it might also be a form of self-deception designed to soften the blow of post-war changes. Finally, the third subchapter has shown that there is a transnational pool of images used in the texts to explore the relations of power in occupied Germany. Again, these images are used to deliver very different messages. In some examples, they stress the power of the occupier over the occupied, displaying the occupied as inferior and dependent. In others, they express the opposite, portraying the occupier as a fool and showing that in reality power lies with the occupied.

Nevertheless, the findings of this chapter suggest that overall there is no clear binary opposition between occupier and occupied: there are more similarities between the two groups than expected, they both engage in a performance of the occupation, and are grounded in constantly shifting relations of power. That is why drawing a clear line between occupier and occupied is not as easy as it appears. What is important to stress, though, is that this blurring of boundaries does not lead to a rapprochement of the two parties. It does not bring occupier and occupied

closer together. Not one of the analysed texts creates a successful relationship between occupier and occupied. They might be united in their hate of each other, they might both be play-acting, and although the relations of power might be swapped or inverted, the gulf between the two groups does not diminish. According to the texts analysed in this chapter, the occupation does not foster a greater understanding between Germans and British.

<u>Epilogue</u>

'Wer heute durch Deutschland fährt, der sieht so gut wie gar nichts mehr von dem, was während den 40er Jahren geschehen ist.'[1] This was W.G. Sebald's perception of Germany in 2001. He interpreted Germany's handling of its past critically as a suppression of memory. The reason for the 'Beseitigung der Vergangenheit' was, according to Sebald, that the Germans did not wish to be reminded of their past.[2]

One significant exception to the rule was and is the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche in Berlin, which today is a combination of the old and the new. The church, originally built in the late nineteenth century and consecrated in 1895, was turned into a ruin by Allied planes on 23 November 1943. After the end of the war, in the 1950s, a debate began about the future of the church. While initially the architect Egon Eiermann planned to tear down the remaining ruins of the old church and to build a new church, public protests in the end led to a different approach: a new church building was combined with the remaining ruins of the old tower and consecrated in December 1961.[3] The ruin was meant to serve as a 'symbol for destruction' and a 'Mahnmal des Krieges'.[4] In this way, the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche seems to be trying to work against a tendency in Germany to forget and suppress the past, which Sebald identified above.

The Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche is not the only building which actively displays and incorporates ruins as a monument and memorial to the destruction of the Second World War. In Britain, Coventry Cathedral serves a similar aim. The city of Coventry and its cathedral were attacked by German bombers on 14 November 1940 as part of the 'Operation Mondscheinsonate'.[5] The heavy bomber attacks left five hundred and fifty people dead and the medieval cathedral in ruins, with 'only the tower and the outer walls […] left standing, and within the walls […] just a great mound of rubble'.[6] Similarly to the church in Berlin, Coventry

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[1] W.G. Sebald, 'Mit einem kleinen Strandspaten Abschied von Deutschland nehmen: Gespräch mit Uwe Pralle (2001)', in *W.G. Sebald: 'Auf ungeheuer dünnem Eis': Gespräche 1971 bis 2001*, ed. by Torsten Hoffmann, 2nd edn (Frankfurt a.M.: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 2012), pp. 252-63 (p. 258) ['Driving through Germany today, one can see close to nothing of that which took place here during the 1940s.'].

[2] Sebald, 'Gespräch mit Uwe Pralle', p. 258 ['elimination of the past'].

[3] See Rüdiger Zill, '"A True Witness of Transcience": Berlin's Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche and the Symbolic Use of Architectural Fragments in Modernity', *European Review of History,* 18 (2011), pp. 811-27 (pp. 816-21).

[4] Zill, p. 821; Vera Frowein-Ziroff, *Die Kaiser Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche: Entstehung und Bedeutung* (Berlin: Mann, 1982), p. 338 ['war memorial'].

[5] See Oliver Schuegraf, *The Cross of Nails: Joining in God's Mission of Reconciliation: Community of the Cross of Nails*, trans. by Gren Hatton (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2012), p. 3.

[6] See Schuegraf, p. 4.

Cathedral deliberately remains a ruin, consisting of an old and a new part.[7] Today it still serves as a symbol and warning of 'further escalation and a new level in bomb warfare' in the Second World War.[8]

These two buildings in Germany and Britain are indirectly connected through their similar architectural treatments of ruins. But the buildings are also connected in a more direct way, by the idea of reconciliation, which is visibly expressed through the Coventry Cross of Nails displayed in the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche.[9] While the Cross of Nails was first only 'a kind of "souvenir"', it quickly turned into 'the most powerfully impressive and well-known symbol of the cathedral' which was employed in its international effort to reach the aims of reconciliation and peace.[10] In this way, the Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche and Coventry Cathedral, which are connected through the Cross of Nails, represent an important shift in the post-war relationship between Germany and Britain. The immediate post-war years were the founding years of the European Union, a project of peace and reconciliation, which was intended to prevent future conflicts and wars in Europe. The destruction and the ruins of the Second World War, prominently exhibited in Berlin and Coventry, served as an initiator of community. The fragments of the war and post-war reality led to the formation of a new and greater whole, which still provides peace in Europe.

That is why the study of the immediate post-war years and its literature is still relevant. The literature of these years stands symbolically, and across borders of nationhood and language, as a reminder of destruction, ruin and fragmentation, similarly to the physical ruins of the churches in Berlin and Coventry. Thus, the findings of my thesis not only offer an insight into the reasons and motivation behind the formation of the European Union, they might also help to explain its success. That the international cooperation after the end of the Second World War worked out well might, at least partially, also be due to a transnationally shared post-war reality, which served as a common – if not always positive – ground and fruitful basis for an understanding beyond national lines. My thesis reveals some traits and characteristics of this transnational post-war reality through an analysis of its literature.

I wrote this PhD thesis in the years that were dominated by the debates about the now approaching Brexit, an act of new separation and fragmentation in Europe. Especially in the

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[7] See Schuegraf, p. 12.
[8] Schuegraf, p. 6.
[9] See <http://www.gedaechtniskirche-berlin.de/page/2095/besucher-info-kurzdarstellung-zur-kirche> [accessed 6 November 2017].
[10] Schuegraf, p. 20; p. 19.

coming years it will therefore be important to remember and understand the meaning and significance of the ruins and rubble of the Second World War. Literature offers people a unique intellectual, but especially emotional access to this topic, which, I believe, cannot be achieved through architecture or politics alone. Thus, the content of this PhD thesis is important and current: the analysed texts serve as warning symbols of destruction and fragmentation, but also as reminders of the resulting union and transnationally shared peace. They work against the suppression and forgetting of the past which Sebald feared in Germany, which is also a potential danger in Britain.

Plain sums up the significance of the cultural achievements of the 1940s in Britain: 'in short, there was a great deal of activity in the decade, but no lasting legacy'.[11] This is not only true for Britain, but can equally be applied to the German situation. Many authors of these years are almost forgotten today, their texts are, with some few exceptions, not read or analysed anymore. On the one hand, this thesis tries to work against this neglect and tries to retrieve some of the forgotten legacy of this period. On the other hand, though, the findings of this thesis might also serve as a starting point for future analysis dealing with the question of why the works of the immediate post-war years lack influence and relevance today. This is especially interesting as the same cannot be said about the significance of the war and post-war period in general. But it are later texts written about this period which determine its image today rather than the texts of contemporary authors. Therefore, it would be interesting to compare more recent artistic representations of the post-war period with contemporary texts belonging to the transnational genre of rubble literature to find out whether or not there are similarities, whether specific elements are modified or even omitted in retrospect. In this way, transnational rubble literature could gain in significance beyond its original scope of relevance and fundamentally influence the perception and interpretation of literary representations of the aftermath of the Second World War.

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[11] Plain, p. 2.

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