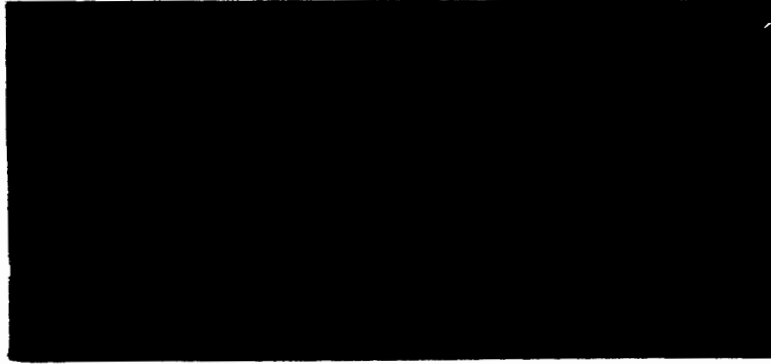




TRANSFORMATIONS  
*comparative study of social transformations*



CSST  
WORKING PAPERS  
The University of Michigan  
Ann Arbor

**"The Presence of the Past: Culture, Opinion  
and Identity in Germany"**

Konrad H. Jarausch, Hinrich C. Seeba,  
and David P. Conradt

CSST Working  
Paper #125

CRSO Working  
Paper #552

October 1996

## Chapter I:

### *The Presence of the Past:*

#### *Culture, Opinion and Identity in Germany*

Konrad H. Jarausch, Hinrich C. Seeba and David P. Conradt

History plays a central role in the creation of national identity. According to one prominent definition, a nation's sense of self is the result of appropriated experiences, "the sum of remembrances of its own political behavior."<sup>1</sup> In practice, groups represent their fate in stories which create a feeling of community by recounting their trials and tribulations. Often dramatic incidents like the storming of the Bastille function as political founding myths that are told and retold, not to remember certain facts, but to establish a bond between past and present that might unite speakers and listeners. In the construction of such national identities actual events matter less than their careful arrangement in a master narrative that presents a highly selective but all the more compelling account of common destiny.<sup>2</sup>

A classic case of such an invented tradition is the Prussian conception of history that emerged in mid-19th century. A group of national and liberal historians and publicists appropriated certain aspects of the Central European past in order to justify Berlin's conquests which led to the unification of Germany. Though they differed on the need for a constitution, both Heinrich von Sybel and Heinrich von Treitschke agreed on a master plot that departed from the glory of the Holy Roman Empire and deplored German decline due to religious quarrels, territorial splits and foreign interfe-

rence, only to celebrate redemption through the national movement and Bismarck's unification wars. By selecting some strands and ignoring others, these Borussian historians sought to legitimize the Protestant and *kleindeutsch* reign of the Hohenzollerns over the Second Empire at the expense of the Catholic and *großdeutsch* rest.<sup>3</sup>

In contrast to this success story, events of the 20th century proved deeply problematic due to German responsibility for the two World Wars. In some ways, the nationalist invention of the stab-in-the-back-legend tried to repeat the plot structure of earlier prominence in the Empire and present decline in the Weimar Republic so as to call for German recovery in a revived Third Reich. After the failure of neo-conservative alternatives, this hope materialized as Hitler's dictatorship, surpassing all expectations, first in restoring national pride and then ending in renewed catastrophe. Only the collapse of 1945 broke this cyclical pattern by revealing to the survivors the full extent of the "German catastrophe" that seemed beyond hope of redemption the second time around.<sup>4</sup> To explain the inexplicable, critics simply inverted the old master plot and constructed a negative teleology towards an inevitable defeat of the Prusso-German state through its Nazi exaggeration, apparently ending the story forever.

In this narrative, the postwar period functioned largely as a post-script, an ahistorical space of prolonged penitence for previous transgressions. In light of the unprecedented horror of the crimes committed in its name, German identity could only continue to exist as a thorough renunciation of earlier affirmations of Germanness. The East therefore embraced anti-fascism, partly in

genuine revulsion and partly as prop for the SED regime, while the West struggled to cope with the past through a curious mixture of repression and restitution.<sup>5</sup> This endless task of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* strangely linked both rival offsprings of the Third Reich and continued to embarrass their leaders during various anniversaries. Though the population wanted to forget what might not be forgiven, critical intellectuals on both sides of the wall became preoccupied with guilt that negatively defined them as Germans through the imperative of atonement.<sup>6</sup>

The unification of 1989-90 has offered an unexpected continuation of the erstwhile master narrative by providing a new redemption. While the left now worries about the doubling of the burden of the past, the right sees the return of unity as a chance to undo the effects of the cultural revolution of the 1960s and to restore a positive sense of identity. Many of the current debates on the Stasi legacy, the collaboration of writers, the morality of *Ostpolitik*, etc. can be understood as clumsy attempts to rewrite history in order to renationalize Germany.<sup>7</sup> This open-ended contest for cultural hegemony poses several important questions: Which symbolic traditions originally shaped German self-consciousness and may continue to color the larger FRG? What historical learning processes transformed public opinion after the war and are likely to determine the political behavior of united Germany? And which current appropriations of the past will inform its national self-conceptions in the future?

#### 1. The Cultural Construction of Germanness:

Due to the lack of a national state, the creation of a German identity was, above all, a cultural project. Frustrated with the particularism of petty principalities after the Seven Years' War, the educated sought to reinvent a common polity, based upon the bond of language, literature and tradition, shared among the peoples of Central Europe. Since the real history of German speakers was pre- and transnational, an imagined past had to be created that could serve as symbolic representation of a national unity that was to be restored.<sup>8</sup> In the construction of a sense of self, several strains of arguments about German traditions emerged that came to vie with each other: an aesthetic view that was content to stress the bonds of common culture, a liberal view that put a premium on constitutional freedom and an ethnic view that emphasized national unity. In some fashion or other, these relatively set visions would structure the debate on German self-conceptions over the space of two centuries.

As precondition for a political revival, Germany had to be conceived of as a cultural community. In the second half of the 18th century some intellectuals began to complain that the Holy Roman Empire provided but a weak link between over three hundred sovereign territorial states, imperial cities and knightly possessions. Friedrich Carl von Moser was among the first who, in his book Von dem deutschen Nationalgeist (1765), lamented an alarming degree of collective alienation among the diverse German provinces: "We no longer know ourselves; / We have become estranged from one another, / Our spirit has left us." In promoting governmental reform, Moser argued for "a German interest" as a rallying point for

better integration of what appeared to be a rather heterogeneous, localized culture.<sup>9</sup> As struggle against parochialism, the inception of nationalism was linked to a project of political modernization.

The formation of a German identity, therefore, began with an aesthetic campaign for establishing a "cultural nation." In 1766 Gottlob Ephraim Lessing still ridiculed "the bright idea of creating a national theater for the Germans as long as we Germans are not yet a nation."<sup>10</sup> But when the hopes for a political revival of the Holy Roman Empire began to fade, Friedrich Schiller chose the opposite direction, recommending the creation of a German theater as the best path to political unity: "If we were to have a national stage, we would also become a nation."<sup>11</sup> Leading to the comforting notion of cultural nation, this aesthetic perspective became the dominant outlook of the *Bildungsbürgertum* in the 19th century. In accordance with Schiller's distych of 1795 "Germany? But where is it? I don't know how to find that country. / Where the learned one begins, the political one ends,"<sup>12</sup> the gradual disappearance of the political Germany, would be balanced by the emergence of a symbolic Germany represented culturally.

In the search for a common denominator, educated promoters of the national revival could appeal to a common language. In his Wörterbuch der Deutschen Sprache (1807), Johann Heinrich Campe argued that in view of the political misery following the Prussian defeat at Jena and Auerstedt nothing would be "more necessary, pressing and valuable" than to strengthen the German sense of linguistic cohesion. After the break-up of the Holy Roman Empire in 1806, their language, the last string to hold together the German people,

was believed to be the only hope for "the possibility of future reunification into an independent nation."<sup>13</sup> Thus *Wiedervereinigung*, a key word of the political debates in post-war Germany, was used already 150-years earlier to champion a predominantly philological venture. From the beginning, much of the discourse on "cultural nation" was cast in a rhetoric of regaining a mythical political unity which had been lost.

Historiographers of national literature such as Ludwig Wachler (1818) and August Koberstein (1827) sought to create an ethnic master narrative.<sup>14</sup> Often constructing, like A. F. C. Vilmar in his popular work of 1844,<sup>15</sup> a mythological origin of ethnic Germans, this tale of national development tried to construct a plot that departed from a golden age, declined to the present and hoped for future redemption. Tracing the Germans' tribal identity back to Arminius (a renegade officer who had beaten the Romans in 9 A.D., thus bolstering Germanic pride forever) and to Siegfried (a mythical figure who would kill any enemy disguised as a ghastly dragon, thus becoming the quintessential Germanic hero) turned into the favorite (and richly rewarded) pastime of mythologizers. It was mainly to honor his popular edition of the Nibelungenlied that a minor philologist, Friedrich Heinrich von der Hagen, was appointed the first professor of German literature at the newly founded university of Berlin in 1810.

Other intellectuals attempted to advance a constitutional nation state through creating a literary canon and promoting linguistic standardization. In his pivotal Geschichte der poetischen National-Literatur der Deutschen (1835-42) the historian Georg



Gottfried Gervinus set out to strengthen German identity through the construction of a literary pantheon. Especially after Weimar classicism had ended with Goethe's death in 1832, literature seemed to present the most significant, if not the only, point of reference on which all Germans, however divided they were, could agree.<sup>16</sup> "What do we have in common beyond our language and literature?" similarly asked Jacob Grimm in 1854 when he set out to collect Germany's linguistic memory in his Deutsches Wörterbuch. Through documenting the richness of the common language, the founder of the academic study of *Germanistik*, hoped to speed the establishment of a common state.<sup>17</sup>

A second major strand in the cultural formation of German identity was the liberal rhetoric of individual freedom. With the celebrated drama of Swiss liberation from Hapsburg control, Wilhelm Tell (1804), Friedrich Schiller issued a stirring call for liberty in the Rütli oath: "We want to be as free as our fathers were!" Forced to shoot an apple from his son's head and taking revenge on his torturer, the protagonist William Tell became a powerful symbol of the desire for political freedom which stirred the popular imagination. Censors, still afraid that "freedom" meant "revolution," and ever cautious stage directors insisted on changing the text of the drama, eliminated the subversive fifth act or banned the celebrated liberation drama altogether. If staged at all, the play was at least barred from repeat performances (e.g. 1832 in Frankfurt, 1846 in Mainz) after the audience ostentatiously had applauded lines that could be seen as directed against the German authorities of the day.<sup>18</sup>

The easy accessibility of Schiller's message made the poet immensely popular as spokesman for German liberation. The famous lines from Don Carlos, "Give freedom of thought, sire!" could be interpreted as support for cultural quietism or, in connection with other plays like Die Räuber, seen as demand for actual political freedom. Popular fervor culminated in the "Schiller year" 1859 when nation-wide commemorations of Schiller's one-hundredth birthday reiterated the call of the 1848 revolution for liberalization and unification. "The spiritual celebration of unity," writes the editor of a two-volume anthology of speeches on that occasion "was a firm foundation for the great edifice which we will yet labor for centuries to build."<sup>19</sup> No wonder that more monuments were dedicated to the "poet of freedom" than to any other German figure and that the national foundation for supporting indigent writers bore his name.

During much of the 19th century Liberals promoted their cause by producing their own historical iconography. As alternative to the black and white Prussian flag, supporters of constitutionalism embraced the black-red-gold tricolor of the *Burschenschaft*, the liberal and national student movement that arose after the War of Liberation and was repeatedly persecuted by restoration authorities.<sup>20</sup> During the Hambach festival (1832) and the 1848 Revolution, radicals tried to introduce French symbols of Republicanism such as phrygian caps, and American-style propaganda like songs and broadsides. The middle class effort to build a statute to "Hermann the German" in the Teutoburg Forest was also a national-liberal attempt to celebrate "liberation" from foreign domination. Inspired

by solidarity with the Commune, the Socialist movement adopted the red banner of revolt so as to suggest that it followed a powerful revolutionary tradition, in tune with the march of history.<sup>21</sup>

The effect of liberal appeals was, however, blunted by the unsolved question of national unity. In Schiller's play Wilhelm Tell the first line of the oath of the Swiss confederation, "We want to be a united folk of brethren,"<sup>22</sup> served as the fictional battle cry for national unity by turning the internal demand for freedom into an external cry for liberation from oppression. This vow was frantically applauded in August 1870, when during the Franco-Prussian War the theater season in Berlin was opened with Wilhelm Tell.<sup>23</sup> It was applauded again at the end of World War One, when the call for unity was used to balance the military defeat and economic misery.<sup>24</sup> It was applauded during the Third Reich when the Nazi movement claimed to be the true heir of all national traditions.<sup>25</sup> Finally, it was applauded in 1951, when following the Berlin blockade the newly built Schillertheater was opened with this play and the Berliners rallied to withstand the Cold War.<sup>26</sup>

As inspiration for resistance against Napoleon's occupation, nationalist intellectuals demanded moving towards actual politics. In his Reden an die deutsche Nation (1808) the philosopher Johann Gottlieb Fichte lectured the Germans to act politically rather than to retreat into the realm of intellect: "Long before recent events we have had to hear so to speak in advance what has been repeated frequently since, that even if our political independence were lost, we would nonetheless keep our language and literature and would always remain a nation in these respects and could easily

console ourselves about everything else."<sup>27</sup> In Fichte's view such cultural solace, later called "inner emigration," would amount to defeatism, because internalizing the site of identity in imagination would mean the end of political resistance. Echoed by Friedrich Ludwig Jahn and Ernst Moritz Arndt, this philosophical call to arms inspired an exclusive, ethnic definition of German identity.

In conjuring up times of paradise, golden age and holy empire, other intellectuals invoked the triadic myth of restored unity, associated with the heroic "Emperor Barbarossa."<sup>28</sup> This figment of national imagination was constructed from two historical figures, Frederick I, who reigned between 1155 and 1190, and his grandson Frederick II, who reigned from 1212 to 1250. Barbarossa was believed to be condemned to wait in the Kyffhäuser mountain for hundreds of years until his time would come to wake up to rid Germany of the divisive regional princes and to restore the unified "Reich" in its medieval, imperial, i.e., centralized grandeur. This late medieval myth took on new significance, when after the collapse of the Holy Roman Empire in 1806, only one generation before its one-thousandth anniversary, the nostalgic dream of the empire lost turned into the drive for a national state to be regained.

Ironically, this vision was revived by a single poem by Friedrich Rückert, "Kaiser Friedrich im Kyffhäuser" (1817). In addition to all the elements of the popular tale -- the emperor dozing for another hundred years deep down in the mountain, with his red beard grown through the marble table and the ravens keeping watch -- this evocation suggests an identity that conflates the old Empire with a hoped-for nation state: "He has taken away / the Reich's glorious

shine, / and shall return one day / With it, in his own time."<sup>29</sup> As it was a "holy" empire -- named for the fact that the medieval emperor had to be crowned by the pope --, the image easily took on, in the triadic scheme of history, a quasi-religious quality of paradise lost and regained, with the cyclical nature of events to come expressed in the prefix "Wieder-." As restoration of past bliss in a timeless millenium the dream of re-unification would lift the old curse of fragmentation and dispel the recent nightmare of defeat which signified the end of former "unity" as the dawning of modernity.

Due to the mythical character of such cultural constructions, the transition from *Kulturnation* to *Nationalstaat* would exact a heavy price. The liberal Karl Biedermann insisted in his entry on "nation, nationality" to Rotteck/Welcker's famed Staats-Lexikon that "the culture of a common language and literature does not suffice in order to create a fully developed nation and a generally capable national character."<sup>30</sup> But in going from culture to politics the goal of personal freedom often lost out to the connected but yet distinct aim of national unity when the two clashed with each other. In Hoffmann von Fallersleben's text of 1841 for what was to become Germany's national anthem in 1922 and again in 1952,<sup>31</sup> the call for "unity" soon proved more popular than claims to "right and freedom." While the liberal Biedermann argued for civil liberty at the *domestic* level, national critics turned the language of freedom into a call for unification by demanding liberation from *foreign* oppression.

In the struggle for a separate identity, definitions of what ought to be considered German narrowed decisively. Based on the cosmopolitan project of Enlightenment, the 18th century was marked by a certain pride in cultural heterogeneity, with Justus Möser, among others, praising the aesthetics of local diversity to counter Frederick II's contempt for German provincialism.<sup>32</sup> After Napoleon's defeat the homogenizing forces in German identity formation grew stronger, since the negative foil of an external enemy was replaced by the problem of defining standards of Germanness internally. The emphatic criteria of what Ludwig Wachler preached in 1818 as "return to a German spirit"<sup>33</sup> increasingly became the yardstick of de-selection, excluding everybody who could be identified outside "Germandom" such as members of other linguistic minorities. This redefinition of what it meant to be German from a cultural into a racial pattern was the milieu in which anti-Semitism, the most hostile exclusion of the "other," could eventually thrive.<sup>34</sup>

Unpersuaded by such efforts, perceptive critics tried to expose the anachronistic fictionality of German claims to unity. Although even Heinrich Heine liked to play with a liberal version of the Barbarossa myth,<sup>35</sup> he realized in more sober moments that the Germans, like the Jews, were still waiting in vain for their "secular Messiah."<sup>36</sup> During the *Vormärz* the exiled poet, therefore, considered the hope for any "reunification" of the Germans as a nostalgic and anti-modern return to a kind of totality which, if it ever existed, was assigned to a mythological past. If there the world had ever been united before, it was preserved, Heine argued, if not created, by "whole poets" who were restricted to antiquity

and the middle ages. They should be respected but not be emulated; for "every imitation of their wholeness is a lie, a lie which any clear eye can see and which cannot escape ridicule."<sup>37</sup>

In the first three-quarters of the 19th century the cultural and political struggle over German identity remained undecided. On the one hand, the building of roads and canals, the growth of railroads and the construction of telegraphs began to link the Central European states more closely. Also the Prussian-led effort to forge a customs union freed trade across petty frontiers while newspapers and book publishers started to cater to a national opinion market. But on the other hand, the efforts of countless civic associations, be they directed towards pursuits like singing and gymnastics or be they openly political only slowly succeeded in wresting some constitutional concessions from the various crowns. The failure of the 1848 revolution doomed dynastic Prussian or Austrian efforts to create a nation state so that the issue of political unity in Central Europe remained an intellectual project rather than practical reality.<sup>38</sup>

Only the founding of the Second Reich in 1871 seemed to settle the issue of Germanness once and for all. Bismarck's military triumphs strengthened the ethnic conception of identity and national fervor pushed advocates of diversity, tarred as *Reichsfeinde*, onto the sidelines. In order to instill a uniform civic consciousness, the new Reich combatted political Catholicism in the *Kulturkampf*, reneged on Jewish emancipation by fostering racial anti-Semitism and persecuted Socialism and trade-unionism. Bismarck ended the confrontation with Catholics when he needed the support of the

Center Party and eventually shifted to social policy so as to wean workers away from Marxism.<sup>39</sup> But once raised by the historian Heinrich von Treitschke, the Jewish question,<sup>40</sup> would not go away, since many believed, like Julius Langbehn in 1890, that it called for a solution "in a hostile sense."<sup>41</sup> Instead of increasing liberality, the creation of the Second Empire reinforced the intolerant aspects of German identity.

As support of the fragile new state, the Barbarossa myth could suggest a seemingly solid historical justification. In 1881 a group of nationalist and anti-Semitic students gathered on the Kyffhäuser mountain to pledge eternal loyalty to "the resurrected Barbarossa, their beloved Emperor William."<sup>42</sup> A decade later construction began on a colossal monument which iconically juxtaposed Barbarossa's awakening and William I's triumph: "On the Kyffhäuser, where according to myth Emperor Frederick the Redbeard waited for the renewal of the Reich, Emperor William the Whitebeard shall arise, who has fulfilled the legend."<sup>43</sup> The Kyffhäuser manifests a series of correspondences in which Rotbart is replaced by Weißbart so as to prove that the newly founded Deutsches Reich was taking the place of the medieval empire. Typically, the dedication in 1896 took place on June 18, a date which marked the anniversaries of Barbarossa's crowning, the Prussian victory over the Swedes in Fehrbellin, the defeat of Napoleon in Waterloo and the victory celebration in Berlin in 1871.<sup>44</sup>

To strengthen its political legitimacy, the Second Reich created a patriotic version of history to "nationalize the masses." The government sponsored national holidays such as the Emperor's birth-



day or Sedan's day (commemorating the victory over France), celebrated with military parades, patriotic speeches and liberal consumption of alcohol. The Hohenzollern dynasty seized on occasions like opening schools, hospitals or railway stations, built in neo-medieval style, to represent itself as a legitimate heir of the imperial tradition by affecting a chivalric pose. The educated and propertied burghers sponsored a series of Bismarck columns to memorialize the founder of the Second Reich and constructed a series of national monuments, such as the Porta Westfalica, the Leipzig tower to the War of Liberation, and the Rüdeshcim Germania.<sup>45</sup> Amplified in schools, churches and barracks, this invented tradition of German glory spread the nationalist gospel to the lower class.

Unification fundamentally transformed the outlook of the educated middle class from a liberal to a nationalist stance. Before there had been a German state, the national movement had to advocate political change in order to overthrow the particularist princes. But after 1871, national agitation became defensive, intent on maintaining the newly gained state by making reliable German citizens out of a welter of different loyalties. Not content with internal consolidation, ethnic radicals directed their agitation outward towards a pan-German gathering up of German-speaking minorities in Europe that had not been unified. Invoking a transition to *Weltpolitik*, nationalists also advocated imperialism, the creation of a world-wide empire for the German latecomers. Based upon a mythological reading of the imperial past, the volkish fringe and the Fatherland Party became ever more radical during World War One,

advocating racist and linguistic suppression at home and military expansion abroad.<sup>46</sup>

After the defeat and collapse of the Second Reich, the different conceptions of German identity once again clashed. Democratic and socialist attempts to infuse the Weimar Republic with the counter-tradition of liberty foundered on circumstances, incompetence and hostility.<sup>47</sup> When the Nazi Party succeeded in creating the neo-Conservative dream of a Third Reich, it used specious logic in claiming to be the culmination of all prior national dreams, a synthesis which would finally end internal strife and bring external might. At home, the SS and its collaborators radically attempted to homogenize ethnic conceptions of Germandom in a biopolitical fashion that culminated in concentration camps and the Holocaust. Even if he was motivated by the association with "red" in "red-beard," it was no accident that Hitler once again invoked the imperial myth by giving the attack on the Soviet Union, that would eventually bring him down, the code-name "operation Barbarossa."<sup>48</sup>

By its shameless exaggeration of exceptionalism, the Third Reich made a travesty out of the tradition of a German *Sonderweg*.<sup>49</sup> Domestically, Nazi chauvinism deeply discredited national definitions of Germanness by involving not just victims but also collaborators and perpetrators in suffering bombing raids and mass expulsions. Internationally, Hitler's expansion of Germany far beyond its historical or linguistic borders abused the notion of self-determination as a flimsy cover for racial imperialism. Since the Wehrmacht and the SS committed their atrocities in the name of the German people, they tarnished all claims connected to that concept

for decades to come. The resistance effort of the previous elites or Communist workers was too little and too late to save older, more moderate definitions of national traditions.<sup>50</sup> By destroying the national state and ruining the conception of a special identity, the Nazis also brought the German master narrative to an inglorious end.

## 2. The Reshaping of National Identity After 1945:

On the "allied reservation" in 1945 the question of German national identity was not a priority item on the cultural or political agenda. Viewed from the perspective of the 1990s it could indeed be argued that between 1945 and 1989 the identity question, like Barbarossa, had once again entered a long hibernation. Though the issue of self-definition after the historical catastrophe of the Third Reich continued to haunt German dreams, bedevil academic discussions and inspire turgid treatises, it seemed at the same time curiously remote from the practical tasks of post-war survival and reconstruction.

At the war's end, most Germans did not have the leisure to worry about how they felt about themselves. When asked in surveys conducted in the American zone from October, 1945 to February, 1949 what their "greatest cares and worries at the present time" were, the great majority mentioned food, clothing, shoes, POWs, and missing persons. After the June, 1948 currency reform "money troubles in general" replaced food and clothing at the top of the list.<sup>51</sup> By early 1947 most Germans in the American zone considered it unlikely that the Allies would leave behind a united Germany at

the end of the occupation and by August, 1948, nine months before the creation of the two German states, 70 percent favored the creation of a provisional government, with only 12 percent opposed to the idea. In supporting a separate West German government, the respondents were well aware that it would mean the continued, if not permanent division of the country.<sup>52</sup>

Division was also on the agenda of Germany's occupiers. By the late 1940s it was clear that neither the United States nor the Soviet Union were prepared to allow "their" Germans to pursue policies that they could not control and that could possibly be directed against their interests. Each superpower wanted a single German state only on its own terms: a liberal, pluralistic democratic state for the United States; a communist, worker and peasant state for the Soviet Union. Unable to achieve such a unified state without military conflict, the two superpowers reluctantly settled for two states each having the social, economic, and political characteristics of its respective protector. Ironically, the division of Germany enabled both states within a relatively short time to achieve a status within their respective power bloc that a single German state could never have attained. Yet, as Ralf Dahrendorf has remarked, both German states in the 1950s thus lacked an integrating core; their respective political centers were Washington and Moscow; they were both "floating in the air."<sup>53</sup> They were not integrated social entities, but they lacked cohesion and an identity that would differentiate them from others. Perhaps unification might provide that integrating substance in the future;

the process of regaining unity itself could become an integrating force.

Most Germans were indifferent to these fateful decisions of the Allies. In the immediate postwar period, for understandable reasons, many wanted to forget about being German at all. After 1945 an emotional vacuum took the place of the affective and integrative ties which previously had linked the national community with political culture. This was in large part the consequence of the Nazi perversion of national sentiments and symbols. To fill the vacuum some Germans enthusiastically embraced the "European idea," a politically united Europe with no national borders, or gladly submitted to the "Americanization" so apparent in popular culture. Most simply reduced their scope of allegiance to the self, the family, and perhaps the local community. This mass withdrawal to the primary sphere, or *privatization*, as some social scientists have termed it, gave German leaders considerable freedom of action but also imposed limits on the intensity of commitment or identification they could require from their citizens.<sup>54</sup>

Privatization was a reaction to the intense politicization of the Nazi period and to the dislocations caused by World War II. Political leaders and critical intellectuals therefore made little headway with *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* in the first post-war years. The vast majority of Germans had other, more basic concerns such as how to put their lives back together, raise fatherless children, forage for food, or simply try to replace the pots, pans, dishes, linen, and other necessities of everyday life lost in air raids. Though it initially made Germany an anomic society, this widespread

withdrawal from any form of political engagement was also a reaction to being burned politically in the Nazi era. The American historian Leonard Krieger describes this mood perceptively: For the mass of Germans

apathy was the rule, an outer lethargy and inner emptiness so pervasive as to indicate not simply a state of shock in the face of catastrophe and the deadening routine of daily exercise in the face of a crushing struggle for survival, but a political withdrawal so profound as to mark the Nazi experience off from any traditional authoritarian analogy.<sup>55</sup>

The postwar elites did not have the option of privatization. They had to govern. The republics proclaimed in 1949 were, like their predecessors, faced with the problem of creating and fusing a commitment to a particular political form with an already existent, albeit muted, national identity. This sense of belonging to a particular national community, usually sharing a common physical territory, language, history, and cultural values, had been present among Germans at least as long as it has among many other European nations. Such a general national identification had not been linked, however, with a stable unified state and political system. Thus, to ensure its own stability, each succeeding political regime unsuccessfully sought to broaden the scope of national identification to include a commitment to the given state. The absence of a shared attachment to a particular state and political system has thus been the missing component in the German sense of national identity.

The presence of a competing German state (the GDR) within the same prewar territory, and its capital in the communist part of the historic center of the Reich, complicated the task. West German

leadership compounded the problem at first by officially encouraging support for the values of the liberal democratic constitution but not for the specific West German state. Thus in effect West-German leadership at least until the 1960s was urging citizens to become democrats but not to develop too strong an attachment to the Federal Republic because it was only "provisional" until all Germans were reunited within a single democratic state with Berlin as its capital. Until that time, however, this provisional West German state also claimed to be the only legitimate representative for all members of the German nation within or outside its borders. This viewpoint was not shared by the leaders of communist East Germany, but apparently it had widespread support among East German citizens.<sup>56</sup>

After the establishment of the two German states in 1949, most West Germans gradually accepted the country's division as part of a stable status quo and prerequisite for peace. Between 1951 and 1976 the proportion of the adult population who believed that the Federal Republic and East Germany would never be united increased from 28 percent to 65 percent.<sup>57</sup> Popular acceptance of the Oder-Neisse line (the then de facto boundary between Poland and East Germany) increased from only 8 percent in 1951 to 61 percent by 1972.<sup>58</sup> By the early 1970s about two thirds of West Germans had come to consider European integration "more urgent" than German unification. Responses to these questions were strongly related to age, with younger Germans being far less interested in unification than older respondents.

Public opinion throughout most of the immediate postwar period was also indifferent to questions of national identity and their symbolic representation. Even in the mid-1950s most Germans reported little interest, much less "joy" over the constitution, national flag or anthem (the Deutschlandlied) than other democratic societies.<sup>59</sup> The level of national pride remained well below that found in other Western societies, but those Germans who did feel a sense of pride focused it on the accomplishments of postwar reconstruction. During the 1950s and especially the turbulent 1960s it became fashionable for intellectuals to dismiss this West German Economic Miracle as a poor substitute for some usually undefined idealism they found lacking in the mass public. This same approach was taken by their East German counterparts such as Stefan Heym and Heiner Müller after 1989. Yet there is little doubt that economic performance, symbolized by the D-Mark, became an important vehicle for postwar identification. When asked to characterize what it meant to be German or to specify why they were proud to be German, respondents repeatedly referred to "hard-work," "diligence," "industry" and the "prosperity which we have achieved."

But more significantly surveys from the 1960s through the 1980s found an increasingly strong relationship between a West German national identity and support for democratic institutions and processes. Those citizens who expressed a sense of national pride were more likely to support the constitution, the country's laws and political institutions, the competitive party structure, and even the educational system than those Germans with little or no pride in being German. Comparative studies have also discovered



that a sense of national identity and pride is an important determinant of social and political integration and stability.<sup>60</sup>

Comparable material on a GDR identity is not available due to the lack of survey research under communist dictatorship. The impressions of observers, policy makers and the fragmentary empirical data that were collected suggest that the regime after the Wall and especially during the early Honecker era from the early 1970s to the mid-1980s had achieved a certain collective sense of self (*Wir-Bewußtsein*) among segments of the population. But this feeling rested on a fundamental ambivalence towards the manifest successes and failures of the East German state.<sup>61</sup>

Honecker's "Unity of Economic and Social Policy" brought many especially young GDR families their first modern apartment with sanitary facilities that did not have to be shared. Funded by Soviet oil deliveries and helped by West German credits, the East German version of goulash Communism meant improved housing and a greater supply of consumer goods in exchange for political docility. Expanded travel opportunities to other socialist countries, above all Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia showed East Germans that they had the right to a certain pride in their own accomplishments (*Aufbaustolz*). Karl-Rudolf Korte emphasizes that this feeling owed much to the satisfaction of overcoming adverse circumstances: "The majority of the East German population had to support its own identity through some kind of idea of what the GDR accomplished. It was an identity formed through the shared experience of deprivations."<sup>62</sup>

The GDR's leadership was never able to steer a straight or steady course on the national identity question. Throughout the 1950s and most of the 1960s it professed its commitment to unification. The 1968 constitution declared that "the GDR and its citizens...strive for the overcoming of the division of Germany forced upon the German nation by imperialism." The GDR would pursue "the step-by-step rapprochement of both German states until their unification on the basis of democracy and socialism." Six years later (October, 1974) this passage was deleted from the constitution, which now declared that the GDR was "forever and irrevocably allied with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics." All references to the "German nation" and to the unification of Germany were expunged. The GDR was no longer a "socialist state of the German nation," but had rather become a "socialist state of the workers and peasants."<sup>63</sup>

This constitutional change followed from a reorientation in 1971, when the SED adopted a hard-line ideology and policy of complete demarcation (Abgrenzung) from the Federal Republic. The goal of its ideological efforts was "to establish in theoretical terms the GDR as a nation-state in its own right." Albert Norden, the SED's chief ideologue as Central Committee Secretary for Propaganda, claimed in July, 1972 that Bonn's talk about "national unity" was a fiction because "a unified nation" did not exist any more, since the "Krupps and the Krauses no longer had anything in common." He rejected the West German claim of a "sense of community" (Zusammengehörigkeitsgefühl), because "the feelings of the workers in the peoples' own factories are fundamentally different

from the feelings of the private-capitalistic owners of the factories, banks and ship works of the Federal Republic."<sup>64</sup>

This *Abgrenzung* was complemented a few years later by an effort to coopt certain aspects of the German historical and cultural past, which it was hoped would contribute to the legitimation of the GDR regime. Under the slogan of "heritage and tradition" the statue of Frederick the Great was returned to *Unter den Linden*, a more balanced biography of Bismarck appeared and in 1983 the 500th anniversary of Luther's death was commemorated on a grand scale. These "progressive" figures in the German historical record were seen as precursors of socialism as practiced in the GDR, but *Abgrenzung* was difficult to square with these reappropriations of a common past. By attempting to kindle some spirit of GDR nationalism, the SED was in fact encouraging East Germans to discover their buried links with the West.

Whatever *Aufbaustolz* the GDR citizenry possessed was clearly not the same as a "national consciousness." The events of 1989-1990 certainly demonstrated that when East Germans could choose, most were ready to abandon the socialist experiment. When the social contract of continuous increases in the standard of living could no longer be maintained, the weakness of loyalties to "real existing socialism" and separate statehood were exposed. The socialist facade collapsed and in its place for at least three-fourths of the GDR population, the German nation became the basis of a common self-definition. The vacuum created by the collapse of the SED regime was filled institutionally by West Germans and psychologically by a very materialist-based national identification.

Since unification the "identity" of East Germans has varied with their perception of how the unification process, particularly in its economic dimensions, has progressed. During 1990 and the first quarter of 1991 East Germans were caught up with unification euphoria. They were more likely to consider themselves German than West Germans, i.e., the proportion of East Germans who felt more "German" than "East" German was greater than the proportion of West Germans who considered themselves Germans rather than West Germans. As the prosaic consequences of unification set in with plant closings, rising unemployment, lower wages relative to the West and media deprecation of Ossies, East German identification with *Deutschland* declined. Increasingly, East Germans differentiated themselves from the West. By 1994-1995, however, the pendulum had begun to swing back towards an all German identification.

In contrast, attempts by political leaders in West Germany to reintroduce a "normal nationalism" into the political debate were limited to occasional books and feuilleton articles which had a very limited impact. Since the Christian Democrats were winning (1949, 1953, 1957, 1961, 1965) without any national appeal, they had no intention of changing a successful formula: peace, prosperity and no experiments!

Most mainstream Christian Democrats at this time propagated at the elite level the so-called *Staatskerntheorie*: the Federal Republic formed the nucleus for a future all German state, with the result that the GDR was seen as situated within the territory of the FRG, the laws of which applied *de jure*, if not *de facto* to the East German territory. (Ironically this argument was not used by

German prosecutors of GDR officials, judges, generals, border guards, secret police after 1990. This claim was found neither in the 1973 Basic Treaty nor in the 1990 Unification Treaty, which did not dispute the sovereignty of the GDR from 1949-1989). For the first two decades of its existence, this construction made the GDR a statefree territory, an occupation zone which required an official position of non-recognition toward the GDR and outright hostility to any state which did not accept Bonn's approach to the GDR (Hallstein doctrine).<sup>65</sup>

Such a cautious approach to the national question was unsatisfactory to some CDU intellectuals. In 1965 Eugen Gerstenmaier, then President of the Bundestag, caused a mini-flap with his book, called "New Nationalism? Concerning the Transformation of the Germans," in which he made an argument very similar to that put forth by Wolfgang Schäuble and others after 1989: "If we [Germans] want to survive as a nation, we must once again begin to know who we are and what we want." Unless a sense of national identity were to become part of consciousness, he continued,

we will, already in this century, be reduced to a perhaps quite well functioning, but historically and nationally quite unimportant part of a European consumer society or perhaps to a provincial appendage to the American industrial society.... In such a state of consciousness a reunification of our people and thus the natural and imperative self-realization of the Germans as a nation would no longer be possible.<sup>66</sup>

What recovering a national identity would mean in concrete terms was never spelled out by Gerstenmaier or others during this period.

Ironically, the first explicit postwar appeal to national sentiments occurred during the 1972 campaign with the famous slogan

"Germans, we can be proud of our country." Apparently written by the Social-Democratic candidate Willy Brandt himself, this phrase was quite successful, since it appealed to submerged sentiments in a moderate way. Because both Brandt and the SPD enjoyed impeccable anti-nationalist and anti-fascist credentials, they could safely play the nationalist card. The campaign itself was designed to focus the attention of voters on the SPD-FDP's *Ostpolitik* of reconciliation with Germany's eastern neighbors.

The SPD's success with the national theme in 1972 prompted, of course, a similar response from the Christian Democrats in 1976. Survey research commissioned by the party in 1974 and 1975 found that most voters were now comfortable with concepts like "fatherland" and "patriotism." When asked in 1975 whether fatherland "sounds good" or "is out of place in today's world," 60 percent of West Germans responded positively to the term, but only 32 percent of voters under 30 did so.<sup>67</sup> From this research came the Kohl-Biedenkopf theme *Aus Liebe zu Deutschland* in the 1976 election, which was continued in various forms in the campaigns of the 1980s.

In the 1970s and 1980s the growing self-confidence of West German leaders was seen in Bonn's increased independence in foreign policy. It began with a restrained opposition to America's Vietnam policy and continued with efforts to rescue detente from the "Evil Empire" rhetoric of the Reagan era. Bonn became very sensitive to any moves in Washington -- even in the name of anti-Communism -- which would have a negative impact on the Federal Republic's relations to the East. In spite of strong opposition from the Reagan administration, Germany in 1982 went ahead with plans to

build a massive pipeline system to supply Western Europe with natural gas from Siberia. Twenty years earlier Bonn had abandoned a similar project because of American opposition.<sup>68</sup> Following the imposition of martial law in Poland in 1981 Bonn refused to join in American-led sanctions against Poland and the Soviet Union, and instead the Schmidt government urged Germans to send food parcels. Bonn's goal, of course, was to save *Ostpolitik* even at the cost of alienating the rising Polish opposition in Solidarity. Rightly or wrongly, the Federal Republic, started to assert its own interests, a behavior consistent with a growing sense of national identity.

On the eve of the collapse of the Wall the once provisional Bonn Republic had become a stable, prosperous, and self-confident democracy. As Table 1 indicates, the proportion of Germans who were proud of the postwar political system had increased substantially by 1988. In 1959 only 7 percent expressed pride in some aspect of the political system. Among Americans at that time the level of pride in political institutions was 85 percent and among British respondents 46 percent were proud of the country's political order. By 1978 the German level of pride in their political system has risen to 31 percent and in 1988 51 percent of the respondents expressed pride in the postwar constitution and political order.

Table 1

Sources of National Pride, 1959-1988 (in percent)

	1959	1978	1988
Political Institutions, Constitution	7	31	51

Economy	33	40	50
Social Welfare Programs	6	18	39
Characteristics of the People	36	25	na
Contributions to Science	12	13	37
Contributions to the Arts	11	10	22
Other, no answer	43	39	50

Source: For 1959 and 1978: David P. Conradt, "Changing German Political Culture," In Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, eds., The Civic Culture Revisited (Boston, 1980), 230; for 1988: German General Social Survey cited in Peter Mohler, "Der Deutschen Stolz: Das Grundgesetz," Informationsdienst Soziale Indikatoren, 2 (July, 1989): 1-4.

It is important to note that by 1988 the political system was the area where Germans had the most pride. On the eve of unification, the institutions of the Federal Republic had even overtaken the economy, which had been the greatest source of postwar German national pride. Support for specific national symbols had also grown since 1949. The proportion of Germans stating that they feel "joyful" or "happy" when they see their black-red-gold national flag increased from 23 percent in 1951 to 60 percent by 1989. Solid majorities of Germans now considered national feelings of patriotism and pride to be important. In January, 1989 over 80 percent of West Germans felt that they could be just as proud of their country as the Americans, British or French.<sup>69</sup> With unification the final embargo on the discussion of the nation and nationalism would be lifted and a new round of discussions begin.<sup>70</sup>



### 3. The Double Burden of Memory:

The unexpected return of history in 1989/90 was bound to shake the fragile foundations of the separate post-war loyalties. In 1945 Hitler's defeat seemed to have ended history, since the dissolution of the Third Reich provided a negative closure to national development. Hence the post-war period appeared to many participants as a space beyond history, a timeless moment of recovery that at best constituted a post-script to the completed master narrative of Germany. With the fall of the wall, history returned with a vengeance, overthrowing Communism, liberating suppressed populations and redrawing the map of Eastern Europe.<sup>71</sup> The democratic awakening proved not only exhilarating but also threatening, since it upset Cold War certainties and thereby reopened previously settled questions of German identity.

In spite of the resumption of the national story, unification in effect doubled the burden of the German past in the twentieth century. As if the scars of the Nazi trauma were not enough, the collapse of the GDR added another failed dictatorship, set of collaborators or victims and demands for restitution. Just as personal memories of the Third Reich had begun to fade, fresh recollections of suffering under Communist repression took their place and the whole practical set of post-45 problems such as purging the civil service, persecuting criminal perpetrators and compensating their victims appeared to have returned in 1990. Some historians and publicists began to talk about a *doppelte Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, a double coming to terms with frightening pasts in which experiences

in dealing with the legacy of the first profoundly affected efforts to cope with the remains of the second.<sup>72</sup>

The public debate during the half-decade after unity has therefore been rife with historical allusions. Overwhelmed by the unexpected rush to German unity, many Easterners tried to regain orientation by reference to a longer time-frame. Just when they most needed a stable perspective, they were forced to realize that their larger conceptions of history had also crumbled with the fall of the wall. This loss of an accustomed past was more upsetting in the East, where the Marxist-Leninist interpretation of law-like development of a socialist nation had provided a clear direction for the future. Eventually some Western intellectuals also began to sense that the return of the national state might challenge their predictions of a post-national trajectory towards European integration as well.<sup>73</sup> The unification shock has therefore triggered a broad re-examination of the historical basis of German identities.

Since the shadows of the past could hardly be exorcized in general, this reconsideration surfaced in several specific debates. The ways in which painful events would be privately recalled, publicly discussed and politically memorialized offer clues to the role of the past in shaping the identity of a united Germany. The first area of soul-searching was the commemoration of World War Two which forced Germans to confront their own role in Hitler's carnage, because their neighbors insisted on celebrating their victory. In contrast to the emotional war-guilt debate about starting World War One, virtually everyone has, however, continued to accept Hitler's responsibility for unleashing the second Armageddon. If

there was a controversy, it focused on the reasons for the Russian campaign in 1941 instead. Though some rightist commentators allege that the Nazi attack only forestalled a planned Soviet invasion,<sup>74</sup> the public seemed unwilling to follow the tortured logic of such apologetics.

The evaluation of the German resistance provoked more heated altercations. While some outside observers have remained skeptical about the existence of wide-spread opposition to the Third Reich, both German successor states had drawn their legitimacy from a specific interpretation of the *Widerstand*. Bent on proving that it was the better anti-fascist Germany, the GDR had represented itself as the fulfillment of the dreams of the Communist resistance, wide-spread in working class circles. Interested in the continuity of national traditions, the FRG had instead celebrated the officers, bureaucrats and trade-union leaders that tried to assassinate Hitler in July 1944. When the resistance memorial in West Berlin dared to dedicate a small room to Communist opponents of the NS regime, conservative circles denounced such a broadening of memory as an insult to Hitler's bourgeois opponents.<sup>75</sup> But after much media discussion, liberal intellectuals succeeded in upholding the more inclusive version.

The commemoration of the War's end proved equally controversial, since it posed the alternative of defeat or liberation. While most Germans were relieved to have survived the killing, many soldiers and some civilians had experienced May of 1945 as the loss of the war. In contrast to such private feelings, the official histories of both German states saw the allied victory primarily as lib-

eration from Nazi dictatorship, only disagreeing on which savior to thank most. After unification the tenor of this debate shifted somewhat and for the first time personal memories of victimization through saturation bombing, lengthy imprisonment or mass expulsion from the East could be talked about openly. Interestingly enough, this outpouring of recollections of German suffering did not foster revanchist sentiment, but rather reinforced President Weizsäcker's paradoxical formula of liberation through defeat.<sup>76</sup>

On the whole, recent remembrances of the Second World War have become more inclusive rather than more nationalist. No doubt, there were some symbolic *faux pas*, such as Chancellor Kohl's misplaced desire to participate in the Normandy observances which François Mitterrand satisfied with a separate ceremony. But in the meantime critical intellectuals were able to attack the last taboo of the Second World War by charging that the *Wehrmacht* actively participated in the racial war of annihilation in the East. A provocative Hamburg exhibition showed countless snap-shots from individual soldiers that document military participation in persecution and extermination.<sup>77</sup> In spite of attempts to discredit Communist claims so as to establish the Western version of events, the commemoration of World War Two did not lead to revanchist outbursts but generally supported a reconciliation between the erstwhile belligerents.<sup>78</sup>

A second sensitive area of public debate, the issue of complicity in the Holocaust continues to be more difficult to discuss. After years of NS propaganda, Germans had found the horrifying pictures, disclosed at the liberation of the camps and broadcast during the Nuremberg Trials, hard to believe. While accusations of

survivors against the worst of the SS perpetrators could be dealt with through legal channels, questions about the role of the majority of the "decent" people proved disturbing, since they touched virtually everyone. In contrast to the nightmares of the victims, focused on their persecution, the recollections of most bystanders involve other kinds of suffering such as losing family members in the fighting or bombing as well as rape, expulsion and hunger. Supported only by a critical minority, demands for atonement were therefore seen as largely coming from the outside. (Unfortunately the controversy around the Goldhagen book has served to reinforce this view.)<sup>79</sup>

The two successor states were therefore only partly successful in dealing with these painful questions of German guilt. In the East the SED claimed to build a better Germany on the basis of anti-Fascist commitment that provided a clean break with the Nazi past. In spite of a rigorous personnel purge in justice and education, GDR practice did not live up to the ideal, since assigning guilt to "monopoly capitalism" absolved the majority of the people and failed to take anti-Semitism seriously.<sup>80</sup> In the West, the less thorough process of denazification allowed minor Nazis to survive and the rejection of collective guilt covered the sins of collaboration with silence. But a massive restitution program paid billions of DM to Jewish victims and eventually the critical minority succeeded in forcing a more honest confrontation with complicity in education or the media and in beating back revisionist efforts in the Historikerstreit.<sup>81</sup>

The effect of unification on this complex set of evasions and self-incriminations has been uneven. Once again the consequences have been more dramatic in the East, since the fall of the wall exposed the "instrumentalization" of anti-Fascism by the SED. During four GDR decades, genuine revulsion against Hitler had turned into a justification for a one-party dictatorship that provided an unchallengeable air of superior morality.<sup>82</sup> Portraying the Third Reich as the product of monopoly-capitalism justified the Communist expropriation of Junkers and factory owners in order to destroy the social basis of Nazism. At the same time, anti-Fascism offered a brown brush for tarring the Federal Republic with accusations of neo-Nazism. Since the democratic awakening in the fall of 1989 discredited anti-Fascism as an instrument of repression, it is unclear whether it also rendered the credibility of broader critiques of the Nazi past suspect.

In the West revisionist efforts have been unable to shake the public commitment to confronting the Holocaust. Initially Jewish fears that the crimes of the second dictatorship would overshadow the atrocities of the first seemed borne out by neo-conservative calls for an end to German self-mutilation. However, commemorations of the liberation of concentration camps like Buchenwald have kept the issue of German guilt in the public eye. The re-dedication of the Berlin memorial Neue Wache from victims of Fascism to all victims of war and repression may represent some dilution of the singularity of Jewish victimhood by referring also to German suffering. But public clamor for the construction of a huge Holocaust memorial close to the Brandenburg Gate shows continued awareness of

the need for a central place of symbolic memory. While this project is currently stalled by personal and artistic jealousies, its realization seems only a matter of time.<sup>83</sup>

The effect of the public controversies about Holocaust remembrance on popular attitudes is difficult to determine. Based on several surveys, a recent study concludes that the pessimist thesis of denial is inaccurate, since information about German responsibility for genocide is wide-spread and anti-Semitism is lower than in some other Western countries. As a legacy of prior indoctrination East Germans show a higher degree of anti-Fascist responses than West Germans, although even these still do comparatively well. On the Left, an unprejudiced minority of urban, younger and educated respondents has internalized a "Holocaust-identity" that accepts the shame of its fathers. In the middle an "ambivalent" and less clearly demarcated group knows about Nazi crimes and is not openly prejudiced, but wants "to draw a line" under the terrible past. The danger comes from the Right, where less than 10percent in the East and about double that number in the West resent the burden of guilt and show remnants of anti-Semitic biases.<sup>84</sup>

A third area of contention is the legacy of "real existing socialism." Coping with the debris of the GDR has proven particularly difficult, because it involves, contrary to ideological expectations, a failed dictatorship of the Left. Even if its imprisonment of much of the population seemed reprehensible, the SED-state could count on progressive sympathies, since it claimed to follow Enlightenment ideals of equality and fraternity. While dyed-in-the-

wool capitalists are triumphant about the collapse of Communism, leftist intellectuals are discouraged by the defeat of this imperfect version of their dreams.<sup>85</sup> The task is further complicated by altercations over *Ostpolitik*, with defenders claiming that the easing of human contacts undermined and critics asserting that the de-facto recognition of the SED stabilized the East German regime. Though the Left had a method to soften the border, it lacked the will to overthrow the SED, while the Right had the will but could not find a method to topple the Communists.

The media have largely reduced the discussion about the GDR to the Stasi-issue. Playing on the victims' resentment of the secret police, sensationalist disclosures have tainted the Eastern elite with collaboration so that hardly any prominent figure has escaped unscathed. Already during 1990 GDR politicians like CDU leader Lothar de Maizière were 'ousted' and subsequently such celebrities as the bobsledder Harald Czudaj or the writers Christa Wolf, Heiner Müller and Sascha Anderson were found to have been informal informants. To establish a checking procedure the unification treaty established a special "Federal Deputy for Secret Service Documents," popularly known as the Gauck-office according to its director.<sup>86</sup> Bitter discussions about the ambiguous role of Brandenburg SPD premier Manfred Stolpe or PDS leader Gregor Gysi have poisoned the climate of post-unification politics. Public furor over any Stasi connection has tended to make discussion of the actual quality of complicity difficult.

In spite of a resolve to do better the second time around, the courts have experienced great difficulties in punishing violations



of human rights by officials of the communist regime. Since the mass of records left by the collapse of the GDR made it possible to document transgressions, prosecutors were able to initiate numerous cases. While the judiciary did hand down modest sentences against the soldiers who shot fleeing East Germans at the Wall, it only succeeded in condemning for minor offenses those members of the SED leadership that were not too old to stand trial. Prominent defendants like Wolfgang Vogel or Alexander Schalck-Golodkowski protracted litigation and ultimately the Federal Supreme Court absolved most of the GDR's foreign espionage.<sup>87</sup> The key problem turned out to be the legal basis of the proceedings: Since the Unification Treaty stipulated that when defendants had violated East German laws, they could be held accountable, the courts proved generally helpless when contested actions were previously legal.

As a positive alternative offering information and education, the Bundestag in 1993 convened a special commission of inquiry into the GDR as political system. Led by the East German opposition pastor Rainer Eppelmann (CDU), this *Enquetekommission*, composed of legislators and historians, held a series of hearings into the basic features of the SED-state. Prompted by numerous specialists' briefs, commission members questioned prominent figures of the prior regime such as Hans Modrow (PDS) sought to defend their actions. Since the sessions were covered by television, these charges reached a broader audience than newspaper commentary or academic analysis. But with the approach of the 1994 election, the debates deteriorated into partisanship, with the CDU picturing Communism as evil, the SPD defending its *Ostpolitik* and the PDS

claiming to be victimized.<sup>88</sup> Split into competing majority and minority reports, the verdict remained inconclusive, forcing the commission to continue its work.

Much of the public debate is dominated by an accusatory discourse which paints the GDR as a repressive regime, an *Unrechtsstaat*. This critical recollection is primarily promoted by prior opponents of the SED in the civic movement and by Western anti-Communists who knew all along that it was wrong. Their language tends to be emotional, generalizing harshly about the fundamental illegitimacy of the East German regime. Its theoretical justification is a revived totalitarianism theory which, in the writings of Hannah Arendt, Carl Friedrich or Zbigniew Brezhinski, equated Fascist with Stalinist dictatorship during the hey-day of the Cold War. The political implication of such a condemnatory approach is the discrediting of everything East German and the demand for its replacement with superior Western practices. Instead of a flawed anti-Fascism the hardliners advocate anti-totalitarianism as the political consensus of the new Germany.<sup>89</sup>

Against such accusations, other voices are trying to establish a counter-discourse which sees the GDR in a more positive light. For many East Germans, especially intellectuals, and some Western sympathizers, the SED-system was instead a "noble experiment" that only failed due to unfortunate circumstances and mistaken policies. The rhetoric of these GDR defenders is more subdued, citing positive counter-examples like full employment or greater equality of incomes as basis for a more generous judgment. The apologists reject comparisons with the Third Reich as oversimplifications and

insist on the progressive aspirations of the socialist tradition while simultaneously distancing themselves from the excesses of its faulty implementation. The political purpose of this discourse is the regeneration of a post-Marxist opposition to Western colonization and the relegitimation of alternatives to capitalist exploitation.<sup>90</sup>

Some commentators also argue for a more differentiated view of the GDR that tries to avoid negative or positive myth-making. In the East especially reform communists and in the West primarily members of the moderate left see the East German state as a set of irresolvable contradictions between admirable and deplorable traits. Their language attempts to be more dispassionate in order to come to terms with the complexities and ambiguities of the subject. Departing from a comparative perspective of a modern dictatorship, they see one-party rule not just as repression from the top but also as cooperation and/or resistance on the bottom. In political terms, these moderates want to sort out which GDR attributes were inhumane and which others might be worth preserving for the future. Half a decade after unification, proponents of condemnation, amnesia and critical historicization continue to struggle for public and academic ascendancy.<sup>91</sup>

A final battleground is the issue of renationalization of German identity. The unexpected restoration of the national state has posed the question of what to do with a political organization that was thought to have been left behind. The rush to German unity in 1990 not only overwhelmed the GDR theory of a separate "socialist nation" but also threw the FRG thesis of a "postnational" self-

consciousness into doubt.<sup>92</sup> The reconceptualization of the mission of the central historical museums illustrates this dilemma. The exhibition of the East Berlin Armory which showed the growth of socialist separatism quickly had to be closed; but Helmut Kohl's plans for a post-modern museum of national history in West Berlin also had to be dropped so that its contents could be used to refurbish the Eastern Zeughaus as a showplace of the national past; and finally the "House of History" in Bonn which was to celebrate a distinctive Western sense of self had to be transformed through the addition of GDR material into a memorial to post-war partition.

Under the banner of "normalization" the Right is vigorously promoting a return to a national identity. Viewing the nation as a "natural" category, many conservatives hail unification as the end of the aberration of division and therefore call for a self-conscious resumption of a chastened version of German traditions. For instance, CDU leader Wolfgang Schäuble asserts that "the bond which holds a community together and creates identity is the nation." In foreign policy, this reorientation motivates the re-emergence of geopolitical thought-patterns about Germany as land of the middle and inspires calls for greater assertiveness in the name of presumed "national interests." Domestically, such an attitude supports an affirmative perspective to the German past that minimizes problematic legacies and it feeds a sense of ethnic exclusiveness towards foreigners.<sup>93</sup> While the rightist fringe aggressively promotes this renationalization, less extreme versions of such views are also starting to influence centrist circles to some degree.

In contrast, a defensive Left tries to cling to its rejection of nationalism. Understanding the nation as a constructed category, intellectuals blame nationalism for the disasters of German history and warn insistently against falling back into national categories. For example, Günter Grass, who once propagated the maintenance of cultural ties to the East, invokes Auschwitz as symbol of the Holocaust to oppose unification by arguing that a return to nation-state thinking would automatically lead to similar disasters. Abroad, critics oppose the use of military force on the basis of the neighbors' recollections of World War Two and promote a wider European or international consciousness. At home, they advocate openness to immigration and multicultural cooperation between the various ethnic groups that make up about 8 percent of all the people living in the FRG.<sup>94</sup> In effect, intellectuals want to retain their regional or trans-national pre-unification identities.

Between these fronts, some moderates are trying to establish a democratic patriotism. Aware of the terrible excesses of nationalism in the past, they nonetheless argue for a "new foundation of the German nation" in order to stabilize the enlarged FRG. In this vein, the East Berlin SPD spokesman and theologian Richard Schröder calls for accepting his "difficult fatherland" with both its guilt and achievements. On the one hand these intermediaries find the intellectuals' "constitutional patriotism" too cold to provide a firm basis for popular loyalty to democracy, which according to Western examples also requires emotional bonding. But on the other hand, they reject the ethnic nationalism of the Right in favor of a constitutional patriotism which propagates an open conception of

citizenship that accepts multicultural differences.<sup>95</sup> Such moderates want to prevent the return of a militant nationalism so to speak through an inoculation with democratic patriotism.

Five years after unification it is still unclear which of these tendencies will win out in the long run. To gain support, re-nationalization advocates have claimed to be speaking for a more traditionalist generation of 1989 which is trying to undo the damage wrought by its rebellious predecessor, the generation of 1968. On closer inspection the fronts in this generational struggle for opinion leadership are curiously reversed. It is the aging former radicals who occupy many key positions in the media or in academe and who are now trying to defend their post-national conceptions against a neo-conservative group of younger intellectuals in their 30s and 40s who use their national battle-cry to advance their own careers.<sup>96</sup> Ironically, the really young in their late teens and early twenties have hardly taken sides so far, making the outcome of this conflict between the self-styled generations uncertain.

Instead of a massive shift back to the nation, there have been subtle signs of a gradual de-tabuization of national feelings. Media anxiety about the ugly and deplorable incidents of xenophobia may be somewhat misleading, since opinion surveys show that such feelings are limited to a small minority. The electoral failure of the neo-Nazi parties and the outpouring of mass support for tolerance show that the skin-head milieu is limited to dispirited and unemployed youths, supported by some incorrigible adults.<sup>97</sup> Instead, what has been noticeable is greater pride and use of national sym-

bols during international sports events such as the European soccer championships, such as the waving of black-red-gold flags and choruses of "Deutschland, Deutschland." Also Chancellor Kohl's references to the word "fatherland" no longer seem quite as quaint as before and in a linguistic shift the word "Germany" is making somewhat of a comeback as a self-evident category, without first having to be defined politically.

#### 4. Living with the Ghosts:

What does the burden of history suggest for the restructuring of German identities in the last decade of the twentieth century? In contrast to the legacy of other democracies, the German past is hardly a source of pride or inspiration, but rather an occasion for collective embarrassment and shame. While medieval glories seem safe enough and there is much early modern artistic creativity and scientific achievement to admire, more recent times are deeply problematic due to their political instability that culminated in two dictatorships. It is a continuing irritant that the bulk of the German population collaborated willingly with the Third Reich and even the SED-regime could draw some internal support from the legacy of Marx and the KPD.<sup>98</sup> The experience of this double repression has left more ghosts, complicating self-conceptions, than in those countries where it was imposed largely from the outside.

In long-term perspective, the unexpected reunification once again rearranged cultural patterns of identity. The excesses of Hitler's aggression and genocide had so discredited the Barbarossa myth as to break off the ethnic strain of nationalism after 1945.

Surprisingly quickly the very term *Reich* disappeared from political vocabulary, sounding out of place where it remained as in the GDR railroad, the *Reichsbahn*. Instead the Germans were thrown back upon the 18th-century notion of the *Kulturnation*, a cultural unity sustained by intellectuals speaking a common language. Coming to terms with the terrible Nazi legacy was one of the strongest bonds, uniting East and West during division. While both post-war states claimed to carry on the Schillerian tradition, it was the Western version of capitalist democracy that eventually succeeded in realizing Tell's imperative.<sup>99</sup> The rejection of the imperial myth made it possible to progress from cultural community once more to political freedom combined with unity.

The historical foundation of this democratic nation state is, however, fiercely contested. In the construction of a new master narrative, alternative memories confront one another in a battle for cultural hegemony over a united Germany. The Right generally wants to return to those national traditions that were not tarnished too badly and it promotes an assertive and ethnically exclusive stance. The slogan of normalization implies leaving behind the traumas of the past and constructing a new German identity out of the purified materials of a nation state. In contrast the Left wishes to hold on to a post-war post-nationalism that had fled from German self-conceptions towards new American, Communist or European identities. In the critical perspectives, the terrors of history prohibit any resumption of normalcy and forever mandate a German sense of guilt and contrition. In a nutshell, current struggles re-



volve around the issue which of these appropriations of the past will win out.<sup>100</sup>

Instead of subsiding, the debates about history have intensified in the wake of unification. Although remembrances of the Second World War, recollections of the Holocaust and judgments about the GDR are separate arenas, these debates are linked by cross-cutting attitudes towards national identity. Some changes in the prior appropriations have already become noticeable. Most dramatically, the communist interpretation of history has lost credibility, personnel and infrastructure as a result of the dissolution of the GDR Academy and the restructuring of universities. At the same time, proponents of renationalization, once considered a lunatic fringe, are making some inroads and their theses, such as the critique of Westernization, are being debated more seriously. Moreover, some of the hysterical self-criticism that was fixated on German crimes alone appears to be waning and a more balanced appropriation that also allows references to German suffering seems to emerge.<sup>101</sup>

Five years after unity, only the barest outlines of a possible consensus are becoming visible. The unforeseen return of a single state is likely to re-establish the saliency of the national level of German identities that range from the regional to the European. Unlike in the 19th century where unity was the result of a national movement, during the second unification the common state precedes national consciousness; therefore it is the restored, if shrunken polity that is likely to spark efforts to fill it with a new shared identity. In order to justify the collection of taxes and the re-

quirement of military service, states tend to promote the loyalty of their citizens. Though the enlarged FRG is far from unleashing nationalist propaganda, civic education is bound to propagate a sense of collective responsibility, if only to justify financial transfers to the East.<sup>102</sup> Does not the entire debate about the prospects of internal unity revolves around the presumption of a common destiny?

Ultimately, the current reconfiguration depends to a considerable degree upon which lessons are learned from Germany's traumatic history. So far, foreign fears of the establishment of a "Fourth Reich" have proven grossly exaggerated since the neo-Nazi movement is smaller than its counterparts in Italy or France.<sup>103</sup> At the same time, attempts to perpetuate a post-national stance via Holocaust guilt seem to evoke fewer responses, since they imply the perpetuation of a negative German exceptionalism. The current challenge is rather to develop a chastened version of identity that accepts the entirety of the past, with all its achievements and disasters, as a mandate for a more peaceful future. In order to "pay off our debts together" the East German theologian Richard Schröder counsels: "We have to unite our histories." If they foreswear external hegemony for the sake of European cooperation and renounce internal exclusiveness in favor of multicultural openness, the new Germans at last have a chance to construct a more stable sense of their identities.<sup>104</sup>

---

 FOOTNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Gerhard Schmittchen, Was den Deutschen heilig ist (Munich, 1979).
- <sup>2</sup> Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism (London, 1983). Cf. also Lloyd S. Kramer, "Nations as Texts: Literary Theory and the History of Nationalism," The Maryland Historian, 24 (1993): 71-82.
- <sup>3</sup> Georg G. Iggers, The German Conception of History (Middletown, 1968).
- <sup>4</sup> Friedrich Meinecke, Die deutsche Katastrophe. Betrachtungen und Erinnerungen (Wiesbaden, 1946). Michael Geyer and Konrad H. Jarasch, "Great Men and Postmodern Ruptures: Overcoming the 'Belatedness of German Historiography'," German Studies Review, 18 (1995): 253-273.
- <sup>5</sup> Konrad H. Jarasch, "The Failure of East German Antifascism: Ironies of History as Politics," German Studies Review, 14 (1991): 84-102; and Alf Lüdtke, "'Coming to Terms with the Past': Illusions of Remembering, Ways of Forgetting Nazism in West Germany," Journal of Modern History 65 (1993): 542-572.
- <sup>6</sup> Ulrich Battis et al., eds., Vergangenheitsbewältigung durch das Recht (Berlin, 1992); Manfred Kittel, Die Legende von der 'zweiten Schuld'. Vergangenheitsbewältigung in der Ära Adenauer (Berlin, 1993).
- <sup>7</sup> Konrad H. Jarasch, Die Unverhoffte Einheit (Frankfurt, 1995); and "Normalisierung oder Renationalisierung," Geschichte und Gesellschaft, 21 (1995): 559-572.

---

<sup>8</sup> Benjamin Anderson, Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism (London, 1983), 13: "My point of departure is that nationality, or, as one might prefer to put it in view of the word's multiple significations, nation-ness, as well as nationalism, are cultural artefacts of a particular kind."

<sup>9</sup> Friedrich Carl von Moser, Von dem deutschen Nationalgeist, (Frankfurt, 1766), 7, 23.

<sup>10</sup> Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, "Hamburgische Dramaturgie" (1766), in Werke, Herbert G. Göpfert, ed., (Munich, 1973), 8: 698.

<sup>11</sup> Friedrich Schiller, "Was kann eine gute stehende Schaubühne eigentlich wirken?" (1785), in dtv Gesamtausgabe (Munich, 1966), 20: 24.

<sup>12</sup> Schiller, "Das Deutsche Reich" (1795), in dtv Gesamtausgabe, 2: 30.

<sup>13</sup> Johann Heinrich Campe, Wörterbuch der Deutschen Sprache. Erster Theil (Braunschweig, 1807), 23.

<sup>14</sup> Jürgen Fohrmann, Das Projekt der deutschen Literaturgeschichte (Stuttgart, 1989) and Hinrich C. Seeba, "Germany -- a Literary Concept? The Myth of National Literature," German Studies Review 17 (1994): 353-369.

<sup>15</sup> A. F. C. Vilmar, Geschichte der Deutschen National-Litteratur (1844). 25th edition (Marburg, 1901).

<sup>16</sup> Georg Gottfried Gervinus, Geschichte der poetischen National-Literatur der Deutschen. Erster Theil (Leipzig, 1846), 9 f.: "I would like to see that artful historian who could leave us consoled after portraying the present political condition of Germany. In contrast,

---

the history of German poetry seemed as interesting in its inner constitution as it is attractive due to its value and our contemporary needs."

<sup>17</sup> Jacob Grimm, Deutsches Wörterbuch, vol. 1 (Leipzig, 1854).

<sup>18</sup> H. H. Houben, Verbotene Literatur von der klassischen Zeit bis zur Gegenwart (Berlin, 1924), 563-567.

<sup>19</sup> Karl Tropus, Nach dem 10. November 1859, in Schiller-Denkmal (Berlin, 1860), 1: 7. Cf. Hinrich C. Seeba, "Auferstehung des Geistes. Zur religiösen Rhetorik nationaler Einheit," in "Nicht allein mit den Worten." Festschrift für Joachim Dyck zum 60. Geburtstag, Gert Ueding, ed., (Stuttgart, 1995), 206-221.

<sup>20</sup> This strain has largely been forgotten. Cf. Konrad H. Jarausch, "The Sources of German Student Unrest, 1815-1848," Lawrence Stone, ed., The University in Society (Princeton, 1974), 2: 533 ff.

<sup>21</sup> John L. Snell, The Democratic Movement in Germany, 1789-1914 (Chapel Hill, 1976); Vernon L. Lidtke, The Alternative Culture: Socialist Labor in Imperial Germany (New York, 1985).

<sup>22</sup> Friedrich Schiller, "Wilhelm Tell," in dtv Gesamtausgabe (Munich, 1966), 8: 138.

<sup>23</sup> It was Fontane who in his very first theater review commented on the nationalist fervor of this premiere on August 17, 1870; "Schiller - Wilhelm Tell," in Sämtliche Werke, Walter Keitel, ed., series III (Munich, 1969) 2: 5 f.

<sup>24</sup> Günther Rühle, Theater für die Republik 1917-1933 im Spiegel der Kritik (Frankfurt, 1967), 190.

---

<sup>25</sup> For example, the Zeitschrift für Deutschkunde proclaimed in 1934 that every German teacher should interpret the famous Rütli line as "the meaning of our national uprising" (quoted in program notes for Hansgünther Heyme's production of Wilhelm Tell in Stuttgart, season 1984-85).

<sup>26</sup> Friedrich Luft, "Die erste Premiere der Berliner Festspiele" in Schiller spielen. Stimmen der Theaterkritik 1946-1985. Eine Dokumentation, Ferdinand Piedmont, ed., (Darmstadt, 1990), 252 f.

<sup>27</sup> Johann Gottlieb Fichte, Reden an die deutsche Nation (1808), in Ausgewählte Werke in sechs Bänden, Fritz Medicus, ed., (Darmstadt, 1962), 5: 562.

<sup>28</sup> Hinrich C. Seeba, "Fabelhafte Einheit: Von deutschen Mythen und nationaler Identität," in Zwischen Traum und Trauma: Die Nation. Transatlantische Perspektiven zur Geschichte eines Problems, Claudia Mayer-Iswandy, ed., (Tübingen, 1994), 59-74.

<sup>29</sup> Friedrich Rückert, "Kaiser Friedrich im Kyffhäuser" (1817), in Werke in sechs Bänden, Conrad Beyer, ed., vol. 1, part 1: Lyrik (Leipzig, n.d.), 50.

<sup>30</sup> Karl Biedermann, "Nation, Nationalität," in Das Staats-Lexikon. Ed. by Karl von Rotteck and Karl Welcker (Leipzig, 1864), 10: 317.

<sup>31</sup> Hinrich C. Seeba, "'Einigkeit und Recht und Freiheit': The German Quest for National Identity in the Nineteenth Century," in Concepts of National Identity. An Interdisciplinary Dialogue. Interdisziplinäre Betrachtungen zur Frage der nationalen Identität, Peter Boerner, ed., (Baden-Baden, 1986), 153-166.

---

<sup>32</sup> Justus Möser, "Über die deutsche Sprache und Literatur. Schreiben an einen Freund" (1781), in Anwalt des Vaterlands. Wochenschriften, Patriotische Phantasien, Aufsätze, Fragmente (Leipzig, 1978), 409.

<sup>33</sup> Ludwig Wachler, Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der deutschen Nationallitteratur (Frankfurt, 1818-19), 1: 3.

<sup>34</sup> Wilhelm Marr, Der Sieg des Judentums über das Germanentum (Berlin, 1879). Cf. also Mosche Zimmermann, Wilhelm Marr, the Patriarch of Anti-Semitism (New York, 1986).

<sup>35</sup> Heinrich Heine, "Elementargeister" (1835), in Sämtliche Schriften, Klaus Briegleb, ed., (Munich, 1971) 3: 1020.

<sup>36</sup> Heinrich Heine, "Ludwig Börne. Eine Denkschrift" (1840), in Sämtliche Schriften, 4: 119.

<sup>37</sup> Heinrich Heine, "Die Bäder von Lucca" [1829], in: Sämtliche Schriften, 2: 406. For Goethe's similar skepticism about the mythical nature of Germany, cf. his letter to Karl Friedrich Zelter, 27 July 1807, in Briefe, Karl Robert Mandelkow, ed., (Hamburg, 1966) 3: 47.

<sup>38</sup> Theodore S. Hamerow, The Social Foundations of German Unification, 1858-1871 (Princeton, 1969-1972), 2 vols.

<sup>39</sup> See Otto Pflanze, Bismarck and the Development of Germany (Princeton, 1963-1990), 3 vols; Lothar Gall, Bismarck, the White Revolutionary (London, 1986); and Ernst Engelberg, Bismarck (Berlin, 1985-1990), 2 vols.

<sup>40</sup> Heinrich von Treitschke, "Unsere Aussichten" (November 1879), in Der Berliner Antisemitismusstreit, Walter Boehlich, ed., (Frankfurt, 1988), 13.

- 
- <sup>41</sup> [Julius Langbehn], Rembrandt als Erzieher. Von einem Deutschen 42nd edition (Leipzig, 1893), 349.
- <sup>42</sup> Albrecht Timm, Der Kyffhäuser im deutschen Geschichtsbild (Göttingen, 1961), 24.
- <sup>43</sup> Quoted from Theodor Nipperdey, "Nationalidee und Nationaldenkmal in Deutschland im 19. Jahrhundert," Historische Zeitschrift 206 (1968): 545.
- <sup>44</sup> All speeches at the ceremony were printed in Deutscher Reichsanzeiger und Königlich Preußischer Staatsanzeiger 144, (18 June 1896).
- <sup>45</sup> Georg Lachmann Mosse, The Nationalization of the Masses: Political Symbolism and Mass Movements in Germany (New York, 1975).
- <sup>46</sup> Friedrich Paulsen, Geschichte des gelehrten Unterrichts, 3rd ed., Rudolf Lehmann (Berlin, 1921), 2: 686 f. Cf. also Roger Chickering, We Men Who Feel Most German: A Cultural Study of the Pan-German League, 1884-1914 (Boston, 1984).
- <sup>47</sup> In contrast to the vast literature on nationalism, the symbolic efforts at rooting democracy in Germany have been studied too little. Cf. Heinrich August Winkler, Weimar, 1918-1933. Die Geschichte der ersten deutschen Demokratie (Munich, 1993).
- <sup>48</sup> Gerhard L. Weinberg, A World at War: A Global History of World War Two (Cambridge, 1994).
- <sup>49</sup> Institut für Zeitgeschichte, ed., Deutscher Sonderweg. Mythos oder Realität? (Munich, 1982); and Helga Grebing, Der "deutsche Sonderweg" in Europa, 1806-1945. Eine Kritik (Stuttgart, 1986).



---

<sup>50</sup> Peter Hoffmann, The German Resistance to Hitler (Cambridge, 1988); and Michael Geyer, ed., Resistance Against the Third Reich, 1933-1990 (Chicago, 1994).

<sup>51</sup> Military government surveys cited in Anna J. and Richard L. Merritt, eds., Public Opinion in Occupied Germany (Urbana, 1970), 16-17.

<sup>52</sup> Merritt and Merritt, Public Opinion, 24-25.

<sup>53</sup> Ralf Dahrendorf, Gesellschaft und Freiheit (Munich, 1962), 318.

<sup>54</sup> This privatization was analyzed in an excellent study by the late German sociologist Friedrich Tenbruck, "Alltagsnormen und Lebensgefühle in der Bundesrepublik," in Richard Löwenthal and Hans-Peter Schwarz, eds., Die Zweite Republik (Stuttgart, 1974), 289-310. Public opinion polls at that time also registered this indifference through the high proportion of "no opinion" and "don't know" responses. In one study, only 15 percent of a national sample, for example, had an opinion on the Basic Law being drafted at the time in Bonn.

<sup>55</sup> Ralf Dahrendorf, Gesellschaft und Freiheit (Munich, 1961), 304. See also the insightful essay by Leonard Krieger, "The Potential for Democratization in Occupied Germany: A Problem in Historical Projection," Public Policy, 17 (1968): 27-58. The very depth of this *Umbruch* also brought to German society new possibilities for democratization.

<sup>56</sup> Walter Friedrich, "Mentalitätswandlungen der Jugend in der DDR," Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte, 16-17 (April 13, 1990): 25-37.

---

<sup>57</sup> EMNID surveys cited in David P. Conradt, "Changing German Political Culture," in Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, eds., The Civic Culture Revisited (Boston, 1980), 227-228.

<sup>58</sup> Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann, Jahrbuch der öffentlichen Meinung, (Allensbach, 1968-1973) 5: 525. The most comprehensive record of public opinion polls for the postwar period can be found in this nine volume Jahrbuch der öffentlichen Meinung (published between 1947 and 1992), which contains the work of the Institut für Demoskopie. The senior editor for all volumes is the Institute's founder and director, Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann.

<sup>59</sup> Jahrbuch für öffentliche Meinung, passim.

<sup>60</sup> For German and comparative data on this point see Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann and Renate Köcher, Die Verletzte Nation (Stuttgart, 1987), 17-71.

<sup>61</sup> Helmut Hanke and Thomas Koch, "Zum Problem der kulturellen Identität," Weimarer Beiträge, 8 (1985): 1237-1264.

<sup>62</sup> Karl-Rudolf Korte, Die Chance Genutzt? Die Politik zur Einheit Deutschlands (Frankfurt, 1994), 85: "Isolation from the state and withdrawal into the 'niche-society' of the GDR offered security and human warmth in a milieu remote from politics. This was a version of compensatory identification, born out of the manifold economic and democratic deficits of the GDR."

<sup>63</sup> Timothy Garton Ash, In Europe's Name: Germany and the Divided Continent (New York, 1993), 189.

<sup>64</sup> Ash, In Europe's Name, 104-105.

- 
- <sup>65</sup> Gebhard Schweigler, National Consciousness in Divided Germany (Beverly Hills, 1975).
- <sup>66</sup> Eugen Gerstenmaier, Neuer Nationalismus? Von der Wandlung der Deutschen (Stuttgart, 1965), 6-10.
- <sup>67</sup> Jahrbuch der öffentlichen Meinung, (1976) 6: 55.
- <sup>68</sup> Ash, In Europe's Name, 248-250.
- <sup>69</sup> Jahrbuch der öffentlichen Meinung, (1992) 9: 394.
- <sup>70</sup> Ernst-Wolfgang Bockenförde, "Die Nation," Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, September 30, 1995.
- <sup>71</sup> Udo Wengst, Historiker betrachten Deutschland (Bonn, 1992); and Jarasch, Unverhoffte Einheit, 278 ff.
- <sup>72</sup> Christoph Kleßmann, "Das Problem der doppelten 'Vergangenheitsbewältigung'," Die Neue Gesellschaft 38 (1991): 1099-1105; Eberhard Jäckel, "Die doppelte Vergangenheit," Der Spiegel 52 (1991): 39 ff.
- <sup>73</sup> Jürgen Kocka, Die Vereinigungskrise. Zur Geschichte der Gegenwart (Göttingen, 1995), 83 ff, 151 ff. Cf. Stefan Berger's forthcoming book on the re-nationalization of German historiography (Providence, 1996).
- <sup>74</sup> Ernst Nolte, Der Europäische Bürgerkrieg 1917-1945. Nationalsozialismus und Bolschewismus (Frankfurt, 1987).
- <sup>75</sup> Peter Steinbach, Widerstreit im Widerstand. Der Widerstand gegen den NS in der Erinnerung der Deutschen (Schönigh, 1994).
- <sup>76</sup> Christoph Kleßmann, Befreiung durch Zerstörung. Das Jahr 1945 in der deutschen Geschichte (Hanover, 1995); Konrad H. Jarasch, "Zwischen Niederlage und Befreiung. Das Jahr 1945 und die

---

Kontinuitäten deutscher Geschichte," Gewerkschaftliche Monatshefte, May 1995.

<sup>77</sup> "Wir hatten geglaubt, wir könnten anständig bleiben," Die Zeit, March 3, 1995. Cf. Jost Dülffer, Führerglaube und Vernichtungskrieg (Stuttgart, 1992); and Ernst Klee und Willi Dressen, eds., 'Gott mit uns'. Der deutsche Vernichtungskrieg im Osten, 1939-1945 (Frankfurt, 1989).

<sup>78</sup> Bernd Weisbrod, "Der 8. Mai in der deutschen Erinnerung," (MS. Göttingen, 1995); Kurt Sontheimer, "Selbstverständlich war dies nicht," Süddeutsche Zeitung, July 21, 1995.

<sup>79</sup> Peter Dudek, "Vergangenheitsbewältigung. Zur Problematik eines umstrittenen Begriffes," Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte (1992) B 1-2: 44-53. Cf. also Richard Matthias Müller, Normal-Null und die Zukunft der deutschen Vergangenheitsbewältigung (Schernfeld, 1994).

<sup>80</sup> Jürgen Danyel, "Die geteilte Vergangenheit. Gesellschaftliche Ausgangslagen und politische Dispositionen für den Umgang mit Nationalsozialismus und Widerstand in beiden deutschen Staaten nach 1949," in Jürgen Kocka, ed., Historische DDR-Forschung (Berlin, 1993): 129 ff.

<sup>81</sup> Charles S. Maier, The Unmasterable Past: History, Holocaust and German National Identity (Cambridge, 1988); and Konrad H. Jarausch, "Removing the Nazi Stain? The Quarrel of the German Historians," German Studies Review 11 (1988): 285 ff.

<sup>82</sup> Jürgen Danyel, "Antifaschismus und Verdrängung. Zum Umgang mit der NS-Vergangenheit in der DDR," in Jürgen Kocka and Martin

---

Sabrow, eds., Die DDR als Geschichte (Berlin, 1994), 148-152; and Jarusch, "The Failure of East German Anti-Fascism," 85 ff.

<sup>83</sup> Jane Kramer, "The Politics of Memory," The New Yorker, August 14, 1995.

<sup>84</sup> Hermann Kurthen, "Antisemitism, Xenophobia and How United Germany Copes with the Past," in idem and Werner Bergmann and Rainer Erb, eds., Antisemitism and Xenophobia in Germany after Unification (New York, 1996). Cf. also Bernd Giesen, Die Intellektuellen und die Nation. Eine deutsche Achsenzeit (Frankfurt, 1993), 236-255.

<sup>85</sup> Rainer Eckert, Ilko-Sascha Kowalczyk and Ulrike Poppe, eds., Wer schreibt die DDR-Geschichte? (Berlin, 1995). Cf. Konrad H.

Jarusch, "The Double Disappointment: Revolution, Unification and German Intellectuals," in Michael Geyer, ed., The Powers of Intellectuals in Contemporary Germany (Chicago, 1997).

<sup>86</sup> Joachim Gauck, Die Stasi-Akten. Das unheimliche Erbe der DDR (Hamburg, 1991); and Albrecht Schönherr, ed., Ein Volk am Pranger? Die Deutschen auf der Suche nach einer neuen politischen Kultur (Berlin, 1991).

<sup>87</sup> Dieter Schroeder, "Ein Staat -- Zwei Nationen," Süddeutsche Zeitung, Oct. 3, 1995.

<sup>88</sup> Deutscher Bundestag, Referat Öffentlichkeitsarbeit, Bericht der Enquete-Kommission "Aufarbeitung von Geschichte und Folgen der SED-Diktatur in Deutschland (Bonn, 1994). The dozens of Gutachten have just been published as separate volumes.

<sup>89</sup> Konrad H. Jarusch, "History as Politics: Discourses on GDR Historiography," forthcoming in Wolfgang J. Mommsen, ed., The

---

Soviet System and Historiography, 1917-1989: The Influence of Marxism-Leninism on the Historical Sciences (1996).

<sup>90</sup> Rainer Eckert, "Strukturen, Umfeldorganisationen und Geschichtsbild der PDS," Horch und Guck 4 (1995): 1-15.

<sup>91</sup> Jürgen Kocka, "Die Geschichte der DDR als Forschungsproblem," in idem, ed., Historische DDR-Forschung (Berlin, 1993), 9-26; and "Sackgasse aus dem Sonderweg -- Zum Ort der DDR in der europäischen und deutschen Geschichte," in Die DDR als Geschichte, 197 ff.

<sup>92</sup> Jarasch, "Normalisierung oder Renationalisierung? Zur Umdeutung der deutschen Vergangenheit," 559-572.

<sup>93</sup> Wolfgang Schäuble, Und der Zukunft zugewandt (Berlin, 1994); Heimo Schwilk and Ulrich Schacht, eds., Die selbstbewußte Nation (Frankfurt, 1994); and Hans-Peter Schwarz, Die Zentralmacht Europas. Deutschlands Rückkehr auf die Weltbühne (Berlin, 1994).

<sup>94</sup> Günter Grass, Ein weites Feld (Göttingen, 1995); Peter Glotz, Die falsche Normalisierung. Die unmerkliche Verwandlung der Deutschen (Frankfurt, 1994); and Hans-Ulrich Wehler, "Angst vor der Macht? Die Machtlust der Neuen Rechten," Heft 8 Gesprächskreis Geschichte (Bonn, 1995).

<sup>95</sup> Richard Schröder, Deutschland, schwierig Vaterland. Für eine neue politische Kultur (Freiburg, 1993); Christian Maier, Die Nation, die keine sein will (Munich, 1991); and Heinrich August Winkler, "Nationalismus, Nationalstaat und nationale Frage in Deutschland seit 1945," Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte 1991, B 40, 12 ff.

- 
- <sup>96</sup> Ulrich Greiner, "Die Neunundachtziger," Die Zeit, Sept. 16 1994; and Rainer Zitelmann, "Position und Begriff. Über eine neue demokratische Rechte," Die selbstbewußte Nation, 163 ff.
- <sup>97</sup> Felix Philip Lutz, "Verantwortungsbewußtsein und Wohlstandschauvinismus Die Bedeutung historisch-politischer Einstellungen der Deutschen nach der Einheit," in Werner Weidenfeld, ed, Deutschland. Eine Nation -- doppelte Geschichte (Cologne, 1993), 157 ff; as well as youth-survey in Der Spiegel, 38 (1994).
- <sup>98</sup> Cordt Schnibben, "Das deutsche Wesen," Der Spiegel, 50 (1993); Irmline Veit-Brause, "Rethinking de State of the Nation: The Case of Germany," Yearbook of European Studies 7 (1994): 205-234.
- <sup>99</sup> Hinrich C. Seeba, "Fabelhafte Einheit: Von deutschen Mythen und nationaler Identität," in Zwischen Traum und Trauma, 59 ff. Cf. also Otto Dann, Nation und Nationalismus in Deutschland 1770-1990 (Munich, 1993), 297 ff.
- <sup>100</sup> Antonia Grunenberg, ed., Welche Geschichte wählen wir? (Hamburg, 1992); and Konrad H. Jarausch, "Die Postnationale Nation: Zum Identitätswandel der Deutschen 1945-1995," Historicum, (Spring 1995): 30-35.
- <sup>101</sup> Eckhart Fuchs, "'Mehr als ein Koffer bleibt:' Gedanken zu den gegenwärtigen Geschichtskulturen in Deutschland," Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft.
- <sup>102</sup> Heinrich August Winkler, "Rebuilding a Nation: The Germans Before and After Unification," Daedalus 123 (Winter 1994): 107 ff.

---

<sup>103</sup> Conor Cruise O'Brien, "Beware the Reich is Reviving," Times, Oct. 31, 1989; and Helno Sana, Das vierte Reich. Deutschlands später Sieg (Hamburg, 1990).

<sup>104</sup> Richard Schröder, "Gemeinsam die Hypotheken abtragen," Die Zeit, Sept. 29, 1995; Jürgen Kocka, "Deutsche Entscheidungen. Rückblick und Ausblick 1995," in Vereinigungskrise, 170 ff.



