THE PAST AS STORY AND MODEL.
THE NARRATION OF HISTORY IN POSTWAR GERMAN LITERATURE AND FILM.

MARK. S. W. PALMER.

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## CONTENTS.

### INTRODUCTION.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER ONE: FROM STRATEGIES OF EVASION TO INITIAL NARRATIVES OF CONFRONTATION.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction: &quot;The Inability to Tell Stories.&quot; Evasions and Silences in West German Society and Culture in the 1950s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Günter Grass <em>Die Blechtrommel</em>: Provocative Tales from an Evaded Past.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max Frisch <em>Andorra</em>: Confronting Dramatically Collective Amnesia.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER TWO: ENTERING SPACES BETWEEN LITERATURE AND HISTORY.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alexander Kluge <em>Die Schlachtbeschreibung</em>: The Novel Documents an Organised Disaster.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Weiss <em>Die Ermittlung</em>: A Documentary Oratorio on the System of Annihilation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER THREE: CINEMA TAKES UP THE NARRATION OF THE GERMAN PAST.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction: The German Autumn, Holocaust and the Narration of the Past in Film.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volker Schlöndorff's Interpretation of <em>Die Blechtrommel</em>: Literature Transformed into Film.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander Kluge <em>Die Patriotin</em>: Suggestions for a Counter Version of History.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edgar Reitz <em>Heimat</em>: Film Chronicles the German Past.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| REFERENCES. |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY. |
THE PAST AS STORY AND MODEL: THE NARRATION OF HISTORY IN POSTWAR GERMAN LITERATURE AND FILM.

INTRODUCTION.

A culture makes sense of its past through the placing of events in narrative structures. The accounts of the past it produces are the most revealing indicators of the prevailing attitudes and problems within a society. Such accounts may take on the form of historical writing, literature or film, but common to each of them is the act of narration. It may also occur that a society fails to produce such narratives. Such a failure is revealing when examining the cultural life of the Federal Republic of West Germany in the immediate postwar period. Both poet and historian failed to produce accounts of the past which referred "to present needs and present situations wherein those past events vibrate" (Croce)\(^1\) in such a way as to confront and to provoke a debate with the past. At this time, the historian clung to his archives and libraries, but with these were produced accounts with an antiseptic quality\(^2\), cool and detached, where the reader floundered in an ocean of factual detail. An increase in knowledge did not lead to a corresponding increase in understanding. Calculated objectivity, Ranke's "wie es eigentlich gewesen", was adhered to, with the resulting production of an intellectually bureaucratic language. In a similar way, the poet remained attached to his traditional inheritance, to the detriment of his participation in historical questions. He ignored all the documentary historical material stuffed full of characters and incidents for the sake of an isolated realm of private experience, or for parabolic utterances which ignored the pleas of past events to be articulated. The poet and historian had no fertile relationship: the historian was firmly tied to his facts and documents, leaving himself little room for the sort of accounts which could provoke a debate with the past, or for a questioning of the appropriateness of his language, whilst the poet refused to move out of his garret and step into the street, preferring a self-imposed exile of "inner truth".

This situation in the postwar period is a crystallisation of a debate on the differentiation between the tasks of the historian and the poet which is found throughout the ages. The attempt to demarcate relative areas of concern goes back at least as far as Aristotle: poetry was philosophical, history not; poetry was concerned with the general and the production of "models", history with the particular\(^3\). And yet both poet and historian begin their work by rummaging in the remains of past life, sifting through relics to prevent its loss. Homer and Herodotus both narrated\(^4\). Nevertheless, in practice the borders between the two activities have shifted and been blurred in the
course of time. At times harmony prevailed; history and literature worked together as
two forms of the same discipline, both poet and historian were engaged in developing or
unfolding the rhetorical craft of writing. At other times there were changes in emphasis,
and the concern of the historian moved to an understanding of historical knowledge
itself; the responsibility of telling how it really was became his alone. Imaginary
narration was relegated to a subordinate act of the historian.\textsuperscript{5} But even Ranke, the
father of modern historiography, who seems to incorporate the movement away from a
literary understanding of history towards the concept of the historian as researcher,
there to give "\textit{nackte Wahrheit ohne allen Schmuck}"\textsuperscript{6}, remains not without his
ambiguities in this respect, for he too placed emphasis on the aspect of presentation in
the activity of historians. The research qualities of finding and collating material are
qualified, according to Ranke, by the need in the historian for the ability to reproduce
life, that is, to present the past events found in source material in such a way that
actuality appears to the reader.\textsuperscript{7} Nonetheless, against this awareness has evolved the
desire to delineate clearly the respective roles of historian and poet. Divisions have been
built up, creating tendencies which have hindered a fruitful dialogue between historian
and poet, and have therefore obstructed a fuller understanding of the past by those at
whom the accounts were directed.

These divisions have been emphasised in the twentieth century by the
development of historiography and modern narrative forms. The writing of history has
been challenged by modern narrative forms which seem to reflect a new experience of
history, most clearly exposed in dislocation and lack of continuity. Yet, as Kraeauer has
demonstrated\textsuperscript{8}, the historian, relying on traditional patterns of understanding history,
uses any number of rhetorical and literary devices to produce a smooth and harmonious
narrative with a beginning, middle and end, unconsciously or without admission. But
these intentions are indicative of a stagnation, when seen in the light of tendencies in
modern literature. The revolutions in narrative forms during the twentieth century
have seemingly found little echo in the writing of history.

Against this resistance, on the other hand, convergences between the historian
and the poet have been highlighted in the context of the discourse theory of the past
decades. Both use language and give narrative forms to the accounts they write, and the
historical text has once again been studied as a literary artifact.\textsuperscript{9} Moreover, the
awareness of creative subjectivity, that ability to reproduce the past and to represent
events in such a way as to give them life and relevance for the reader, allows the
historian and poet to work on the same basis. Such creative subjectivity depends on
language and forms of narration; it includes the literary, as well as raising questions
about the "fictional" character of the source material itself (documents) and its place in a
narrative framework. The question then arises whether the form of narration of the historian really differs in some indubitably distinctive feature from imaginary narration as found in the epic, novel and drama.\(^{10}\)

Divergences and convergences. Debates on "Literature as History" or "History as Literature", whilst absorbing, have, happily, not succeeded in subordinating one to the other. Nor is it the intention of this thesis to attempt such a task. Let the historian and poet retain autonomy, whilst recognising that there are both overlapping areas of common interest and practice, as well as gaps created when each goes his own way. Within such spaces exists the kind of historical narratives which concern us here.

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Novelists, dramatists and film makers in postwar Germany, after overcoming a period of silence and evasion during which there was no interplay between literature and history, began, at first reluctantly and in some cases accidentally, to be pulled into producing accounts of the past. Initially, they still tried to sustain and retain the divisions and remained caught up in the attempt to remain poets. It was not until the early 1960s that history began to contribute to these literary attempts. Yet at the same time they wished to respond to the events of the past which were still reverberating within the present. Through this tension are produced accounts which are as important a contribution to our understanding of the past as conventional historiography. An investigation of the narrative forms novelists, dramatists and film makers have chosen in order to relate history is the central concern being addressed in this thesis. Have they added to our understanding by filling gaps or entering spaces left unoccupied by traditional historiography? No argument will be made for a continual process in postwar German cultural life, for a steady movement from silence to enlightened articulation, but rather for a haphazard series of fits and starts. Writers and film makers responded to certain moments in their present which broke through the private silences of writers and through the public silence. These moments can be described in terms of a collision of socio-political circumstances and media events. The first of these was the reaction to the Frankfurt war crimes trials (1963-5) which entered public space via television and newspaper reporting, subsequently to be taken up by literature. The second was the showing of the American TV film Holocaust which coincided with the traumatic political events of the late 1970s. The response of writers and film makers was to refer back to past events, not in order to "master" the past (the cliché bewältigen is a dubious concept), but to bring back its import for the present. This is a central feature of the
narratives chosen. Probable and partial accounts are produced which are provisional approximations, "models" left open to later verification, modification or refutation.

History, as Burckhardt reminds us, is the record of what one age finds worthy of note in another, and each generation will rewrite the past in its own style and according to its own preoccupations.11 Thus the moment when history is narrated must be seen as a pivotal point, for such narrative accounts are written in the light of the problems of the present. Contemporary conflicts are the place where the past lives on, at times unrecognised. Those accounts which have tried to raise the awareness of this aspect have been chosen, where the treatment of the past is illuminated by, and illuminates, problems of the present. The first of those moments comes, with some hesitancy, at the end of a long period of silence, in the late 1950s. Initial tentative considerations of the German past were undertaken by Günter Grass in the novel Die Blechtrommel, and on stage by Max Frisch in his play Andorra. Therefore these works are the first to be investigated, not for reasons of uniqueness, but on account of the German and international reception accorded to them. The two moments where present needs appealed for a renewed attempt to understand the past were, firstly, in the wake of the Frankfurt war crimes trials in 1963-5, and secondly in the aftermath of the traumatic political events of the German Autumn of 1977, when West German democracy was shaken by the threat of terrorism and state reaction. In the mid 1960s, a "documentary" form of literature emerged involving a different literary approach to the past. Peter Weiss's play Die Ermittlung and Alexander Kluge's novel Schlachtbeschreibung are taken as examples of this new literary exploration into the past, because they allow an investigation of the literary forms which now take account of historical writing. Kluge and Weiss have moved into the gaps or spaces between history and literature. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, film becomes the medium which undertakes anew the task of breaking through collective amnesia. Whereas literature seemed no longer capable of responding to the demands of past and present, film appeared with a sudden explosion of works as the medium for narrating the past. From all the films by directors such as Fassbinder, Kluge, von Trotta, Wenders and Reitz, three have been selected: Alexander Kluge's film Die Patriotin, Volker Schlöndorff's film adaptation of Grass's novel Die Blechtrommel which harks back to the strategies of the 1950s, and Edgar Reitz's Heimat.

The point of view of any narrator of the past inevitably enters into every historical observation he makes.12 He rummages on the refuse tip selecting pieces, distilling or creating patterns. All this implies a selective system guided by present concerns. The elements that each of the chosen writers or film makers selects, or what they choose to leave out, either consciously or subconsciously, is of concern to us. As
important, for they are all using language, is the manner of that presentation. Literature and film in particular seem to offer very different opportunities for presentation. But in both cases the content takes on particular forms, and the forms in turn contribute to the way history is perceived and understood. Marx, in the *18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*\(^\text{13}\), referred to the revolutionary events of the nineteenth century by using the terms "tragedy" and "farce", implying that we understand historical events in a literary, or rather a narrative way. Literary patterns change, and new perceptions can be furthered by such changes. These changes are exhibited in three main ways: fundamental changes in narrative ways of writing; transference from one form (medium or genre) to another; and a process of cross-fertilisation between the media. Thus new perceptions may be furthered, depending on whether the narrative is found as a novel, as a play or as a film, and also on the extent to which those genres and art forms supply each other and feed off each other. Film in particular (which, as the medium of the twentieth century, supplies us with our collective memory of past events) has fed and challenged more traditional narrative structures. Just as the artificial frontier between history and literature has been breached, so too have the conventional boundaries between the art forms been called into question, as the novelist adopts aesthetic principles of the film maker, the dramatist narrates in an epic mode, and the film maker seeks to "literarize" the cinema. Such an interaction between the art forms is conducive to exploration, for it seems to have furthered the entering of previously unoccupied spaces.

The removal of walls now taking place allows the historian and the poet to walk on what used to be a barren no man's land, and make it fertile for a better understanding of our past.

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CHAPTER ONE.

FROM STRATEGIES OF EVASION TO INITIAL NARRATIVES OF CONFRONTATION.
Introduction. "The Inability to tell Stories": Evasions and Silences in West German Society and Culture in the 1950s.

The postwar period and the formative years of the Federal Republic of West Germany were seen in retrospect by many who grew up in them as being characterised by evasions and silences with regard to the German past. Rainer Werner Fassbinder, born May 1945 and belonging therefore to the Stunde Null generation, experienced this private and public silence, and in the late 1970s concentrated in his film making on an examination of the mentality and behaviour of his parents' generation. His experience of those years is not atypical of his generation which believed itself to have been starved, both at home and in school, of German history. The consequences of an inability to tell German history, to relate stories, became clear to Fassbinder in the traumatic decade of the 1970s. In his reaction to the American TV series Holocaust, broadcast in West Germany in January 1979, Fassbinder commented: "Wenn ich jetzt dieses ganze Theater um 'Holocaust' sehe, was müssen sie da so ein Theater machen, haben die das wirklich so verdrängt und vergessen? Das können die gar nicht vergessen haben, das müssen sie doch im Kopf gehabt haben, als sie ihren Staat aufgebaut haben. Wenn so etwas Entscheidendes vergessen werden könnte oder verdrängt, dann kann doch an dieser Demokratie und dem 'Modell Deutschland' etwas nicht ganz richtig sein."1 The feeling prevailed that the Nazi era had not been treated at all in the cultural life of the Federal Republic, thus raising the question as to what attitudes and mental processes had been carried through from the Third Reich into the Bonn Republic. The 1950s came to be seen as the crucial axis between the National Socialist era and the present. As the philosopher Jürgen Habermas explains: "Unsere Lebensform ist mit der Lebensform unserer Eltern und Großeltern verbunden durch ein schwer entwirrbares Geflecht von familiären, örtlichen, politischen, auch intellektuellen Überlieferungen, durch ein geschichtliches Milieu also, das uns erst zu dem gemacht hat, was wir heute sind. Niemand kann sich aus diesem Milieu herausstehlen, weil mit ihm unsere Identität sowohl als Individuen wie als Deutsche unauflässig verwoben ist."2 Yet despite the presence of a historical milieu which reverberated with the events of the German past, the parents' generation did not pass on experience of that past, allowing it instead to become distorted or forgotten. Such an interruption in the normal process of handing down experience from one generation to the next was to have serious repercussions for the social and political culture of the Federal Republic.

Fassbinder was writing in critical retrospect on a time some thirty years before. Only after such a delay had those repercussions made themselves felt. It is, however, important to consider these years without the benefit of a retrospective position,
particularly as a sharp moral critique was often adopted by the generation of those "born after" which tended to lead to a polemic castigation of the so-called *Auschwitzgeneration*. Attempting to derive a contemporary picture of the mentality and attitudes prevalent in those years may facilitate an understanding of both the apparent cultural vacuum which existed, and of the way narrative forms conspired in an evasion of history. Two contemporary accounts, one at each end of the decade, both written by outsiders, attempted to tackle the collective mentality of the German people: Hannah Arendt's essay *Besuch in Deutschland* 1950 and Theodor Adorno's *Was bedeutet: Aufarbeitung der Vergangenheit* (1959).

Arendt is a moralist, Adorno a Marxist; but it is not these positions which necessarily concern us here, rather the analytical tools they offer to understand the mechanics of evasion in narratives of the past. In her *Besuch in Deutschland* (1950), Arendt found a lack of discussion among the Germans about the physical and moral ruin of their country. There was almost no reaction to what was happening and had happened, either as a deliberate refusal to mourn the dead or as an expression of an inability to respond emotionally. To a certain degree this can be understood: given the devastation in Germany and the hunger and destitution of the immediate postwar years, it is hard to imagine how a continuing process of confronting the past, entailing a critical assessment of both public and private behaviour, could have taken place amongst people who were either bewildered, hostile or indifferent. The neoconservative philosopher Lübbe carried this further in claiming that the silence Arendt encountered was indeed necessary in a period of transformation from dictatorship to democracy; explanations and analysis were not needed, just a tolerant acceptance of each other's past. The extreme conditions of the immediate postwar years were followed by the *Wirtschaftswunder* and its consequences, which succeeded in squeezing out any possible debate with the past. But Arendt's conclusions sweep past Lübbe's theory of a silent mastery of the past, or the idea that a confrontation with German history was somehow squeezed out by economic circumstances. She concludes that a general absence of emotion and evident lack of sympathy were the most conspicuous symptoms of a deeply-rooted, obstinate and at times brutal refusal to face up to the National Socialist era. With the fall of National Socialism, the majority of the German population, who had been exposed for so long to a propaganda view of the world, now had to confront a view of those events in total contradiction to their formerly held version. Arendt proposes the view that the experiences of totalitarianism seemed to have robbed many Germans of any spontaneous means of expression, because of the devaluation of language by propaganda. The ensuing speechlessness was not a deliberate silent mastery of the past, but an indication of the incapacity to articulate thoughts or express emotions, and of the
inability to make judgments: "man fühlt sich erdrückt von einer um sich greifenden öffentlichen Dummheit, der man kein korrektes Urteil in den elementarsten Dingen zutrauen kann."9

The problem for Hannah Arendt lies in the question of language: twelve years of propaganda and the Nazi abuse of language had removed the means to articulate experience, to assess and judge. Hence the silence. Moreover, vestiges of the former way of distorting through language had been maintained and were being used in the evasive strategies devised for actively denying elements of past experience.10 It was clear to Arendt that the reality of the past, whether perceived or repressed, dominated postwar life, and that amongst the Germans of the period various strategies had been developed to avoid its implications. The central precept was to ward off the past in order not to "foul one's own nest" and led to such ploys as the weighing up of loss on both sides, in short, the crude equating of Dresden or the expulsions from the East with Auschwitz, or the trivialisation of the concentration camps as "correctional institutions". Any detail was seized upon with the express purpose of denying the whole event; thus the argument over the numbers who died in the death camps had at its root an attempt to cast doubts on the reality of the Final Solution.11

Adorno, writing at the end of the 1950s in Was bedeutet: Aufarbeitung der Vergangenheit? adds to the picture Arendt paints, commenting from a Marxist standpoint which is particularly concerned with the way continuations within the economic structure express themselves in various attitudes carried forward from the Nazi era. He saw the official debate with the past as merely an attempt to settle the account and to wipe out memory.12 Immediately after 1945, the priority of the political authorities was the return to the norms of a constitutional, anti-Nazi state. What Broszat terms a "declamatory general distancing"13 from the past took place, because a detailed confrontation with the individual entanglements with the Nazi regime would have proven difficult and time-consuming. The past was therefore exorcised rather than explained. This suited many Germans who wanted to escape from their history as soon as possible, and were therefore happy to concede the work of remembrance to those institutions of research and education officially involved in the task, thus obviating an individual identification with, or consideration of the events of the past. Once they had been marched past the corpses in the concentration camps by American soldiers, or had seen the US army-produced film Todesmühlen which graphically illustrated the horrors of the atrocities, they could consider their "re-education" complete.14 From one point of view this urgent desire to escape the shame and remorse brought about by the recognition of the crimes committed by the regime was
understandable, because the past was unbearable to live with; but on the other hand, it was impossible to run from events which were continuing to have deep repercussions. Adorno also detects the same defence mechanisms as Arendt: "Unbestreitbar gibt es im Verhältnis zur Vergangenheit viel Neurotisches: Gesten der Verteidigung dort, wo man nicht angegriffen ist; heftige Affekte an Stellen, die sie real kaum rechtfertigen; Mangel an Affekt gegenüber dem Ernstesten; nicht selten auch einfach Verdrängung des Gewüfteten oder halb Gewüfteten." Tactics such as the attempt to nullify the consequences of the Nazi period through euphemistic language, or by denying or arguing over numbers of dead in the concentration camps; and the attempt to balance out the crimes of the Nazis at Auschwitz with Allied war crimes such as the saturation bombing of German cities like Dresden, all still featured in Stammtisch conversation at the end of the decade. Other disturbing attempts to rewrite the past emerged, for example, the questioning of the innocence of the Jews. The specious reasoning was that the Jews could not possibly have been innocent, if such things happened to them. Official policy in the early 1950s had been to try and deal with the "Jewish question" as quickly and effectively as possible. Thus Adenauer hoped, through the official policy of Wiedergutmachung (reparations), to overcome the sense of horror and shame aroused by the attempted extermination of the Jews. Such a state policy could never hope to cope with individual experiences, but sought instead escape in the creation of narratives of the past which avoided the demands of experience. Adorno concludes of these strategies of evasion: "Die Idiotie alles dessen ist wirklich Zeichen eines psychisch Nichtbewältigten, einer Wunde ...".

The speed with which Germany returned to everyday life was a talking point in the whole of Europe. Arendt points to the feverish activity and the need to feel permanently occupied. The conditions in the immediate postwar period were an important contributory factor, with the need to rebuild after the carnage of the war. However, this constant occupation was a major weapon in resisting the demands of the past, the ruins, the cruelties, the dead who had been forgotten. The overall consequence of this was a loss of a sense of history, "eine Zerstörung der Erinnerung." The loss is experienced not only on the level of the psychopathology of the German people, but also in the general social and political situation. For these psychological defence mechanisms served very real and concrete political goals, as far as Adorno is concerned, namely to reestablish a German sense of worth and reputation abroad. Adenauer's policy of Wiedergutmachung was designed to smooth Germany's re-entry into the family of nations. As such, these attempts to obliterate memory were not just an unconscious mechanism, but they supported or gained support from social tendencies and found accord with the Zeitgeist.
The economic and psychological impulse moved forwards, not just in the sense of making progress, but also in the desire to move away (Fortkommen) from the past; those who preoccupied themselves with German history were deemed to be casting sand in the machinery of this forward moving dynamic. The authoritarian character of the Germans under Hitler, typified for Adorno by "Starrheit und Reaktionsunfähigkeit, Konventionalismus, Konformismus, mangelnde Selbstbesinnung, schließlich überhaupt mangelnde Fähigkeit zur Erfahrung", now needed as a substitute for its identification with Nazism some other collective. In the postwar period, this was offered by the political and economic consensus of the Federal Republic. This need to identify with power is a significant aspect of the authoritarian character, as described by Adorno. In his view, the politically immature Germans had identified their need for strong government with Hitler. Adorno terms this collective narcissism. This was, it is true, damaged by the defeat, but its disruption happened on the level of major political events, in other words with the military defeat of the Nazis, without individuals being aware of it and coming to terms with it. The collective narcissism continued secretly and therefore particularly powerfully underground. Adorno sees the implicit danger that not only would it seek its own repair, but it would also manipulate and distort the past to force it into an agreement with the expression of its own wishes. Collective narcissism "greift nach allem, was zunächst im Bewußtsein die Vergangenheit in Übereinstimmung mit den narzisstischen Wünschen bringt, dann aber womöglich auch noch die Realität so modelt, daß jene Schädigung ungeschehen gemacht wird."[22]

One particular area where the collective works to ward off the demands of the past and to reshape reality according to its own wishes is the question of responsibility, more of a concern to Arendt than to Adorno. It is the consensus omnium which generally sets the frontier of guilt, isolating a guilty individual from society. But this does not apply in a Verbrecherstaat where the guilty person is one amongst many, and when the whole of society is using the Gehorsamthese to excuse itself. Given the degree of complicity with the regime of so many on so many levels, the cost of pursuing and punishing all the guilty, as both Arendt[23] and Hans-Ulrich Wehler have argued, could have been "nothing short of a social and cultural civil war."[24] Arendt reflected on the difficulties of a legal settlement of the issue of guilt: "Just as there is no political solution within human capacity for the crime of administrative mass murder, so the human need for justice can find no satisfactory reply to the total mobilization of a people for that purpose. Where all are guilty, nobody in the last analysis can be judged."[25] The particular answer to this dilemma explored by Karl Jaspers in Die Schuldfrage was to speculate on the possibility of "metaphysical guilt". But this concept removed guilt from all human judicial measures and relied on an individual ethical approach, a sort of "self- accusation before God."[26] Rabinach confirms Arendt's assessment of "moralische
Verwirrung"27, concluding that "the majority of the population lived ... in a state of moral amnesia between 'criminal' and 'metaphysical' spheres of guilt."28 In contrast, Adorno looks forward rather than backwards in assessing the role of the collective, which is central to his theory of the persistence of National Socialism in democracy. He sees many of the conditions of Fascism continuing in the Federal Republic, making a true debate with the past impossible. Arguing from an analysis of the economic structure, he identifies the similarities in the economic order which create a consensus, an organisation which subjects the majority to events over which it has no control or say.29

How should a confrontation with the past have taken place? Adorno enlarges on this in concluding his thoughts: "Aufklärung über das Geschehene (muß) einem Vergessen entgegenarbeiten, das nur allzu leicht mit der Rechtfertigung des Vergessenen sich zusammenfindet."30 He gives the example of the parents who, when asked about Hitler by their children, seek to exculpate themselves by giving a partial account of his achievements, presenting the past as a distortion. Such partial narratives included dividing the Third Reich into the "good years" (i.e. the period between the seizure of power in 1933 and the defeat of France in 1940, when the majority of the population was in broad agreement with the aims and achievements of the regime) and the "bad years" (particularly from the defeat at Stalingrad). As an alternative strategy, myths were developed by the State such as the differentiation between the "good" Wehrmacht and the "bad" SS, or the "good" resistance fighters of July 20th, 1944 and the "bad" Gestapo. As A. Markovitz explains, through the creation of these myths an identification with the new Republic and indeed its legitimization were facilitated, and at the same time a real understanding of the recent past was hindered.31 In the end, for Adorno, a true coming to terms with the past can only take place when the causes for that past are removed: "Nur weil die Ursachen fortbestehen, ward sein Bann bis heute nicht gebrochen."32 As a Marxist commentator, Adorno locates these root causes he refers to in the capitalist economic system; the Federal Republic still adhered to that system. Adorno's solution lies in calling into question the capitalist system, for the mechanisms he describes, the attitudes he delineates, are phenomena in the superstructure which arise out of the economic base.

In the socio-political sphere, many of the tendencies analysed by Adorno and Arendt are summed up in the idea of restoration or rehabilitation. The tendency towards restoration after 1945 survives in the very language used of the period, with the continual reiteration of wieder: Wiederaufbau, "wir sind wieder wer", Wiedererausfristung, Wiedervereinigung, "man benimmt sich wieder". There was, on the other hand, the suggestion of a fresh start contained in terms like Bruch, Neuanfang.
and *Stunde Null*. Indeed, there had been a break, in the sense that the political power structure of Nazism had been removed, but many social habits remained. One indication of this easy rehabilitation is the way in which the German national anthem was quickly restored. The shock and shame of what had occurred in the Nazi period remained untapped. Both these apparently contradictory ways of looking at the past work in the same direction, namely to cover up and reconstruct, rather than starting from anew.\(^{33}\) A clear example of this, worthy of closer examination because of the way it later became a thorn in the side of the Bonn Republic, is to be found in the denazification process undertaken in the immediate postwar period. At intermittent moments in the history of the Federal Republic, war crimes trials act as an uncomfortable reminder of the past.

Any initial confrontation with past events lay largely in the hands of the Allies with their denazification programme. But what began as an attempt to remove the remains of National Socialism quickly fell into disrepute and was abandoned. The guilty were largely rehabilitated among the bureaucracy and judiciary; university teachers, industrialists and civil servants soon returned to their former posts. The results of the trials suggested to the populace that only leading members of the Nazi hierarchy had borne responsibility, or those who had had a direct hand in the murder of concentration camp prisoners. In this way, a particular view of Nazism was confirmed. This was the approach to the past which underlined the criminal aspects of the regime, the "outlaw theory" which neglected the broad popular appeal, as well as the social and historical roots of Nazism. The historian Lütz Niethammer\(^{33}\) draws attention to the way in which the question of denazification continued to be raised, long after the trials ended, by the spectre of prominent ex-Nazis holding important positions in the Federal Republic. This phenomenon was reflected in 1960s dramatic production where it forms an important theme in, for example, the plays of Hochhuth and Weiss. The suspicion arises that denazification merely led to a rapid eradication of an uncomfortable past, in that the issues raised were dealt with only on the surface.

The denazification process was largely controlled by the Americans who believed initially in the possibility of removing Nazis from prominent public positions and replacing them with democratic, untainted bureaucrats. A combination of the naïveté of the Americans and the willingness of the Germans to see in the process a fig-leaf, permitting the status quo to remain pretty much intact, rendered it ineffectual. Denazification stumbled on the basic question: "Who is a Nazi?" There was no consensus on this issue, beyond the easily recognisable central group of high ranking Nazi functionaries. In many cases, however, the lesser functionaries were punished, whilst
powerful and influential individuals and bodies escaped justice, producing a cynical view of the proceedings amongst the general population. With no overall political criteria available, the process became haphazard, as it was left to local investigations to try individual cases. The affair took on a rehabilitative character, giving the message to the German population: "ihr seid entweder Mitläufer oder, wenn ihr noch sozial schwach seid, amnestiert."34 The concept Mitläufer confirmed the picture of a population which had been seduced and led astray by a cunning and ruthless criminal élite. A consensus was thus created between those deemed not responsible and those who had been "misled"; in other words: a consensus through guilt and rehabilitation. Arendt supports this view of a creation of a consensus: "Aber es steht außer Zweifel, daß die Entnazifizierung eine ungute neue Interessengemeinschaft unter den mehr oder weniger Kompromittierten geschaffen hat, die aus opportunistischen Gründen mehr oder weniger überzeugte Nazis geworden waren."35 The longer term effect of this was to produce, as Adorno argues, a society united around the need for economic revival. The question of which elements in society had been responsible for the erection and maintenance of the fascist state had not been addressed. Only a few guilty had been removed; the past could be revoked for a majority brought together by the mutual interest of ignoring responsibility.

The rehabilitating and reintegrating aspects of the trials were supported by the onset of the Cold War. Political exigencies meant that the Americans were now keen to win the German population as allies in the Cold War, to be a bulwark against Communism. A historical narrative, in the form of the totalitarian theory, was produced to legitimise this volte-face. This theory saw both National Socialism and Stalinism as two variants of totalitarian rule, which used force to achieve their ends. It exonerated the population from the accusation of criminal complicity, since a totalitarian regime uses terror and indoctrination to force citizens into becoming criminals. The various strains of the totalitarianism theory emphasised the manipulation and monolithic domination of a terrorist Nazi dictatorship.36 Hitler was portrayed as the main architect of National Socialism, and the events of those twelve years became personified in him. The singularity of Nazism was lost in the equation with Communism, blame was focused on one man (thus National Socialism became Hitlerism), and the Cold War allowed the population a convenient scapegoat in Communism. The effect of Cold War ideology on the denazification trials was essentially to close the book on the Nazi era. The issue was deemed bereft of topicality, and all efforts could be steered towards the new democracy. Not until the 1960s was the debate reopened, both in the socio-political sphere in the Frankfurt War Crimes trials, and in theatre, where the trial recurs as a significant
element in an attempt to compensate for the absence of an official genuine examination of the past.

That the open sore of an evaded past continued to trouble the development of the Federal Republic is clear from a further analysis of the 1950s, written in the mid 1960s. Alexander and Margarete Mitscherlich, in Die Unfähigkeit zu trauern, are writing with distance and hindsight on the formative years of the Federal Republic, having seen the consequences of the phenomena analysed by Arendt and Adorno. Still, after twenty years, the Mitscherlichs felt compelled to enter what remained a taboo area and to find psychological explanations for the scant treatment given to the Third Reich. Their general thesis starts from the diminishing political consciousness apparent in the Federal Republic, and the methodology is based neither on theories of Fascism nor totalitarianism, but on observation of both individuals in clinical practice, and of widespread and frequent patterns of behaviour. These included an inability to react, a lack of participation, and a disregard for basic political rights. From being a reactionary, aggressive nation under Fascism, Germany seemed to have merely changed into a conservative apolitical one.

The Mitscherlichs' particular strength lies in their ability to describe and analyse the defence mechanisms and strategies of evasion of the 1950s. The main economic benefit of these was the ability to concentrate on the present, rather than indulge in a "fruchtloses Wählen in der Vergangenheit." But this excluded any consideration for the victims of the past, German or non-German, relying instead on an attempt to draw up a balance sheet of history in order to cancel out responsibility. The German people under Fascism had identified with the Führer as a personification of what the Mitscherlichs call a "kollektives Ich-Ideal." The loss of this ideal should have unleashed melancholy, but the Federal Republic did not succumb to any sense of collective melancholy. There was an inability to mourn. The loss of self-esteem, which would have been otherwise activated by the loss of the idealised Führer figure, was avoided by breaking all contact with the past. This subconscious process had led to sterility and the petrifaction of German society. Any sense of melancholy among the populace gave way to a determination, a monomaniac industriousness in clearing the ruins of the past.

A flight from reality was taking place, and the average German found the causes for the calamity of the war not in a measured evaluation of the facts about the Nazi past, but in a number of narratives of evasion which included generalised statements on good and evil, a demonisation of history, the personalisation of National Socialism as
Hitlerism and the Nazi era as the *Hitlerzeit*, and the evaluation of it as an irrational outbreak of terror which had overcome the Germans. Such a flight from historical reality also entailed a flight from responsibility, for these versions of the past appeared to exonerate the average citizen. Sterility in the socio-political life of the Federal Republic was a result of this denial of the past.41 The Mitscherlichs observe that the use of defensive mechanisms like denial and repression can, in both the individual and the collective, lead to a limited perception of reality and the spread of stereotypic prejudices. An easy transition from dealing with social problems on the level of an *Endlösung* to a return to civilised daily life can only come about with a splitting of consciousness. This attempt to split off past from present reveals itself in the distancing terminology used in describing the break from the Nazi period: *Bruch, Neuanfang, Stunde Null*.42

To avoid, or at least minimise the fear, shame and guilt which should have come from a recognition of what had happened, use was made of psychological defence mechanisms involving repression, denial and projection, as a grotesque and infantile way of mastering the past. Faced with the realisation that millions had been murdered in their name, there was a strong tendency for the German people to withdraw from their own history and refuse to accept it as a part of their own identity. If the past had been directly confronted, it would involve extreme difficulties and conflicts to integrate it with the present. A direct examination would have revealed that the death of millions had come about actively through decision making and execution of orders, or as a result of the passivity of individuals, and that the alibi of blaming superiors was no longer tenable. The result of the loss of the *Führer* figure, promising the fulfilment of archaic fantasies of omnipotence, led simultaneously to disorientation, the attempt to find a surrogate leader with authority, and the withdrawal of all emotional involvement in the past: "*Die Nazivergangenheit wird derealisiert, entwirklicht.*"43 National Socialism had offered a narcissistic object, an economic support, and a psychological representation of fantasies of omnipotence from early childhood. The loss of such an object should have produced a loss of self-esteem. The Mitscherlichs assert that this trauma was in part avoided by many Germans by transferring support for the dictator into the economic sphere: "*Alle unsere Energie haben wir vielmehr mit einem Bewunderung und Neid erweckenden Unternehmungsgeist auf die Wiederherstellung des Zerstörten, auf Ausbau und Modernisierung unseres industiellen Potentials bis zur Kücheneinrichtung hin konzentriert.*"44 The monomanic determination to resist the claims of the past to be articulated had led to the political sterility which is the Mitscherlichs' starting point.

The Mitscherlichs locate phenomena which reveal the attempt to close this chapter of the German past: the inability to feel any emotion towards the German dead,
demonstrated in a quasi stoical attitude; an all too easy identification with the victors (a change of identity helps to ward off feelings of involvement); and "das manische Ungeschehen machen" in the collective efforts to reconstruct. Tricks are played with memory. Anniversaries of the bombing of German cities are marked, but there is no such regard for the victims of concentration camps. For the Mitscherlichs, this absence of sympathy stems from the fact that although the ideology of the Nazis went out of circulation, no critical distance had been won towards it: "Dazu wäre eine kritische Auseinandersetzung, zum Beispiel eine Untersuchung auf die Wahrhaftigkeit mancher Teile dieser 'Weltanschauung'; notwendig gewesen; aber sie kam nicht zustande."

This meant that parts of this ideology continued as before, in, for example, a form of anti-Communism in which ideological elements of National Socialism were amalgamated with the official policy of the West during the Cold War.

One other serious remnant of the Nazi period for the Mitscherlichs was the urgently felt need to fill the vacuum left by the fall of Hitler. This vacuum was filled in part by economic activity. In the economic sphere the explosive development of German industry had replaced a real examination and confrontation with the past: "Werkätigkeit und ihr Erfolg verdeckten bald die offenen Wunden, die aus der Vergangenheit geblieben waren ... Im Zusammenhang mit dieser wirtschaftlichen Restauration wächst ein charakteristisches neues Selbstgefühl. Auch die Millionenverluste des vergangenen Krieges, auch die Millionen getöteter Juden können nicht daran hindern, daß man es satt hat, sich an diese Vergangenheit erinnern zu lassen."

The Mitscherlichs' own answer to the way in which the past should be approached lies in their understanding of the difficult term Bewältigen. Taking up Freud's term, they describe Vergangenheitsbewältigung as "eine Folge von Erlebnisschritten: erinnern, wiederholen, durcharbeiten." Single memories fade quickly, therefore a form of debate which is open to constant renewal is vital "um die instinktiv und unbewußt arbeitenden Kräfte des Selbstschutzes im Vergessen, Verleugnen, Projizieren und ähnlichen Abwehrmechanismen zu überwunden." Clinical practice is fully cognisant of the healing effects of such memorising and "working through". But the Mitscherlichs' emphasis on "working through" in an individual cure seems scarcely applicable to the collective. How is it possible to employ this method on the scale of the collective consciousness of a people? In the context of German postwar society, material well-being confirmed, to those who wished to turn their backs on history, that treatment was not needed. As far as Germany's position in the world was concerned, economic activity had repaired her reputation at least on one front, and in
moral terms the Allies had been subsequently implicated in Vietnam and Angola. Individuals could always invoke the Gehorsamsthese and rely on partial amnesia. In the face of this resistance, the Mitscherlichs call for Trauerarbeit, a form of remembering the past based on "ein stückweises, fortgesetztes Zerreipen der Bindung an das geliebte Objekt und damit ein Erlebnis von Rissen und Wunden im Selbst des Trauernden."

Das geliebte Objekt is in their view the Führer-ideal, a fascination with the Führer, from which the German people needed to detach themselves, if they were to understand the path which led to Fascism. They add that it is of necessity a lengthy process, involving a recognition of those identifications with certain ideals which had to be worked off. Without this form of treatment a proper relationship with the past and with reality itself cannot be established. They warn that the old ideals will continue to have effect.

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Thus far we have examined, with the help of a number of commentators, the socio-political manifestations of the tactics of evasion from both a contemporary and a retrospective perspective. It is now appropriate to consider the implications of these analyses of the socio-political sphere on the cultural products of the time. In particular, to ask how such tendencies and mechanisms were reflected in narratives of the past, whether historiographical, cinematographic or literary. Although tangential to this thesis, it is worth commenting briefly at this stage on the response of professional historians to the German past.

In his study Literatur und NS-Vergangenheit (1983) the historian Martin Broszat refers in retrospect to the astonishing silence which surrounded professional writers, both in literature and history, and identifies within these writers the same attitudes as existed in the political culture of the Federal Republic from 1945. Apart from the few exceptions, like Adorno and Arendt, he locates in both areas of literature and history the same urge to rapidly discard the demands of the past, alongside the creation of a consensus: "nach 1945 unterblieb zweifellos, von wenigen Ausnahmen abgesehen, ebenso wie in anderen Bereichen der Gesellschaft eine Selbstreinigung und offen ausgetragene, nachtragliche Fehde zwischen ehemaligen Mitträgern und Mitsingern des NS-Regimes auf der einen Seite und Nicht-Nationalsozialisten und Antifaschisten andererseits. Auch hier wurde der Mantel gnädigen Vergessens schnell ausgerückt."

This consensus in the intellectual and cultural life of the Bonn Republic is a reflection of the economic, social and political consensus already examined.
With regard to the historiographical craft in particular, Lucy Davidovicz traces the difficulties of postwar German historians back to a dominant nationalistic ideology amongst German historians of the nineteenth century. Taking this together with their distrust of democracy and willingness to at least tolerate anti-Semitism, she finds it of little surprise that many professional historians were capable of making an easy transition from the Weimar Republic to the Third Reich. A deep conservatism characterised the profession after the war. Those who did attempt to produce accounts were faced with a dilemma: Was Nazism an aberration or a continuation of traditions of nationalism and authoritarianism? Davidovicz comments: "It comes as no surprise that many German historians ... should have rejected the idea that National Socialism was a link in the chain of Germany's continuous history. For it assuaged the conscience ... to believe that National Socialism was only a breach in the continuity of German political traditions, that it was no more than a fateful and capricious deviation from the calculated trajectory of German history." Exemplary in this regard is Meinecke's Die deutsche Katastrophe (1946), an apologia for the German people which saw impersonal forces behind events. History, in a tragic Greek style, became a concatenation of chance happenings. In this espousal of chance, being beyond the laws of causality, the German historians had declared themselves bankrupt of rational explanations, for "when the historian designates chance as an event-producing factor, in effect he puts the event beyond historical causality and thus he no longer needs to provide a historical explanation for it." Meinecke saw Hitler's rise as a "chance chain of causes", his followers were "a band of criminals" who "forced the German people" under their leadership. The devil-theory of history with the suggestion of seduction, National Socialism as an aberration, and the demonising of Nazism as Hitlerism, all found credence in historical accounts of the time. This view of history, represented by Meinecke, Freund and Ritter in particular, had a short life after the war before being replaced by a more effective narrative of evasion.

We have made reference already to the theory of totalitarianism which replaced the "disaster theory" of German history with the onset of the Cold War. The Totalitarismustheorie, with its coupling together of Bolshevism and Nazism as two variants of the same totalitarian phenomenon, allowed historians and a wider public to see Nazism as a defensive reaction to Communism and to hide the crimes of Nazism behind its anti-Bolshevism. As well as going some way towards justifying aspects of the Nazi past (such as the role of the German army on the Eastern front), it also allowed former Nazis to be rehabilitated. The historian E. Jäckel summarises the effects of this anti-totalitarian consensus on the political and cultural life of the Federal Republic as preventing "neo-Nazism on a serious scale, because Nazis could be integrated over that
bridge, and at the same time (preventing) full acceptance of the Nazi past, as the necessary condition of integration was drawing the line (einen Schlußstrich ziehen). The serious comparative category being investigated by Arendt and others had been bowdlerized to provide justification for National Socialism.

In other ways the situation did not improve dramatically in the course of the 1950s, despite the setting up of the FRG Institut für Zeitgeschichte. Certainly there was no shortage of archive material, libraries and documentary sources, but Davidovicz summarises the products of the institute as having "an antiseptic quality, sometimes merely cold and detached, but more often lifeless." An "overload of factual detail" and "an attitude of moral disengagement" meant that such materials were never likely to have mass influence. This is a view confirmed by two eminent postwar historians, Joachim Fest and Martin Broszat. Fest acknowledges the wealth of material, but accuses his profession of not understanding its responsibility to a public at times eager for enlightenment. He adds: "All their texts are written in a haughty and hermetic manner, they are inaccessible and are directed at a small number of colleagues ... Historians writing about the Nazi period have denied it a language. Instead they invented complicated theories so that nobody can recognize reality in their works ... In these texts history comes across as something very remote which is not worth remembering." Broszat complains of a cold, distant tone in historical accounts of this period of German history, caused by an evident lack of pleasure in narrating, and he describes the landscape of historiography as "inhabited less by plastic, psychologically convincing figures than by types and stereotypes drawn from the conceptual vocabulary of political science ... it is formulated in the more-or-less emotional or abstract-academic language of historians whose embarrassment, disconcertedness vis-à-vis the history of National Socialism, also manifests itself in the fact that they refuse to grant that history the true and genuine means of communication employed by historical presentation - namely, narrative language." Such judgments of eminent professional historians suggest the failure of this form of narrative to stir up discussion and debate within a wider public.

There were other reasons for this lack of a historiographically-inspired debate. One of these is the apparent absence in Germany, compared with Britain, of good quality popularisers of history, authors capable of producing a readable narrative which allows history to be absorbed in a by-the-by way. As well as these deficiencies in German publishing, there was the absence within German schools during the 1950s of any treatment of German history after 1933. In fact it was the experience of many educated in the 1950s for history to end at the First World War. Universities also failed in this
Heimatfilm, characterised by subtle influence continued to officers charged how 1945 cinema saw no new directors who had made this task, this wonder that (Leni population of view as in drama Jud Süss) or overt message, or Semitic without any Film films. If the ancient craft of history-writing had little to offer, could the gaps be filled by other, more modern forms of narrative? What did film, the medium of the twentieth century, have to offer? It is important to recognise the quite different developments in German film history towards the end of the Weimar Republic and into the Nazi period. Before Hitler took power, there had been a thriving avant-garde movement in cinema in Germany, best exemplified by a film like Kuhle Wampe. But film makers who opposed Hitler, such as Fritz Lang, were forced into exile, and cinema in the Third Reich, under the close personal direction of Goebbels, was used to subtly convey the Nazi view of the world through the form of entertaining Hollywood-type musicals, or through Heimat films. Film was either turned into a trite medium for entertainment and escapism, without any overt political message (Goebbels vastly preferred the historical costume drama Jud Süß to the crude Der ewige Jude as a vehicle for transmitting an anti-Semitic message), or it was used in a documentary way in newsreels, presenting a Nazi view of world events and maintaining the passive support of the majority of the population (Leni Riefenstahl's work as a director stands as an example of this function, as in her film eulogising Hitler Triumph des Willens). Both trends in film, documentary and fictional, had been divested of their ability to articulate experience, and it was small wonder that critics like Adorno turned against the medium.

The film historian Thomas Elsaesser describes in his history of the German cinema how 1945 saw no new start for the German film industry. Indeed, American officers charged with the denazification of the industry complained of the impossibility of this task, as virtually all involved in the industry were more or less tainted. Many directors who had made films for Goebbels, such as Deppe, Harlan, and Stöckel continued to work after 1945. As so many of the films made during the Nazi period had no overt political content, they could continue to be seen by, and continue to work a subtle influence on their West German audiences. The cinema of the 1950s was characterised by the Heimatfilm, and Eric Rentschler comments that over thirty such Heimatfilme, originally made during the Third Reich, were remade between 1947 and 1960. Furthermore, the cinemas were filled by people wanting to see some of the three
hundred new Heimatfilme made in the same years. Of this phenomenon Rentschler concludes: "In a Federal Republic burdened with unassimilated war guilt and still in the process of rebuilding itself, the felicities of a fantasy countryside devoid of rubble and Allied occupation troops allowed audiences to dream of a simpler primeval Germany."

This Germany, the stuff of dreams in the Nazi era, was one not of bombed cities, but peaceful nature; not of refugees driven from their homes, but Heimat. The world of politics was replaced by the domestic world of the family in an escape from history, and the audiences received "a message of quietism and accession to the powers that be" which suited the consensus. Anything in the view of the past which could arouse guilt or conflict was repressed under this anodyne form of cinema.

In literature the catchphrase Stunde Null, which was applied also within a cultural context, might suggest the end of one era and the beginning of a new. Instead, stagnation and a movement towards a restoration were the essential features of the 1950s in German literary life. In reception, writers who had made their reputations at least twenty-five years before held sway: Rilke, Mann, Hesse, Benn, Hofmannsthal, Broch, Musil and Kafka. Such choices provide evidence for the turning away from contemporary and socially aware literature, and also suggest a clear selection designed to avoid contact with the Third Reich, or with a form of literature which could have enlightened the period. David Roberts argues that the question of a so-called Stunde Null has led to a debate over the periodisation of contemporary German literature. In his opinion, 1945 signifies not a break, but a continuation of the restorative tendencies which started at the end of the 1920s and which National Socialism reinforced. The period of restoration can be thus seen to stretch from the late 1920s till the late 1950s. These tendencies were reinforced by the intellectual vacuum at the end of the Second World War, and the onset of the Cold War which produced an enforced stability and outlawed possible alternatives. However, the flaw in this analysis is the neglect of an alternative aesthetic, and the presentation of a homogeneous picture of the late Weimar period. There was an extremely broad spectrum on offer, from Brecht through Horváth, Fleißer and Feuchtwanger to the authors mentioned above, stretching further to the right in political terms to Bronnen. Naturally, of these only a small selection were retained by the Nazis as being ideologically sound. In the reception of the 1950s a wider selection was on offer, but a selection which continued to ignore a significant tendency in Weimar literature. The picture is further added to by the return of exiled writers, many of whom had nothing to say which they had not already said in their opposition to Hitler in exile. Brecht, who settled eventually in the East, wrote few new plays, and in the West performances of his work were deliberately stripped of political content. For example, productions of Der Kaukasische Kreidekreis omitted the prologue for reasons
which can be put down to the Cold War and the anti-Communism of the era. In as much as writers like Musil, Brecht and Mann were taken up again, this might be attributed to the need to re-establish some cultural life, to gain some contact with the cultural and democratic life of Weimar. But it is erroneous to suggest that those elements in Weimar which saw, described and opposed the rise of Nazism are represented in this selection.

The consensus which was created in social and political life is reflected in the literary products of the decade. It is revealing how many of the representatives of German literature in the postwar phase had been able to practise under the Nazi regime without too many difficulties. Broszat\(^65\) cites as examples Weyrauch, Eich and Koeppen. Goebbels' toleration of these writers was long understood by critics as a calculated move to retain an aura of culture for the regime. It is more likely the case that with the movement away from experimental and avant-garde trends in literature which had taken place before 1933, in close association with the economic and social crisis, came a return to traditional themes, forms of expression and tendencies which the Nazis could latch on to. Given this trend, and the eclecticism of the Nazis in cultural matters, it proves difficult at times, as Hans Dieter Schäfer\(^66\) explains, to differentiate between the writers of the *innere Emigration* and Nazi writers *per se*.

Literature became a part of the mechanism of evasion found in the postwar period; emerging from this were writers like Böll and Lenz. Broszat cites a revealing conversation with Lenz and Böll, both leading writers of the 1950s, in which both admit that after the military defeat of 1945 the Nazis were no longer of any interest to their work as writers. In making this statement, it appears that these two prominent writers of the 1950s are allying themselves to the social and political consensus of the decade which saw a distinct break with the Nazi era occurring as a military event. It is an impression which is strengthened when Böll, remarking on the swift demise of Nazi resistance, concludes that there was therefore no need to confront Nazi ideology, feeling a disinclination "*den Unterlegenen etwas am Zeuge zu flicken.*"\(^67\) Böll is happy to accept the "outlaw" or the totalitarian theories of the postwar era which saw the small people as apathetic and desperate *Mitläufer* who quickly became the victims of the Nazis after 1933.

One of the most trenchant critiques of the literature of the 1950s is again offered from the perspective of the late 1960s. Hans Magnus Enzensberger\(^68\) assesses the literature of the period in the light of the contemporary search for a revolutionary form of literature. He explains how West German society placed great emphasis on the importance of cultural life in this period; literature in particular had an important role

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\(^67\) Zitat aus einer Diskussion zwischen Lenz und Böll."
to play. The literary magazine Die Wandlung is significant for its very title, given that literature's main task after the war was to illustrate to both German and foreign audiences that a transformation had taken place: the Nazi past was dead and buried. The underlying function of literature, in Enzensberger's view, was to direct attention away from a recognition of an absence of real change in the structure of West German society. Literature took on an alibi function, as it sought to compensate for the lack of real social change: "Je weniger an reale gesellschaftliche Veränderung, an die Umwälzung von Macht- und Besitzverhältnissen zu denken war, desto unentbehrlicher wurde der westdeutschen Gesellschaft ein Alibi im Überbau."69 Various motives converge in constituting this alibi: the wish to compensate, at least intellectually, for the bankruptcy of the Fascist period; the urgent desire for the Germans to be seen as a Kulturvolk, despite the collective crimes committed in their name; a state which was hungry for any kind of prestige; a form of idealism which, faced with the facts of mass-consumer society, seeks refuge in "den alten antizivilisatorischen Affekten"; an anti-Fascism which exhibits itself as a matter of taste and, in order to prove itself, appreciates what was regarded as degenerate by the Nazis, regardless of the intrinsic value of the work; finally, there was the desire to keep up with the rest of the world culturally. One point unites all the elements of the alibi: "sie haben der Literatur Entlastungs- und Ersatzfunktionen aufgeladen."70 Literature was to fill the void caused by the absence of genuine political life, with the outcome: "Je mehr die westdeutsche Gesellschaft sich stabilisierte, desto dringender verlangte sie nach Gesellschaftskritik in der Literatur: je folgenloser das Engagement der Schriftsteller blieb, desto lauter wurde nach ihm gerufen."71 This mechanism led to a supreme place for literature within society, but also, Enzensberger claims, to grotesque self-deception.

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The fundamental problem facing writers in the postwar period, one which could not be resolved by harking back to formal experimentation, was the question of language. How was it possible for the writers of the 1950s to approach the events of the recent past and their full horror as encapsulated in the term Auschwitz? We recall Adorno's dictum that after Auschwitz it is barbaric to write poetry: "Kulturkritik findet sich der letzten Stufe der Dialektik von Kultur und Barbarei gegenüber: nach Auschwitz ein Gedicht zu schreiben, ist barbarisch, und das frisst auch die Erkenntnis an, die ausspricht, warum es unmöglich ward, heute Gedichte zu schreiben."72 A similar conclusion with regard to poetry had been hinted at by Brecht in his famous statement about the possibility of continuing to write poetry, in An die Nachgeborenen: "Was sind das für Zeiten/ wo ein Gespräch über Bäume fast ein Verbrechen ist/ weil es ein
How was hell on earth to be represented in fictional writing? Had Auschwitz, as the literary critic Ernst Schuhmacher suggests, become a synonym for organised, systematised and rationalised brutality, and did this not mean the real Ende der Kunstperiode that Hegel had spoken about in his own time?

It is somewhat ironic, given Adorno’s emphasis on poetry, that the first attempts to approach Auschwitz in literature took on that very form. These were poems written by Jewish writers, Paul Celan and Nelly Sachs being the best known, writing from the point of view of the victims. Thus we find, in the poetry of Nelly Sachs in particular, attempts to convey the horrors of the camps seen from a victim’s perspective, for example, in the collection In den Wohnungen des Todes. Celan’s poem Todesfuge is remarkable for the fact that it, of all the Jewish-German poetry of the 1940s and 1950s, examines the mentality of the perpetrators. In Celan, who later turned against his most famous poem and espoused a style based on the reduction of language to its barest essentials, we find the same dilemma with language, particularly the German language, the language of the torturers and murderers. In his oeuvre, poetry or language is often associated with death. We find an example of such an association in the poem Nächltich geschürzt: "Ein Wort - du weißt: /eine Leiche." This scepticism with regard to language, and the paradox of then using language, is a continuing theme in Celan’s poetry. The difficulties of using language, which lie in the constant peril of somehow aestheticising the death camps, is further expressed in the poem Welchen der Steine du hebst: "Welches der Worte du sprichst-/ du dankst/ dem Verderben." Nevertheless, there is no doubting the power these poems have to express the horror of the camps.

H. Vormweg examines the approach of German writers of the immediate postwar period to the question of language and claims that the literature produced, exemplified by the collections of sonnets which appeared after the war, contributed to "eine unbewußte, oft höchst kunstvolle Kostümierung einer elementaren Sprachlosigkeit." Here we discover an important mechanism: the attention to form is used to cover up an essential poverty in the content of the language, and a particular form is used to evade the recognition of the way in which language had been compromised and devalued. The programmatic slogans Kahlschlag and "Auszug aus dem Elfenbeinturm" had been proclaimed in 1949 and are the literary correspondences to the terms Bruch and Stunde Null on the social level. Yet the use of these terms hides the absence of a fundamental re-evaluation of language. Support for this contention is found in Widmer’s research which examined the so-called "Neue Sprache" of the younger generation by looking at the literary magazine Der Ruf. He concludes: "Zwölf Jahre Klischeesprache scheinen schwer auf den jungen Journalisten zu lasten. Sie können sich von den
vernebelten Begriffen, die das 'Dritte Reich' geschaffen hat, nicht lösen. Im gleichen diffusen Stil wird weitergeschrieben - nur die Vorzeichen haben sich geändert .... Aber man kann nicht einzelne Wörter aufspießen und glauben, mit ihnen allen Nazi-Einfluß auf die Sprache ausmerzen zu können.\(^{578}\) Widmer's analysis showed that all the goodwill in the world could not hide the concrete failure of language; as Schnurre had stated, every conjunction and adjective had been sullied by the Nazi era. A contamination of language had taken place which had removed the very working material of writers. Vormweg takes Eich's poetry as his example in showing that the so-called Kahlschlag and the concern of young German writers with language was short-lived. By 1950 he assumes that this concern had faded away.\(^{79}\)

If we look at the response of two writers of the time to the problem of language, we can gain an idea of the extent to which Vormweg's conclusion is justified. Günter Grass writes of his early development as a writer in Schreiben nach Auschwitz\(^{80}\), and Peter Weiss considers the issue in his essay Laokoon: oder über die Grenzen der Sprache.\(^{81}\) Both are writers to be considered in greater detail later in this study. Grass describes his situation in 1945, incapable, on account of the propaganda of twelve years, of comprehending the fact that his fellow countrymen had been responsible for the crimes of Auschwitz. In his own case, and he speaks for his generation, it took years before the significance of the documentation began to sink in. Looking back over those years, he wonders whether the problem of writing after Auschwitz had only been posed in a ritualistic way, to show concern, and whether self-doubts were not merely a rhetorical exercise. These experiences of a writer reflect the overall cultural and political climate, for, despite Theodor Heuss's appeal in 1949 to bring the horrible injustices done to the Jewish people to speech, it appears, as Rabinbach claims, that "in the cultural climate of the immediate postwar years, the crime against the Jews was almost never mentioned and, if it was, then euphemistically and metaphorically."\(^{82}\)

Grass started his artistic life as a sculptor, Weiss as a painter. Both avoided through their choice of medium, deliberately or otherwise, the problem of language. But when he moved over to writing, Grass admits that he was following a path which led "zielstrebig an Auschwitz vorbei." He adds: "Bedenken dieser Art: Kann man nach Auschwitz Kunst machen? Darf man nach Auschwitz Gedichte schreiben? - für eben dieses Bedenken nahmen sich viele meiner Generation, nahm ich mir keine Zeit."\(^{83}\) The Adorno dictum was known, but misunderstood as a Verbotstafel, therefore the challenge of it was easily overlooked in the drive towards the future. Adorno had never intended his proposition to be taken literally, but as a challenge to those who continued to seek a comfortable relationship with language and literary tradition. In particular, Adorno was
warning of the danger of art doing an injustice to suffering, of the potentiality of wringing pleasure or meaning from an artistic representation of brutality. But the challenge of Adorno's statement was dismissed with the argument: "barbarisch sei dieses Verbot, es überfordere den Menschen, sei im Grunde unmenschlich; schließlich gehe das Leben weiter, wie beschädigt auch immer." In a frank baring of his own soul, Grass reveals his own repudiation of Adorno's challenge: "Da ich mich im Vollbesitz meiner Talente wänhte und mich entsprechend als Alleinbesitzer dieser Talente sah, wollte ich sie ausleben, unter Beweis stellen. Geradezu wiedernaturlich kam mir Adornos Gebot als Verbot vor; als hätte sich jemand gottväterlich angemäßt, den Vögeln das Singen zu verbieten."85

If for Günter Grass the dilemma of language was easily resolved, if, that is to say, it was really even recognised in the first place, this would appear to confirm Vormweg's assertion. But this can not be said for Peter Weiss who identified the same defence mechanisms, evasions and silences as Arendt and Adorno, and saw in them mechanisms against enlightenment. Writing in 1965 in his essay Laokoon, oder über die Grenzen der Sprache, he begins by describing the difficult process of acquiring one's mother tongue and the importance of language for identity and a sense of belonging to a common culture. He then describes what happens when that same language, as happened in the Nazi era, was used to ostracize and took on a threatening violence: "Menschen stehen vor einer Stimme, und in allen Ohren vibrieren die Trommelfelle unter den gleichen Schwingungen ... Menschen marschieren und brüllen zum Takt ihrer Schritte Wörter, die ihre Verständlichkeit verlieren."86 Propaganda means that people no longer possess language, but are possessed by it, as the ability to check and confirm with reference to the world around is steadily removed. For Weiss, the world of language had disintegrated under Fascism, and he had to flee into a realm of speechlessness (Sprachlosigkeit) quite different to the one Arendt describes.

The loss of the writer's mother tongue in exile entailed a loss of belonging and identity. Cut off from the naming of events, he was also cut off from events themselves, and it was as though he was returned to the dark room of early childhood. Weiss portrays the slow and painful loss of his first language and the equally slow and painful learning of a foreign tongue. The language of his mother tongue became the language of night, relying on chiffres, and the writer turned to a visual presentation of his dream world: "Er sah vor sich, was er zu sagen nicht mehr imstande war."87 Visual art did not abdicate faced with the emptiness of the writer's situation, but it was fixed in time; nor did it possess the movement of language with its openness to possible alterations.
When, as a survivor of the catastrophe, Weiss returned to the German language, he perceived it as containing barbarity in its very tones. Yet faced with the alternative of sinking into total silence, he embarks on a strenuous project to repair the very language damaged by violence. This was an exercise in stripping words of all connotations, beginning solely with "Lagebestimmungen".88 The experience of Auschwitz can not be simply allowed to be lost, for the events cry out for words. Weiss is countering the view of those like the historian Dahrendorf who claimed (in 1965) that Auschwitz "transcends the horizons of scientific explanations: it is too close and too overwhelming to be studied sine ira et studio"89, or those like Golo Mann who saw the whole event as covered in darkness. Surrender to silence would imply a surrender to the cynicism of the barbarians, a concession to darkness. Other strategies had been devised for dealing with the demands of the past in language. Some made a virtue of confusion (the "Absurdist") and others, like those among the Gruppe '47 with their Magic Realism "begnägten sich mit dunklen Worten und täuschten Magie vor, weil sie zu müde waren und zu bequem, sich mit dem Sachverhalt, der sich bis zum absoluten Grenzpunkt erstreckte, zu befassen."90

In postwar Germany Weiss found, alongside the rapid reconstruction of buildings, a correspondingly rapid and concealing renovation of language. "Er kam sich funktionslos vor in dieser übertünchten und aufpolierten Welt, in der sich die Redeströme wieder breit um die neuerrichteten Bauwerke ergossen."91 The rapid rebuilding of the West German infrastructure concealed an easy accommodation with the language of the past. Here the difference between Weiss's position and the response of Grass to the problem of language is clearly stated. For Weiss, the German language was a tool like any other, but "die Wurzeln der Wörter waren verwittert, die Wörter standen losgelöst von ihrem Ursprung, oft nur als leere Gehäuse, denen er erst einen Inhalt geben müßte."92 The scepticism towards a devalued language had as a consequence the need to rediscover, re-evaluate and reconstruct; only in this way could a writer in Weiss's position begin to write again. In Weiss we find a scepticism towards language, a need to neutralise and to strip it of all connotations which is rarely found in the literature of the 1950s. The ease with which other writers in that decade took up language again without reflection provides a stark contrast to Weiss's own experience.
Günter Grass Die Blechtrommel: Provocative Tales from an Evaded Past.

Like a shark amongst sardines Günter Grass entered the German literary scene in 1959 with his novel Die Blechtrommel. The curtain of evasions and silences of the decade was torn apart by the work, bringing a breath of fresh air into a stagnant, derivative and inconsequential literary world. The author belonged to the Hitlerjugend generation, those born late enough to be absolved of direct political responsibility, yet who felt a deep need to confront the Nazi past critically. Broszat typifies the experience of that generation during the years of Nazi rule as being "affected emotionally and intellectually to a high degree by the suggestivity - so confounding to feeling and to one's sense of morality - which the Nazi regime was capable of." In the postwar period this generation began to feel angry and cheated, and after a "period of retreat into the realm of private values during the final years of the war and the immediate postwar period" members of it were motivated to begin a confrontation with the past, being freer than the older generation and more involved than the younger.

Günter Grass's engagement with the issues relating to Germany's history has spanned the whole of his literary work. Twenty years after the publication of Die Blechtrommel, he was to comment in an essay entitled Wie sagen wir es den Kindern: "Uns kann die Vergangenheit nicht aufhören, gegenwärtig zu sein. Wir fragen uns immer noch: Wie kam es dazu? Und immer noch sind wir ohne Antwort." Grass does not believe in a simple Vergangenheitsbewältigung, but shares the Mitscherlichs' appeal for a continual working through of the past in the form of "erinnern, wiederholen, durcharbeiten." As a seventeen year old prisoner-of-war, Grass had been released to face the horrors of what had been done in the name of the German people. The forced viewing of the documentary evidence had little immediate effect on him, and his experiences in this respect corresponded to many of his countrymen and women who were either repelled by what they saw and thus repressed it, or considered their re-education completed with this one traumatic gesture. Grass describes his participation in that delayed reaction: "Es brauchte weitere Jahre, bis ich zu begreifen begann: das wird nicht aufhören, gegenwärtig zu bleiben; unsere Schande wird sich weder verdrängen noch bewältigen lassen; ... Auschwitz wird, obgleich umdrängt von erklärenden Wörtern, nie zu begreifen sein." As a young writer, he was typical of many of his generation in disregarding the demands of Auschwitz. He describes the path of his literary career as going past Auschwitz, and he interpreted Adorno's dictum about writing after Auschwitz as a
command against art and a denial of his imaginative creative talents. Yet, at a certain period in his development Grass, although challenging Adorno's dictum, appears to come close to Peter Weiss's experience with language. A poem he wrote in the 1950s, entitled Askese, is viewed by its author as a programmatic response in the search for language appropriate for dealing with the experiences of the past. Auschwitz had stamped itself on his outlook as a writer almost without him being aware of it. In his retrospective interpretation of the poem, he sees the colour grey as denoting a conscious rejection of the stilted language used in the poetry of the 1950s: "Also raus aus der blästischen Innerlichkeit. Weg mit den sich blumig plusternden Genitivmetaphern, Verzicht auf angerikte Irgendwie-Stimmungen und den gepflegten literarischen Kammerton. Askese, das hieß Mißtrauen allem Klingklang gegenüber, jener lyrischen Zeitlosigkeit der Naturmystiker, die in den fünfziger Jahren ihre Kleingärten bestellten..."7 Expressed here is a clear reaction against language which is derivative, typified by an attention to form which conceals the paucity of the content, and the rejection of a language which was participating in the evasion of history.

Hand in hand with his rejection of these trends in the literary language of the 1950s came an aversion to ideological positions, born of his experiences in Cold War Berlin. Grass found himself at the front line of an ideological war between West and East Germany in which theories of history were used to legitimise a particular form of state. As the historian Dan Diner comments: "In no other European country does the interpretation of National Socialism play such an existential and politically important role as in the two German states. Both sides have justified their civil war-like opposition to each other with theories that relate directly to the past."8 For West Germany the theory of totalitarianism legitimised the construction of a capitalist, anti-Communist state, whereas the existence of the German Democratic Republic was justified by the Marxist line which saw Fascism as derived from capitalism; hence the anti-capitalist, anti-Fascist state. On both sides an official "declamatory general distancing"9 from the Nazi past took place. A confrontation with the past, characterised by an ideological battle between political élites seeking the raison d'être for their particular German state, removed the crimes of that past from view, as Diner concludes: "Both of these underlying theories .... ignore at least one event within National Socialism; the mass murder of millions, the killing for the sake of killing."10 Grass moved away from the charged atmosphere of Berlin to Paris, where he produced the Danzig Trilogy partly in response to the way the crimes of the past had been hidden underneath the ideological conflict: "hell ausleuchten, ans Tagelicht bringen wollte ich das Verbrechen."11

The way in which Grass reacted against both the conventional literary language of the 1950s and the entrenched ideological positions of the time struck a chord in the
reception of Die Blechtrommel on its release. In the reception the quality of the language is a main issue, often provoking more discussion than the historical subject matter. Most react with fulsorne praise to Grass's visceral language, and there is no doubting the sense of excitement after years of inconsequentional and stilted writing: "In der deutschen Literatur ist seit langer Zeit nicht mehr so atemberaubend, aus solcher Fülle der Gesichter und Geschichten ... erzählt worden." It was as though the German reading public had become fed up with the polemic and didactic approach to the past. At last they had a writer who was prepared to tell stories, to provide a "rattling good read" without going out of his way to enlighten. History was being absorbed along the way; a historical consciousness was being created through a readable story. Joachim Fest relates how Thomas Mann once said that the novelist should not want to exert a moral influence. Instead, he should concentrate his efforts on his craft of writing a strong story with convincing characters. In succeeding in the latter, he would also achieve the former. He continues: "The same applies to the writing of history. It should not pursue political aims. But if it awakes interest in the past and can depict the people who participated in it convincingly, it will also have the political influence which must be important to us." 

The ability of Grass to tell such readable stories seems to represent a release from the repressed years of evasions and silence. Like a patient on the psychoanalyst's couch who had blocked the past, he suddenly releases a torrent of memories which have no other purpose than to tell. The stories may have no didactic sense or structure, but act as a form of catharsis. The overwhelming power of the language is felt and welcomed by many critics who speak of a "fasszierende ... poetische Wirkung ... es fesselt zu lesen", and "Grass fasziniert: durch seine Sprache, seine epische Kraft, seine Fabulierkunst, seine ans Unheimliche grenzende Beobachtungsgabe." The unreflective but vital descriptive power of the language provokes effusive praise from most quarters. Enzensberger, for example, speaks of Grass's urge to simply narrate and describe in detail: "Dieser Autor greift nichts an, beweist nichts, demonstriert nichts, er hat keine andere Absicht, als seine Geschichten mit der größten Genauigkeit zu erzählen." The absence of polemical attacks, demonstration and proof of theories, coming after fifteen years of ideologically motivated narratives of the past, is refreshing for Enzensberger and others. Grass's motivation to purely narrate an abundance of stories is seen as having a therapeutic value: "hier rollt eine Handlung vor dem Leser ab, als habe der Autor bloß erzählt, um sie loszuwerden." There is a strong impression of an explosion after fifteen years of stagnation, of a need at last to bring personal, individual memories of the past into the public domain; Grass is seen as "ein Epiker von elementarer Sprachgewalt, der ... 700 Seiten lang Schilderung an Schilderung und Anekdote an Anekdote reiht."
But praise for the language is by no means unanimous, and dissenting voices can be heard. Some record the almost exclusive concentration on the language of the novel by critics, whether favourable or not: "Das Wie entlockt Freudenschreie und Haßgesänge ... Es ist diese Sprache, die den einen verzaubert, den anderen abstößt." Others question Grass's total dependence on the descriptive. Marcel Reich-Ranicki describes it as "ein effektvolles Spiel" and uses the verb hypnotisieren to depict the effect achieved by the cascade of words in Grass's descriptive narration, raising doubts about the overall effect: "Man wird die Frage stellen, warum, und wird kaum eine andere Antwort finden als: Es hat dem Autor Günter Grass so gefallen." He also suggests that many of Grass's ideas are not worked through in any way which could further understanding, with many potentially revealing scenes remaining sketches. He concludes: "Die meist präzisen und bisweilen wollüstigen Schilderungen seiner Art ergeben nichts für seine Zeitkritik", and that such preoccupation with descriptive detail deflects from effective historical criticism, claiming: "die Auseinandersetzung mit der Zeit wird von Spielereien oder Schaumschlagereien verdrängt." He is not alone in expressing a concern that the demands of recent German history were going unheeded. Schüler, despite his admiration for the fascination aroused by Grass's writing, sees inherent dangers in a whole-hearted acceptance of it: "Er schildert minutiös Ekelregendes und Perverses, ohne sich wohl immer zu fragen, ob er dazu noch legitimiert sei ... (er) philosophiert nicht. Er stellt dar, er berichtet, weitschweifig, mit einer Vorliebe für das Detail." There is, of course, no reason why Grass should "philosophise", nor why he should present a theory of Fascism, but the charge that he uses language unreflectively stands. The search for moral significance behind the satirical descriptive methodology is frustrated: "Eine moralische Grundhaltung, etwas, was letzten Endes befriedigt, erhält oder aufrüttelt - wir suchen in diesem Buch vergeblich danach." The vitalism of Grass's writing, after the sterility of what had gone before, is seen to be rich in possibilities. However, the impression remains that this unreflective way of writing contains particular dangers with regard to a debate with, and understanding of, the past.

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Die Blechtrommel did not signal a new departure for the novel form, and it is clear from reading the reception of Die Blechtrommel that most related it to previous traditions: Wilhelm Meister auf Blech getrommelt. Many critics welcomed in Grass the return to the traditional virtues of the novel, including imagination, a linear plot built around a hero and his family (in essence Die Blechtrommel is the story of the Matzerath family), and a descriptive narration: "Grass verläßt sich auf die Fabel ... der Held steht im Zentrum und seine Lebensgeschichten erzählt er in chronologischer Abfolge. Moderne Theorie über Auflösung des Romans und Ende allen Heldentums
werden beiseitesgeschoben."\textsuperscript{26} The author himself gives voice to his rejection of avant-garde theories of the novel through Oskar at the beginning of the novel. Naturally, it could be argued that these are Oskar's not Grass's views, and that Grass is parodying the philistinism of the petty bourgeois view of modernist culture. However, there appears to be some correspondence, as we shall see.


In the light of this account, it comes as something of a surprise that Grass saw Alfred Döblin, the author of \textit{Berlin Alexanderplatz} and one of the great innovators of the novel in the twentieth century, as his teacher of narrative. In his essay \textit{Über meinen Lehrer Döblin}, Grass states: "denn ich verdanke Alfred Döblin viel, mehr noch, ich könnte mir meine Prosa ohne die futuristische Komponente seiner Arbeit .... nicht vorstellen."\textsuperscript{28} It is worth considering what it was that interested and influenced Grass in Döblin's work, and what elements of Döblin's theoretical and artistic work he chose to ignore. Grass decides to focus his attention on Döblin's theoretical writings, and as far as his novels are concerned on \textit{Wallenstein} rather than \textit{Berlin Alexanderplatz}. This decision says something about Grass's view of Döblin, for Döblin's work changed considerably between 1913-30, and Grass comes down in favour of the earlier, ignoring the later achievements and avant-garde developments. Grass's interests differ markedly from those of the Döblin of \textit{Berlin Alexanderplatz}.

In discussing Döblin's critical writings, Grass pays particular attention to the article \textit{An Romanautoren und ihre Kritiker} (1913). His question "Wo ist der Autor?" focuses on the dominance of the author which Döblin himself had tried to reduce. An important part of Döblin's critique of the traditional novel was an attack on the
conditions of production and the tendency of authors to be cut off from collective social experience, taking up a position of isolation. Grass says of Döblin's Berlin Programme: "Hart geht er Romanautoren an, die mit Ausdauer die 'Probleme ihrer eigenen Unzulänglichkeit' bewegen. 'Dichten ist nicht Nägelkauen und Zahnstochern, sondern eine öffentliche Angelegenheit'."\(^{30}\) The aspects of Döblin's futuristic programme which Grass finds congenial to his own writing in the 1950s are firstly the absence of philosophy and theory, secondly the replacement of lyricism by vitalism in the language of the novel, and finally the absence of intervention on the part of the author. The author is not there to expound a philosophical, moral or theoretical position, but to present and describe. This attack on the hegemony of the author, together with the sort of language Döblin proposes, must have given great encouragement to Grass, and plays an important part in his presentation of history.

As a consequence of Döblin's earlier programme, it is not the epic Berlin Alexanderplatz, but the novel Wallenstein which attracts Grass's interest. There is little doubt that he finds in the author of Wallenstein a much more congenial figure, and his admiring description of the methodology of this other Döblin reinforces this: "Da sitzt er, klein, unruhig, kurzsehichtig unter den Bäumen des Kurparks und sieht die Ostsee, sieht das unablässige Fahren der Koggen und Korvetten, sieht Gustav Adolf mit seiner Flotte von Schweden her aufkommen. Rennende Schiffe, brusthebend geschwollene Segler raheschlagend tauchen sie aus herabrieselndem Wasser, noch namenlos, noch ohne Herkunft. Schweden bleibt dunkel, ohne Ankunft und politische Bestimmung, ein bloßes Gleiten und Raumgewinnen, das einem erholungsuchenden Militärarzt in Bad Kissingen die gegenwärtige Realität Verdun verdrängt. Diese Vision wird bald darauf benannt werden."\(^{30}\) In the first place, the elements Grass admires are the freedom of the descriptive language, and the imagination and vision exercised in evoking the past. These aspects are further complemented by the absence of the author, and an element of escapism from the horrors of the present in the powerful evocations of the past.

In the second place, Grass was attracted to Wallenstein by the treatment of history he found in it. Although defining Döblin's work as "kein historischer Roman" and claiming that "Döblin sieht Geschichte als absurden Prozeß"\(^{31}\), he really means that the author rejects a view of history in the conventional, monumental sense of dates, battles, kings and emperors. History is an absurd process, in that it resists the attempts to impose theoretical and ideological frameworks upon it. Döblin accumulates history; he is more interested in the comings and goings of armies searching for winter quarters than in the victories and defeats of the Thirty Year's War: "Aber Geschichte, und das heißt die Vielzahl widersinniger und gleichzeitiger Abläufe, Geschichte, wie Döblin sie bloßstellen will ist das nicht."\(^{32}\) Events are depicted as contradictory and simultaneous;

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it is a matter of chance what emerges from the account. In denying the term history to this approach, Grass is distancing himself from a traditional understanding of what constitutes history and placing himself firmly in what he considers to be a literary camp. However, what Döblin offers is also history, a history from below which is in marked contrast to Schiller's version of Wallenstein. This is undoubtedly an area where Döblin has made a mark on Grass's novel Die Blechtrommel. Grass enlarges on the difference between Döblin and Schiller in the treatment of their historical theme: "Schiller war bemüht, uns den Dreißigjährigen Krieg überschaubar gegliedert darzustellen. Da ergibt sich eines aus dem anderen. Seine ordnende Hand knüpfe Bezüge, will Sinn geben. Das alles zerschlägt Döblin mehrmals und bewusst zu Scherben, damit Wirklichkeit entsteht." The encouragement Grass gained from these elements of Döblin's work is most evident here. Grass gleaned much from his reading of Döblin: the vital language; the resistance to entering into a work with beliefs or convictions; the urge to present in a fully literary way; the view of history as a chaotic process which can only be simply presented without ideological frameworks. With Wallenstein in mind he embarks upon the writing of Die Blechtrommel.

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The appearance of Die Blechtrommel in 1959 coincided with what Rabinbach terms "the crisis of Vergangenheitsbewältigung" in the years 1958-9. The consensus of the previous decade and a half was showing signs of fragility, and cracks were beginning to appear. As Rabinbach explains, on both domestic and foreign fronts the Adenauer epoch seemed to be breaking up. This coincided with a renewed interest in the events of the past which exhibited itself in a number of ways. The dramatization of the Diary of Anne Frank achieved an unexpected resonance, and the Hamburg journalist Erich Lüth organised spontaneous pilgrimages to the sites of former concentration camps. Moreover, a new wave of desecration of Jewish cemeteries and synagogues began in 1959. These symptoms of a reignited past provoked a response on a political level: Adenauer spoke of the need "to devote particular attention to historical education about the recent past" as there had been a belated recognition of "historical illiteracy". Anti-Semitic attitudes were a feature of public opinion, with 16% openly anti-Semitic and 41% indifferent to the new wave of anti-Semitism. An attempt to respond with laws against Volksverhetzung was defeated by the SPD in favour of the compromise solution of a "national program of political enlightenment." Coping with the past was once more seen as the responsibility of official pedagogy. Such was the climate in which Grass's novel appeared.
Aspects of Grass's treatment of German history appealed to a generation that had been starved of any discussion of the past. Grass had evidently opened up an area which had all too conveniently been consigned to the vaults of history, and in doing so had touched a raw nerve. Of greatest import was the recognition that history, namely the history of a specific and relevant time and place, was back on the agenda. Oskar's story is not a timeless fantasy or parable, but is clearly located in the years 1900-1954. The direct approach to recent events of the past and their authentic detail also appealed: "Das Buch birst geradezu von authentischer Realität ... Grass bezieht zB so tatsächliche Details wie den Angriff der Deutschen auf die polnische Post in Danzig am 5. September 1939 ein."

The depiction in the novel of the petty bourgeoisie is recognised by one or two commentators as significant: "Denn hinter den Kleinbürgern aus Langfuhr, zwischen denen er aufwächst, spielt sich ja Geschichte ab, die Erwachsenen zu machen behaupteten, deutsche Geschichte, europäische Geschichte, kurzum die Zeitgeschichte."

The literary critic R. Baumgart also recognises this apparent merit in the novel of locating the appeal of the Nazis to a previously neglected stratum of society, thereby working away from the demonisation of the Nazis towards a recognition of the broad popular appeal of Nazism: "Beinahe behäbig, verliebt ins Detail, wird eine bürgerliche Kulisse vor uns hingestellt, vor der Oskar zwischen Hinterhof und Schrebergarten, in geläufigen Dreieck zwischen Grünzeugladen, Bäcker und Krämer aufwächst, hochgepäppelt mit Familienausflügen und Geburtstagsfeiern, Welterfahrung unter dem knallenden Skattisch sammelnd ... zunächst hat die Dämonie noch bürgerliche Ausmaße."

Enzensberger is another who approves of the way Grass shows history "from below". Being blind to ideology was a virtue, Enzensberger suggests, imparting to Grass's work the merit of avoiding the demonisation born of an ideological position. Grass succeeds in bringing the Nazis down to earth, and his presentation works against the stereotypical images of the era produced particularly in film: "Nichts bleibt hier von dem fatalen Glanz übrig, den gewisse Filme, angeblich geschaffen, um unsere Vergangenheit 'mutig zu Leibe zu rücken', über die SS Uniform werfen. WHW, BdM, KdF, aller höllischen Größe bar, erscheinen als das, was sie waren; Inkarnationen des Muffigen, des Mickrigen und des Schofeln."

Die Blechtrommel treats German history from 1900-1954 with references to the major political events of those years: the First World War, the rise of Hitler, the Second World War, and the postwar years of reconstruction and recovery. The twelve years of Nazi dictatorship are thus not treated as a separate, distinct period, in other words, as an aberration with its consequent effect on our perception of the era, but both the prehistory and the postwar period feature in the narrative. In this way, German history is no longer distanced so as to resemble that of a foreign people, but the Nazi period is once more integrated into Germany's history. Grass makes no stylistic division to
separate off the Third Reich; Book One ends at about the beginning of the Second World War, Book Two at the end of the War. The former division does not pose as many problems as the latter, which could tempt the reader into seeing 1945 as a break. Moreover, the chronological approach to the narration of history in Die Blechtrommel has another important consequence. The history of the Third Reich is not told backwards from the horrific events of Auschwitz; in a sense the shadow of Auschwitz is removed from the position from which judgments and perceptions of all that went before are often made. This approach has the virtue of allowing a presentation of normal life, showing the evil which emerged from an abundance of almost unperceived individual initiatives, summed up in Arendt's famous phrase as "the banality of evil". However, it also allows Grass to bypass to a large extent the whole question of how Auschwitz came about and what it was ("an Auschwitz vorbei").

Grass's approach also possesses the virtue of avoiding what might be termed *Hilfskonstruktionen*, that is to say, narrative frameworks which provide a model for understanding the Third Reich. Amongst these was the interpretative framework based on a location of long-term continuities in the German psyche. This interpretation of the German congenital susceptibility to Fascism is typical of narratives written around the beginning of, and during, the Second World War. Thomas Mann, for example, reached back in time to Dürer and depicted National Socialism as an illness rooted in the German psyche. In this way, an apparently historical search for precedents is quickly transformed into a psychological explanation, where National Socialism is no longer the result of socio-political circumstances after the First World War, but of something resembling a sickness deeply embedded in the German character. Grass was not interested in maintaining the cultivation of this kind of thought, nor did his programme involve introducing other forms of analogy or parable.

Following in Döblin's footsteps, he dispenses with these *Hilfskonstruktionen*, pre-shaped concepts of world history, in favour of the perspective of "history from below". Major historical events are subordinated to the needs of the story of Oskar and his family in a way which leads to a parody of traditional historiography. A formulation often found in the novel confirms this relationship between the two: "Vjazma und Brjansk; dann setzte die Schlammerperiode ein. Auch Oskar begann, Mitte Oktober einundvierzig kräftig im Schlamms zu wählen. Man mag mir nachsehen, daß ich der Schlammerfolgen der Heeresgruppe Mitte meine Erfolge im unwegsamen und gleichfalls recht schlammigen Gelände der Frau Lina Greff gegenüberstelle." The specific date and location associated with the critical period in the Russian campaign are, as the narrator emphasises, deliberately subordinated to history from below in a way which also ridicules a trend in modern historiography of trying to catch the life of a period by
concentrating on the banal lives of ordinary people. Grass's whole purpose is to parody, and thus distance himself from, the writing of history. This departure from trying to interpret, by providing a model for the major events of the epoch, allows Grass the possibility of telling a story for its own sake; it places him firmly within the literary tradition. The telling of stories and release of memories take over from the provision of a model.

In moving away from analogy or parable, in short, away from the imposed framework of historical conventions, and by choosing to concentrate on a particular family within a specific milieu, a possibility for a new approach to history opens up for Grass: the depiction of the behaviour and mentality prevailing amongst the petty bourgeoisie. In confronting National Socialist history, Grass chose to deal with the section of the population where Hitler found his greatest popular support. His own memories lend the novel both a force and directness lacking in other, at times contrived, presentations, and an access towards understanding the past. Grass locates and describes the class of people most susceptible to Hitler's appeal, the lower-middle class of small town shopkeepers, tradesmen and small businessmen. The hero Oskar's life revolves around the grocer's shop of his parents, the greengrocer's, baker's and toy shop of Danzig's suburbs. The Nazis' appeal specifically within the lower-middle class had been neglected for so long, on account of the political and economic consensus which had developed in the 1950s. This treatment thus became the provocative element in Die Blechtrommel, for the petty bourgeoisie had been an essential part of the dynamic of recovery in the 1950s, and there was no desire to "dirty the nest" by attributing specific blame to it. The general desire to draw a veil of silence over such painful events had thus far prevented such a specific treatment.

In pointing the finger directly at the social attitudes of the petty bourgeoisie and their contribution to the disastrous events of the century, Grass is returning the whole issue of guilt and responsibility to the agenda. We recall the moral amnesia of the postwar years caused in part by the inability to deal with the question of guilt, within either a judicial or a moral-ethical framework. Grass recognised this evasion of the issue and commented: "Ihr wirtschaftlicher Erfolg kann das moralische Vakuum ihrer unvergleichbaren Schuld nicht verdecken ... auf alttestamentarische Weise überdauert die Schuld, sie überträgt sich." The economic success of the Germans in the 1950s could not expunge the consequences of the past, and this concern with guilt is recognised in the novel. For these people are not innocent bystanders somehow swept up by world events. They are in the middle of those events; responsible for the destruction of the community of Danzig, for the expulsion of the Jews, for the outbreak of the Second World War, and finally for their own expulsion from Danzig.
Given that Hitler's ideological appeal was aimed largely at the *Kleinbürgertum*, it is of potential significance that Grass chose to deal with a section of the population which gave greatest support to the Nazi party. But it becomes clear that it is not Grass's intention to give a specific, sociologically-inspired picture of the *Kleinbürgertum* of the crisis years of the Weimar Republic. Many authors in the late Weimar period had presented a picture of the social behaviour of these people, influenced in part by the analyses of Trotsky and Bloch. These commentators had seen the economic squeeze on the petty bourgeoisie as paramount in explaining its susceptibility to Fascism. As Trotsky said: "The sharp grievance of small proprietors never out of bankruptcy, of their university sons without posts and clients, of their daughters without dowries and suitors, demanded order and an iron hand."\(^43\) Authors like Horváth, Brecht, Fleißer and Feuchtwanger took up this analysis in depicting the deep-seated fear of the petty-bourgeoisie of becoming déclassé, which expressed itself partly in the brutality and sadism towards minority groups in the provincial milieu of the 1930s. Fleißer and Feuchtwanger in particular include sociological interludes in their accounts of provincial life.

Grass's purpose, however, is to give a generalised picture of the behaviour patterns of the petty bourgeoisie which neglects these sociological and historical analyses. He is writing literature in the Aristotelian mode, whose purpose is to give the general not the specific. He is thereby perpetuating the division between poet and historian. Grass deliberately selects a different picture from that of the *Kleinbürgertum* of the economic crisis. He chooses instead to present the boom years of the Nazi period with the intention of making an implied link with the petty bourgeoisie of the *Wirtschaftswunder* in the 1950s. What emerges from this is an illustration of Brecht's warning in *Arturo Ui*: "Der Schoß ist noch fruchtbar."\(^44\) An illustration of this generalised picture of the class he is concerned with emerges from Grass's presentation of the Matzeraths' family life, characterised by boredom, lovelessness and satiety. Matzerath's working life gives no sense of satisfaction; he feels he is working himself into the ground for no purpose. In their personal relationships there is a deep sense of boredom and impoverishment, underlined by Grass's descriptions of the photos of the ménage. Firstly of Jan and Agnes: "Da riecht es nach Tragik, Goldgräber und Verstiegenheit, die zum Überdruss wird, Überdruss, der Verstiegenheit mit sich führt."\(^45\) Then of Matzerath and Agnes: "Da tröpfelt Wochenendpotenz, da brutzeln die Wienerschnitzel, da nörgelt es ein bißchen vor dem Essen und gähnt nach der Mahlzeit, da muß man sich vor dem Schlafengehen Witze erzählen oder die Steuerabrechnung an die Wand malen, damit die Ehe einen geistigen Hintergrund bekommt."\(^46\) A bored living-room culture, revolving around *Skat*, food, jokes and tax-returns, but lacking any sense of deeper fulfilment, is the picture Grass paints. It is a dehistoricized picture,
behind which lurks the intention of relocating the smug, sated, self-satisfied petty bourgeoisie of the 1950s Freßwelle in the 1930s, without bothering with historical analyses of these peoples' anxieties as demonstrated by Trotsky and others.

The author's concern then, in establishing this link, is to illustrate patterns of social behaviour and attitudes which have continued undiminished within this section of the population. This concern coincides with that of Adorno, whose essay Was bedeutet: Aufarbeitung der Vergangenheit? also appeared in 1959, and with the later work of the Mitscherlichs in Die Unfähigkeit zu trauern. He achieves an unstructured and disturbing perspective on the past, as Thomas argues, "not by interconnecting social, political and historical facts and imposing a pattern on them, but by the selection of detail and by highlighting characteristic attitudes and behaviour." His choice of a literary way of working means, however, that although he is trying, and succeeds in part, to establish different perspectives on history, he is forced to rely on the conventional means of the novel.

Principally this reliance entails the representation of an individual, or individuals, for a class. Thus Matzerath, as Oskar makes clear, is the representative of the "mitteleuropäisches ... zukunftsträchtiges Kleinbürgertum." His representative function is illustrated in his attendance at the Nazi party rally in the Maiwiese. Here individual behaviour patterns merge into group behaviour. The initial mass attraction to the Nazis was grounded in part in that desire for order located by Trotsky, expressed in the symmetry of the rostrum, and for spectacle, in the banners and uniforms. Matzerath the individual becomes one of the crowd: "Das stand und berührte sich mit Ellenbogen und Sonntagskleidung, das war zu Fuß gekommen oder mit der Straßenbahn, das hatte zum Teil die Frühmesse besucht und war dort nicht zufriedengestellt worden, das war gekommen, um seiner Braut am Arm etwas zu bieten, das wollte mit dabei sein, wenn Geschichte gemacht wird, und wenn auch der Vormittag dabei draufging." But in replacing the sociological account of the susceptibility of these people to Fascism with a detailed description of events, Grass has succeeded here in giving a different perspective. Rather than there being one overarching reason for the appeal of the Nazis, we find here a multitude of individual, banal, seemingly insignificant reasons, creating an untidy, but at times fruitful, picture of events. It is a picture which corresponds to Broszat's account of Arendt's concept "the banality of evil" which demonstrates in his opinion that "the full magnitude of the crime was made up of a multitude of often very small contributing elements, and of frequently negligible portions of guilt."
Another treatment of the appeal of National Socialism within Oskar's milieu illustrates the effects of Grass's literary working method. In the chapter entitled Die Tribüne, Grass uses the motif of the rostrum to illustrate the identification with symmetry and spectacle. The first part of the chapter describes a visit to the circus which ends with a warning to Oskar by the dwarf Bebra: "Sie kommen! Sie werden die Festplätze besetzen! Sie werden Fackelzüge veranstalten! Sie werden Tribünen bauen, Tribünen bevölkern und von Tribünen herunter unseren Untergang predigen." The reliance on spectacle by the Nazis to promote their ideology struck a deep chord in the Kleinbürger. The desire to be one of a crowd and to identify with Nazism, illustrated here by Grass, corresponds to Adorno's account of the authoritarian character of the Germans under Hitler, characterised by "Starrheit und Reaktionsunfähigkeit, Konventionalismus, Konformismus, mangelnde Selbstbestimmung, schließlich mangelnde Fähigkeit zur Erfahrung." Adorno's concept of the collective narcissism of those politically immature Germans who wished to identify their need for strong government with Hitler is given flesh and blood by Grass's description of Matzerath's entry into the party: "Matzerath aber ... trat im Jahre vierunddreißig, also verhältnismäßig früh die Kräfte der Ordnung erkennend, in die Partei ein und brachte es dennoch nur bis zum Zellenleiter ... Sonst änderte sich nicht viel. Über dem Piano wurde das Bild des finsteren Beethoven ... vom Nagel genommen und am selben Nagel der ähnlich finster blickende Hitler zur Ansicht gebracht ... Nach und nach kaufte sich Matzerath die Uniform zusammen." This description of the gradual complicity of ordinary people with Nazism contradicts the view of Nazism seen in terms of Dämonie der Macht which brutally terrorised a helpless population.

An almost imperceptible adaptability to the new order is illustrated and enhanced by the position of the incident within the chapter: it neither opens nor forms the main theme of it but is, seen from the perspective of the Kleinbürger, a natural development ("sonst änderte sich nicht viel"). The normal conditions of the lifestyle of the Kleinbürger, it is implied, were ideally suited to National Socialism, or seen the other way round, National Socialism is presented as an outbreak of Kleinbürgertum. The view of Fascism which emerges is of something unique and irreducible within the petty bourgeoisie. It appears that Matzerath joins the party to give a sense of order to his life, which on a personal level, with its ménage à trois and a disabled child, exhibited deep confusion in personal and sexual terms. But if this story of a (typical?) lower-middle class family is to have anything other than the function of relating personal memories, if it is to represent the attitudes and behaviour of that class, then on its own it seems too specific to act as pars pro toto.
Other motivations hinted at in this passage describing Matzerath's entry into the party are the idea of Führer worship (the hanging of Hitler's portrait next to Beethoven's) and of a tendency towards militarism, shown in Matzerath's desire to get a uniform as quickly as possible. Alfred Matzerath is a Mitläufer conforming to a narrow set of ideals as a willing and eager participant. Particularly in the chapter which aroused so much indignation among critics, Karfreitagskost, Matzerath's desire to belong is shown as he imitates the fisherman who has just pulled the eels out of the horse's head, and as he waves and calls to a passing ship. Oskar remarks: "Warum aber Matzerath winkte und solch einen Blödsinn wie 'Schiff ahoi!' brüllte, blieb mir schierhaft. Denn der verstand als gebürtiger Rheinländer überhaupt nichts von der Marine, und Finnen konnte er keinen einigen. Aber das war so seine Angewohnheit, immer zu winken, wenn andere winkten, immer zu schreien, zu lachen und zu klatschen, wenn andere schrien, lachten oder klatschten. Deshalb ist er auch verhältnismäßig früh in die Partei eingetreten, als das noch gar nicht nötig war, nichts einbrachte und nur seine Sonntagvormittage beanspruchte."54 This scene comes after the graphic description of Agnes' eel-induced nausea which has attracted admiration and revulsion in equal measure. Often, in their enthusiasm or outrage, critics have neglected the veiled significance of the scene, for Agnes' vomiting is a result of the sight of eels being pulled from the head of a horse. The eels, through their shape and a clue offered by Oskar, are the phalluses which dominate Agnes' life of mere copulation. The lovelessness and sordidness of her existence come home to her on seeing the eels being drawn out of the horse's head. Matzerath's reaction to all this is to ignore her distress, as he tries through his conformism to overcome the significance of what happens. The need to conform is determined by the necessity to escape from the emptiness and sordidness of this lifestyle. Through this description Grass again succeeds in powerfully illustrating the conformism and inability to react which Adorno had identified as features of the authoritarian character.

Hillman55, commenting on this passage, has, however, detected a limitation within this literary approach. He remarks that Grass's methodology involves taking a small, apparently insignificant example of everyday behaviour which is left unmotivated. This is related without explanation to more general patterns of behaviour, and the specific thereby becomes explicable, not by connecting to socio-political circumstances, but by relating it to the background of the general. A pattern of typical modes of behaviour is discovered without the root causes being uncovered. A political analogy follows through the causal conjunction deshalb. The joining of the party is described as being a consequence of the former, the public and political act of becoming a member of the party is seen as being derived from private behaviour patterns. Underlying all this is the desire to conform ("wenn andere") and to enjoy the spectacle
Grass brushes aside other factors which may have played a part. Oskar adds "als es noch nicht nötig war", suggesting that external economic or social compulsions were not the reasons; Matzerath was not compelled to join because of the threat of being reduced to proletarian status. Similarly, material or opportunist reasons are not considered relevant ("nichts einbracht"). Indeed, the Matzeraths are shown to be comparatively well off, and economic crisis does not threaten. Thus, as has been already suggested, the impoverishment of the petty bourgeoisie at the beginning of the 1930s plays no part at all in Grass's account. The lessons of history are left unheeded.

Hillmann takes the figure of Meyn as a further example of what he considers to be the historical limitations of the novel. Again we have here an individual story from which general conclusions are meant to be drawn. Meyn had belonged to a Communist youth group in the 1920s, but after a period of loneliness and drunkenness had found new, sober, ordered meaning to his life in the SA music corps. Meyn comes to represent the mass on the occasion of the Kristallnacht, as is made clear by the description of the SA men outside the dead Jew's toyshop: "Sie sahen alle aus wie der Musiker Meyn, trugen Meyns SA-Uniform, aber Meyn war nicht dabei; wie ja auch diese, die hier dabei waren, waanders nicht dabei waren." This interchangeability between Meyn and the mass of SA men confirms his representative function. But, as with Matzerath, what conclusions can be drawn regarding the motivation of his behaviour? Hillmann warns of Grass's use of apparently connecting and explanatory conjunctions like denn, weil and und so in this account which hide the absence of genuine attempts to psychologically motivate behaviour. However, the last thing on Grass's mind is to provide such explanations. Hillmann is expecting something that Grass is not prepared to do. He is looking for psychological motivation, whereas Grass is merely concerned with describing social attitudes.

On the other hand, there is a problem in those passages where Grass attempts to rise from a presentation of individual behaviour patterns to a generalised mass behaviour pattern, with the individual substantiating the general conclusions. The constraints of this particularly literary approach are such that they appear unable to show how general patterns of behaviour, which can be found at many times and places in history, can take on an unprecedented socio-political form. The specific character of Fascism, its bureaucratic, institutionalised criminality and barbarity, is not in reach of a method which is, in effect, confined to anecdote following upon anecdote. It is not just that he is unable to explain these aspects, he is also unable to describe them. Hillmann's criticism in this respect is to some extent justified: "Deshalb erscheint bei Grass der National Sozialismus als Phänomen einer sozusagen naturgegebenen Mittelschicht, wird
bei ihm nicht sichtbar, wie diese 'Natur' gesellschaftlich entsteht, wie im politisch gesamtgesellschaftlichen Bereich die Partei ihre Organisation aufbauen kann.\textsuperscript{57}

However, Hillman's expectations are those of a later generation which wanted more than Grass was prepared to offer, and more than his literary working method could deliver.

Relieved, through his adherence to Doblin's programme, of the need to find explanations and to psychologically motivate, and charged with the task of removing himself as an author from the account and of merely describing, Grass presents us with an account of history from below, that is to say, from the petty bourgeois point of view. He remains in the realm of literary description without regard to possible distortions created by this \textit{Kleinbürger} view of history. As Grass says: \textit{"Ich bin selbst in kleinbürgerlichen Verhältnissen aufgewachsen. Ich schildere, was ich weiß und was ich gesehen habe, mit literarischen Mitteln, d.h. die Dinge stellen sich selbst dar.\textsuperscript{58}}

Koopmann defends Grass's method and the absence of a search for explanations, stating: \textit{"So wird eigentlich nur die Wirklichkeit entfaltet, wie sie damals war.\textsuperscript{59}} If an explanation is to be found then, according to Koopmann, it is coincidental to this description of reality. The era of National Socialism is seen through the distorted vision of the \textit{Kleinbürger}: \textit{"Und so erscheint der Nationalsozialismus nicht als Produkt schon lange angelaufener historischer Prozesse, sondern als Wirklichkeit der Gemüsehändler und Postangestellten, die letztlich ebensowenig sagen konnten, wie sie in diese Todesmühle hineingeraten waren, wie es Oskar Matzerath konnte.\textsuperscript{60}}

The reader has no choice but to be carried along by the story and the presentation, no alternative is on offer because the presentation is monoperspectival, seen from Oskar's vantage point. Grass attempts to break the "suspension of disbelief" by making the narrator appear unreliable and contradictory, but we remain caught in his perspective and his language. An ideological view of events is parodied in this story of the past, as history is seen from the \textit{Kleinbürger} perspective in formulations which subordinate the monumental events of "history writ large" to the private affairs of the individuals in the family story, e.g. \textit{"fand mit dem Afrikacorps auch Kurtchens Keuchhusten sein Ende.\textsuperscript{61}} This is a parody of the petty bourgeois Weltanschauung with its political abdication and narcissism. Politics is seen in terms of self-interest.

Given the epoch-making events of the period covered in the novel, it is perhaps at first sight somewhat surprising that few are given any real substance. But as the \textit{Kleinbürger} themselves did not see any connection between their tax returns and the crisis in the economic structure of capitalism, Grass too does not wish to see it. Thus the outbreak of mass destruction in the Second World War takes place during a game of
Skat; the habits and lifestyle of the Kleinbürger continue as they try to preserve an inner sanctuary from the events outside. The outbreak of war is just another episode; there is certainly no attempt to connect it to the war economy of the fascist state in the previous years. Koopmann maintains that the critical elements of this form of presentation are inherent. He gives an example from the treatment in the novel of the last stages of the war, when talk was of Wanderwaffen and Endsieg and any setback was euphemistically referred to as a Frontverkürzung. He argues that such a presentation, which uses the self-deceptive language of the time, "bedarf des Kommentars nicht; er macht von sich aus deutlich, daß die Wehrmachtberichtssprache zu Unrecht in den Erfolg ummünzt, was eigentlich eine vernichtende Niederlage war, und so demontiert sich die heroische Welt, wie sie in den Köpfen der kleinen Leute damals immer von neuem wieder und allem Geschehen zum trotz durch Propaganda und Heeresberichte aufgebaut wurde, in ihrer Fälschung und Lügenhaftigkeit." 62 In other words, the reader brings his own knowledge of what happened and contrasts it with the account given.

This methodology encounters greater difficulties when Grass presents one historical event which directly entered the experience of these people. In the presentation of the pogrom initiated against the Jews in November 1938, the Reichskristallnacht, it can again be argued that the perspective and language offer a parody of the petty bourgeois view. 63 In their sentimentality and political naiveté, they await a Father Christmas who will bring prosperity. What they hope will happen is a self-delusion, and Grass uses the language of Advent to reveal the thought processes which make up this delusion. According to this mentality then, the Reichskristallnacht was a "misfortune", without a history of cause and effect, and by replacing the image of the Weihnachtsmann with that of the Gasmann, Grass attempts to uncover, without need of commentary, the extent of the self-delusion and its fearsome consequences. But we also have a view of events presented which, because unchallenged, is self-perpetuating. Thus the events of November 1938 are seen as a misfortune, and the demon theory of history is reinforced by the metaphor of the gas man. The simple substitution of Gasmann for Weihnachtsmann is an inappropriate metaphor for the complex socio-political processes and the impact of ideological preconditions. Grass was perfectly aware of the climate in Germany at the time the novel appeared. In his depiction of the 1950s, he has powerfully captured the continuing infantilism, lack of political responsibility and (in the chapter Im Zwiebelkeller) an inability to mourn the past; a resistance to a proper consideration of the past. Yet, given the cultural climate of the 1950s, the repression and ignorance of the past, and the abiding influence of Nazi propaganda, together with the renewed outburst of anti-Semitism in 1959, the fear that Grass has trivialised the brutal events of that past in this chapter begins to grow.
alongside a sense of unease at this inappropriate moment of fun. The literary method contained in the use of metaphor and mythology seems inadequate for fostering a better understanding; the "es war einmal" tone of the passage distances the episode, consigning what was a moment of reality in the contemporary scene to the realm of fairy-tale. In this episode above all others Grass has bypassed Auschwitz.

Günter Grass is a man of literature following a literary working method. This method had distinct advantages for his presentation of the German past. It allowed him to develop a novel structure not based on plot, but on observations, descriptions, memories and stories. These were also freed from the constraints of psychological motivations or explanations of events. His view of history is refreshingly free of ideological or theoretical frameworks, as well as the structural devices such as analogies and parables. Without preconceptions he is able to attract attention to the petty bourgeoisie and to describe patterns of social behaviour. His "history from below" illustrates their way of experiencing and perceiving historical events. On the other hand, the family story, with its observation of one family as representative of a class, does not allow any consideration of socio-political developments. Relying on a literary form of representation based on childhood and adolescent memories, Grass steers clear of those spaces which have opened up between the poet and the historian. As his treatment of the pogrom against the Jews illustrates, his literary way of working remains insensitive to the demands of those events from history which continue to reverberate in the present. He remains unable to adequately motivate the susceptibility of the Kleinbürger in the 1930s to Fascism, or to explain or even describe the institutionalised and industrialised mass murder. Despite the breakthrough he has achieved in the novel, *Die Blechtrommel* takes us on a route that leaves out Auschwitz.
"Wann hat man zuletzt bei einem modernen Stück, verfaßt in deutscher Sprache, eine solche Raserei der Zustimmung erlebt?" Such was a contemporary judgment on Max Frisch's Andorra, a play regarded as the first attempt to come to terms with the past on the German stage, and it reflects the enormous impact it had all over the German speaking world and beyond in the early 1960s. The first performances of the drama at the Zürich Schauspielhaus in 1961 and its dismal failure in New York in 1963 mark the boundaries of an intense interest in it. Andorra was staged in Germany for the first time in January 1962, and there were some nine hundred performances in the ensuing two years. A television version of the drama appeared in 1964, coinciding with the Frankfurt trials, but after initially positive reaction the play began to be looked at more critically, largely disappearing from major theatres until the 1980s when there was a renewed recognition of its virtues on the part of a younger audience. On its appearance Andorra was described as "das wichtigste Stück seit Jahren in deutscher Sprache." Enthusiasm was matched by hostility, however, as spectators greeted the play with angry disapproval or stormed out, indicating that a raw nerve had been touched. With the first flush of enthusiasm over, critics began to examine Frisch's treatment of the theme and saw problems arising from the parable form which generalised a specific historical event. This core tension in the play was posed by one critic: "Die stoffliche Bindung an eine konkrete politische Situation im Gewande der humanitären Allgemeinverbindlichkeit führt leicht dazu, daß sich beide Komponenten gegenseitig aufheben - mit dem Resultat Null." In the end the play was incapable of sustaining this tension.

Given the social and cultural climate of the time, it is easy to understand the enormous impact of Frisch's model of prejudice based on an examination of the mechanics of antisemitism. Prejudice was in the air; in the winter of 1959 there had been a renewed outbreak of antisemitism in Germany. Jewish cemeteries and synagogues had been desecrated, and the Frankfurter Beiträge zur Soziologie confirmed in 1961 that antisemitism and indifference to it were rife amongst the German public. An outbreak of concern with the events of the past amongst younger Germans was made manifest in the unexpected reaction to the dramatization of the Diary of Anne Frank; pilgrimages were organised to Bergen-Belsen by a Hamburg journalist, and the trial of Adolf Eichmann in Jerusalem for crimes specifically against
the Jews had unleashed a wave of guilt amongst the younger generation. Hannah Arendt reacted scathingly to this latter phenomenon: "Those young German men and women who every once in a while - on the occasion of all the Diary of Anne Frank hubbub and of the Eichmann trial - treat us to hysterical outbreaks of guilt feelings are not staggering under the burden of the past, their fathers' guilt; rather, they are trying to escape from the pressure of very present and actual problems into a cheap sentimentality." Whatever the motives for these guilt feelings, they led to a recognition by Adenauer in 1959 of the need to overcome 'historical illiteracy' with a programme of education aimed at the younger generation. The same year also saw the setting up of the Zentrale Stelle der Landesjustizverwaltung zur Verfolgung national-sozialistischer Gewaltverbrechen at Ludwigsburg.

The importance of Andorra lies in the way it unwittingly illustrates the reverberation of historical events in the contemporary scene. The illustration is unwitting because Frisch, very much a part of the cultural world he inhabits, intends to deal with the past in a traditional literary way. He does not seek to confront the historical events directly, but his approach "greift hinter die Geschichte." This statement of intent expresses a recognition that traditional historical accounts had failed to confront these events, and therefore it was necessary for literature to attempt the task. It is certainly the case that German historians had failed to approach the question of the Nazi treatment of the Jews in the fifteen years after the events. There were almost no publications by German historians on the Holocaust, even though non-German historiography had dealt with the destruction of European Jewry. One effect of the totalitarian theory was to accentuate the notion of a terrorist state and the German opposition to Hitler whilst effectively banishing the persecution of the Jews from the account. As Diner points out: "In West Germany, the theory of an overpowering totalitarian system, of a directionless autonomous process ending in Auschwitz, encourages an exculpating approach that sees no actors, although the event took place." The specific crime of the Nazis, to "determine who should and should not inhabit the world" (Arendt) found no place in the historical accounts. A general ignorance about the attempted extermination of the Jews was a consequence which expressed itself in the public argument about whether only two or three million Jews had been killed.

In his attempt to get beyond historical events Frisch determines to go back to the beginning (der Beginn einer Katastrophe) in order to construct a model of prejudice capable of illustrating how the phenomenon emerges and functions. He is aware that the bare historical facts of Auschwitz have either lost, or never had, the ability to bring about a reaction: "die Meldung, daß fünf Millionen vergast worden sind, erträgt fast jedermann..." Frisch also expresses scepticism about the documentary material on the
concentration camps, suggesting again that such 'historical' material has no power to move: "Reden wir aber von Gasöfen, so sagt jeder, weiß ich, jaja entsetzlich."\textsuperscript{12} The use of this material in the immediate post war period for political and didactic reasons had backfired, causing hostility, revulsion and confusion. For strategic reasons Frisch avoids focussing on mass graves and other elements of the documentation, adopting an approach which moves away from history in order to place itself in the realm of a poetic presentation. He also avoids the minefield between literature and history and asks a question which implies an either/or rejected by later writers: "Warum überhaupt dieses Stück, statt die Dokumentation von Warschauer Ghetto vorzulegen?"\textsuperscript{13}

An examination of the genesis of the play reveals the way in which Frisch remains attached to a literary way of working when creating his model. \textit{Andorra} began as a prose sketch entitled \textit{Der andorraneische Jude}, to be found in Frisch's diaries (1946-1949). The raw material of the play remained untreated for around fifteen years, during the period of silence and evasions. The sketch, scribbled on the back of a cigarette packet in 1946 at the Café de la Terrasse in Zürich, found a place in his account of experiences of travel in war-ravaged German and European cities during the immediate post war years. Other extracts from these early diaries also reveal a concern with the same theme: \textit{Marion und die Marionetten} and \textit{Du sollst dir kein Bildnis machen}.

The prose sketch \textit{Der andorraneische Jude} is centred on the character of the supposed Jew and examines the origins and nature of prejudice. The plot of the story and its later development in the play hinges on mistaken identity; the young man is someone "den man für einen Juden hielt", and the Andorrans, "die in ihm den Juden sehen"\textsuperscript{14} project onto him their stereotypes of what a Jew is. Frisch is essentially describing the process of prejudice without, as is typical of a poetic model following Aristotle's categories, reference to social or historical background. Therefore war-ravaged Europe makes no appearance in a sketch written in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War. The sketch shows the working of prejudice; Jews are held by the Andorrans to have no warmth, to be coldly intellectual, to be obsessed by money, to be unpatriotic, tactless and so on. Although these characteristics are recognisable as being dominant features in historical antisemitic prejudices, Frisch is not concerned with their motives and origins, for these are issues which exist outside the parameters of this essentially parabolic story. The existence of prejudice is an accomplished fact, the motivation of the story is not to analyse its sociological, economic or psychological causes, but to illustrate how these stereotypes work and their further transforming and distorting effects on the individual victim.
This process is summed up by Frisch in the idea of Bildnis, das fertige Bildnis, which awaits the supposed Jew at his every step. Again, there is no concern with the origins of the nexus of stereotypic prejudices; the historical search for causes lies outside this tale whose parameters have been set by the author. We are shown how the supposed Jew, confronted at every point by a picture of what he is, takes on those characteristics which form part of his Bildnis (whether that picture is a result of ill-will or, as in the case of those "Andorraner eines freieren und fortschrittlichen Geistes ... der sich der Menschlichkeit verpflichtet fühlte", a result of good-will). Given the nature of the parable this appears as determined, even mechanistic. With the death of the supposed Jew, which the story implies was brutal ("sie empörten sich ... über die Art, wie das geschehen war, vor allem die Art"), it emerges that the young man was not a Jew at all, but an Andorran like the rest of them. The parable thus illustrates the irrationality of prejudice. Frisch, then, wishes to examine in this first sketch Der andorranische Jude the workings of prejudice in the form of a model which avoids the concrete, specific and explanatory in favour of the descriptive. He is concerned with showing how people become victims and the distorting effects of prejudice on the human personality. Yet, in treating the topic of prejudice at this particular time, and in choosing to centre the parable on a Jewish victim, he enters a dilemma straight away, for he is unable to avoid connections with recent historical events.

In the extracts which constitute the basic material of the later play Frisch maintains his attempts to generalise and poeticise the subject matter. He has recourse to a moral-religious language in examining the question of stereotypes: "Du sollst dir kein Bildnis machen, heißt es, von Gott. Es dürfte auch in diesem Sinne gelt: Gott als das Lebendige in jedem Menschen, das, was nicht erfaßbar ist. Es ist eine Versündigung, die wir, so wie sie an uns begangen wird, fast ohne Unterlaß wieder begehen - Ausgenommen wenn wir lieben." In expressing his own solution to the problem of prejudice he leaves the socio-political field altogether to find an answer in the area of private emotions. A wider consideration of his proposed remedy for prejudice is found under the diary extract Du sollst dir kein Bildnis machen, in which Frisch argues that we are able to say the least about those we love, that the act of defining or describing those we love is a step towards destroying that love. His example, and the language he uses to give it, put him firmly in a traditional literary camp in the treatment of this theme. He becomes lyrical in his depiction of the ineffibility of love: "Man höre bloß die Dichter, wenn sie lieben; sie tappen nach Vergleichen, als wären sie betrunken, sie greifen nach allen Dingen im All, nach Blumen und Tieren, nach Wolken, nach Sternen und Meeren." The language Frisch uses in defining his material is as far removed from the socio-political as is possible, in the attempt to create a parable and model, and is characterised by a mixture of the poetic and mystical: 'ein Geheimnis', 'ein erregendes
Rätsel', 'das Wunder jeder Prophetie', 'Orakel bei den alten Griechen', and 'das Wunder des Wortes, das Geschicke macht'. Here in particular Frisch shows himself to be a part of the mainstream literary world of the 1950s whose writers were attacked by Grass as exhibiting "jene lyrische Zeitlosigkeit der Naturmystiker".

Concern with prejudice as a socio-political phenomenon is not found in these early passages which are dominated by examples from private, personal relationships. The first extract under examination was titled Der andorranische Jude, not Andorra. Only the Andorrans' attitude at the death of the supposed Jew is referred to with implied criticism. Here are aspects in which we can detect the historical, social and psychological background of the time coming, almost by accident, to the surface of Frisch's prose: the inability to react to the horror of what had happened, the lack of remorse, inappropriate reactions, the search for alibis eventually leading to a rapid desire to forget ("Man redete nicht mehr davon"). All these are patterns of behaviour previously documented by Arendt and Adorno. Apart from the use of the word Jude there is little to help place the passage historically. The events have been deliberately removed from any specific reference. The language of a fairy-tale to create the generalised model is employed in the diary extract Marion und die Marionetten: "Andorra ist ein kleines Land, sogar ein sehr kleines Land, und schon darum ist das Volk, das darin lebt, ein sonderbares Volk, ebenso misstrauisch wie ehrgeizig." The raw material takes on the form of an invented fable: "Die Fabel. Sie ist erfunden" as Frisch himself confirms. The author has invested much skill and effort into making a model which is removed from all specific historical reference. Many more years then elapsed before he began to give dramatic shape to this material. The intervening decade of the 1950s with its evasions and silences formed the cultural climate of which Frisch was part. He later admitted in a conversation with Horst Bienek: "Erst nach Jahren, nachdem ich die erwähnte Tagesbuchskizze mehrere Male vorgelesen hatte, entdeckte ich, daß das ein großer Stoff ist, so groß, daß er mir Angst machte, Lust und Angst zugleich, - vor allem aber, nachdem ich mich aus meinen bisherigen Versuchen kennengelernt hatte, sah ich, daß dieser Stoff mein Stoff ist." Frisch then came back to this material and its parabolic form in 1957 when he began work on a stage adaptation for the twentieth anniversary of the Zürich Schauspielhaus. The first uncompleted version was entitled Zeit für Andorra, a later one Modell Andorra. The most extensive revision of the text came in preparation for the first three performances in November 1960, by which time its contemporary relevance could not have escaped the author.
In converting his original prose sketches into a work for the stage, Frisch is at pains to maintain and emphasise the model character of the work. In one of his notes to the play he states that the spectator should be reminded that "ein Modell gezeigt wird, wie auf dem Theater eigentlich immer."\(^{25}\) Despite the fact that the play coincided with Eichmann's trial, Frisch emphasises that it is not about him "sondern von uns und unseren Freunden, von lauter Nichtkriegsverbrechen."\(^{27}\) The play is intended to retain the parable character which avoids all reference to specific historical events in favour of a generalised pattern of human behaviour. This is a point Frisch underlines: "Ich meine nicht die SS ... aber was in Andorra geschieht, das könnte sich überall ereignen."\(^{27}\) The extent to which he has succeeded in maintaining this position, in the face of tensions created by the demands of recent historical events to be articulated, is central to an examination of the play.

Where is Andorra? The question allows an initial approach to these tensions created by the non-historical, non-specific treatment of the theme in this play. Frisch felt it necessary to clarify: "Das Andorra dieses Stücks hat nichts zu tun mit dem wirklichen Kleinstaat dieses Namens, gemeint ist auch nicht ein ander wirklicher Kleinstaat; Andorra ist der Name für ein Modell."\(^{29}\) An earlier title of the play had been Modell Andorra before Frisch settled on Andorra, as he said, for want of a better title. But his ambiguous approach to the model can already be detected here. Why choose a place which could be so easily taken for a 'real' place? If he wanted to avoid topical reference he could have followed Dürrenmatt's example and create a Gullen, or if he wished to distance the spectator from the material, then Brecht provided an example in placing the action in a remote location like Sechzuan.

His comment that Andorra does not stand for any other small state ("auch nicht ein ander wirklich Kleinstaat") has been taken to be tongue-in-cheek. The similarities between Andorra and Frisch's own fatherland, Switzerland, have been remarked on, investing the play with a sharp, socially critical character otherwise absent. For if Andorra is Switzerland, then it raises the issue whether the neutral Swiss would have behaved in the way the Andorrans do in the play, had the Germans invaded. If the play is an attack on those numerous Nazi sympathisers in Switzerland, or an attack on the immigration and repatriation policy of the Swiss government, then it loses much of its relevance as a contribution to German Vergangenheitsbewältigung, for Swiss history was different from German history in the Second World War. Certain clear similarities exist which suggest that Frisch is attacking his compatriots. Andorra is a small country ("Andorra ist ein kleines Land aber ein freies Land"\(^{30}\)), a republic threatened by another stronger and militarised state, yet determined to fight to the death. It is a country with narrow valleys and rocky fields, "ein Hort des Friedens und
der Freiheit und der Menschenrechte\textsuperscript{31}, with a people whose history of neutrality allowed them the claim to be "Ein Volk ohne Schuld."\textsuperscript{32} Yet such allusions to the role of 'neutral' Switzerland could, and indeed were, easily missed. One critic declared in answer to the question "Wo liegt Andorra?": "Das historische Modell für Andorra ist Deutschland."\textsuperscript{33} Others have seen in the intonation of the characters' names a resemblance to the fourth national language of Switzerland, but have not therefore been inclined to place Andorra in the canton Graubünden. Spanish appears to be the language of the neighbouring threatening country, and Andorra, according to his notes, should be depicted as 'südländisch'\textsuperscript{34}. All this interesting debate is futile, if one takes on board the author's wish for Andorra to represent any place at any time. If Frisch intends criticism of his fatherland, then it is certainly a veiled form of criticism. Evidently drawing in this area on Dürrenmatt's Der Besuch der alten Dame, which appeared whilst he was writing Andorra, Frisch has not totally succeeded in the attempts to avoid specificity by selecting a mixture of geographical and cultural features.

The change of emphasis from a concern with the individual in Der andorrannische Jude in the prose sketch of the diaries to a society in Andorra can be seen as determined by the change in genre, by the need to fill out the play with further characterisation, and by the conflict which conventional drama requires. This is within Frisch's dramaturgical conception, as he says: "Theater ist Auseinandersetzung mit einer Gesellschaft, die ihr Bekenntnis lebt oder korrumpiert..."\textsuperscript{35} Furthermore, it could indicate an interest on Frisch's part, not apparent in the diary extracts, with the sociological aspects of prejudice. Frisch's intention, however, remains with the poetic model; we learn little or nothing about the structure and institutions of Andorra, who governs and what sort of political system the inhabitants live under. It is a poor society whose economy seems to depend on agriculture and the artisan class. As such it bears little resemblance to even underdeveloped parts of 20th century Europe, but belongs in either the realm of fairytale or in the pre-capitalist, pre-Industrial Revolution Europe of, say, the late 18th century. Andorra is a society dominated, despite juke boxes, "heutige Konfektion\textsuperscript{36} and blue jeans, by traditional trades and professions: the innkeeper, the carpenter, the apprentice, the soldier, the priest, the doctor and the teacher. Rather than representatives of a particular class, they all are types driven by an opportunistic conformism: the soldier is a boastful, cowardly servant of whoever is in power; the landlord is a greedy little shopkeeper; the carpenter extorts and favours; the doctor is full of ressentiment as a result of thwarted ambition. The deceit and self-deception of the educated class are conveyed in the teacher and priest.

Despite Frisch's intentions to present an invented society with little or no resemblance to the complexities of modern industrial societies, sociologically and
historically-inspired speculation has taken place amongst critics as to whether Andorran society represents the class particularly susceptible to anti-semitism, i.e. the lower middle class. Such speculation seeks an approach different to the one offered by Frisch who has a professional understanding of the work of a literary writer, based on Aristotle’s distinctions, which releases him from any consideration of sociological perspectives. Marianne Biedermann claims that the Andorrans and the groups within society they represent (church, army, artisans, intellectuals, etc.) “spiegeln einen wesentlichen Zug moderner Industriegesellschaften wider.” It would certainly be difficult for any writer, let alone one writing against the background of such traumatic events, not to allow a picture of his society to emerge in his writings even, as it were, by default. The open conformism demanded by mass production and culture, the loss of individuality to economic, political and social power, the urge to climb are seen by Biedermann as aspects of modern society reflected in Andorra, yet she is forced to conclude: "Das Modell Frischs läßt sich daher weder historisch noch geographisch genau einordnen. Dies dürfte zunächst den Intentionen des Autors entsprechen, gesellschaftliche Probleme darzustellen, ohne durch zu große empirische Nähe zu verwirren.” Whilst recognising that the parable does not lend itself to a treatment of specific social issues, this particular critic gives voice to expectations in connection with this theme which seem to have been closed to further consideration: "Dennoch drängt sich hier die Frage auf, ob innerhalb eines solchen Rahmens auch die Ursachen von Vorurteilen und Diskriminierungen, nicht nur ihre Folgen demonstriert werden können.”

The attempt to remove Andorra from any specificity continues beyond the choice of topos. When discussing the choice of uniform for the invading 'blacks' Frisch stresses: "Bei der Uniform der Schwarzen ist jeder Anklang an die Uniform der Vergangenheit zu vermeiden.” Elsewhere he refers to the invading soldiers as "nicht nur ein Teil der NS-Vergangenheit", betraying an ambivalent attitude to the historical events beneath the surface of the play. But if it was Frisch’s intention to look at the mechanics of prejudice without topical references, why did he take as his example anti-semitism which in recent times had reached its most awful expression? Could he really expect the spectators of his play to be distanced from historical reality by the word ‘Jude’? He says: "Warum ich den ‘Jud’ zum Beispiel nahm? Sein Schicksal liegt uns doch am nächsten, macht die Schuldssituation am deutlichsten.” History is then important in establishing the model, but it is the question of guilt or responsibility which is at the axis of this model. It is hard to imagine that the dramatist really expected his audiences not to make the inevitable connections between the imagery of hair (Barblin’s hair is shorn, as happened to women found with Jews), and of shoes (Andri’s shoes are left on stage as a potent reminder of his fate), and those documentary photographs of the concentration
camps with rooms stuffed full of hair and shoes. Or that he expected an audience not to be taken back to the horrors of recent events by the scene, however pantomime-like its presentation, of the Jew Inspector. But before considering this particular tension, let us consider in more detail the model of prejudice which Frisch gives us in his attempt to reach behind history.

This model depends on a reduction which eliminates historical specificity. A series of scenes, in which the Andorrans project their own anxieties and vices on to Andri, the supposed Jew (the name suggests otherness: Andri = anderer) are given in the simple style of a fabula docet. The Andorrans themselves are not murderers, they merely delivered Andri up to the butchers at the end. It is not the guilt of the Eichmanns that interests Frisch, nor the complicity of vested interests, but the contribution of 'each one of us'. In the play the soldier accuses Andri of being cowardly. Andri asks "Wieso bin ich feig?", to which the soldier replies "Weil du Jud bist." Frisch's intention is to describe the perversity of such prejudices, without giving explanations for them. In the following scenes other aspects of the antisemitic stereotype are demonstrated in much the same way. Andri is seen as greedy, obsessed by money, having mercantile abilities by nature, humourless, lascivious, intellectual and oversensitive. It is made clear to him that Jews walk differently, rub their hands together, and smell when afraid. Prejudice as the projection of irrational anxieties and its effects in distorting the victim are well illustrated here.

How this mechanism is set into motion is scarcely a concern of the dramatist. There is only one explanation suggested in the play given by Andri in the second scene. It is a diagnosis of prejudice which uses the language of the parable, couched in religious imagery: "Das ist aber kein Aberglaube, o nein, das gibt's, Menschen, die verflucht sind, und man kann machen mit ihnen, was man will, ihr Blick genügt, plötzlich bist du so, wie sie sagen. Das ist das Böse. Alle haben es in sich, keiner will es haben, und wo soll das hin? In die Luft? Es ist in der Luft, aber da bleibt's nicht lang, es muß in den Menschen hinein, damit sie's eines Tages packen und töten können..." Pätz argues that this is the attempt of an uneducated young man to understand what is happening, therefore we should not see in these words the key to understanding the origins and nature of prejudice. To a certain extent this is valid, but this is all the spectator is given to go on; there is no other explanation offered in the play, no contradiction of this idea of evil to be found in all of us, which finds its resting place on an arbitrarily chosen group of victims.

This aspect of the play is constructed around a series of individual reactions to Andri based on specific anxieties and vices projected onto a victim (fear, cowardice, envy.
greed, etc.). Yet Frisch is unable or unwilling to show the moment and motivation for
these individual stereotypes becoming collective and an impulse to collective action.
What is it that is able to mould disparate individual prejudices into a mass act of social
discrimination? It lies outside the scope of the parable to examine the power which
achieves this. The sort of prejudices Frisch describes do not lead to such awful results as
Auschwitz taken in isolation from other factors. The manipulation of those individual
stereotypes under certain economic conditions renders prejudice deadly. Frisch's model,
as a model, presupposes amongst its generic features an abstraction from specific,
historical conditions. The force which makes the individual prejudices collective is
determined in this play by Frisch's imitation of Greek tragedy, in other words by his
literary approach. Here, admittedly, it is neither the gods nor fate as in Greek tragedy
which makes this transformation possible, but it is something very akin to them -
chance or coincidence.

There is hardly a suggestion in the play that Andri's treatment was determined
to some degree by socio-political or economic reasons, although the priest refers in
passing to poverty in Andorra. Other reasons hinted at are the fear of competition by
the apprentice and sexual jealousy by the soldier. Others seem to lack all motivation for
discriminating against Andri. In his autobiographical statement the doctor suggests
that his departure from Andorra was caused by Jews occupying all the best positions,
denyng the native population chances of promotion. Prejudice as a product of economic
resentment is touched on, but left only as a faint and distant possibility. Andri does not
lose his apprenticeship as a carpenter because of mass unemployment, but because the
carpenter, in a poor assessment of character based on preconceived notions, wants him
to work as a salesman, and sees him as better suited for a job in that department. The
reasons for the hatred of the Jews by the Andorrans are not given by Frisch, for he does
not consider it his role as a writer to perform this task, and we are left with a description
of the mechanism which contains just hints of its possible causes.

The victim Andri clearly poses a problem for many critics when considering
Frisch's model, for Andri is the part of the model which stands for those throughout
history who have been victims, and that, presumably, includes the six million Jewish
victims of the Final Solution. The problem is created by the tension between the
generalised parable of the model and the underlying associations with concrete historical
events. In bestowing upon Andri the representative function of the victims of
antisemitism throughout history, including those victims of the Nazi regime, there is a
significant risk that the fates of 'real' victims of antisemitism are trivialised. In refusing
to enter that space between history and literature, the model has run up against serious
difficulties. It is interesting to note the reaction of the Jewish New York audiences to
the play, as recounted by Pütz: "Stimmen aus Amerika ... lehnten es ab, in dem angeblich jüdisch-masochistischen Nichtjuden den Repräsentanten von Millionen ermordeter Juden zu sehen, weil durch sein privates Identitätsgerineral die Brutalitäten in den KZs und ihre historischen Bedingungen verharmlost wurden." One can imagine Jews disturbed at the implication that their ancient culture and identity were merely products of others' prejudices; even more disturbed that the representative for the millions of dead Jews should be a non Jew. Once again the model has serious flaws to it. Pütz argues, not particularly convincingly, that this is a misunderstanding of the play, that our attention should not be on the victim, Andri, but on the Andorrans, and in particular their statements in the Zwischenszenen. He is arguing, in effect, that the model only applies to these Zwischenszenen and not to the play as a whole: "Nicht die sich jeder Darstellung entziehende Ermordung von Millionen Juden, noch weniger der Versuch einer seichten Vergangenheitsbeschichtigung sind die Hauptintentionen dieses Stückes, das mit gutem Grund nicht 'Andri' und nicht 'Der andorranische Jude' heißt, sondern 'Andorra'; denn es geht gerade um die Demonstration falscher,unerreichter/ und auf diese Weise unerreichbarer Vergangenheitsbewältigung." Pütz claims for the play a negative virtue of having shown us that a real debate with the past has not yet come about, or that the form it has taken is misconceived and self-deceptive. This interpretation is based exclusively on the late additions of the Zwischenszenen, which, important as they are, cannot be seen as constituting the whole play.

In rejecting this attempt to shift the model character of the play away from the central character, we are left with a consideration of the consequences of seeing Andri as a model of all the victims of prejudice, including those six million Jews who died in the concentration camps. Torberg sees significant dangers in the 'exchangeability' of the victims as propounded by, among others, H.M.Enzensberger. The arbitrary exchange of victim, whereby the 'Jew' may be a black American or a Communist, given the lack of basic information and understanding of the conditions and consequences of antisemitism in 1950s West Germany, could only lead to a trivialisation of historical events. The concepts 'Jew' and 'Jewishness', Torberg argues, are not exchangeable; to say 'nicht einmal der Jude ist ein Jude' is to play with words to such an extent as to strip them of meaning. Jews are not 'models' designed to stand for any persecuted minority. Antisemitism is not the same as any other prejudice but has specific characteristics, causes and effects. Torberg, himself a Jew, reacts to Frisch's play as follows: "Ich möchte ... den Mord an sechs Millionen meinesgleichen nicht dazu erlebt und überlebt haben, um dann in einem Theaterstück zu hören, wie ein Nichtjude (Andri) einem anderen Nichtjuden (dem Pfarrer) sagt: 'Sie sind Christ von Beruf und ich bin Jud von Geburt. So etwas fühlt man'. Oder: 'Hunderttausende meiner Vorfahren sind am Pfahl gestorben. Ihr Schicksal ist mein Schicksal' ... Einer, von dem um diese Zeit alle auf der
It is not so much the parable form which produces these problems but the proximity to historical events which still vibrated in the present. Moreover, the reduction to an individual example can, when examined in the light of historical documentation, bring with it an unacceptable generalisation. The reduction to an individual fate was Frisch’s way of coping with the problems inherent in the presentation of recent history on stage. By not being able to abstract enough from powerful events, Frisch cannot totally fulfil the demands of the model and is open to critics who see the play as a documentary record, even though this was not intended.

Belatedly Frisch recognised the problem. He later talks of his discomfort with the parable form and the need to find another, better form for the theatre. For the parable does not permit a specifically historical perspective. Weigel comments on the rounded structure of the play which suggests that nothing has changed: "Als hätte sich der Faschismus nach ‘der totalen Endlösung’ befriedigt in Nichts aufgelöst. Hier wird ... die Türe zur Geschichtsfälschung weit aufgestoßen." Although the parable allows the demonstration of particular behaviour patterns towards the Jews, it is not open to the historical conditions which brought about these patterns. Schuhmacher comments: "In der Wirklichkeit bestand und besteht das Problem gerade darin, daß die Juden auf Grund der historischen Bedingungen, die ihnen auferlegt wurden und die sie selbst mitschufen, zu ‘anderen’ wurden."

The problems associated with the parable form are compounded when we examine other structural elements in the play. The structure of the parable consists of a series of pictures. Frisch calls them Bilder, and they are derived from Brecht’s concept of autonomous scenes in his epic theatre. These pictures reiterate the central point about the mechanics of prejudice as the model is built up. However, the construction of
the model based on these autonomous scenes is undermined by the recourse Frisch has to the conventions of a family-based plot. The scenes lose the independence from each other which is a main feature of Epic theatre (*jede Szene für sich*), and merge as the plot unravels. These twelve scenes then constitute the story which revolves around the three central characters Andri, Barblin and Can, the teacher and father of Andri and Barblin. In essence we have a family drama based on these three figures (what might be termed for brevity the ABC plot), all other characters are types (der Soldat, der Wirt, der Pater, etc.) or devices to keep the plot from floundering (*Die Senora*). The conventionality of this family drama is underlined by a plot which contains illegitimacy, adultery, romantic love, incest, drunkenness, rape, father-son conflict, suicide and betrayal.

The plot can be summarised as follows: a rebellious teacher has an affair with one of the neighbouring hated 'blacks', who are noted for their antisemitism. Instead of admitting the child to be a product of this adulterous relationship, the teacher brings it back to Andorra as a Jewish foundling rescued from the 'blacks', thus winning respect from his fellow Andorrans. The child Andri falls in love with his supposed half-sister Barblin (the teacher's legitimate child). When it comes to asking for her hand, the teacher refuses. Andri, having been subjected to ever increasing prejudice, believes it is because he is a Jew. The relationship between the two youngsters is ruptured when Barblin is raped by the soldier with Andri believing she gave herself willingly. Meanwhile Andri, still believing himself to be a Jew, abandons his plans to escape and decides to accept his 'Jewishness'. This despite the arrival of the Senora introduced to clarify Andri's origins. However, she is not able to give Andri this information and is killed on her departure from Andorra. The blacks invade, Andri is taken captive and after a Jew inspection is murdered. The teacher meanwhile has committed suicide, driven by the awfulness of the lie he has unleashed, and Barblin has gone mad. It is a plot which has elements of a parody of Greek tragedy. In particular the tragic blindness of the central character with regard to his origins, his inability to recognise the reality of his situation concerning his relationship with his half-sister, leaves him as the tragic hero of a classical drama.

Frisch's superimposed this storyline onto his illustrations of the mechanics of prejudice, shown in the treatment of Andri by the Andorrans. He felt the need to keep the action going in conventional dramatic terms with the ABC (Andri-Barblin-Can) plot; it is this which creates the suspense as a tightening bow across the whole structure of the play. Indeed, this plot gains in dominance over the desire to illustrate prejudice; the dramatic can be said to allow the problem of Andri's identity to come to the fore at the expense of the model. Rischbieter comments: "*Alle Aufmerksamkeit ist auf die Fabel und ihren rasend-mörderischen Ablauf gerichtet.*"51 This concern for the minutiae of the
The purpose of the Judenschau is to shock the spectator. This is, of course, a very important element in the traditional Aristotelian concept of drama. Frisch's aim is that the Judenschau should simply be there, without having been mentioned by any of the characters beforehand. The traditional theatrical elements of surprise shock dictate his approach to the scene, also characterised by the demonisation of evil in the figure of the Jew Inspector himself. The Jew Inspector is not meant to be Eichmann, as Frisch is at pains to make clear, and yet he is unapproachable like the Nazi criminals: "man kann mit einem SS-Sturmführer nicht sprechen." It is at this point quite evident that these elements of Frisch's model are derived from historical precedents. He wishes to turn the
war criminals into monsters: "Der Jew-Inspector wird dadurch ein Monstrum", he is referred to as 'geheimnisvoll'; a sort of evil apparition which comes and goes. The theatrical creation on offer is a mythical legendary figure, a personification of evil and a demonisation of history. The scene ends with the death of Andri, not before an act of brutality in which his finger is cut off in order to plunder the Senora’s ring. In commenting on this scene Frisch explains the power of such an apparently insignificant act of brutality on the stage to shock and move, whereas the bare historical documentation fails to achieve that effect: "Das mit dem Finger ging zu weit ... Das ist es doch; die Meldung, daß fünf Millionen vergast worden sind, erträgt fast jedermann, aber nicht die Grausamkeit am kleinen Finger, die für alles steht." We are incapable of visualising the figures in question, capable of easily dismissing the fact of millions of dead, yet we cannot bear the cutting off of one finger. Such is the power of live theatre to portray human tragedy in a way which can move or shock us.

However, the scene taken as a whole, with its pantomime-like treatment of such a brutal theme, runs a severe risk of trivialising events which really had not been properly confronted within the public sphere. As with Grass in his treatment of the pogrom against the Jews in 1938, there is an unease at this literary treatment. Commenting on this scene, Hilty makes the point: "Wenn die 'Judenschauf' leicht peinlich wirkt, so doch wohl in erster Linie deshalb, weil hier der historische Ansatzpunkt und der Modellcharakter zu sehr auseinanderklaffen. Hört man das Wort 'Judenschau', erwartet man unter anderem, daß sich die Männer nackt ausziehen und zeigen müssen, ob sie beschnitten sind oder nicht..." But, as he points out, this would destroy the plot and Frisch's parable, so historical veracity is sacrificed to theatrical effect. When literature and history meet in this way a tension is created which cannot be sustained by a conventional literary treatment. The events call out for a treatment which is prepared to move into the spaces between the two.

There is a further structural level of superimposition in the play which is considerably more successful for the very reason that it does begin to enter those spaces. Late on in his reworking of the material Frisch, in the last phase of the play’s writing, decided to add several key scenes between the main action of the play, where the characters would come forward to an imaginary tribunal and attempt to justify their past actions (in the play itself) to the spectators. This aspect of the play is possibly the most interesting and successful. The juxtapositioning of the character’s excuses and their clear responsibility salvages the play. The excuses are made to sound shallow and false. On closer examination we recognise the influence of Brecht who chose to interrupt his own plays with songs, placards, titles, to comment on the preceding or ensuing action, and to divert attention from dramatic action towards a reflection on cause and
effect. Schuhmacher comments that Frisch intended to produce "mit Mitteln eines nichtaristotelischen Theater ... die Wirkungen der aristotelischen Dramaturgie: Furcht und Schrecken, Reinigung und Läuterung." Frisch himself says that Andorra was "kein Versuch über Brecht hinauszugehen, hingegen ein Versuch mit dem Epischen Theater, ohne die ideologische Position von Brecht zu übernehmen." Frisch has turned Brecht's theatre into shock therapy through pictures. The intention within Brecht's epic theatre was to release the spectator from an absorbed involvement in the action and to give space for reflection and for criticism. In particular the inevitability of events or their outcome was put in doubt; did it have to come to this or was there an alternative? What are we going to do about it? In other words: a political decision is required from the spectator. The first significant effect of these intermediate scenes in Andorra is to break up the ABC plot and the invented play with its timeless aspects, and to move into the here and now. From being a distant fairy tale in a place no one can quite recognise, set at a time no one can quite identify, the theatrical experience is focussed upon a real place and time. The characters have moved out of their dramaturgical roles and take on a documentary role.

The attempt to avoid all specificity in the play is undermined by these scenes which, in the choice of statements, take on an almost documentary significance. Shock and debate are brought about as Frisch confronts his audience with their own evasions. The moment when the Andorrans turn to face the audience with black drapes over their heads, thus confronting the spectators with their own wish to forget the past, is a coup de théâtre. It is hard to imagine that Frisch's late additions in the form of the Zwischenzonen were not motivated in part at least by the statements coming out of Eichmann's trial in Jerusalem. Arendt's account of his final statement bears citing here: "The court did not understand him: he had never been a Jew-hater, and he had never willed the murder of human beings. His guilt came from his obedience, and obedience is praised as a virtue... He was not one of the ruling clique, he was a victim... I am the victim of a fallacy." The Andorrans' attempts to justify themselves echo these excuses as well as the evasions found in post war Germany, confronting the audience with statements like "Ich bin nicht schuld, daß es dann so gekommen ist."(Wirt) "Ich sag ja nicht, es sei ihm recht geschehen, aber es lag halt auch an ihm, sonst wär's nie so gekommen" (Geselle) "Ich hab nur meinen Dienst getan ... Ich war Soldat" (Soldat). Frisch is working against the desire to forget. The doctor's statement, a collection of subtle self-justifications and evasions, is a powerful example of this. Beginning by challenging his accusers to judge without the benefit of hindsight, he quickly moves from the first person singular to the first person plural, pleading lack of clear recollection of events, telling blatant lies, questioning the well-established truth, blaming the extreme historical conditions. This speech is a masterpiece in which Frisch has concisely and
accurately recorded the evasions circulating in West Germany in the postwar period; here lies the value of the play in exposing the attempts to cover up, and in confronting German audiences with their own evasions. But in writing in these scenes Frisch has abandoned the neutrality of his model and taken a specific approach which compresses historical material and makes use of documentation familiar to a wide audience at the time.

Another important aspect of these scenes is to emphasise the way in which all these people have maintained or even improved their material situation in society. Although a change of costume may simply denote the passage of time, occasionally it also indicates an improvement in material state. Or, as in the case of the soldier, if a change of dress has taken place, this conceals an underlying mentality which has not changed. The doctor, now Amtsarzt, has moved up in the world and is proud of being what he always was. This social satire of the conditions in West Germany after the war again moves us from the generalised realm of the parable to the specific realm of West German post war society.

The nature of these scenes is again significant, for the presence of a witness stand, imaginary or otherwise, turns the theatre into a tribunal. It is an aspect which recurs in the drama of the 1960s indicating a lack of legalistic coming to terms with the past. It is as though the theatre is fulfilling a function which society itself had ignored. Frisch emphasised that the Andorrans were not to face the audience as though they were on trial and the audience were the jury, but rather to turn to one side, towards an imaginary jury, and to speak with the audience. This was an attempt to convey the idea "Die Schuldigen sitzen im Parkett", and that the excuses, evasions and attempts at self-justification were there within the audience.

Frisch's approach to the question of guilt determines the moral tone of the play. The word 'Schuld' appears often in these Zwischenszenen, and the establishing of guilt appears to be a quintessential aspect of the drama. Frisch is concerned with establishing the political and social responsibility of the 'little man', the individual, everyday responsibility brought about by his conformism. All are guilty judged by the actions on stage, whether they meant well or not: "Sie, die sagen, daß sie es nicht gewollt haben. Sie, die schuldig wurden, sich aber nicht mitschuldig fühlen. Sie sollen erschrecken, sie sollen, wenn sie das Stück gesehen haben, nachts wachliegen. Die Mitschuldigen sind überall." Frisch's intention is clear: to shock his audience into feelings of guilt and responsibility by means of a literary work. In this way he hopes to break through the amnesia and make people see the enormity of what took place.
Both Günter Grass in his novel Die Blechtrommel, and Max Frisch in his play Andorra achieved an enormous reputation both in Germany and abroad by addressing the recent German past. They overcame the social, political and cultural climate of the time which consisted in the evasions and repression of the past that Arendt, Adorno, and later the Mitscherlichs complained of. Both authors achieved this through a recourse to literary means which were freed of all ideological flavour, allowing them to examine areas which had been neglected for so long, but which necessarily relied on a traditional representative mode in their manner of depiction. Thus we find both writers prevented from entering the space between history and literature, and encountering serious difficulties on this account. It remains a contradiction of their undertaking that, in wishing to respond to the demands of history, they were still held back by the cultural climate of restoration. It needed a shock wave to move writers into that space. That wave broke in the years 1963-65.
CHAPTER TWO.

ENTERING SPACES BETWEEN LITERATURE AND HISTORY.
INTRODUCTION.

The Auschwitz Trials: The Impetus towards Documentary Narration of the Past.

From December 1963 until August 1965, twenty-two members of the SS who had been active at Auschwitz stood trial for crimes committed in the concentration camp. The Frankfurt trials brought to the attention of a West German public, through the media of press and television, the extent of the brutality carried out in the name of the German people. It had taken around twenty years for the West German judicial system to identify and pursue the protagonists of the crimes. But now the trials were returning history to the agenda; they brought with them the remembrance of past events which broke through the evasions and silences of two decades. The Holocaust became visible in a very public, almost unavoidable way, as for the first time a mass television audience was able to look upon the perpetrators of the crimes and see not demons hidden in impenetrability, but respectable, middle-class citizens who otherwise occupied responsible positions within society. A direct confrontation with the events of the past took place in a way which brushed aside the evasive strategies employed in previous decades.

The long delay had resulted from a general reluctance, both officially and unofficially, to get to grips with the problem of the many war criminals who had escaped punishment, once the Allies had carried out the Nuremberg trials and dispensed with their own denazification policy. Adenauer had spoken out against a witch hunt and "defiling one's own nest", and in favour of the need for a Schlufstrich. Incriminations and public debate were judged inappropriate, as the parliaments of certain Länder closed their archives on denazification, with the suggestion even that they should have been destroyed. These tendencies were supported by a judiciary which to a great extent had been instrumental during the Nazi period in meting out death sentences to resistance groups and upholding the rule of terror. The machinery of the law was set in motion to put obstacles in the way of prosecutions, or to pass derisory sentences on mass-murderers which amounted to a humiliating mockery of the victims. The historian E. Jäckel describes the whole process as "like putting the past on a ship and making it sink. But it proved to be unsinkable."1 Towards the end of the 1950s, political events began to undermine the wall of silence: in 1955, the Soviet Union had released thousands of German POWs, amongst them many concentration camp guards, and the question of
what to do about these guards became more acute; in 1959 the Zentrale Stelle der Landesjustizverwaltung zur Verfolgung NS Gewaltverbrechen was set up; the trial of Adolf Eichmann in Jerusalem in 1961 sent shock waves throughout West Germany; and in 1963, one hundred and fifty judges tarnished by their Nazi past were forced to retire, although it was not until the late 1960s that a further four hundred were eased out. The public debate threatened to come to a head with the controversy over the Statute of Limitations in 1965. At this time, some 60% of the German population wanted an end to all prosecutions of war criminals. But the central event during this period was to be witnessed at Frankfurt with the Auschwitz trials.

The reason for the impact of the trials lies partly in their timing, coinciding with the break up of a political consensus which had held sway for so long. More importantly perhaps, it lies in their extensive coverage in the media, for not only were the trials covered in the press, but more significantly they were also reported on television to millions of West Germans who now possessed a TV set for the first time. The trials took on a significance far beyond the legal and juridical; indeed, the light sentencing at the trials (three of the accused were freed, one detained for ten years, six were sentenced to life imprisonment and the rest to sentences between three months and three years) indicated the inability of the legal system to deliver an appropriate response to the enormity of the crimes committed. This, in a sense, was an inevitable outcome, as Hannah Arendt had predicted: "These crimes cannot be dealt with in the normal legal manner, and it is precisely that which makes them so monstrous. There are no fitting punishments for such crimes..."2 The significance of the Auschwitz trials lay in a far wider sphere: they represented the first confrontation of many with the past, particularly among the younger generation, described by Peter Weiss as "eine neue Generation, die nichts davon weiß."3 A direct confrontation with history was made visible through the appearance of the accused on TV in living-rooms throughout the country. No longer was it possible to take refuge in convenient stereotypes. The first stage of breaking the consensus picture of a "reign of terror" had been reached, as one contemporary reaction illustrates: "I look at those men down there and listen to them talk, and they seem no different from anyone else ... they seem gentle and kind - good fathers, good citizens, hardworking. But then I glance at the indictments and read what they did. It just does not seem possible. These men are not even Eichmanns who murdered by administrative decree, but men who killed with their bare hands ... Perhaps I am naive, or maybe I've just seen too many movies. But they don't look like SS guards. I mean, I have a vision of men in stiff black uniforms, high riding boots, clubs or whips in their hands..."4 The stereotyping of the war criminals, found typically in Hollywood and British films, had distorted the faces of the criminals beyond recognition, as a
deliberate distancing device created to serve the socio-political consensus of the postwar years, presenting Nazism as a brutal regime terrorising a hapless population.

The impact of the Auschwitz trials, together with the problems they brought up, can be gleaned from contemporary accounts, the clearest of which is to be found in Martin Walser's account of 1965 entitled Unser Auschwitz.6 He, like Peter Weiss whose diary extracts relating to Frankfurt also offer many illuminations, made personal visits to the Frankfurt trials and was therefore able to contrast his own direct experiences with their media presentation. The language used by the media in relating past occurrences becomes the key issue for Walser who identifies a major difficulty here. In recognising that the import of the trials went far beyond the question of justice, by encompassing the possibility of wider political enlightenment, further historical research and the uncovering of information previously concealed or ignored, Walser focuses in his argument on the problems produced by the way in which events at Auschwitz were presented in the media and the resulting impact of this manner of presentation on the population.

For Walser, the difficulty lies in the fact that although "das Unvorstellbare"6 was ostensibly presented in the form of information in the media, very often the effect of the documentation had been distorted through a desire to sensationalize. The consequence of using dreadful quotations from the trials was to counteract their initial impulse, distancing the past by reinforcing the idea that ordinary citizens had nothing to do with what went on at Auschwitz: "Diese Gemeinheiten sind nicht teilbar."7 It is an impression Walser finds strengthened by the use of demonizing language when depicting the accused (Teufel, Henker, Raubtiere), which leads to the self-justifying question: "Wer von uns ist schon ein Teufel, ein Henker, ein Raubtier?"8 In this way, Auschwitz is removed from being a German question, and furthermore a decontextualising of historical events takes place. This despite the appearance, evidenced in Peter Weiss's diaries9, of an ever increasing collection of documents relating to the events. Walser is essentially taking issue with an inappropriately metaphorical approach which reduces the criminal acts of Auschwitz to criminal acts devoid of a specific historical context. A further difficulty for Walser lies in the reception of this approach. The metaphorical language used in the reports holds, in his opinion, a dangerous fascination which he terms "abgestoßen/angezogen werden".10 Walser picks up on the widespread adoption in media reporting of aspects of Dantesque imagery and metaphor from Inferno, as an example of a misleading and inappropriate use of language. For after the Inferno comes, in Dante, Purgatory and Paradise, and the "sins" of the "guilty" are redeemed: "Die Menschen in Auschwitz wären grauenvhaft überfragt gewesen, wenn sie einem
durchwandelnden Dante hätten die Sünden aufsagen sollen, um derentwillen sie da gequält wurden. Und ihrer Qual folgte lediglich die Vernichtung."\textsuperscript{11}

The recourse to a traditional "literary" language and the use of metaphor taken from Dante’s vision of hell are symptoms of a void in language when discussing Auschwitz. In choosing Dantesque imagery, the heart of the poet’s undertaking had been ignored, as Peter Weiss, who later used Dante as a literary model, reminds us. For Dante was not solely interested in presenting a vision, but was deeply concerned with his political reality. Auschwitz was simply not a reality for those reporting the trials, and therefore had to be constructed in language. The accused themselves had made a construction in language of their Auschwitz in their "Dienstplan-Jargon"\textsuperscript{12}, either in an attempt at self-exculpation, or because no language existed in which they could articulate their memory of the events. Peter Weiss refers to this as "Die Entfremdung in der Sprache. Wie die Henker und ihre Gehilfen sprechen"\textsuperscript{13}, and in his diaries he records the manipulations which serve a false reconstruction of events.\textsuperscript{14} Walser also refers to the capacity within individual memory for evading the past: "Dann können wir, nach neueren Einsichten, unsere Rolle manipulieren, wir können sie bedauern, verleugnen, widerrufen."\textsuperscript{15} These constructions, however, collide at the trials with the accounts of the survivors and victims, commentaries and accounts which resist such manipulations. The scornful reaction of the accused to these accounts and documents is, in Walser’s assessment, not necessarily cynical, but rooted in an inability to fit this other Auschwitz of the victims into the reinforced structure of their own Auschwitz, because "ihr Gedächtnis ein ganz anderes Auschwitz aufbewahrt hat; ihr Auschwitz nämlich, das der SS Chargen."\textsuperscript{16} The importance of the witness accounts lies first and foremost in their capacity to challenge this version of the past.

Although Auschwitz, through the media presentation, had become a national concern again, significant parts of its reality had been concealed, or lost, through that very same presentation. The problem lay partly in the difficulty of conveying the state of absolute lawlessness (Rechtlosigkeit) which characterised the worst excesses of the Third Reich, and partly in the difficulties of imagining the extent of the suffering and the barbarity. Such difficulties found a simplistic solution through recourse to the distancing language of devils and hells which resists the demands of the past and removes the events from contemporary political and historical reality. But Auschwitz, for both Walser and Weiss, could not just be described in terms of hell; it remained a part of our world, a German concentration camp where the prisoners were not the damned, but innocent Jews and political opponents, and where the torturers were not devils, but German citizens. The history of the nation was being concealed by
presenting a collection of quotations from the trials which achieved nothing more than keeping the events at arm's length. Missing were the conditions which produced the concentration camps, considered "viel zu farbloser" for the instant demands of media presentation. In place of the necessary socio-political and historical background, details had been dressed up as "history", whereas all that had in effect happened was the extraction of dreadful details from history. Walser articulates the need of his time to understand the conditions which produced Auschwitz: "Wie Auschwitz für die 'Häftlinge' war, werden wir nie verstehen. Aber was geschah, daß es für diese 'Häftlinge' eine Auschwitz gab, das sollte nicht in einer Flucht zu phantastischen Umschreibungen - halb Bildzeitung, halb Dante - verlorengehen."18

In attempting to provide a working definition of Auschwitz, Walser betrays both his own concern and that of many of his contemporaries with examining its political reality. He defines Auschwitz as "eine Anstalt, die der deutsche Staat mit großer Folgerichtigkeit entwickelte zur Ausbeutung und Vernichtung von Menschen."19 Weiss speaks in similar terms, referring to "eine riesige Organisation"20 constructed for the purpose of mass murder. The employment of terms like Anstalt and Organisation offer an alternative to the language of hell. Auschwitz was an institution, a system constructed deliberately by the German state. Too much attention directed at the medieval bestiality of the concentration camps detracts from an awareness of this system. The medieval torturers were, in Walser's judgment, acting against the system, and thus a false impression of anarchic criminality is given, obstructing the view of a complex system planned with quite specific aims. Responsible, through a deliberate policy, for this institution was the German state. Auschwitz thereby returns to our own recognisable world. For the Todesfabrik to be understood, the system must, according to both Walser and Weiss, be clearly delineated ("mit äußerster Genauigkeit nach jeder Einzelheit fragen, wieder und wieder..."21 Weiss), at the expense of the gruesome details of murder and torture: "Auschwitz, ohne diese 'Farben' ist das wirklichere Auschwitz."22

The important elements in this re-examination of the nature of the concentration camp become the process of transportation, selection, the contribution of industry and the exploitation of slave labour by firms like Krupp and IG, summed up by Walser as "das Betriebssystem".23 Personal crimes lie outside this system and may even work against it.

The Nuremberg trials, despite their failings, had, according to Walser, the virtue of making the system of the Third Reich more transparent, whilst being unwilling or unable to spread this finding. Here the crimes had been seen in terms of decisions made by individuals within organisations. The Auschwitz trials, different in nature, were
concerned not so much with "political crimes", but with middlemen, closer to the criminal acts themselves, who perpetrated acts of individual violence. Such individual acts could be, and were removed from the overall system and rendered ahistorical, leaving a picture of brutality *per se*. The consequences of this were firstly a susceptibility to the fascination brutality brings with it, to being at once drawn and then repelled by the details, and secondly a brief and meaningless identification with the victims. Walser was surely justified in predicting: "Ich glaube, wir werden Auschwitz bald wieder vergessen haben, wenn wir es kennenlernen nur als eine Sammlung subjektiver Brutalitäten." An obsession with detailed brutality had obscured the need for a thorough analysis and left questions unanswered, or even unasked. The Auschwitz trials, lacking at their centre the organisers and builders of the system, ran the risk of becoming a dramatic presentation in the form of sensational murder trials, consumed by a fascinated but uncritical public, leaving aside the question to what extent these brutalities have taught anything about the nature of Auschwitz or, as important to Walser, have illuminated contemporary socio-political problems.

If a dialogue with the past is to mean anything, it must have a contemporary political relevance. The limitations of trials, as legal mechanisms for dealing with acts for which actors have been found, leave a space which calls out to be filled. One of the limitations is, Walser argues, that the actors who have been found are "*mit uns allen verwechselbar ähnlich, daß sie dann durch spezielle Umstände den Weg nehmen, der sie in diesen Prozeß führte, das kann in einem solchen Prozeß nicht hinreichend zur Sprache kommen.*" A gulf widens between the accused and those observing the trials, because the acts carried out by the accused are far beyond the experience of the observers. Many Germans did not know exactly what was going on at Auschwitz, and thus any sense of Auschwitz being *Unser Auschwitz*, as well as feelings of collective guilt, is removed, leaving the criminals to carry responsibility on their own. This line of argument, however, ignores the historical process which led up to Auschwitz and the fact that many Germans were "*geduldige Zeugen*" from 1933-45. Each political move by the Nazi regime had been tolerated, therefore the attempt to distance oneself from Auschwitz was at the same time an attempt to create a distance from the Third Reich, the state which had produced Auschwitz, and to deny complicity with the policies of that state. As the historian H.Mommsen argues: "*by reacting to National Socialism only with shock and moralizing self-criticism, as has so often been the case in the Federal Republic, Germans have managed to avoid the sensitive question of how the general public and the elite functionaries were responsible.*"
Although rejecting the commonly held understanding of the concept of collective guilt, Walser takes issue with those who push the concept of individual guilt to such a stage that the social and political elements which bind together in collective action are ignored. The question of responsibility becomes a matter for the individual: each discovers his own responsibility and, having discovered it, deals with it in his own way. In relation to the crimes committed at Auschwitz, this leads to complete innocence in the overwhelming majority of cases. An alternative to this way of going about a debate with the past is a rejection of the conclusion which saw the crimes as simply a matter for the criminals, in an attempt to think about both deliberate and coincidental participation in events undertaken by the collective. Causes take on a greater significance than the preoccupation with details of the crimes themselves. Those who created the conditions, those who constructed the system in which the "little man" becomes a murderer, would be called to account, rather than is the case in the legal system which looks for blood on hands, whilst ignoring those who were politically and economically responsible.

Walser is, in effect, arguing for a consideration of the role of the collective in all this, warning of the consequence of the argument that collective guilt does not exist: if it does not exist, there is no need to look for collective causes. Once this is recognised, Auschwitz becomes a German issue, and every citizen, regardless of whether he has belonged to the SS or not, is charged with debating his part in the causes. But the Auschwitz trials, having stimulated the debate, were in danger of being used to draw a line under the events. The reaction to the sentencing, considered ridiculous by a public which somehow believed that recompense could be made officially, demonstrated an attempt to construct a sense in law where none existed. Auschwitz, for Walser, had only been perceived through the nerves: "Aber bitte, wir haben momentan, als Gesellschaft, Erfolg. Und Erfolg macht unempfindlich. Das Bewußtsein hat kein Bedürfnis. Aber die Nerven brauchen starke Dosen."28

The trials at Frankfurt had broken through consensual evasions and offered an opening for a debate with the past. This opportunity, together with the awareness of the shortcomings in the manner of their media presentation, led to renewed attempts to tackle the questions aroused by the trials in West Germany. They offered a starting point, a stimulus and spur to further discussion. But between the stimulation and response lay a path fraught with difficulties. To begin with, literature felt impotent, responding to the challenges of the Frankfurt trials initially with despair. Peter Weiss records this reaction in his diaries, in extracts under the theme of Laokoon: "Es ist ja fast sprichwörtlich geworden, daß diese Dinge sich nicht ausdrücken lassen"29, and: "es gibt Dinge, von denen es heißt, daß sie von nichts anderem mehr ausgedrückt werden"
können, als einem Schrei, einem namenlosen Schmerz...”30 Another response, to write in spite of Auschwitz, "an Auschwitz vorbei", was Grass's preferred route at this time. The news media, particularly in the case of the Frankfurt trials, had raised certain challenges, only to obscure them again. The need to establish the past was there; the attempt to deal with history gives the impetus for a new development in literature.

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An unprecedented reception greeted the wave of documentary dramas which revived the German stage between 1963-5, with dramatists like Weiss, Kipphardt and Hochhuth achieving controversial acclaim. Hochhuth was the first to break through in 1963 with his play Der Stellvertreter; Kipphardt's Joel Brand and Weiss's Die Ermittlung followed quickly. The documentary approach in literature was not a phenomenon restricted solely to the stage: Kluge's novel Schlachtbeschreibung appeared in 1964, and the documentary approach continued with Runge's Bottropper Protokolle, Ulrike Meinhof’s contributions to konkret and Wallraff’s reportage. This approach was not simply a literary fashion, but was motivated by a deep concern with how literature could deal with history. It came about through the need to deal with the past in collective terms which was hampered by the problem, as we have seen from Walser, of finding an appropriate language in discussing these events. A growing concern emerged to show the system behind such events as Auschwitz, Stalingrad or Hiroshima, and to examine the role of the collective in such events. Moreover, this debate with the past was not for its own sake, but an attempt to find an orientation for contemporary problems, particularly the resurgence of neo-Fascism. A more productive way of dealing with historical events was being sought.

This search for a new approach is determined by the need to find a language capable of narrating the German, fascist past; history is at the heart of this search. Baumgart, in Aussichten des Romans,31 provides the wider context for the difficulties of language to which Walser points. For these difficulties are not just problems of finding an appropriate language, but are part of the question of literary form too. Baumgart explains this motivation with regard to form as beginning with the consequences of modern warfare in 1914 and carrying on through to events such as Auschwitz and Hiroshima: "Hinter der technischen Kriegsmaschinerie ließen sich Täter nicht mehr fixieren. Zerrissen war der beruhigende Kausalnexus von Tat und Schuld und Sühne, der dem Individuum seine Würde verlieh, von dem so viel Literatur so lange gezehrt hatte.”32 A form of literature which still acts as though history has not seen fundamental changes, and continues to describe individuals and their conflicts in the
manner of the nineteenth century novel, is also incapable of finding language appropriate to catastrophes which are not composed of such individual conflicts. Following the conventions of literature will not meet the demands of the subject matter; as we have seen in our consideration of Grass and Frisch, narratives and plots in the conventional mode come across serious problems in conveying important aspects of our reality which have undergone a fundamental transition. A consequence of historical developments was that traditional aesthetics had had the floor taken away from beneath them. Baumgart questions the continuing validity of the novel in the conventional sense of a story "als Leistung eines individuellen Bewuβtseins, das aus einer Imagination stellvertretende Welt, also Figuren, Handlung und 'Moral' entwirft." The mass dimensions of suffering and loss in the World Wars, the machinery which ignores or extinguishes individual will, the "administered world" of Standardisierung and Immergleichheit described by Adorno, all confound traditional aesthetics which seek to arrange and order the world, whilst attempting insights into individual psychology. The experience of the Holocaust has compounded these issues and brought them into stark relief, for how can literature now respond to events which Diner describes as "a collective, bureaucratically organised and industrial action that was made possible by a social division of labour and the institutional smoke-screen generated by total political domination"? He continues: "by dissolving a process carried out mainly through a division of labour into a series of detailed individually examined aspects ... one runs the risk of completely overlooking the defining feature of the regime: industrialised mass-murder."33

This difficulty with form is not limited to the literary author. The historian too, when reflecting on an appropriate form with which to narrate history, has had to recognise serious shortcomings within his own craft. Hayden White, in his essay The Burden of History, suggests that modern man can perceive both the uniqueness of his problems and the inadequacy of the historical record in offering help in his quest to solve those problems. This inadequacy lies in part, for White, in a form of historical narrative which "admits little more than the nineteenth-century novel as a paradigm"35, whilst rejecting the significant advances made in the arts in the twentieth century. The problem for the historian extends to the language of history writing. Kluge uses an analogy to illustrate the impoverishment of the language of history in a speech on Fontane36, where he contrasts the "sinnliche Sprache" of Hölderlin's poem Der Herbst with the "unsinnliche Sprache" on the same theme in a biology textbook. Both forms of language deal with the same subject matter in essence, but the latter, "die Sprache der Statistik" is impoverished compared with the former. Kluge characterises the language of historians as being unable to embody the wishes and desires, particularly of the
victims of historical processes. A problematic gap had been created by the specialised language of the historians. Martin Broszat recognises this problem in the language of the professional historian, which leaves little room for the creative imagination: "Die unaufhebbare Bindung des Historikers an quellenmäßig nachweisbare historische Faktizität, die für sprachliche Verdichtung und kreative Imagination wenig Raum läßt, überhaupt der historische Faktizitätsbegriff erscheint den meisten Schriftstellern nur formal und äußerlich, weit entfernt von ihrem Begriff der inneren Wahrheit."37

Alongside the challenges that modern techniques of literary presentation have offered to the form and language of history writers, have been the demands made by the mass of available documentary sources to the subjective working practices of the literary author. Whilst admiring the freedom of the poet in relation to his material, the historian Broszat is irritated by the "bloß Impressionistischen oder Konstruktivistischen der freien literarischen Gestaltung historischer Wirklichkeit."38 The challenges to literature made by historiography and other forms of specialised knowledge had been recognised by Dürrenmatt whose theatre proposed one answer. In recognising the gulf which exists between poet and historian, Dürrenmatt's proposed solution is to parody the "historical" view. Dürrenmatt holds the opinion that a dramatic reconstruction of history is only possible in a naïve world and he adheres to a strict division of labour between writers and historians. Knowledge about an historical figure like Caesar is passed down through specialised disciplines, many of which have taken over functions which were once performed by literature. For a playwright to write about a subject which had already been dealt with by historians amounted to a tautology, "eine Wiederholung mit untauglichen Mitteln, eine Illustration zu wissenschaftlichen Erkenntnissen: gerade das, was die Wissenschaft in ihr sieht."39 But Broszat's preference would be for writers to enter the space which Dürrenmatt prefers to leave unoccupied. He argues for a close cooperation between literature and history, and cites Kluge's Schlußbeschreibung as a move towards his plea for a new writing of history, embodying "die gerade durch klinische Verfremdung des Gegenstandes erreichbare Form eines Radikalrealismus, der wegen seiner Schonungslosigkeit auch äußerste Betroffenheit zu erzielen vermag."40 Kluge's novel offers us one opportunity to investigate the documentary response to these questions in greater detail. A further opportunity is afforded by Peter Weiss's play Die Ermittlung.

Before embarking on a closer consideration of these two works, a step backwards is necessary to recognise that the documentary approach was not entirely new, but was built upon a heritage from the 1920s. Traditions from early twentieth century culture gave writers, both novelists and dramatists, models which were of use in their own
endeavours. Writers like Kluge and Enzensberger, faced with the problems of form and language outlined by Baumgart, looked back to the 1920s and beyond to find alternatives to the conventional modes. There they discovered the concept of the epic work, already developed in both the theatre and the novel through the theory and practice of Brecht and Döblin, both of whom were concerned with the problem of finding ways to comprehend "das Ensemble aller gesellschaftlichen Verhältnisse" (Marx). In his Bemerkungen zum Roman, Döblin searches beyond the literary tradition of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, to find the spirit of the epic in the works of Homer, Cervantes and Dante. The epos was the narrative form in verse characterised by the recital of the rhapsody; rhapsodos, derived from rhapsodion, indicates a sewing together, a stitching and placing side by side. For critics like Benjamin, the epic work opened up new possibilities in the presentation of social and collective experience, beginning with a movement away from the traditional working methods of the literary author: "Der Roman, nach wie der Epos, hat sich abgeschieden vom Volk und von dem, was es treibt. Die Geburtskammer des Romans ist das Individuum in seiner Einsamkeit, das sich über seine wichtigsten Anliegen nicht mehr exemplarisch aussprechen kann, selbst unberaten ist und keinem Rat geben kann." 42

The attempt to deal with public affairs was at the root of this return to the epic, for in the epos the fate of a whole nation is demonstrated, rather than the intellectual, emotional and psychological development of an individual which typified the nineteenth century novel. The epos was also delivered to the community, whereas the novel remained the private reading matter of individuals; and whilst the novel saw the world more from an individual perspective, the epos showed the widest possible world picture. For Döblin then, literature should become "eine öffentliche Angelegenheit" 43, and he conjures up a picture of the epic narrator who "im Volk herumziehend die Fabeln, Schwänke und Sagen (vortrug), die im Volk selbst umliefen." 44 This interpretation of the role of the epic narrator was based on the idea that Homer himself did not create the epic verses, but was above all an arranger of the tales which circulated in his ancient world. Voltaire, one of the founders of modern historiography, ascribed to Virgil the garnering of different narratives which were already part of a widely accepted tradition. Thus the best material for an epic writer was that which had already undergone a process of selection and had been shaped by popular imagination.

In the theatre of the 1960s, where the greatest move towards a documentary approach is to be found, we are confronted with a similar rejection of traditional aesthetics. In discussing the attempts of dramatists to treat the concentration camps, Ernst Schuhmacher asserts that no play attempting such a task by means of a
conventional dramaturgy has succeeded. At the root of the failure has been plot: "*eine Fabel mit individuellen Verwicklungen.*"46 The theatre had struggled with the representation of Auschwitz on stage, either directly or indirectly. Approaches which depended on the development of an artificial plot were unable to show the concentration camps as death factories, so engrossed were they with a series of coincidences which kept the plot going. Film had highlighted this inadequacy, having documented the concentration camps in a way that made attempts in the theatre appear inadequate, melodramatic, and contradicting the anonymity of mass murder. Attempts to introduce documentary materials often foundered, because such materials were used in the service of a conventional dramaturgy. Indirect approaches to the theme formed an alternative for dramatists. If not a direct or indirect treatment of Auschwitz, then an alternative course was to portray either events leading up to, or arising from the camps themselves. Here the problem for the dramatists lay in trying to make the connection between the past and present clear, either by means of a commentary or by using interludes.

Some of the problems associated with a dramatic approach become clear in examining Hochhuth's controversial play *Der Stellvertreter* of 1963. The play had an enormous impact, yet demonstrated too many "*melodramatische Züge.*"46 Indeed, it could be argued that in personalising the attack on Pius XII, Hochhuth had merely succeeded in stoking up a heated debate which, through an acrimonious polarisation, struggled to then contribute to an understanding of causes and effects. The attack on the role of the military-industrial complex is submerged in arguments over the documentary presentation of the actions and character of the Pope. Although prefacing Act Five with a recognition of the extreme problems of presenting Auschwitz on stage, Hochhuth nevertheless undertakes such a re-enactment in an individualising and moralising manner. The typical conflict between the individual and his environment found in classical theatre is continued in this Act, where the Schillerian diction adds to the theatrical, melodramatic character of the play.

Peter Weiss saw such attempts to treat the subject as being fraught with the risk of trivialisation, particularly when seen in the light of documentary film material. A significant yardstick and challenge to dramatists like Weiss was offered by Alain Resnais' film *Night and Fog*. Resnais had been able, in this film, to show the horrors of the camps, but he avoids the numbing of response through skilful montage. The film maker used montage in a way to "challenge existing visual language, mainly through an editing style that both reflects and elicits tension. Whether the counterpoint is between image and sound, past and present, stasis and movement, despair and hope, black-and-white and colour, or oblivion and memory, Resnais's film addresses the audience's
intelligence - and moves beyond a facile stimulation of helpless tears." In her account of the film, Insdorf traces the use of Hanns Eisler's music to act as a counterpoint to the images, the breaking up of newsreel footage with documentary stills, colour with black-and-white. The camera does not move relentlessly onwards but stops, and Resnais inserts photographs to halt and express the limitations of the camera. A voice-off narrator accompanies the images with statistics and an unemotional commentary; a restrained and haltingly simple diction typifies the commentary which seeks to allow the spectator to view the unbearable. "Night and Fog assumes the function of an X-ray; through the spine of documentary footage and Cayrol's calmly vigilant meditation, we are forced to see the deformities hidden from the unaided eye (and camera), and to struggle against the imperturbability of surfaces." Superficial reality is taken apart to be reconstructed in a way which demonstrates true relationships.

Such a way of working in film with archival material formed the impetus for dramatists like Peter Weiss (who saw the film) and novelists like Alexander Kluge (who also worked in film) to find another way of showing the system of annihilation. Perhaps it was the only remaining way of presenting catastrophes like Auschwitz and Stalingrad, in the form of a report which was capable of capturing both the totality and singularity of the experience, both the general and the particular, a description of the system and the horror of individual experiences. Schuhmacher argues: "Es gibt wahrscheinlich nur diese letzte Konsequenz ... nämlich 'nur' berichten zu lassen und auf die Assoziations- und Konkretionsfähigkeit der Zuschauer zu vertrauen, daß damit die Ungeheuerlichkeit des Vorgangs rational und emotional bewältigt werden kann." In response to the demands of the past to be articulated, it became the way which both Alexander Kluge and Peter Weiss chose.
Alexander Kluge Schlachtbeschreibung: The Novel Documents an Organised Disaster.

Alexander Kluge, regarded by Enzensberger as the least known amongst known contemporary German authors, was born in the small town of Halberstadt, one year before the Nazis came to power. He belongs to the generation of writers, including amongst them Grass, Walser, Enzensberger, Lenz and Hochhuth, who experienced the Nazi period in their formative years, and whose central and determining experience was the Third Reich. This generation was near enough to the events in question to be able to confront directly the taboo area of the recent past and, when the breakthrough eventually came about in the 1960s, they were able to do this without being burdened by feelings of personal shame and responsibility.

Halberstadt forms an important motif in Kluge's work for two reasons: firstly, on account of its almost total destruction by American bombers towards the end of the war, and secondly, because of the existence of a labour camp in the area. Kluge experienced the trauma of the former directly when his parents' house was destroyed in the attack on Halberstadt, a strategic target because of the Junker aeroplane factory: "Die Form des Einschlags einer Sprengbombe ist einprägsam ... ich war dabei, als am 8. April 1945 in 10 Meter Entfernung so etwas einschlug." David Roberts argues that the destruction of German cities survives as a repressed trauma in German consciousness, and that for Kluge the events of the 8th April represent a crystallisation point of history which allows a view from it, both towards the further past and towards the present. Certainly the question of how a collective catastrophe like the destruction which was wreaked during the Allied bombing raids of Dresden, Halberstadt and other German cities, or the military catastrophe of the battle of Stalingrad are to be presented, is at the core of Kluge's work, and contrasts starkly with the attempt in the postwar period to use the bombings of German cities by the Allies as a way of "balancing out" the outrages committed in the concentration camps. For this reason, as the Mitscherichts explain, the suffering of the German people at Dresden or Stalingrad had never been confronted directly, only used as a part of the strategy of evasion. The Mitscherichts' plea for Trauerarbeit, a work of mourning, is taken up by Kluge in his novel of 1964, Schlachtbeschreibung, which treats the traumatic events of Stalingrad with a most original approach to the total phenomenon of the battle.

Shortly after the war Kluge moved to West Berlin and in 1949 began to study law in Marburg and Frankfurt. He started practising as a lawyer and got know Adorno. He was moving towards literature and film; Adorno helped this development by gaining
permission for Kluge to watch Fritz Lang at work. The experience introduced him to the practice of film. He was working at the time on short stories which then appeared in 1962 under the title Lebensläufe. These secured for him a literary reputation, but at the same time he was writing for the cinema, and a script for a short film won a prize at Oberhausen. The collapse of Ufa and the parlous state of German cinema financially, together with a growing discontent with the products of Papas Kino, led Kluge and other directors to initiate the Oberhausen Manifesto, demanding the formation of a film academy and suggesting ways in which German film could be saved financially and artistically. The new directors had limited success, but Kluge was able, during his work at the Ulmer Hochschule für Gestaltung, to write his first theoretical essays on film, Ulmer Dramaturgien. His real breakthrough in the world of cinema came with Abschied von Gestern in 1966. His artistic career shows how theory, film and literature overlap in his work, thus acting as a protest against the contemporary specialisation and division of labour in the arts. His way of working involves the use of many media, crossing genres and ignoring artificial boundaries, bringing the aesthetics of film into literature and vice-versa. This perhaps goes some way to clarifying Enzensberger’s contention that Kluge is the least known of contemporary German authors and film makers, given the demands made upon readers by his texts.

Kluge’s multi-media methodology, particularly the intervention of filmic elements, is apparent in his novel Schlachtbeschreibung which began life as research for a film on the battle of Stalingrad. The presence of several versions of Schlachtbeschreibung points to another central characteristic of Kluge’s approach which sees the work as a process, adapting to changing circumstances and the demands of the present. As Croce stated: history in reality refers to present needs and present situations wherein historical events vibrate, and the past must be seen through the eyes of the present and in the light of its problems. Certainly this is true of this novel. The first version appeared in 1964 under the title Schlachtbeschreibung. Der organisatorische Aufbau eines Unglücks, the second, with changes of sequence and the addition of a preface, was published in 1968. A further version, under the title Der Untergang der sechsten Armee, appeared in 1969. With the events of Autumn 1978 and Kluge’s increasing involvement in the cinema, in particular with the film Die Patriotin, Kluge saw fit to release an edited and changed version in 1978. This version contains much additional material, including pictures, diagrams and material also used in the film Die Patriotin. The interpretation of events has also shifted its emphasis, as the material has been rearranged, indicating the changing understanding of the past as the present situation also changes.
The significance of a treatment of the battle of Stalingrad in 1964, when the novel first appeared, lies in two areas. Firstly, members of a younger generation, although not touched by them directly, had heard about the events treated and recognised them as being of national concern. Secondly, for the generation which lived through those war years, the awful demise of the Sixth Army at Stalingrad represented the turning point in the war, a loss of trust in the Nazi regime, and the beginning of the end of the Second World War which brought with it the horrors of "total war", entailing significant civilian casualties. In the immediate postwar period, the battle of Stalingrad had received an intense treatment, stimulated as early as May 1945 by the collapse of the Third Reich which had brought back the memories of Stalingrad and endowed it with a prophetic, almost symbolic significance. Gerd Ueberschar refers to "die tiefe Erregung über die Katastrophe an der Wolga" which found outlets in passionate debate over the causes for the defeat, and in numerous publications which "sich meist noch unreflektiert mit der Stalingrader Schlacht als einer gleichsam durch schicksalhafte Mächte hervorgerufenen 'Tragödie' bzw. 'Katastrophe' beschäftigten."6

The treatment by writers, eyewitnesses and historians of the battle of Stalingrad reveals itself almost as a microcosm of the general difficulties in treating the Nazi past. Eyewitness reports often are characterised by an attempt at self-exculpation, particularly those written by former generals, described by Ueberschar as "geprägt von fehlender Einsicht und unerschütterlicher Selbstsicherheit; alle Schuld wird anderen zugeschoben." In particular, there was the tendency to locate all responsibility in one man, Hitler. The events were seen in terms of a tragedy or catastrophe reminiscent of the historian Meinecke's attempt to characterise the Third Reich as Die Deutsche Katastrophe. Whilst on the one hand, many memoirs offered brutal descriptions of the battle, the lack of supplies and the conditions amongst officers and ordinary soldiers, on the other hand, writers of history continued in the traditional mode, according to which "in der Regel nur wenige Personen, meist Angehörige der politischen und militärischen Führung agieren."7 This traditional history from above neglected the stories of the vast majority of those who experienced Stalingrad. However, the "little man" at Stalingrad had little or no idea of the overall political and military situation. This division between accounts from "above" and accounts from "below" lies at the heart of Kluge's dissatisfaction with historical versions of the battle, and he comments in the Nachbemerkung of the 1978 version: "Wer in St. etwas sah, Aktenmerke schrieb, Nachrichten durchgab, Quellen schuf, stützte sich auf das, was zwei Augen sehen können. Ein Unglück, das eine Maschinerie von 300,000 Menschen betrifft, ist nicht so zu erfassen."8 The monoperspectival approach remained a significant disadvantage in both the forms of historical account which existed at the time.
A further difficulty for traditional writers of history lay, as Ueberschar suggests, in the language of their accounts which demonstrated that "diese nüchterne und distanzierte Geschichtsschreibung nicht jenen adäquaten Zugang für das elementare Kriegserlebnis und die totale Katastrophe bieten konnte, wie er von vielen Zeitgenossen und der nachgeborenen Generation erwartet wurde." Dissatisfied readers turned, as publishing figures illustrate, to the wave of novels which appeared in the postwar period, termed by Hans Schwalb-Felisch as "Die Literatur der Obergefreiten". Typifying these are descriptions of the horrors of the conflict and the betrayal of the ordinary soldiers by the generals. The decent "little man" was thus exonerated; he had given of his best, maintained Kameradschaft and the soldier's honour, despite being betrayed by commanders with no conscience. According to Baron, these accounts leave out the pre-history of the Russian campaign and "die militärische Führungsebene, auf der in blindefem Gehorsam jene Fehlentscheidungen getroffen wurden, die den Kessel von Stalingrad zur Todesfalle machten." Theodor Plieviers stands as an exception to these novels. As a German exile living in the Soviet Union, he had access to much authentic material and was able to make use of hundreds of individual episodes which form the basis of his novel, in illustrating that the demise of the Sixth Army lay more in social causes, "Preußischer Untertanengeist, Selbstdegradierung zum 'Objekt' Hitlers, das Entsetzen über die eigene Schuldverstrickung", than the lack of supplies and superior enemy forces.

Kluge attempts in his Schlachtbeschreibung to overcome these difficulties of presentation and to consider these traumatic historical events within a much wider field. All aspects of the battle of Stalingrad are considered in Kluge's novel, concentrating on the defeat of the Sixth Army from Autumn 1942 till 2nd February 1943. The bare historical facts are these: In his war of conquest and destruction on the Eastern front, Hitler, in haste and without consideration of the necessary supply of reserves, had ordered German tank units forward to Stalingrad in August 1942. There the Sixth Army met with sporadic guerrilla resistance in bitter street battles with Russian troops hidden in buildings. On the 8th November, Hitler announced to a German audience that Stalingrad was as good as defeated. In the battle of the two dictators the prestige city had fallen, or so Hitler anticipated, to the German dictator. However, on the 19th-20th November, the Red Army launched operation Uranus in a counter offensive involving a pincer movement which broke through the German-Rumanian front. By the 22nd November, the Sixth Army was surrounded, cut off from its reserves across the Volga. An air lift, suggested by Goering and approved by Hitler, remained the hope of General Paulus who therefore rejected the idea of breaking out to the south-west. The
air lift of supplies proved increasingly difficult, and by Christmas the German army was effectively abandoned and starving, despite the illusion being given by Hitler and his high command that help was on its way. After the Russian attack on the 10th January, the army was split, weakened in any case by the extremities of the Russian winter and extreme hunger exacerbated by the failure of air supplies. Paulus requested permission to surrender, which Hitler refused, ordering a fight to the death and expecting his generals to commit suicide at the end. The situation was hopeless: "Unter den Kämpfenden nahm das Massensterben seinen Fortgang. Unbestattet blieben die Toten liegen, vor den wenigen, dem Feuer ausgesetzten Lazaretten türmten sich die Haufen der in harten Frostes erstarrten Leichen" ... "Für den einfachen Soldaten war jeder Tag Hunger, Not, Entbehrungen, Strapazen, bittere Kälte ... Ein Schrecken ohne Ende." On 2nd February the surrounded army surrendered. Over 120,000 German soldiers had perished, around 90,000 were taken prisoner and of these fewer than 6000 returned home. The defeat heralded the turning point of the Second World War, signalled the onset of total war, gave a foretaste of the fight to the death and total defeat of the Third Reich, and was the greatest catastrophe suffered by the German army in the Second World War.

The novel Schlachtbeschreibung consists to a large extent of documents collected from archives, interviews, eyewitness accounts from returning soldiers, diaries, sermons and official documentation which includes instructions from the propaganda ministry for the press and hints on surviving the Russian winter. Kluge arranges these extracts in sections to form a tapestry of text which lacks any apparent literary form or language in its construction. Indeed, the description of the book as a novel is bound to raise some questions, for it is far from typical of the form, if it is compared with examples of war novels such as Im Westen Nichts Neues, Im Stahlgezitter, Krieg or Catch 22, and is certainly untypical of the mass of novels written on Stalingrad in postwar Germany. But Kluge is challenging the distinction between story and history, raising questions regarding the nature of history-writing which have been asked by others too. R.Barthes, in The Discourse of History, had asked whether the narration of past events which "has generally been subject to the sanction of historical 'science', bound to the underlying standard of the 'real' and justified by the principles of 'rational' exposition"13, whether this form of narration is different in any significant way from the imaginary forms of narration of epic, novel and drama. Moreover, writers of novels had sought to free literature from the "myth of Literature" and to widen its possibilities. Such tendencies in literature in the modern age indicate correspondences between the writing of history and the writing of fiction which the critic L.Gossman summarises as "the repudiation of realism, the collapse of the subject or character as an integrated and integrating entity,
and an increasingly acute awareness of the fundamental logic or syntax of narrative and of the constraints and opportunities it provides."\(^{15}\)

Siegfried Kracauer, in particular, has demonstrated that authors, notably those of historical novels in the 1920s, have tried to evade the consequences of this tendency, and have rather attempted to sustain traditional ideas of biography and chronology. Holding on to biography, Kracauer indicates in *Die Biographie als neubürgerliche Kunstform*, is an attempt to maintain an individualistic concept of history and to create a place of refuge from the chaotic ocean of the unformable.\(^{16}\) A sense of discontinuity, with moments of collision and crisis, is found in the modern novels of Proust, Joyce and Woolf, in sharp contrast to traditional history writing which takes on the unifying principles of biography and chronology. Kluge does not entirely abandon biography in *Schlachtbeschreibung*, but he removes it as a structural feature. It forms part of the recapitulation which follows the main sections of the novel and concentrates on Hitler and Paulus. Kluge, however, deconstructs traditional biography by dividing it up into sections with specific characteristics which are often contradictory: *Feinfühlig, Vorsichtig, Beliebt. Pünktlich, Besonnen.*\(^{17}\) The inclusion of a *Personenliste*, similar to a list of characters in a film, also undermines the status of biography in traditional historiography, giving prominence as it does to minor actors in the events (G.). Seen in the light of modern developments, it is not difficult to apply the term novel to *Schlachtbeschreibung*, which preserves and develops features of advanced forms of novel writing.

If, in Kracauer's critique, the "historical novel" of the 1920s offered a form of escape from the realities of twentieth century history, then the impetus of a novel dealing with history in the 1960s is to avoid such escapism. As indicated, Kluge's novel consists largely of collected and assembled documents. The author may therefore be seen as belonging to the documentary movement in literature in the 1960s, but his use of documents has a more significant purpose in challenging both as a novelist the traditional position of the historian, and as a collector of documents the traditional role of the novelist. For Kluge, as for Enzensberger, the work of "documentary literature" is an assembly of ready-made pieces, a cutting, editing and mixing based on the methodology of film making. The imagination of an autonomous artist, fundamental to the traditional role of a novelist, abdicates as the central moving force of a work of art. On the other hand, both Kluge and Enzensberger cast into doubt the ability to divide the terms "document" and "fiction" so clearly and question the supposed authority of a document. Their task in placing documents in a piece of fiction is to challenge the particularly strong belief found in German historiography which saw a fetishism for
facts completed and justified by a fetishism for documents. One of the underlying
tendencies of Kluge’s novel is to cast doubts on the whole concept of the reliability of
documents. Does a document tell us what happened or not? Even the estimates of the
numbers of German soldiers surrounded at Stalingrad ranges widely: "Die Russen
glaubten, 80 000 Mann umschlossen zu haben; Wehrmachtsführungsstab: etwa 400 000.
Der Quartiermeister der Armee sagte später: 300 000. Paulus glaubte, er hätte etwa 200
000 unter sich." Even if such “facts” could be ascertained with precision, they do not
on their own constitute history.

Enzensberger particularly raises doubts about the claims of documents and
demonstrates how every historical document is essentially a piece of fiction. Faced with
a document one should ask: "Wer spricht? Zu welchem Zweck? In wessen Interesse? Was
will er verbergen? Wovon will er uns überzeugen? Und wieviel weiß er überhaupt?
Wieviel Jahre sind vergangen zwischen dem erzählten Augenblick und dem des
Erzählens? Was hat der Erzähler vergessen? Und woher weiß er, was er sagt? Erzählt er,
was er gesehen hat, oder was er glaubt, gesehen zu haben? Erzählt er, was ein anderer
ihm erzählt hat?" Such a list of questions leads to the conclusion that every document
contains a large measure of fiction. This point is also supported with regard to the
writing of history by Hayden White, in his article Interpretation in History. His claim is
that historians are translating facts into fictions. In writing about the past, they are
either faced with a historical record which is too full and are therefore compelled to
exclude, or they need to fill in certain gaps to render a complex set of events
comprehensible. Both these activities of the historian, together with the creation of a
framework in which to place events, distort the "factual" content. Such distortions,
according to Hayden White, occur in much the way Enzensberger describes and consist
"of the exclusion of facts that might have been included" or "in the arrangement of events
in an order different from their chronological order of their original recurrence, so as to
endow them with different functions." Kluge removes a particular framework in his
novel, not in an attempt to deconstruct history, but to present us with an alternative
framework of documents, many of which have a doubtful value, which allow us to see
what lies behind the work of the writer of history, to examine to what extent the
inconsistencies have been ironed out in the attempt to create an account which is
smooth, harmonious and elegant.

Kluge’s Nachbemerkung to the 1968 edition of Schlachtbeschreibung, written at
the height of the "documentary" wave to distance himself from many of its more naïve
aspects, clarifies his own position with regard to documents. After listing the sources for
the book, he adds: "Insofern können die im Buch beschriebenen Szenen dokumentarisch
belegt werden. Das Buch wird dadurch nicht dokumentarischer. Wer in St. etwas sah, Aktenvermerke schrieb, Nachrichten durchgab, Quellen schuf, stützte sich auf das, was zwei Augen sehen können. Ein Unglück, das eine Maschinerie von 300 000 Menschen betrifft, ist nicht so zu erfassen.22 It is not possible, as far as Kluge is concerned, to claim any more authenticity for documents than for other forms of writing, and to speak of a particular "Leistung der Dokumente"23 is erroneous as far as this novel is concerned. For in the novel, he constantly makes the subjectivity of the accounts clear; the authors of Kluge's chosen accounts rely on what they see: "Oberstleutnant Sch. sah durch sein Scherenfernrohr in den Donwaldern ... Einige Flieger sahen etwas ... Ein Major sah, zusammen mit einigen rumänischen Majoren."24 But what they see also depends on a limited perspective. In a section entitled Wie sah die Armee?25 Kluge illustrates the manner in which information was filtered through a chain of command to the extent that so much that was seen was then lost.

Kluge is undermining traditional oppositions: here, the sharp distinction in reception between poetry and history. The past takes the form of a "geschichtliche Fiktion".26 In this respect, he is often at variance with a naïve strand of the documentary movement which held sway in the mid 1960s, but remains in line with the form of documentary literature espoused by Enzensberger. Kluge does not make the clear differentiation between fiction and document, he does not share in the belief in authenticity which documents were held to contain by their very nature by many authors: one thinks of Runge's Bottroper Protokolle, a collection of transcribed tape-recorded conversations with the working class of a coal mining community, Wallraff's Unerwünschte Berichte and Ulrike Meinhof's articles in konkret as examples. The idea that documents could be the basis of a new form of realism in literature was not the reason for his use of documents. This lies rather in a manner of their arrangement which allows the reader to discover the subjectivity and ideological content of what lies at the core of historical narratives.

Kluge relies heavily on Brecht in clarifying his stance towards the question of understanding the role of documents in literature. In his speech on receiving the Fontane prize for literature, Das Politische als Intensität alltäglicher Gefühle, he quotes Brecht: "Die Lage wird dadurch so kompliziert, daß weniger denn je eine einfache 'Wiedergabe der Realität' etwas über die Realität aussagt. Eine Fotografie der Krupp-Werke oder der AEG ergibt beinahe nichts über diese Institute. Die eigentliche Realität ist in die Funktionale gerutscht. Die Verdinglichung der menschlichen Beziehungen, also etwa die Fabrik, gibt die letzteren nicht mehr heraus."27 The development of photography brought with it the belief that this medium was capable of showing objects
as they really were, not invented by an artist, free of the subjective and ideological altogether. Barthes described this fetish for the "real" as an idol "by which men seek to escape from their freedom and their role as makers of meaning." Kluge has learned from Brecht to observe caution in matters relating to the use of documents in the narration of past events. Conventional history-writing has much in common with the photograph; claiming to be able to convince us that this is how it was - "wie es eigentlich gewesen". It ignores the recognition that history is a construction, for we can never get back to the events of the past, we can only experience them at second hand through what has been told about them. Kluge develops Brecht's thoughts on the photograph, stating that realism consists of two quite different attitudes: exactness in representation of real experiences is what he terms the "realistic attitude" (as with the photograph), but contrasting with this is the Naturform, a form of perception which does not conform to this "realistic attitude", as it carries with it the subjective in the shape of desires, wishes and needs. Any episode of a historical moment of war or revolution contains within it a "multitude of individual psychic moments" (White).

Kluge's purpose then in using documents is not to create a photographic reality, but to reveal underlying structures. He had already begun to mix document and fiction in his Lebensläufe, stories which reveal an interest "in the structure and paradigm of documentary discourses rather than in their claims to empirical truth or factual accuracy." Huyssen argues that Kluge's literary and theoretical work takes received dichotomies and seeks to re-mix, construct and make a collage of them so that "well known positions are set productively back into motion." The implications of this mixed form of literature for the reception by the reader are, according to Lewandowski, firstly, that the epic arranger or narrator dominates the reader more than the conventional narrator who allows the reader to accept his work or simply dismiss it as fiction, and secondly, that the border between fiction and document is cancelled, and in a permanent state of having to decide the reader must continually test what is being offered: "ein Prozeß, der ihm zeigt, wie weit er schon in das Normengeflecht seiner Gesellschaftsform verstrickt ist."

The material used by Kluge in his novel are documents. The way he uses this material indicates his role as a narrator. For as narrator, he is a collector, collagist or arranger, following in the tracks of the collector Walter Benjamin. What he produces is no longer determined by plot, for he has removed this framework, but by a collage of confusing and diverse materials consisting of articles, anecdotes, dossiers, interviews, letters and biographies, speeches, sermons, reports, pictures and diagrams. Faced with a chaos of materials, he chooses and selects for narrative purposes, giving the novel the
character of a collage in which the author makes no attempt to reconcile contradictory and confusing elements. It is up to the reader to use his own associative abilities, as the meaning is not contained within the text itself, but in the fissures created from the juxtapositioning of disparate elements. Into these gaps the reader inserts his own experience and understanding. Brecht had already shown, by the introduction in his epic theory of the principle Trennung der Elemente32, that a formal arrangement of material can help to expose certain contradictions. This is an aesthetic principle Kluge takes up in his novel.

The model Kluge produces avoids the temptation to create a harmonious, seamless version of the battle. He has scavenged on the rubbish heap of the past, selected scraps and placed them together in a pattern which takes on what he considers relevant and jettisons the irrelevant, whilst leaving open contradictions. Such a work is an exploration rather than explanation, and the unevenness of the structure counteracts the flowing, closed composition of traditional history writing. Hugh Blair, erstwhile Professor of History at the University of Edinburgh, embodied in the last century this tradition which saw as the prime task of the writer of history "to give as much unity as possible; that is, his History should not consist of separate unconnected parts merely, but should be bound together by some connecting principle, which shall make the impression on the mind of something that is one, whole and entire." The overriding consideration was to show "a great plan" with "a point or centre".33

To harmonise in this way demands a prearranged pattern or a scheme, or at least the apprehension of a pattern to be imposed, and it is this rejection of the need for predetermined schemata which leads to the search for alternative ways of narration. Kluge clarifies, in his later essay Die realistische Methode (1975), his reversal of the usual deductive methodology. A deductive methodology proceeds from "Gesetzen, Regeln, Werten" and moves towards their fulfilment: "Wirklichkeit wird repräsentiert. Prinzip der Illustration: Die Abstraktion regelt die Konkretion, indem sie sie zerstört."34 An inductive methodology is, however, open and leaves the reader free to draw conclusions from the material offered. A construction is necessary, but it is one which leaves as many gaps or open spaces as possible. Kluge describes this as Gitter, where both horizontal and vertical perspectives cross and overlap, or he refers later to Erzählflächen where the emphasis is on as open a field as possible, in contrast to the linear plot.

Montage is the aesthetic device used and it forms part of the underlying intention in Kluge's work of neither avoiding nor smoothing out the contradictions of
history. Manipulation, in Enzensberger's positive use of the term in *Baukästen zu einer Theorie der Medien* (1968), belongs to this process. The narrator is far from being unbiased or disinterested, terms which wrongly assume that the handling of any material can achieve what in a naïve sense the term "objective" is taken to mean. Kluge undoubtedly chooses the stories which are of interest to him, he edits, cuts and mounts in order to produce from the ensemble of fictional accounts he discovers his own fiction, discovering his own patterns in the material. The mounting or juxtaposition of the separate parts does not produce a "closed" work in the sense of the classical aesthetic, but the openness and lack of harmonious connection between the parts creates cracks or fissures in the text, which give it the character of an incomplete or temporary work. Heifenbüttel draws out the essential elements of Kluge's style, explaining how the fragments produce a necessary provocation, because the very nature of the quotation form suggests a denial of personal competence and authorial authority. The independent activity of the reader is emphasised. Neither the documentary nor the authentic is what matters, but "das Lückenlose - man muß die Lücken mitlesen." Moreover, a fragment remains incomplete and therefore provisional; it offers a form in which experiences can be related without ever being sure of their own centre: "Wer im Fragment redet und erzählt, hat den Illusionscharakter des zentralen Bezugs durchschaut."35 The fragmentary is also the form of possible error; the provisional demands later revisions. Because the story is not available in a complete form, it must be produced or found through an active participation by the reader. A methodology with cracks or breaks in the text, allowing contradictions to arise and leading to insights about the dialectic of history, is endorsed by Enzensberger: "Die Widersprüchlichkeit der Formen kündigt aber nur die Risse an, die sich durch das Material selber ziehen. Die Rekonstruktion gleicht einem Puzzle, dessen Stücke nicht nahtlos ineinander sich fügen lassen. Gerade auf den Fugen des Bildes ist zu beharren."36

The overall outcome of this "putting together" is to present the reader with the attempt to create a model. The title of the novel *Schlachtbeschreibung* illustrates this concern: the absence of the definite article, the removal of any specific reference to Stalingrad (it is referred to as 'St.'), the use of initials to lessen the importance of individuals like Hitler (referred to as Hi.), are all ways in which Kluge seeks to move away from the specific, to allow us to see how a disaster like Stalingrad could come about. In doing this, the work, which up to this point in its construction has conformed in many ways to the methodology of the historian, takes a move away from the traditional historical concern with specific events towards the generalising concerns of the poet. In one extract, Kluge wants to draw attention to the chain of command, an important part of the organisation of the disaster, without allowing the reader to become
bogged down in the specific details of the Battle of Stalingrad: "Am 12. hatte der viertvorletzte Befehlshaber lieber die Richtung über Kru. eingeschlagen ... Der fünfvorletzte Befehlshaber war am 13. anderer Auffassung als der unmittelbare Ausführer der Befehle (Hu). Dieser wurde zeitweise durch den drittletzten Befehlshaber (Ho.) unterstützt; zeitweilig bestanden ernsthafte Meinungsverschiedenheiten zwischen dem Drittverletzten und Viertverletzten. Der Zweitverletzte mischte sich in Einzelheiten nicht ein; er wollte nur, daß Ergebnisse kamen. Der vorletzte Befehlshaber (Zeit.) fragte täglich zweimal nach Erfolgen. Begierig wartete der letzte (Hi) auf einen durchschlagenden Erfolg." Here Kluge wishes to demonstrate the system behind the catastrophe and hence espouses the model form to this end.

The purpose of his model is to open up to the reader the system behind a "disaster", to illustrate the "organised" construction of a calamity like Stalingrad. This intention is clarified in the later version (1978) where Kluge explains the content of the novel as "der organisatorische Aufbau eines Unglücks", a description which is not without irony. The two contradictory elements of organisation and catastrophe play a significant part in the structure of the novel. On the one hand, there is "der organisatorische Aufbau", a factory-like construction with the structure of a state institution, an organisation which has taken a thousand years of history to develop. The first few chapters or units of the novel give us the versions of the battle of Stalingrad as officially narrated by the main members of the state institution: the army, media, and the church. Together these help constitute the "organisation". They also bind individuals together in society: "Kein einzelner wäre je nach Stalingrad gekommen; hätte auch keinen Grund gehabt, dort etwas zu suchen. Es ist das Reich, 1000 jähriges Gebilde ('Gemisch aus Wünschen und Zwang'), das sie in Marsch setzt. Dieses Reich ist eine Staatsanstalt." This binding of individuals together in society prevents mass desertion, and in this context it is worth recalling the command of Paulus to the troops at Stalingrad on 22nd January 1943: "Wenn wir wie eine verschworene Schicksalsgemeinschaft zusammenhalten und jeder den fanatischen Willen hat, sich bis zum äußersten zu wehren, sich unter keinen Umständen gefangen zu geben, sondern standzuhalten und zu siegen, werden wir es schaffen." The way in which the soldiers of all ranks at Stalingrad became constrained, and therefore victims of a catastrophe like Stalingrad, is a strong feature of Kluge's model.

The second aspect of Kluge's description of the novel involves the private human reactions and wishes, the portrayal of the suffering of individuals on a subjective level which finds expression in the term Unglück. This element prevents the Sixth Army being seen merely in terms of a machine or an instrument, but rather it is made up of
"Arbeitskraft, Hoffnungen, Vertrauen, der unabweisbare Wille, in der Nähe des Realitätssinus zu bleiben."\textsuperscript{40} The core of all wishes is the desire to remain within society. This theme is clearly treated in the individual accounts of the section \textit{Wie wurde das Desaster praktisch angefaßt?} Throughout the novel, Kluge is able to combine the two often contradictory elements in order to prevent the reader stopping at the idea of Unglück. The weakness of so many of the accounts of the battle was that they had been narrated as tragedy, failing thereby to consider the reasons for the disaster. Disaster, tragedy, and catastrophe are all terms which hinder investigation of causes, but by juxtaposing various perspectives Kluge hopes to reveal elements of the "organised", i.e. social and political, construction of the defeat at Stalingrad.

These two elements form a major part of the central section of the novel, \textit{Tagesabläufe}, which is most diverse in its material, widest ranging in the perspectives on offer. The hierarchical structure of the organisation is illustrated in diagrammatic form in several places, for example "Montag, 16. November 1942: Organisation für St.\textsuperscript{41}" under which follows a list giving the chain of command. Later in the novel we find a similar illustration under the title \textit{Organisatorischer Aufbau der Armee}.

In \textit{Tagesabläufe} we see the organisation as it begins to disintegrate and yet, despite the calamity, a total disintegration in the form of mass desertion or a break out from the siege never takes place. The organisation of the army is based on those elements Plieviers had detected and treated in his Stalingrad novel, namely coercion and obedience, elements produced and consolidated within civil society. Kluge includes several illustrations of this, reaching from measures taken against indiscipline ("\textit{das Militärstrafgesetzbuch enthält ausreichende juristische Vorkehrungen zur Aufrechterhaltung der Organisation, z.B.} \textsuperscript{43}"), to examples of German officers preventing their own men from breaking out ("\textit{Die deutschen Soldaten ... wollen fliehen. Es sind aber hinter ihnen, in der Mulde verteilt, Offiziere, die sie aufhalten} \textsuperscript{44}"), to generals ordering capitulating troops to be fired on ("\textit{General He. vom VIII.Korps, ließ auf den kapitulierenden Nachbarstab v.Sey. schießen. Einige Offiziere wurden getötet} \textsuperscript{45}"). This system of coercion based on absolute obedience reached as high as Paulus himself, who, once refused freedom of action, subsequently would not act without reference to Hitler. The organisation is tenacious in the face of hostile circumstances, keeping those who might wish to escape in their place: "\textit{Moralische Haltung, begrenzte Überlaufmöglichkeit ... Dieser moralische Standard überlebte noch eine Zeitlang, als die Armee nicht mehr funktionierte, verfiel dann allmählich. ... es war zu diesem Zeitpunkt im Kessel jedoch schwer, den bestehenden Organisationszustand zu ändern.}"\textsuperscript{46} With the defeat of the Sixth Army came the "\textit{Übergang von 100 000 in einen neuen Organisationszustand ... Die neue Organisation, die der Kriegsgefangenschaft}..."\textsuperscript{47} Yet even this was not the end, for Kluge shows the
ability of the organisation to reform or regenerate itself throughout the novel. The defeated Sixth Army managed even this: "Wiederaufstellung .... Die erneut ausgestattete 6. Armee versuchte Winter 1943 und Frühjahr 1944 in Südrussland Rache zu nehmen."48

Individual wishes both act within this organisation, for the core of all wishes is to remain in society, yet also seek to escape from the calamity of the events as they unfold. This contradiction is resolved through wishful thinking which ignores the impending doom, because of the need to stay within society. Thus we find constant reference to the subjective hopes of the victims: "Die Hoffnung war, daß die eigenen Verluste wesentlich geringer wären, als die des Feindes. Das hoffte der Feind auch."49 Such wishful thinking became blind to the reality of the situation: "Wir alle vom ältesten General bis zum jüngsten Soldat stehen fest zueinander und sind eine verschworene Gemeinschaft ... Wir halten die Festung St., bis der vom Führer zugesandte Entsatz den Ring um uns sprengt."50 Hopes and wishes spread throughout the organisation to the generals ("Wir wollen hoffen, daß der Krieg bald aus ist ...51) to Hitler himself ("Hitler setzte große Hoffnungen auf ..."52)

In the original foreword to the novel, Kluge indicates the problems of taking an event like Stalingrad, either in isolation or as part of a limited period of history, for "die Ursachen liegen 30 Tage oder 300 Jahre zurück."53 Which period is to be taken, at what point in the past can the story realistically begin? He wishes to emphasise that there is a continuous historical process in play which breaks the bounds of the events from November 1942 to February 1943, events which require consideration within the framework of their own pre-history. Such a consideration can only work if conventional periodisation is abandoned in favour of a model which has as the range of its investigation a specific theme. The tenacity of the organisation he has discovered at Stalingrad has precedents in Napoleon's campaign which also depended on a system of coercive terror: "Daß sein Heer ihn freiwillig begleitete, ist nicht anzunehmen. Schon 1810 wurden in dem von N. verwalteten Europa 160 000 Menschen wegen Nichtrstellung verurteilt; Maßnahmen gegen die Familien der Betroffenen wurden angeordnet."54 Kluge's constant concern is to highlight these precedents by referring back in history. The history of the army is an important aspect of the recapitulation, together with a genealogy which offers a different narrative form with the same purpose in mind, and an examination of the various war plans drawn up by the German military since the last century. Under the question Was waren die Vorbilder für die Lage am 20.November? Kluge lists Friedrich der Große, Moltke, the situation of the army in the years 1918-28, and the state of the Nazi party before 1933, thus allowing many elements of the pre-history of Stalingrad to come into play.
Faced with such a work a reader experiences different challenges as conventional expectations of a novel are frustrated. The impulse of a reader used to traditional novel forms is to move towards the end, searching for an answer or a conclusion of some sort. Here the reader would like to have an explanation of the construction of a disaster. It soon becomes clear that the novel cannot be read in a linear way, it must be read gegen den Strich, and against accepted genre norms. In discussing the traditional novel, Doblin was well aware of its dependence on dramatic elements, and the way in which the emphasis on suspense dominated a composition. He complained "die Spannung ruiniert den Roman" and typified the work of traditional novelists as being dominated by dramatic plot: "Der Roman hat mit Handlung nichts zu tun ... vorwärts ist niemals die Parole des Romans." In the context of Hayden White’s assertion that traditional historiography uses the form of the nineteenth-century novel, a form imbued with dramatic qualities, it follows that much history writing too is conditioned by the qualities of drama, particularly when an account of the past seeks a thread running through the narrative, has a specific start and finish, and strives for suspense and climaxes in its flow. Doblin’s answer to this was to develop a theory in the context of the novel akin to Brecht’s Trennung der Elemente in theatre. Doblin’s Regenuermtheorie was based on the idea that if you cut up a worm the individual parts will take on a life of their own. It attempted to replace plot with a structural principle where individual sections stand as equals. In the development of the composition of the epic work, whether in the novel, drama or film, the independence of the elements of the work (Selbstständigkeit der Teile) becomes a determining feature.

Kluge follows the path of Doblin’s critique of the traditional Bildungsroman of the nineteenth century in abandoning the linear plot which combines the experiences of an individual in a causal manner. He maintains and adapts the tradition of the epic work: "Es kann kein Zweifel sein, daß die Erzählung eines Einzelschicksals ... geschichtliche Materie nur durch dramaturgischen Inzest wiedergeben kann. Der rote Faden drückt Erfahrung (...) heraus." The reference to "dramaturgical incest" points to the closed form of traditional drama with its formalistic demands for plot, tension and solution. "Der rote Faden" refers to the narration of stories in the conventional manner according to an ordered, one dimensional, monocausal chronology which Kluge rejects: "Die Substanz konzentrieren, ja, Substanz wegen eines 'roten Fadens' wegschreiben: nein." Schlachtbeschreibung, with its seven main units taken largely from documentary sources, a section of recapitulation, list of persons and appendix, refuses to adapt these sources to the requirements of a traditional plot with a "red thread", but is rather in favour of assuming the structural principles of Doblin’s Regenuermtheory.
A closer examination of some of the units Kluge presents reveals a clearer picture of how the novel works. The start of the first unit Rechenschaftsbericht lacks any developed narrative elements, consisting simply of a chronological sequence with the barest possible description of a battle: "Dienstag, 10. November 1942: In St. Stoßtruppätigkeit." It possesses none of the attributes normally given to a story: the beginning appears arbitrary; there is no narrative voice, no central subject, no connections, and no plot. There is little or no indication of what sort of document this is, and the reader's ignorance, together with the chronicle form, allows the account to unfold, drawing the reader along. Soon the reader becomes aware of a perspective; the reference to the "enemy" indicates that the position is not neutral and that the description is subjectively coloured, thus contradicting the signals given out by the documentary appearance of the section that suggests information is being offered. It is soon clear to the reader that the perspective is limited and contemporary, and he views the account from this perspective.

Gradually a heavily stylised structure emerges consisting of three main elements: Russian attacks which lead to a hard, bitter, bloody struggle with heavy losses to the enemy; slight losses to the German army; the role of the Sixth Army as taking up a defensive position. The beginnings of a constructed picture thus appear, commencing with the reversal of roles: the Red army, defending its homeland from the German aggressors has, in this account, become the aggressor, whereas the term Widerstand is used of the German army to belie its participation in a war of conquest and destruction which was the underlying cause of the ensuing disaster. The narrative framework takes on a pattern which distorts and omits. For several days nothing apparently has happened, and the reader becomes aware of the tactic of omission in the construction of a story. A story is being fashioned, a description which has a definite purpose in mind: to conceal the extent of German losses. These documents reveal themselves as providers of a totally unreliable propaganda version of the battle of Stalingrad. Their initial purpose, to conceal what was happening and to make the act of aggression appear to be an act of self-defence, changes as the situation at Stalingrad nears its disastrous conclusion. With the gradual admission that the Russians had broken through comes the attempt to construct a myth of the battle: "Truppen gaben damit wieder ein leuchtendes Vorbild heroischen deutschen Soldatentums." By means of an emotional appeal using the metaphorical language of traditional mythologies, the account evokes more frequently the myth of the brave soldier who remains true to the flag unto death, despite the overwhelming causes for the approaching disaster, i.e. the vast numerical
superiority of the enemy and the treacherous weather conditions. The true causes for the disaster have been effectively removed from the account.

Suddenly the reader, following the chronicle from the perspective of those living in the dark days of the disaster, becomes aware of the catastrophe and shares the experience of shock when learning of the defeat. The propaganda account resists all attempts to understand what had happened: "Noch ist es nicht an der Zeit, den Verlauf der Operationen zu schildern"61, and the attempt is made to console the German readership with evasions couched in quasi-religious metaphor: "Das Opfer der Armee war nicht umsonst."62 The closure of the story offers a moral conclusion in the attempt to satisfy the demand for meaning. White suggests that the demand for closure in the historical story "is a demand ... for moral meaning, a demand that sequences of real events be assessed as to their significance as elements of a moral drama."63 In this account the meaning is contained in the Heldenepos, a myth of a brave German army defeated by overwhelming numbers and the treachery of a Russian winter, thus exonerating the culpable political and military elites. But having read the account with the limited perspective of a German civilian in the Second World War and having experienced the impotence at being kept in a state of ignorance, the reader is forced into a position where he must reject and judge the account and seek the truth which lies behind the description. Kluge's novel then offers the opportunity of comparing this account with others in the novel, and the search for connections and contradictions begins.

After considering this element of the construction of the myth of Stalingrad, Kluge presents a further version of events, this time provided by the media. The second unit, Pressenäffige Behandlung, illustrates the way the gleichgeschaltete press is used to corroborate and enhance the previous version of events. The same critical period, November 1942 to February 1943, is taken, challenging the reader to consider the same events and thereby begin to construct his own account of the battle in the form of layers which rely upon each other. These documents, secret at the time of the battle, allow a discovery of the process of censorship and black propaganda or disinformation, whilst revealing the internal political aims of the presentation of the news of the first section. In comparing the documents, it becomes clear how the version of events given by the military is bolstered by the press; the same mythologising vocabulary is used (for example "Der Heldenkampf", "bis zum letzten Atemzug") as a historical myth of the battle is constructed in metaphorical language. Particular emphases and formulations reappear in the instructions of the Reichspressechef. The worse the situation, the more general and heroic becomes the language describing the events. On the 18th January,
with the unavoidable realisation amongst the Nazi leaders that a disaster was approaching, the emphasis is already being laid on the heroic struggle in the shape of the myth of a Heldenepos already prepared in advance of the announcement of defeat. As Wette has examined in his article, *Das Massensterben als 'Heldenepos': Stalingrad in der NS-Propaganda*, the use of such myths was a deliberate policy by Goebbels who had recourse to the Germanic myths of the Nibelungen, to the classical myths of the Spartan defence of Thermopylae, and to more recent mythologies of the 1920s and 1930s.

The third layer of this construction of a myth is provided by religious metaphor. In the section *Militärgeistliche Behandlung*, Kluge offers a collection of sermons on the subject of war which confirm the story already constructed. These add a further layer of mythology provided by religious metaphorical language which made use of terms such as *Glaube, Allmacht, Ehre, Opfer* in the context of political loyalty in the face of the disaster. The interdependence of these elements illustrates their complicity in the structure of the social organisation which allowed Stalingrad to happen. One priest exhorts: "Wir wissen, daß wir eine starke Führung haben", echoing the omniscience and omnipotence ascribed to the Nazi leadership in the previous sections. The separation of these elements by Kluge allows the reader to see the connections and the manner in which the organisation gained support from social institutions. So far, Stalingrad has been constructed as an official myth.

In the central sections entitled *Wie wurde das Desaster praktisch angefaßt?*, *Wunden* and *Tagesläufe*, however, Kluge sets up the possibility of contradictions and collisions with the official version of events given so far. The first of these sections is, significantly, based on a series of interviews with individual soldiers, followed by interviews with a number of doctors. In using this oral form of narration, Kluge seems to be confirming what he said in his speech on receiving the Fontane prize for literature: "Es geht darum, daß wir anfangen, an unserer Geschichte zu arbeiten. Etwas sehr Konkretes stelle ich dir darunter vor, es kann auch damit anfangen, daß man sich darüber wechselseitig Geschichten erzählt." If history is a collective fiction, then it must have the dominant characteristics of the orally narrated rather than the written. Döblin had lamented the loss of the oral tradition within the novel and with it the loss of a treasure of collective experience. Enzensberger takes his thesis a stage further in his novel about the Spanish civil war, *Der kurze Sommer der Anarchie*. The narrator hears stories which he retells: "Seine wenigen Zeiten fangen ein Stimmengewirr auf, ein gesellschaftliches Produkt. Unbekannte, Namenlose sprechen hier: ein kollektiver Mund .... aus den Geschichten wird Geschichte. So ist seit den ältesten Zeiten Historie überliefert worden: als Sage, als Epos, als kollektiver Roman."
The presence of the element of quotation is important for another reason. The quotation keeps its own identity, rather than being subordinated to the demands of plot, and signifies a change in the relationship between the author and the text, as authorial dominance is surrendered along with subjective modes of expression. It may even be possible that the author is not in total control of what he is quoting, in the sense that he does not understand its significance. Visch\(^67\) cites the example from Schlachtbeschreibung where Kluge quotes: "Wir wollen nicht vergessen, daß Stalingrad ein Fanal war" and then, as narrator comments: "Was ein Fanal ist weiß ich nicht", demonstrating his lack of complete control over the material on offer. This oral form of narration also contradicts the concept of history as an academic subject. It is a reaction against the history of the professional historian, written in book form, presented as a closed work. The language of the historians is unable to express the wishes and desires of the victims of historical processes, and a perpetuation of the use of that form of language will only lead to a perpetuation of the historical relationships.

Kluge and Enzensberger both herald a departure from the scientific, academic language of history towards a bundle of stories passed on through an oral tradition. The main characteristics of the oral form of communication are the possibilities of contradiction, addition and interruption as well as the feeling of openness and provisionality. As regards subject matter, what history abhors belongs to the stuff of this alternative concept of history. Döblin was the first to show the way towards this form of narration, and Enzensberger highlights the powerlessness of the professional historian in the face of the Bilderbogen of history: "Der Lange Marsch ist letzten Endes für uns das, was vom Langen Marsch erzählt werden wird."\(^68\) The collection of numerous stories also avoids the problem of a mono-perspectival account, which must necessarily be inadequate for describing a disaster like Stalingrad. We recall Kluge's statement in his postscript to the 1968 edition: "Ein Unglück wie dieses hat den Vorteil, daß es unmöglich mit zwei Augen zu sehen ist. So sah keiner von uns alles, wenn es auch dem einen oder anderen gelang, Rückschlüsse anzustellen."\(^69\) Kluge is aware that the material is heavily tainted with subjectivity and private wishes in the face of historical events, and the form he chooses makes it clear that we are receiving individual accounts from a limited perspective.

Through these oral histories at the centre of the novel the reader is compelled into cross-referencing, checking, contradicting and confirming accounts. In an earlier section, Richtlinien für den Winterkrieg, which presented the Russian climate somewhat optimistically, he had read: "Der Soldat muß nicht nur über die Nachteile, sondern erst
By reading on in the sixth unit, Wunden, we learn from pathologists' reports of the premature ageing discovered on the corpses of the soldiers. Again and again the reader is pulled and pushed from one passage to another, either confirming or disputing perspectives, trying to build up his own version of events. The division of the elements of the description into sections by Kluge helps the reader to examine each aspect individually without being caught up in a plot. The construction, or building site as Kluge describes it, allows him to be free of the spell of plot and to be able to stop, think and remind himself of earlier accounts.

In the unit Wie wurde das Desaster praktisch angefaßt? the first attempt is made to arrive at some explanation of events by means of interviews with twenty-six officers and four soldiers of the Sixth Army. The question-answer structure of this extract acts as a distancing device and also allows the subjective perceptions and wishes of the individual soldiers to emerge. The accounts of both officers and soldiers agree. Both point to the false optimism in Germany, to early German losses, to chaos, confusion and inexperienced reinforcements, to orders and counter orders, and the disappointed hopes of an air bridge. It is here that the senselessness and haphazard nature of war is presented, and the collision between subjective hopes and wishes of individuals and the "organisation" of war surfaces. In fact, the so-called organisation is shown to be chaotic and haphazard itself. The reader is again drawn into comparison between different sections and the different perspectives contained therein. In the first unit, the military establishment's story, we read "Der Mut der Verteidiger ist ungebrochen," a version contradicted by a soldier's account: "Das war eine sehr deprimierende Wirkung auf die dort eingeschlossene Truppe." Both reports come from the same day. The account of the doctors confirms the horror of the conditions, and the matter-of-factness of the report contributes to the shock of the last extract in which cannibalism amongst the starving troops is described.

Juxtapositions, or rather collisions of perspectives, which would in the framework of a traditional novel be most difficult to carry out, are significant in the central sections of this novel. One purpose of these juxtapositionings is to draw the elements in the organised construction together. Thus the individual account of the death of a soldier is placed next to Hitler's order for the Sixth Army to maintain its position: "L. fiel einem russischen Spähtrupp in die Hände. Er erhielt einen Pistolenschuß durch den Kiefer, stellte sich geistesgegenwärtig tot .... Hit...gab Befehl, daß die 6. Armee am Wolgauf stehenbleiben solle." On occasions, this formulation is followed up by a story "from below". In the entry for the 29th December, we read of the
experiment in Berlin to survive on army rations, abandoned on Hitler's orders. Next to this is placed: "Oberleutnant G. starb, untätig, in St.-Mitte an einem Kieferschaden." Following directly on from this is the biography of G., an account of his active service and the victims of that service which delivers a stark contrast to the activities at headquarters. The relationship between the parts is under examination. In a further example, we have Paulus' letter to Hitler asking him for permission to surrender. This is followed by Hitler's refusal, and then an account of an incident which traditional historiography would deem insignificant and out of place: "Zwei Offiziere fanden eine Verpflegungsbombe in einem Keller; sie öffnen den Inhalt auf und erschossen sich dann getrennt." Different versions of events are allowed to collide, forcing the reader into a judgment: "Tagesmeldung: In unvorstellbar heldenmutigem, verzweifeltem Kampf versuchten die Divisionen der Westfront, feindliche Massenangriffe abzuwehren ... Natur, Sonne. Über die Augen eines vereisten Toten auf einer Anhöhe haben sich Krähnen hergemacht." One particularly illuminating entry reads: "G. kralte sich in die Erde, steinhart gefroren, ein Nagel brach. Der Panzer sah zu, überrollte dann den G ... Hitler ging davon aus, 'daß in St. denkbar günstige Aussichten bestünden.'" The extract shows how, even though the individual standpoint is diminished among the bureaucratic language of reports, it occasionally flickers into life to offer a criterion with which to judge the disaster. However, even this micro-narrative embodies the idea underlying Schlachtbeschreibung and many of Kluge's other fictions, that is, as Labanyi argues, the fatal consequences of wilfully trying to apply instinctive or obsolete behaviour (kralte) in an inappropriate environment (steinhart gefroren). This montage of simultaneous but contradictory perceptions makes demands on the reader throughout the novel.

In responding to the demands of the forgotten or evaded trauma of German history to be given fresh treatment, Kluge has been sensitive to the dissatisfactions of many literary critics, writers and historians with the sterility and inadequacy of the form and language of previous accounts. Moreover, he has responded to a profound public need to confront those half-lost events openly and by means of a form and language which allowed an intensive participation. The success of the novel lies in Kluge's willingness to step into the space between literature and history, whose specific boundaries were understood by so many at the time as a hindrance to a full debate with the past. Kluge is able to promote this in his documentary novel by presenting collisions, gaps and juxtapositionings which shape the perception of the reader, allowing him to sharpen his understanding both of Stalingrad and similar disasters. The reader is offered the task of comparing, casting away, following a track, giving it up in favour of another, and is in this way pulled into a lively debate with history.
Peter Weiss Die Ermittlung: A Documentary Oratorio on the System of Annihilation.

With the appearance of Peter Weiss's Die Ermittlung: Oratorium in 11 Gesängen in 1965, initially on the 19th October in the Volkskammer in East Berlin with Erwin Piscator as director, as well as in some fourteen other theatres in both Germany's, Auschwitz had returned as a topic for dramatic treatment. At this point its return, stimulated by the Frankfurt war crimes trials and their coverage in the media, led to a documentary treatment which signals a departure from the docu-dramatic approach adopted by Hochhuth in his play Der Stellvertreter of 1963. Weiss saw his play as a spur to an overdue discussion of the past: "aber das könnte doch bloß ein Anstoß, ein Anfang sein. Müßte zu einer 'Massenbewegung' werden. Verlangt nach jahrelanger Aufarbeitung. Dieses Stück stellvertretend für etwas, das noch brachliegt - kann ein Volk sich von einem Trauma, einer Psychose befreien?"

The importance of the Auschwitz trials as the impulse for this play emerges from Weiss's diaries, containing extracts from the proceedings made either on his own personal visits to Frankfurt, or on the basis of Bernd Naumann's reports for the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung. No trial documents as such were available. Yet although the trials clearly act as the catalyst, there is no attempt by Weiss to stage them, as is emphasised in his Anmerkungen zu Die Ermittlung. His diaries also indicate the extensive bibliography he read on the subject, including Eugen Kogon's Der SS-Staat: Das System der deutschen Konzentrationslager (1946). During the course of the trials, the dramatist also made a visit to the site of the concentration camp at Auschwitz, an account of which he gives in Meine Ortschaft. As a half-Jew who had escaped the fate of many of his fellow Jews by fleeing Germany at the time of the pogrom of November 1938, Weiss gives voice to an individual concern with Auschwitz, expressed in the title Meine Ortschaft. In the account, he tells of how he became aware through the medium of film of the horrific events at Auschwitz: "Auf der blendend hellen Bildfläche sah ich Statuen, für die ich bestimmt gewesen war, die Gestalten, zu denen ich hätte gehören können ... zu wem gehörte ich jetzt, als Lebender, als Überlebender, gehörte ich wirklich zu jenen, die mich anstarrten mit ihren übergroßen Augen, und die ich längst verraten hatte, gehörte ich nicht eher zu den Mörndern und Henkern?" The pictures which provoked this agonised self-questioning could not be simply ignored or forgotten.

The very title of Peter Weiss's play Die Ermittlung: Oratorium in 11 Gesängen contains a clue to the overall structure of the work. In fact, his notebooks indicate several changes he made before settling finally on the title: Die Erörterung des
Sachverhalts: Drama in 33 Gesängen, Die Vernehmung zur Sache: Drama in 33 Gesängen, Anus Mundi: Ein Prozeß in 33 Gesängen: 11 Gesänge eine Untersuchung⁴. All of these titles, however, indicate the relationship between the documentary sources of his material and the intention to create a work of art. Die Ermittlung is firstly a work of documentary literature, following the path laid down by Kluge with his novel Schlachtbeschreibung. Both writers start with the collecting of materials without any defined purpose in mind and then begin the critical selection and arrangement of those materials. Secondly, Die Ermittlung is a work of documentary theatre with forerunners in the work of Piscator, the Lehrstücke of Brecht and in agitprop. Documentary theatre has been labelled in many ways: political theatre, document theatre, the theatre of protest and anti-theatre. As Weiss, its main theorist and most famous exponent argues, the underlying characteristic of it is the use made of documentation. In his Notizen zum dokumentarischen Theater (1968), Weiss also refers to it as the Theater der Berichterstattung, relating it closely to the mass media, particularly journalism. But its raw material also consists of minutes, letters, statistics, reports, interviews, newspaper articles, photographs and other "Zeugnisse der Gegenwart"⁵. This material forms the starting point for artistic production.

In the case of Die Ermittlung, newspaper reports form the raw documentation from which the work is fashioned. Like Kluge, Weiss responds critically rather than mimetically to the activities of the new media. Martin Walser had already exposed, in his article Unser Auschwitz, the difficulties created by the media reporting of the Auschwitz trials, the principle being an apparent inability to find an appropriate language to describe these events. Weiss's artistic interest originates in the media event; that is, in the media presentation of trials relating to crimes which took place twenty years before. He initially collected extracts from these trials without any editing or changes, presenting them in July 1965 in Kursbuch 1 under the title Frankfurter Auszüge. Despite the heavy reliance on the news media, Weiss's documentary theatre then parts company from its source. The flood of material in the media which engulfs us with its frequency and quantity is stemmed, as Weiss makes a deliberate selection with the intention of concentrating the material on a particular theme: "Diese kritische Auswahl, und das Prinzip, nach dem die Ausschnitte der Realität montiert werden, ergeben die Qualität der dokumentarischen Dramatik."⁶ He could have added that this selection and arranging of material, the kind of research qualities generally associated with the work of a historian, also define the quality of the documentary novel practised by Kluge.
Textual criticism is inherent to the documentary approach, as the workings of the mass-media are opened up to inspection. In the same vein as Enzensberger, Weiss asks questions which are at the core of this critical examination. Are the reports in the media influenced and guided by the interests of the ruling class? What is kept back from us? Whose interests do the reports serve? Who benefits from any editing, cutting or idealising? What is the significance of omissions when narrating historical events? Who benefits from the elimination of certain historical facts? Who profits from the deliberate disfigurement of events? How are falsifications expressed? How are they received? What are the effects of distortions on the present? The sophisticated levels of modern communication, particularly in the amount of material broadcast, obscure the importance of events "in ihren Anlässen und Zusammenhängen", and material which is essential in enlightening us is held back. Far from it being his intention to imitate the media, Weiss uses documentary sources to work against the results achieved by mass forms of communication.

Despite what might be termed the "historical" method of research and collecting sources with which Weiss starts his work, he retains a literary and artistic approach in arranging his material. This manner of arranging, however, differs from both conventional literary and historiographical ways of arranging material. Weiss avoids the plot-centred arrangement of traditional literature and the chronological/biographical approach of much conventional historiography, finding an alternative in a topographical framework which takes the spectator of his play from the arrival at Auschwitz through the different parts and functions of the camp up to the increasingly anonymous extermination of the victims. In keeping with the often religious flavour of an oratorio, the stages of his investigation into the camp resemble the stations of the Passion, with the important difference that Weiss's work has a circular quality with the last canto bringing the spectator back to the unloading of the trains at the ramps.

The second part of the title Die Ermittlung, Oratorium in 11 Gesängen emphasises the act of artistic construction which lies at the heart of the play. An oratorio is a dramatic poem without scenery, costume and action, in which history is related not re-enacted. As such, it is closely associated with the origins of theatre in Greek tragedy, where a static characteristic is found in the epic narration of a protagonist commented on by the chorus. The protagonist reports, the chorus asks questions and comments. Die Ermittlung is divided into eleven songs, each of which in turn is in three sections. Within each section, individual witness statements are commented on by the "chorus" of the accused. Weiss uses the word Gesang to denote the epic tradition in which he stands, alluding to Vergil who sang of arms and men. But the
structure of the work also recalls the epic singer Dante. Weiss's notebooks clearly show the development of a mirroring of the Dantesque structure, rather than an imitation of the language of Dante's vision. He maintained that Dante was primarily giving a picture in his work not of some imaginary hell, but of his own political reality.9 Therefore he is not concerned with what was, as Walser had indicated, an inappropriate metaphorical language, but uses Dante's structure to give a shape to material which otherwise would have been too overwhelming. Hence we find a recurring division into three: each of the eleven cantos is divided into three, the defendants number eighteen, the witnesses nine, and the court officials three. The eleven cantos, in giving the topography of the camp, follow the path of the victims from arrival to extermination. Two songs deal with the transportation and arrival, a further six have the torture and extermination as their theme, two are centred on exemplary figures, and one song deals with the possibility of survival. The dramatist achieves some variation within this structure by placing two individual stories at the centre of the play.

Weiss chooses the "public" art form of theatre to counteract subjective tendencies in the treatment of the Auschwitz theme. As a writer, he shares Benjamin's critique of the conventional modus operandi of the author in a passage which echoes Benjamin's own words: "Der Schriftsteller, der verdrossen an der Schreibmaschine saß ... und sich bemühte, eigenes Gedankenmaterial hervorzuholen, war eine veraltete überwundene Erscheinung ... es war unnötig, sich um Formulierungen den Kopf zu zerbrechen. Es war alles schon gesagt, die fertigen Bestandteile brauchen nur ergriffen zu werden."9 He is here describing his own early experiences of writing, cut off from the world, isolated and apolitical. One reason for choosing the theatre was the escape it offered from this isolation: "Das Schreiben ist dann ein Ausdruck meiner Isolation und des Gefühls, nirgendwohin zu gehören. Aber sobald ich für die Bühne schreibe, lebe ich auf."10 Ten years before writing Die Ermittlung, any move to handle such a theme would have been rendered impossible because of his lack of "openness", leading to a treatment in the manner of Kafka as a subjective nightmare.11 As we saw, his initial response to Auschwitz revolved around feelings of personal guilt and responsibility: Auschwitz was Meine Ortschaft, a place he had avoided whilst others, including childhood friends Lucie Weisberger and Peter Kien had met their deaths there. In his earlier, more subjectively coloured Fluchtpunkt, he gives expression to this sense of guilt: "Lange trug ich die Schuld, daß ich nicht zu denen gehörte, die die Nummer der Entwertung ins Fleisch eingebrannt bekommen hatten..."12 Another strong theme in these earlier writings is the exchangeability of victims and perpetrators, for Weiss recognises that he could just as easily have been on the side of the murderers as that of the victims: "gehörte ich nicht
Auschwitz, he had to undergo a lengthy and difficult engagement with the problems posed by language itself. This meant not simply the difficulty of using German, but the inability to find any language capable of articulating such terrible historical events. Writers such as Grass and Frisch had experienced no such dilemma, but Weiss's personal history and the psychological difficulties associated with using German did not allow him an easy evasion of the question. His experiences saw a secure relationship with language shattered under Fascism, when it became a tool of violence and propaganda, for propaganda removed the ability to check, question and confirm. Weiss fled the German speaking world at the time of the Reichskristallnacht in 1938, literally entering a realm of "speechlessness" in exile in Sweden where he was caught between two languages. In the essay Laokoon, oder über die Grenzen der Sprache (1965), he describes the slow and painful acquisition of another tongue.

The dilemma posed by words is at the root of his decision to paint. Visual art retained the power to express when the writer was incapable of finding words, and the medium resisted the malleability and tendency to distortion of language. In the immediate postwar period, Weiss attempted to write in both Swedish and German, struggling to produce anything of value. But in 1952, an experiment in writing in German appeared as a prose sketch entitled Der Schatten des Körpers des Kutschers. The prose work takes on the technique of painting, in an attempt to use words as nothing other than precise describing tools. Such a painstaking methodology recognises the need for a conscious effort in the rebuilding of language; words had to be stripped of all values and connotations. Nevertheless, from behind an apparent scepticism contained in this methodology emerges the need to rediscover a hold on language, for the events of the past cried out to be articulated. Although the German language remained tainted and contained a sense of horror and barbarity within its sounds, his exile from it had been of benefit. Now he was able to start again from scratch. Exile had made the writer sensitive to nuances and prevented an easy, comfortable relationship with language. Instead, it had become a tool used to attain a demanding precision totally opposed to Grass's visceral, free-flowing approach: "Die von einigen Kritikern hervorgehobene Reinheit meiner Sprache resultiert aus meinem Unvermögen, im Strom der gefühlsmäßigen Sprache zu schreiben, wie beispielsweise Grass. Ich muß jedes Wort suchen und abwägen." Detachment and scepticism are consequences of his isolation from a German speaking environment.

13 "Ich muß jedes Wort suchen und abwägen."15
Die Ermittlung exemplifies this paring down of language to its essentials, as the newspaper and documentary sources are remodelled into rhythmically ordered extracts in the form of free verse. An extract from the witness Dr. Glowacki reveals the components of this procedure: "Ein Fall ist mir besonders in Gedächtnis geblieben: Im Waschraum setzte sich ein großer starker Mann auf, der vorher die Giftinjektion erhalten hatte. Links vom Eingang stand ein Kessel, und daneben war eine Bank. Mit großer Mühe setzte sich dieser Mann auf die Bank; da kam Klehr und gab ihm eine zweite Herzspritze." Weiss reorders this passage in the following way: "Ich erinnere mich an einen Mann/ der war groß und stark gebaut/ Er richtete sich im Waschraum auf/ mit der Injektion im Herzen/ Ich erinnere mich deutlich wie es war/ Da stand ein Kessel/ und neben dem Kessel war eine Bank/ Der Mann stützte sich auf dem Kessel/ und auf die Bank/ und zog sich auf/ Da kam Klehr herein/ und gab ihm die zweite Spritze." The hypertactic sentence construction changes to a paratactic structure which largely eliminates subordinate clauses. Each line contains the meaning, and interruptions caused by the free verse emphasise particular words or phrases. Emphasis is also added by the repetition of key phrases such as "ich erinnere mich". The hidden meaning of certain statements is revealed by deliberate caesura and the hiatus created by the lines gives time for contemplation, as the unrelenting rush of words found in the news media is temporally dammed and a densely packed text is broken up, allowing both acoustic and visual gaps to appear in a steadier form of communication. Slowness is rediscovered. The simple language with its matter-of-fact delivery allows an uncluttered and detached observation of the scene in question, with an emphasis on everyday objects (Kessel, Bank) which help the spectator visualise the action. Metaphor is abandoned as being incapable of adding to the descriptions of the reality of horror; there is no place for language which is übertragen, no need for analogy when a clear condensed language can say much more. Zusammensetzen replaces übertragen as an aesthetic principle, for such a form of language has its own emphatic qualities and does not need conventional literary devices. Where such figures of speech do appear in the play, they are usually from the mouth of one of the accused and have the effect of trivialising the events. Describing the transportation, one witness makes use of a glaringly inappropriate and conspicuous use of simile: "Die Transporte kamen an/ wie warme Brötchen." 17

As well as abandoning the use of metaphorical language, Weiss also eschews the individual, plot-based approach of Grass and Frisch. He wanted to "screw down" his imagination, free himself from subjectivity and the autobiographical; nowhere in Die Ermittlung is there the suggestion that Auschwitz is Meine Ortschaft. To find a more detached standpoint meant working from material already in existence: "Ich wollte
Weiss rejects the outmoded reliance on individual conflicts, revolving around stories of marriage and love, which constitute a strong element of conventional plot-based drama and distort the picture of our reality by concealing or omitting real social conflicts. Conflicts (Auseinandersetzungen) certainly remain, as characters on stage represent competing social tendencies. Die Ermittlung attempts to give a historical situation without individualising. Authentic figures are used to represent social and collective interests ("Gruppen, Kraftfelder und Tendenzen") rather than to narrate personal fates. For this reason, Weiss emphasises that this play is not an attempt to dramatise the trials which took place in Frankfurt, but makes use of the material contained in the trials to clarify a dialectical process consisting of "Die Gegenüberstellung von Zeugen und Angeklagten" and "Reden und Gegenreden". Individual reports are concentrated to form an essence of events, personal experiences give way to a presentation of the system of exploitation. Nine witnesses act as mouthpieces for all the sufferings of the victims, and modulations of voice and bearing convey the variety of experience. Weiss's dramatic problem was to raise certain voices above the mass of those who suffered and died, and to give those voices a representative function. Although the eighteen accused keep their names, this is far from suggesting an attempt to individualise the process, for they remain representatives of a system rooted in anonymity: "sie stehen für ein System."

Identification with the figures on stage is discouraged, as Weiss tends to the Brechtian position that a character is there to make a statement which the spectator must then evaluate and criticise. But this resistance to presenting figures on stage which can be identified with, and the replacement of plot with "das Dokument auf der Bühne", do not prevent or invalidate an emotional response. Possibilities of a different kind of identification and emotional response are created through the language. For although the play consists of "documents", these documents are in fact stories loaded with emotional power brought to the fore by the artistic remodelling of the text. The speakers offer their accounts free of emotion, yet "der Inhalt dieser Worte ist so stark und enthält so viele gefühlsmäßige Worte." A gestic form of acting also adds human shape to the word, and the actor does have possibilities: "der Schauspieler muß hier
The rejection of biography as a structural principle does not prevent the inclusion of an abundance of individual stories in the play, in two of the cantos individuals feature. The Gesang vom Ende der Lili Tofler interrupts the description of the mass murder to recount an individual fate. Schuhmacher is right to conclude of this canto: "Gerade hierin erweist das objektivierende dramatische Dokument seine ungeheuere Kraft, auf heutige Menschen eine emotionale Wirkung auszuiben." However, the type of emotional reaction here released remains firmly connected to the awareness, as Weiss points out, that Lili Tofler's Gegenspieler is the industry of mass destruction and it is dependent on an understanding of that system, thereby bringing about a fuller response. The construction of the canto prevents the spectator forgetting that Lili's is one story amongst hundreds of thousands.

As in each of the songs in the oratorio, this canto is divided into three sections. The first section gives the named individual victim who is then set quite deliberately in the context of the system of extermination, as described in the second section of the song. The report is given at second hand by an eye-witness, thus creating a distance to events in the manner of the theatre of narration. There is no attempt to create suspense. Early on in the account, Lili Tofler's fate is revealed: "Wurde sie erschossen? Ja." Any deliberate emotional appeal remains a tactic of the defendants and highlights the inappropriateness of this form of story-telling: "Ich war über ihren Tod damals ebenso erschüttert/ wie der Bunkerjakob / dem die Tränen über die Backen liefen." Whereas the language of the victims is sober and devoid of metaphor and sentimentality, that of the defendants is characterised by emotional outbursts which betray an absence of critical distance to the events. Weiss constantly moves to counteract these emotional responses by the defendants, as well as reducing the tendency of the spectator to become over-involved. The moving account of Lili's last moments is followed by a question which prompts a return to the topographical description of the concentration camp: "Wie sah der Platz aus?" The second part of this song uncovers the participation of German industry in the process of mass extermination. The depiction of the Vernichtungsindustrie is essential in determining Weiss's choice of material and therefore finds its place in this pivotal section. Individual fates must be seen as a part of the system. The links between the camps and industry are made clear: "Dort wurden Untersuchungen im Auftrag/ pharmazeutischer Industrien vorgenommen." The camp is described as "ein
the prisoners as "Arbeitskräfte," and the exploitative conditions of the economic structure, such as small or non-existent wages and long hours of work, are seen as components of the economic system of the camp. The continuing influence in important positions in West Germany of many involved in the administration of the camps features in Weiss's Notizbücher as a major aspect of Auschwitz under investigation. In the play, this aspect is frequently given emphasis: "Sie sind heute Ministerialrat" and "Sie stehen heute noch in Zusammenarbeit / mit den Industrien/ die damals Häftlinge bei sich beschäftigten." The defence lawyer's protestations at these connections indicate the contemporary sensitivity to this particular issue, as he levels against those seeking to identify these elements the accusation of undermining trust in German industry. But many of those who had benefited from the "segensreiche Freundschaft zwischen der Lagerverwaltung und der Industrie" had changed only their names. Weiss is determined to resist the tendency to forget ("Jetzt: laßt Grass darüber wachsen/ Die Verdrängung") and to continue the search for connections between past and present: "Sie Herr Zeuge/ sowie die anderen Direktoren/ der großen Konzerne/ erreichten durch unbegrenzten Menschenverschleiß/ Jahresumsätze von mehreren Milliarden ... Lassen Sie es uns noch einmal bedenken/ daß die Nachfolger dieser Konzerne heute/ zu glanzvollen Abschlüssen kommen/ und daß sie sich wie es heißt/ in einer neuen Expansionsphase befinden.

The pivotal function of this central section provides Weiss with possibilities of setting an individual fate in the context of its social and political causes without relegating those causes to background. In the third section, the anonymity of the death camp is temporarily lifted, as the report returns to the story of Lili Tofler, extracted from the millions of stories of the victims. The dry language of statistics and the jargon of the accused are replaced by a terse eye-witness account which gives little detail about Lili. But the taciturnity of the language holds a strange emotional power, and the simplicity of the statement heightens the impact of the whole song: "jedesmal wenn ich Lili traf/ und sie fragte/ wie geht es dir Lili/ sagte sie/ mir geht es immer gut." Lili Tofler's story, as an attempt to link the events at Auschwitz to the socio-economic circumstances of the Third Reich, is reminiscent of the way Kluge sought causes within German society for the distant catastrophe of Stalingrad. Both Auschwitz and Stalingrad had the advantage, for those who wished to forget, of being both temporally and spatially distant from the experience of most Germans, hence the requirement felt by both authors to evoke the places in question. A further attempt to seek the causes for the phenomenon of Auschwitz within German society appears in the following song which offers an indictment of the role of education in the Third Reich.
Found here is an individual story told in much the same way as Lili Toller’s, allowing in these central cantos of the play a temporary postponement of the movement towards anonymous mass-murder which increasingly comes to the fore in the subsequent cantos. In the Gesang vom Unterscharführer Stark, an individual biography is given, this time from the perspective of the perpetrators of the crimes, but the individuality of the story is subordinated to its representative function of giving a critique of those cultural and educational values which not only were unable to prevent the extermination, but indeed seemed to offer an ideological framework of justification for those who committed the outrages. The juxtapositioning of the statement "Führte er einen Diskurs mit uns/ über den Humanismus bei Goethe" with the brutal account of the murder of women and children calls to mind the cultural criticism found in Paul Celan’s famous poem Todesfuge. Weiss concentrates on a form of education which produced people prepared to murder without conscience. Stark was one of the youngest defendants at Frankfurt: he was just twenty years old when sent to Auschwitz in 1940 and had grown up in the Nazi period exposed to the sort of propaganda expressed at Auschwitz in the motto: "ES GIBT EINEN WEG ZUR FREIHEIT/ SEINE MEILENSTEINE HEISSEN/ GEHORSAM FLEISS SAUBERKEIT/ EHRLICHKEIT WAHRHAFTIGKEIT/ UND LIEBE ZUM VATERLAND." In the aftermath of the Holocaust, his upbringing rendered him incapable of seeing what he had done wrong.

The division of the song into three sections again sets up the possibility of collisions and contradictions. The bare question and answer technique allows the report to move between the seemingly harmless bureaucratic system and nightmarish sequences of brutal murder. The latter have a limited treatment, before the emphasis returns to the topographical: "Wie sah das alte Krematorium aus?" The presentation of Stark’s biography presents an opportunity for the spectator to weigh up the "Reden und Gegenreden" and consider assumptions made about the past. Stark’s defence pleads "Gleich nach dem Krieg/ als er sich in normalisierten Verhältnissen/ einleben durfte/ entwickelte er sich vorbildlich." Both the assumption of a rapid return to "normal circumstances" and the view of the Nazi period as a complete aberration are called into question. Stark’s own inability to recognise what had been done confirms this doubt about a return to normal circumstances. When talking about the extermination of the Jews, he can only state: "Aber die Anwendung von Gas/ das war unmännlich und feige", indicating a residual need to at least partially justify his actions. Both these cantos show that individual biographies do exist in the play, we are not confronted with a portrayal of the faceless masses of Expressionist drama, but the role and function of these individual biographies are quite different to dramatic plots based on individual conflicts.
The Auschwitz trials gave the impetus to Weiss's play, but his journey through other media has given it a particular shape. One of the main reasons for the different approach found in the work of Peter Weiss seems to be the route he took to literature through painting and film which put a stamp on his aesthetics. When he went into exile in Sweden in 1939, the problem of language led him to become a painter. Film then took over the role painting had once played: "Das Bild war mir zu statisch, aber mit dem Film hatte ich die Bewegung, die ich suchte." At this point in his artistic development, Weiss was convinced that theatre had nothing to offer and he associated it with an outmoded tradition. On the other hand, he considered film capable of approaching and presenting a wide spectrum of contemporary subject matter. In the late Fifties, his own film production was influenced by the Surrealist painters and has been characterised as: "ein sadistisches oder ironisches Gefallen an Gegeneinandergesetzten oder wie irrtümlich zusammengefügten Teilen und die Suche nach phantastischen Formen..."

Weiss's movement across the visual arts, drawing, painting, collage and film, back to literature produced an important cross-fertilisation. The techniques of the visual arts were carried forward in his early prose work, assisting his attempts to come to terms with the dilemma of language, and are perhaps best observed in Der Schatten des Körpers des Kutschers. His experiences with painting and collage, in particular, fashioned his approach to documentary theatre. In moving back to the theatre, Weiss admits to the possibilities it offers as against film: "Der Film ist in gewisser Weise zweidimensional. Wenn sich das Theater von seiner besten Seite zeigt, ist es überzeugender als ein Film je sein kann ... Ich denke, wenn man als Zuschauer in einem Kino sitzt, ist man in einer Art Traumwelt, und man nimmt es nicht so ernst, als wenn man es auf der Bühne sehen würde .... Das ganze lebendige Treiben auf der Bühne ist (wenn es denn überhaupt revolutionär ist) meiner Meinung nach überzeugender als Kino." The theory and practice of Brechtian theatre were stimuli for Weiss and convinced him that many possibilities still remained for the theatre. His own practical work in the theatre supported this view. His return to the theatre was accompanied by both the visual experience gained from collage and the stimulus given by film theory, especially Eisenstein's theory and practice of montage. Weiss is ready to acknowledge his debt: "Ja, das ist es auch, wovon Eisenstein spricht in seinen Schriften über den Film, nämlich vom Zusammenprall der Ideen, vom Zusammenprall der Bilder: Der Streit zwischen den Erscheinungen ergibt die dramatische Spannung. Das heißt doch nicht anderes als die Verpflanzung des dialektischen Systems auf das Theater."
Die Ermittlung is a play constructed around such a collision of ideas. Conforming to an essentially narrative theatrical style renders it static and apparently unfilmic, yet the work betrays key visual elements, taken particularly from collage, which are employed to bring accounts and statements into collision. In rejecting many of the features of Aristotelian theatre, Weiss recognised the need to find new theatrical forms of expression. For these he reached back to devices which belonged to the world of painting, and he refers to his montage in terms taken from the visual arts: Muster and Modell. From the scraps of reality found in his documents he pieces together a pattern which serves as a model of contemporary events. This act of placing extracts together demands a certain distance from the material; the monteur is both observer and analyst. At the heart of Weiss's use of montage lie three aims: firstly, in its cutting technique, it emphasises details from a chaotic mass of materials; secondly, it strives for enlightenment regarding conflicts in society by highlighting the contradictions which exist; and thirdly, by providing essential information, his montage can raise questions or suggest solutions.

There are several stylistic principles based on his use of these techniques taken from the visual arts. The first is the principle of the "Reihen gleichartiger Beispiele" where several different accounts of the same theme are placed next to each other without any explanatory linkage. Each account gives an aspect or perspective on the events considered, and thus dozens of different voices and accounts are brought together in one song, the point is emphasised, and the impact of the accounts allowed to sink in. Another aspect of this principle, as Weinreich points out, is the emphasis given through the repetition of particular words or phrases. The idea of what constituted "normal life" in the camp is called into question by the repetition of the phrase "Es war das Normale", "normal war" and "es war normal".

A further principle is the use of montage to create collisions. Disparate and mutually contradictory accounts are placed side by side to force a decision. Such a technique is frequently used to show the hypocrisy of defendants' statements. Between statements by the accused Baretzki, in which he tells of his indignation at the mass murder and his own mother's incredulity at events, and raises a pedantic argument over the possibility of administering a fatal blow with his hand whilst holding a stick, is placed a horrific account of the same man committing an act of utter brutality and sadism: "Was tust du mit dem Dreck da/ rief er/ und gab dem Kind einen Fußtritt/ so daß es 10 Meter fortflog/ Dann befahl er mir/ Bring die Scheiß hierher/ Da war das Kind tot." The contradictory statements are placed together without any commentary or judgment; but the two positions are so at variance that one only can possibly stand. A
decision must be made, aided by the provision of factual material about the camps which gives the necessary background and acts as a prologue to the collision. With the help of this presentation of many different accounts, leading to collisions between statements, an informed judgment is facilitated. To rely simply on the emotional power of extracts like the one just quoted would fall into the trap Walser detected in much of the media presentation of the trials. As total a picture as possible must be given, and there is no question of resorting to shock tactics; Weiss cannot be accused of choosing the most brutal aspects of the accounts at the trial. He avoids any charge of sensationalising the historical events by presenting them in a distanced manner, for there would be a tendency in an emotive presentation of the horrors achieving an all too easy catharsis. But Weiss is not content just to shock and stun the audience, and works against a viewing of horror which makes no rational search for the possible causes.

This principle of montage has an essential function in overcoming amnesia in the audience, and is used in the examination by Weiss of the various strategies of evasion. These tactics find full expression: the defendants wish to present themselves and their behaviour in the best light; they attempt to limit the range of their particular activity; claim ignorance or amnesia; deny events or mitigate their actions with recourse to the Befehlspanst. Weiss carefully scatters these evasive statements through the text, placing statements by the witnesses next to them. Thus the oft-heard claim "ich weiß es nicht" is not allowed to stand as an evasion. When the question one of the accused is asked: "Wie viele Menschen wurden von Ihnen verurteilt?" receives the answer: "das weiß ich nicht", there follows a catalogue of deaths, a filling of the gap in information, and a response to the claim of ignorance on the part of the accused.

The juxtapositioning of matter-of-fact, topographical description with horrifying personal accounts serves the purpose of engendering emotional understanding. Weiss employs an interruption technique to break the emotional spell of accounts of brutal murders of children and to force the spectator into a position of understanding how and why such events came about. Often a return to the topographical description of the camp prevents a response characterised by shock and disgust. Similarly, Weiss does not allow statistics to lose their impact and to become a game of numbers and dimensions. An "individual" story returns the reader to a balanced understanding. Many Germans in the immediate postwar period had been treated to one or other approach at different times: on the one hand, shock tactics by the Allies to induce shame and guilt, on the other, a treatment of history which could be said to be thorough in detail, but in its concern with cold facts was equally inhibiting to a real understanding of events. Weiss rejects both; or rather he synthesises in an attempt to produce a form of understanding.
and perception which works against the psychic numbing and capacity for forgetting at large in postwar German society.

Weiss's documentary approach to the narration of history is first and foremost a rejection of the concept of the world as being irrational and absurd. He contends that, however absurd the world might appear, the temptation to celebrate that absurdity should be avoided. Before writing *Die Ermittlung*, Weiss confessed to a position of despair: "Ich trug auch eine Menge von dem alten Pessimismus mit mir herum, und mir fehlten noch ziemlich viele Kenntnisse über politische Probleme." The political theme of *Die Ermittlung* brought with it the search for awareness, its impetus was born in the face of deliberate "Verdunkelung und Verblindung" which placed the dramatist in the same position as any citizen who wished to be informed. The private citizen resorts to public protest; protest too, defined as a search for understanding and enlightenment, is at the root of Weiss's drama. Weiss holds on to a belief, albeit hard tested by historical events, in the capacity of language to express, and of reason to understand, and he is opposed not only to the deliberate concealing of the powerful, but also to the aid given them by writers of the 1950s with their programmes of despair: "Deshalb wendet sich das dokumentarische Theater gegen die Dramatik, die ihre eigene Verzweiflung und Wut zum Hauptthema hat, und festhält an der Konzeption einer ausweglosen und absurden Welt. Das dokumentarische Theater tritt ein für die Alternative, daß die Wirklichkeit, so undurchschaubar sie sich auch macht, in jeder Einzelheit erklärt werden kann." So, whilst admiring Beckett for example, he rejects Beckett's way of writing in which despair leads to political resignation. Rejected also are the mannerisms of the Absurdists with their paradoxical and hyperbolic metaphors, which, as Schuhmacher contends, can no longer perform a useful function: "Dieser Normalität des Unmenschlichen kann immer weniger durch Verzerrung, durch Transponierung und Verwandlung beigekommen werden, sondern nur noch dadurch, daß sie 'als sie selber und nicht weiter' dargestellt und begriffen wird."

Central to the theory of documentary theatre as propounded by Weiss is the need to fill gaps of information. A personal reason for writing the play was to understand events. But Weiss is not so naive as to believe that "facts" have a persuasive power of their own. The various ways of receiving and perceiving events are shown, positions are taken; there is no truck to be had with the concept of an objective form of historical narrative. Contradictions are underlined. Moreover, Weiss is also working against the desire to forget and therefore gives expression in *Die Ermittlung* to the silences and evasions of the participants. He is working against the wish to be left in peace, to draw a veil of silence over the past, to take refuge in a convenient collective guilt: "Alle
anderen haben es auch getan! Warum nimmt man gerade mich fest?"55 The desire to hide behind the "incomprehensibility" of Auschwitz and to see the events of history as inexplicable was often encountered by survivors of the camps, as is expressed by one of the witnesses: "Wenn wir mit Menschen/ die nicht im Lager gewesen sind/ heute über unsere Erfahrung sprechen/ ergibt sich für diese Menschen/ immer etwas Unvorstellbares." This evasion is countered by the conviction that there were enough witnesses and documentation to aid comprehension: "Und doch sind es die gleichen Menschen/ wie sie dort Häftling und Bewacher waren/ Indem wir in solch großer Anzahl/ in das Lager kamen/ und indem uns andere in großer Anzahl/ dorthin brachten/ müßte der Vorgang auch heute noch/ begreifbar sein."56 The belief that Auschwitz can be understood in every detail is typical of a play which offers not just a supply of the information needed to understand, but which in its own structure is an exercise in how to remember. We constantly find contradictory statements which compel an act of remembering on the part of the spectator and a decision on the basis of that memory. This exercise in remembering encourages a move backwards in order to contrast what is being said with what has been said, and is the equivalent on stage of a way of reading found in Kluge's Schlachtbeschreibung. The usual forward dynamic of a traditional drama is removed, for Weiss is not interested in the outcome of the trial but in bringing about an investigation.

The importance of the theme of Auschwitz for Weiss lay in the way in which it refused to be disposed of as an event which continued to have repercussions in the present. This concern with the way past events continued to vibrate in the contemporary socio-political scene demonstrates Weiss's closeness to Croce's view of the past: "Wenn ich geschichtliche Themen aufgreife, dann interessiert mich vor allem daran die Bezogenheit zur Gegenwart."57 In Die Ermittlung, German history is given life by being judged from a present perspective. The historical craft would question judgments made from such a perspective, arguing that the age must be understood in its own context. In this way, the historical period under examination is rendered discrete, impervious to contemporary positions. Weiss is not interested in imitating the work of a historian: "nicht Schilderung der Vergangenheit, sondern Schilderung der Gegenwart, in der die Vergangenheit wieder lebendig wird."58 The historical subject matter is deliberately chosen because it can be actualised, it can form the basis of a revision of how we see the past and therefore the present too, so that historical themes are seen as underpinning contemporary conflicts. Subject matter is chosen not simply to repeat old stories, but to reflect contemporary events. In other words: history is used openly for a political purpose. The task is then to find new forms to transpose the historical material, to render it accessible to a wide audience.
The links between past and present frequently come to the surface in the play whose very subject matter helps overcome the problem of how to combine the two. Because Auschwitz (the event) is seen through the post-history of that event (the Frankfurt trials), Weiss has succeeded in combining past and present in the one work without recourse to artificiality. In the play, he continually shows how those accused of past crimes have been able to maintain leading positions in contemporary German society ("Sie haben heute eine letzende Stellung/ in der Direktion der Bundesbahn."65) or even to gain advancement: "Er war ein Studienrat/ und wenn ich recht unterrichtet bin/ ist er zur Zeit Studiendirektor irgendwo."66 In making the link between the past activities of the industrial interests and their role in the present, he does not hesitate to point the finger directly at Krupp, IG and Siemens. Experience gained from the equipment employed for mass exterminations can now be put to civilian use, as a bitter example underlines: "Die Hersteller dieser Öfen/ die Firma Topf und Söhne hat/ wie es in ihrer Patentschrift/ nach dem Kriege heißt/ ihre Einrichtungen/ auf Grund gewonnener Erfahrungen/ verbessert."61

Even in the most private realm of an individual’s life the past continues to have deep repercussions. One witness relates the brutal murder of a child: "Boger ist zu dem Kind gegangen/ und hat es bei den Füßen gepackt/ und mit dem Kopf an die Baracke geschmettert/." Challenged as to why this incident was not related in the preliminary investigations, the witness explains the painful personal reasons: "Ich habe seitdem nie mehr/ ein eigenes Kind haben wollen."62 Weiss does not seek to split off the personal from the general pattern of socio-political continuities, rather he is showing that these highly personal experiences form a part of such a pattern. The continuation of elements of Nazi ideology into the present belongs to this pattern. One defendant claims in exculpation: "Im übrigen bin ich auch der Meinung/ daß auch heute noch/ die Prägelstrafe angebracht wäre/ zum Beispiel im Jugendstrafrecht/ um Herr zu werden über manche Fälle/ von Verrohung."63 An adherence to elements of National Socialist social policy persists in a mentality of many living in the Federal Republic.

Weiss would argue that all historical narratives contain within them, to a greater or lesser degree, an interpretation. He is therefore not apologetic in ascribing an open bias to his own writing of history and does not shirk the bias in his own documentary theatre. The presence of documentary material does not mean that manipulation is not taking place, the very selection indicates manipulation in its original sense of handling material. There is no attempt to deceive the spectator into thinking that the presentation is objective, simply because he is faced with authentic documents.
So-called "objectivity" is "unter Umständen ein Begriff, der einer Machtgruppe zur Entschuldigung ihrer Taten dient."\(^6^4\) The call for moderation, for "seeing both sides", is a call by those who do not wish to lose their prejudices.

Weiss’s account, concerned with describing a system, or more accurately an economic system, is directed as an attack on capitalism and an exposure of the business interests implicated in the death camps. For this indictment, which coincides with the theory of Fascism favoured by the East German state, he was attacked in West Germany. Like Hochhuth before him, he identifies the culpability of German industry, but exceeds this, in maintaining that this system of annihilation was the last consequence of a capitalist system of exploitation. The play is far more than a piece of socialist didactics, however, and the search for a political sense is but one voice amongst many voices, one investigation and one explanation. It does not dictate the entire structure of the work. Weiss intends to show the origins and consequences, together with an indication of the further development of such a system. In illustrating these aspects, he follows in Adorno’s footsteps and rejects the assertion that National Socialism was a *Betriebsunfall*, by demonstrating the roots of Fascism in capitalism and the remnants of Nazi ideology in the Bonn Republic. These themes run through the play: how the system developed, what sort of people it produced, how some came to be executioners, others victims, and how the distinction between the two was often arbitrary. This last point is important, because in the end Weiss is not interested in establishing personal guilt in the way Hochhuth is, therefore he gives no verdict in the trial, but his interest lies in uncovering the workings of the system.

The material itself, in the *Gesang von der Möglichkeit des Überlebens*, is resistant to this attempt to establish an organised structure behind the annihilation. In commenting on this canto, Demetz ascribes to Weiss a crude determinism which he never propounds, in accusing him of "shoddy intellectualizing"\(^6^5\) for seeing Nazism as a logical rather than coincidental consequence of capitalism. The playwright never contends that capitalism *must* produce concentration camps, but rather that there is a logical link between the two. In the canto, witness three, whom many commentators see as the mouthpiece of the author, speaks against the economic order which promoted the death camps, thereby bringing out the ideological basis of the play: "*Wir müssen die erhabene Haltung fallen lassen / daß uns diese Lagerwelt unverständlich ist/ Wir konnten alle die Gesellschaft / aus der das Regime vorgangen war das solche Lager erzeugen konnte / Die Ordnung die hier galt/ war uns in ihrer Anlage vertraut/ deshalb konnten wir uns auch noch zurechtfinden/ in ihrer letzten Konsequenz / in der der Ausbeutende in bisher unbekanntem Grad / seine Herrschaft entwickeln durfte / und"
The suggestion that the underlying causes for Auschwitz lay in the structure and nature of the society which produced it is attacked by the defence as being "ein schießes ideologisches Bild"\textsuperscript{67}, an attack Weiss does not attempt to answer directly. He merely continues with the accounts and lets the evidence speak for itself. But he also provokes the political consciousness of his audience by inserting a statement which contains within it a warning about the continuation of exploitation. We cannot afford to spend too long scratching our heads, wondering how such things could possibly happen: "Wir / die noch mit diesen Bildern leben / wissen / daß Millionen wiede so warten können / angesichts ihrer Zerstörung/ und daß diese Zerstörung an Effektivität/ die alten Einrichtungen um das Vielfache/ übertrifft."\textsuperscript{68} Weiss is not arguing for the Einmaligkeit or Einzigartigkeit of the Jewish Holocaust, concepts which later formed part of historical controversy of the mid 1980s, for he sees in the modern world analogous situations. Therefore he is at pains to create a model of the "camp". Auschwitz itself is not mentioned by name, for fear of reducing his play into a play specifically about Auschwitz, thereby relegating the Nazi concentration camps to a historical concept. As one witness states: "Ich kam aus dem Lager heraus/ aber das Lager besteht weiter."\textsuperscript{69}

Weiss's approach to the question of responsibility and guilt is quite different to the treatment found in Hochhuth and Frisch. To be sure, he is not particularly interested in proving the various accused guilty of war crimes. This point is illustrated by the choice, towards the end of the play, of the following statement: "Ich stehe gleichgültig/ vor den einzeln Angeklagten/ und gebe nur zu bedenken/ daß sie ihr Handwerk / nicht hätten ausführen können/ ohne die Unterstützung / von Millionen anderen."\textsuperscript{70} Weiss leaves such judgments to the spectator; the last scene presents the opposing positions and gives, with heavy irony, the last word to the defence: "Heute/ da unsere Nation sich wieder / zu einer führenden Stellung/ emporgearbeitet hat/ sollten wir uns mit anderen Dingen befassen/ als mit Vorwürfen/ die längst verjährt angesehen werden müßten."\textsuperscript{71} The statement is directed at the contemporary debate over the Statute of Limitations with regard to the further prosecution of war criminals.

Although not interested in establishing individual guilt, he is concerned to strip away the evasions and excuses used by individuals. One of these, which again must be seen in relation to the system he is giving an account of, is the claim to specialised functions by defendants who plead ignorance of, and lack of involvement in, the final outcome, and deny any further consequences of their limited actions in the overall chain of events. This narrow specialisation is seen as a product of the demands of the
economic structure. Thus the camp administrators are able to describe their tasks as specialised to a degree that they could not see the totality of what was happening. They just got on with their jobs: "Ich hatte nur dafür zu sorgen/ daß die Betriebstrecken in Ordnung waren/ und daß die Züge fahrplanmäßig / ein und ausließen."72 The system is described as a bureaucracy. A witness gives an account of the office where the secretaries comported themselves as in any civilian firm, whilst making out lists of the dead with "absoluter Genauigkeit" and writing letters to the families of the victims offering an urn and ashes at a price. This apparently banal and unsensational documentation reinforces the idea of the annihilation industry with all its support services. In all areas the division of labour is strictly adhered to, and the statement "es war nicht meine Aufgabe" reiterated.

The business of the death camps is demonstrated by a balance sheet of outgoings and income, overturning the argument that the extermination of the Jews made no economic sense to the German nation. What this argument fails to recognise is that it might have been detrimental to the German nation as a whole, but certain interests did profit from what went on in the camps, and it is those interests in particular which need identifying and isolating from a catch-all belief in collective guilt. Thus we have the financial accounts: the expenditure: "Für 2000 Menschen in einer Kammer/ wurden etwa 16 Büchsen verbraucht/...Das Kilo zu 5 Mark/ macht 40 Mark."73 On the other side of the balance sheet, the income: 132 million Marks in one year: "Die Güter wurden weitergeleitet/ an die Reichsbank/ bzw. an das Reichswirtschaftsministerium."74 Individuals continued to prosper from these profits after the war: "Woher stammt das Geld/ mit dem sich der Angeklagte Capesius/ sofort nach dem Krieg/ eine eigene Apotheke/ und einen Schönheitssalon einrichtete/ Sei schön durch eine Behandlung bei Capesius/ so hieß es in der Firmareklame."75 The principle of exploitation accompanies the spectator on his journey through the camp, as he witnesses the confiscation of property, slave labour, experimentation, and the exploitation of skin, bones and marrow for profit. These increasingly harrowing reports are answer enough to the charge that Weiss has produced "ein schiefes ideologisches Bild."

Weiss chooses accounts which support the view that all, victims included, were caught up in this system. The prisoners' lives were conditioned by the need to exploit others: "Unsere Ambitionen/ waren auf ein einziges Ziel gerichtet/ irgend etw as zu gewinnen."76 One of the witnesses reinforces the point that all were subject to the system: "Auch wir Häftlinge/ vom Prominenten/ bis hinab zum Sterbenden/ gehörten dem System an."77 The exchangeability of the roles of guards and inmates is a provocative assertion which certainly would not be found in Frisch's or Hochhuth's

118
clearly defined moral universe: "sie (prisoners and guards) hatten sich eingesetzt für die gleiche Nation/ und für den gleichen Aufschwung und Gewinn." This element finds its origin in a question found in Weiss's personal response to the theme. Had he not been of Jewish descent and able to go into exile, would he have found himself on the side of the aggressors? The world may be divided between aggressors and victims, but it may not always be possible to choose through the application of moral free will which side one is on: "Daß manche Deportierte, um zu überleben, in den Lagern das Spiel der kapitalistischen Gesellschaft weiterpielten, ist nicht erstaunlich. Denn die Strukturen des Lagers waren diejenigen der Gesellschaft, deren Mitglieder sie gewesen waren und gegen die sie sich nie gestellt hatten: die höchste Form der Entfremdung."79

Weiss does not allow a fatalistic view of history to dominate. Part of his purpose is to provoke protest, and it is therefore essential that he gives some model for such resistance, a way out from what would otherwise be an all-consuming history. The possibility "daß es möglich gewesen wäre / auf die Maschinerie einzuwirken"80 is of paramount importance for resistance to current forms of exploitation, and Weiss gives accounts of the activities of the politically engaged within the camps and their attempts to achieve solidarity: "Naturlich hielten die politischen Aktiven/ untereinander zusammen/ stützen und halben einander/ soweit sie konnten."81 The Communist antifascist resistance in the camps became a strong element of the orthodox East German interpretation, and reference to it was therefore bound to provoke hostility in the West. But Weiss is more concerned with a call for political solidarity in the present. Part of the function of the resistance movement in the camps was to document what was happening for future use. Weiss is engaging in a similar effort. Art should change life.

But what of the attempt to create a model? Is not one of the dangers of this that the material, in being generalised, is removed from a specific historical matrix? The presentation of Auschwitz, or any other concentration camp, on the stage has proven impossible. What is feasible is to show Auschwitz as a permanent possibility. Weiss is offering a model, from the present perspective, of what is relevant and typical of Auschwitz. Although the theme of Auschwitz occupies centre stage, specificity is not his purpose, despite the topographical exactness of the description of the camp. Capturing the essential character of the camp is his aim, belying the idea that what happened is unvorstellbar, so that we can recognise Auschwitz can happen in our own age. Proceeds from the play went not just to survivors of Auschwitz, but also to victims of the apartheid system in South Africa. Weiss's play then does not relate specifically to the Jewish question; his own Jewish ancestry did not bind him existentially to that question, nor was it a significant contributory factor: "Ich schrieb das Stück, weil es mir um die
menschliche Situation unterdrückter Völker geht. Ich kann mich genauso mit der Lage der Schwarzen in Südafrika identifizieren.\textsuperscript{82} The camps can exist anywhere. This does not reduce Auschwitz to a synonym for organised bureaucratic extermination. Auschwitz remains both typical and specific.
CHAPTER THREE.

CINEMA TAKES UP THE NARRATION OF THE PAST.
Introduction: The German Autumn, Holocaust, and the Narration of the Past in Film.

Film, as the medium of the twentieth century and a young narrative form, has been spared the centuries of debate which succeeded, to a greater or lesser extent, in demarcating the particular roles and responsibilities of the historian and the poet. There has been no Aristotle to assert that film should concern itself with the general rather than the specific, with models and universals rather than particulars, with what might happen rather than what has happened. Nor has there been a Ranke to relegate the process of selection and interpretation of material to a role subordinate to the craft of researching and showing wie es eigentlisch gewesen. Whereas literature maintained its divisions over the fictional and the documentary, film's earliest exponents demonstrated the freedom of the new medium to accept and develop the two, imbibing elements of the more traditional genres of writing, whilst simultaneously pursuing the development of its own specific possibilities. The fictional and documentary happily cohabited in a development involving both adaptation and innovation.

In demonstrating their invention of the cinematographe in a Paris café in 1898, Auguste and Louis Lumière assembled a half hour programme of around twelve short films which recorded scenes of life at the turn of the century. Through technical necessity, these films were shot outside and they featured crowd scenes of workers in their best Sunday dress (La sortie des Usines), or aspects of family life (Le déjeuner de bébé). The "realism" of the new medium both fascinated and shocked spectators: the film L'arrivée d'un train en gare de La Ciotat appeared so realistic that legend has it the viewers felt the train was heading directly for them and took cover under their seats. Subsequently, the Lumière brothers filmed monarchs and ministers, continuing to exploit the documentary potential of the new medium by recording public life, and opening up unknown elements of the world to their Parisian audiences. Contemporary with this tendency, however, was the work of Georges Méliès, who, working in his purpose-built studio in Montreuil, created imaginary fantasies with the aid of theatrical elements such as painted backdrops, actors and dramatic action, yet extending the technical possibilities of film with, for example, his innovation of double exposure. This fantasy potential of film culminated in 1902 with his Le voyage dans la lune.

These happily cohabiting tendencies within cinema accompanied its progress from being a sleazy fairground peepshow attraction to, within a decade, inhabiting an exotic fantasy world of plush cinemas removed from life out of doors. Film earned respectability by taking on characteristics of drama; by basing itself on plays and using
established actors. Still in its teenage years, the trend for adaptation brought film to look so strongly to the theatre that critics like Kurt Pinthus, writing in 1913, warned: "Dies ist der Hauptfehler des Kinos: daß er sein eigenes Wesen zu mißachten beginnt. Das Kino will Theater werden, ohne zu erkennen, daß es nichts mit dem Theater gemein hat. Das Kino wird sich nur halten und entwickeln können, wenn es wirklich Kino sein will, also wenn es sich seiner unendlichen Möglichkeiten erinnert und aufgibt, der Schaubühne nacheifern zu wollen."¹ In the development of German cinema the warning went unheeded. Film became a branch of the Expressionist movement in the arts, in visual art and drama in particular, as studios with theatrical staging, lighting, masks and Expressionist décor were harnessed to achieve an essentially theatrical effect, eschewing the technical possibilities of the new medium.

As well as entering the plush surroundings of the theatre, film was also taken out into the battlefields of the First World War. Aided by the commonly-held perception of film as the ultimate medium for capturing reality, the new medium became a tool for a presentation of events whose propagandist intentions were concealed behind the apparently immediate representation of reality. In 1917, Hugenberg wrote to the German Ministry of War: "Der Krieg hat die überragende Macht des Films als Aufklärungs- und Beeinflussungsmittel gezeigt."² The letter led to the foundation of Ufa (Universum-Film AG), part of whose task was to "document" world events in the form of the Wochenschau.

 Appropriated in this way by those who wished to transform it into a branch of literature, and by others who saw it as a means to achieving a particular account of historical events, film nevertheless struggled, and did not fail, to discover its specific potential as a medium. Although, in the aftermath of the First World War and with the emergence of Hollywood as the main production site, film seemed to have been confined to feature films based on old forms of narrative, there was a different development in the 1920s which exhibited prolific efforts to explore the genuine nature of film. The cinematic practice of Eisenstein, derived from experimentation in the Russian theatre, Ruttmann with his Symphonie einer Großstadt, and the dadaist René Clair, established an avant-garde concerned with the specifically filmic. Following on from this practice came a theoretical reflection on the nature of photography and film. Critics like Kracauer³ and Brecht⁴ had challenged a widespread naïve expectation from photography and film; this expectation was characterised by the belief that a represented object, in the case of a photograph, or a represented event, in that of a film, expressed an authentic reality. This reflective critical appraisal of the film medium

123
questioned the distinction between the fictional and documentary, laying emphasis instead on the act of construction taking place.

The early work of Dada artists like John Heartfield challenged the photograph, demonstrating that a picture does not necessarily show what it pretends to show, and replacing this with the innovation of the photomontage which intended to bring out the constructed nature of reality. In film, Eisenstein, moving from his experimentation on the "montage of attractions" in the context of the theatre where he sought to turn the conventional play into a variety show, created a new intellectual and metaphorical language appropriate to the technical aspects of the medium, termed the "montage of film attractions". Eisenstein found montage to be deeply grounded in the technical nature of the film medium, subsequently developing it both as a compositional element in the way film shots were glued together, and as an aesthetic principle. By juxtaposing through editing disparate elements, he was able to induce spectators towards thought and reflection: the medals of the Tsars are faded into a shot of marbles; the shadows of soldiers become teeth devouring a woman and child; strikers shot down become associated with the butchering of cattle in an abattoir.

By the end of the 1920s and the early 1930s, film culture had attained a height with the use of montage, entailing a critical, reflective usage of visual images and the contrapuntal employment of sound and image. This mainly Russian and German phenomenon was then destroyed by Stalin's totalitarianism and the cultural politics of socialist realism on the one hand, and on the other, by the rise of Hitler and the Nazis. The co-operative film Kuhle Wampe stands as a last witness to its existence in the dying years of the Weimar Republic. During the Nazi era, film, having reached a technically mature and sophisticated level, became one of the most potent tools of propaganda. In achieving their ends, the Nazi propagandists succeeded in perverting all forms of filmic language. All that remained was Hollywood.

This perversion of the medium took place not just through the presentation of propaganda in the newsreels, although this aspect is clearly of import, nor is it simply a question of the subtle and less subtle propagandist films made by the Nazis. In these areas the "documentary" use of film was certainly perverted for a clear propaganda purpose; the films of Leni Riefenstahl, particularly the film Triumph des Willens, stand as potent records of this. Both these forms of film making have been examined and exploited by historians, adapting their archives from the written to include the documentary record of film in order to either give illustration to particular events such as the bombing of cities, or to underline the manipulation through propaganda of
totalitarian regimes. Far less attention has been paid to the significance of the feature film. Yet the use made of feature films is of great importance, for, as Leiser⁵ maintains, only one sixth of the 1150 films produced by the Nazis during the Third Reich had any straight propaganda purpose. Goebbels recognised the desirability of avoiding this, in favour of a form of propaganda which did not reveal itself, and yet was able to permeate the whole of life. It would be, however, simplistic to see this as a manipulation process from the top down, as an attempt to brainwash an unwitting and unsuspecting public. Goebbels intended that films should reflect the needs and desires of the people:

"Problems which are tackled by the arts today are, so to speak, out on the streets ... I do not want in the least an art which proves its National Socialist character merely by the display of National Socialist emblems and symbols ... At the moment that propaganda is recognised as such it becomes ineffective. However, the moment that propaganda message, bent or attitude as such stay in the background and appear to people only as storyline, action or side effect, then they will become effective in every respect ..."⁶ For Goebbels, all art, and all film, had a message. Ideology could be more effectively conveyed through a well-made film which reflected the needs and concerns of the populace, which brought the people into the cinemas in their millions to be entertained and simultaneously to gain the Nazi view of world events in the form of the newsreels.

It was this use of the cinema and popular culture which lay at the heart of Adorno's negative critique of film in the postwar period. Adorno had challenged writers of poems, novels and plays with his cultural criticism, questioning how it was possible for these forms of expression to approach the horrific events of the recent past encapsulated at Auschwitz. With his famous dictum that it is barbaric to write poetry after these events, he lays down a challenge for those who wish to continue in a conventional vein, thereby inducing a reflective use of medium. In much the same way he deliberately puts obstacles in the path of those who would seek to use film as a means of conveying an account of past events. In The Dialectic of Enlightenment⁷ Adorno (with Horkheimer) is concerned with the way in which popular culture reflects and supports values and forms of experience endemic to capitalism. What he has to say applies as much to Hollywood as to the cinema under the Nazis, for he is criticising the mass media from the aspects of production, presentation and reception. In this context, his comments on the aesthetics of presentation are the most challenging. With regard to film, Adorno maintains that effect predominates over ideas. Harmony, smoothness, flawless technique, in which the whole and parts are alike, are all-important. There should be no antithesis, no dialectic, no contradiction. "Film, far surpassing the theatre of illusion, leaves no room for imagination or reflection on the part of the audience, which is unable to respond within the structure of the film, yet deviates from its precise
detail without losing the thread of the story; hence the film forces its victims to equate it directly with reality. The stunting of the mass-media consumer's powers of imagination and spontaneity does not have to be traced to any psychological mechanisms; he must ascribe the loss of those attributes to the objective nature of the products themselves, especially to the most characteristic of them, the sound film. They are so designed that quickness, powers of observation, and experience are undeniable needed to apprehend them at all; yet sustained thought is out of the question if the spectator is not to miss the relentless rush of facts. Even though the effort required for his response is semi-automatic, no scope is left for the imagination.8

Adorno's critique, based on the experience of film in the Nazi period and in Hollywood, concurs with the criticism of more traditional art forms carried out in the 1920s by Benjamin, Döblin, Kracauer and Brecht. The interest in this critical tradition, particularly in Brecht, found a renaissance in the 1960s. The epic theory of Brecht was used to cast further light on the role of film in mass society. Its function was to provide Abendunterhaltung9; it was irrelevant what was played on the screen as long as this function was satisfied. The entertainment function of the medium (Apparat10) itself was paramount, a function which was also capable of robbing works of intended significance: "Die Produzenten sind völlig auf den Apparat angewiesen, wirtschaftlich und gesellschaftlich, er monopolisiert ihre Wirkung, und zunehmend nehmen die Produkte der Schriftsteller, Komponisten und Kritiker Rohstoffcharakter an; das Fertigprodukt stellt der Apparat her."11

What Brecht had to say in his criticism of traditional, "Aristotelian" theatre was found to be valid for a form of cinema which had taken over the traditional dramatic requirements: a causally linked plot with interwoven scenes, interdependence of all the parts, and the concentration on individual conflicts. Such a procedure Brecht typifies in its general aesthetic principles as a Schmelzprozeß, in its products as Hypnotisierversuche, and stimulating unwürdige Rausche12 in its reception. After its innovative beginnings, film came to espouse conventional dramatic techniques with a homogenous form of expression. Film, in short, had become photographed Aristotelian theatre. For New German film makers, amongst them Kluge and Fassbinder, Brecht's critique lay at the centre of their fresh approach to film. Kluge, Adorno's pupil and an admirer of Brecht, drew on the division between experience and film, expressed by Brecht with lines he wrote on the theatre, but which could equally apply to the cinema: "Freilich, einer/ der da mitten hineinkäme, noch den Lärm des Verkehrs im Ohr/ und noch nüchtern, erkannte kaum/ oben auf eurem Brett die Welt, die er eben verlassen hat."13 Kluge pursues the thought when he says: "It is not only a political question, but
a consequence of a persistent and total overburdening of people, which expresses itself ever farther from the sphere of their lives as producers. They suffer, they experience cognitive dissonance when they perceive how they live ... So I would rather be a spectator of my life. I would rather change my life this way since I cannot change it in society. So at night I see films that are different from my experiences during the day. Thus there is a strict separation between experience and the cinema. That is the obstacle for our films. For we are people of the 60s, and we do not believe in the opposition between experience and fiction.14

Kluge is here describing the experience of many of the New German film makers for whom cinema in the postwar period was dominated by regurgitated Heimatfilme. These films acted as a form of escapism from social and political issues, being characterised by a flight into a rural, natural idyll (usually Alpine) far from the city, an escape into private domestic affairs, and a fatalism which abandoned politics to the political leaders. The period of restoration and Wiederaufbau of the 1950s had exacerbated this division between cinema and experience. This was partly a result of the general collective psyche which sought to escape from the harshness of reality into an idyllic fantasy world; partly it was felt the film medium did not lend itself to the task of reflecting on the past. To begin with, film convention needed to be broken and a rediscovery to take place, followed by a renewed development of film. An important part of this rediscovery and innovation involved the attempt to overcome the division between the fictional and documentary and bring the two back into a constructive combination. The need to bring film and experience together became ever more urgent, culminating in an unprecedented wave of films in the late 1970s and early 1980s which attempt to return to the experience of the past in a cinematic undertaking.

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The urgency of the task is not just motivated by developments in film history. The emergence of a widespread cinematic preoccupation with the past in the late 1970s and early 1980s has at its centre two determining events. The first of these lay in the socio-political sphere, where the conflict between the Rote Armee Fraktion and the West German state during the 1970s culminated in the violence of Autumn 1977, the so-called German Autumn. The second factor, in the cultural sphere, was the screening in January 1979 of the TV series Holocaust in which events of the Nazi period were portrayed to a huge audience. These two key moments spurred German film makers to respond to those events in the past which continued to send vibrations through West German political life. German cinema flowered at this time, as director after director
approached the theme; amongst them were Kluge, Schlöndorff and Reitz, whose films are here under discussion.

Throughout the 1970s the language of political debate in West Germany became increasingly coloured and distorted by partial and emotive references to the Nazi past. In examining the increasingly vituperative political debate, it becomes evident that the events of the Nazi era had been far from "mastered"; both the recurrence of certain terminologies and the very framework of the debate itself indicate that the German past had been superficially dealt with, merely removing it from the surface for it then to re-emerge in times of crisis. The experiences of the writer Heinrich Böll in these years exemplify this situation. In 1972 Böll became alarmed by the way in which the media, in particular the Bildzeitung, was whipping up public hysteria over the increasingly desperate activities of the Baader Meinhof group, later renamed the Rote Armee Fraktion. On Monday 10th January 1972 an article he had written appeared in Der Spiegel under the title Will Ulrike Gnade oder freies Geleit? The ensuing storm indicates the degree to which repercussions from the past were again making themselves felt.

Böll was attempting in his article to suggest a way out of a dilemma. Alarmed by the increasing public demand for lynch justice stoked up by a press busily engaged in creating an atmosphere of hysteria, he made a plea for safe conduct for Ulrike Meinhof with a fair trial in full view of public opinion. There was certainly no attempt by Böll to defend the actions of Baader and Meinhof who, he says, had declared war on the Federal Republic. But this Kriegserklärung was a declaration of war against a system by desperate theorists who had driven themselves into a corner. It was a war carried out by six against millions; "ein sinnloser Krieg." The associations which the use of the word "war" released did not stop here for Böll. He saw a threat to West German democracy in the activities of elements of the German media and warned of the danger of a return to Fascism.

Böll's opponents countered immediately with charges of "roter Faschismus" and "Linksfaschismus", and one commentator sought to do away with any differentiation: "Der rote Faschismus unterscheidet sich in nichts von dem braunen Faschismus." The line of argument was continued: "Und die Sympathisanten dieses Linksfaschismus, die Bölls und Brückners und all die anderen sogenannten Intellektuellen, sind nicht einen Deut besser als die geistigen Schrittmacher der Nazis, die schon einmal soviel Unglück über unser Land gebracht haben." Such a loose usage of terminology for immediate polemical and political purposes shows deep
insensitivity to history. Uncritical references to the past abounded; Bildzeitung compared Böll to Goebbels: "Böll, dieser christliche Dichter, bedient sich einer Sprache, die Gemeinschaftswerk Karl-Eduard von Schnitzlers und Josef Goebbels sein könnte."21 Die Welt made use of a cartoon by Hicks attacking Böll. The irony of this was not lost on Böll who knew the curriculum vitae of the same cartoonist who "unter Goebbels jüdische und russische Untermenschen ... treffsicher zeichnete."22 Böll was lumped together with other intellectuals and "sympathisers" (a term which carried with it connotations of Mitläufer) as Deutschlands Salonanarchisten.23 The term of abuse, deliberately or not, alluded to the form of vilification used by the Nazis against liberal democrats: Salonbolschewisten, a usage Böll described as "faschistisch und verleumderisch."24 As a further example of the way in which language revealed the still unhealed scars of history, Böll cites the way the police referred to the shooting of members of the Baader-Meinhof group using the term "auf der Flucht erschossen."25 He reminds his readers how the concentration camp administrators employed the same euphemism in their bureaucratic jargon.

The past, banished underground, had resurfaced with a vengeance. Ghostly figures from the past came back to haunt the German public in the debate. Goebbels was the spectre raised by Axel Springer's newspapers. Böll added to the ghoulish entourage. Indignant that Bildzeitung (which, as Böll pointedly added, had a higher circulation than Der Stürmer) should include in a list of victims of the Baader-Meinhof group two who had in fact been shot by the police (Petra Schelm and Georg von Rauch), he commented acidly: "Wahrscheinlich wird 'Bild' bald so weit sein, einen so armen Teufel wie Hermann Göring, der sich leider selbst umbringen mußte, unter die Opfer des Faschismus zu zählen."26 The apparent inability of the German state to offer a non-violent solution, in the form of safe passage and a fair trial, throws up for Böll another ghoul: "Für einen so abscheulichen Satrapen wie Baldur von Schirach, der einige Millionen junger Deutscher in die verschiedensten Todesarten trieb und zu den verschiedensten Mordarten ermutigte, sogar für ihn gab es Gnade. Ulrike Meinhof muß damit rechnen, sich einer totalen Gnadenlosigkeit ausgeliefert zu sehen."27 Böll also reminds his German readers: "Wieviel junge Polizeibeamte und Juristen wissen noch, welche Kriegsverbrecher, rechtmäßig verurteilt, auf Anraten Konrad Adenauers heimlich aus den Gefängnissen entlassen wurden."28 He goes on to plead for a trial in public, in full view of world opinion. In contrast to all the trials which, in his opinion, had neither been placed at all, or had been perverted in the course of postwar German history. The inability to deal with the past contributed to the resurfacing of its traumatic aspects in moments of crisis.
Böll gave vent to his distaste at the *Sympathisantenjagd* orchestrated by the popular press by writing his story *Die verlorene Ehre der Katharina Blum*, later made by Volker Schlöndorff into a film which captures the mood of hysteria, confusion and the turmoil of the time. The activities of the RAF increased throughout the decade, the very name acting as a reminder of the catastrophes of recent history, bringing to mind, as Stefan Aust points out, the *Red Army* and reprisals carried out by it on the German population, as well as the postwar division of Germany, and the RAF's (Royal Air Force) destructive bombing of German civilian populations in cities like Cologne and Dresden. The activities of the RAF reached a violent peak in the events of Autumn 1977. On the 5th September of that year, the RAF kidnapped the chairman of the West German Confederation of Industry and head of the Daimler-Benz corporation Hanns-Martin Schleyer in order to force the release of eleven terrorists, including Andreas Baader, J.K. Raspe and Gudrun Ensslin, imprisoned in Stammheim near Stuttgart. On the 13th October, a Lufthansa aircraft was hijacked and taken to Mogadishu in Somalia in a further attempt by the terrorists to enforce the liberation of their three comrades. However, five days later a special commando group of the German Border Police (GSG9) freed the hostages on the hijacked aeroplane. The same day the three terrorists, incarcerated in Stammheim, committed suicide. The circumstances surrounding the suicides were mysterious and the subject of inconclusive investigations by an international body. Several days later Schleyer's body was found in Mulhouse. A state funeral took place for Schleyer in Stuttgart, and the terrorists were eventually, after much opposition, buried in Dornhalden cemetery on the outskirts of Stuttgart. The political climate at that time was one of hysterical over-reaction on the part of the state, leading to news blackouts, censorship, and a practical state of siege by the security forces together with a policy of repression. With a witchhunt of so-called *Sympathisanten*, the *Berufsverbot* and an atmosphere of suspicion, German democracy appeared to be in considerable danger.

In these traumatic circumstances Alexander Kluge, together with other leading German directors, decided to respond to events by making a co-operative film treating the German Autumn, *Deutschland im Herbst*. Kluge outlines the origins of the film in a discussion of the question of remembering history. He sets out on the path of memory: "*Nur was nicht aufhört, weh zu tun, bleibt im Gedächtnis.*"*30* The statement sees in the contemporary turmoil of German political life the symptoms of a past which had been summarily dismissed. Kluge proceeds from the way in which an individual deals with past history, working on experiences as is necessary to dispense with them. If this process of working is inadequate and the past retains its potency "*so verzerrt er sie, rutscht aus, zerzt lieber sich als diese Gedächtnisarbeit aufzugeben.*"*31* The collective
experience of remembering is seen as taking place beyond the individual's control. Collective remembering is described as an unorganic process in which "der Mensch nicht Agent dieser von ihm produzierten Geschichte ist, sondern daneben stehend, von ihr fortgezogen." In this context, the individual treats history only within the parameters provided by society: "Also, mein Boden, mein Gemeinwesen und meine Selbstbestimmung über die Bedingung meiner Arbeit (wird) gemeinsam hergestellt." If neither of these routes are taken, an indifference towards all subjective and collective reaction is located. Memorising never becomes a public affair and has no place in political and social institutions. This, for Kluge, typifies the attitude of the citizens of the Federal Republic in the postwar period, in which the past was cut off from the present and submerged under the effort of reconstruction.

The events of Autumn 1977 brought to mind for Kluge the end of the Second World War and thus re-established a bridge between the past and present. Kluge describes the intervening age of indifference, i.e. from 1945-1977, as an "apolitical" time. Here he is, with some irony, using the definition of politics of the right-wing lawyer Schmitt as "die konkrete Bestimmung eines Feindes"; this is how politics existed under Fascism. But in the years 1945-77, within the socio-political consensus of the Federal Republic, such a concrete definition of an enemy did not exist, and this is the sense in which Kluge describes these years as "apolitical". Only in 1977 did such definite positions resurface, but because of changing circumstances, these positions no longer corresponded to reality but remained fixed in anachronistic ways of thinking: "es stehen plötzlich nicht aufeinander bezogene Todfeinde einander gegenüber." The two sides are "nicht aufeinander bezogen" because Schleyer, on the one side, is not the symbolic representative of West German capitalism as Fascism, despite his SS past and his role in industry during the Nazi period, and the three terrorists in Stammheim on the other side must also be counted as a part of Germany. Neither can be excluded and put outside the borders of Germany, metaphorically speaking. Yet the way of looking at politics as "die Bestimmung des Feindes", inherited subconsciously from the fascist period, continues in the political turbulence of the 1970s. The ideological positions adopted by the two sides are false; Kluge rejects both the logic of terrorism and state reaction.

The reason for such positions being taken up goes back to the deliberate neglect of a consideration of German history in the 1950s and 1960s. The terrorist generation grew up under an imposed ignorance of German history, and the discovery of that past had traumatic results. Many saw the Federal Republic with its petrified institutions and rigid political life as a continuation of Fascism under a different guise and were, as
Kaes\textsuperscript{36} suggests, offering the resistance to Fascism which their parents had not offered. This generation, deeply shocked by what it had discovered about the repressed past of their parents, coupled with the frustration felt at the social and institutional life of the Bonn Republic, now seemed, according to Kaes, to want to make belated amends for this. What had happened in Autumn 1977, however, was a breakthrough in the amnesia that had existed for so long, and the events of Autumn 1977 began to be associated with 1945. Stefan Aust relates examples of the way this connection was felt in the general public. Bomb attacks by the RAF released the trauma of bombed German cities in the war years. For the older generation of Germans, Mogadishu had produced many one-sided and dangerous associations of rapid military success. On the other hand, the postwar generation saw in Stammheim the continuation of state violence and suppression of criticism found in the Nazi era. In examining these associations, Kluge fears that the repressed shock could release false reactions, leading to a hardening of anachronistic ideological positions and to distortions, instead of both illuminating the elements of German history which had falsely merged and uncovering the mistaken developments in the past: "Alle Verhältnisse werden im Moment der katastrophalen Erschütterung einen Moment durchsichtig darauf, daß sie falsch zusammengewachsen sind und an keiner Stelle ein menschliches oder auch nur mögliches Verhältnis bilden."\textsuperscript{37} False connections such as the association of the freeing of hostages in Mogadishu with other successful campaigns from Germany's military past (Blitzkrieg), and the association of the West German democracy with German Fascism by the terrorists, are made at the expense of more helpful connections.

"Ein bedingungsloser, erfinderischer Kampf" exists for Kluge on both sides of the conflict, and he finds examples of this uncompromising attitude throughout German history. A key to his thematic approach to history is found in the proverb \textit{fiat iustitia pereat mundus} - justice shall be done even if the world perishes. In the conflict of Autumn 1977 Kluge sees this exemplified in "einer Vereisung aller gesellschaftlich möglichen Kommunikation" and that "die Waffe der Kommunikation auf beiden Seiten aufgeopfert werden muß, wenn die militärischen Waffen sprechen."\textsuperscript{38} There could be no winner in this struggle. The state would merely produce the next generation of terrorists, and the possibility of the terrorists bringing about a revolution was out of the question. Kluge, in a way which is typical of his approach to history, searches for and finds other examples of this principle, for example in the British demands for unconditional surrender towards the end of the Second World War which disarmed the German resistance, and in the German tradition of loyalty which led to a fight to the death by the Werwölfe. In considering the concept \textit{fiat iustitia pereat mundus}, two ideas are found which often run counter to each other; human dignity and the legal principle.
In the case of Filbinger, Ministerpräsident of Baden-Württemberg in the late 1970s, strict adherence to the legal principle found its cruelest expression in the condemning to death in the last days of the war of a deserter no-one would have seen as a criminal. The issue of burning concern for Kluge is to find a way out of this historical process which ends in destruction.

The year 1977 was critical in the reopening of a discussion of the German past, not only, as Kluge shows, because of the associations made between 1977 and 1945 released by the terrorist problem, but also because of further war crimes trials, the Majdenek concentration camp trial, which became the longest trial of its kind in West Germany, the Filbinger affair, and renewed debates in the Bundestag on the Statute of Limitations for Nazi war crimes. In October 1977 nine German film directors, working without state subsidy, came together to make the film Deutschland im Herbst. The film can be seen as the first such cooperative effort to create an alternative cinema in Germany since Kuhle Wampe, which was also made at a critical time in Germany's history and undoubtedly offered a model to the film makers. Not only was the film important in its political response to the critical situation, but it also offered an aesthetic model for the cinema which acted as a stimulus to further approaches to the German past. In particular, its episodic structure, the combining of documentary and fiction into a fruitful construction, and the multiplicity of stories offered were taken up in the subsequent work of German film directors. The film can be seen as a most significant catalyst; after Deutschland im Herbst Kluge went on to shoot his own film Die Patriotin, Fassbinder made his trilogy of films on postwar Germany, Schlöndorff made his version of Grass's Die Blechtrommel, and Edgar Reitz subsequently embarked on his Heimat project.

The film Deutschland im Herbst can be seen as a film of the moment, a genuine reaction to the events of Autumn 1977, and it sought to express the confusion and anger of many Germans. In its content, as in its form, it responded to events in the shape of an open discussion which avoided closure, conveying the confusion of the time whilst avoiding the adoption of a polemical stance towards events. M. Hansen, in illustrating this, points out that the film makers could have made the connection from the biography of Hanns-Martin Schleyer between his role as a leading industrialist and his former activities as an SS officer. "This link, which long before his kidnapping had established Schleyer as a symbol of the continuity of industrial elites, is significantly absent from Germany in Autumn - as if to elude the mythologizing patterns of historiography on the left."39 It is precisely the film makers' intention to avoid the fixed ideological positions of both right and left, and to chart an alternative route through German
history. A sequence of archive film showing Rommel, "vom Staat durch Gift getötet"\textsuperscript{40}, stimulates the connection with Schleyer, who was left to his fate by the West German state. The commentary, however, makes an association which counteracts fixed positions; Rommel's son, present at the state funeral of Schleyer, was the Lord Mayor of Stuttgart and responsible for allowing the burial of the three terrorists in the Dornhalden cemetery.

In its open structure, Deutschland im Herbst works against thirty years of closed constructions in film. The freedom derived from its episodic structure allows all kinds of different filmic approaches and opens up a debate with the German past without then offering a conclusion. Thus there are sequences which have a documentary character which, in its attention to apparently peripheral detail, is quite different from that offered in the official, censored version of events, and therefore acts as an alternative news programme. There are scenes involving fictional characters like the history teacher Gabi Teichert, who despite her invented status is allowed to roam around an SPD party conference. Fassbinder offers both an autobiographical one-man-show in which he relives the moment of the freeing of the Lufthansa aircraft in Mogadishu, and an aggressive interview with his mother who seems not to have fully learnt the lesson of the past: "Das beste wär so'n autoritärer Herrscher, der ganz gut ist und ganz lieb und ordentlich."\textsuperscript{41} Other elements include an interview with Horst Mahler, one of the founders of RAF; a song by Wolf Biermann; lyrical autumnal passages showing a "better" Germany; archival material from the Third Reich and fictional episodes. Reitz offered a sequence of a border crossing with a monologue given by the border guard. Schlöndorff, once again working from a script by Heinrich Böll, satirises on this occasion not the world of tabloid journalism, but the censorship by a TV programming committee of a production of Sophocles' Antigone, on account of its acute relevance. These richly varied forms of film making occupy a loose structure characterised throughout by a sense of mourning.

This impression of a work of mourning is underlined by the film's framing by prologue and epilogue sequences which treat the funerals of Schleyer and the three terrorists, as well as by the frequent references to suicide, violence and war dead in the main body of the film. The opening sequence, made by Kluge and Schlöndorff, contains documentary shots of Schleyer's funeral, a voice over of a letter by Schleyer to his son, a silent title followed by close-up shots of wreaths, the soundtrack of the funeral with music, camera shots of the apparent marginalia (acting as a counter to the media presentation which ignores all that is not part of the "story"), finishing with another silent title with a quotation from 1945: "An einem bestimmten Punkt der Grausamkeit
angekommen, ist es schon gleich, wer sie begangen hat: Sie soll nur aufhören." A chance incident on the periphery of the Schleyer funeral where a Turk has been found carrying a rifle he had just bought, not to carry out an act of terrorism as was suspected in the hysterical climate of the time, but to shoot a pigeon for lunch, is a powerful example of the kind of documentary film making which challenges the official media in its choice of material. Roving on the margins of this Schleyer funeral sequence, the camera seems to dwell on the preparations for the funeral banquet in an apparently whimsical way. The film makers here are leaving gaps and posing questions which receive an answer of sorts in the epilogue at the Dornhalden funeral where the problems encountered by Gudrun Enslinn's father in getting a funeral meal for his daughter are documented.

Within Kluge's own contribution the theme of mourning is continued in the context of an approach to German history which seeks connections between suicide and violence as a theme of German history and the events at Stammheim. Gabi Teichert, a history teacher from Hessen, digs for German history through the ice which represents "die Vereisung aller gesellschaftlich möglichen Kommunikation." A montage of stills on the themes of suicide and the relationship between parents and children offers disconnected thoughts, as pictures from German history induce the connection with the suicides in Stammheim. A further four still pictures give the story of a girl who commits suicide because of her parents' rejection of her lover. A complete story is given in seconds without any need for psychological elaboration, only the statement "Selbstmord begeht, was in dieser Welt nicht paßt" is allowed to stand as a commentary. No further connection is made until the end of the film, in Dornhalden, where the camera focuses on a banner which acts as a title, on which is written: "Wer die BRD angreift, begeht Selbstmord."45

As well as offering a richly varied collection of episodes loosely associated within a work of mourning, the film also has as a major aesthetic principle both a separation and an innovative reassembling of filmic elements. Titles and voice-over commentaries are used contrapuntally with regard to the images. Particularly of note is the use Kluge makes of sound and music in the film. His section begins with a montage of still pictures containing images of Germany: knights in medieval legend and landscapes by Caspar David Friedrich. These stills are accompanied by Haydn's Kaiserquartett, later the tune for the German national anthem. The music reappears as a leitmotif and commentary in the film. In a later sequence in the film, the Deutschlandlied reappears with the text "von der Maas bis an die Memel." Gabi Teichert comments: "Was für Märchen man erzählt"46, as the national anthem is placed next to a song about Karl Liebknecht and a
montage on Rosa Luxemburg. With this use of music Kluge hints at different choices in German history, suggesting alternatives to the old tune of German history conveyed by the Deutschlandlied. This search for alternatives continues to the end of the film, in the cemetery at Dornhalden, where the national anthem is paralleled by the song Joan Baez sings about the execution of the innocent anarchists Sacco and Vanzetti.

Deutschland im Herbst acted as a catalyst for subsequent works which approach the German past. Its construction had left open questions regarding that past, intensifying political discussion and stimulating a movement towards other films. The film did not take a polemic stance towards events; the song on the death of Sacco and Vanzetti which concludes the film is a melancholy response which emphasises an elegiac rather than critical tone. No conclusive theories are on offer; rather there is a search which allows the widest possible treatment of German history. That search continued in the films of, amongst others, Kluge, Schlöndorff and Reitz.

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One year after the launch of this most successful attempt by Kluge and other West German film makers to create a "counter-cinema" came the greatest challenge yet to the new generation of film makers, in the form of the American TV series Holocaust. The ability of a film, which incorporated so many of the faults ascribed to the medium by critics like Adorno and Brecht, to bring about such an intense and widespread debate with the Nazi past within the German public, caused at first consternation, then an uncritical acceptance of its importance, followed by a determination by various film makers to respond to the challenge of the Holocaust film in the same medium. Holocaust was broadcast to an audience of some one hundred and twenty million viewers in 1978 in the USA, not without critical voices being heard. Of note was Elie Wiesel, survivor of the concentration camps himself, who saw in the film a presentation of the past as soap opera containing coincidences, contrived situations, and sentimentality. He wrote, echoing the debate which had taken place with regard to literature years before: "Was Sie auf dem Bildschirm gesehen haben, ist nicht das, was dort geschah. Sie denken möglicherweise, Sie wüßten jetzt, wie die Opfer lebten und starben, aber Sie wissen es nicht. Auschwitz kann nicht erklärt, noch kann es sichtbar gemacht werden."47 The film Holocaust had not attempted an explanation, but it had dared a presentation of Auschwitz on the screen which forced Wiesel to the reluctant conclusion: "Holocaust wird möglicherweise einmal als die endgültige Darstellung des Holocausts angesehen werden, was die peinliche Genauigkeit, die Breite des vorgelegten Materials und den Einsatz der sorgfältig ausgesuchten Originalaufnahmen angeht."48 The very confusion
between the word Holocaust, relating to the historical event, and Holocaust relating to the media event, suggests Wiesel's fear that this film was in danger of becoming the version of these historical events had some justification.

By January 1979 Holocaust (which became the most quoted "word of the year") had been seen by twenty million West Germans over four weeks. The episodes had been followed by phone-ins, discussions, and attempts to explain the historical background. An American film made for mass-consumption seemed to have fulfilled all the expectations of those who wanted to see such a widespread debate with the past, the Mitscherlichs included. But the reception of the film is contradictory and worthy of closer investigation. Before the film was shown in West Germany critical opinion came out strongly against it. Relying heavily on the critique of Elie Wiesel, German critics complained about the film's trivialisation, banality and presentation of history as TV soap opera. As Zielinski concludes: "Kaum jemand ließ sich auf die Konstruktion der Serie und ihre Details ein ... Man störte sich an der Dramatisierung an sich. Wobei der Verweis, daß diese im Stil des amerikanischen Fernsehens unternommen worden war, schon als ausreichend vernichtend befunden wurde." Some of this criticism was in the tradition of cultural criticism of commercial American TV, but underlying it was the concern that, as Klaus Stephan articulated, "natürlich antideutsche Ressentiments geweckt werden." The rejection of Holocaust on these grounds is not dissimilar to the attempts of Adenauer's government to intervene against the showing of Resnais' film Night and Fog at Cannes in 1956.

Certainly attitudes changed almost overnight as soon as WDR bought the film with the intention of showing it in West Germany. Springer's Die Welt had been most vociferous in its criticisms of the cheapness of the film, yet within a year Bildzeitung was serialising the story, and voices like those of Sabina Lietzmann claimed now that the film offered, through the easy access of a story, information which otherwise would be ignored. This turn about in the reception has, as Kaes argues, its roots in a moral gesture made to impress others. West German public opinion was looking to see what the rest of the world was expecting as a suitable reaction and was more than willing to oblige with an uncritical response which left film makers like Reitz angry and determined to film an alternative to the Hollywood version of history.

The appeal of Holocaust's presentation of the past lay in a somewhat surprising quarter. The political events of Autumn 1977 had certainly created a sensitivity and a desire on the part of the younger generation in particular to learn about the German past, but it took this film to overcome resistance from a wider German audience.
Holocaust was able to reach a mass audience in Germany by using the story form. Moreover, as Lietzmann suggests\(^52\), it took the form of a traditional family story set within a historical period in the mould of Tolstoy and Scott. The aesthetics of the nineteenth century were applied to the phenomena of the twentieth century, history became the wrapping paper for "a saga of fire and blood ... of hatred and love, too", as the publicity had it. The intention of the producers to use a family story to reach a mass audience was clearly stated: "Wir wollen nicht den ganzen Holocaust machen, wir wollen auch keine Dokumentation, keine Nachschöpfung der historischen Ereignisse, wir wollen Menschen, Charaktere, mit denen sich das Publikum identifizieren kann.\(^53\) For this purpose the stories of two families, the Weiss family representing the victims, and the Dorf family the perpetrators of the crimes, were written. The latter was created to show "den Standpunkt einer deutschen Familie - eines pflichtbewußten Nazis, der bei der SS war. Zu diesem Zweck erford ich Dorf."\(^54\) The rapid elision from a German family to a Nazi family to the SS, demonstrates the crude simplification of this form of presentation.

The forcing of historical events into a family story, or rather two family stories, is a significant source within the film of a false perspective. Vogler, in his study of particular scenes relating to the relationship between the perpetrators and the victims, shows the way in which the perspective changes according to the requirements of the family plot. He comments: "Besonders bei Erschießungen und Vergasungen ... spielten in vielen Fällen die jüdischen Figuren nur Statistenrollen. Sie sanken unter Gewehrsalven in die Gruben."\(^55\) Whilst this is going on, the moods and discords amongst the SS are being played out in the foreground. But when the victims in question are members of that family whose story is at the centre, "war ihr heldenhaftes, selbstsicheres Sterben im Zentrum des Darstellungssinnteresse\(^56\), and the perpetrators become faceless and brutal. The exterminations become "background" for the plot of Dorf's career, Auschwitz is merely the place where Berta Weiss ends her life. Such are the distortions caused by the insistence on a "family plot". The perspective on Auschwitz changes depending on which plot is at the forefront at a particular moment. Thus when the film makers wish to draw attention to the Dorf plot and highlight the scruples of the SS, then the victims recede into the background, portrayed as objects on the conveyor belt of death. If the spectator is required to identify with the victims, then the perpetrators become anonymous. Auschwitz, through these two presentations, is trivialised by being pressed into this story.

Although the film succeeded in making events of German history accessible, at the same time its effect was severely constricted by the family drama. The consequences for an understanding of Fascism are serious: Fascism is not comprehended as a political
event by this film, but as a personal drama involving not political but personal power struggles. The camera allows the spectator to go, it appears, into the most intimate areas of Fascism, to see its last secrets. Vogler concludes his analysis: "Das von außen Sehen der Wochenschau und der Filmdocumente wird so auf zweifache Weise durchbrochen; durch persönliche, ans Herz gehende Geschichten und durch das Durchbrechen der Intimität mittels Inszenierung von Räumen. Endlich ist der Blick freigegeben, die geheimsten Bereiche des Faschismus zu zeigen: Intrigen, Karrieren, Verrücktheiten, Sex, Hinrichtungen, Grausamkeiten, Sadismus, Fütter, Massenvergasung. Der Blick hinter die Kulissen ist eine geheime voyeuristische Sicht durch das Schlüsselloch. Interessant ist das Zeigen des nicht Zeigbaren, die Sensation des Tabus."57

What applied to the overall structure of the film also applied to its detail. Zielinski makes the connection, at times too laboured and one-sided, between the form of presentation in Holocaust and that of entertainment films in the Nazi period where "historische Reminiszenzen mit ruhreigen melodramatischen Familiengeschichten verwoben werden."58 Vogler, who has examined scenes from the film in detail, draws the conclusion that in many aspects the presentation of the victims resembles that found in Nazi propaganda films.59 Hence the Jews are presented as a chaotic, rat-like mass, as in the film Jud Süss, or as totally passive victims. The ideological position of the Nazis towards their victims seems to have been perpetuated in the images used, and the enlightenment claimed as a product of the film thwarted. However, this was certainly not the intention of the makers of the film, who wanted to show how people could be turned into animals. The removal of all individuality from the victims would have been a powerful theme for a film made in the United States. What remains a problem, and a challenge to German film makers, is the way in which an unreflective use of images from the past could convey Nazi ideology, if the right critical perspective on those images were not created.

What was on offer in the film Holocaust was a cinematic product in the classical Hollywood style in which telling a story was the basic concern. In assuming the traditional formal pattern of a family story, it was able to satisfy viewer expectations, for with its narrative causality it corresponded to the sort of films viewers were used to seeing. Those films, as Bordwell 60 has shown, placed great emphasis on a strong plot typified by character-centred causality. The characters themselves were to be quickly and clearly identified as possessing certain consistent traits, and they follow a dramatic line in the working out of their problem through the traditional stages of exposition, conflict, complication, crisis and denouement, with the support and subordination of
spatial, temporal, musical and technical elements. As Bordwell further explains, this character-centred dramatic line is carried along by the creation of gaps in the narration which invite the spectator to form hypotheses as to what will happen next. But "broadly speaking, Hollywood narration asks us to form hypotheses that are highly probable and sharply exclusive ... we participate in a game of controlled expectation and likely confirmation." But "broadly speaking, Hollywood narration asks us to form hypotheses that are highly probable and sharply exclusive ... we participate in a game of controlled expectation and likely confirmation." Where gaps are opened, it is in order to pull the spectator along and they are quickly filled, avoiding unresolved questions and closing the film so that, according to the intentions of screenplay writers: "In the beginning of a motion picture we don't know anything. During the course of the story information is accumulated, until at the end we know everything."62

Deutschland Im Herbst, as a film relying on the principle of montage, recovered the great possibilities of cinema from its own past and sought to develop these in an attempt to take a political stance towards historical events which reverberated in the present. Holocaust, as a family story in the classical Hollywood mould, having at first opened up the theme, now appeared to have severely confined such an attempt. After the success of Holocaust in Germany, films which aspired to a critical assessment of the German past were on the agenda, and the two films offered models of how that past could be presented. Both the route taken by Deutschland im Herbst and the experience of viewing the Holocaust film challenged German film makers to a response.
Filmed versions of literary texts are as old as cinema itself; in 1896 Lumière took motifs from Goethe's *Faust*, Méliès made versions in film of Jules Verne stories, and other pioneers of film, such as Maurice and Zecca, looked for, and found, material in literature and in the theatre. The theatre initially provided an enormous source for the fledgling medium. Actors, directors, stage designers and writers all lent their theatrical input to the cinema's aspirations for respectability as a bourgeois institution and distance from its fairground and peep-show roots. The novel too, found its way into film; one of the first full length feature adaptations of a literary work was Zola's *L'Assommoir*, made by Capellani in 1909. This intermedial activity was not a one way street, and novelists and other writers began to see the implications for their own preferred form.

Literary critics reacted with conservatism to film adaptations of literary texts. Particularly in the age of silent movies they were seen by traditional critics as a debased form of the original, a treason to literary heritage. Others, more modern in their approach, saw a need to literarise the cinema, to raise it from its humble birth and bring it into the fold of the rest of the cultural world. As time went by, the latter were to change their position and see such adaptations as a betrayal of the specific qualities of film, whereas traditionalists saw an opportunity to perpetuate certain cultural values in the new medium. A constant battle has raged since then, derived from a recognition of the inescapable effects of the new medium on the old, with skirmishes which either attempted to appropriate cinema to the handservant of literature, or to allow it autonomous and free development in its own right.

Film adaptations allow an examination of both the relationship between film and literature and an investigation of the complex process of intermedial transformation. What emerges from this is the conclusion that with a film adaptation comes the transformation of a literary work into a film. In so many cases the literary model for the filmed version becomes irrelevant; the question of conforming to the original in authenticity is removed by the change of medium. For the process of transformation entails a reinterpretation of the original text. In all filmed adaptations a version or interpretation is on offer.

What remains of import, however, is the choice of literary text by the film maker. Schlöndorff's attention to Grass's novel *Die Blechtrommel* was firstly a positive attempt
to recapture the impact the novel had made in 1959, and secondly had the intention of revitalising the themes which lay at the root of the initial breakthrough. The rich vein of stories and their ability to shock, entertain and disgust; the depiction of Nazism as a popular phenomenon rooted above all in the mentality and life-style of the petty bourgeoisie; the satirical portrayal of history seen from a Kleinbürger perspective and their view of politics as a spectacle; all these aspects could arouse certain expectations from a revival in film of such a significant work of literature. The way the film was launched, however, raised doubts about the direction in which it was likely to move. With its budget of seven million DM, the media attention it gained from the start and the big names who starred in it, the film Die Blechtrommel was described by one contemporary critic as a "Programmierter Erfolgsfilm". There were, for example, press conferences with Grass and Schlöndorff even before filming began, journalists visited the scene of the shooting, the film was marketed according to conventional strategies with a glossy book and Schlöndorff's own diary of the film thrown in to boot. In September and October 1978 the German press was full of the film; Zeit-Magazin had a lead article on it and Der Spiegel followed suit on the film's release. All of which raises the question to what extent Schlöndorff was able to rescue the film from being a commercial product of the cinematic Rezeptküche. Was the film going to move on from Deutschland im Herbst or move towards Holocaust?

What in particular made Schlöndorff, in 1979, go back to Grass's novel of twenty years before? What interpretation was he attempting in film? His intentions are positive enough: "Ohne die Faust, Mi s made versions in film of Me Verne stories, and nicht loswerden, indem ich woanders hingehe. Ich möchte mich damit auseinandersetzen". A further consideration is the extent to which his own memories of the war years coincided with the presentation of the past found in Grass's novel. Of his early experience of the war he relates that his mother was killed in a bombing raid and he adds: "I don't have many memories from the Nazi era, except for the swastika flags flapping in the streets ... and also a vague sense of horror." Schlöndorff explains the initial appeal of Grass in the challenge offered to his own education regarding the Nazi era. He says: "I also remember, at around 8 or 10, a kind of mass guilt tendency - we were all accusing our fathers and asking them how Hitler could have happened ... schools added to this by teaching us about the war in a dry, statistical manner. All you had to know was that a nasty Santa Claus, Hitler, had reduced everyone into doing horrible things.... So that is why the view of Nazism as a sinister populist phenomenon in the Grass novel seemed to me an important theme." So a concern with explaining how Hitler came to power, a dissatisfaction with the "monumental history" of school text books and with the demon-theory of history all found their antithesis for Schlöndorff in
Grass's novel. This indicates a positive and political approach to German history together with an anti-Nazi stance which is the least one would expect from a director of Schlöndorff's pedigree.

Schlöndorff clarifies exactly what he means by "Nazism as a sinister populist phenomenon" later in the same interview: "Grass starts from precise childhood memories of a small town on the Baltic, of a family of shopkeepers. He shows how everything that happened had roots in the way these people lived."6 What appeals first and foremost to Schlöndorff then is Grass's ability to locate and describe the class of people most susceptible to Fascism. We have considered in some detail the way in which Grass describes and motivates the behaviour of the Kleinbürger of the 1930s with regard to the novel. But what is of interest is to see if and how Schlöndorff adds to or varies this significant account in the novel, given that twenty years had elapsed, given the transformation from the novel to film, and taking into consideration that the demands of 1979 were quite different from those of 1959.

The depiction of the acceptance of Nazism by the Kleinbürger and the consequences of this embrace of Nazi ideology are central features of the novel. Schlöndorff is correct in recalling of the novel: "Hier wird keine Faschismustheorie hinterfragt."7 This rejection of a polemical and ideologically motivated explanation of Fascism at the height of the Cold War is one of the novel's lasting merits, in that it avoids the prejudged schemata of theory in favour of memories of individual experiences. Hence Nazi ideology is seen to creep in without the Nazis as such being visibly present; it is a piecemeal process over a period of time. The creeping insinuation of Nazism into this milieu is allowed a slow exposition in the novel which, when we look at the relevant scenes in the film, is rendered incomprehensible because of the transformation into film. Here Nazism suddenly appears without any apparent motivation, like the Nazi band which, in the first apparition of the phenomenon in the film, comes around a street corner.

A difficulty in following the rapid manner in which Nazi ideology becomes part of the Matzeraths' life is the main problem in Schlöndorff's adaptation. The scenes depicting its intrusion are immediately preceded by a sequence showing Anna Matzerath's adultery with Jan Bronski. The messy ménage à trois is rejected by Oskar, through whose eyes the scene unfolds. His reaction is to shatter the windows of Danzig with his scream. The link from this sequence to the following is made through the insertion of a speech by Hitler pertaining to the Polish corridor and German claims to it: "Danzig war und ist keine deutsche Stadt"8 heard whilst we see a view of Danzig.
Returning to the family shop Anna complains "überall spricht der Führer, bloß bei uns nicht." The link between these sequences (ménage à trois - Hitler speech - a yearning for the Führer) suggests that the seductive power of the Nazis lay in the frustrations, domestic unhappiness and sordid lifestyle of the Kleinbürger. In this, Schlöndorff is following one aspect of the Kleinbürgerthese but ignoring another which sought to explain why these people should have fallen for Nazism at this particular moment in history. This generalised picture of the grubby, sordid and loveless milieu found in the film conveys a deep, almost misanthropic, distaste felt towards the Kleinbürger, furthering a condemnation of the generation which lived through those years. For Oskar’s family is, presumably, meant to have a representative status. The satirical disgust with the way they lived, which is both the approach of the film maker and the response of the spectator, prevents an understanding of how and why these people fell for the Nazis.

From the grocer's shop the film moves to the circus and a veiled warning is made by Bebra "sie werden kommen"; that is, the Nazis who will come and occupy the stage with their use of spectacle. We are then taken back to the Matzerath home where the arrival of the radio is accompanied by the exchange of Beethoven's portrait for Hitler’s, and Matzerath is seen putting on his uniform and talking of being present when history is made. All these motifs (apart from the scene with Anna) are as in the novel: Führer idolatry, fascination with uniforms, and the desire to be part of history. All are in some measure relevant to the issue. Yet the speed with which these sequences follow upon each other, together with the smooth elisions from shot to shot, lead to an overload of images which communicate few, if any, of the intended messages.

Moreover, the problem of the presentation of the Kleinbürger remains. In a revealing interview given by Grass he claims of the film: "Das kleinbürgerliche Milieu kommt sehr deutlich heraus" and refers to the "Verführungs Kraft totaler Ideologien für den Kleinbürger." A certain discomfort with the idea that the Matzerath family's behaviour is somehow typical creeps in, and the suspicion is aroused that the film maker, in transforming the text into film, has turned what was satirical in the written form into a representation of how things actually were, effecting a demonisation of the petty bourgeoisie. The change of medium has created a different interpretation in the film, an interpretation which is unconvincing and confusing.

Grass is challenged to give the reasons for this particular susceptibility and he responds by admitting that it was because the Kleinbürger were in a difficult economic situation. But nowhere, in either film or novel, is the clarification expressed or even
hinted that the reasons for the ideology and characteristic behaviour patterns of the Kleinbürger might lie in the economic structure. It is evident that this is not the explanation Grass or Schlondorff prefer, choosing instead the attraction of Nazi ideology as Heilslehre, or the increase in self-confidence through wearing uniforms, or a widespread feeling: "Weltgeschichte wird gemacht und man darf dabei sein." He continues: "Das ist die Verführungskraft des Nazismus, die auf breite Bevölkerungsschichten ausstrahlte." At this point, the particular appeal of the Nazis to the Kleinbürgertum has been left out of the picture.

Schlondorff himself seems to endorse Grass's explanations of this question: "Grass shows Nazism deriving from the banality of middle-class life aspiring to be something else. For Grass, these people aren't very innocent. They want to feel important, to feel like generals in control of history ... that's what Fascism is built on, making everybody feel important ... These people are infantile ... they claim to be controlling history while in reality they left all decisions in the hands of their leader." Wanting to be someone else, feeling important, infantilism? Do these explanations really add anything to our understanding of why the Nazis had such popular appeal within this class at this specific moment in history? Indeed, Schlondorff seems to avoid this difficulty of interpreting the novel: "Der Film wird auch mehr die Beschreibung der Beziehung eines Kindes zu den Erwachsenen sein als eine Milieubeschreibung des Kleinbürgertums der 30er Jahre, mit dem ich nichts direkt zu tun habe." In making this admission, Schlondorff has firstly admitted to weakening one of the main causes of impact in the novel through the narrowing and condensing which has taken place, but secondly he has put his finger on the nub of the problem: the central place of Oskar in the film. The film is his story, and it could be argued that he both saves the film (in the sense of a spectacle) and destroys the film (as a meaningful discussion of the past) with his performance. David Bennet rescued the film, as Schlondorff admits: "I didn't really know what was happening until we got David Bennet for the role of Oskar." Schlondorff's diary makes clear that Oskar became for him the motivating impulse of the film. The fascination of his performance and the identification which Schlondorff furthers in the film bring Oskar to the centre of the film to such an extent that all other themes become side issues. We become so involved with Bennet's performance that the historical aspects, such as the depiction of the petit-bourgeois milieu, are blurred. The other characters, who make up the petit bourgeois environment, become marginalised. Their behaviour and ideology are given little or no motivation because they are mere extras to Oskar's drumming. All the events too are
grouped around the central character and seem to act merely as a backdrop for Oskar's performance. In this way any debate with the past is quickly lost.

Despite his lack of physical growth in the film, Oskar's story from birth to early manhood is conventional biography, tracing the hero from early childhood, through school, home and social life, to adolescent experiences and leaving home. His character, bizarre though it might seem, consists of a limited number of easily identified and mutually consistent traits. His drumming and his scream are reiterated in many scenes, emphasising the sharp delineation and unambiguity of a character whose traits are clear from the start. Oskar is central to practically every scene in the film, either as protagonist or observer, and the camera always follows him, giving the best view for his story. Historical events therefore become pressed into the service of his autobiography in a way which runs the risk of trivialising the events.

The other major problem with Oskar is a confused and confusing picture of what he represents. For Grass he is supposed to have represented the destructive infantilism of the Nazis as well as the scepticism of the 1950s. Schlondorff is not interested in the 1950s but he endorses the idea that the irrational and monstrous should be made commonplace through Oskar. But as well as being the embodiment of various characteristic modes of behaviour in the 1930s, including infantilism and a regressive attitude towards women, he is also described as "ein hellhöriger Kommentator, der die faschistische Explosion vorausspürt." This all begs the question: when is he part of the age he lives in and when is he apart from that age as a commentator on historical events?

The difficulties do not end there, for Grass and Schlondorff wish to superimpose another level of interpretation on Oskar. According to this, Oskar represents: "the most vitriolic and rage ridden currents of the post-68 protest movements", he is "a prophetic image of the entire post-68 youth ... Oskar is obviously an ancestor of the post-68 dropout generation. The screaming of protests combined with the refusal to provide a realistic framework for change." Marcuse commented on the film: "The reason the film is an international hit is the character of Oskar. You have taken a very contemporary type and have inserted him into the Nazi era. The film works on both levels simultaneously." Grass even favoured relating Oskar's "infantile destructiveness" to Baader - a view Schlondorff just stopped short of. It is certainly a novel idea to see the Nazi era as a product of 1968. What is clear is that, despite these interpretations which would require critical distance in the reception of the character, Schlondorff goes all out to stimulate identification with Oskar by making him into a hero of his film. For him, Oskar is his
own lost or missed childhood. Oskar's is not a voice of protest or even commentary, but he simply wants to be the centre of attention. His actions or words can therefore carry little commentating function with them.

Potentially important scenes are frequently pressed into Oskar's story, distorting the intentions of the film maker. This is true of the Maiwiese scene, where the opportunity for showing how the Nazis aestheticized politics by turning it into a show becomes just another moment in the film when Oskar is able to use his drum to subversive effect. In this sequence one of the hero's central characteristics is given full treatment at the expense of a historical illustration. More worrying, because the scene is not farcical in its conception, is the sequence of the anti-Jewish pogrom, the so-called Reichskristallnacht. Here the scene seems to have been constructed as a backdrop to the Oskar-Sigismund Markus plot. The narrative voice-over illustrates this; beginning promisingly enough ("es war einmal ein leichtgläubiges Volk") the focus is then shifted to the hero's story with the continuation "Es war einmal ein Spielzeughändler ... Es war einmal ein Blechtrommler. Er hieß Oskar."20 The viewer's attention is shifted rapidly from the pogrom to Oskar, both by the voice-over narrative and by his presence in the picture.

These two scenes bear further examination from another aspect. This concerns the use Schlöndorff makes of the medium of film to present a view of the past. The film seems to rely heavily in its presentation of German history on a reproduction of filmed images of the times, in attempting to provide as authentic an atmosphere as possible. In his diary Schlöndorff comments: "Dazu kommen all die Atmosphären der Straßen und Vororte aus den dreißiger Jahren ... all diese naturalistischen Farben, die ab und zu ins Bild hineinwuchen müssen."21 The words "atmosphere" and "naturalistic" seem to indicate a desire to re-create a picture of the times which corresponded with the mental picture held by the film's viewers. To do this, Schlöndorff has recourse to the newsreel images of the thirties. This approach is particularly apparent in the Maiwiese scene, on which Schlöndorff comments: "Er (Oskar) stellt sich das Ganze in Bildern wie aus der deutschen Wochenschau vor, und wir filmen zunächst in diesen Einstellungen ... so daß die Sequenz wie aus dem Archiv geholt wirkt."22 He relies heavily on conventional visual images together with his own recollections of flapping swastikas. This temptation to naturalism contains within it the lure of an unreflective reproduction of visual clichés in the dubious search for authenticity.

The question of "authenticity" in the film also fascinated Grass. He says: "Ich hätte das Ganze lieber schwarzweiß gehabt"23, no doubt to reproduce the associations of
the newsreels. He goes on to admit the attraction of colour in the film, and seems fascinated by the colour of the swastika: "Aber das Rot überwog. Damit wird natürlich auch deutlich, daß es eine national-sozialistische Partei war, was doch weitgehend von links her verdrängt worden ist."24 This statement, based as it is on the presentation of history within the film, perfectly demonstrates the inherent danger. In reproducing the images of the time, found in the news reel, what is essentially being reproduced is a propagandistic version of events masquerading as reality. Grass has spectacularly failed in this interpretation of the scene to differentiate between Nazi ideology and practice. Schlöndorff unfortunately does nothing to prevent such associations being made.

When we come to such events as the Reichskristallnacht this approach is seen to be un rewarding, if not distorting. Schlöndorff was filming the sequences on the 14th November 1978, at the time of the fortieth anniversary of the event. The anniversary received enormous coverage in the German press, and surely this permitted Schlöndorff the opportunity of illuminating the events. In his diary he comments: "Zufall oder Notwendigkeit, daß der deutsche Film und die Öffentlichkeit das erst so lange danach und dann alle auf einmal reflektieren."25 What does Schlöndorff then make of the historical event? Does he attempt to relate 1938 to 1978 in any way, or is it simply seen as an event belonging to the past?

The scenes of the Reichskristallnacht are preceded in the film by the expulsion of Sigismund Markus from Anna's funeral and his ostracism from social life. However, the rapid pace allows just the most general of readings of this episode. Found in the film are the familiar images of synagogues burning, to the extent that one critic commented that Schlöndorff tries to outdo Hollywood in pyrotechnics26, followed by a sequence of the Jewish toy seller's shop being vandalised by the SA. Finally we see Sigismund Markus slumped at his desk, having committed suicide to escape his persecutors. In many ways the treatment bears a remarkable resemblance to that given to the subject in the American series Holocaust. The initial scenes of burning synagogues simply reinforce the same images in the mind of the spectator culled from Wochenschau excerpts. Schlöndorff taps in to conventional images in order to reconstruct the event according to principles of authenticity.

The pictures are accompanied by a commentary by Oskar: "Es war einmal ein leichtglaubiges Volk. Es glaubte an den Weihnachtsmann, aber der Weihnachtsmann war in Wirklichkeit der Gasmann."27 The voice reaches a pitch of near hysteria which could be said to convey a bitter ironic statement on the reaction of the population to the outbreak of barbarism, were it not for the fact that the same pitch is also used when
Oskar relates some of his own private experiences (e.g. the threat of losing his drum). The hysteria also corresponds to the implied understanding of history in the utterly tasteless metaphor of the Gasmann. For this commentary, both in tone and content, reinforces the demon theory of history, that all this was the work of a madman. We are reminded of the very critic Schlöndorff made of his own education about the Third Reich in the 1950s: "All you had to know was that a nasty Santa Claus, Hitler, had seduced everyone into doing horrible things." A nasty Santa Claus - Gas man? Schlöndorff seems to be giving support to the view of Fascism as "ein Ausbruch der Dämonie". The Gasmann, in the person of Hitler, had caused this outbreak of violence, his personal mad dreams had led to the death of Sigismund Markus. As has been noted already, the focus of attention in any case rapidly shifts to Oskar; the camera follows his personal path and the voice-over brings the narrative back to his individual story "Es war einmal ein Blechtrommler. Er hieß Oskar".

The whole scene lasts little over a minute before we are dragged on by the rapid succession of images to the next stage of Oskar's story. For this reason opportunities were missed that are there in the film, but lost in the relentless onward rush of pictures. The collusion of upright God-fearing citizens in the events of that night is surely the most important point that could have been made. The banner with the words Glaube, Liebe, Hoffnung is scarcely visible; only an observant viewer with a good knowledge of the novel would recognise and appreciate its significance. Similarly the hymn being sung could have been given more emphasis were it not for the "authentic" sound effects of burning buildings and Oskar's central voice-over.

This is perhaps more astonishing considering the fact that work on the film was going on at the time of the traumatic events of Autumn 1977. Schlöndorff himself was personally caught up in those events. Kluge and Fassbinder both took the opportunity in their different ways to connect the present to the past and see the relevance of the past for the present. Schlöndorff's reaction, however, is exemplified in a diary entry of the time: "Ein so plötzlicher Einbruch von Wirklichkeit nach Monaten am Schreibtisch und im Büro ist schwer zu verkraften." One has the picture of the film maker in his cell oblivious to the political realities around him, determined to carry on with his work of the imagination.

The overall structure of the film reinforces a strong impression of closure. To begin with, Schlöndorff abandons the third part of the novel. Grass's novel had the virtue of continuing up to 1956 in the attempt to at least hint at continuities of elements of the Nazi period in the Bonn Republic. But Carrière, the scriptwriter, makes a merit of
the early decision to dispense with the third section of the novel. The reason given was that it would have destroyed the unity of the film. Schlöndorff supports this desire to present history in neat packages or periods, he refers, for example to the period 1945-56 as "ein in sich geschlossener Abschnitt deutscher Geschichte." No doubt he viewed the period up to 1945 in the same light and thus is happy to perpetuate the periodisation of history which sees 1933-45 as a discrete period of German history. It is a point reinforced in the film by the hanging of Hitler's portrait on the Matzerath's lounge wall in 1933 and its removal in 1945. 1933-45 equals Hitler. The time span we experience seems a complete unit, closed with the death of Matzerath choking on the Nazi party badge.

The structure of the film can be seen to strengthen this perception of German history. We have spoken of the wish to see the period up to 1945 as a distant age with little connection with the present. This distancing of the past is reinforced by the closed structure of the film. At the beginning we see the Kaschubian grandmother sitting in a potato field. The same image recurs at the end of the film. Carrière remarks: "We wanted to round it off, to end it as it began." This desire for rounding off, for unity has the effect of giving the events in the film a legendary, mythical feel (reinforced by the "es war einmal" tone) and closing off the events of the past to further debate. The imposition of a mythical interpretation is also given by Schlöndorff's remarks on the scenes: "It's what the grandmother represents at the end of the film: despite the wheel of history ... she still remains there amidst her potato crop. For me, this grandmother is a total life principle." The generalising of history, the removal of the specific location and social milieu into the legendary or mythical is also conveyed by the title at the beginning of the film stating that: "alles, was sich auf dieser Welt ereignet oder ereignen könnte/ sich auch in Langfuhr ereignete/ oder hätte ereignen können."

Schlöndorff originally conceived the film as a Nummernrevue, a series of scenes or numbers within a loose construction, dispensing with a narrative voice and with explanatory sequences between them. He explains that this structural concept, having been suggested by the form of Grass's novel, required in film "nicht ein Hintereinander, sondern ein Nebeneinander. So entsteht eine Freske, ein Erzählen in die Breite, statt in die Länge." This may well have offered the opportunity to open gaps and pose questions, the original intention for Oskar as commentator: "Zwischen diesen großen Tableaux ... können kurze Montagen liegen, in denen Oskar auch einmal als Kommentator spricht, doch nicht um Informationen zu geben, sondern um seine Gedanken zu sich und dem Geschehen zu formulieren." All that remains of this intention is, rather than a structural principle, the dependence within the film on the bizarre, the freakish,
sordid and, at times, distasteful. Many of these scenes in fact miss the point being made by Grass in the novel. The extreme and extraordinary are needed to maintain interest in the family story. Special effects, music and voice-over narrative also serve this purpose. However, the problems of this concentration on the bizarre when considering the presentation of history in the film are firstly a demonisation of the petty bourgeoisie, and secondly a presentation of the Nazis as freaks. Neither would appear to be particularly productive consequences.

In terms of the structure of the film the complicated flashback structure of the novel is abandoned. The sequence is strictly chronological and the plot is linear. The story moves quickly forward from one scene to the next without pause for reflection. The impetus for this is again Oskar and the character-centred causality of the family plot. All the elements of the film move in the direction of the central character, underpinning and advancing his story, acting as techniques of continuity. Schlöndorff's use of the voice over is conventional, despite the unusualness of Oskar's voice itself. Oskar simply accompanies the pictures, makes the necessary links to provide a smooth elision, and occasionally explains the motivation of the characters. It is interesting to note the gradually diminishing use of the voice over as the plot gathers momentum, as the chronological sequence of shots no longer needs explanatory links.

In other respects the film rejects any method of producing collisions, contradictions or gaps in the homogenous presentation of history. No use is made of documentary material to provide such a break or conflict in the way Fassbinder does. There is an excerpt from a Hitler speech used purely as ornamentation; documents for Schlöndorff are a method of providing as authentic a set as possible for his film. Similarly music, which for Brecht and Eissler, and later Kluge and Fassbinder, offered the possibility of commenting on what was seen, is used in a conventional manner. Schlöndorff goes for an undialectical, non-contrapuntal use of cinematic elements described by Brecht as a Schmelzprozeß.37 Talking about the music commissioned for the first scene he says that it should convey the "earth-mother" principle "so that you can hear it as well as see it."38 The music is motivated by the story and reinforces the cyclical, closed structure of the film. At times there is a triteness beyond description in the use of music, as for example when Oskar has a love affair with the Italian dwarf Roswitha accompanied by the obligatory mandolins.

The closure which typifies the film is confirmed by the use of the epilogue, returning the story to its own beginnings. The spectator is taken back to the starting point to confirm that all the questions raised in the story have been answered. This
structural closure has implications for the debate with history reopened by Schlöndorff's choice of *Die Blechtrommel*. Despite his intention to make an anti-Nazi film, the possibility of further debate appears to have been closed off. The compression and pace required to tell a family story based on these critical years in less than two hours of film causes so many potent historical issues to be confused, trivialised or submerged, raising once more, as with the *Holocaust* film, the issue of the appropriateness of such a manner of presentation.
Political events and the challenge of the American film *Holocaust* lie at the core of Alexander Kluge's search for an alternative view of history, presented in a different form of narrative. The search for this counter-narrative took the film maker Kluge back to the origins of the medium and its early history. In the films of the early years Kluge discovered a narrative variety which caused him to give the name *Erzählkino* to early cinema, and to comment: "Genau dies ist nach meiner Vorstellung Erzählkino, nämlich Geschichten erzählen, und was ist die Geschichte eines Landes anderes, als die weiteste Erzählfläche überhaupt? Nicht eine Geschichte, sondern viele Geschichten."¹ The apparent return to a traditional form of presentation, the story, is offset by an emphasis on the abundance and multiplicity of stories, already investigated as an aesthetic principle by Kluge in his earlier novel *Schlachtbeschreibung* and followed up in the composition of *Deutschland im Herbst*.

The early film shows of Lumière were characterised by a series of many short sequences, each containing a story. As well as this essential feature, Kluge finds compositional elements in the work of the innovator Lumière which have a significance for his own work. Commenting on Lumière's *Repas de bébé*, he explains how each shot has an independent life of its own. Describing the breakfast scene with the film maker, his wife and child, and the branches of a tree waving in the breeze, he says: "There is a balance between the branches and the little story in the foreground. The balance between them is what is good. It is very exciting. The film industry always tries to destroy this balance. So we are interested very much in short films, one-minute pictures. Only the convention of making extended linear narratives obscures this separate life."² The essential characteristic of the medium film, for Kluge, is found in the images of film, in the visual. The dramatic plot of conventional films had robbed those images of power and autonomy. Without the determining function of plot those images found in conventional films would become devoid of meaning. Kluge wishes to give every image within a film an independent life, removing them from the over-arching concepts inherited from drama. Hence he turns to the epic tradition of seeking the broadest possible narrative sphere, "narrated differences"³, to use his term. One story will have the tendency of pressing historical material, the material the past delivers up, into its service; plot has the capacity to destroy real experiences, a criticism certainly pertinent to the *Holocaust* presentation of the past: "Es kann kein Zweifel sein, daß die Erzählung
ones Einzelschicksals in 90 Minuten geschichtliche Materie nur durch dramaturgischen Inzest wiedergeben kann. Der rote Faden drückt Erfahrung aus dem Film heraus.\textsuperscript{4}

Further to these aspects of early cinema to which Kluge has recourse, is his attempt to overcome the distinction made in defining films as either documentary or fictional. In this context, Deutschland im Herbst operates not just as a spontaneous political response to events, but as an aesthetic frame of reference. By discarding any differentiation between documentary and fiction, he wishes to avoid the way in which the Holocaust film makers had mixed the two, subordinating the documentary to the needs of family plots and turning documentary material into wrapping paper or decoration for the central plot. His own activity as a writer, in particular his novel Schlachtbeschreibung, together with the theoretical writings of Kracauer and Brecht, the practice of Enzensberger in his novel Der kurze Sommer der Anarchie, and the common practice of television programming, all offered models to Kluge to help overcome this distinction. Kluge refuses to adopt an ornamental subordination of the historical-documentary to the fictional, whilst at the same time rejecting the insistence that somehow the documentary has greater validity conferred by its apparent authenticity. The two tendencies were clearly formed in the early days of cinema history, located in the works of the early exponents of film, Lumière and Méliès. Kluge outlines the two tendencies: "Lumière beobachtet einfache Vorgänge: Arbeiter verlassen eine Fabrik, ein Zug fährt in eine Bahnhofshalle ein, so wie die Kamera den Vorgang erfährt. Méliès erzählt erfundene Geschichten. Er fotografiert präparierte Atelier-Wirklichkeit: die Reise zum Mond, Jules Verne Geschichten usf."\textsuperscript{5} For Kluge, the two strands exist side by side, neither claiming superiority over the other.

In the film Die Patriotin, Kluge ironically thematises preconceptions about the documentary and fictional in film. In one sequence, a man smoking a cigarette in the far distance is held on film whilst the voice-off is heard commenting: "Dokumentarisch! Ein Mann mit Zigarette in achthundert Meter Entfernung, nachts. Seine Geschichte kann ich nicht wissen."\textsuperscript{6} Kluge is casting doubts on the ability of the purely documentary to say anything of value; he is also reminding us of the need to reflect on the film images of the past with which we are confronted. By highlighting the ability of photography to delude us into a belief in the reality of what is portrayed, Kluge is following in the critical footsteps of Kracauer and Brecht. Kluge elaborates on the significance of this for film: "Mere documentation cuts off relations; nothing exists objectively without the emotions, actions and desires, that is without the eyes and senses of the people involved."\textsuperscript{7} The fictional, on the other hand, can have a power to convey authenticity. In the following sequence of the film Die Patriotin, during a commentary on a sequence
illustrating the activity of bomber planes, Kluge states: "Inszenierung. Diese Bomber sind nicht authentisch. Ich weiß nämlich nicht, ob es dieser Bomber war, dessen Bombe trifft. Ich weiß allerdings: er ist oben. Unten. Eine Frau, zwei Kinder 1944." The fiction of this scene carries within it a documentary expression, conveying more than the previous scene because it determines relations.

As important for Kluge's alternative cinema as the early films to which he is indebted, are the theory and practice of Brechtian cinema. He shares Brecht's position that reality in film can only be conveyed through an act of construction. When speaking of the photograph of the Krupp works, Brecht had concluded: "Es ist tatsächlich etwas aufzubauen." Kluge sees film making as an act of construction too. Brecht's epic theory offered two basic concepts which allowed such construction work to be carried out in film. These are the concept of the independence of the parts (Selbständigkeit der Teile) and the division of the elements which constitute a film (Trennung der Elemente). In his epic theory, intended initially for the stage but worked out as effectively in the cinema, Brecht had developed the constructive principle of having independent scenes with clear and deliberately artificial breaks between those scenes. In part, this theory derived from the same point, early cinema, and had as its aim the abandoning of dramaturgical elements. The division of the elements acted as a counter to the conventional tendency to use all the elements of film (images, text, music, etc.) to form a synthesis. For Brecht and Kluge, these elements were to be independent and autonomous, often colliding or creating fertile juxtapositionings. Having salvaged the visual from the dramatic, Kluge now goes a stage further in suggesting that photography is not the central activity of film: "Ich gehe nicht davon aus, daß Film nur mit der Photographie zu tun hat. Die Bilder sind nicht wichtiger als die Tone, die Geräusche sind nicht wichtiger als die Musik, das Wort ist weder dienend noch übermächtig, ein Titel ist auch ein Bild. Es gibt unter den sogenannten filmischen Mitteln keine Hierarchie." These principles lie at the heart of what Kluge introduces into his film aesthetics, following up what was typical of Brecht's theory and practice, namely the "literarisation" of stage and film by the use of titles, songs and commentary.

The separation of scenes and the division of the filmic elements allow Kluge to slow down first of all, and then halt the relentless onrush of pictures which Adorno had identified as a major danger of the medium. In this way, gaps are produced which free the imagination of the spectator. Kluge refers to this freeing of the imagination as fantasy, a concept which contains two main faculties: the stream of associations and the faculty of memory. Every cut in his montage is intended to allow the imagination freedom. No overarching meaning is bestowed upon a film; meaning is to be found in
the fissures and ruptures which appear in this open construction. Within such gaps the viewer of the film has an opportunity to engage his own creative imagination, in reflecting, remembering and associating. The scene at the SPD conference in the film Die Patriotin is followed by a blackout, an empty space, followed in turn by an example of the one-minute pictures which typify Kluge's film. A still is seen of a tortoise carrying seven elephants, in turn carrying a mountain. The discontinuity creates a shock, or rupture within the film, which Kluge explains: "Auf jeden Fall schaffen der Kontrast und die Stummheit der Bilder ein Dazwischen; eine Stelle, an der ein Sprung ist (the term Sprung is Brecht's). Man kann ihn mit nichts Begrifflichem, mit keiner Logik ausfüllen. An dieser Stelle ist es für den Zuschauer möglich, in den Film einzudringen."12 Although Kluge uses the term Gitter in a literary context to describe the criss-crossing pattern of stories, it can equally well apply to film, suggesting the possibility for the spectator to fill in the gaps between the pattern of short independent stories and images on offer.

As important to Kluge's use of associative montage is the furthering of the faculty of memory, an element he discovered from the reception of his own films: "Ich habe bei mehreren Vorführungen die Erfahrung gemacht, daß Zuschauer Einzelheiten des Films miteinander assoziieren, die einen Abstand von 60 oder 80 Minuten haben. Wenn sie nacherzählen, verknüpfen sie Ereignisse vom Anfang des Films mit solchen, die mehr am Ende liegen. Dieses Erinnerungsvermögen ist eine unbestechliche, recht wenig manipulierbare Größe, es ist die sinnliche Wahrnehmung eines Zusammenhangs."13 The spectator is encouraged to make his own connections. To further assist this process, Kluge relies on "das Prinzip der Verdopplung"14, a distancing device which removes the suspense of what is seen by also describing the event in words. This also has the effect of training memory, as what was earlier seen is reactivated. The viewer, no longer passive, is drawn into the construction of the film. Kluge talks of activating through his films the film in the head of the viewer. Thus, in more than one way, he works against the tendency to forget.

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At the very beginning of Die Patriotin, we are made aware of its concern with German history and of two of the ways of presenting that subject matter: by means of the history teacher Gabi Teichert and the Knee of Corporal Wieland. Gabi Teichert is known to us already from the film Deutschland im Herbst and also through additions to the revised version of the novel Schlachtbeschreibung. This recycling of material which Kluge practises is explained by him as essential in the world of multi-media, in order to
create a multiple perspective which he terms *intertextualità*. He talks of creating a network of material and continues: "Only in this network does the real appearance of a modern product appear. You can't sell an isolated product. If you come from the country and bring one cabbage or potato to the train station in Frankfurt, you couldn't sell it. People would think it was poisoned .... You would never use only one light to make a good picture. It would always look flat. You need a key light, a back light, a fill light ... You can now throw on the same subject, the same human experience, the literary 'light' by writing a novel, a cinematic 'light' by making a film, or a discursive 'light' by writing an essay. Each of the three approaches yields a different impression, different perspectives on the same subject."15 This is precisely what Kluge does with the material in *Die Patriotin*, some of which has already appeared in *Deutschland im Herbst*, in the novel *Schlachtbeschreibung* and also in the book of the film *Die Patriotin* which contains the film script and a collection of essays. Kluge calls this an attempt to create a "new encyclopedia", which would be "decentralized, which would not be one row of volumes, which would not only be written, but written, told, acted."16 The film *Die Patriotin* combines material gathered from various media and varied sources, with the aim of creating a new model whose central purpose is to cast light on the manner of representation of the German past and the burning issues pertaining to it.

Kluge is investigating the possibility of a patriotic response to German history (a contradictory notion, perhaps, given the nature of that history), and the possibility of a patriotism of the left (again fraught with difficulty given the traditional claim of the political right to the title "patriot"). To do this without being accused of revisionism, he has to make it clear that patriotism involves a full and open consideration of the past. Therefore Gabi Teichert, who is the patriot of the film's provocative title, "nimmt Anteil an allen Toten des Reiches"17; conventional patriotism does not remember the dead of defeated armies but glories in victories and heroes. But the problem here seems to be the limitation to the German war dead, for it appears to ignore the greater numbers of Jewish and Russian victims of German history. There is very little direct reference to Fascism in the film, and the Germans are seen only as victims. In one section of the film, Kluge even seems guilty of the very mitigation and revisionism which was prevalent in much of the postwar period: "Wir wollen nicht vergessen, daß die RAF in Hamburg 60,000 Menschen verbrannte" is the commentary on a sequence in the film. However, in the script this is moderated to "daß in Hamburg 60,000 Menschen verbrannten."18 Another difficulty Kluge himself raises, with some irony, is what is meant by the object of that patriotism implied by the title: Germany. The difficulties begin with attempting to treat a nation's history when that very nation is almost impossible to define. Is it simply the Federal Republic?: "Sie ist zweifellos nicht
Deutschland. Ich würde die Ostschweiz und Österreich dazu zählen, und die DDR würde ich bestimmt nicht zu etwas anderem als Deutschland zählen .... Deutschland hat noch nie 'von der Maas bis an die Memel, von der Elsch bis an den Belt' gereicht. Es ist so schwer, patriotisch zu sein."\(^{19}\) The problem is not confined to simply a matter of defining geographical boundaries. Kluge quotes Karl Kraus: "Je näher man ein Wort ansieht, desto ferner sieht es zurück\(^{20}\) and adds the word DEUTSCHLAND to illustrate the difficulties of talking about German history.

Kluge's answer to this dilemma is to approach "German" history from a local setting. As a history teacher in a school in Hessen, Gabi Teichert researches the past, yet in a way which is far from academic. In one of the scenes which takes place in a school setting, there is a meeting of the history department, during which an argument rages over the place of history as a subject and its relevance to pupils. A number of positions are rehearsed, but at the end of the discussion Gabi Teichert has no contribution to make, despite her intense unease. It is as though this sort of academic debate is precisely the way history should not be told or treated. She adopts a practical approach; this is reiterated throughout the film by the images Kluge uses. Thus she digs for history, attacks history books with hammers and sickles (a Marxist approach?), distils the books with orange juice and drinks the resulting mixture giving herself stomach ache, and takes a drill to the books. The resulting scenes are wittily portrayed by Kluge, as Gabi sits in her laboratory and experiments: "alles das tut sie handgreiflich, praktisch. Sie erprobt Werkzeuge. Wie man Autos oder Holzstücke bearbeitet, das weiß man; wie bearbeitet man die Geschichte unseres schönen Landes?\(^{21}\)

Her approach towards history is enlarged on in Schlachtbeschreibung where her creator states: "daß sie Geschichten hören muß, irgendwer muß dasitzen, oder vor ihr stehen und etwas erzählen. Sie kann aus Kleingedrucktem in dicken Büchern keine Geschichte entnehmen. Vielmehr müssen Tonfall, Sitzhaltung, Beziehung einer Person zu dem Gesagten und zu ihr hinzutreten ... sozusagen muß sie in Gesellschaft sein, wenn sie mit Geschichte umgeht."\(^{22}\) This places her very firmly in the oral tradition of the epic and documentary writers, with its emphasis on the possibility of contradiction, addition, interruption, as well as the underlying characteristic of openness and provisionality. The material for this sort of history is taken from legends, fairy tales, myths and oral accounts; in short, it is the material traditional history shuns.

Kluge places Gabi within a society not only unwilling to consider the dilemmas she presents, but even prepared to put up many obstructions. The first is the readiness to forget the past, a metaphor for which is the proposal to do away with history altogether as a separate subject within schools in the state of Hessen, and to merge it
with geography and sociology. She complains that there is not enough said about German history: "Obwohl nun aber kaum jemand in Gabi Teicherts näherer Umgebung über Stalingrad mehr als nötig redete (und meist erschien das in Schulpausen, Lehrerkonferenzen, im Schulkampf usf. unnötig)." As she moves through the institutions, the continuing unwillingness to remember the past is exposed. In carrying out her re-search, she is almost criminalised as she joins a group of private amateur archaeologists. One explains the depth to which she is allowed to dig by law, any further becomes a criminal act entailing fines and the loss of employment. Kluge is describing the continuation of the same mentality found in the immediate postwar period, the consensus of not rocking the boat, of not throwing sand into the well-oiled machine. To act against the consensus is to be "am Rande der Legalität."24

Gabi wishes to give a patriotic version of German history, but finds the material she has to work with in school unsuitable. She is forced to teach the subject within a strict syllabus, to correct "mistakes" in exercise books that are most productive, and when she admits to her own perplexity, she meets with opposition from pupils and school authorities alike. A scene with a particularly irate father is revealing: he accuses her of betraying the tradition which she should be handing on to his son. As in the film Deutschland im Herbst, the generation conflict plays a thematic part in this film. In her attempts to find connections she meets harsh resistance from the school authorities. For her, history has a direct relationship to the pupils and should be presented in such a way. The relationship of the socially created individual to his past is essential; this is a view of her creator Kluge: "Wenn ich einem Menschen die Hoffnungen, von denen er lebt, die aber aus der Vergangenheit stammen, wegnnehmen könnte, wenn ich ihm also die Vergangenheit und die Zukunft wegnnehmen könnte, dann hätte er auch keine Gegenwart."25 This position leads to the hope that something must happen to change the way history will turn out in the future, and Gabi searches for ways to make or change history.26 It is a position rejected by the head of History who opines: "worauf es ankommt, ist, nicht zu zeigen, daß alles mit dem Subjekt zu tun hat, mit dem einzelnen Schüler, sondern, daß es Dinge gibt, die nichts mit ihm zu tun haben ..."27 This approach is taken to its conclusion when the headmaster of the school bans the exhibiting of political posters, because they might lead to a discussion, and connections between the posters and the life of the school might be made by pupils. The German bureaucratic and authoritarian mentality is revealed in the satirical portrait of the headmaster: "Ich sage nochmals, mir ist durch Erfahrung bekannt, das Wort Berufsverbot gibt es nicht. Selbst wenn es die Sache geben sollte."28 Within the context of the school Gabi Teichert can find no answer to her questions.
And so she moves out into the world of politics and to the SPD conference. It is here that history will be made, and therefore she wishes to influence that history so that she may have better material for her lessons, she wishes to act upon the end product of history. In a series of interviews she asks baffled delegates to help her in this task. Ehmecke suggests she finds the answers to her questions in the Braunschweig Schulbuchinstitut; he offers the official answer to difficulties raised by the past. But this answer ignores the central problem of changing history. The occasionally very funny results of Kluge's technique of putting a fictional character in such a setting do not hide the pure incomprehension on the part of the delegates that somehow they are making history. Or are they? The search for an escape from a "false" or bad history is shattered on the rocks of the Leitantrag: "Seit dreitausend Jahren ist die Obrigkeit so geordnet, daß ich das, was ich will, nur abstimmen kann, wenn ich dem, was ich nicht will, ebenfalls zustimme." Will the wishes of the delegates, with regard to the debate on nuclear energy, bring about a more peaceful and meaningful existence? Or will their suppressed yearnings be discovered in the fairy-tales of the future, as examples of unfulfilled wishes? Working to change history through the political system is treated with bitter irony by Kluge in this long sequence of the film which ends with Gabi marching out of the conference past the party chiefs.

What other options exist for her to consider? If an escape from the history which destroys cannot be found in political parties, then what about extra-party activity? Quite early in the film we are shown round, in an apparently arbitrary and threadless way, a Frankfurt department store. In one sequence, the manager of the toy department extols the virtues of a talking, walking, singing doll. Later in the film, the perplexity of the viewer having been aroused, we are witnesses of the break up by the police of a demonstration by young people against consumerism and the sale of toy weapons in the store. Gabi Teichert is there, and after a series of interviews with the store owner, the insert appears "Sinn des Polizeieinsatzes ist die Störung des Weihnachtsfriedens im Kaufhof durch Jugendliche." No further comment is required, as again the potential for protest, for the changing of history, seems stifled by the desire for an accommodating peace.

As well as moving through society in this way, Gabi is involved in her own research and the amassing of material from German history. Here we need to turn our attention away from the protagonist, or rather from one of the protagonists of the film, to the other - the Knee. For the Knee is the ironic hero of the one-minute films which constitute many other sequences in Kluge's film. The fascination of this idea for the spectator consists in an overturning of the usual way of seeing history. If Brecht had
reversed the view of history, in his *Fragen eines lesenden Arbeiters*, from one dominated by the ruling class to a perspective from the working class, then Kluge takes a different direction by offering us a perspective of history, not from the usual point of view of the survivors and victors with their tales of heroes, but from the realm of the dead. The idea for the Knee came from Beate Mainka-Jellinghaus who suggested that Kluge needed a metaphor of something which had to do with the body and Stalingrad: "It has to be of a human being. You want to show that the German Reich is destroyed and can no longer have an identity. Therefore the individual you describe - the narrator - mustn't be a complete human being."31

The Knee is introduced through a recitation by the film maker of Morgenstern's poem. Simultaneously we see shots of a battle scene. There are no dates, places or names given, indeed none of the prerequisites of conventional history are present. The Knee belongs to a person with a concrete history, namely Corporal Wieland, who lost the rest of his master, in particular the brain with its symbolic significance as the rational, controlling impulse in history, in the battle of Stalingrad. It is thus a fragment of a disaster and typical of much of the historical material Kluge collects. Stalingrad remains a preoccupation of Kluge, and *Die Patriotin* is his attempt to treat the subject in film. After the poem, the Knee begins to speak, to break the silence surrounding the past and to protest against the view that the dead have no contribution to make towards our perception of history: "denn niemand ist einfach nur tot, wenn er stirbt."32 The Knee claims the right to speak as a part of German history, to question the history which has destroyed his master Corporal Wieland: "Wie kann ich der Geschichte, die uns alle umbringen wird - entkommen?"33 This is precisely what Kluge allows to happen in the film, the Knee and all other historical records are allowed free rein to speak for themselves. There is a profusion of material which counteracts the urge to find origins and continuities, and which conventional history would see as peripheral. But the peripheral has great power, as in the documentary shots of the execution of Werwölfe, or the senseless death of a soldier two days after capitulation in 1813. The commentary in this introduction of the Knee synchronises with a series of pictures, the first of many such montages of German history, and it is as though the Knee operates as the unifying principle behind such *Geschichtsminiaturen*, giving the perspective of the dead towards the events of German history.

However, after its introduction in the first scene of the film, the Knee vanishes until the last section. One critic laments the loss of this dramatic device after the first ten minutes and suggests that the film could have gained much from having the Knee commenting throughout. Of course, it is possible to identify Kluge's commentary with
the perspective represented by the Knee. The critic in question suggests areas where the Knee could have intervened: "Man stelle sich vor, einen Kommentar des Knies zum SPD-Parteitag aus der Perspektive der parteigeschichtlichen Toten. Oder eine Stellungnahme des Knies - stellvertretend für die Getöten und Ermordeten des 2. Weltkriegs - bei der Lehrerversammlung ... Eine solche Betrachtungsweise hätte harte Worte der Wahrheit aussprechen müssen. Und diese Wahrheit konfrontiert mit der 'Schulbuchwahrheit' und 'Wahrheit' von gültigen Geschichtsinterpretationen hätte tiefe Wirkungen hinterlassen."35 But the function of the Knee is not just to speak of Stalingrad or of the death of Corporal Wieland, but as Hansen states: "True to its construction, the Knee both remains an allegory and produces allegorical images for the film ... In its discursive confusion, the Knee presents both a parody of and a challenge to the history of books and libraries, as it itself points out, thus hyperbolizing the difficulty of giving history a voice - or, rather, many voices - beyond the narrative of history."36 The question remains unanswered in the mind of the spectator: does Kluge's subsequent voice-over constitute the further thoughts of the Knee, or is it the authoritative voice of the author? This uncertainty undermines the authority of the commentary and leads to scepticism regarding it. KAES37 seems to make a direct identification between Kluge's voice and the Knee. The fairy tale-like motif serves for KAES as the "Dazwischen", as a joint between upper and lower leg, it acts as a metaphor for the mediation between past and present, the dead and the living.

It is not until the last chapter of the film that the Knee openly speaks again, but this time he represents his dead master. After the title which points to the difficulties of saying anything about German history: "Je näher man ein Wort ansieht, desto ferner sieht es zurück! DEUTSCHLAND."38 and a further montage of battle scenes, the Knee takes up his rambling discourse once more. He claims to represent the dead of the Reich, questions the history of the text books, and claims that the dead are the real experts of history because they are the ones who wished to survive. After stating that he intends to be accurate and speak clearly, we are confronted by blurred pictures, confusing statements and a rapidly delivered Latin text as a deliberate contradiction to this. The Knee seems to check the rational attempts to synthesize or schematize history, and if Gabi Teichert is looking for positive connections, then the Knee seems to be intent on thwarting this search. In the following sequences, we see pictures of Corporal Wieland in the Hitler youth in 1933: "8 Jahre bevor er in Stalingrad umkam. Wollte leben, befand sich in der falschen Geschichte."39 Then the long journey to Stalingrad is described: "Nun ist festzuhalten, daß ein Knie grundsätzlich vorwärtschreitet. Alle halben Meter einknicken und alle halben Meter straffen. Das über 2000km bis Stalingrad, dirigiert von einem zänkischen Gehirn."40 The brain, with its isolated and
functional rationality, has been responsible for the disaster, together with misplaced wishes which express themselves in the punishment of the rest of the body in the form of the goose-step. The Knee concludes: "Grundsätzlich sollen Knie nie ausschließlich straffen, wie hier, sondern sie müssen knicken und dann straffen."41 O’Kane42 sees this as an ossification of alternatives by reason. Alternative ways of moving are subordinated by the brain into a single rigid gesture. The Knee has a suggestion for counter-acting this. In posing the question at the end of his discourse "was tut?", he proposes the following solution: "Vom Standpunkt eines toten Knies muß man es negativ sagen. Nicht: was tut? Sondern: Was tue ich nicht? Wenn mein zänkisches Hirn sagt: Tue das, so weiß ich, was ich nicht tue, ich laufe nicht, sondern ich stolpere..."43

Gabi Teichert and the Knee encounter a mass of material: photographs, pictures, film, documentary material, poems, proverbs, drawings, manuscripts, and cinema-history. These are all presented during the course of the film in montage sequences, or what Kluge himself calls Geschichtsminiaturen. This term combines the particular mode of construction with the theme of history; the two come together in the form of an assemblage of little stories which both determines the structure of the film and keeps its discussion of the past open. Kaes has described Kluge's route through this material as "nomadic"44; certainly it is possible to talk of a deconstruction of history, with the removal of all traditional supports, be they narrative structures, reliance on epochs, chronology, personalities, etc. Kluge sees history as affecting the individual through what we call "fate"; this "fate" is produced by the work of generations. The ruling impulse in history is, according to Kluge, constituted by wishes which seek to counteract this "fate": "die eigentlich die ganze Zeit über etwas ganz anderes wollten und wollen."45 One of the main concerns of his work is to portray these collective wishes. "History" works against these wishes as people die and suffer through bombings over which they have no control. The wish to change history and to escape from a false history is dashed against political and historical events which seem to come from above. But the wishes continue to work underground. These poles of unten and oben are frequently found in the film, and we can describe the underground as that area where human wishes "unterhalb des Real-Terrors alle Arbeit leisten,"46 where they attempt to release protest and resistance.

The purpose of Kluge's aesthetics is indeed this release of potential for protest and resistance. Kluge describes the conventional manner of narrating history, where the expectations of the viewer are directed by the use of suspense, and the narrated material is limited and arranged according to strictly preconceived schemata, as Raubbau.47 Protest energy is squandered; such protest potential being the precondition
of his alternative aesthetic: "Das Motiv für Realismus ist nie Bestätigung der Wirklichkeit, sondern Protest." The protest function of pictures is to be found in deepest consciousness and in earliest times: "Etwa seit der Eiszeit (oder früher) bewegen sich im menschlichen Kopf - zum Teil aus antirealistischen Gründen, nämlich aus Protest gegen unerträgliche Wirklichkeit - Bilderströme sog. Assoziationen." The viewer of Die Patriotin is confronted with such streams of pictures, in the form of Geschichtsminiaturen, and their associations.

A pattern in this collection of images can be discerned within the film. During the reading of Christian Morgenstern's poem of the Knee, there is a typical collection of about a dozen mainly still pictures. Amongst these is an image which serves as a metaphor for the significance and structure of the whole work. The Kafkaesque image is of a "sich in den deutschen Mythen wiederholendes Alptraum-Bild: ein Schloß auf dem Berg, unten ein Glacis, wie ein glatter Eisrand. Ein Mensch versucht an der glatten Wand emporzuklettern zur Burg." Two essential elements are present: the opposite poles of above and below, and the conditions of ice. With regard to this metaphor in his work, Kluge has more to say in an interview entitled Eis und Geschichte. Here he quotes a poem which also appears in the film: "War ein Männchen war nicht weis/ baut sein Häuschen auf dem Eis./ Sprach: O Herr laß allzeit frieren, /muß ja sonst mein Haus verlieren./ Doch das Häuschen das ertrank und/ das Männchen das versank." Kluge takes this as a metaphor for German history, particularly of the culmination of that history at Stalingrad, and the term Vereisung is also one he uses to describe the political situation in Germany in Autumn 1977. At one point in the film, we see soldiers attempting to dig themselves shelters in the frozen earth. Gabi Teichert visits a laboratory and learns of what happens at absolute zero, 300 degrees Kelvin beneath room temperature: "Das sind also 300 Kelvin, die den Bereich des Lebens trennen von dem Bereich, an dem die Materie so gut geordnet ist, wie es also nur möglich ist. Im Off summmt Gabi Teichert das Lied 'Zehntausend Mann, sie zogen ins Manöver.' The implications for the disintegration of society in such extreme conditions are given brutal shape by Kluge - at Stalingrad the consequence was cannibalism. Ice, in all of these examples, seems associated with the mercilessness of history in disposing of the wishes of those who wish to escape, change or merely survive it.

A definite hierarchy is discernible within the images chosen for the Geschichtsminiaturen. It emerges clearly when Kluge comments on a collage of two pictures, one of bombers, the other of a sheltering woman: "Ich weiß nämlich nicht, ob er dieser Bomber war, dessen Bombe trifft. Ich weiß allerdings: er ist oben. Unten. Eine Frau, zwei Kinder, 1944." Characteristic components of the Oberwelt are found
throughout the film: aerial bombardments, birds of death, views from Frankfurt skyscrapers, bombers, American bomber pilots, Vesuvius, a flock of ravens, space war, the brain, bombardments, more bombers, bombs from planes, Strategie von oben, Die Rotte von oben, mountain peaks, towers and more bombs. Similarly, there is a whole series of images which speak for the Untergrund: graves, holes, bomb disposal men in a cellar, a woman and two children unten, an open grave, the gravedigger, Pompeii, Grube, grabend, a funeral procession, bulldozers, workers in a pit, an egg head buried in the ice, graben, schaufeln, the foot, am Soebel des Hauses, "ich bin hier unten", cellar, Sandgrube bei B, Strategie von unten, digging a ditch, bulldozers, ditches, Totenfeld. Discovering this contrast of upper and lower in the hierarchy of history allows the viewer to see other scenes in a similar way, although the metaphor may not seem so obvious. Gabi Teichert's experiences at the party conference, with the leaders above and the delegates below, or the scenes in school with the Oberschulrat, Schulleiter and the Fachgruppenleiter dictating to teachers and pupils alike, correspond to this pattern. In contemporary German society, as seen through the experiences of Gabi Teichert, we see the glacier like freeze in social relationships and frozen institutions.

Returning to the original image, we recall a man trying to climb the glacier from a village to the castle. This wish - and here the key word has been named - to somehow escape or change the pattern of history is represented, as we have seen, by Gabi Teichert, who speaks for the living, and the Knee, representing the dead. But "die menschlichen Wiinsche sind vielgestaltig" Kluge warns after the scene at the SPD conference where all the conflicting arguments and wishes, particularly in connection with nuclear power, have been rehearsed. After a blackout, the comment is reinforced by a still picture of a tortoise carrying seven elephants, in turn carrying a snow covered mountain, above which is the universe. This is an elaborate illustration of a whole host of human wishes including solidarity, security, endurance, a sense of place, but in the context of German history these have been negated and replaced by misery, brutality and senseless death. Elsewhere Kluge suggests: "Die Wiinsche sind im 12. Jahrhundert etwas sehr Einfaches" and gives the story, by means of a monk's manuscript, of a farmer about to be dispossessed and killed by soldiers. Here the simple wish is to survive. But history works against our wishes, and Kluge cleverly undermines the illusion that history corresponds to our wishes in two linked sequences. In the first, the story of Feldwebel Dennerlein is told, how he was able to free himself from the wing of an aeroplane he had become entangled on when he parachuted out of it. The commentary runs: "wenn man sich etwas ganz fest wiinscht, geht es in Erfullung." Shortly after, we see shots of destruction through aerial bombardment and hear the incomplete comment: "wenn man sich etwas ganz fest wiinscht..."
Wishes form the subjective element of history and therefore cannot be ignored when discussing history: "Die Wünsche, die im Alltag nicht wirklich werden, die aber im Kopf vorhanden sind und dazu führen, daß unsere lebendigen Augen den Alltag nie so sehen wie er ist. Sie fälschen ihn mittels der Wünsche." In the film, Kluge examines this subjective element of German history, from the twelfth century, through to the visions of Caspar David Friedrich, designs of future cities, plans to cross the Alps with a network of canals, and the Märchen of the brothers Grimm: "Ihr Inhalt: Wie ein Volk über 800 Jahre an seinen Wünschen arbeitet." A concern with the myths and legends incorporated in this collective wish production has, says Kluge, been the monopoly of the political right for far too long, whereas the left has concerned itself with programmes, ideas and principles which the majority do not understand: "Das liegt daran, daß diese Mehrheit ihre Interessen 'instinktiv' (in Wirklichkeit, weil sie geschichtlich lernt) den gefährlichen Maschinen der abstrakten Politisierung nicht anvertraut, sondern sie lieber 'unpolitisch' in Phantasieform äußert." Märchen, to which Kluge devotes a long sequence in the film where a former lawyer analyses the fairy tales from a legal stance, attempting in so doing to impose a rational structure of interpretation upon them, are, as Kaes states, history written from below, often full of subversive significance: "Die Märchen sind immer auch Projektionsflächen für die heimlichen Träume der Deutschen gewesen; sie lesen, läßt uns das Ausmaß der kompensatorischen Phantasiearbeit ermessen, die nötig war, um das historische Leid des Volkes auszugleichen: 'Wer über die Märchen lacht, war nie in Not.'"61

Let us now return to the question of the contrary poles of oben and unten and their significance for Kluge's view of history. The images of "above" and "below" may be viewed as a representation of the hierarchy of history, with the rulers above and the ruled below, or as an illustration of the contrast between history on a large, monumental scale and the myriad tiny stories. Kluge, however, hardly speaks of the economic factors in history, and in one scene in the film, we find the town's administration and the Oberbürgermeister in the cellar, victims themselves of historical events. It is more appropriate to speak of the relationship between history on a large scale and its influence on the many small stories, particularly as this is also the structural principle of the film. This formulation is particularly evident in the love story in the sixth section: Das Verhältnis einer Liebesgeschichte zur Geschichte. Hansen comments that this story can be seen as a critique of the conventional family story which seeks to "domesticate the gap between individual life plan and historical contingency." The conventional story ignores the contradictions of history by catering "to the desire to rehearse - and idealize - these personal relationships on a level of fantasy." Yet these stories also express the
wish to escape the "social conditions that systematically disregard and manipulate human needs, emotions and intentions." Not only is it the non-synchronicity of history and story (große and kleine Geschichte), but it is the total disregard for human wishes which is central to this example of conventional domestic story-telling.

The non-synchronicity and malfunction caused by the separation of human activity can be further enlarged upon with the help of two other scenes. The bomb disposal experts sitting underground discuss the direction from which the aeroplanes are coming to drop their bombs on them. One is of the opinion "Is' eh egal ... da sind sie" whilst another shows "expert" knowledge in discerning their provenance. The two positions betray passive acceptance of historical events on the one hand, and the mistaken idea that rational and technical know-how can influence or change the outcome of such events on the other. American bomber pilots belonging to the realm above are filmed on their return from wholesale destruction in Germany: "Sie haben von Deutschland nichts Bestimmtes erfahren" comments Kluge. In both examples the unbridgeable gap between the two levels is apparent, as the two stories are related without a connection being made. Highly specialised knowledge of all sorts (the lawyer who talks about Märchen, and the stenographer at the SPD conference are further examples in the film) is impotent faced with this division, and the participants remain trapped in an activity restricted by the limited perspective of a functional rationality. Kluge is arguing against this way of seeing history: "Diesem ganzen rationalistischen herrschenden Bewuβtsein miβtraue ich, weil es nämlich 1933 nichts nützte" - and the Knee does the task for him when he complains of his "zänkisches Gehirn".

Gabi Teichert, motivated to examine the lack of relationship between events through an illicit investigation of German history, attempts to bring the two realms of the Oberwelt and the Unterwelt together. To begin with, it is a question of perception: this is shown in the scene with the state spy cum peeping-Tom who claims; "Ich bin an Erkenntnissen interessiert." Gabi Teichert explains to him "Unsere Berufe sind verwandt"; in other words: it is a question of how history is perceived. This is the purpose of the film. Gabi is often seen looking up through a telescope into the heavens, or down into the earth with her spade and notebook. She looks for an answer in all sorts of situations, but remains perplexed. Even if the awareness and wish to change history is there, the problem then revolves around the question of organisation. She gives her class the example of Gerda Beathe who wanted to defend herself from the bombs. What could she do? "Die letzte Chance, sich gegen das Elend von 1944 zu wehren, war 1928. 1928 hätte sich Gerda Beathe mit anderen Frauen organisieren können." In 1944, there was no longer an opportunity to develop a "strategy from
below”. Clausewitz had investigated the Strategie von oben, but a Strategie von unten remained unexplored. Organisation, awareness and experience all run against each other: “Die Waffen für eine ‘Strategie von unten’ sind aber nicht von uns erforscht, während es für die ‘Strategie von oben’ sehr wohl fertige Konzepte gibt.”72 Drews makes the association between the Gerda Beathe extract and the statement “Die Grundpfandbriefe, die jetzt herausgegeben werden, laufen bis 1998” and suggests: “Welche Katastrophen werden in diesem Zeitraum sich ereignen, welche Art von Vorsorge könnten wir heute für 1998 treffen ... ist Arbeit für die Zukunft nicht eigentlich chimärisch?”73 How can we escape the history which will kill us? The insight and desire to change history seem in vain, and Gabi Teichert seems to be confirming the gravitational rule of history, from above to below, by dropping her furniture down her stairwell. Shortly afterwards she is seen weeping in despair at the apparent inescapability of history.

Perhaps protest is all Kluge has to offer in the film, but the revised version of Schlachtbeschreibung offers Gabi Teichert’s alternative view of history. She asks a historian the question in connection with Stalingrad: “Wie hätten denn 300,000 Mann ... am Abrücken aus der Falle gehindert werden können?” The answer: “Zu einem geschlossenen Ausrücken war ja eine Vorverständigung notwendig.”74 Again, the question is of awareness and organisation, an organisation which can counteract the thousand years of tradition of obedience and the wish to remain within society. In conflict situations, like the German Autumn, the unorganic rigidity of history reasserts itself with uncompromising mercilessness. This motif is emphasised towards the end of the film with the fairy tale of the mother and child in which the cruel severity of the mother continues even beyond death. The search in Kluge’s work is for the exit or escape from this rigidity, and it is this which acts upon the viewer as an impulse.

In giving her definition of history, Gabi Teichert offers an alternative example to the gravitational law of history. She mentions the case of nine thousand women who learnt late in the war of a train full of coal and food, and managed to organise themselves “ohne daß nachzuweisen wäre, wie sie sich in so kurzer Zeit hätten verstündigen können.”75 The wishes which work underground found their expression in the production of a counter-organisation. By the end of the film, the spectator has been confronted with “So viele Berichte. So viele Fragen”, reports and questions which intend to release protest potential and initiate the search for an escape from the icy rigidity of the historical process. Kluge allows Brecht the last word, and hints with him at the possibility of new beginnings, the first of which would be a new model of historical perception:
Through an open construction, consisting of many unrelated and often contradictory stories in the form of Geschichtsminiatüren, Kluge has been able in this film to open up a discussion of the past. It is a discussion which allows both the relationship between past, present and future, and the connections between monumental history and individual experiences to be examined. In avoiding the individual story form which dominates both Holocaust and Die Blechtrommel, he has, at the same time, avoided the movement towards both structural and thematic closure which have been seen to be the inherent danger of that form. A consequence of this liberation from conventional paradigms is the freedom given to the film's spectator who, after regaining the joy and frustration of discovery, is left the task of making some sort of sense of history. The aim of this search for meaning is found in the present and future, as the debate with the past unleashes both the potential for protest and the search for an exit from the history which will otherwise destroy.
Edgar Reitz's *Heimat*, "Made in Germany" as the provocative opening title has it, is an alternative to *Holocaust*, the version of German history made in Hollywood. Reitz reinforces this impression as the opening sequence, with an apocalyptic burning Star of David with the word *Holocaust* emblazoned across the screen, is echoed and mimicked in the introductory parodying sequence of *Heimat*. Confronting the question why the Germans themselves had been incapable in thirty years of postwar cultural life of such a product as the film *Holocaust*, capable through its popular and comprehensible presentation of unleashing such a reaction amongst the populace, Reitz concentrates his rejection of the film on the way it was made. He aims his attack on its dramaturgy and the commercial aesthetics which use the Nazi past as decoration: "ein willkommenes Hintergrundsspektakel, vor dem sich diese ruhreliche Familiengeschichte mit den zur Verfügung stehenden Stars nach bewährtem Muster produzieren ließ."1 Discussion of the content of the film cannot be divorced from a criticism of its formal aspects; the form of narration must itself contain *Wahrhaftigkeit*, for it is not possible to convey truth in a work which is formally false. In the *Holocaust* film all irritations have been smoothed away. The product is a reassuring picture of "goodies and baddies" in which a later generation assumes the arrogant position of moral rectitude and stands in judgment on a previous generation. Real remembering is replaced by sentiment and guilt. History is reduced to black and white, where even the victims' names (the family Weiss) remind us of the crass simplification.

In the first episode of *Heimat* a powerful scene illustrates the alternatives Reitz offers in the telling of history. In Schabbach, as all over defeated Germany, the past is about to be commemorated in the unveiling of a memorial to the dead of the First World War. An official ceremony takes place in which the same version of the past is given as in thousands of similar memorial services throughout the country ("die gleiche Rede"). It is a speech which exploits memory with its myth of the "stab in the back" and the disgrace of the Weimar Republic in accepting the shame of the Versailles treaty. It looks forward to the day when "Deutschland den Genius aus seiner Blut erwecken wird." The past has been interpreted, explained and a prognosis given to the accompaniment of solemn speeches and music. At the same time, the baker Böhnke from a neighbouring community walks alone down the street singing *Ich hatt' einen Kameraden*, holding in his hands a miniature of the memorial statue. He had lost his three sons in the bloodshed of the Great War. Despite this, however, he continues to share in the official version of events, and like Mother Courage he is prepared to reject the consequences of
his own experience in favour of an official version which continues to glorify militarism. The official version of events has no place for experiences which contradict it.

In an article written in 1979 on the possibility of making films after Holocaust, the official version of past events is characterised by what Reitz calls Urteil (judgment), the unofficial version by Erlebnis\(^5\) (experience). Experiences, in his view, remain tightly bound to individuals and their capacity to remember. They are falsified when living details are distorted or eliminated, when subjectivity and uniqueness are removed. On the other hand, judgments on events can be, and have been, split off from personal experiences and are subject to manipulation. Reitz refers disparagingly to school history, or the history of professional historians, which is concerned with generalising events, ordering experiences (Erlebnisse) and uncovering causality. The purpose of this: "Unsere Fähigkeit zur Urteilsbildung wird ausgebildet."\(^6\) With particular regard to the Third Reich, an era has been judged (Urteile gefällt) by educators and politicians with the result: "Das verhindert, daß noch Geschichten erzählt werden, die in ihren Details rätselhaft bleiben."\(^7\) In talking about stories in the plural, Reitz allies himself to Kluge's approach and takes a direction away from the individual story found in Holocaust and in Schlondorf's Die Blechtrommel.

Reitz is arguing against a didactic or deductive way of looking at history, against the "schoolmasterly approach" which stifles our ability to play freely and inductively with memories. A didactic approach divides into good and bad, oppressors and oppressed. Reitz is neither prepared to accept, nor classify the Nazis as "the others" in the way the Hollywood version does, and he wishes to give a qualified and more complex response to the question of what a Nazi was: National Socialism as a part of the whole human personality. He claims: "Even now after 40 years we are still troubled by the weight of moral judgments, we are still afraid that our little, personal stories could recall our Nazi past and remind us of our main participation in the Third Reich."\(^8\) Thus when the past is known, it is repressed; in a psychotherapeutic way the stories have to be released and given a shape so they can be confronted. "Our stories are blocked by one thing: history. In 1945 everything started from scratch, erasing what had gone on before. It's like a gaping hole in people's memories and feelings. As Mitscherlich says 'An entire nation incapable of mourning' and that means we are incapable of telling stories because we have this enormous block that makes us fear the slightest connection with a past tormented by the weight of moral judgments."\(^9\) The consequences of this for the composition of Reitz's film revolve around the need to give expression to many stories. Evidently this entailed breaking the conventional duration of a couple of hours for a film produced for cinema, in favour of a series of films giving full expression to the multitude
of stories. The implication of this for the film was to transfer it from the cinema to television, a medium already familiar with the concept of a series.

Where the American series Holocaust so clearly fails, in Reitz’s assessment, is that, in the attempt to press the past into the service of a family story, differentiation and perplexing details are removed. Hollywood film aesthetics aim for the same reaction between Frankfurt and Bangkok; an ability to achieve such uniform reception in such disparate climates is a result of the elimination of regional film language in a process of Gleichmacherei. Thus the characters of the Holocaust series are constructed types, "emotionale Pappkameraden"11, whose purpose is to achieve cheap emotional effects through an oversimplification of the historical record. Reitz expresses his distrust of a form of narration which ignores the complexities and ambiguities of history: "Ich glaube so nicht an 'das Herz', nicht an die Rühmung, nicht daran, daß so etwas die Schleusen der Erkenntnis in einem Volk öffnet."12 For this reason he declares himself happy that Holocaust was not made in Germany; at least the pseudo-aesthetics of Hollywood had not completely established themselves, and the possibility still existed for the Germans to take possession of their history in narrative form, in an attempt to break free of the world of judgments.

German cultural and film criticism had failed miserably for Reitz in the context of this particular film; even critics like Mitscherlich had succumbed to the overwhelming impact of the series. Film criticism had failed to differentiate between "historischen Tatsachen, die sich zusammensetzen aus individuellen Leidensgeschichten zahlloser Menschen und diesem ästhetischen Popanz der Schuldgefühle."13 A meaningful debate with the Third Reich entails an act of cognition in the present, therefore an appropriate choice of form is essential in filling the "hoffnungslosen Mangel an aufbereiteter strukturierter und ästhetisch vermittelnder Erfahrung"14 which Reitz believes still exists despite Holocaust. The many stories of those who lived through the period had not been told and were in need of articulation. Moreover, the lack of a suitably structured form of narrative only succeeds in perpetuating a state of affairs where "unsere Reflexe verkümmern, daß wir böse Ereignisse nicht mehr riechen."15 Therefore the form of narration takes on importance in that it allows a new perception of experiences to develop and underlines the need for a work of memory for the development of present (political) reflexes. Only with such reflexes do the means exist "positiv und qualitativ etwas zu verändern."16 Such a task, repairing reflexes, was never a concern of the film version of history "Made in Hollywood".
The Hollywood version of German history, moreover, with its simplistic presentation, prevents this activation of memory and the subsequent recounting of thousands of individual stories: "Es gibt Tausende von Geschichten in unserem Volk, die Wert wären, verfilmt zu werden, die auf irritierenden Detailerfahrungen beruhen, die scheinbar oft zur Beurteilung und zur Erklärung der Geschichte nichts beitragen, aber in ihrer Summe diesen Mangel beheben würden."17 Reitz does not start from any paradigm, any judgmental interpretation of history; rather, as we have seen before with Kluge and Weiss, he starts with the raw material of history, working inductively with the stories people told and tell. Holocaust worked against this. The pre-packaged account of the past prevented people from taking their personal lives seriously in this "Enteignung des Menschen von seiner eigenen Geschichte."18 Reitz puts it forcefully, polemically overstating his case when he states that the Americans have taken history away from the German people with Holocaust. The possibility of understanding memories, and of dealing with them seriously, has been trampled on by this version of past events.

Reitz's manner of narration has an irritating attention to apparently unimportant detail which can be illustrated from a scene in the first episode of Heimat. Paul Simon has just returned home from the First World War and sits in the kitchen where he is visited by all and sundry. All around him stories are told, public and official, or private. A mix and confusion is the apparent product, from which emerge certain themes. Eduard, Paul's elder brother, sits and reads extracts from the newspaper (the first form of media considered in the film). In Munich, the Spartacists are in revolt and have murdered citizens travelling by tram. The reaction to this: "Gott sei dank, daß wir keine Straßenbahnen in Schabach haben."19 The city is another world, the events taking place in it are incomprehensible to the villagers. A collection of stories about the war and mobilization follows. Everyone adds his own contribution to this collective act of remembering: "Ich weiß noch ganz genau" is a phrase which reappears in the confused conversations. Memories are interspersed with wishes (Eduard's "Ich wäre gern Flieger geworden... die Flieger sind die wahren Helden") and prejudices (Appolonia is verhext). The juxtapositioning of superstitions and references to modern technological developments is typical of this first episode in which Reitz is searching for reflexes or patterns of thought. Here, feudal, medieval beliefs live side by side with technological progress, and underneath both lies the prejudice against dark, different outsiders like Appolonia. Individual stories of loss, injury and hardship are in the foreground; only occasionally do events from "official" history make an intrusion. Eduard reads a newspaper account about the Russian Revolution, but the villagers are not interested in the historical significance of such events and the implication of world-shattering
revolutions or attempted revolutions. They are only interested in the salacious detail. Were the executed grand dukes really naked? How was the chemist done in? By gypsies? The medium of the newspaper provides erotic or blood-curdling titillation.

Official stories are interposed between unofficial ones. War songs are recalled along with snatches of propaganda, such as the belief that the German army was not defeated but betrayed. These ideological accounts of history are placed next to the image of the shattered Paul, and stories of death and injury deliberately make the contrast between official and private history. The multilayered approach to storytelling in this extract ends with two stories being told simultaneously: Paul's vision of a dead comrade with Karl Glasisch's account of how he got his scabrous hands. In examining this extract, it is helpful to bear in mind the distinction Reitz offers us between Trivialität (of which Reitz has been accused) and Alltagsgeschichte. This scene epitomises Alltagsgeschichte as Reitz understands it; quite at variance from the trivialising of history found in Holocaust. The defence against a trivialisation of history is the production, the mass production one could almost say, of one's own histories.

Despite Reitz's strong criticisms of Holocaust, deliberate similarities do exist between the two films. The most significant correlation is the basing of the plot on the lives of two families: in Holocaust the Weiss and Dorf, and in Heimat the Wiegand and Simon families. But whereas the Holocaust figures are placed within the conventional events of history writ large and turn up wherever major events are taking place (the list of major events reads like a chronology of the years of Nazi dictatorship), and the fictional families mix with the "great" men of the time (Heydrich, Lichtenberg, Himmler, Höss, and Eichmann), Reitz's characters seem to exist outside the historical mainstream of events, marginalised and apparently insignificant. "Nothing happens in grand style."20 Reitz parodies this Holocaust view of history (as ornament) in a scene where three important Nazi bosses (Frick, Loy and Rosenberg) visit Eduard and Lucie's expensive villa. History writ large and history writ small meet - or do they? Rather they brush past each other in a fleeting visit ironically treated by Reitz. The bright light at the end of the corridor where the bosses (presumably) are, a fleeting glimpse of the god-like figures, Lucie's eyes lit up with infatuation and adulation, all the left-over food; all these are filmic exaggerations mocking the adulation felt by these people towards criminals, and parodying the suggestion that this is the way great historical events are experienced.

* * * * *
Contained within the concept Heimat for Reitz is "eine Familie, ein Dorf, eine Landschaft"\(^2\), namely the region where he was born and grew up. Reitz was born in Morbach on 1st November 1932 in the area known as the Hunsrück, west of the Rhine between Mainz and Trier, "ein ärmliches Mittelgebirge."\(^2\) The exact placing of his narration, rural Rhineland Germany in the years 1919-1982, is as important for Reitz as Danzig was for Grass in Die Blechtrommel and represents a move away from those presentations of history like Holocaust which involve ludicrous sweeps across Europe. Exactness in location is significant for the attempt to activate memory through place; thus the story is based on Schabbach, a village of poor farmers (Schabbach itself does not exist, but in the film is assembled from parts of five villages near Reitz's birthplace), the neighbouring small town, and very occasionally Berlin.

The choice of the title Heimat for this work is a provocation, as Reitz himself confesses: "Es gibt in unserer deutschen Kultur kaum ein ambivalenteneres Gefühl, kaum eine schlimmere Mischung von Glück und Brutalität als die Erfahrung, die hinter dem Wort 'Heimat' steht. In allen Zeiten der deutschen Kultur hat man sich mit diesem Gefühl herumgeschlagen. Heine wurde fast verrückt davon, Hitler hat versucht, dieses Wort zu einer politischen Maxime zu machen."\(^2\) Notwithstanding these connotations, like Kluge with the similarly loaded term "patriot", Reitz does not shy away from a reassessment of the concept. At the time of making the film, and certainly after its appearance, the term Heimat was bandied about on all parts of the political spectrum. Traditionally belonging to the conservative elements, there was an attempt in the 1970s by the Left in Germany to appropriate something of it to itself. By the end of the 1970s, all the political parties were vying for possession of the charged word Heimat, not just the traditional right-wing elements of West German political life.

For since the war, the idea of Heimat, best exemplified in the idea of Heimatvertriebene, belonged, much as did the term "patriot", to the political ideology of the Right, and was used as a vehicle for disseminating right-wing ideas through the popular culture of Heimat films. Heimat films had existed before the restoration period of the Adenauer era, but in this period these films with their rural settings offered a nostalgic return to the past in a time of turmoil and then reconstruction. With their Alpine settings, sentimental romances and their expression of fatalism, they became a peculiarly German, and immensely popular form of cinema in the 1950s. These associations with Heimatfilme make KAES suspicious and critical of Reitz's employment of the genre. But his assessment and judgment of the film, largely based on this assessment, regrettably fails to do justice to Reitz's venture. He accuses Reitz's film of evoking "associations of the 'homeland' and Blut und Boden literature of the Nazi era,
"associations which must be regarded as dangerous." Kaes is justifiably suspicious about the evocation of these associations, yet neglects the stance which Reitz in fact takes up in the film Heimat.

In his appraisal of the Heimat genre, Kaes also neglects an important transformation which took place as film and literature returned to the provinces in the 1970s. Tales from a provincial milieu began to dominate with the return of the Volksstück, once a kitsch form of literature turned into a vehicle for social criticism by Horváth and others, and with works such as Klaus Pohl's Das alte Land, Gerhard Roth's Langläufiger Tod and Peter Handke's Langsame Heimkehr. This tradition harked back to the Volksstück of the younger Brecht, of Marieluise Fleißer, and Ödon von Horváth, all of whom showed life in the provinces to be far from the rural idyll found in the Nazi and postwar periods. In a sense, this tradition of provincial literature can be viewed as a critical alternative to the Heimatfilme. The sadism, brutality and prejudices of the milieu described by Horváth and Fleißer reveal Kaes's evaluation as partial and misleading. The Volksstück counteracted sentimental idylls of rural life in the provinces, beginning in 1966 with Martin Sperr's Jagdszenen aus Niederbayern, depicting the persecution of a young homosexual in a Bavarian village. In fact, the central motif of the Volksstück became the persecution of outsiders. This theatrical genre was transported to film when Sperr's play was filmed by Fleischmann, and when Fassbinder, drawing heavily on Fleißer, began making films.

An attempt to subvert the nature of Heimatfilme was thus taking place in the critical Sixties and Seventies, as Elsaesser charts in his history of new German cinema. Drawing on the tradition of Fleißer, Horváth and Brückner who had subverted the Volksstück into a means of social critique on the oppression taking place in the more remote parts of Germany, these films used a similar rural setting. Around 1971 there was, according to Elsaesser, "a resurrection of Germany's only indigenous and historically most enduring genre..." Kaes omits this later development of Heimat by Fassbinder, Schlöndorff and Achternbusch, jumping straight from the Heimat film of the Fifties to the Green wave of the late Seventies and concluding an uncritical espousal of the ideals of Heimat by the later generation. There had been, in the meantime, a strong alternative created to the traditional Heimat film. The challenge to Reitz was to make a film about Heimat without, on the one hand, any of the connotations which worry Kaes and, on the other, the sharp satirical and polemic edge of the films of the 1970s. Reitz belonged on neither side of what can be seen as a politically divided and ideologically motivated debate, and therefore he sought to develop a new approach beyond what had already been said.
In assessing where Reitz lies in relation to the contradictory tendencies associated with the term *Heimat* and the cultural products it has brought about, it must be admitted that he moves unevenly between them. He talks of *Heimat* in terms of a memory of lost things, our childhood dreams. Such a sense of nostalgia would not have found a place in the works of the critical films of the 1970s. Worthy of emphasis here is the different perspective that Reitz takes. Whereas those earlier writers and film makers identify and follow the victims of provincial brutality, Reitz leaves the victim (after the point about prejudice and persecution has been made) to maintain his interest in those responsible. Thus a certain critical sharpness is, it must be conceded, lacking in Reitz. Yet there is the same awareness of the cruel treatment of outsiders, as exemplified in the stories of Appolonia and Klärchen. The treatment of Appolonia, branded Hexe and Zigeunerin by the villagers and exploited by the innkeeper, is placed side by side with the revival of nationalism. The historian would say that what happens in one village is not of historical interest, what happens in thousands of villages is. Reitz makes the generality of the treatment of Appolonia clear when she describes Schabbach as "ein böses Dorf - wie all die bösen Dörfer" as the train speeds through the countryside. Her treatment is echoed later in the film by the treatment of Klärchen (also dark in appearance). reinforcing the theme of the maltreatment of outsiders found in critical films on the provincial milieu. Moreover, the apparent ambivalence in Reitz's own approach to the term *Heimat* is partly explained by an inability to pin the word down. It is the same problem Kluge has with the word Deutschland. "*Heimat* is such that if one would go closer and closer to it, one would discover that at the moment of arrival it is gone, it has dissolved into nothingness." His solution to this problem of definition is, like Kluge's, to go beyond entrenched, prejudged positions by telling a multiplicity of stories which do not come down on a particular side.

If the *Heimat* genre was one which posed particular problems for Reitz, then the use he makes in the film *Heimat* of quotations from the films and newsreels of the Nazi period is as fraught with potential danger. One charge levelled at Reitz is that, in attempting to present the thought processes of the time, he has merely reproduced false ideology, leaving the film's narrative open to a nostalgic and uncritical reception. In particular, he has been accused of perpetuating clichés, culled particularly from the world of film, instead of living up to his claim to be presenting real experiences. Reitz has a problem: it is clear that the Nazi period was experienced to a great extent through the medium of film, and that the medium was abused and manipulated for the dissemination of propaganda, or to support the "false consciousness" necessary to disarm perception and criticism. Film was therefore discredited, having been implicated in the
criminal acts of the Nazi regime. Quoting from films made in the period in *Heimat* thus carries with it the danger of reproducing ideology without critical distance. Whether Reitz succeeds is to a certain extent the test of the value of the film. Does he merely reproduce the cinematographic clichés of the time, or is he able to reveal to the spectator the relationship between the wishes and desires of the cinema-going public and the ideology contained within the films they were seeing? Before considering Reitz's presentation of German history, it is necessary to look at the degree to which he does in fact reflect on the filmic images of the past, on the medium of film itself.

Christmas 1935 is a point in the film where Reitz appears to be nostalgically evoking the clichéd images of the past found in UFA films of the time. Central to an understanding of this scene is the intention of Reitz to illustrate the implication of the German people with a criminal regime, and the way in which the reality of their involvement is successfully concealed by a false picture of the world they live in, in the sentimentality and *kitsch* of popular culture. These scenes in the film reconstruct this "false consciousness" with an irony which overturns the accusation that Reitz is merely trading in clichés. We see the German Catholic Christmas, filmed in UFA lighting to ironic effect, with the singing of *Stille Nacht* in church at the same time as Wiegand is celebrating his own way by listening to the *Horst Wessel Lied* on a radio broadcast. The sequence makes clear the way in which the Nazis appropriated the sentimentality of Christmas for their own propagandistic purposes. The juxtapositioning of the two "services" is clever film making, as is the use of a lush, golden lighting exaggerated to provide irony. The scene needs no further commentary; these people have allowed themselves to be distracted by sugary sentimentality from a sober assessment of the reality of their situation, they have deceived themselves with their wishful thinking. The ludicrous figure of Wiegand is a further satirical touch, making quite clear that Reitz does not wish an identification with these feelings, but a critical viewing of the mechanics. Lucie, another ironic figure with her effusive enthusiasm, further adds to the satire. This is Christmas exactly as they have wanted, there is "ein anderer Glaube in ihren Augen."30 Only Kath, the voice of scepticism, asks when it will all have to be paid for.

The specific role of the cinema in reflecting the false picture of the world held by the petty bourgeoisie is examined in the episode entitled *Reichshöhenstraße*. Here is the first use of a Zarah Leander film, simultaneous with a view of the reaction of the audience to it. Film quotation is not employed for the sake of mood or creating an atmosphere of nostalgia, but to illustrate the way popular entertainment acted as a form of escapism, to show how people have always wept over sentimental films in cinemas,
while catastrophes and barbarity were taking place outside. The attention Reitz pays to the reactions of the audience in the cinema demonstrates his interest in uncovering the mechanisms here at play. Nor is it true to say that Reitz is merely reproducing clichés rather than real experiences. What he is conveying here is that these people's real experiences were in fact clichés garnered from the world of kitsch films. When Pauline and Maria get home from the Zarah Leander film, they both imitate the star by drawing curls on their cheeks "direkt wie die Zarah." Escapist fantasy prevents them taking the death's head rings seriously; only later does Maria admit to Otto that they had been thoughtless. But it was a thoughtlessness that had, to a certain extent at least, been given free rein by popular culture. In a further example, after the quotation from the Carl Froelich film Heimat, Robert, in imitation of the film, goes down to his abundantly stocked cellar to eat one of the apples on the shelves, in exactly the same way as characters in the film. Reitz is not trying to illustrate some crude manipulation of the German people by deliberate propaganda. The mechanism he is here demonstrating is far more subtle and involves the collusion of the wishes of these people. The film makers of the era had latched onto the fantasy world of the petty bourgeoisie and reflected it in their films, and these people sought to indulge the fantasy world of the films they saw.

Such a mentality made them blind to what was going on around them. At the outbreak of World War Two there is intelligent montage by Reitz using the radio speech by Hitler announcing the invasion of Poland. But unlike Schlöndorff, who uses the same broadcast merely as decoration in his film version of Die Blechtrommel, we discover a different, thoughtful treatment here. Two rows of air cadets stand to attention in a memorial chapel. As war is announced, the camera moves slowly down one row to emphasise the youth of the cadets. The camera then moves across to the stained glass window with a crucifixion scene. The implication is clear: these young men are to be sacrificed. The camera next holds on a picture of Hitler, as the talk is of sacrifice, "Opfer müssen gebracht werden," and then to the monument upon which these words are written. But official history, in the form of national leaders and monuments, is oblivious to the victims. The camera allows the increasing awareness in the spectator, by moving down the second row, that the victims will be these young men. The grim warning of this scene goes unheeded, as life goes on as normal in the street outside; a new baby is born, to be called Sieghild, because victory is desired. The war is to be over "in null komma nix". Robert departs thinking the Führer just wants his car, when he is really being called up and will never be seen again. Pauline wants to protect the world they have built up, and on his departure they talk of business as though nothing is going to happen. Only Kath has a word of caution: "Jetzt bezahlen wir die Rechnung."
As we move deeper into the war years, Reitz is at pains to show how film produced a sanitised version of events for home consumption. It is far from the case that he merely repeats the pictures which had become clichés of the past. The telephone marriage between Anton and Martha, filmed for domestic consumption, is shown in its cynical construction and distanced by a revelation of the mechanics of that construction. Thus the wedding has to wait whilst the lighting is correctly fixed, various camera angles, particularly the one from Anton's perspective, show how the film is being made. When Martha tells Anton to be careful, he replies according to his text: "Gleich neben uns steht der Adolf Hitler Leibstandard. Mit dem kann uns wirklich nichts passieren."34

There are guffaws of laughter from the film makers, a sarcastic comment on such nonsense designed to hoodwink the "home front". Reitz's comment is also reinforced by the interim episode when Eduard learns that Hans, the sniper, had fallen on the Eastern front. The reality of the war comes home to Eduard too late.

In the episode Die Liebe der Soldaten, Reitz reflects on the production of another form of film material, which is to be kept hidden from the public. The commanding officer of the camera crew, in a cynical exposé of his sordid activity, claims: "Nicht der Spielfilm, sondern die Kriegswochenschau ist die wahre Kunst des 20sten Jahrhunderts."35 With it, the events of the war can be seen as though with one's very own eyes: "Wir erreichen, daß sich das Kriegsgeschehen mit größerer Gewalt in die Seele des Menschen eindringt, als es die Kraft der eigenen Augen vermag. Das erreichen wir mit der Kamera."36 Reitz exposes the deception in this view of film as expressed by the commanding officer. These documentary records of the war years were not history wie es eigentlich gewesen as the officer claims, but a construction with an ideological intent. Nowhere does Reitz's approach differ more from the unreflective use of material in Holocaust than in the filming of the execution of the partisans. Merely showing these executions in the way that the Holocaust film does is not enough. They are all too familiar to a postwar generation, the power of such archive sequences to shock has diminished with the years. Reitz is therefore interested in showing the mentality of those taking part in the shooting, both of the film and of the prisoners. The film crew carry on with their highly specialised activity, but Reitz, through clever camera angles and references, demonstrates how the camera is as much a weapon of war as the machine gun. The officer looks for the best angles, the camera is referred to as Kanone, the lens jams just as a gun might, and the three soldiers shooting the film are positioned in black and white behind the three shooting the partisans who are emphasised in colour. During the execution Anton, with the steadiest of hands, witnesses the brutality whilst continuing to take part in his highly specialised activity. Such distancing of the
spectator from the images is certainly not a quality found in the Holocaust film and gives evidence of Reitz's intention to show what was happening behind the screen.

Reitz follows the production of such unofficial documents of war to the editing studio. Here a woman is being taught the art. Before her, two films are simultaneously being run, one a Spielfilm and the other a Kriegsfilm. One is for public consumption, the other is not. The horror trial of Doctor Crippen, in a fictional representation, is deemed suitable fare for cinema goers. But the horrific scenes of the maltreatment of refugees are not. When, looking at the war film, the apprentice comments "es ist furchtbar", she is told not to look at the pictures, but at the technical deficiencies: "das ist alles, was Sie lernen." Even those with direct access to the information were thus able to repress the disturbing events they saw before them, to split their specialised function from the rest of their humanity. In all these quotations from the filmed images of the past, Reitz employs distance and reflects on the use made of film. In none of these examples does the use of documentary film material serve as mere authentic decoration.

Reitz chooses for his film the chronicle ("Eine Chronik in elf Teilen") as a specific form for presenting history in film. The distinction between a chronicle and other forms of historical narrative needs enlarging upon before examining Reitz's chronicle in more detail. Hayden White examines three forms of historical narrative: the annals, the chronicle and the historical narrative proper. The chronicle differs from annals in that it is capable of "translating difference into similarity" by providing a "subject". This subject entails the organisation of materials into topics having as a central feature the "life of an individual, town or region." The organising principle in the discourse is chronology, which renders the chronicle "less than a fully realised history. Moreover, the chronicle, like the annals but unlike the history, does not so much conclude as simply terminate; typically it lacks closure, that summing up of the 'meaning' of a chain of events with which it deals that we normally expect from a well-made story." As such, it is the ideal form, given Reitz's views on the need to avoid preordained judgments in narrating the past.

But it is also important to bear in mind that because the discourse follows the order of chronology "it presents events in the order of their occurrence and cannot, therefore, offer the kind of meaning that a narratologically governed account can be said to provide." The reader thus has the responsibility for "retrospectively reflecting on the linkages between the beginning of the account and the ending." In contrast to the
historical account, the chronicle does not have the same demand for what White terms "closure", that is, the demand for moral meaning where events are given a "significance as elements of a moral drama." A recognition of the nature of the chronicle and Reitz's choice of it as a form of narrative for Heimat is crucial for a full discussion of the debate over whether he is unwilling to make moral judgments about the period in question.

The chronicle form is immediately apparent in the film. Reference has already been made to the film maker's precision in locating the action geographically and the importance of milieu as a base for memory. Here too, in relation to time, he betrays the same exactness of the chronicler, recording and collecting the apparently insignificant minutiae of memory. The date which stands as a title: "9 Mai 1919. Ein Freitag" illustrates a traditional chronicling formulation placed side by side with a form of recollection typical of the ordinary subject of history. The named day of the week moves us into the realm of Alltagsgeschichte or of oral tradition. The beginning of the story is not actually the beginning either, for the title explains that Paul Simon has been walking for six days. Before that was the First World War. A neat periodisation of history is avoided, the starting point is arbitrary and does not suggest a new start or dramatic ending. Very much the same process is noticed at the end of the Hitler Reich which in itself does not constitute the end of an episode, but carries on "messily" into the following one.

Reitz takes us back a good decade before the Nazi period in order to examine the mentality of the people living at that time in rural Germany, and to allow the spectator a chance to get to grips with their thought processes. In one notable scene in this first episode, we see the women of Schabbach sitting and singing at their looms, weaving linen "für die Ewigkeit." The scene is timeless, it could have been painted centuries before. But there is a discrepancy, a jarring modern influence: the radio. A contradiction exists and Paul feels it. The old securities have disappeared, and the fascinating threat of the modern technological age grows. However, a part of those women continues to reside in previous centuries: "nicht alle sind im selben Jetzt da."

Through his attention to the small, apparently insignificant detail, Reitz provides an illustration here of an important observation made by sociologists in their studies of the phenomenon of Fascism. Trotsky wrote in 1933: "Nicht nur in den Bauernhäusern, sondern auch in städtischen Wolkenkratzern leben noch heute neben dem 20sten Jahrhundert das zehnte und das dreizehnte. Hunderte von Millionen Menschen gebrauchen den elektrischen Strom und hören doch nicht auf, an die magische Gewalt der Gesten und Beschwörungen zu glauben. Der römische Papst
This collision between technological developments and an archaic mentality was discussed in similar terms by Ernst Bloch. He developed, in his attempt to understand Fascism, the concept of Ungleichzeitigkeiten (nonsynchronicities), containing his assertion that we live not just in "today" but in yesterday and tomorrow. Bloch examines an abundance of older and younger forms of living which exhibit themselves not only in modes of production, but in pictures, hopes, yearnings which gain their strength as it were from a subterranean sea. Hitler, according to Bloch, was able to tap into these archaic influences in Germany and to gain as much support from these nonsynchronicities as he did from the money of the capitalists.

The closeness of Reitz to Bloch's view of history is made clear in the former's essay Die Kamera ist keine Uhr: "Ich halte es für eine Lüge, wenn uns gesagt wird, die Zeit sei ein regelmäßiger Strom, in dem wir alle und alle Dinge gleichmäßig dahinfließen. Die Zeit, die wir mit Uhren messen, die wir in Kalendern registrieren oder die wir mit Meterlängen im Film definieren, existiert nicht. Jedes Lebewesen und jeder Gegenstand lebt in einer eigenen Zeit und diese eigene Zeit fließt nicht kontinuierlich, sondern steht gelegentlich still, geht stockend voran, manchmal mit rasender Geschwindigkeit, also unregelmäßig. Das Vergangene ist nicht vergangen, die Zukunft ist nicht vor uns, sondern genausogut hinter uns. Gegenwart ist nicht die Zeit, in der wir handeln."46

As Bloch relates in his essay on Ungleichzeitigkeiten, there are two sections of the population, the Bauerntum and the Kleinbürgertum, particularly susceptible to this phenomenon. These are precisely the two areas located by Reitz in Schabbach and the small town milieu of Simmern. Bloch emphasises, as one of the main characteristics of the Bauerntum, that their existence, the archaic form of their means of production, their customs and calendar life, contradict the urbanisation of the modern technological age and create the non-synchronicities from which political reaction draws sustenance.47

For these reasons Bloch considered it vital to study this milieu: "Abgelegene Orte wirken hier besonders lehrreich, denn sie zeigen kulturelles Grundwasser, das anderswo nur tiefer liegt ... Paare leben trotz Radio und Zeitung auf dem Dorf, denen Ägypten immer noch das Land ist, wo die Prinzessin den Moses-Knaben aus dem Fluß gezogen hat, nicht das Land der Pyramiden oder des Suezkanals." He continues: "Die Bauern halten dennoch einen schiefen Rest, fühlen sich eher von Rittergütern als von Arbeitern in der verdächtigten Stadt mitvertreten."48
The other section of the population considered by Bloch is the one on which Grass also centred his satirical attention, i.e. the Kleinbürgertum of small town shopkeepers. In Heimat, Pauline represents with her husband Robert that milieu of which Bloch says: "Mehr als je ist das Kleinbürgertum der feuchtwarme Humus für Ideologie; doch zeigt sich; die heute grassierende Ideologie hat lange Wurzeln und längere als das Kleinbürgertum." Those roots take us back to the country, for the movement from the countryside into the towns was not just demographic, but contained attitudes which created the Ungleichzeitigkeit, characterised by a longing for the lost rural lifestyle "Heimweh nach Gewesenen." Older forms of life are found in the towns, older ways of thinking, together with prejudices surrounding the Jewish money lender derived from a view of the economy belonging to the fifteenth rather than the twentieth century. The medieval is alive and well in the modern technological age. Archaic patterns of thought and attitudes resurface, the peasants believe in witches, the Kleinbürger in Jewish plots; the peasants have their superstitions about the powers and secrets of nature, the petit bourgeois their belief in the elders of Zion.

The final scenes of the first episode of Heimat serve to underline some of these themes and to illustrate Ungleichzeitigkeiten. Paul takes his radio to the ruined castle; old and new are juxtaposed. Future technology and the remnants of the past exist side by side, whilst the technology is being erected we hear snatches of peasant superstition: "Das kann kein Gewitter geben, wenn mein' Kellertreppe trocke ist" and tales of a man shooting a gun at the skies. The alternation between black and white film and colour emphasises these differences, and the upside down view of the scene thematises a world in confusion. The reaction of the villagers is noteworthy: a fascination with the wonder of it all without understanding its significance and implications. For Wiegand in particular, there is the suggestion that technology will become a surrogate religion. How are these people, with all their archaic thought processes, their dark prejudices and their ignorance of the modern, going to respond to the manipulation of the medium of radio? Reitz has successfully, and historically through his collection of memories in this episode, shown the potential for future problems, and counterbalanced a simplistic view of events with his version of Alltags- and Mentalitätsgeschichte.

In his essay entitled Sympathische Nazis, Reitz expounds some of his thoughts on the Nazi period which were to be developed in the course of the film Heimat. He begins with a definition of Fascism as "Wunscherfüllung. Revolutionäre Träume von der 'besseren Welt' sollen zu Lebzeiten unter allen Umständen Realität werden."
Impatience coupled with vitality is the motivating factor, and the desire to possess whatever can be imagined, soon becomes collective greed. This desire to possess demands the sacrifice of all that is slow and weak, and those who try to slow down or point out the dangers in the acquisitive process are seen as spoil-sports. Katharina is such a figure in *Heimat*. She recognises that the new found wealth is based on credit, and is not hesitant about making her views known. She has also seen the other side of the new age in the poverty of the cities and suppression of opposition. Reitz's view of the fascist mentality is that it demands "Fortschritt um jeden Preis. Deswegen wird der Faschist versuchen, sich an die Spitze der 'modernsten' Entwicklung zu setzen ... Der Faschist will unbedingt zu Lebzeiten glücklich werden." The violent and speedy solution to social problems follows from this, leading to other acts of violence. The Fascist lives in a state of intoxication: "Nur im Rauschzustand kann man viele Widersprüche übersehen, so unbewußt leben, wie es die Nazis in ihrer Irrationalität taten. Sie waren die 'modernsten', 'schnellsten', 'vitalsten', 'schnellen', 'schönsten', 'schnellen', 'schönen', 'schnellen'. Der Intellektuelle mit seinen 'Bedenken', der Kommunist mit seinen 'Analysen' - das waren Greuel für die Nazis." Action replaced thought, emotion replaced reason, extreme individualism was expressed in the demand for instant happiness, extreme collectivism became the way of achieving it. Yet, as Reitz concludes, this impatient search for happiness also made of "unsere Mütter so sympathische Hühner."

The willingness with which Reitz is prepared to see the perspective of his parents' generation and to suspend the sort of damning indictment of it as the *Auschwitzgeneration*, in an attempt to understand and uncover certain reflexes, has led to objections from certain critics. First and foremost amongst these concerns is the apparent displacement of the Holocaust from an account of German history which is regarded at best as elliptical, at worst revisionist. Political violence is pushed to the very margins of the tale, and there is certainly no detailed reference to the Holocaust. A few references are made: to the Jew living in Robert's house "dem es nimmer so gut geht" to a Jewish bank which goes to the wall (conveniently for Eduard and Lucie, who have bought their villa on credit from the same bank). Then there is the sequence involving Hans the basket maker's son, who stumbles on an Arbeitslager; a whispered conversation in the salon of Lucie's villa on a musical evening contains veiled references to the cremation of Jews. None of these are followed up in any way, and the objection is raised that history of technology and the trivia of kitchen life takes on a greater importance than the Holocaust. The claim is made that the omission of reference to the Holocaust renders the film ahistorical. Everydayness replaces events of historical significance. The sort of things Reitz describes at length are universal, "timeless" occurrences without historical importance. The fact these things made up daily life
whilst the concentration camps were operating at full capacity would be more impressive if the contrast were to be found in the film.

These particular criticisms can be answered in several ways. First of all, it ignores the nature of this historical account which is in the form of a chronicle. As such, there is of necessity a suspension of hindsight. The story presents events in their order of occurrence and cannot bestow that meaning which such critics wish it to have. Nevertheless, the chronicle does allow us to see history from the perspective of those who experience it, and the evolution of events, attitudes and thought processes can be more carefully examined. As to the charge that Heimat offers an elliptical account, it must be said that history is always selective, must needs be so. The historian of necessity limits himself; to attempt other would be non-sensical. We only ever get a partial picture. However, given this obvious constraint on narrating the past, Reitz seeks to present many stories, rather than to press the past into the service of a single story in the way Holocaust did. In this way, he avoids the trivialisation of the past which was the unfortunate outcome of the Hollywood version. Although the Holocaust is left out of play, Reitz could expect the viewer to superimpose his knowledge of those events on to the images he presents, in the manner of Kluge's "Kino im Kopf". Such a dialogue is also in the nature of a chronicle which, as Hayden White reminds us, "throws onto the reader the burden for retrospectively reflecting on the linkages between the beginning of the account and its ending."57 This is the creative aspect of memory, of imagination: to build new connections, to work associatively like a poet. Of the Judenfrage Reitz comments: "Eine Thematik, zu der unendlich viel erzählt worden ist, und in dem Moment, wo ich mich auf diese Terrain begeben hätte, hätte die Geschichte eine andere Wendung genommen."58 That turn in the account would be to see the Nazis as the others and hence to judge all who lived in the period as war criminals.

A further criticism is aimed at Reitz's portrayal of Fascism as an import from Berlin, or as a natural calamity along the lines of Die deutsche Katastrophe, indicated by a reading of the scene where diphtheria comes to Schabach. It has also been suggested that Reitz is supporting the Kleine Leute These which saw Fascism as a catastrophe which befell the poor little man portrayed in the works of Böll and Lenz. Did no mass murderers come from the Hunsrück? Or was Fascism an interloper in a solid peasant world? To suppose Reitz sees Fascism as a natural disaster is a misinterpretation. Rather the indications are of a slow, insidiously creeping, almost inconspicuous association with the regime, comprising elements of greed, opportunism, speculation and immaturity. But we see the film with the benefit of hindsight. The length of the film
and the multiplicity of stories give us the possibility of seeing the almost imperceptible changes in outlook, the growth of a fascist mentality almost by-the-by.

The second episode of Heimat takes us into the years running up to the coming to power of the Nazis and affords us an opportunity to examine these objections to Reitz's presentation. At the beginning of the episode, Karl reminds us of the need to suspend hindsight - "we were happy then, because we did not know what was going to happen." In having Eduard seduced by Lucie, madam of a Berlin brothel, and then return to the Hunsrück to become a Gauleiter, the suggestion that the episode implies that, firstly, the little people were seduced by Hitler against their better judgment, and secondly, that Berlin was the centre of Nazi influence and all evil came from the big cities seems to be confirmed. If Reitz is trying to show the perception of the villagers, then this has not been made clear and he has been clumsy in reproducing, without any distance, the evasions of the postwar period. But this may be to read into the scene something which was not intended by the film maker.

It may instead be the case that Reitz wishes here, as elsewhere, to demonstrate how political events are ignored, marginalised or "lived over" by the wishes of people to be happy and healthy. Eduard goes to Berlin sick and lonely, he returns healthy and happy. The stereophonic effect employed to great effect by Fassbinder is used also by Reitz to show how the great political events are meaningless for people setting out to live their lives. We hear, in the brothel, a speech by Hitler threatening ruthless treatment to those who oppose him. We, with the benefit of hindsight, can shudder at these words, but they hear the speech and know what is being said in a totally superficial way. Certainly they are not innocent, but this is not the question which concerns us here, rather it is the question of reflexes. The bedroom scene with Eduard and Lucie is a further example of this process of knowing-but-not-knowing, of experiencing historical events whilst being oblivious to their import. We, and they, hear the military marches going on outside and the sounds of the crowds with the Sieg Heil, but they are engaged in their own intimate affairs. Wiegand quizzes Eduard on the events in Berlin, he expects that Eduard has seen the Führer. Of course, he has not: "was Direktes sieht man ja net. Meier liest es mehr in der Zeitung." They do not have first hand experience of 'events', but are dependent on the media for their picture. Eduard's account of the events of the 30th January is typical of how we experience 'history'. Of the National Revolution he says: "Ja, am 30. Januar war es auf einmal so hell in meinem Zimmer. Das muß von dem Fackelzug gewesen sein. Aber ich hab grad geschlafen ... müde war ich schon." How often is human consciousness ever fully aware? Events pass by. The actors and actresses of the day mean more to these people than the events of the
'National Revolution'. Katharina's note of warning is but an intuition: 'Ich hab dat Gefühl, die ganze Welt lebt auf Pump ... eines Tages, müsse mer dat alles bezahle.'\textsuperscript{62} But it remains an intuition; how could she know what would happen? The time to live is now; now is the moment to get a villa and a good job.

The 30th January 1933 is a date given ironic emphasis by Reitz; the \textit{Machtergreifung} is shown in a warm glow of colour as it is welcomed by the people of Simmern. \textit{Brot und Arbeit} is what it all means to them, but feelings are shown to be ambivalent. Robert and Pauline, the archetypal \textit{Kleinbürger}, look out at the passing SA, and Robert comments on the dubious provenance of many of those marching. We are reminded of the roots of National Socialism in anti-Semitism in the repetition of the scene where Pauline goes out and is cut by broken glass from the window of the Jew who owns the house and lives above. It has all happened before. During the march Pauline and Robert declare their love for each other. Personal lives take precedence over historical events. Nevertheless, the mood of the people of the time is captured in a way no history book can; the excitement expressed by Pauline: "es geht aufwärts - die Leute spüren es alle"\textsuperscript{63}, the anticipation of improvements and future happiness: "es ist so, als ob jahrelang schönes Wetter käm".\textsuperscript{64} The customers are laughing and are in a hurry, the long wait for something to happen is at last over. Reitz presents us with this without judgments; we are capable of making that judgment, because we are capable of adding what we know about subsequent events; but a suspension of judgment is necessary, if understanding of how those events were experienced is to be produced.

Nonetheless, Reitz is careful not to remove from the account the warning signals which were quite clear to see, for as well as being negligent, these people deliberately chose to turn a blind eye to what was going on. By 1933, three cars are parked in front of the Simons' house. Robert and Pauline, small retailers, are prospering: "Die Leute kaufen Uhren und Schmuck wie noch nie"\textsuperscript{65}, and to emphasise the blooming of their personal happiness Pauline is expecting. However, such new found prosperity has come about at the expense of the Jew who lived above "dem geht's nimmer so gut dem Juden"\textsuperscript{66}, comments Robert without malice. There is a faint awareness of a general condition, but an uncaring, indifferent and unsympathetic attitude is the result of the desire to be happy, possess a car, house and children. Such a pattern strikes as being true to human behaviour, full of omissions, not demonic, but just as harmful in a banal way. Kath's words reflect Reitz's own thoughts on the Nazi mentality: "das alles auf einmal". The answer: "Man ist doch nur einmal jung, Mutti"\textsuperscript{67}, an answer, although all too human, which betrays a carefree indifference and a political blindness.
Elements of what Reitz describes in his essay as the Nazi mentality are given flesh and blood in this episode. Wishful thinking and opportunism typify Lucie’s outlook. She forms a picture of Eduard’s Heimat from his descriptions of his lands and sees the opportunity for them when the real state of affairs is revealed. Wiegand is another opportunist, with his Hitler moustache, he cuts a comical, trivial figure. Entrancement with the wonders of the new age is shown on Kath’s journey to relatives in the Ruhr. On the train a family of fellow travellers are spell-bound by the fireworks display celebrating the Führer’s birthday: “das ist eine neue Zeit.” Fritz, the Communist prophesies a speedy end to the dream and is arrested by a Schupo, who, knowing the victim, is kindly in his assessment of his fate: nothing untoward will happen, this is a bloodless revolution; the concentration camp is to re-educate and eradicate his Marxist ideas: “das Essen ist gut, Sport wird getrieben und jeden Tag Schule.” The friendly Großpapa is another example of this wishful thinking. Even Kath herself, the intuitive critic of the new age, wishes outcomes which are impossible in the circumstances they are in, requiring the impossible of Anton: “die Uniform ziehst du nicht mehr an. Versprichst du mir?” As Glaisch comments, with the only hindsight which is offered in the film, it was an impossible promise for a fifteen year old who had grown up thinking the Führer was always watching him.

It has been forcefully argued that Reitz is too concerned to normalise the past and does this by refusing to commit himself into arguing the rights and wrongs of past actions. This harmonisation strategy has the unfortunate result of showing the repression of unpleasant facts, but without the distance and irony which are needed to make such mental block-outs transparent. Harmonisation bestows an atmosphere on the film which may trigger uncritical nostalgia rather than perception. The question of moral judgments has been considered already. Although the film is not about German guilt, this does not mean Reitz seeks to excuse. Trying to find the reasons for events is not the same as justifying those events. Reitz is clearly trying to understand the connections between ordinary life and the concentration camps. In so doing, he sees the need to put the past into bearable proportions, thereby undoubtedly slipping into problems of harmonisation and losing critical distance. But it would be hard to judge some sixteen hours of film in such a general way. Embarrassment over the past, simplistic guilt reactions and crocodile tears could never lead to understanding. Reitz is successful at showing how people were capable of thinking elliptically, of subconsciously taking on board attitudes, and of adopting the principle of living-in-spite-of-everything.

It is an ambitious project to attempt to show what the man in the street was thinking during this traumatic period of German history. There is also enough
indication in the course of the film of the cruelty and senselessness of events, in the
death of Hans Betz and the cold-blooded murder of an English pilot. Reitz's intention is
not to act as (hanging) judge, but to stay with the concrete detail of the story, with the
aim of bringing people together to remember in a way which could be communicative
and lead to the discovery of common ground. The broad category of national evil which
leads only to an impersonal guilt is rejected. Reitz comments: "Obviously it is an
antifascist film - but in contrast to most, I've tried to show history in concretely human
terms, how it felt to live in those days - the kind of choices people had to make."71

In assuming a form of narration which avoids closure, both structurally and
morally, Reitz has been able to overcome the dichotomy in the discussion of the past
which existed in the ideological debates of Left and Right. The open-ended form of story-
telling signifies a deliberate abstention from a moralistic judgment on social and political
events. Reitz has avoided showing his own political credentials by celebrating his anti-
fascist views, and through a slowly evolving, multi-faceted representation of the past has
contributed to an understanding of how those events were experienced and perceived by
those who lived through them. The temporary removal of Auschwitz from the central
position it is due in the narration of German history has allowed an alternative to be
offered. However, it is a removal that should not be seen as other than provisional.
Moreover, from a highly suspect and stereotyped form of cinema Reitz has created a film
about Heimat which both transcends its predecessors and allows the possibility for
thousands of repressed stories to be told.
CONCLUSION.

Fifty Years On: The Continuation of the Remembrance of Things Past.

The German past has proven to be an unsinkable ship, notwithstanding the often strenuous efforts to submerge it in an ocean of oblivion. Even before the momentous events of German reunification and the end of the Cold War, aspects of that past had provoked intense historical debate in the Historikerstreit of the mid 1980s. This brought to a wider public the burning relevance of historical controversy over the era of the Third Reich, as the argument raged between those who wished to historicize past events by widening the perspective, and those for whom Auschwitz remained the sine qua non of German history. Saul Friedländer, in his discussions with the historian Martin Broszat, points to the dangers of shifting the debate from the unique aspects of the Nazi era to the normal and comprehensible. We have seen, in the context of both literary and cinematic consideration of the German past, both the merits and problems associated with this shift of perspective. Grass, although taking a path which went "an Auschwitz vorbei", was able to show Nazism as a populist phenomenon rooted in the attitudes and mentality of a large section of the population. He was able to undermine the myth of Nazism as Hitlerism, and the theory of a hapless population brutalised into submission by a band of criminals. This tendency towards "normalization" continued in the work of the film makers studied. Kluge allowed his film to speak for the German victims of Fascism, concentrating on the German catastrophe at Stalingrad and the plight of civilians in German cities during Allied bombings. Schlöndorff gave Grass's approach another airing, showing how Fascism insinuated its way into the lives of the Kleinbürger, whereas Reitz succeeded, by turning his back on Auschwitz, in dispelling the tendency to utterly condemn the generation which supported Hitler, without understanding the way in which ordinary failings, political blindness and opportunism allowed the Nazis to come to power and maintain it. There is no doubting the way in which these explorations of "normal" life can help understand the reflexes and processes which allowed barbarity to take place.

The Historikerstreit returned questions over the singularity of the Holocaust to the foreground. It demonstrated that any leaving aside in the reckoning of the past of all that is understood by the word Auschwitz could only be provisional, for in following this route past Auschwitz, the story of the victims, most of whom were not German, but nevertheless are as much a part of German history as the dead of Stalingrad or Dresden, was in danger of being ignored. That is not to say that there had been no treatment of
the other victims in literature and film: Peter Weiss's play *Die Ermittlung* and Egon Monk's film *Ein Tag* (1965) both dealt with those who suffered and died in the concentration camps. On the whole, though, there has been an understandable hesitancy in treating such a difficult theme, or a reluctance to draw in the non-German victims of the Third Reich. The dangers of permanently removing Auschwitz from the central perspective of these years have been clearly outlined by Kershaw: "*For the victims of Nazism - most of whom were not Germans - the experience and memory are different, utterly contrasting, but certainly no less genuine or legitimate. From their perspective, a portrayal of the Hitler era which does not have at its core Auschwitz as the epitome of the evil and horror of the Third Reich, can only be a flawed, misguided, or deliberately tendentious one.*"¹

However, despite this warning, the second half of the 1980s saw an outbreak of wishful thinking characterised by a desire to give emphasis to the positive aspects of German history. The mood of this period was of confidence and prosperity in West Germany; this correspondingly required, in conservative circles at least, a "normalization" of the German past, bringing it from the shadows of the war crimes and genocide of the Third Reich. The end of the Cold War, the reunification of Germany, and the "end of history" as declared by Fukuyama were naively regarded as confirming a movement away from the past. Whereas the division of Europe, and more specifically the division of Germany, into two ideologically opposed factions should have reminded those who might have wished to forget them of the causes of, and responsibility for that division, a mood of triumph and euphoria brought about one more evasion, as the past was again buried underneath the construction work for the future. According to this general atmosphere of optimism, the scars of history seemed to have healed with the fall of the Berlin Wall; Germany had returned to a normal existence as a nation state, and required a normalised history to correspond to this return. A renewed use of the totalitarian alibi came into existence which sought to blur the distinctions between the crimes of Stalinism (and the GDR state) and those of Nazism. Kershaw describes how this alibi was employed: "*Within Germany this could easily mean that the perfectly understandable preoccupation with the inhumanity of the GDR system, which has only recently disappeared and is therefore much more vivid in the memory, increasingly displaces the fading memory of Nazism, trivializing the horrors perpetrated under Hitler by naïve and shallow comparison with the crimes of the Honecker regime.*"² Wishful thinking, monomanic construction for the future, and alibis with regard to uncomfortable aspects of the past resurfaced as though straight from the text book of the tactics of evasion written in the 1950s.
This wishful thinking dissipated as rapidly as post-unification euphoria, and subsequent events have demonstrated that a line can not be so easily drawn under the past. Re-emerging racism, with the desecration of Jewish cemeteries, attacks on immigrant hostels in Rostock and other German cities so reminiscent of the anti-Jewish pogrom of the Reichskristallnacht, and neonazism with its attendant recourse to fascist symbols, salutes and ideology underline the point that the German past is a past which simply will not vanish. During the forty years of the existence of West Germany, key political moments unleashed a debate with that past: the end of the Adenauer era and the rise of anti-Semitism in the late 1950s; the Frankfurt trials of 1963-5; the culmination of terrorist action and state reaction in the German Autumn of 1977. All three moments were sudden, unpredicted breakthroughs in collective amnesia, and give warning of the difficulty of predicting constellations of events which could lead to a renewed debate with the past. The trials may vanish with their protagonists, the ideological battle of the Cold War which polarised official stances to recent history may have been won or lost, but the reappearance of a racism and of political extremism unprecedented in postwar Germany and Europe, together with deep structural problems of unemployment, surely present such a challenge. Within the new Europe, far from Auschwitz being removed from view, the horrific events surrounding the dissolution of former Yugoslavia have returned the very images of concentration camps and genocide to the foreground. Events have thrown down a challenge which, at least in part, induced the American director Spielberg to respond in the film Schindler’s List.

Fifty years on, and we move towards the new millennium and away from a century over which Auschwitz has cast its dark shadow. The fiftieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War, the liberation of Auschwitz and the Stunde Null will soon have passed. As each anniversary comes and goes, and official attempts are made to exploit them for political ends, fewer are those who lived through the events which those anniversaries commemorate. In what ways will the collective remembrance of things past find an expression? Since we live in an age of "technical reproduction", all the visual and verbal documents will remain with us. The directness of this collective memory was used to great effect by Kluge in his Stalingrad novel, by Weiss in his play Die Ermittlung, and by the French film maker Claude Lanzmann in Shoah, his nine hour record of witness accounts. But few, if any, new documents will be forthcoming, as those surviving victims capable of giving such powerful testimony in eye-witness accounts are becoming ever less numerous, and those who perpetrated the crimes are, at the very least, no longer in active life within society. The prospect of further significant war crimes trials which stirred West German society in 1963-65 and again in 1979 appears unlikely, particularly after recent cases of mistaken identity. There is a danger
that the industry of memorialisation will step into the breach, and that images which once shocked will lose their power to do so. Who could have imagined a rash of Holocaust museums in the United States, making use of interactive gimmicks, flashy technology and cheap identification with the victims, just fifty years after the liberation of Auschwitz? Direct accounts will inevitably be replaced by indirect collective images created by mass-cultural products such as the Holocaust film of 1979 and Spielberg's Schindler's List (1994).

The appearance of Schindler's List has confirmed the power of film to both preserve and move. Ever since Hitchcock made his documentary record of the liberation of the concentration camps, collective remembrance of those events has been etched in black and white on subsequent generations. The directness of those film images has held an indisputable power. Even survivors of Auschwitz claim to remember in black and white, and Lanzmann's complaint that Spielberg's documentary realism, in the form of the newsreel trope, is specious, and that there were blue skies and green trees at Auschwitz3, falls against the power of these images. Spielberg's comment: "I have no colour references for that period"4 applies to those born after. But every film made about Auschwitz raises the question: how are these events to be portrayed? Both Spielberg and Lanzmann, in their very different ways, reject the use of direct archive material. Lanzmann was the more radical, in that his film eschews any attempt to re-create the past, being filmed entirely in the present (1979) and consisting of interviews with survivors and camp officials interspersed with sequences filmed at Auschwitz as it is now. He is interested in the gaps between reality and recollection, and in the workings of the past in the present. Spielberg, too, discards any archive film, although he imitates, alludes to, and constantly reminds us of the images found in them. With the skill of the cinematographer, and using the power of pictures, he creates a compelling melodrama based on the traditional Aristotelian categories of shock, pity and fear, aimed at releasing shame, indignation and sadness. His film possesses Hollywood features of narrative tension (sustained over three hours), a happy end and the dynamic pragmatism of an American hero, as well as a blithe disregard for the Bilderverbot. Yet, despite claims that Spielberg has added nothing to an understanding of how pogroms happened in European history, the film has worked against the increasing desire to forget, the astounding ignorance amongst school children, and unleashed an interest that has been followed up in many other educational and cultural spheres.

The cultural effects of Spielberg's film within a specific German context remain to be seen. The choice by Spielberg of Schindler's story is a provocative challenge to those who wished to dispense with this period of German history. Schindler himself was
a "forgotten" German, seen as a pariah by the citizens of Frankfurt in the postwar period, and a direct challenge, in his remarkable ability to act against the system, to the convenient alibi of the Gehorsamsthese. Some German critics\(^5\) have been moved to ask why it has again been left to Hollywood to bring aspects of the past home. The Reimers, in their overview of German narrative cinema in the postwar period\(^6\), have made the claim that no German narrative film has portrayed life in the death camps. Hollywood has taken on this task, at first, Holocaust (1978), then War and Remembrance (1989) and most recently by Spielberg with his film Schindler's List. Holocaust, in the manner of its presentation of German history, stimulated a fierce reaction, as has been seen, bringing about a wave of response by German directors. Aspects of the past certainly retain a potency, as is testified by Joseph Vilsmaier's film Stalingrad which attracted some one and a half million German cinema-goers in 1993. We shall have to see whether Spielberg's film unleashes such a productive wave as did Holocaust fifteen years ago. The moment is perhaps once more propitious; Boyes suggests: "Spielberg's film arrives at a different moment in German history. East German children ... were not given a sense of collective guilt ... As far as the communist schools were concerned, the Nazi years were part of West and not East German history. Spielberg's film is likely to sow some doubts, wake up a few teenagers, contribute in its way to the psychological unification of east and west."\(^7\)

Are these aspects untouchable for German feature film makers? Kluge, Schlöndorff and Reitz, in their different ways have left out Auschwitz from the centre of contemplation of the Nazi era. Is this the time to attempt an integration of both the "normality" of life at that time and Auschwitz? Is such an approach possible? Kershaw asks the same question from the viewpoint of a historian: "Can 'normality' and genocide be linked rather than presented as irreconcilable opposites? ... It is important to search for and develop such connections if the latent polarization of fundamentally opposed interpretations is not to harden into trivialization on one side and monumentalisation on the other."\(^8\) Where Auschwitz fits in to German history seems a question still to be fully answered. Historians, writers, dramatists, and makers of films for both cinema and television will all undoubtedly perpetuate the work of remembrance, as they continue to give narrative shape to events in an attempt to make sense of the past.
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