Germans as Victims?

Thoughts on a Post–Cold War History of World War II's Legacies

Robert G. Moeller

Some fifty years after the end of World War II, many Germans, including leading politicians, public intellectuals, architects, journalists, writers and historians discussed the most effective way to memorialize the Holocaust, mourn Jewish victims of the Nazi state and signify to themselves and the rest of the world that the Nazi attempt to kill all European Jews was central to any complete account of modern German history. After broad public debate, a majority in the parliament determined that in the center of Berlin—a city that with the end of the East–West division of the Cold War had resumed its former prominence as a major capital in the center of Europe—a monument would be constructed to honor the memory of the "murdered Jews of Europe." Within walking distance of the Brandenburg Gate and the remodeled Reichstag building, since 1998 home of the German parliament, and close to the huge new buildings that have sprung up in the past decade to house the national government, the Holocaust Memorial should serve as a powerful reminder that what joined Germans in the present was a past in which millions of other Germans had enthusiastically supported a regime that had sought to eliminate European Jewry. The Holocaust Memorial will be located on ground that was part of the "no man's land" running along the wall that for nearly forty years divided East from West Berlin. One part of modern German history will cover another.[1]

Against the background of debates over what shape the Holocaust Memorial should take, many Germans were also discussing how to commemorate other legacies of World War II. Consider a few examples. In 1992, Helke Sander's film *BeFreier und Befreite* (Liberators take liberties) presented the past of the thousands of German rape victims of Red Army soldiers at the war's end. A year later, Josef Vilsmaier's *Stalingrad* evoked the suffering of men rather than women by revisiting the "death of the Sixth Army" in the winter of 1942/43. This well-known director's film drew more than a million and a half viewers by the end of 1993. Two years later, as the fiftieth anniversary of the war's end approached, papers were filled with pictures of victims of the war—in particular expellees driven out of eastern Europe at the war's end and the victims of Allied bombing raids—and images of Germans mourning their dead and struggling to survive in the rubble.[2]

Writing in 1997, the novelist W. G. Sebald, a German expatriate at home in England since 1966 but intellectually and emotionally never far from the country of his origin, turned his attention to the strategic bombing war of British and American flyers against German cities. Sebald commented that "the destruction, on a scale without historical precedent, entered the annals of the nation, as it set about rebuilding itself, only in the form of vague generalizations. It seems to have left scarcely a trace of pain behind in the collective consciousness." He described "a kind of taboo like a shameful family secret, a secret that perhaps could not even be privately acknowledged," surrounding the "darkest aspects of the final act of destruction, as experienced by the great majority of the German population."[3]

Günter Grass, arguably Germany's best-known writer, agreed. Speaking as part of a forum on the "future of memory" in Vilnius in October 2000, he declared that the writer "remembers as a profession," and his list of those to be remembered included European Jews, Sinti and Roma and slave laborers persecuted by the Nazis. But he also commented on how "curiously disturbing" it was that "we remember only belatedly and with hesitation the suffering that came to Germans during the war." Grass claimed that only in the margins was it possible to read stories of the "death of hundreds of thousands of civilians, [killed] by saturation bombing, and the expulsion and misery of some twelve million East

German refugees." It was finally time, Grass mused, to give voice to the "silence of the victims."[4]

Two years later, his novel *Im Krebsgang* (translated as *Crabwalk*) indicated what form breaking the silence might take. The short novel tells the story of how the sinking of the *Wilhelm Gustloff*, a ship carrying Germans fleeing the Red Army in January 1945, had been excluded from public memory in East and West. The memory of the *Gustloff*—and by extension, the expulsion of Germans from eastern Europe—had been appropriated by right-wing extremists, placing it off limits in a commemorative culture that allowed Germans only to express collective guilt for what the Nazi state had done to others, leaving them no space to mourn what others had done to them.[5]

The same year that Grass's novel appeared, the historian Jörg Friedrich joined those calling for a new look at the war's end. In his book *Der Brand* (Conflagration), a detailed account of the consequences of the Allied bombing campaign against Germany, Friedrich acknowledged that others had offered analyses of the strategy, tactics and effects of the bombing war, but "for a long time there has been nothing about the forms of suffering" it caused.[6] Like Grass's novel, Friedrich's book was an overnight sensation, selling thousands of copies and generating extensive public response.[7]

For those more likely to switch on the TV or pick up a newsmagazine or daily newspaper than read a novel or over 500 pages of history, at the end of the 1990s and in the early twenty-first century images of German suffering at the war's end circulated in these popular media as well. For the weekly newsmagazine *Der Spiegel*, the publication of Grass's novel and Friedrich's book was the occasion for extensive, richly illustrated coverage of the events they described, and the approach of the sixtieth anniversary of German defeat at Stalingrad also prompted reflection on the war's last years.[8] And in 2001 Guido Knopp, a historian who has made a career of producing German history on the small screen, chose the topic of the "great flight"—the expulsion of Germans from eastern Europe at the end of the war—for a five-segment documentary, broadcast nationally on state-owned television.[9] Soon to follow from the "master of mastering the past in Mainz" were documentary specials on Stalingrad and a special on the bombing war.[10]

This article takes as its starting point the "politics of the past"[11] in the present and the overwhelming evidence that many Germans are seeking ways to lay their dead to rest and find a place in their history for the devastation that World War II brought to Germany. In order to understand the present calls for an acknowledgment of this record of German loss and suffering, however, we should first look back at the form that rhetorics of victimization have taken since the shooting stopped. What interests me is how the trauma of the mass death, loss and suffering of millions of Germans has entered German public memory, history and politics since 1945 and how representations of that past have changed over time.

The part of this story with which most historians of post-1945 Germany are familiar begins with the 1960s when an era of silence about the crimes of National Socialism gave way to a public commemorative culture and historical analyses in which not German loss but the Holocaust emerged as the defining moment of twentieth-century German history. From the mid-1980s many argued that this was an incomplete account. They emphasized that histories of National Socialism failed adequately to describe the suffering endured by millions of Germans—in uniform at Stalingrad and behind the barbed wire of Soviet prisoner-of-war camps, in bombed-out homes and in flight from the Red Army as it swept through eastern Europe into areas occupied by the Nazis and then into Germany itself. But in the mid-1980s calls for Germans to remember their losses triggered vehement negative responses from those who claimed that any attempt to tell the story of German victims would inevitably lead in the direction of apologia and the false equation of German suffering with the crimes committed by Germans. They feared a tendency toward *Aufrechnung*—a reckoning up or settling of accounts—and charged that creating such moral balance sheets allowed Germans to avoid guilt and responsibility by drawing a line below the ledger (*Schlusstrich*) of moral accountability and laying the past to rest. When Ronald Reagan joined West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl at Bitburg to commemorate the fortieth anniversary of the war's end in 1985, he honored soldiers of the Waffen-SS buried there, "victims of Nazism also.... They were victims, just as surely as the victims in the concentration camps."[12] But many rejected this symbolic act. And when the historian Andreas Hillgruber proposed the juxtaposition of "Two Demises: The Destruction of the German Reich and the End of European Jewry," he found himself in the midst

of a "historians' dispute" (*Historikerstreit*) and was roundly criticized for presenting tales of German suffering and the suffering caused by Germans in the same book.[13]

I will address these parts of the history of the representation of Germans as victims of World War II, but I will focus in greater detail on a chapter of this history that is less familiar, the first decade or so after the war's end. In these years, Germans—East and West—devoted considerable energy to assessing their losses and incorporating their victim status into public memory and politics. It is worth remembering how extensive those losses were. The bombing war left as many as 600,000 civilians dead and wounded over 800,000. Some 7.5 million Germans who survived were left homeless at the war's end, the vast majority of the ten million or so evacuated from cities to avoid the bombs. About twelve million Germans from eastern Europe and the eastern parts of the Reich survived the flight ahead of the Red Army at the war's end or forced expulsion from their former homes after May 1945. The best data available indicate that another 500,000 were killed in the process. Estimates of rapes of German women committed by Red Army soldiers are inexact but range to as high as a million and a half. As many as 110,000 took place in Berlin alone. At Stalingrad, emblematic of German military losses, some 60,000 died, and of the 110,000 taken captive, only about 5,000 would straggle back to Germany after a stay in Soviet captivity that for some lasted more than a decade. More than five million more Germans in uniform lost their lives before the shooting stopped, well over half of them on the eastern front. When deaths of German POWs in Soviet captivity are added to this total, the war on the eastern front accounts for almost 75 percent of all German military casualties. Average daily death rates on the eastern front ran around 2,000, a breathtaking figure that pales in comparison with the 10,000 or so a day killed in the last months of fighting. At the end of the war, more than a million German women were widows, and the first postwar census recorded that for every 1,000 adult men who might seek a spouse, there were 2,242 available women.[14]

These numbers are staggering, and they can only begin to give a sense of the physical and emotional wasteland that Germans confronted in May 1945. However, the search for ways to come to terms with these traumatic pasts did not begin in the mid-1980s or 1990s. In the 1950s, there was not silence about this past; rather, in the political arena and forms

of commemoration, stories of German loss and suffering were ubiquitous. Many accounts of German memory in the 1950s have taken as their starting point Theodor Adorno's 1959 conclusion that his fellow countrymen had failed to "reprocess the past" or to "come to terms" with fascism. Extremely influential as well was the variation on this theme presented by Alexander and Margarete Mitschlerlich in 1967 when they wrote that Germans exhibited an "inability to mourn" about the National Socialist past. Missing for Adorno and the Mitscherlichs was an acknowledgment of the enormity of German crimes, and they took their fellow countrymen to task for their unwillingness to confront this past.[15] Accounts that emphasize Germans' silence and willing forgetfulness about National Socialism in the immediate postwar period, however, fail to tell the entire story. At least in the Federal Republic, as Jeffrey Herf has amply demonstrated, some political leaders, including the Chancellor Konrad Adenauer, reflected on German responsibility for the Holocaust, acknowledged the crimes committed "in the name of the German people" and sought reconciliation with Israel. Adorno and the Mitscherlichs also neglected how postwar Germans mourned and processed another past—the past of German suffering about which postwar Germans spoke volumes.[16] Germans—East and West—identified themselves as victims of a war that Hitler started but everyone lost. However, rhetorics of victimization did not lead to demands for revenge or retribution, and they tended to solidify, not dissolve, the bases for social solidarity in both postwar states. In this sense, Germans came to terms with defeat far more successfully than they had in 1918, and in a brief detour into the 1920s and 1930s, I suggest the potential usefulness of this diachronic comparison.

In recent years, more and more historians have begun to illuminate the complex politics of the past in the immediate postwar period—and I draw extensively on their work in this article—but their efforts have yet to make it much beyond the covers of scholarly monographs and research journals.[17] However, my thesis is that those who have not stopped to study *this* history may, as it were, be condemned to repeat it, constantly claiming to break a silence around German suffering, which, I argue, has never really existed. In a concluding section, I suggest that in important ways the end of the Cold War has opened up spaces in which it is possible for Germans—and others who study Germany—to describe a past in which Germans committed unspeakable acts of barbarism *and* suffered enormous

losses without creating false equations. This is where Sebald, Grass and many others enter the story. However, what distinguishes calls for mourning German losses in the 1990s and the first decade of the twenty-first century is not that they are new but, rather, different in important ways, offering alternatives to patterns that have long dominated the German "memory landscape."[18] In a concluding section, I offer some thoughts about how those alternatives might look and how it might be possible to write a history of the war's end in which Germans cause immeasurable suffering *and* Germans suffer immeasurably.

THE POLITICS OF THE PAST IN THE POSTWAR YEARS

When the leaders of a newly created German Democratic Republic (GDR) went in search of a national anthem in 1949, they turned to the poet and prose writer Johannes Becher. A member of the Communist Party since 1923, Becher had abandoned his university studies to become a full-time political activist. He fled Germany for Moscow in 1933, and in 1944 he looked on as hundreds of thousands of German POWs were paraded through the Soviet capital. He returned to Berlin in June 1945. A little over four years later, he was charged with finding the words for the music that would celebrate a new nation. The Germany that Becher invoked was "arising out of the ruins, turned to the future," on a journey toward socialism that led away from the rubble of the fascist regime and a Germany devastated by Allied bombing and the extraordinarily brutal fighting that had accompanied the war's end on German soil. East Germans should look ahead, but this past of loss, devastation and suffering should be incorporated into the foundations of the future they were setting out to construct.[19]

When it came to ascribing responsibility for the ruins, the East German state left no doubt that the "Hitler gang" had started World War II and was guilty for whatever Germans had suffered. To be sure, the German people should have known better than to follow the "band of criminals," but beginning almost as soon as the shooting stopped, the official position of the Communist Party and its successor, the Socialist Unity Party (Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschland, SED), was that Germans had been deprived of their rights, deceived and victimized by a

regime that had waged an aggressive war against its European neighbors. As Wilhelm Pieck, the first president of the GDR, explained, the "Hitler clique" was responsible for the deaths of "millions of Germans" who "had been driven into death on the battlegrounds and on the home front" as well as the millions who had died in concentration camps.[20]

According to the version of the past advanced by the East German state, those who best understood the origins of Germany's woes were antifascists who had struggled against Hitler from the start, often falling victim to the regime, some, remaining in Germany, others, like Walter Ulbricht, the head of the Central Committee of the SED, Becher and Pieck, surviving the Third Reich in exile in the Soviet Union. Elevated to the level of a foundational ideology of the East German state, "antifascism" became a way to describe what was noblest about the German past—its socialist traditions—and also to identify what differentiated East from West—where one form of fascism had simply succeeded another in the postwar period. Those who had died in the antifascist resistance struggle or in Nazi concentration camps claimed pride of place in the commemorative practice of the GDR, but the designation *Opfer des Faschismus* (victims of fascism) was interpreted far more broadly to include Jewish victims of Nazi persecution as well.[21]

In the official version of the war that circulated in the GDR, Germans could also claim victim status because of the destruction that capitalist imperialists—American and British bomber pilots—had dropped from the skies. Beginning in 1950 annual ceremonies commemorated the February 1945 bombing of Dresden, where the "civilian population" had fallen victim to the "use of weapons of mass destruction" (*Massenvernichtungs-waffen*).[22] In the context of the emerging Cold War, the SED equated the bombs of Western imperialists falling on Dresden in 1945 with the bombs of Western imperialists dropped on Korea in the early 1950s. Elsewhere, remembering the war meant overcoming its legacy, clearing away the rubble and constructing a different sort of Germany based on positive socialist traditions that the Nazis had sought to eliminate.[23] In the East, that history included devastation unleashed by the "Anglo-American gangsters in the skies," agents of a capitalist order that had survived the war's end, and a blueprint for reconstruction that was rooted in the positive traditions of the German working-class movement.[24]

Counted among Hitler's victims in East Germany were also those who had put on uniforms to fight the Nazi war. No less than their fellow countrymen, they had been led astray. The guilty parties were relatively few in number and always the same—the most important leaders of the Nazi party, including Hitler, Goebbels, Himmler and Göring, the agents of "reactionary militarism," and the "imperialist agents" of the Nazi Party, particularly heavy industrialists and bankers. "Criminal leaders," not common soldiers, had started the war, and virtually any resistance to the overwhelming power of the "reactionary Prussian military caste or against the German monopoly capitalists" was pointless.[25] Redemption lay in an antifascist education, available to many in Soviet prisoner-of-war camps, where German soldiers were transformed into "pioneers of a new Germany" whose labor in rebuilding the Soviet Union had paid off some of the debt owed by Germans to their liberators. As Frank Biess has demonstrated, the process of conversion also brought with it forgiveness of all past sins,[26] and former soldiers emerged in popular memory not as members of a criminal organization but as men who had learned from their mistakes.[27]

This past of German victimization and antifascist struggle registered in public ceremonies, political speeches, history books and the socialization of youth. New recruits to the "Young Pioneers," the communist youth organization, dedicated themselves to the memory of Ernst Thälmann, the communist leader who had been imprisoned by the Nazis in March 1933 and killed in Buchenwald in August 1944. The quintessential victim, as the historian Dorothee Wierling puts it, a "communist saint," Thälmann's sacrifice could represent the losses of all *Opfer des Faschismus*, and his example was offered as a source of inspiration to the next generation.[28] At the end of the organization's induction ceremony, each child received a red flag, "soaked with the blood of the many victims of the struggle for socialism."[29] East Germans of all ages could also see Thälmann's story on the silver screen, and films that underwrote the ideology of antifascism offered didactic tales in which soldiers came to understand the perfidy of National Socialism, or martyrs spilled their blood in the struggle against the Hitler regime.[30]

Not all forms of mourning victim fates were so carefully orchestrated by the state. In interviews with East Germans collected before and after the fall of the Wall, Wierling finds evidence of stories of loss and suffering

told around kitchen tables and passed along from parents to their children, which were not collapsed into the framework of official accounts and in which the Red Army did not necessarily appear as a liberator.[31] And a mass gravesite for soldiers killed in the last days of the war as they tried to prevent the Red Army from taking Berlin, established near the village of Halbe around 1950, expressed a sober sense of grief, not the triumphalism of the monuments constructed by the East German regime to celebrate the antifascist struggle or by the Soviet forces of occupation to commemorate the sacrifices of the Red Army.[32] But in the restricted public sphere of the German Democratic Republic, there was little space in which to tell stories of the war's end that diverged from the accounts put in place by the state or to debate the contours of public memory.

The past of National Socialism and World War II was also quite present across the border in the Federal Republic of Germany, and in a public sphere not so constrained by the state, an even greater range of stories of suffering and loss emerged. The first Chancellor of the Federal Republic, Konrad Adenauer, was a career politician, not a poet like Becher, but when he first addressed the Bundestag, the West German parliament, in September 1949, he too left little doubt that Germany must quickly emerge from the ruins. The "highest objective" of the new state, Adenauer promised, would be "to strive for social justice and the alleviation of misery." Germany was a nation of victims whose needs must be met. Economic recovery was the essential prerequisite to achieve the "distribution of burdens" (*Lastenausgleich*) among those who had suffered enormous losses and those whom fate had spared.

The legacy of the war took many forms. Adenauer alluded to families shattered by the huge number of soldiers killed in the war when he acknowledged the women who might not find marriage prospects and youth who had been robbed of a stable family life by the war. The "social and ethical healing" of the German people would be possible only when housing stock, leveled by the bombs, was replaced. In West Germany where only a handful of communist parliamentarians portrayed the Red Army as liberators, the state pledged to restore the losses of those whose livelihoods and homes had been "liberated" as Soviet forces advanced into Germany in late 1944 and early 1945. Expellees, a group missing entirely from the East German victim role call, were high on Adenauer's list. Some eight million found themselves in the Federal Republic in 1949. According to

Adenauer, millions more had died, victims of communist barbarism. If the problems of the living were not directly addressed, they could easily become the source of "political and economic unrest." Of great concern as well were the "1.5 to 2 million German prisoners-of-war" who were not accounted for, assumed to be languishing in Soviet camps.[33]

The postwar West German state also acknowledged that Jews and others had suffered extraordinary losses, and in a historic statement before parliament in September 1951 Adenauer announced that "the Federal Government and with it the great majority of the German people are aware of the immeasurable suffering that was brought upon the Jews in Germany and the occupied territories during the time of National Socialism … unspeakable crimes have been committed in the name of the German people, calling for moral and material indemnity."[34] But Germans had suffered too, and it was the political and moral responsibility of the West German state to address the needs of German victims who were not Jewish and whose losses had been inflicted by Allied bombs and the Red Army.

From the perspective of most West Germans, the Allied forces of occupation had done little to alleviate the suffering of the immediate postwar years, constructing moral balance sheets according to which what Germans had suffered was just retribution for the suffering Germans had caused. In particular, the Allied reluctance to contribute to the costs of integrating those driven west by the Red Army was attributed to the residual belief in German "collective guilt."[35] Adenauer's remarks in 1949 left no doubt that his government would make up for lost time, meeting the needs of German victims. The past of destruction, mass death and loss were high on the agenda of the West German legislature in its first four-year session. Some eighteen million West Germans counted themselves among the "war-damaged"—victims of falling bombs, expulsion from their homes by the Red Army, or a currency reform that had wiped clean the huge debt that the Nazi state had accumulated during the war, obliterating the savings of millions of Germans. The "Law to Aid Victims of War," passed in 1950, was only a prelude to the "Law for the Equalization of Burdens" of the war which followed two years later. As Michael Hughes's study of the *Lastenausgleich* demonstrates, the public discussions of this "moral accounting for Hitler's war" tell us much about how West Germans calculated the costs of the war and processed the past.[36]

Those calling for just treatment also included returning veterans, whose organizations demanded compensation for injuries and time spent in POW camps. As Frank Biess's work demonstrates, the counterpart to the "pioneers of a new Germany" in the East were the "survivors of totalitarianism" in the West, representatives of a German *Kulturnation* who had lived to tell the tales of Soviet captivity and who could serve as the source of the "spiritual renewal" of postwar society. In political speeches, the language of social policy, and the popular press, returnees appeared as courageous men who had been victimized twice, once by Hitler, then by the Soviets. No other group had done more penance for National Socialism's defeat in war. Their redemption for past crimes became the redemption of all Germans.[37] Postwar public opinion polls revealed that only a handful of those Germans questioned believed that most soldiers had done anything but their duty. By the early 1950s, the Allies agreed, and less than six years after the end of the war they too affirmed that Hitler, not the army, was the culprit. In the context of the Cold War, it was more important to forge an alliance against a common enemy than to revisit the complicated past of the Wehrmacht's involvement in criminal acts.[38]

Clearing away "marriage rubble" left by the war was also a key to reconstruction. Families at risk—robbed of a "provider" by the war or strained by the exigencies of long separations and postwar shortages—were classified by contemporary observers among the "unknown victims of the great tragedy of our people."[39] There was a broad political consensus supported by a substantial sociological literature that the war had placed particularly great strains on the family. Falling bombs and the war's end on German soil had completely dissolved the boundary between front and home front, and in ranking the war's victims, some commentators claimed that "more than any other societal institution, the family had fallen into the whirlpool created by the collapse," making the family "the central problem of the postwar era."[40] Solving that problem involved measures to ensure the construction of new housing that would replace the temporary hovels still occupied by many West Germans, instituting policies that would encourage women to bear the children who would fill the gaping demographic hole left by the war, and addressing the problems of young people, "children of the rubble," robbed of their youth and "morally endangered" by families at risk.[41]

Rhetorics of victimization were central parts of the civic culture of the early Federal Republic. The annual meetings of the *Landsmannschaften*, the regional organizations of expellees, became occasions to mourn the "lost *Heimat* in the German East," and special monuments were constructed in "memory of those who died in the *Heimat*."[42] The legacy of falling bombs became part of local histories and school atlases which carefully documented the extent of destruction, and monuments memorialized those whom the bombs had killed.[43] The losses of bombing victims were also the stuff of annual ceremonies, and when in August 1952 the president of the West German parliament, Hermann Ehlers, dedicated a memorial to those killed in the bombing of Hamburg, he acknowledged that "all regions of Germany have their share of the wounds that the air war inflicted on the property and blood of our entire nation."[44] A decade after the war, Dresden had also been added to the calendar of commemorative events in the Federal Republic, and the *Kassler Post* reflected on a destructive history that was "worse than Hiroshima … one of the biggest destructive undertakings of history."[45]

The "People's Day of Mourning," first introduced in the 1920s and converted to the "Hero's Day of Commemoration" under the Nazis, once again belonged to people, not heroes, when it was reintroduced in the Federal Republic in 1950. On a Sunday in November, hundreds of thousands of West Germans participated in ceremonies that affirmed that "when a people in one of the greatest and most horrible wars in history has fought for its life for six long years, when millions of soldiers fell on all fronts, millions of women and children at home and on the flight from the east—then it is spiritually impossible for this people to go right back to everyday work and pleasure as if nothing of importance has happened."[46] Remembering what had happened was also the job of community organizations that constructed war memorials and took on responsibility for maintaining the gravesites of those who had fallen in the war. Memorials typically bore Christian religious motifs that emphasized suffering and the senselessness of war, associating all the dead—whether in concentration camps, from bombing raids or in battle—and identifying them as victims of a general period of wartime destruction and terror. This pattern of commemoration paralleled the general postwar emphasis on West Germany's membership in the "Christian occident," implicitly marking off the Federal Republic from the "godless east." Unlike the monuments to the antifascist

struggle in the GDR, they offered little explicit political gloss on the death of the "victims of fascism," and the most common message was a general exhortation to ensure that war would never come again.[47]

A shared past of loss and suffering also figured prominently in the pages of illustrated magazines and on movie screens. "Rubble films" of the early postwar years—featuring the leveled urban landscape—were superseded by movies that allowed West Germans to relive the "flight from the east," the reunion of parents and children divided by the chaos of war, the struggles of POWs held somewhere "behind the Urals," the defeat of the Sixth Army at Stalingrad, the sinking of the *Wilhelm Gustloff,* and the hail of bombs that drove urban dwellers to havens in eastern Germany where they soon faced an even greater evil—the onslaught of the Red Army. The past of German victims—who in most tellings survived to overcome adversity and contribute to postwar reconstruction—sold papers, provided grist for the mills of pulp fiction authors, and made for good box office well into the latter part of the 1950s.[48]

Those seeking more objective versions of the past needed to turn only to the massive documentation projects undertaken by the West German state to provide detailed accounts of the "expulsion of Germans from the east," the POW experience, the effects of the bombing war, and the history of the "Law to Equalize the Burdens." Rich compilations of individual testimonies, ministerial records and newspaper accounts, these volumes filled bookshelves. Although it is impossible to know how many people actually read them, their production was a clear indication of the ways in which the West German state sought to incorporate a past of loss and destruction into the "contemporary history" of postwar Germany.[49]

Not everyone accepted accounts of the war in which Germans appeared primarily as victims. Writing in 1946, for example, the philosopher Karl Jaspers acknowledged that "virtually everyone has lost close relatives and friends, but how he lost them—in front-line combat, in bombings, in concentration camps or in the mass murders of the regime—results in greatly divergent inner attitudes." Jaspers insisted that "suffering differs in kind," and he was concerned that "most people have a sense only for their own kind." "It is unjust," Jaspers lectured his readers,

> to call all equally innocent. On the whole, the fact remains that we
> Germans—however much we may now have come into the greatest

distress among the nations—also bear the greatest responsibility for the course of events until 1945. Therefore we, as individuals, should not be so quick to feel innocent, should not pity ourselves as victims of an evil fate, should not expect to be praised for suffering.[50]

Communists, only a marginal presence in West Germany, and German Jews who had survived in hiding or returned to Germany after the war were also not inclined to equate the suffering of all the war's victims.[51] But such critical voices were in a distinct minority, not silenced, but certainly heard infrequently in a political environment in which victims who were neither Communists nor Jews received the most attention.

The list of those claiming victim status in the early history of the Federal Republic diverged from that outlined in East Germany in important ways that reflected how the Cold War structured public memory of the war's consequences. The same Red Army that "liberated" East Germans prosecuted a brutal war against West Germans. The victim of rape by the Red Army soldier—whose voice echoed through the testimonies of expellees in a documentation project funded by the West German state— was absent from the account of the war's end promoted by the SED in which Soviets were liberators, not perpetrators.[52] "Resettlers" in the East were "expellees" in the West, and responsible for their fate was not Hitler's war but the Soviet Union and a postwar boundary settlement that the Western Allies had sanctioned.[53] The POWs who were the beneficiaries of an enlightened antifascist education in the East were the survivors of communist brutality in the West. For the West German state, war widows and waiting wives deserved recognition and compensation, while the East German regime sought to mobilize women for the labor force and paid little attention to the needs of women left "standing alone" by the war.[54]

But there were also images of the past that East and West shared. In both states, there was a clear distinction between a small group of Nazi leaders who were responsible for Germany's woes and the mass of good Germans who had been betrayed and were ready to learn from the past. East and West German victims alike established their identities as survivors, and survivors became the shapers of their own destinies, able to return Germany to the proper path—whether that path pointed toward a "Christian occident" and the "social market economy" or toward a light from

the east and communism. On both sides of the Cold War divide success was measured in reconstructed cities, economic recovery, the provision of adequate housing, and a sense of security. The East German "resurrection from the ruins" found its counterpart in the West German "emergence out of nothing" (*Aufstieg aus dem Nichts*), the title of a large-format, richly illustrated book published in 1954 that began with devastation and ended with renewal.[55] Clearing away the rubble did not mean forgetting; recovery and reconstruction were measures of how successfully Germans, East and West, had overcome the misery of the war and the immediate postwar years.

In both German states, the past was also remembered selectively. At least on an official level, the Federal Republic acknowledged that crimes against Jews had been committed "in the name of the German people," but criminals remained largely faceless, and the focus on the consequences for Germans of "Hitler's war" meant that what had brought Hitler to power and allowed the Nazi state to prepare for war received relatively little attention. In the East, Jews persecuted by the Nazi regime found a place only with difficulty in an undifferentiated mass of the "victims of fascism." And in both Germanies other victims of Nazi persecution—so-called "asocials," Sinti and Roma, homosexuals, foreign workers forced to labor in Germany during the war—were denied victim status altogether. In West Germany, this list of exclusions also included Communists, who were charged with maintaining their allegiance to a totalitarian regime.[56]

The acknowledgment of German "crimes against humanity" was also sometimes paralleled by claims that German victims had suffered no less than what Germans had inflicted on others. When an East German account of the bombing of Dresden published in 1955 referred to Germans immolated in that city's fiery "hell," it established the equivalence of the crimes of the Allies and the crimes of the Nazis.[57] In public commemorative events that lumped together all *Opfer des Faschismus*, the East German regime also erased what distinguished victim fates. Such tendencies were even more pronounced in the Federal Republic. In early public opinion surveys of the US occupation forces, at least some of the returning POWs interviewed about their responses to Allied films depicting concentration camps voiced the opinion "that all the dead bodies 'were all killed by Anglo-American bombs and anti-aircraft shells'," and "conditions in concentration camps were no worse than those imposed on refugees from

the east."[58] A former officer, denied his claims to a pension by the Allied forces of occupation, compared his fate to that of the Jews. Indeed, if anything, he was worse off, because "the Jews had been able to count on the support of world-wide Jewry," while no one cared about the woes of former officers. Thirteen years later in 1961 in a popular movie about POWs who remained in the Soviet Union long after the war's end, the German protagonist told the camp's Jewish translator—an Austrian in service of the Soviets—the same thing: "Yes, you were under arrest, but all over the world people were fighting for you; that was right, I know, but what of us?"[59] In their testimonies, at least some expellees also settled on the same powerful analogy to describe their fate: the war's end confronted Germans in Eastern Europe with circumstances comparable to those in Nazi concentration camps.[60]

Comparisons of German and Jewish suffering were by no means the exclusive preserve of the political right, and when the Social Democrat Carlo Schmid called for the release of the last remaining POWs in the Soviet Union, he charged that Soviets had turned German POWs into "modern slaves," subjecting them and civilians hauled eastward to "inhumane treatment that deserves its own Nuremberg."[61] And in 1950, addressing parliament on the occasion of West Germany's first *Volkstrauertag*, Konrad Adenauer recalled POWs and others deported and forced to work in the Soviet Union after the war and asked whether "ever before in history millions of people have been sentenced with such chilling heartlessness to misery and misfortune?" The point of reference in Adenauer's comparison could remain implicit.[62] The social psychologist Harald Welzer, head of an important research project to study how individuals in multigenerational families in the late 1990s remembered the war, remarks that some of his interview partners borrowed "framing" strategies, narrating their experiences in terms of the categories provided by other victims. A look at the immediate postwar years reveals that there were precedents for such patterns of remembrance, crafted at the *Stammtisch*, in political fora, as part of "contemporary history," and at the movies.[63] These narratives told no single story. In some cases, mentioning Jews and Germans in one breath reinforced interpretative frameworks according to which a war and a reign of terror unleashed by Hitler had claimed many victims, some German, some Jewish. In others, there were clear overtones of a negative response to a victor's justice imposed by the Allies whose crimes

were deemed no less serious than those committed by Germans. And in still others, German suffering became a form of atonement and collective penance, an acknowledgment of what Germans had done that became the basis for simultaneously making amends and demanding that others recognize what had been done to Germans.

Public memories that emphasized tales of overcoming adversity and moving beyond the past to create a new future left little room in the West for the psychologically disturbed veteran who continued to relive the trauma of a war of mass death, the disabled soldier whose family bore the burden of rehabilitative services not adequately covered by the state, or the expellee who by the late 1950s was still living in substandard housing.[64] In the East, the complete exclusion from public discourse of expellees and those POWs not converted by their antifascist education left them only private spaces in which to attempt to heal the physical and mental scars left by the war. Germans, East and West, also drew selectively on the past in ways that reflected the geopolitical alliances in which they were enmeshed. The memory of the war and its legacy was instrumentalized to explain and justify the Cold War that had followed; for the West, the Soviet Union was the enemy before and after 1945, and in the East the imperialists who had bombed Dresden now threatened Korea.

In 1983, at a conference to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Nazi seizure of power, Hermann Lübbe argued that in the postwar era West Germans had of necessity maintained a "certain silence" (*gewisse Stille*) around memories of National Socialism. For Lübbe, keeping silent about the past was essential for permitting West Germans to construct a functioning civil society after 1945, a virtue, not a vice.[65] Without much effort, it would be possible to extend this thesis of a necessary postwar silence to include East Germany as well. There far more attention was devoted to the antifascist resistance than to fascist criminals, and those fascists who were identified were located in the other Germany. This brief review of the representations of the war's end in the first decade or so after the end of fighting suggests that maintaining the "certain silence" around Nazi crimes was, however, a noisy business. Germans, East and West, were able to say relatively little about their responsibility for the crimes of National Socialism at least in part because they talked so loudly about other legacies of the Third Reich and their own status as victims. Germans, East and West, made the transition from the racially defined

"community of the people" of the Third Reich to the community of victims of a war for which they claimed to hold no responsibility, to the community of survivors that gradually emerged from the ruins, ready to preserve and rebuild what remained of the "good" Germany.[66] In his 1997 book, Sebald, referring to the victims of the bombing war, described "the well-kept secret of the corpses built into the foundations of our state."[67] A look back at the record of social policy, the construction of public memory and the emergence of forms of public commemoration in East and West suggests that the dead helped to define the bases of both postwar German states in ways that were anything but secret.[68]

In his study of how Germans confronted the past of National Socialism after 1945, the sociologist Helmut Dubiel argues forcefully that maintaining silence around Nazi crimes impeded the development of a democratic political culture in West Germany and allowed myth to replace history in the East. More memory, not less, he suggests, would have fostered a "positive collective self-conception among Germans."[69] Viewing the 1950s from the perspective of the 1920s and 1930s, however, might lead to a different assessment of how successfully Germans—East and West—confronted the legacy of war, mass death and defeat after 1945. In the 1920s, for many Germans, the politics of memory became the politics of resentment and revenge, and rhetorics of victimization translated into demands that the state could not meet. Although Germans were unified by their rejection of the harsh terms of the Versailles treaty, their unwillingness to accept the "war guilt clause" buried within it and their conviction that the military had never really been defeated, the "memory landscape" of Weimar was riddled with fault lines as Communists blamed the war and its aftermath on capitalists, and the right blamed socialists for undermining the morale of the home front and wielding the dagger that became part of the legend of a Germany "stabbed in the back." Commemorations of the war reflected the same divisions over the meanings of the past. When the German state attempted to orchestrate a service to honor the war dead in Berlin in 1924, the strains of "The Watch on the Rhine" were disrupted by Communists, singing the "International."[70]

For the Nazis and others on the political right, the only way to redeem a past of sacrifice was through the glorification of force, the promise that Germany would once again assume its rightful place as a world power, and the pursuit of the real perpetrator of crimes against Germans, the Jew. Once

the Nazis were in power, public memory—like all other parts of public life—was "coordinated" (*gleichgeschaltet*). Those who in Weimar drew pacifist lessons from the horror of war or who blamed wars on imperialist greed were silenced or driven into exile. In National Socialist Germany, sacrifice—whether in the trenches of World War I or in the street fights of Nazi Storm Troopers—should not be mourned but redeemed.[71]

Once World War II commenced, and particularly after the number of German military and civilian deaths began to soar, justifying sacrifice became more and more difficult for the regime. Beginning in 1943, the Nazi state attempted to transform once triumphant Germans into victims whose sacrifice demanded fighting to the finish. Consider the example of Stalingrad: even before German surrender, Göring insisted that the *Opfer* of the Sixth Army would not be in vain. Rather, it would stand as an example to inspire Germans to rededicate themselves to mobilization for the "final victory" (*Endsieg*).[72] The rhetoric of German victimization only intensified as the war continued to sour in the winter of 1944 and the spring of 1945. Individual experiences became the stuff of national propaganda, and Goebbels's newsreels ground out images of row upon row of dead bodies, the endless "treks" of Germans pushed westward by the Red Army, children left orphans, and women raped by "Mongols," the racist designation applied freely to Red Army soldiers. Allied bomber pilots launched "terror attacks," and it was not uncommon for the Nazi leadership—and many ordinary Germans—to blame their victimization from falling bombs on the influence exerted by Jews on Allied policymakers. But by May 1945 more and more Germans also saw themselves as victims of a system run amok. The "good times" of the late 1930s and the early 1940s had given way to the "bad times" of 1943, 1944 and 1945.[73] The interpretations of the war that emerged before May 1945 influenced how the war was remembered after the shooting stopped. Some modes of understanding defeat and destruction, which would reappear with variations in the late 1940s and early 1950s, were already in place as Germans continued to fight a war they could no longer hope to win.

This brief summary can only begin to outline how history, memory and politics intertwined in Germany after World War I and the ways in which rhetorics of victimization and unredeemed sacrifice in one war became part of the ideological justification for starting another, but it can offer another perspective on how successfully Germans confronted a

record of loss, suffering and defeat the second time around. To be sure, there was much that distinguished the two postwar periods. In 1945 no one could maintain that the German army was undefeated, and the field of battle had expanded to include large parts of German territory. The Cold War that followed the shooting war left Germany divided and ensured that in neither East nor West would Germans define their future free from careful scrutiny. The presence of sizable occupation forces and restrictions on the ability of Germans—in East or West—to act without the approval of the occupiers underscored the point. And the Nuremberg trials and the postwar reeducation campaigns of the Allies left no doubt that the Third Reich had committed crimes of unimaginable horror against civilian populations. Also, the repeated economic crises that hampered Weimar's ability to address the needs of those whose lives had been shattered by the war contrasted dramatically with the relative prosperity that both post–World War II Germanies enjoyed.

Still, there is at least some evidence that when it came to the politics of the past, many Germans in the post–World War II period had learned from their history. In neither East nor West was there evidence of the politics of resentment that had contributed to the triumph of the Nazis. There was no "Stalingrad syndrome," no lost war for which Germans must seek revenge. The public commemoration of mass death, loss and suffering was accompanied by the exhortation to avoid all future wars, not to redeem loss at the end of a gun. The German word *Opfer* can denote both passive victimization and sacrifice or suffering in service of a higher cause. The pre-1945 emphasis on the latter meaning of the term gave way in the late 1940s and 1950s to the former. Death yielded no answers, and the primary lesson it offered was that future wars should be avoided. In official pronouncements and public commemorations, the past enabled Germans to admonish, not threaten.[74]

In his important work on *Germany after the First World War*, Richard Bessel concludes that after 1918, "Germany never really made the transition from a 'war society' (*Kriegsgesellschaft*) to a 'peace society' (*Friedensgesellschaft*)." Weimar could not escape the "crippling legacy" of the war; "it was associated with disorder rather than order, with war rather than peace."[75] Seen from the perspective of Weimar, the success of both German states at confronting the past of World War II—and moving beyond it—was remarkable.[76] The war stories postwar Germans told were

incomplete, but they did define usable pasts, outlining paths that allowed both German states to move from war to postwar and from postwar to a Cold War in which East and West sought "peaceful coexistence."

"THE POSTWAR YEARS ARE AT AN END":
SHIFTING MEMORY LANDSCAPES, 1960S–1980S

By the late 1950s and early 1960s, Germans, East and West, knew that they were moving into a new phase of postwar history. When Adenauer's Christian Democratic successor Ludwig Erhard announced in 1965 that "the postwar years are at an end" he expressed widely held sentiments that it was time to focus on the future. The proclamation by Walter Ulbricht to the Socialist Unity Party congress two years earlier that the "new era, the era of socialism has begun in Germany" made clear that in the East too the time had come to outline a future that was less directly shaped by the past.[77] As they set out to enter the "era of socialism," East German leaders continued to offer the vision of the past that had emerged clearly in the 1950s. Official accounts emphasized that the conditions that had brought about fascism in 1933 still flourished across the border in the West, but these were variations on established themes, not a politics of the past in a new key.

In the West, however, the end of the postwar years opened a space in which a more critical examination of the *pre*-postwar years was possible, and the contours of the past of National Socialism shifted.[78] The decision by the German parliament to locate the Holocaust Monument in the middle of Berlin in the 1990s represented only one more installment in a story that represented a major change in how many West Germans and the West German state "came to terms with the past" and reconfigured a public "memory landscape" in which a focus on German crimes eclipsed discussions of German victimization. The literature on the emergence of this critical confrontation with the past in the Federal Republic is vast and constantly growing. Here, I will suggest only some of the highlights of the developments that shaped the complication of public memory in West Germany.

Rudy Koshar writes that "if a nation were to remember, if a nation were to take responsibility for its deeds, it had to be reconstructed as a

nation first,"[79] and by the late 1950s, there were many indications that in the Federal Republic such a reconstruction had taken place. The West German state began systematically to collect evidence that could be used in prosecuting German citizens who had carried out acts of murder and violence in German uniforms, a clear departure from the "amnesty lobby" that had prevailed in the early 1950s. The trial of Adolf Eichmann in Jerusalem in 1961 received extensive coverage in the Federal Republic and was followed by the 1963 prosecutions of twenty Auschwitz guards in Frankfurt. Lasting for the next twenty months, the proceedings provided West Germans with daily reports of what had taken place at this killing facility in Poland. And throughout the 1960s, when a majority of the legislators in the West German parliament voted to extend the statute of limitations for murder, they were particularly concerned with murders of a very specific sort—those committed by Nazis in the service of the Third Reich.[80]

In the early 1960s some members of Adenauer's government—high-ranking officials whose Nazi pasts delivered evidence to support East German charges that Adenauer's Germany was tied to Hitler's—became a political liability for the aging Chancellor, leading to the resignation of a cabinet minister. The emergence in 1964 of the National Democratic Party, part of a right-wing conservative backlash that contained explicit neo-Nazi tendencies, was further cause for concern and provided additional grounds for intensified efforts to analyze why Germans had followed Nazi leaders in such large numbers.[81] By the late 1960s a majority in the parliament was ready to elect as Chancellor the Social Democrat Willy Brandt who had spent the war fighting Germans in the Norwegian resistance. In May 1970, as the West German parliament commemorated the end of World War II for the first time, Brandt called officially for a sober confrontation with the past, not only for those who had experienced National Socialism, but also for those born since the end of the war because "no one is free from the history that they have inherited."[82] Brandt's public acknowledgment of the crimes of Germans against Poles and Jews during his December 1970 trip to Warsaw pushed into the shadows the 1950s preoccupation with the crimes of Communists against Germans.

A cohort of historians and political scientists more likely to have experienced Nazism as adolescents than as young adults added to this mix, seeking to write a "contemporary history" of Germany that focused far

less on World War II's consequences for Germans who had met the racial, religious, sexual and political criteria of the Third Reich, and far more on its causes and consequences for German Jews and other Europeans. Many were strongly influenced by Fritz Fischer's analysis of the origins of World War I, which made Germany responsible for not just one but two global conflicts in the twentieth century.[83] By the late 1960s their message found a receptive public among radical students, children of the rubble who had been raised on tales of a suffering Germany. They charged that the failure of their parents' generation to resist National Socialism was tantamount to complicity. By the 1980s this intensified scrutiny of a past of Nazi crimes led to the acknowledgment of more and more victims, particularly homosexuals, Sinti and Roma, Jehovah's Witnesses and "asocials," and historical analyses of why this "mosaic of victims" had been denied victim status in the past.[84]

The new version of the German past began to make its way into the politics of public commemoration, foreign relations with Germany's East European neighbors and Israel, and history books. Television also did its part to influence public opinion, and the 1979 broadcast in the Federal Republic of the American miniseries *Holocaust* had an enormous impact. Of West Germans over fourteen, nearly half saw at least part of the series, where they faced Jewish victims, as Harold Marcuse puts it, as "living breathing people, instead of statistics and piles of emaciated corpses."[85] Comparisons of German victims and victims of Germans did not vanish from public discourse, but on the left-liberal side of the political spectrum, it was widely accepted that what Germany had lost was the price Germans had to pay for the crimes of the National Socialist regime. A critical perspective relegated to the margins in the 1950s was by now widely held by a broad spectrum of politicians, religious leaders, intellectuals and journalists. When in 1985 the CDU Chancellor Helmut Kohl accompanied Reagan to Bitburg and Hillgruber called for the juxtaposition of demises—drawing on discourses that had solid foundations in the first postwar decade—their actions were vehemently criticized. Addressing the parliament on 8 May 1985, Richard von Weizsäcker, the president of the Federal Republic, insisted that German "crimes against humanity," particularly the "Zivilisationsbruch" (breach of civilization) of the Holocaust, must remain at the center of public memory and commemoration in West Germany. They have.[86]

By now, we have come full circle to Grass's and Sebald's calls for a unified Germany to make a place for other memories of the war. The "silence of victims," however, has never been complete, and as Bitburg and the "historians' dispute" made clear, patterns of public memory put in place in the first postwar decade have continued to circulate with variations for over forty years.[87] In both East and West, rhetorics of victimization laid the groundwork for analyses of the past in which victims could not be guilty, and the only real perpetrators were a handful of fanatics. Part of the problem lay—and continues to lie—in the very categories of analysis. Victims and perpetrators appear as mutually exclusive categories. In the 1950s Germans were innocent victims of fanatical Nazis in both Germanies, and of the Red Army in the West and imperialist bombs in the East. The story of the German past that emerged in the Federal Republic in the 1960s, '70s and '80s was one in which "no one was free from history," and if not collectively guilty, Germans were certainly collectively accountable for their past. For those who insisted that the Holocaust was central to what defined postwar German identity, claiming victim status was immediately suspect because it implied the denial of responsibility for German crimes. For many on the left-liberal side of the political spectrum, acknowledging the horror of what Germans had done closed off the space in which it was possible to discuss the expulsion, bombed cities or other forms of German loss.

In an article about the memory of the bombing war in the 1950s, Thomas Neumann asks what it would have required to tell a story of loss and destruction in which it was possible to "process one's own guilt" while accounting for the "terror of war that one had suffered." In the 1950s no one had an answer.[88] Fifty years later the question remains the same, but it is perhaps easier to imagine a response because the framework within which discussions of history, memory, politics and the war's end take place has changed in key respects:

(1) Since the late 1940s, the ideological divide between East and West and the ups and downs of Cold War tensions have profoundly shaped the politics of the past. The end of the Cold War means that discussions of World War II are not immediately filtered through the geopolitics of

the conflict that followed. A Germany split between East and West had "divided memories" of a common past. Thus, while West Germans were not completely silent about the bombing war, it was in the East that Dresden became the symbol of the destruction caused by "Anglo-American gangsters from the air," while in West Germany, the expulsion of Germans from the east and POWs in Soviet hands loomed large in public memory. In his famous 1985 address to the West German parliament, President von Weizsäcker intoned a ritualistic call for German–German unity and maintained that "Germans are one people and one nation ... because [we] have lived through the same past." He called for Germans to commemorate the war's end "amongst themselves."[89] The end of the Cold War has made that process of internal introspection possible and created a space in which a unified past can take shape. The common experiences of loss and suffering—no longer distorted by the politics of the Cold War—are part of a history on which most Germans can agree. To be sure, in some of the enthusiastic responses to Grass's *Crabwalk* and popular portrayals of the bombing war, it was still possible to hear an implicit "too" in accounts of how Germans had suffered, and from "too," it has sometimes been a short step to "like" and the equation of German and Jewish suffering.[90] But as Grass and many others who reject such comparisons fully understand, the failure to provide historically nuanced, reliable accounts that include both German crimes and German suffering will leave it to others to tell tales of self-exculpation, employing the moral scales that were used in the 1950s.

(2) For historians, the end of the Cold War has opened up extraordinary opportunities for conversations between German historians and their east European counterparts about the troubled past they share. Open borders have also meant open archives, creating new possibilities for histories that consider German–Czech and German–Polish relations over a period that includes the German occupation of eastern Europe *and* the expulsion of Germans from eastern Europe at the end of the war.[91] Scholarly collaboration takes place against the backdrop of the diplomatic negotiations that surround the expansion of the European Union and agreement among Polish, Czech and German political leaders that the wrongs of National Socialism do not make right the brutal way in which Germans were driven from their homes in eastern Europe at the end of the war. Diplomatic and scholarly exchanges remain fraught, burdened by

the history of the war and the Cold War, but the end of communism has made possible a dialogue that would have been unimaginable a decade and a half ago.

(3) The view that dominated the politics of the past in West Germany by the late 1980s—defined by the acknowledgment of the centrality of the Holocaust—has continued to be the view that is dominant in a unified Germany. What John Borneman calls "rites of accountability" are central to the civic culture of the Berlin Republic.[92] Those who claim that a focus on the Holocaust makes impossible a true German patriotism have not vanished, but as Dubiel concludes in his survey of how Germans have confronted their past as perpetrators since 1945, they are outnumbered by others who understand that precisely such a critical confrontation with National Socialism is the bedrock of a democratic political culture. In this post-totalitarian era, Dubiel argues, many Germans have shown themselves able to accept a past that includes collective injustice and the acknowledgment of "the corpses in the cellar of their history"[93] as parts of an identity that eschews triumphalism and does not define the world in terms of insiders and outsiders. As Bill Niven puts it, Germany thus joins the nations that "are beginning to make negative events in their national history a point of orientation. History becomes important not as something to emulate, but as something to avoid repeating. The *difference* between past and present becomes the measure of progress."[94] The emergence of this consensus makes it easier for Grass—and many others—to call on us to remember other deaths without fears that commemorating German victims will lead to attempts to dodge responsibility for the ways in which Germans victimized others.

(4) Since the end of the Cold War the headlines have been filled with images of other wars that have caused many Germans to think through the politics of the present by drawing on a shared past of victimization and suffering. The deployment of German troops as part of the NATO military force in Kosovo in 1999 marked an important step in post-unification debates about Germany's responsibilities to ensure collective security in Europe. Against opposition from within their own parties, the Social Democratic Chancellor Gerhard Schröder and his Green Party Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer—only six months in office—won an overwhelming parliamentary majority in support of committing German forces as part of a NATO military campaign, intended to bring an end to Serbian

aggression against Albanians. The Nazi past—invoked since the end of World War II as justification for Germans' refusal to participate in combat operations—now was used to justify use of force. Schröder argued that German crimes in the past should not be used as an argument against using German troops to prevent the "massive violation of human rights" in the present, and Social Democratic Defense Minister Rudolf Scharping warned of "genocide" (*Völkermord*) in the Balkans.[95] In many press accounts, the war conjured up a past of German suffering.[96]

Speaking in September 2000 in front of the annual meeting of the Union of Expellees, Gerhard Schröder, the Social Democrat who had pushed Helmut Kohl out of office two years earlier, suggested an even broader comparative framework in which to locate German experience in a "century of expulsions" that included Armenians, "the criminal, so-called 'population redistribution policies' of Hitler [that affected] Poles, Ukranians, Finns, Hungarians and White Russians," and closer to the present, the examples of Rwanda, Burundi, Congo and Kosovo. In every case, expulsions resulted in loss suffering and death, leaving populations cut off from their culture and history, and in every case, Schroeder concluded, "expulsion is an injustice." Tellingly, his examples did not invoke the balance sheet of the early postwar years; there was no suggestion that the examples of "ethnic cleansing" that he cited should be compared with the Holocaust.[97]

By 2002 the German parliament was ready to give concrete form to Schröder's sentiments, supporting a proposal for a Center against Expulsions, a concept originally proposed by Erika Steinbach, a parliamentary representative of the Christian Democratic Union and head of the Union of Expellees, who was born in West Prussia in 1943, and Peter Glotz, a Social Democrat, born in Bohemia in 1939 of a Czech mother and a German father. The center should be a site of commemoration, scholarship and intellectual exchange, locating German experience in the context of other forced population transfers in the twentieth century.[98] Plans for the center triggered immediate criticism. Many argued vehemently against the proposal to locate the center in Berlin. Such a move would signal that a German story would take precedence over all others. Others questioned those who sought to limit comparison to European cases, when Africa provided powerful evidence that "ethnic cleansing" and state-organized forced population transfers were neither a thing of the past nor an exclu-

sively European phenomenon. Some Czechs and Poles charged that the center would reignite old feuds between central European neighbors. And historians from several European countries argued that a "European Network against Expulsions" that would support scholarship, documentation projects and the development of educational materials, tying together initiatives already in place and locating memories of European expulsions in no single national capital, would be far more effective than a single center.[99] For all parties involved, however, the debates around the center also made clear that the proposal to locate the experience of Germans in the last years of the war in a comparative context of twentieth-century forced migrations did not mean telling the story of the war's end in Germany without remembering how the war began or how Nazi population transfers and resettlement policies in central Europe preceded the expulsions of Germans from the same part of the world. And most agreed that finding a set of analogies for German suffering that was not rooted in explicit or implicit German–Jewish comparisons marked an important break with modes of remembrance that have triggered concerns that talking about the expulsion would inevitably intertwine the German question with the Jewish question, leading to comparisons of "two demises" and tendencies toward apologia.[100]

(5) Of Germany's citizens today, about 80 percent were born after 1945.[101] The politics of the past remain charged in Germany, but as the generation of '68 turns gray at the temples and the generation that lived through the war dies off, revisiting the war's end no longer triggers the generational conflicts that characterized the 1960s; it is shaped less and less by those who claim the authority of eyewitnesses; many '68ers have ceased to fear that acknowledging that many Germans were victims will lead to denials that many were perpetrators; and a second postwar generation is coming of age in a Germany where a monument to the Holocaust is at the center of its capital city, one form of testimony to the Berlin Republic's commitment to make a sustained confrontation with the past a vital part of its present and future.

These developments open up possibilities for new approaches to the history of the war's end and its consequences, and in what follows, I offer some preliminary reflections on how we might make that past part of post–Cold War German history.

Historical accounts of the last years of World War II have tended to distinguish too neatly between perpetrators and victims in ways that end some stories too early and start others too late. Take, for example, the story of the Sixth Army. Told as a tale of German victims, it begins in November 1942 when the army is encircled by Soviet forces outside of Stalingrad, stuck in the Russian winter, and blocked from any attempts to "break out" by a crazed Hitler, who writes off German soldiers, leaving those still living to surrender in early February 1943. Written as a history of perpetrators, the Sixth Army never arrives at Stalingrad, but advances into Ukraine and arrives at Kiev, where the Wehrmacht plays a supporting role in the mass execution of Jews at Babi Yar; the story ends there. Or consider the war stories of Germans in eastern Europe. When Germans appear as victims, the past begins with the arrival of the Red Army at the gates of the village. When told as the story of perpetrators, Germans appear as colonizers and subjugate a labor force in Poland and benefit enormously when the Wehrmacht marches into countries where Germans constitute an ethnic minority. The Red Army may never arrive, and if it does, Germans get nothing more than what they deserve. But some of those Wehrmacht soldiers who died at Stalingrad or who were marched off to Soviet POW camps also marched through Ukraine.[102] Some of those Germans raped, killed and robbed of their homes and livelihoods as they were driven west in the spring of 1945 had celebrated the expansion of Germany's *Lebensraum* into eastern Europe and had been committed to the goal of "building a German homeland" where once Poles had lived.[103]

Or take the bombing war. From one perspective, in an age of total war that is fought on the basis of total mobilization, there are no civilians. If Germans wanted to stop the bombs, they should have brought down the regime. The alternative is to tell the story as an example of misguided Allied strategy that failed to undermine German morale and resulted in civilian death on a massive scale. A more complicated history might reveal that some Germans who lost homes and loved ones to the bombs were

176

also among those who had bought "Aryanized" businesses at reduced prices in the 1930s. Workers in war-related industries, bombed out of their homes and factories in the Ruhr, may also have been among those who had exalted in climbing to a higher rung on the status hierarchy once they had a slave foreign labor force working next to them.

Representing the past in all its complexity would allow us to understand better how many Germans—who met the criteria of the "racial state"—lived through the war, and to move beyond a mode of analysis in which innocent victims speak an unassailable truth and guilty perpetrators can never have any claims to victim status. In his study of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, Mahmood Mamdani describes how "victims become killers."[104] Perhaps we can write a history of Germany in World War II which can better explain how killers—and colonizers and those who embraced racist policies, enthusiastically supported Hitler and directly benefited from the pain and suffering that the Nazi state inflicted on others—became victims. Such a narrative of the war's end would not mask how the war began or avoid the causal relationship between Nazi brutality and the brutality of bombs and the Red Army. But it could reveal much about how people behave under extraordinary circumstances, seldom living their lives in terms of moral absolutes. And it would be a history that denied no victim the right to mourn while prohibiting any attempt to establish the moral equivalence of victims of Germans and German victims, or to explain German suffering as the quid quo pro for the suffering inflicted on others by Germans.

Trauma and suffering are among the most powerful forces capable of shaping "communities of memory," and the communities of memory that formed after 1945 tended to divide the world into victims and perpetrators. Given the choice between these two alternatives, it is hardly surprising that most Germans chose the former. A history of the war's end that includes not only Nazi crimes but also bombs, the expulsion and the massive death of Germans who were not Jewish allows us better to understand why Germans so quickly claimed victim identities after 1945. It makes even more remarkable the enormity of the shift—particularly in the Federal Republic in ways that have shaped the politics of the past in a unified Germany—from the "memory landscape" of the 1950s, defined by rhetorics of victimization, to that of the 1990s in which rites of accountabil-

ity are at center stage.[105] And it can perhaps provide a history that justifies rites of accountability *and* rites of mourning—for German losses.

We might also envision a history of victim fates during the war's end that sought to include the vast range of meanings that it had for different individuals. Can we imagine a history of the bombing war in which Anne Frank's heart soars as Allied bombers fly over Amsterdam, never knowing that they will deliver the payload that will leave her former school friends in Frankfurt dead in the rubble? A history in which Red Army soldiers who liberate Auschwitz move on to Breslau where they "liberate" Germans from their lives and property? Again, the goal would not be a "balanced account" or the establishment of a hierarchy of victims, but rather, a history that did not shy away from seeing the past from many different perspectives and that could better explain how, after 1945, different interpretations of the war's end translated into different modes of commemoration and remembrance, many histor*ies*, not one single history.

For novelists, it is perhaps easier to provide a range of voices and perspectives, and it is not surprising that an author primarily of fiction, Walter Kempowski, should have offered one tentative example of how such a history might start to take shape. In *Das Echolot: Fuga furiosa*, the second installment of his massive multivolume compilation of contemporary testimonies from World War II, Kempowski creates a timeline of documents that leads his reader through a little more than four weeks in January and February 1945.[106] We read the minutes of a meeting in the Reich Chancellery where General Heinz Guderian reports to Hitler on the advance of the Soviet troops, and descriptions of Auschwitz by Danuta Czech and Primo Levi. Excerpts from the memoirs of concentration camp survivors immediately precede excerpts from survivors of the expulsion. Hillgruber's "two demises" were cordoned off into separate parts of one book. Here, a range of historical actors all appear on the same page. Such juxtapositions of evidence are perhaps a necessary first step for those who seek to plumb the complexity of the last months of the war. They also powerfully reinforce Jaspers' observation that "suffering differs in kind." In a historical narrative that crosses the paths of Germans, fleeing the advancing Red Army at the war's end, and Jews, driven from concentration camps by SS guards on death marches in advance of the same Red Army, those differences appear in sharp relief.

Two books by Antony Beevor, a former military officer turned nonfiction author, provide other examples of how a complex history can be told. Beevor's *Stalingrad* moves back and forth between Soviet and German troops and offers a range of voices, perspectives and experiences. And his *Fall of Berlin 1945* reveals Red Army soldiers as liberators *and* vengeful rapists, Germans as a unified *Volksgemeinschaft,* ready to fight with their Führer to the finish, *and* a community of victims left few options in the rubble of a city leveled by Allied bomb attacks.[107] Wars are extraordinarily messy, but taking that messiness seriously can prevent us from drawing facile lessons or imposing ex post facto a set of moral categories in which few of the people we are describing lived their lives.

If comparisons of victim fates during the war can yield one set of insights, comparisons over time can also illuminate how Germans came to terms with their losses in World War II. As my brief digression into the rhetorics of victimization following World War I suggests, when looking at how Germans sorted through their experiences of National Socialism and World War II after 1945, it is important to remember that they were confronting the traumatic aftermath of a major war for the second time. Perhaps the analysis of post-1945 rhetorics of victimization should begin in 1918.

Still other comparative perspectives suggest themselves. What most interests Grass, Sebald and Friedrich is finding a way to come to terms with the phenomenon of massive civilian death, a central characteristic of World War II. How did other societies make a place for the dead in postwar history and memory? How were deaths instrumentalized as a way to intensify domestic morale during the war? And how were they mourned and memorialized after 1945? Is there anywhere else a postwar literature that has adequately captured the trauma of the war in ways that have eluded German writers? The civilian deaths of Hiroshima and Nagasaki—and the forms of their commemoration—provide one point of reference, and the important work of Catherine Merridale and Nina Tumarkin on the Soviet Union and post-Soviet Russia offer other possible comparative perspectives. The purpose of comparison would not be to stage a victim marathon in which the country with the highest body count was proclaimed the winner, but rather to consider how different political regimes have confronted and processed the massive loss of civilian life that is a consequence of total wars and why, in different political and

social orders, some individual memories become parts of public memory and others do not.[108]

The process by which individual memories become part of a national narrative can also be illuminated by employing another comparative framework—one defined by gender. In Elizabeth Heineman's study of postwar discussions of women as victims of rape by the Red Army, as "fraternizers" with Allied forces of occupation, and as the "woman of the rubble," valiantly clearing away the past, she describes the "Hour of the Woman" in which female experiences became central to the creation of West German collective memory and shaped national identity after 1945.[109] In her work on "Trauma, Memory, and Motherhood," Atina Grossman concludes that "many Germans conceived of their experience as that of *Opfer*, and they did so in gendered and sexualized terms, which focused on birth and abortion rates, infant and child mortality, on female victimization and rape." Men, returning from the war, defeated and often disabled, carried other images of *armes Deutschland*, which registered clearly in public memory, and by the early 1950s, as Biess's work suggests, the hour of the man had struck in East and West, as the returning veteran and POW became symbols of a new, rehabilitated—and remasculinized—Germany.[110]

Writing the history of the war's end should also include a continued commitment to collect the testimonies of those who experienced it, and Welzer, Elisabeth Domansky and others have demonstrated how valuable these sources can be.[111] Oral testimonies also provide insights into how individuals constructed meaning from what Alf Lüdtke calls the "patchworks" (*Gemengelagen*) of their lives, drawing on personal experience, public memories and symbolic structures advanced by the state, interest-group organizations and "communities of memory" of which they were a part in ways this article, mainly focused on the politics of the past at the level of the nation, cannot fully explore.[112] However as historians rush to collect the stories of eyewitnesses whose numbers diminish with every passing day, it is worth recalling that oral histories have figured prominently in historical analyses of what war stories Germans remembered, at least since Lutz Niethammer and his co-workers set out to compile the postwar memories of working-class men and women in the Ruhr in the late 1970s. In these sources, stories of bombing raids and the expulsion abound.[113] Still other sources that record eyewitness testimonies in the first postwar decade have received relatively little attention and deserve more careful

scrutiny. The state-sponsored projects to compile voices of expellees and POWs demonstrate how the West German state sought to incorporate the war into "contemporary history," but they are also an extraordinarily rich source of individual testimony that can reveal how certain narrative patterns emerged, transforming individual stories into collective memories.[114] Two other sources compiled in the 1950s are worth particular mention. Members of the Institute for Social Research, returned from exile in New York during the Third Reich, did extensive small-group interviews with former POWs and in another project, conducted open-ended discussions with 563 women and 1,072 men in an attempt to capture a "non-public opinion" (*nicht öffentliche Meinung*).[115] Reading oral histories collected in the present against testimonies from the 1950s can also alert us to the ways in which what Germans remember has changed over time, and how some memories shaped in the Federal Republic's early history have continued to repeat themselves for nearly sixty years.

We should also continue to think broadly about the forces that form memories. Much recent historiography focuses in particular on the ways in which the past has registered in social policy and political rhetoric and has taken shape in monuments, struggles over historic preservation, and rituals of commemoration, and there is still much to be learned by continuing our study of these contexts. But memories also played themselves out in pulp fiction, in radio dramas, at the movies and around the kitchen table. Welzer, who has sought to sort through generational differences in memories by interviewing a range of members of the same family, records fascinating examples of men who narrate their war experiences in ways that mirror the story of *Die Brücke* (The bridge), the 1959 movie that portrayed a group of naïve young men, taken in by Nazi propaganda, who vainly try to hold a bridge against the American onslaught in the last days of the war. In other cases, Welzer's interviewees explicitly cite war movies as points of reference for their experiences.[116] Art replaces life. Memories are always mediated, and we would do well to pay closer attention to the ways in which postwar German memories of loss and suffering have been *mass*-mediated. As Guido Knopp continues to churn out the past on television and in richly illustrated books, we should also consider the ways in which popular histories of the war—which are read or viewed by far more people than will ever delve into the monographs that most

historians produce—reinforce or leave completely unchallenged certain accounts of the past.

Finally, as we revisit the past of German suffering at the war's end, we should remember that this is precisely what we are doing—*re*visiting a history that has been discussed endlessly since 1945. Studying this history—the history of how German victimization has been represented—can help us to understand why in some moral and political environments it was possible for historians to ask some questions and not others; how memory can block historical understanding and impede an open discussion of the past; and why nearly sixty years after World War II calls for Germans to mourn their dead do not involve "breaking the silence," but do suggest new perspectives from which we might begin to write a history of the war's end in which some Germans were victims, some Germans were perpetrators, and some Germans were both.

NOTES

1. Bill Niven, *Facing the Nazi Past: United Germany and the Legacy of the Third Reich* (London, 2002), 194–232.

2. Helke Sander and Barbara Johr, eds., *BeFreier und Befreite: Krieg, Vergewaltigungen, Kinder* (Munich, 1992); Andreas Kilb, "Warten, bis Spielberg kommt," *Die Zeit,* 28 Jan. 1994; and Klaus Naumann, *Der Krieg als Text: Das Jahr 1945 im kulturellen Gedächtnis der Presse* (Hamburg, 1998).

3. W. G. Sebald, *On the Natural History of Destruction,* trans. Anthea Bell (New York, 2003), 4, 10; published in German as *Luftkrieg und Literatur* (Frankfurt/ Main, 2002).

4. Günter Grass, "Ich erinnere mich…," in Martin Wälde, ed., *Die Zukunft der Erinnerung* (Göttingen, 2001), 29, 31–33. The speech is also available at http://www.steidl.de/grass/a2_5_vilnius.html (last accessed 19 Aug. 2004).

5. Günter Grass, *Im Krebsgang: Eine Novelle* (Göttingen, 2002); published in English as *Crabwalk,* trans. Krishna Winston (Orlando, 2002); for a more detailed discussion of the book, see Robert G. Moeller, "Sinking Ships, the Lost Heimat and Broken Taboos: Günter Grass and the Politics of Memory in Contemporary Germany," *Contemporary European History* 12, no. 2 (2003): 1–35.

6. Jörg Friedrich, *Der Brand: Deutschland im Bombenkrieg, 1940–1945* (Munich, 2002), 543.

7. See, e.g., Lothar Kettenacker, ed., *Ein Volk von Opfern? Die neue Debatte um den Bombenkrieg 1940–45* (Berlin, 2003).

8. The articles on Grass's novel and historical memories of the expulsion were collected and published in a special issue, *Die Flucht der Deutschen: Die SPIEGEL-Serie über Vertreibung aus dem Osten,* no. 2 (2002); on the bombing war, Jochen Bölsche, "So muss die Hölle aussehen," *Der Spiegel*, 6 Jan. 2003; and on Stalingrad, "Der Totale Krieg," *Der Spiegel,* 16 Dec. 2002.

9. The series is available on video as *Die grosse Flucht,* BMG Video, Universum Film, 2002. This was not the only series. The ARD-Ferhsehanstalten, Mitteldeutscher Rundfunk and the Norddeutscher Rundfunk produced a series called "The Expellees: Hitler's Last Victims." See the accompanying book, K. Erik Franzen, *Die Vertriebenen: Hitlers letzte Opfer* (Munich, 2001). And on Stalingrad, Klaus Wiegrefe, "Der totale Krieg," *Der Spiegel,* 16 Dec. 2002.

10. "Stalingrad: Der Angriff," *Süddeutsche Zeitung,* 14 Jan. 2003; and "Fernsehen heute," *General-Anzeiger* (Bonn), 4 Feb. 2003; and in general, Lutz Kinkel, "Viele Taten, wenig Täter: Die Wehrmacht als Sujet neuerer Dokumentationsserien des öffentlich-rechtlichen Rundfunks," in Michael T. Greven and Oliver von Wrochem, eds., *Der Krieg in der Nachkriegszeit: Der Zweite Weltkrieg in Politik und Gesellschaft der Bundesrepublik* (Opladen, 2000), 113–30.

11. I borrow the phrase from Norbert Frei, *Adenauer's Germany and the Nazi Past: The Politics of Amnesty and Integration,* trans. Joel Golb (New York, 2002), originally published in German as *Vergangenheitspolitik: Die Anfänge der Bundesrepublik und die NS-Vergangenheit* (Munich, 1996).

12. "Remarks of President Ronald Reagan to Regional Editors, White House, April 18, 1985," in Geoffrey H. Hartman, ed., *Bitburg in Moral and Political Perspective* (Bloomington, 1986), 240.

13. Charles S. Maier, *The Unmasterable Past: History, Holocaust, and German National Identity* (Cambridge, MA, 1988).

14. These numbers are drawn from Alice Förster and Birgit Beck, "Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and World War II: Can a Psychiatric Concept Help Us Understand Postwar Society?" in Richard Bessel and Dirk Schumann, eds., *Life after Death: Approaches to a Cultural and Social History of Europe during the 1940s and 1950s* (Cambridge, 2003), 28; Michael Krause, *Flucht vor dem Bombenkrieg: "Umquartierungen" im Zweiten Weltkrieg und die Wiedereingliederung der Evakuierten in Deutschland 1943–1963* (Düsseldorf, 1997), 33–37; the extraordinarily comprehensive work of Rüdiger Overmanns, *Deutsche militärische Verluste im Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Munich, 1999), 283, 299; Elizabeth D. Heineman, *What Difference Does a Husband Make? Women and Marital Status in Nazi and*

Postwar Germany (Berkeley, 1999), 21–22, 79; Robert G. Moeller, *War Stories: The Search for a Usable Past in the Federal Republic of Germany* (Berkeley, 2001), 3; and idem, *Protecting Motherhood: Women and the Family in the Politics of Postwar West Germany* (Berkeley, 1993), 27.

15. Theodor W. Adorno, "What Does Coming to Terms with the Past Mean?" in Hartman, ed., *Bitburg*, 114–29; and Alexander and Margarete Mitscherlich, *Die Unfähigkeit zu trauern: Grundlagen kollektiven Verhaltens* (Munich, 1967).

16. In general, see Jeffrey Herf, *Divided Memory: The Nazi Past in the Two Germanys* (Cambridge, MA, 1997); and Erich Langenbacher, "Changing Memory Regimes in Contemporary Germany?" *German Politics and Society,* 21, no. 2 (2003): 46–68.

17. See in particular, Klaus Naumann, ed., *Nachkrieg in Deutschland* (Hamburg, 2001); Jörg Hillmann and John Zimmermann, eds., *Kriegsende 1945 in Deutschland* (Munich, 2002); Bruno Thoss and Hans-Erich Volkmann, eds., *Erster Weltkrieg/Zweiter Weltkrieg: Krieg, Kriegserlebnis, Kriegserfahrung in Deutschland* (Paderborn, 2002); Bessel and Schumann, *Life after Death*; Gottfried Niedhart and Dieter Riesenberger, eds., *Lernen aus dem Krieg? Deutsche Nachkriegszeiten 1918 und 1945* (Munich, 1992); Elisabeth Domansky and Harald Welzer, eds., *Eine offene Geschichte: Zur kommunikativen Tradierung der nationalsozialistischen Vergangenheit* (Tübingen, 1999); Rudy Koshar, *From Monuments to Traces: Artifacts of German Memory, 1870–1990* (Berkeley, 2000); and Greven and von Wrochem, eds., *Der Krieg in der Nachkriegszeit*. Other recent accounts curiously pay little attention to the ways in which German suffering was a central part of postwar political discourse; see, e.g., Aleida Assmann and Ute Frevert, *Geschichtsvergessenheit/Geschichtsversessenheit: Vom Umgang mit deutschen Vergangenheiten nach 1945* (Stuttgart, 1999). My understanding of the politics of memory in the 1950s has also been strongly influenced by three books that address key aspects of post-1945 social and political reconstruction: James M. Diehl, *The Thanks of the Fatherland: German Veterans after the Second World War* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1993); Michael L. Hughes, *Shouldering the Burdens of Defeat: West Germany and the Reconstruction of Social Justice* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1999); and Heineman, *What Difference Does a Husband Make?*

18. I borrow the phrase from Koshar, *From Monuments to Traces*.

19. See Heike Amos, *Auferstanden aus Ruinen…: Die Nationalhymne der DDR 1949 bis 1990* (Berlin 1997); and for more on Becher and a complete set of lyrics, see http://staff-www.uni-marburg.de/~naeser/becher.htm (last accessed 19 Aug. 2004).

20. Wilhelm Pieck, "An die Heimkehrer," 10 Aug. 1946, Stiftung Archiv der Parteien und Massenorganisationen der DDR im Bundesarchiv, NY 4036/428, 20–24, quoted in Frank Biess, "'Pioneers of a New Germany': Returning POWs

from the Soviet Union and the Making of East German Citizens, 1945–1950," *Central European History* 32, no. 2 (1999): 147.

21. See, e.g., the essays in Jürgen Danyel, ed., *Die geteilte Vergangenheit: Zum Umgang mit Nationalsozialismus und Widerstand in beiden deutschen Staaten* (Berlin, 1995); also Jörg Echternkamp, "Von Opfern, Helden und Verbrechern: Anmerkungen zur Bedeutung des Zweiten Weltkriegs in den Erinnerungskulturen der Deutschen 1945–1955," in Hillmann and Zimmermann, eds., *Kriegsende,* 301–16.

22. Max Seydewitz, *Die unbesiegbare Stadt: Zerstörung und Wiederaufbau von Dresden* (Berlin, 1956), 7.

23. Gilad Margalit, "Der Luftangriff auf Dresden: Seine Bedeutung für die Erinnerungspolitik der DDR und für die Herauskristallisierung einer historischen Kriegserinnerung im Westen," in Susanne Düwell and Matthias Schmidt, eds., *Narrative der Shoah: Repräsentationen der Vergangenheit in Historiographie, Kunst und Politik* (Paderborn, 2002), 189–208; also Thomas W. Neumann, "Der Bombenkrieg: Zur ungeschriebenen Geschichte einer kollektiven Verletzung," in Naumann, ed., *Nachkrieg in Deutschland,* 319–42.

24. Klaus Naumann, "Leerstelle Luftkrieg: Einwurf zu einer verqueren Debatte," *Mittelweg 36* 7, no. 2 (1998): 12–15.

25. Echternkamp, "Von Opfern, Helden," 308–9; Rüdiger Wenzke, "Das unliebsame Erbe der Wehrmacht und der Aufbau der DDR-Volksarmee," in Rolf-Dieter Müller and Hans-Erich Volkmann, eds., *Die Wehrmacht: Mythos und Realität* (Munich, 1999), 1113–38.

26. Biess, "'Pioneers of a New Germany.'" Biess's work on this topic is path-breaking, and I draw on it heavily here.

27. Karin Hartewig, "Militarismus und Antifaschismus: Die Wehrmacht im kollektiven Gedächtnis der DDR," in Greven and von Wrochem, eds., *Der Krieg in der Nachkriegszeit,* 236–54; Jörg Echternkamp, "Arbeit am Mythos: Soldatengenerationen der Wehrmacht im Urteil der west- und ostdeutschen Nachkriegsgesellscahft," in Naumann, eds., *Nachkrieg in Deutschland,* 442.

28. Dorothee Wierling, "Erzieher und Erzogene: Zu Generationenprofilen in der DDR der 60er Jahre," in Axel Schildt, Detlef Siegfried and Karl Christian Lammers, eds., *Dynamische Zeiten: Die 60er Jahre in den beiden deutschen Gesellschaften* (Hamburg, 2000), 629.

29. Dorothee Wierling, *Geboren im Jahr Eins: Der Jahrgang 1949 in der DDR: Versuch einer Kollektivbiographie* (Berlin, 2002), 107–9; also Annette Leo, "'Deutschlands unsterblicher Sohn…': Der Held des Widerstands Ernst Thälmann," in Silke Satjukow and Rainer Gries, eds., *Sozialistische Helden: Eine Kulturgeschichte von Propagandafiguren in Osteuropa und der DDR* (Berlin, 2002), 101–14.

30. Detlef Kannapin, *Antifaschismus im Film der DDR: DEFA-Spielfilme 1945–1955/56* (Cologne, 1997).

31. Wierling, "Erzieher und Erzogene," 624–41.

32. Alf Lüdtke, "Histories of Mourning: Flowers and Stones for the War Dead, Confusion for the Living—Vignettes from East and West Germany," in Gerald Sider and Gavin Smith, eds., *Between History and Histories: The Making of Silences and Commemorations* (Toronto, 1997), 152–53; and in general Sabine Behrenbeck, "Between Pain and Silence: Remembering the Victims of Violence in Germany after 1949," in Bessel and Schumann, eds., *Life after Death,* 27–64.

33. *Verhandlungen des Bundestags* (hereafter *VDB*), [1], Deutscher Bundestag, 5. Sitzung, 20 Sept. 1949 (Bonn, 1950), 23–29.

34. Adenauer's remarks to the Bundestag are republished in Rolf Vogel, ed., *Deutschlands Weg nach Israel: Eine Dokumentation mit einem Geleitwort von Konrad Adenauer* (Stuttgart, 1967), 36.

35. In general, see Josef Foschepoth, "German Reactions to Defeat and Occupation," in Robert G. Moeller, ed., *West Germany under Construction: Politics, Society, and Culture in the Adenauer Era* (Ann Arbor, 1997), 73–89.

36. Hughes, *Shouldering the Burdens of Defeat*; also, idem, "'Through No Fault of Our Own': West Germans Remember Their War Losses," *German History* 18, no. 2 (2000): 193–214.

37. On the return of POWs in East and West, the work of Frank Biess is unsurpassed. See, e.g., "Men of Reconstruction—The Reconstruction of Men: Returning POWs in East and West Germany, 1945–1955," in Karen Hagemann and Stefanie Schüler-Springorum, eds., *Home/Front: The Military, War and Gender in Twentieth-Century Germany* (Oxford, 2002), 335–58, which previews Biess's forthcoming book on the social and political integration of returning POWs in the two Germanies.

38. Jay Lockenour, *Soldiers as Citizens: Former Wehrmacht Officers in the Federal Republic of Germany, 1945–1955* (Lincoln, NB, 2001), 27; also, Thomas Kühne, "Zwischen Vernichtungskrieg und Freizeitgesellschaft: Die Veteranenkultur der Bundesrepublik (1945–1995)," in Naumann, ed., *Nachkrieg in Deutschland,* 90–113.

39. Franka Schneider, "'Einigkeit im Unglück'? Berliner Eheberatungsstellen zwischen Ehekrise und Wiederaufbau," in Naumann, ed., *Nachkrieg in Deutschland,* 208.

40. Bernhard Winkelheide, *VDB* [1], Deutscher Bundestag, 162. Sitzung, 13 Sept. 1951, 6959; and in general, Moeller, *Protecting Motherhood*; Heineman, *What Difference Does a Husband Make?* and Dagmar Herzog, "Desperately Seeking Normality: Sex and Marriage in the Wake of War," in Bessel and Schumann, eds., *Life after Death,* 160–92.

41. Merith Niehuss, *Familie, Frau und Gesellschaft: Studien zur Strukturgeschichte der Familie in Westdeutschland 1945–1960* (Göttingen, 2001), esp. 34–40, 106, 112, 139. Pathbreaking on youth culture in the two postwar Germanies is Uta G. Poiger, *Jazz, Rock and Rebels: Cold War Politics and American Culture in a Divided Germany* (Berkeley, 2000).

42. See in particular Eva Hahn and Hans Henning Hahn, "Flucht und Vertreibung," in Etienne François and Hagen Schulze, eds., *Deutsche Erinnerungsorte,* vol. 1 (Munich, 2001): 335–51; and in general, Pertti Ahonen, *After the Expulsion: West Germany and Eastern Europe, 1945–1990* (Oxford, 2003), 1–115.

43. Ralph Bollman, "Im Dickicht der Aufrechnung," in Kettenacker, ed., *Ein Volk von Opfern?* 137–38; and Volker Ullrich, "Weltuntergang kann nicht schlimmer sein," in ibid., 110–15.

44. "Ansprache des Bundestagspräsidenten Dr. Ehlers anlässlich der Enthüllung des Ehrenmals für die Hamburger Luftgefallenen am 15. August 1952 auf dem Ohlsdorfer Friedhof," in Bundesminister für Vertriebene, Flüchtlinge und Kriegsgeschädigte, ed., *Dokumente Deutscher Kriegsschäden: Evakuierte, Kriegssachgeschädigte, Währungsgeschädigte* (hereafter *DDK*). *Die geschichtliche und rechtliche Entwicklung,* vol. 1 (Düsseldorf, 1958), 63.

45. Margalit, "Der Luftangriff auf Dresden," 205.

46. *Kriegsgräberfürsorge: Mitteilungen und Berichte vom Volksbund Deutscher Kriegsgräberfürsorge, e.V.* (1953), 163, quoted in Karin Hausen, "The 'Day of National Mourning' in Germany," in Sider and Smith, eds., *Between History and Histories,* 141.

47. Reinhart Koselleck, "Der Einfluss der beiden Weltkriege auf das soziale Bewusstsein," in Wolfram Wette, ed., *Der Krieg des kleinen Mannes: Eine Militärgeschichte von unten* (Munich, 1992), 336, 342; Michael Jeismann and Rolf Westheider, "Wofür stirbt der Bürger? Nationaler Totenkult und Staatsbürgertum in Deutschland und Frankreich seit der Französischen Revolution," in Reinhart Koselleck and Michael Jeismann, eds., *Der politische Totenkult: Kriegerdenkmäler in der Moderne* (Munich, 1994), 49–50.

48. Robert R. Shandley, *Rubble Films: German Cinema in the Shadow of the Third Reich* (Philadelphia, 2001). And in general, Heide Fehrenbach, *Cinema in Democratizing Germany: Reconstructing National Identity after Hitler* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1995); Ulrike Weckel, "The *Mitläufer* in Two German Postwar Films: Representation and Critical Reception," *History & Memory* 15, no. 2 (2003): 64–93; idem, "*Die Mörder sind unter uns* oder: Vom Verschwinden der Opfer," *WerkstattGeschichte* 9, no. 25 (May 2000): 105–15; and Robert G. Moeller, "'In a Thousand Years, Every German Will Speak of This Battle': Celluloid Memories of Stalingrad," in Omer Bartov, Atina Grossmann and Mary Nolan, eds., *Crimes of War: Guilt and Denial in the Twentieth Century* (New York, 2002), 161–90.

49. These projects were initiated and funded by the federal government and filled literally thousands of pages. The *Dokumentation der Vertreibung der Deutschen aus Ost-Mitteleuropa* (Documentation of the expulsion of Germans from East-Central Europe) was compiled under the supervision of an editorial board that included Theodor Schieder and Hans Rothfels. For a discussion of the projects that detailed the POW and expellee experience, see Moeller, *War Stories,* 51–87, 177–80. The massive 5-volume collection on the bombing war included a bibliography of more than 400 pages. See Bundesminister für Vertriebene, Flüchtlinge und Kriegsgeschädigte, ed., *DDK,* vol. 5, *Bibliographie* (Stuttgart, 1964).

50. Karl Jaspers, *The Question of German Guilt,* trans. E. B. Ashton (New York, 1961), 21, 114; also Anson Rabinbach, *In the Shadow of Catastrophe: German Intellectuals between Apocalypse and Enlightenment* (Berkeley, 1997), 129–65.

51. In general, Frank Stern, *The Whitewashing of the Yellow Badge: Antisemitism and Philosemitism in Postwar Germany,* trans. William Templer (Oxford, 1992); and on the West German Communist Party, Patrick Major, *The Death of the KPD: Communism and Anti-Communism in West Germany, 1945–1956* (Oxford, 1997).

52. Regina Mühlhauser, "Vergewaltigungen in Deutschland 1945: Nationaler Opferdiskurs und individuelles Erinnern betroffener Frauen," in Naumann, ed., *Nachkrieg in Deutschland,* 384–408; see also Norman M. Naimark, *The Russians in Germany: A History of the Soviet Zone of Occupation, 1945–1949* (Cambridge, MA, 1995), 69–140.

53. Hahn and Hahn, "Flucht und Vertreibung"; Elke Mehnert, "Vertriebene versus Umsiedler—der ostdeutsche Blick auf ein Kapitel Nachkriegsgeschichte," in idem, ed., *Landschaften der Erinnerung: Flucht und Vertreibung aus deutscher, polnischer und tschechischer Sicht* (Frankfurt/Main, 2001), 133–57; Michael Schwartz, "'Zwangsheimat Deutschland': Vertriebene und Kernbevölkerung zwischen Gesellschaftskonflikt und Integrationspolitik," in Naumann, ed., *Nachkrieg in Deutschland,* 114–48.

54. Elizabeth Heineman, "Gender, Public Policy, and Memory: Waiting Wives and War Widows in the Postwar Germanys," in Alon Confino and Peter Fritzsche, eds., *The Work of Memory: New Directions in the Study of German Society and Culture* (Urbana, 2002), 214–38.

55. Kurt Zentner, *Aufstieg aus dem Nichts: Deutschland von 1945 bis 1953. Eine Soziographie in zwei Bänden,* 2 vols. (Cologne, 1954). This is also the unifying theme of the multivolume documentation of the consequences of the bombing war and the ways in which West Germans overcame this past. See, e.g., Bundesminister für Vertriebene, Flüchtlinge und Kriegsgeschädigte, ed., *DDK. Die geschichtliche und rechtliche Entwicklung,* vol. 2:2 (Dortmund, 1960), xi.

56. See Constantin Goschler, *Wiedergutmachung: Westdeutschland und die*

Verfolgten des Nationalsozialismus (1950–1954) (Munich, 1992); idem and Ludolf Herbst, eds., *Wiedergutmachung in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Munich, 1989); and Robert G. Moeller, "'The Homosexual Man Is a "Man," the Homosexual Woman Is a "Woman"': Sex, Society, and the Law in Postwar West Germany," in idem, ed., *West Germany under Construction,* 251–84.

57. See the discussion in Koshar, *From Monuments to Traces,* 162. He refers to Max Seydewitz, *Zerstörung und Wiederaufbau von Dresden* (Berlin, 1955).

58. OMGUS, Daily Intelligence Digest no. 158, 2 May 1946, "Reactions to KZ Film," National Archive, OMGUS, Information Control Division, Opinion Surveys Branch, box 146, file 20, "Daily Intelligence Digest, 1 April–20 June 1946."

59. General a.D. Gerhard Müller to the Landtagsfraktion of the SPD Rheinland-Pfalz, 16 Nov. 1948, quoted in Diehl, *Thanks of the Fatherland,* 63; and *Der Teufel spielte Balalaika,* discussed in Moeller, *War Stories,* 162.

60. See the discussion in Moeller, *War Stories,* 74–82.

61. "Gebt die Kriegsgefangenen frei!" *Stuttgarter Zeitung,* 11 Nov. 1949; see also, "Verbrechen gegen die Menschlichkeit," *Bremer Nachrichten*, 28 Jan. 1950, copies of both in the clippings collection of the Presse- und Informationsamt der Bundesregierung, Mikrofilm 1566.

62. *VDB* [1], Deutscher Bundestag, 94. Sitzung, 26 Oct. 1950, 3495–96.

63. Harald Welzer, Robert Montau and Christine Plass, *"Was wir für böse Menschen sind!" Der Nationalsozialismus im Gespräch zwischen den Generationen* (Tübingen, 1997), 146.

64. On these subjects, see the important work of Vera Neumann, *Nicht die Rede wert: Die Privatisierung der Kriegsfolgen in der frühen Bundesrepublik* (Münster, 1999); and Svenja Goltermann, "Verletzte Körper oder 'Building National Bodies': Kriegsheimkehrer, 'Krankheit' und Psychiatrie in der westdeutschen Gesellschaft 1945–1955," *WerkstattGeschichte* 8, no. 23 (1999): 83–98.

65. Hermann Lübbe, "Der Nationalsozialismus im politischen Bewusstsein der Gegenwart," in Martin Broszat, ed., *Deutschlands Weg in die Diktatur: Internationale Konferenz zur nationalsozialistischen Machtübernahme im Reichstagsgebäude zu Berlin* (Berlin, 1983), 329–49, esp. 334–35.

66. Jörg Echternkamp, "'Verwirrung im Vaterländischen'? Nationalismus in der deutschen Nachkriegsgesellschaft, 1945–1960," in idem and Sven Oliver Müller, eds., *Die Politik der Nation: Deutscher Nationalismus in Krieg und Krisen, 1760–1960* (Munich, 2002), 219–46.

67. Sebald, *On the Natural History of Destruction,* 13.

68. And on literary voices, see Volker Hage, *Zeugen der Zerstörung: Die Literaten und der Luftkrieg. Essays und Gespräche* (Frankfurt/Main, 2002).

69. Helmut Dubiel, *Niemand ist frei von der Geschichte: Die nationalsozialistische Herrschaft in den Debatten des Deutschen Bundestags* (Munich, 1999), 127.

70. Robert Weldon Whalen, *Bitter Wounds: German Victims of the Great War, 1914–1939* (Ithaca, 1984), 33.

71. My remarks here are based on much recent literature that focuses on the ways in which World War I's legacies and rhetorics of victimization profoundly influenced the politics of the 1920s and 1930s. In particular, see Richard Bessel, *Germany after the First World War* (Oxford, 1993); Deborah Cohen, *The War Come Home: Disabled Veterans in Britain and Germany, 1914–1939* (Berkeley, 2001); Greg Eghigian, *Making Security Social: Disability, Insurance, and the Birth of the Social Entitlement State in Germany* (Ann Arbor, 2000); Sabine Kienitz, "Body Damage: War Disability and Construction of Masculinity in Weimar Germany," in Hagemann and Schüler-Springorum, eds., *Home/Front,* 181–203; Bernd Ulrich and Benjamin Ziemann, eds., *Krieg im Frieden: Die Umkämpfte Erinnerung an den Ersten Weltkrieg* (Frankfurt/Main, 1997); Jost Dülffer and Gerd Krumreich, eds., *Der Verlorene Frieden: Politik und Kriegskultur nach 1918* (Essen, 2002); Jörg Duppler and Gerhard P. Gross, eds., *Kriegsende 1918: Ereignis, Wirkung, Nachwirkung* (Munich, 1999); Sabine Behrenbeck, *Der Kult um die toten Helden: Nationalsozialistische Mythen, Riten und Symbole 1923 bis 1945* (Greifswald, 1996); Omer Bartov, *Mirrors of Destruction: War, Genocide, and Modern Identity* (New York, 2000); and offering suggestive comparative perspectives, Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *The Culture of Defeat: On National Trauma, Mourning, and Recovery,* trans. Jefferson Chase (New York, 2003).

72. Jens Ebert, ed., *Stalingrad: Eine deutsche Legende* (Reinbek bei Hamburg, 1992); Manfred Hettling, "Täter und Opfer? Die deutschen Soldaten in Stalingrad," *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 35 (1995): 515–16; and Jay Baird, "The Myth of Stalingrad," *Journal of Contemporary History* 4, no. 3 (1969): 187–204.

73. See Ulrich Herbert, "'Die guten und die schlechten Zeiten': Überlegungen zur diachronen Analyse lebensgeschichtlicher Interviews," in Lutz Niethammer, ed., *"Die Jahre weiss man nicht, wo man die heute hinsetzen soll": Faschismus-Erfahrungen im Ruhrgebiet* (Bonn, 1983), 67–96; also Michael Geyer, "'There is a Land Where Everything Is Pure: Its Name Is Land of Death': Some Observations on Catastrophic Nationalism," in Greg Eghigian and Matthew Paul Berg, eds., *Sacrifice and National Belonging in Twentieth-Century Germany* (College Station, TX, 2002), 118–47.

74. See, e.g., the account of Ulbricht's speech at the dedication of the memorial to the victims of fascism at Sachsenhausen in 1961, in Jeffrey Herf, "Traditions of Memory and Belonging: The Holocaust and the Germans since 1945," in Ulf Hedetoft and Mette Hjort, eds., *The Postnational Self: Belonging and Identity* (Minneapolis, 2002), 289–90.

75. Bessel, *Germany after the First World War,* 283–84.

76. See James M. Diehl, "Germany in Defeat, 1918 and 1945: Some Com-

parisons and Contrasts," *The History Teacher* 22, no. 4 (1989): 397–409; and Michael L. Hughes, "Restitution and Democracy in Germany after Two World Wars," *Contemporary European History* 4, no. 1 (1994): 1–18.

77. "Regierungserkärung vom 10. November 1965, Bundeskanzler Dr. Erhard," in Peter Pulte, ed., *Regierungserklärungen 1949–1973* (Berlin, 1973), 161; and *Protokoll der Verhandlungen des VI. Parteitages der Sozialistischen Einheitspartei Deutschlands 15. bis 21. Januar 1963 in der Werner-Seelenbinder-Halle zu Berlin: 1. bis 3. Verhandlungstag* (Berlin, 1963), 28.

78. In general, see Axel Schildt, "Materieller Wohlstand—pragmatische Politik—kulturelle Umbrüche: Die 60er Jahre in der Bundesrepublik," in idem, Siegfried and Lammers, eds., *Dynamische Zeiten,* 21–53. See also Ulrich Herbert, "Liberalisierung als Lernprozess: Die Bundesrepublik in der deutschen Geschichte," in idem, ed., *Wandlungsprozesse in Westdeutschland: Belastung, Integration, Liberalisierung 1945–1980* (Göttingen, 2002), 7–49, and the other contributions to this important volume.

79. Koshar, *From Monuments to Traces,* 153.

80. For a useful summary of these developments, see Peter Reichel, *Vergangenheitsbewältigung in Deutschland: Die Auseinandersetzung mit der NS-Diktatur von 1945 bis heute* (Munich, 2001); Harold Marcuse, *Legacies of Dachau: The Uses and Abuses of a Concentration Camp, 1933–2001* (Cambridge, 2001); Mary Fulbrook, *German National Identity after the Holocaust* (Cambridge, 1999); and Langenbacher, "Changing Memory Regimes."

81. See the discussions in Marcuse, *Legacies of Dachau,* 214–16, and Dubiel, *Niemand ist frei von der Geschichte,* 103–10. In general, on the 1960s see also Detlef Siegfried, "Zwischen Aufarbeitung und Schlussstrich: Der Umgang mit der NS-Vergangenheit in den beiden deutschen Staaten 1958 bis 1969," in Schildt, Siegfried and Lammers, eds., *Dynamische Zeiten,* 77–113.

82. Quoted in Dubiel, *Niemand ist frei von der Geschichte,* 133.

83. Edgar Wolfrum, *Geschichtspolitik in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland: Der Weg zur bundesrepublikanischen Erinnerung 1948–1990* (Darmstadt, 1999), 232, 352.

84. Michael Berenbaum, ed., *A Mosaic of Victims: Non-Jews Persecuted and Murdered by the Nazis* (New York, 1990).

85. Marcuse, *Legacies of Dachau,* 346.

86. "Speech by Richard von Weizsäcker, President of the Federal Republic of Germany, in the Bundestag during the Ceremony Commemorating the 40th Anniversary of the End of the War in Europe and of National Socialist Tyranny, May 8, 1985," in Hartman, ed., *Bitburg,* 263.

87. See Peter Reichel, *Politik mit der Erinnerung: Gedächtnisorte im Streit um die nationalsozialistische Vergangenheit* (Munich, 1995), 231–46.

88. Neumann, "Der Bombenkrieg," 334; and in general, Herf, *Divided Memory.*

89. "Speech by Richard von Weizsäcker," 272.

90. See, e.g., Harald Welzer, "Zurück zur Opfergesellschaft: Verschiebungen in der deutschen Erinnerungskultur," *Neue Zürcher Zeitung,* 3 April 2002; and "Der böse Geist der Charta: Ralph Giordano fürchtet, dass die Diskussion über die Grass-Novelle die Ursachen der Vertreibung vergessen macht," *Die Welt,* 9 Feb. 2002.

91. For a complete discussion, see Moeller, "Sinking Ships."

92. John Borneman, "German Sacrifice Today," in Eghigian and Berg, *Sacrifice and National Belonging,* 14.

93. Dubiel, *Niemand ist frei von der Geschichte,* 293. See also Ralph Giordano, "Ein Volk von Opfern?" in Kettenacker, ed., *Ein Volk von Opfern?* 166–68; and Wolfgang Sofsky, "Die halbierte Erinnerung," in ibid.,124–26.

94. Niven, *Facing the Nazi Past,* 215.

95. See, e.g., "'Ohne freudige Gefühle': Bundeskanzler Gerhard Schröder über die Aussicht auf Frieden, die Lehren des Krieges und das Verhältnis der Europäer zu Amerika," *Der Spiegel,* 7 June 1999; the very critical assessment of Jürgen Elsässer, *Kriegsverbrechen: Die tödlichen Lügen der Bundesregierung und ihre Opfer im Kosovo-Konflikt* (Hamburg, 2000); and Stefanie Christmann and Dieter S. Lutz, *Die Zerstörung der Vernunft in Zeiten des Krieges: Zum Demokratieverlust nach 1989* (Berlin, 2000).

96. See Klaus Naumann, "Das nervöse Jahrzehnt: Krieg, Medien und Erinnerung am Beginn der Berliner Republik," *Mittelweg 36* 10, no. 3 (2001): 42–43. See also Nicholas Stargardt, "Opfer der Bomben und der Vergeltung," in Kettenacker, ed., *Ein Volk von Opfern,* 56–71.

97. Text available at http://www.bundeskanzler.de/Reden-.7715.11806/Rede-von-Bundeskanzler-Gerhard-Schroeder-anlaess...htm (last accessed 19 Aug. 2004).

98. Peter Glotz, "Rede auf dem Tag der Heimat am 1. September 2001 in Berlin," http://www.mitteleuropa.de/zgv04.htm (last accessed 19 Aug. 2004).

99. See, e.g., Peter Steinbach, "Vertreibung ist Gegenwart," *die tageszeitung,* 10 Oct. 2003; Julius H. Schopes, "Angst vor dem Tabubruch," ibid., 2 Oct. 2003; Michael Jeismann, "Das zweite Symbol: Erfahrungsebenen von Flucht und Vertreibung," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung,* 15 March 2004; Karl Schlögel, "Die Düsternis—im neuen Licht: Die Geschichte der Vertreibung passt nicht in ein Zentrum," *Die Zeit,* no. 31 (2003); Christina Weiss, "Niemand will vergessen: Aber nur ein Netz von Geschichtswerkstätten in ganz Europa dient der historischen Aufklärung," *Die Zeit,* no. 41 (2003); and Hans Michael Kloth, "'Wunde

Punkte': Der Streit um ein 'Zentrum gegen Vertreibungen' entzweit nun auch das Bundeskabinett," *Der Spiegel,* 4 Aug. 2003.

100. Here I consciously echo the title of Anson Rabinbach's insightful essay, "The Jewish Question in the German Question," in Peter Baldwin, ed., *Reworking the Past: Hitler, the Holocaust, and the Historians' Debate* (Boston, 1990), 45–53. See also the thoughtful reflections of Omer Bartov, "'Seit die Juden weg sind…': Germany, History, and Representations of Absence," in Scott Denham, Irene Kacandes and Jonathan Petropoulos, eds., *A User's Guide to German Cultural Studies* (Ann Arbor, 1997), 209–26.

101. Based on http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/gm.html# People (last accessed 19 Aug. 2004).

102. See Moeller, "'In a Thousand Years'," 188–90. And for a critical alternative that argues that the popular representation of the Sixth Army's fate as an *Opfergang* embodies the survival of Nazi mythology and instead ends the story before Stalingrad, emphasizing the participation of the Wehrmacht in genocide, see Bernd Boll and Hans Safrian, "Auf dem Weg nach Stalingrad: Die 6. Armee 1941/42," in Hannes Heer and Klaus Naumann, eds., *Vernichtungskrieg: Verbrechen der Wehrmacht, 1941–1944* (Hamburg, 1995), 260–96.

103. See Elizabeth Harvey, "Remembering and Repressing: German Women's Recollections of the 'Ethnic Struggle' in Occupied Poland during the Second World War," in Hagemann and Schüler-Springorum, eds., *Home/Front,* 275–96; idem, "'Die deutsche Frau im Osten': 'Rasse', Geschlecht und öffentlicher Raum im besetzten Polen, 1940–1944," *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 38 (1998): 191–214.

104. Mahmood Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda* (Princeton, 2001).

105. See Iwona Irwin-Zarecka, *Frames of Remembrance: The Dynamics of Collective Memory* (New Brunswick, 1994); also Hettling, "Täter und Opfer?" and Benjamin Ziemann, "'Vergesellschaftung der Gewalt' als Thema der Kriegsgeschichte seit 1914: Perspektiven und Desiderate eines Konzeptes," in Thoss and Volkmann, eds., *Erster Weltkrieg/Zweiter Weltkrieg,* 735–58.

106. Peter Fritzsche, "Walter Kempowski's Collection," *Central European History* 35, no. 2 (2002): 257–67; and Walter Kempowski, *Das Echolot: Fuga furiosa, ein kollektives Tagebuch Winter 1945,* 4 vols. (Munich, 1999). See also the novels of Dieter Forte, *Der Junge mit den blutigen Schuhen* (Frankfurt/Main, 1998), and *In der Erinnerung* (Frankfurt/Main, 1998).

107. Antony Beevor, *Stalingrad* (New York, 1998), and *The Fall of Berlin 1945* (New York, 2002).

108. Catherine Merridale, *Night of Stone: Death and Memory in Russia* (London, 2000); Nina Tumarkin, *The Living and the Dead: The Rise and Fall of the Cult of World War II in Russia* (New York, 1994). See also Pieter Lagrou, "The

Nationalization of Victimhood: Selective Violence and National Grief in Western Europe, 1940–1960," in Bessel and Schumann, eds., *Life after Death,* 243–57.

109. Elizabeth Heineman, "The Hour of the Woman: Memories of Germany's 'Crisis Years' and West German National Identity," *American Historical Review* 101, no. 2 (1996): 354–95.

110. Atina Grossmann, "Trauma, Memory, and Motherhood: Germans and Jewish Displaced Persons in Post-Nazi Germany, 1945–1949," *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 38 (1998): 215–39 (quotation on 237). On masculinity, see the work of Biess; Heide Fehrenbach, "Rehabilitating Fatherland: Race and Remasculinization," *Signs* 24, no. 1 (1998): 107–27; Poiger, *Jazz, Rock, and Rebels*; and Robert G. Moeller, "Heimkehr ins Vaterland: Die Remaskulinisierung Westdeutschlands in den fünfziger Jahren," *Militärgeschichtliche Zeitschrift* 60, no. 2 (2001): 403–36.

111. See, e.g., Domansky and Welzer, eds., *Eine offene Geschichte*; Elisabeth Domansky, "A Lost War: World War II in Postwar German Memory," in Alvin H. Rosenfeld, ed., *Thinking about the Holocaust: After Half a Century* (Bloomington, 1997), 233–72.

112. See Alf Lüdtke, "What Happened to the 'Fiery Red Glow'? Workers' Experiences and German Fascism," in idem, ed., *The History of Everyday Life: Reconstructing Historical Experiences and Ways of Life,* trans. William Templer (Princeton, 1995), 209.

113. Lutz Niethammer, "Privat-Wirtschaft: Erinnerungsfragmente einer anderern Umerziehung," in idem, ed., *"Hinterher merkt man, dass es richtig war, dass es schiefgegangen ist": Nachkriegs-Erfahrungen im Ruhrbegiet* (Berlin, 1983), 17–106; and idem, "Heimat und Front: Versuch, zehn Kriegserinnerungen aus der Arbeiterklasse des Ruhrgebietes zu verstehen," in idem, ed., *"Die Jahre weiss man nicht,"* 163–232.

114. See Moeller, *War Stories,* 51–87, 177–80.

115. Institut für Sozialforschung, *Zum politischen Bewusstsein ehemaliger Kriegsgefangener: Eine soziologische Untersuchung im Verband der Heimkehrer: Forschungsbericht* (Frankfurt/Main, 1957). As far as I know, this exists only as a typescript manuscript, and it circulates as a kind of underground bestseller among historians who have looked at the social and political reintegration of POWs after the war. The second study was published. See Friedrich Pollock, *Gruppenexperiment: Ein Studienbericht* (Frankfurt/Main, 1955), which appeared in the series, Frankfurter Beiträge zur Soziologie im Auftrag des Instituts für Sozialforschung, edited by Theodor W. Adorno and Walter Dirks.

116. Harald Welzer, Sabine Moller, Karoline Tschuggnall, *"Opa war kein Nazi": Nationalsozialismus und Holocaust im Familiengedächtnis* (Frankfurt/Main, 2002), 127.

194