

ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: THE “*EUROPA-GEDANKE*” AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF GERMAN CONSERVATISM, 1930-1955

Joshua Derren Klein, Doctor of Philosophy, 2019

Dissertation directed by: Distinguished University Professor Jeffrey Herf, Department of History, University of Maryland, College Park

The following dissertation is a political-intellectual history of German conservatism and national identity from the 1930s to the 1950s. It explores the published and private documents of prominent conservative intellectuals, propagandists, journalists, and military elites who before, during, and after the Second World War developed a new concept of European nationalism which they called the “*Europa-Gedanke*,” or “Europe-concept.” This dissertation traces the evolution of this political ideology by assessing what Europe meant for these thinkers, how this meaning changed over the course of a volatile historical time period, how it differed from other concepts of Europe, and how it informed the transformation of German conservatism.

The figures analyzed in this dissertation had in common a professional and intellectual trajectory that began in the Conservative Revolution of the Weimar period. Part I of this dissertation dissects their path to intellectual complicity in National Socialism and the propaganda apparatus behind Hitler’s “New Order of Europe.” Part II traces their postwar professional rebirth as widely publicized journalists and influential military reformers in the first decade of West Germany.

Surprisingly, after 1945 these figures were able to bridge their European ideology with the postwar Christian Democratic politics of European integration and anti-Communism. This alliance opened the door for liberals in West Germany and the American intelligence community to accommodate a previously hostile milieu into their postwar liberal politics.

The primary thesis of this dissertation is three-fold: a) the conservative Europe-concept is a hitherto neglected and dismissed ideology which was highly influential across all three examined time periods of German history; b) this influence was a result of the Europe-concept's explicit reformulation of the enduring German *völkisch* tradition in such a way that expanded the definition of the historical ethnic community (from Germany to Europe) and thereby addressed the perceived political inadequacy of nationalism during and after the Second World War; and c) the Europe-concept contributed to the de-radicalization of German conservatism by assisting a transition from the anti-democratic Conservative Revolutionary impulse to the postwar West German politics of liberal democracy – a convergence that moderated the instinctive illiberalism of German conservatism.

THE “*EUROPA-GEDANKE*” AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF GERMAN
CONSERVATISM, 1930-1955

By

Joshua Derren Klein

Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Maryland, College Park, in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
2019

Advisory Committee:
Professor Jeffrey Herf, Chair
Professor Marsha Rozenblit
Professor Piotr Kosicki
Professor Jerry Muller
Professor Vladimir Tismaneanu

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Overview	1
The Sonderweg, Völkisch Ideology, and Europeanism	7
The Zero Hour, Postwar Conservatism, and Democratization	13
Competing Ideas of Europe	29
1. The Interwar Period	30
2. The Nazi Period	33
3. The Postwar Period	44
Methodology	52

Part I: Nazi Europeanism, 1930-1945

Chapter 2: The Conservative Revolution, the <i>Europa-Gedanke</i> , and Giselher Wirsing	56
Introduction	56
Giselher Wirsing	59
Carl Schmitt, the <i>Grossraum</i>-concept, and the Tat-Kreis	66
Reconciliation with National Socialism	83
Giselher Wirsing's Early-war Europeanism, 1939-1943	89
Giselher Wirsing and Signal, 1943-1944	101
Signal at the End of the War	120
Conclusion: Das Zeitalter des Ikaros	126
Chapter 3: "Europe to the Europeans!" – Nazi Europeanism in the Foreign Office	136
Introduction	136
Karl Megerle and the Origins of Nazi Europeanism in the Foreign Office...	139
Megerle's Adoption of Nazi Europeanism, 1940	143
The Propaganda Committee, 1941	151
Standard Theses and Megerle's Role in 1942	157
Paul Karl Schmidt and the Press Department	167
Nazi Europeanism in the Press Department	174
Antisemitism and Illiberalism in Schmidt's Europe-Concept	181
Conclusion	187
Chapter 4: Foreign Office Europe-Projects in Berlin and Abroad	189
Introduction	189
Franz Alfred Six and the German Foreign Studies Institute (DAWI)	190
Axel Seeberg and the Foreigner Course	202
The Europe-Seminar	209
Klaus Mehnert and the XX Century in Shanghai	221

Mehnert’s Early Life and Attraction to National Socialism	224
Mehnert’s World Travels and Conflict with the Nazi Regime	230
Mehnert’s Propaganda in Shanghai	241
Conclusion	253
Chapter 5: Germanic Europeanism in the Waffen-SS	256
Introduction	256
Gottlob Berger and the SS-Office for Indoctrination	263
Lehrpläne	268
Terminology	270
Racial doctrine (Rassenkunde)	271
“Theory of the Reich” (Reichsidee)	274
Nazi Historicism	277
European Racial Exceptionalism	280
Leithefte	284
German Racial Supremacism, 1935-1939	289
Germanic Particularism, 1939-1941	293
Germanic Nationalism, 1941-1944	294
Modified Germanic Europeanism, 1945-1945	304
Conclusion: Felix Steiner’s Revisionist History	320

Part II: Post-Nazi Europeanism, 1945-1955

Chapter 6: Transitions across 1945	331
Introduction	331
War-time Disillusionment with National Socialism	338
Giselher Wirsing’s Path to Defeatism and Insubordination	340
Ernst Jünger and Der Friede	355
Early Postwar Cooperation with the United States	367
Paul Karl Schmidt, the CIA, and the “ECA-Mission”	369
Giselher Wirsing, Klaus Mehnert, and the American	386
Conclusion	394
Chapter 7: The Origins of Post-Nazi Europeanism in West German Journalism	400
Introduction	400
Origins of the Postwar Network	403
The Revised Europe-Concept	408
European Integration	410
Christian Democracy and the Occident	412
The Gatekeepers	418
Occupation Authorities	418
Hanns Lilje	425
Eugen Gerstenmaier	429

Conclusion	439
Chapter 8: <i>Christ und Welt</i> and <i>Sonntagsblatt</i>	441
Introduction	441
<i>Christ und Welt</i>	442
Opposition to Nationalism.....	444
Echoes of Nationalist Resentment	447
The Grossraum Reconfigured	455
European Integration	459
The European Defense Community and the “Third Front”	461
<i>Sonntagsblatt</i>	466
The Occident	468
Criticism of Spengler	469
European Historicism and Nazi Continuities	470
Völkisch Europeanism	474
West German Public Opinion	477
Democratization in <i>Christ und Welt</i> and <i>Sonntagsblatt</i>	479
Early Illiberalism	481
Reconciliation with Liberalism after 1952	485
Conclusion: Different Trajectories	492
Chapter 9: Post-Nazi Europeanism in Veterans’ Organizations and Intelligence Operations	500
Introduction:	500
Context: The Postwar Veteran Milieu	503
Project KMMANLY, Felix Steiner, and the <i>Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung</i>	507
Project QKSNITCH and the <i>Gesellschaft für Wehrkunde</i>	528
American Inroads	536
West German Liberal Military Reformers	542
The Origins of the Himmerod-Conference	545
Democratization	559
Democratization in <i>Gesellschaft für Wehrkunde</i>	559
Democratization in the <i>Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung</i>	572
Conclusion: Successful Operations or Vehicles for Extremists?	584
Chapter 10: Conclusion – Konrad Adenauer and Post-Nazi Memory Politics...594	
Konrad Adenauer	594
Post-Nazi Memory Politis	601
Appendices	606
Bibliography	613

Chapter 1: Introduction

Overview

The following dissertation is a political-intellectual history of German conservatism and national identity from the 1930s to the 1950s. It explores the published and private documents of conservative intellectuals, journalists, and military elites who before, during, and after the Second World War developed a unique concept of Europe which they called the “*Europa-Gedanke*,” or “Europe-concept.” The Europe-concept was a reformulation of German nationalism in which the past, present, and future could be understood from the perspective of an organic, ethnic European community marching a teleological path in history towards political, economic, and cultural unification. This “European revolution,” as they often called it, would culminate in a new European nation capable of liberating Europeans from the East (Bolshevism), the West (liberalism), and, importantly, even Europe’s own past (nationalism). This dissertation will trace the evolution of this political ideology by assessing what Europe meant for these thinkers, how this meaning changed over the course of a volatile historical time period, how it differed from other concepts of Europe, and how it informed the transformation of German conservatism.

The figures analyzed in this dissertation have in common a professional and intellectual trajectory that spans the Weimar period, the era of the Third Reich, and the first decade of postwar West Germany. A primary goal of this dissertation is to trace the evolution of the Europe-concept across all three of these time periods and their accompanying political peculiarities, and in doing so

highlight the impact of the conservative Europe-concept on mid-twentieth century German politics. Part I of this dissertation traces the Europe-concept to its origins in the early 1930s where it was constructed by proponents of the so-called Conservative Revolutionary movement in the Weimar Republic. For our investigation of the Europe-concept the central personality was Giselher Wirsing, but also important were his colleagues Hans Zehrer, Ferdinand Friedrich Zimmermann, and Ernst Wilhelm Eschmann. This Berlin-based network of conservative intellectuals called itself the *Tat-Kreis*, or “Action Circle,” and published one of the most influential conservative magazines called *Die Tat*. Like other Conservative Revolutionaries these intellectuals also rejected the conservative Wilhelminian monarchy for its inability to overcome Marxism, bourgeois liberalism, and the reactionary agrarian and Christian conservatism of Germany’s social elites; instead, they desired a future-oriented political revolution that could usher in a cultural awakening of the German ethnic community, the *Volk*. But unlike other Conservative Revolutionaries, they were preoccupied with the consequences this would have outside of Germany’s borders and therefore began developing an interpretation of Europe that could complement the national revolution.

After Hitler’s seizure of power in 1933 this network embedded itself into the National Socialist regime, gradually accumulated positions of high influence in the Nazi propaganda apparatus, and expanded their network into various institutions throughout the Third Reich such as the Foreign Office, the Wehrmacht, and the Waffen-SS. During the 1930s they further developed their

Europe-concept with the help of Carl Schmitt's concept of an independent European *Grossraum*, or European "continental space." The swift Nazi victories in Central and Western Europe in 1939/40 created an opportunity for these propagandists to enlarge their influence by further developing their Europe-concept in the service of Hitler's "New Order of Europe." They assumed leadership in the second-most published periodical of the entire Nazi propaganda apparatus, *Signal*, which was published in German and other languages as a transnational mouthpiece for the Wehrmacht in conquered Europe. Likewise, they ascended into leadership positions in the sprawling propaganda machines of the Foreign Office, Berlin academia, and the Waffen-SS, each of which similarly disseminated Europe-propaganda across the continent. Important additions to their network included: a) Foreign Office propaganda administrators such as Karl Megerle, Paul Karl Schmidt, and Klaus Mehnert; b) propagandists in Berlin academies such as Franz Alfred Six, Axel Seeberg, and Karl Heinz Pfeffer; c) commissioned officers in the military such as Waffen-SS propaganda-chief Gottlob Berger and Waffen-SS general Felix Steiner. By 1940 the Europe-concept had been thoroughly reformulated into a wide-ranging propaganda discourse that served Nazi imperialism in dozens of languages across the continent. This marriage of the Europe-concept with National Socialism drew upon much of the Nazi *Weltanschauung* but also revised it in significant ways. Throughout this dissertation we will call this unorthodox, revisionist discourse "Nazi Europeanism."

Most of these Nazi Europeanists served the regime until the bitter end, but by the end of the war many had become disillusioned with National Socialism and attempted to distance themselves from the regime. Importantly, the Europe-concept was the primary vehicle for their estrangement from National Socialism – as they came to disavow National Socialism the Europe-concept was left remaining as their only ideological orientation. While some Nazi Europeanists stubbornly supported National Socialism until the end of the war, most came to oppose the regime, and some even took careful steps to express that opposition. This late disillusionment, however opportunistic it was, stimulated a form of memory politics in which they could distance themselves from the past without fully repudiating it. National Socialism, they could argue, had failed Europeans by neglecting and falsifying the New Order of Europe and instead actually leading Europe further into the abyss of nationalism. Furthermore, in the context of postwar European integration, the Europe-concept proved to be a useful tool for revising their past and reconciling themselves to the present. Therefore, part II of this dissertation follows the former Nazi Europeanists across the “Zero Hour” of 1945 into the first decade of the West German Federal Republic, illustrating continuities and discontinuities in their Europe-concept. Former Nazi Europeanists attempted to separate the Europe-concept from National Socialism but also retain many of its core precepts by developing what we will call “post-Nazi Europeanism.” This was an attempt to salvage the radical Conservative Revolutionary tradition from National Socialism by projecting the post-Nazi Europe-concept onto the postwar politics of European integration during the

debates of the late 1940s and early 1950s. Many of this dissertation's key figures succeeded in resurrecting prestigious careers in postwar West Germany where they obtained a remarkable degree of influence in journalism as leading public advocates of European integration. They included: Giselher Wirsing, Klaus Mehnert, Eugen Gerstenmaier, Hans Zehrer, Axel Seeberg, and Paul Karl Schmidt - most of whom had prolific careers as chief editors and/or leading editorialists in two of the most-read political periodicals in the first decade of postwar West Germany: *Christ und Welt* and *Sonntagsblatt*.

Part II will also trace the continuation of the Europe-concept in the West German military milieu, arguing that the Europe-concept was bridged into postwar military circles by influential elites such as Ernst Jünger, Hans Speidel, and Felix Steiner who sought to revise the German military tradition by anchoring it in the Europe-concept as opposed to nationalism. This advocacy took place in the context of the short-lived campaign to create a European Army from 1950-1954, which opened the door for liberals in West Germany as well as American occupation authorities to accommodate a previously hostile milieu into their Cold War liberal politics. In fact, the final chapter in this dissertation will illustrate that this reconciliation produced a liaison between former Nazi Europeanists and covert U.S. and West German public relations intelligence operations called "Operation KMMANLY" and "Operation QKSNITCH," which were designed by American intelligence officers to democratize and de-nationalize German veterans while simultaneously encouraging their participation in rearmament. These operations expanded the reach of the Europe-concept to West German veterans,

and by the end of the 1940s former Nazi-Europeanists had attained leading positions in the most influential veteran periodicals such as the *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung* as well as the most influential officers' clubs such as the *Gesellschaft für Wehrkunde*. These projects attracted additional social elites who advocated the Europe-concept within the veteran community. Especially significant among these additions were former commissioned officers of the Wehrmacht Johann von Kielmansegg, Erich Dethleffsen, Arno Werner Uhlig, Robert Knauss, Georg von Sodenstern, and Günther Blumentritt. Many of these figures played an important role in the official re-founding of the West German military in the early 1950s and the Europe-concept was at the center of their activities vis-à-vis this new military establishment.

The primary thesis of this dissertation is three-fold: a) the conservative Europe-concept is a hitherto neglected and dismissed ideology which was highly influential across all three examined time periods of German history; b) this influence was a result of the Europe-concept's explicit reformulation of the enduring German *völkisch* tradition in such a way that expanded the definition of the historical ethnic community (from Germany to Europe) and thereby addressed the perceived political inadequacy of nationalism during and after the Second World War; and c) the Europe-concept contributed to the de-radicalization of German conservatism by assisting a transition from the anti-democratic Conservative Revolutionary impulse to the postwar West German politics of liberal democracy – a convergence that moderated the instinctive illiberalism of German conservatism.

The Sonderweg, Völkisch Ideology, and Europeanism

This thesis is anchored in the *Sonderweg* interpretation of German history - the assertion that German history, especially the disaster of National Socialism, was to significant extent informed by historical continuities.¹ Beginning in the 1980s the *Sonderweg* came under sharp criticism by historians for its purportedly deterministic approach to German history and for the absence of any distinct alternative “Western” model of historical development.² But the most arresting criticisms of the *Sonderweg* focused primarily on the so-called Bielefeld interpretation of the *Sonderweg*, which suggested that agrarian social elites resisted industrialization and democratization and leveraged their political power against the emerging bourgeois middle class ultimately culminating in an aggressive Wilhelminian foreign policy designed to distract the German populace from domestic politics.³ As Gordon Craig argued, another altogether different interpretation of the *Sonderweg* was too often overlooked or dismissed during these debates; namely, the argument that a unique discourse of nationhood established itself in German political culture during the nineteenth century and

¹ For a good review of the *Sonderweg* school of thought see Jürgen Kocka, "German History before Hitler: The Debate about the German *Sonderweg*," *Journal of Contemporary History* 23.1 (1988): 3-16.

² This argument was most forcefully advanced by David Blackbourn and Geoff Eley. See David Blackbourn and Geoff Eley, *The Peculiarities of German History: Bourgeois Society and Politics in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984).

³ See most notably Hans-Ulrich Wehler, *The German Empire, 1871-1918* (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1985).

was politically radicalized at the turn-of-the-century and afterwards.⁴ This “cultural-ideological Sonderweg”, as Craig called it, unlike the over-determined social-economic Sonderweg of the Bielefeld school, has stood the test of time and been reinforced by more recent historians.⁵

The cultural-ideological Sonderweg, originally advanced most notably by George Mosse and Fritz Stern, asserted that in juxtaposition to the individualistic liberal nationalism that emerged out of the French Revolution, Germans articulated a definition of nationhood based on notions of an inherited and exclusive ethno-linguistic community, the organic rootedness of society, and the subservience of the individual to the mythic collective (the German *Volk*). As this “völkisch” ideology failed to find political realization over the course of the nineteenth century German nationalists increasingly fled to the dream of a

⁴ Gordon Craig, “The German Mystery Case,” in *New York Review of Books* 33.1 (January 30, 1986).

⁵ Much of the recent literature that has reinforced the Sonderweg has re-centered it on antisemitism and the Holocaust, arguing that Nazi antisemitism emerged out of German history. In doing so, these historians move the “vanishing point” of the Sonderweg from 1933 to 1941. See Helmut Walser Smith, *The Continuities of German History: Nation, Religion, and the Long Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008). Saul Friedländer and Jeffrey Herf have illustrated that Nazi antisemitism was driven above all else by conspiratorial obsessions and a desire for a historical confrontation that would finally “redeem” the German nation from the Jews. See Jeffrey Herf, *The Jewish Enemy: Nazi Propaganda during World War II and the Holocaust* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2008). Saul Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews: The Years of Persecution, 1933-1939* (New York: First Harper Perennial, 1998).

powerful cultural unification that would transcend politics. Such neo-romanticism provoked among German nationalists an adversarial posture towards modernity known as “cultural pessimism,” which entailed a flight from Enlightenment rationality, an anxiety that the völkisch community was disintegrating, and a consequent resentment of the political ideologies of the fin de siècle. In particular, Marxism and liberalism, which were both gathering strength in the late Wilhelmine Era, were maligned as anti-nationalistic universalistic ideologies, because they anchored their understanding of the world in international humanity rather than the Volk, in “*Zivilisation*” rather than “*Kultur*.” After the disastrous First World War and the Treaty of Versailles, cultural pessimism in German political culture metastasized into a conservative radicalization against liberal democracy in the Weimar Republic which resulted in the consolidation of German conservatism behind a fateful consensus: namely, an espousal of radical solutions to preserve the German Volk by reasserting the völkisch principle in a national revolution led by Hitler and the Nazi party. National Socialists, then, effectively channeled the radical völkisch nationalism which had come to dominate German political culture by presenting their radical politics as the organic redemption from the threatening universalisms of Marxism and liberalism.⁶ This cultural-ideological Sonderweg has been reinforced by a

⁶ See George L. Mosse, *The Crisis of German Ideology: Intellectual Origins of the Third Reich* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1964). Fritz Stern, *The Politics of Cultural Despair: A Study in the Rise of the Germanic Ideology* (Berkeley: University of California, 1961). Fritz Stern, *Dreams and Delusions: The Drama of German History* (New York: Knopf, 1987). This is, of

consensus among historians of the Third Reich that the Nazi regime was a popular dictatorship that ideologically integrated the German populace into its genocidal politics by engendering a wide-spread conviction that the original promise of the völkisch tradition – the transcendent unification of the “German people’s community” (*deutsche Volksgemeinschaft*) – was in the process of being realized during the twelve years of Nazi rule.⁷

course, not to suggest the inevitability of völkisch nationalism’s domination of German political culture. As Thomas Nipperdey has shown, there was a strong tradition in early nineteenth century German history of liberal nationalism which drew from the French Revolution. However, after the failure of the 1848 revolutions this discourse was gradually overwhelmed, even if not entirely replaced, by völkisch nationalism. See Thomas Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte: 1800-1866* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1983).

⁷ Frank Bajohr and Michael Wildt, *Volksgemeinschaft: Neue Forschungen zur Gesellschaft des Nationalsozialismus* (Frankfurt a.M.: Fischer Taschenbuch, 2009). Sven Keller, *Volksgemeinschaft am Ende: Gesellschaft und Gewalt, 1944/45* (Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2013). Thomas Kühne, “Todesraum: War, Peace, and the Experience of Mass Death” in ed. Helmut Walser Smith, *The Oxford Handbook of Modern German History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 527-547. Thomas Kühne, *Belonging and Genocide: Hitler’s Community, 1918-1945* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010). Thomas Kühne, *The Rise and Fall of Comradeship: Hitler’s Soldiers, Male Bonding and Mass Violence in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017). Peter Fritzsche, *Life and Death in the Third Reich* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2009). Ian Kershaw, *The End: The Defiance and Destruction of Hitler’s Germany, 1944-1945* (London: Penguin Books, 2012). Nicholas Stargardt, *The German War: A Nation Under Arms, 1939-1945* (Basic Books, 2017).

This dissertation builds upon the cultural-ideological Sonderweg by examining a network of German conservatives who encountered the transnational ruptures of the mid-twentieth century – in particular: continental expansionism, the Eastern Front, political collapse, divided Germany, and the Cold War – by expanding the definition of an organic *Gemeinschaft* (“community”) from Germany to Europe and repackaging the ideas of völkisch nationalism into a larger European framework. This endeavor was deliberate; it was evident in the terminology of the Europe-concept. The idea of a “national revolution” was replaced by a “European revolution” that would usher in the inevitable political, cultural, and economic unification of an organic, historical European völkisch community called the “*europäische Völkergemeinschaft*” (European Community of Peoples) or “*europäische Schicksalsgemeinschaft*” (European Community of Destiny). This European revolution would be secured by the establishment of an enclosed continental polity called the “*europäische Grossraum*” (European continental space), which would marshal its resources to preserve the new European community in the existential struggle against Western liberalism and Eastern Marxism. All of these terms were unambiguous appropriations of German nationalist terminology even though conservative proponents of the Europe-concept also rejected nationalism as an inhibiting reactionary relic of Europe’s past.⁸ But this rejection of nationalism is better described as a reinvention of the nation than a complete rejection of it. The Europe-concept was

⁸ *Völkergemeinschaft* was a plural reformulation of *Volksgemeinschaft*; *Schicksalsgemeinschaft* was a direct appropriation; and *Grossraum* functioned as an alternative to *Lebensraum*.

consistently presented not just as a surpassing of nationalism but also its fulfillment: a new, superior European nationalism.

This dissertation, therefore, contributes to the historical literature that defines nations as modern, socially constructed “imagined communities.”⁹ Following Rogers Brubaker, it understands nationalism as the product of various competing discourses of the nation all of which define themselves against one another.¹⁰ Thus, the Europe-concept was an imagined community that defined itself against German nationalism but also drew its meaning from the traditional völkisch ideology at the core of German nationalism. This was at the heart of its appeal. As Ute Frevert has argued: “...the opposition of national versus European tends to overlook how deeply connected and intertwined those orientations actually are.”¹¹ Consequently, this dissertation employs the term “Europeanism” as a way to capture the ideological nature of the Europe-concept as a discourse of nationhood. In this way, this dissertation builds upon the historical research that has investigated the especially contested nature of German nation-construction.¹²

⁹ See Benedict R. O’G. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991). Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983).

¹⁰ Rogers Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

¹¹ Ute Frevert, “Europeanizing Germany’s Twentieth Century,” *History and Memory* 17.1-2 (2005): 87-116, 88.

¹² Stefan Berger, *Inventing the Nation: Germany* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2004). James J. Sheehan, “What is German History? Reflections on the Role of the Nation in German

But it also contributes to the broader scholarly literature that has explored the way Europe emerged as a new form of identity after the First World War and the resulting crisis of European confidence.¹³ Although it began as a relatively marginalized idea in the Conservative Revolution, the events of the 1940s and 1950s secured the Europe-concept remarkable reach and influence at the same time that German nationalism was encountering a lack of legitimacy in the context of an increasingly dire war situation as well as the anti-nationalist sentiment of the postwar period. The Europe-concept, then, was a form of identity politics that camouflaged the völkisch *Kultur* and in doing so made the ideas of radical German conservatism accessible in the new and changing contexts of the war and postwar period. Indeed, the significance of the Europe-concept lies in its ability to traverse the ruptures of the Second World War.

The Zero Hour, Postwar Conservatism, and Democratization

This dissertation adopts the “transwar” framework advanced by Philip Nord, wherein he argues that continuities in European political history can best be

History and Historiography,” *The Journal of Modern History* 53.1 (1981): 1-23. This dissertation also complements Pieter Judson’s argument that German nationalists developed a uniquely subversive identity and readiness to challenge the political status quo. See Pieter M. Judson, “Nationalism in the Era of the Nation-State, 1871-1945,” in ed. Helmut Walser Smith, *The Oxford Handbook of Modern German History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 499-526.

¹³ Mark Hewitson and Matthew D’Auria, *Europe in Crisis: Intellectuals and the European Idea, 1917-1957* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012). Menno Spiering and Michael Wintle, *Ideas of Europe since 1914: The Legacy of the First World War* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002). Frevert, “Europeanizing Germany’s Twentieth Century.”

understood by investigating continuities that both transcend the end of the Second World War as well as reach back to the interwar period.¹⁴ This is particularly complicated as it pertains to the so-called *Stunde Null* (“Zero Hour”) of German history in 1945, because any conversation of continuities in German history has to confront the reality of blaring postwar discontinuities as well.¹⁵ Even though the term “Zero Hour” originated in connection to postwar apologetic memory politics, some recent historians have nonetheless called for its revival as way to highlight discontinuities in German history. The most arresting such arguments point to the abrupt absence of nationalism and militarism in postwar German political culture.¹⁶ To be sure, there is much to be said for reading postwar German history through the lens of rupture; very important, for example, were the occupation and division of Germany and the geopolitics of the Cold War, which exerted an incalculable impact on the development of German politics.¹⁷

¹⁴ Philip Nord, *France’s New Deal: From the Thirties to the Postwar Era* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).

¹⁵ For an excellent review of recent literature on the debate over the Zero Hour, see Pertti Ahonen, “Germany and the Aftermath of the Second World War,” *The Journal of Modern History* 89.2 (2017).

¹⁶ See, most notably, Richard Bessel, *Germany 1945: From War to Peace* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2010).

¹⁷ A less convincing defense of the Zero Hour, however, is the argument that Germans were depoliticized having turned to religion, family, basic living necessities, and survival. See William M. Chandler, “Integration and Identity in German Politics,” in ed. Peter H. Merkl, *The Federal*

Nevertheless, this dissertation will join the work of scholars who have sought to carefully investigate the nuanced ways in which political continuities survived the watershed of 1945.¹⁸ A suitable compromise in the debate over the Zero Hour can be found in Thomas Nipperdey and Jeffrey Herf's arguments vis-à-vis "multiple continuities" and "multiple restorations"; namely, the co-existence of competing political traditions in German history.¹⁹ This is the framework that will be adopted in this dissertation's investigation of post-Nazi Europeanism, postwar German conservatism, and the issue of democratization.

One of the most perplexing developments in German history is the remarkable reversal of nationalism in West German politics. Whereas the Social Democratic political Left took up the banner of nationalism (albeit shorn of

Republic of Germany at Fifty: The End of a Century of Turmoil (New York: New York University Press, 1999).

¹⁸ Frank Biess and Robert G. Moeller, *Histories of the Aftermath: The Legacies of the Second World War in Europe* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2010). Mark Mazower, Jessica Reinisch, and David Feldman, *Post-War Reconstruction in Europe: International Perspectives, 1945-1949* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011). Richard Overy, "Interwar, War, Postwar: Was There a Zero Hour in 1945?" in ed. Dan Stone, *The Oxford Handbook of Postwar European History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 60-78. Jan Werner Müller, *German Ideologies Since 1945: Studies in the Political Thought and Culture of the Bonn Republic* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003).

¹⁹ See Thomas Nipperdey, "1933 und Kontinuität der deutschen Geschichte," *Historische Zeitschrift* 227.1 (1978): 86-111. Jeffrey Herf, "Multiple Restorations: German Political Traditions and the Interpretation of Nazism, 1945-1946," *Central European History* 26.1 (1993): 21-55.

militarism and irredentism), the new political Right, in contrast, abandoned nationalism in favor of the Christian Democratic politics of European integration. This development begs the question why conservative voters, who had hitherto been the most vocal milieu in favor of radical nationalist politics, supported Christian Democracy despite this incongruity. This question is especially important, because in contrast to the common interpretation of postwar European history as a “Social Democratic moment,” the first postwar decades of Western European history, and West German history specifically, were in actuality a decidedly “Christian Democratic moment.”²⁰ As Heinrich August Winkler has argued, liberal democracy’s “long road” to fruition in German political culture was primarily the accomplishment of Konrad Adenauer and his party (the Christian Democratic Union, or CDU) during the two decades of near uncontested

²⁰ For the “Social Democratic moment” argument, see Geoff Eley, “Corporatism and the Social Democratic Moment: The Postwar Settlement, 1945-1973” in ed. Dan Stone, *The Oxford Handbook of Postwar European History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 37-59. Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945* (New York: Penguin, 2005), chapter 11. For the iteration of this argument in the historiography of West Germany specifically, see Stefan Ludwig Hoffman’s argument that Christian Democracy was successful precisely because it appropriated the Social Democratic tradition. See Stefan Ludwig Hoffman, “Germany is No More: Defeat, Occupation, and the Postwar Order” in ed. Helmut Walser Smith, *The Oxford Handbook of Modern German History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 593-614. For the “Christian Democratic moment” argument see Jan-Werner Müller, *Contesting Democracy: Political Thought in Twentieth-century Europe* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011).

political power after the Second World War.²¹ One of the most important questions for postwar West German history, then, is how the German Right, which had only very recently been ideologically radicalized in a totalitarian regime, was attracted to postwar Christian Democracy and was consequently integrated into the politics of liberal democracy.

This was not a forgone conclusion. One way to interpret this phenomenon is to point to an “anti-Communist consensus” in which West Germans detached themselves from radical politics in order to cooperate with Konrad Adenauer’s hardline foreign policy against Communism.²² But this answer is insufficient because it neglects to consider the anti-Communist alternatives to Christian Democracy. For example, Kurt Schumacher, the postwar leader of Christian Democracy’s closest competitor center-left party, the Social Democratic Party, remade his party into an equally fierce anti-Communist organization.²³ Furthermore, Schumacher supplemented his party’s anti-Communism with an explicit appeal to German nationalism and went so far as to imply that his opponents were un-German for supporting European integration at the expense of national reunification. Additionally, the anti-Communist thesis fails to

²¹ Heinrich August Winkler, *Germany: The Long Road West* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006). Jeffrey Herf, *Divided Memory: The Nazi Past in the Two Germanys* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997).

²² See, for example, Andrew I. Port, “Democracy and Dictatorship in the Cold War: The Two Germanies, 1949-1961” in ed. Helmut Walser Smith, *The Oxford Handbook of Modern German History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 615-639.

²³ See Jeffrey Herf, *Divided Memory*.

acknowledge that there also existed nationalist right-wing, anti-Communist alternatives to the CDU which, in the first few years of the West German Federal Republic, were not declared unconstitutional (for example, the *Sozialistische Reichspartei* and the *Deutsche Partei*). Any of these alternatives could very well have been a more natural home for the millions of conservative Germans who nevertheless supported Adenauer's CDU or his main coalition party, the Free Democratic Party.²⁴

This dissertation contributes an answer to this dilemma by suggesting that the Europe-concept created a bridge for many radicalized German conservatives to the postwar Christian Democratic politics of European integration. As will be illustrated, post-Nazi Europeanists attached to the European integration project the continuation and fulfillment of their conservative European revolution and successfully created an influential voice for this interpretation of contemporary events in West German public discourse. To be clear, the politics of Konrad Adenauer's CDU and European integration was markedly different in motivation and vision than the politics advocated by post-Nazi Europeanists. Furthermore,

²⁴ This dissertation agrees with Geoff Eley's call for historians to acknowledge the contingency and plethora of possibilities as Germany transitioned across the year 1945. See Geoff Eley, "Europe after 1945," *History Workshop Journal* 65.1 (2008): 195-212. Many historians who have answered this call highlight the possibility and missed opportunity for a left-wing transformation of German political culture in the late 1940s. But given the role of radical nationalism in German history, this point is even more salient for considering the possibilities of right-wing entrenchment. See, for example, Gareth Pritchard, *Niemandland: A History of Unoccupied Germany, 1944-1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

although they allowed post-Nazi Europeanists to exist within the umbrella of the CDU voting bloc, the architects of Christian Democracy and European integration did not actively legitimize or confirm the fantasies of post-Nazi Europeanists. But as Ronald Granieri has argued, terms such as “Europe” and the “West” were concepts in postwar German conservatism which carried many different meanings, and the resulting ambiguity efficiently masked some of the irreconcilable political differences of the postwar period. Granieri argues that this ambivalence was the key to Konrad Adenauer’s political success in the 1950s, because it concealed a division in Christian Democracy between a group he calls the “Atlanticists” (advocates of a West Germany integrated into an American-led liberal international order) and a group he calls the “Gaullists” (advocates of an independent continental Europe opposed to Anglo-Saxon influence in politics, culture, and economics such as was promoted by Charles de Gaulle, the President of the French Fifth Republic).²⁵ Granieri is correct to identify an anti-Atlanticist milieu within the CDU such as Eugen Gerstenmaier, a key figure in part II of this dissertation, but his categorization of this group as “Gaullist” is questionable for a number of reasons. Such an interpretation reads the political controversies of the 1960s back into the 1950s. “Gaullism” was not a meaningful category in the political culture of West Germany in the 1950s and anti-Atlanticist conservatives did not regularly engage with de Gaulle before his ascension to power in 1958. But even as an analytical category, the term “Gaullism” falls short because anti-

²⁵ Ronald J. Granieri, *The Ambivalent Alliance: Konrad Adenauer, the CDU/CSU, and the West, 1949-1966* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2003).

Atlanticist conservatives of the 1950s were markedly different in political ideology than the Gaullists of the 1960s. Furthermore, anti-Atlanticist conservatives were not a monolithic group. For example, while many belonged to the Catholic *Abendländische Bewegung* (“Occidental movement”), many others were former nationalist Protestants who escape easy categorization alongside Catholic conservatives.

This dissertation will introduce a group anti-Atlanticist conservatives who differed from Gaullists in three fundamental ways: first, unlike de Gaulle who openly presented himself as a restorative nationalist, they energetically denounced nationalism (even and especially German nationalism); second, unlike de Gaulle who opposed European integration and appealed only rhetorically to a “Europe of Fatherlands,” they were among the most enthusiastic advocates of even the most radically integrationist policies of the European integration program in the 1950s; third, unlike de Gaulle they moderated their anti-Americanism, accommodated the United States as a useful ally, and eventually even came to embrace Atlanticism by the end of the 1950s. While it is true that a small contingent of Gaullists emerged in West German politics in the 1960s to confront what had become the dominant Atlanticism of the CDU, this was not necessarily a product or continuation of 1950s anti-Atlanticism. Although there were continuities between the specifically Catholic Occident movement and 1960s Gaullism, this

dissertation aims to show that there existed an important post-Nazi Europeanist discourse within the non-Catholic voting bloc of the CDU.²⁶

The bridge between former Nazi Europeanists and Christian Democracy was further aided by the sense of rupture and experimentation that surrounded the politics of European integration when it first began to dominate the public sphere in the immediate postwar period. The initial proposals for European integration advanced by Western European statesmen in the late 1940s and the early 1950s were more ambitious than the comparatively limited integration that was actually implemented by the end of the 1950s. For example, the original plans for a European Coal and Steel Community and, especially, the European Defense Community (or, European Army) were accompanied with calls for a far-reaching deconstruction of nation-state sovereignty and the eventual creation of a new European federation called the European Political Community – in short, a radical rupture with the postwar status quo. Although the European Army and the European Political Community ultimately failed, this dissertation attempts to restore the centrality of these proposals to the early history of West Germany. These grand narratives of wide-sweeping European integration dominated West German political discourse during these years and in doing so created space for post-Nazi Europeanists to project radical and illiberal ramifications onto European integration - or at least the possibility to influence the process in their desired direction. Consequently, for nearly a decade post-Nazi Europeanists

²⁶ Much of this conversation hinges on an important delineation between Catholic and Protestant conservatism in postwar West Germany. This point is discussed in more detail below.

worked to advance their Europe-concept through democracy and West German rule of law, and, as a result, they accustomed themselves to the practice and idea of democracy. But by the mid-1950s their European dream had died and, having worked within the parameters of liberal democracy for many years, they had nowhere else to go. Their disillusionment stimulated a coming to terms with a new perception of liberal democracy's reality and necessity.

This transwar examination of the Europe-concept, therefore, is also a study in the democratization of German conservatism. Specifically, this dissertation will build upon Jerry Muller's paradigm of a "de-radicalization" of German conservatism; namely, the process by which the German conservative tradition was reconciled to the principles of liberal democracy, that is: individualism, pluralism, human rights, self-government, and popular sovereignty. Muller's research on the influential intellectual Hans Freyer traces the path in German conservatism to and from the temptation for a utopian total state as a vehicle for preserving the mythic *völkisch* nation against modern civilization.²⁷ This dissertation aims to complement this argument by highlighting the conservative departure with the *völkisch* nation itself. As argued above, historical research on the cultural-ideological *Sonderweg* has situated *völkisch* nationalism front and center in the story of German political radicalization. This dissertation argues, therefore, that our understanding of the de-radicalization of German conservatism must seek to understand the decline of *völkisch* ideology in postwar

²⁷ Jerry Z. Muller, *The Other God That Failed: Hans Freyer and the Deradicalization of German Conservatism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987).

German history. De-nationalization, in other words, was a pivotal component of the de-radicalization of German conservatism. The Europe-concept, it will be argued, was an important waystation in the transition from völkisch nationalism, because, although the Europe-concept repackaged substantial elements of the völkisch tradition, it was ultimately advanced in the name of anti-nationalism (including an explicit rejection of German nationalism). This aided the formation of an alliance between postwar German conservatives and the postwar liberal architects of European integration who likewise rejected nationalism but who had no illusions about a völkisch Europe. It was within the confines of this alliance that the fantasy of a völkisch community (völkisch Europe) safely died as it was gradually replaced with the Europe of incremental economic integration. As Dirk von Laak has argued, the de-radicalization of German conservatism was a protracted process that succeeded in multiple stages. The Conservative Revolution was not immediately tamed in 1945; to the contrary, significant elements remained in their postwar political identity and many conservatives only participated in postwar democracy in as much as they viewed the Federal Republic as a new “technocratic” vehicle for elites to govern society. This anti-democratic participation in democracy, von Laak argues, was only moderated over time and as a result of their participation in democracy.²⁸ The argument in part II of this dissertation is that the Europe-concept was another important

²⁸ Dirk van Laak, “From Conservative Revolution to Technocratic Conservatism” in ed. Jan Werner Müller, *German Ideologies Since 1945: Studies in the Political Thought and Culture of the Bonn Republic* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003), 147-160.

moderating force in the postwar democratization of conservatism because it contributed to the dissolution of völkisch politics. In short, the Europe-concept assisted a transwar unpacking of the cultural-ideological Sonderweg.

Early postwar literature on the transformation of German conservatism was largely incredulous. In fact, a predominant argument advanced by, for example, Eugen Kogon and Walter Dirks in the *Frankfurter Hefte* during the 1950s and 1960s was the suggestion of a “restoration” of a proto-fascistic culture of conservative authoritarianism.²⁹ As Norbert Frei has argued, the idea of a conservative restoration dominated the literature of the immediate postwar period until the 1980s, at which point a more optimistic turn produced the perspective of a “founding era” for liberal democracy in West Germany’s “long 1950s.”³⁰ But as Diethelm Prowe has argued, this historiographical shift was inclined to eschew the role of conservative modernization and instead ascribe the achievement of democratization to the postwar economic boom (*Wirtschaftswunder*) or to cultural globalization and generational turn-over in the 1960s.³¹ Even those historians

²⁹ For one of the most well-known examples of the “restoration” thesis, see Eugen Kogon, *Die unvollendete Erneuerung: Deutschland im Kräftefeld, 1945-1960. Politische und Gesellschaftspolitische Aufsätze aus zwei Jahrzehnten* (Frankfurt a.M.: Europäische Verlag-Anstalt, 1964).

³⁰ Norbert Frei, “Die Langen Fünfziger: Wirtschaftliche Dynamik und biedermeierliche Restauration, materielle Modernisierung und Kontinuität nationalsozialistischer Funktionseliten,” *Die Zeit*, February 16, 2006.

³¹ Diethelm Prowe, “The ‘Miracle’ of the Political-Culture Shift: Democratization between Americanization and Conservative Reintegration” in ed. Hanna Schissler, *The Miracle Years: A*

who do situate the modernization of conservatism at the center of democratization narratives tend to place the process considerably later, emphasizing the persistence of illiberalism, especially on the German political Right, well into the 1960s.³² These accounts of postwar West German political culture risk leaving the first ten to fifteen years of West German history unaccounted for and inexplicable; after all, it was precisely in this time period when political liberalism was institutionalized: the establishment of a federal constitution, three mass elections producing a democratic consensus behind Konrad Adenauer, West

Cultural History of West Germany, 1949-1968 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 451-458. For arguments that emphasize economic modernization, see Hans Peter Schwarz, "Modernisierung oder Restauration? Einige Vorfragen zur künftigen Sozialgeschichtsforschung über die Ära Adenauer," in ed.s Kurt Düwell and Wolfgang Köllmann, *Rheinland-Westfalen im Industriezeitalter, Band 3. Vom Ende der Weimarer Republik bis zum Land Nordrhein-Westfalen* (Wuppertal: Peter Hammer Verlag, 1984), 278-293. Axel Schildt and Arnold Sywottek, *Modernisierung im Wiederaufbau. Die westdeutsche Gesellschaft der 50er Jahre* (Richmond: Dietz, 1998). For arguments that place great emphasis on cultural Americanization and generational turn-over, see Konrad H. Jarausch, *After Hitler: Recivilizing the Germans, 1945-1995* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006). Ulrich Herbert, *Wandlungsprozesse in Westdeutschland: Belastung, Integration, Liberalisierung, 1945-1980* (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2002).

³² Axel Schildt, *Zwischen Abendland und Amerika: Studien zur Westdeutschen Ideenlandschaft der 50er Jahre* (Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 1999). Axel Schildt, *Konservatismus in Deutschland: Von den Anfängen im 18. Jahrhundert bis zur Gegenwart* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1998). Winkler, *Germany: The Long Road West*. Christoph Kleßmann, *Zwei Staaten, eine Nation: Deutsche Geschichte, 1955-1970* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1988).

German entry into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and the founding of the European Economic Community. This paradox has led some historians to conclude that the initial postwar years in West Germany (and elsewhere) were a story of liberalism without liberals, an argument that was summarized by Jan-Werner Müller with the somewhat awkward formulation “post-post-liberal Order,” by which he meant a politics in postwar Europe that rejected anti-liberalism without any positive consensus of its own.³³ This is not dissimilar to Mark Mazower’s argument that liberal democracy in Europe was more a product of fascism delegitimizing popular illiberalism than any actual achievement of liberalism itself.³⁴ Such arguments, although valuable, miss an important part of the story. As this dissertation will illustrate, some of the most influential German conservatives of the Conservative Revolution and even National Socialism were, from positions of considerable influence, already by the mid-1950s openly espousing liberal democracy. As such, this dissertation joins the work of those scholars who have sought to move the interpretative lens of democratization back to the ideas and political culture of the 1950s.³⁵ By highlighting these figures and

³³ Jan-Werner Müller, “A Post-Post-Liberal Order: How Western Europe Emerged from its 30-Year Crisis” in ed.s Lars K. Brunn, Karl Christian Lammers, and Gert Sørensen, *European Self-Reflection between Politics and Religion: The Crisis of Europe in the 20th Century* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 193-212. Müller, *Contesting Democracy*.

³⁴ Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe’s Twentieth Century* (New York: Vintage, 2000).

³⁵ Friedrich Kießling, for example, has attempted to move left-liberal intellectuals such as Dolf Sternberger, Karl Jaspers, and Ernst Fraenkel and their work in the “old Federal Republic” back to the center of the story of democratization. See Friedrich Kießling, *Die undeutschen Deutschen*.

their relatively early reconciliation with liberal democracy, this dissertation attempts to reemphasize the power and centrality of ideas in the story of West German democratization.

Before moving on it is worth noting a final point on the de-radicalization of postwar conservatism. The literature on West German democratization has witnessed a debate over the terms “Westernization” and “Americanization.”³⁶ Some historians have critiqued the terms “Westernization” and “modernization” for insinuating a deterministic end-of-history triumphalism, and instead prefer the term “Americanization” because it ascribes the political transformations in West German political culture a certain contingency, but also because it acknowledges the pivotal role of the United States in shaping the developments of postwar history.³⁷ Other historians have argued that the term “Americanization” fails to appropriately weigh the role of national traditions specific to German political culture.³⁸ A recurring argument throughout this dissertation is that the United

Eine ideengeschichtliche Archäologie der alten Bundesrepublik, 1945-1972 (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2012).

³⁶ For a good review of this debate, see Volker Berghahn, “The Debate on ‘Americanization’ among Economic and Cultural Historians,” *Cold War History* 10.1 (2010), 107-130. Phillip Gassert, “The Spectre of Americanization: Western Europe in the American Century” in ed. Dan Stone, *The Oxford Handbook of Postwar European History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 182-200.

³⁷ Anselm Doering-Manteuffel, *Wie westlich sind die Deutschen? Amerikanisierung und Westernisierung im 20. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1999).

³⁸ See Prowe, “The ‘Miracle’ of the Political-Culture Shift.” Herf, “Multiple Restorations.”

States featured prominently in the minds of conservative Europeanists precisely because it was the paragon of Western liberalism. In other words, the subjects of this dissertation did not distinguish between terms like “West,” “liberal,” and “democracy.” Furthermore, as this dissertation will show, conservative Europeanists were just as obsessed with the United States as they were with Communism; indeed, the rise of the Europe-concept in Nazi propaganda preceded the invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941. Therefore, one of the most important tasks for understanding the postwar democratization of the figures in this dissertation is tracing the evolution of the United States, and by extension liberal democracy, in the minds of conservative Europeanists.

The United States exerted an invaluable pressure, albeit indirectly, on the political culture of Western Europe and West Germany specifically.³⁹ The occupation period, followed by the sustained presence of the American military, and held together by the interventionist foreign policy of the early Cold War created a climate in which post-Nazi Europeanists were forced to moderate their anti-Americanism. In order to remain relevant, they were more easily persuaded to work within the limits and boundaries of the American-led postwar democratic order. In fact, as part II of this dissertation will illustrate, covert CIA operations designed to encourage European integration cooperated directly with post-Nazi Europeanists, who in turn saw the United States as a useful ally in their designs

³⁹ See William I. Hitchcock, *The Struggle for Europe: The Turbulent History of a Divided Continent, 1945 to the Present* (Norwell: Anchor, 2004).

for a European revolution.⁴⁰ However opportunistic this alliance was, it was an essential precondition for the liberalization of German conservatism. The United States was the undisputed leader of liberal democracy in the postwar period, and the perception held by post-Nazi Europeanists that they had American sympathy and support gradually eroded their illiberalism. Over the course of the early 1950s post-Nazi Europeanist increasingly found themselves defending the United States and its political principles from not only Communists, but also their pacifist, nationalist, and anti-European integration domestic opponents as well. Consequently, by the mid-1950s, when the dream for a European revolution failed, liberal democracy was for post-Nazi Europeanists considerably less treacherous than it had appeared in 1945. Acknowledging the importance of the United States in the democratization of West German political culture need not come at the expense of analyzing developments specific to German history. As this dissertation will illustrate, the two often worked hand in hand. For this reason, this dissertation will use neither the term “Westernization” nor “Americanization,” but rather, simply, “democratization.”

Competing Ideas of Europe

In all three time periods examined in this dissertation the conservative Europe-concept was contested by other, competing ideas of Europe. The following paragraphs situate the conservative Europe-concept into the existing

⁴⁰ For detailed account of the United States intelligence community and its liaison with former Nazis during the Cold War, see Richard Breitman, Robert Wolfe, Norman J. W. Goda, and Timothy Naftali, *U.S. Intelligence and the Nazis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

literature concerning the idea of Europe in each of these respective time periods. Additionally, the following paragraphs will outline how conservative Europeanists encountered these opposing concepts of Europe.

1. The Interwar Period

Many historians trace the roots of European integration and Europe as a political identity back to the late nineteenth century and interwar period, where a small, but growing, group of European intellectuals and politicians began to advocate replacing nation-state rivalries with various visions of European political and economic unification, such as French Foreign Minister Aristide Briand's proposed European economic integration in 1929 as well as the ill-fated Pan-European movement led by Richard von Coudenhove-Kalergi, which sought the eventual formation of a "United States of Europe." The connection between the Pan-European movement and the conservative Europe-concept, however, is tenuous. In part because of its reliance on the League of Nations, conservative Europeanists explicitly engaged with and rejected the Pan-European movement, which they argued was a tool of liberal internationalism and Anglo-Saxon imperialism and, as such, a distorted and fraudulent understanding of Europe. In contrast to much of the literature on the idea of Europe, this dissertation highlights intellectual trajectories that do not easily fit into a progressive reading of the pre-history of European integration.⁴¹

⁴¹ Many histories of Europe as a political concept and identity isolate various early twentieth century liberal idealists as forerunners for the postwar liberal project of European integration. See Karl Christian Lammers, "Europe between Democracy and Fascism: Hermann Heller on Fascism

As Dieter Gosewinkel has shown, a much more predominant intellectual tradition of Europe in the early twentieth century was what he calls “anti-liberal Europe,” a diverse intellectual tradition in European conservative circles, extending from political Catholicism to German and Habsburg imperialism, which envisioned Europe as an alternative to liberal modernity at the fin-de-siècle.⁴² As Jürgen Elvert has illustrated, one particular concept in this tradition would become especially important for Nazi Europe-propaganda; namely, the *Mitteleuropa* (or, “Middle Europe”) concept, which was originally articulated by German intellectuals, politicians, and statesmen in the Foreign Office during the First World War, and which proposed the subjugation and coordination of Central

as a Threat to Europe and Democracy as a Community of Values” in ed.s Lars K. Brunn, Karl Christian Lammers, and Gert Sørensen, *European Self-Reflection between Politics and Religion: The Crisis of Europe in the 20th Century* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 44-57. Gert Sørensen, “Italian Intellectuals and the European View: Corce, Nitti and Chabod between Dictatorship and Democracy” in ed.s Lars K. Brunn, Karl Christian Lammers, and Gert Sørensen, *European Self-Reflection between Politics and Religion: The Crisis of Europe in the 20th Century* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 25-43. Anita Pretenthaler-Ziegerhofer, “Richard Nikolaus Coudenhove-Kalergi, Founder of the Pan-European Union, and the Birth of a ‘New’ Europe” in ed.s Mark Hewitson and Matthew D’Auria, *Europe in Crisis: Intellectuals and the European Idea, 1917-1957* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012), 89-110. Ernest Schonfield, “The Idea of European Unity in Heinrich Mann’s Political Essays of the 1920s and Early 1930s” in ed.s Mark Hewitson and Matthew D’Auria, *Europe in Crisis: Intellectuals and the European Idea, 1917-1957* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012), 257-270.

⁴² Dieter Gosewinkel, *Anti-liberal Europe: A Neglected Story of Europeanization* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2014).

Europe under German imperial leadership in order to establish a bulwark against East and West. This idea, facilitated by German imperialists and right-wing reactionaries, was ultimately an intellectual justification for German political, economic, and social dominance of Europe in the early twentieth century and was sometimes drawn upon by conservative Europeanists before and during the Second World War.⁴³ However, this dissertation will argue that a network of Conservative Revolutionaries of the Weimar period was the most immediate and important originator of what would eventually become Nazi Europeanism. The Third Reich's massive transnational Europe-propaganda machine, which reached millions of readers across the continent during the Second World War, was initiated, organized, and administered by a group of radical German conservatives with connections to this network, and for whom "Europe" was much more than a new geopolitical arrangement; rather, it was an organic community imbued with the historical mission to resolve Europe's modern identity crisis via the creation of a new European nation and polity. Nevertheless, the Conservative Revolutionaries who first experimented with the Europe-concept often channeled the *Mitteleuropa* concept and even used the not dissimilar term *Zwischeneuropa* ("In-between Europe"). Furthermore, as will be shown in part I of this dissertation, the Nazi Europe-concept evolved over the course of the war as it was increasingly revised and distanced from orthodox National Socialist principles,

⁴³ Jürgen Elvert, *Mitteleuropa!: Deutsche Pläne Zur Europäischen Neuordnung, 1918-1945* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1999). Fritz Fischer, *Germany's Aims in the First World War* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1967).

and in its initial configurations in 1940 the Nazi Europe-concept was often difficult to distinguish from justifications for German hegemony in *Mitteleuropa*.⁴⁴

2. The Nazi Period

The term “Nazi Europeanism” might seem inherently paradoxical. After all, National Socialism was a political ideology defined by its insistence on the radical exclusion of, and uncompromising struggle against, non-racial Germans. For the National Socialists, all modern political concepts (especially transnational ones) were mere window dressing for the actual essence of politics: racial struggle. This “hyper-nationalism” is arguably why the historiography has largely neglected transnational studies of fascism.⁴⁵ This is also why Nazi Europe-propaganda has been incorrectly dismissed in the literature as hollow, opportunistic, and limited sloganeering program designed merely to mask German imperialism or buttress a fracturing front in the face of diminishing war prospects. Historians who have dismissed Nazi Europe-propaganda often point to Hitler’s frequent demands that propagandists withhold specifics about the postwar “New Order of Europe” as evidence that Nazi Europe-propaganda was never more than

⁴⁴ The above two paragraphs are drawn substantially from an article published by the present author. See Josh Klein, “Nazi Europeanism as Transnational Collaboration and Transnational Memory,” *The Yearbook of Transnational History* 2.1 (2019), 149-173.

⁴⁵ Arnd Bauerkämper and Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe (eds.), *Fascism without Borders: Transnational Connections and Cooperation between Movements and Regimes in Europe, 1918-1945* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2017).

an opportunistic and disingenuous charade.⁴⁶ To be sure, this dissertation does not refute the fact that Hitler and other Nazi leaders merely viewed Europe-propaganda as a tool for their racial conquest of the continent.

However, a few recent scholars have illustrated that some propagandists in the National Socialist regime patronized a more thorough, sincere, and consequential Europe-propaganda than previously acknowledged. Benjamin Martin, for example, has recently illustrated that Goebbels's propaganda ministry,

⁴⁶ Hans-Dietrich Loock, "Zur 'Großgermanischen Politik' Des Dritten Reiches," *Vierteljahrshefte Für Zeitgeschichte* 8.1 (1960): 37-63. Paul Kluge, "Nationalsozialistische Europaideologie," *Vierteljahrshefte Für Zeitgeschichte* 3.3 (1955): 240-75. Peter Longerich, *Propagandisten im Krieg. Die Presseabteilung des Auswärtigen Amtes unter Ribbentrop* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1987). For a more recent dismissive approach see Mark Mazower's *Hitler's Empire*, in which he devotes a chapter to Nazi European ideologues connected to the Foreign Office and Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories, who, in fact, did take European ideology seriously, but were ostracized from any real influence and mostly spoke amongst themselves. The chapter title, "Ersatz Diplomacy," reveals Mazower's general agreement with Loock and Kluge that Nazi pan-Europeanism was largely inconsequential. See Mark Mazower, *Hitler's Empire: How the Nazis Ruled Europe* (New York: Penguin, 2008). As the historians Karl Heinz Roth and Barry McLoughlin have shown, one exception to the relative dismissal of Nazi Europe-propaganda for most of the late twentieth century could be found in the work of right-wing revisionist amateur historians who were quasi-sympathetic to Nazi Europe plans and hoped to rehabilitate the reputation of Nazi collaborators on the Eastern Front. See, for example, Hans Werner Neulen, *Europafaschismus und der Zweite Weltkrieg: Europas verratene Söhne* (Oslo: Universitas, 1980). Karl Heinz Roth and Barry McLoughlin, "Revisionist Tendencies in Historical Research into German Fascism," *International Review of Social History* 39.3 (1994): 429-455.

beginning already in 1934, initiated a wide-reaching project to facilitate transnational cultural exchange throughout the continent through various programs, clubs, and conferences designed to unify Europeans behind a new vision of traditional European cultures set against the decadent East and West. But Martin's subject matter does not illustrate the full extent of Nazi Europeanism. Martin uses the unique term "inter-nationalism" to describe Goebbels's program, because his examined euro-fascists did not seek to integrate cultural traditions; instead, they sought to rally mutual support for, and admiration of, the cultural and racial peculiarities of the various European nations. In short, he reads what one could perhaps call national segregationism - a limited platform for approving the nationalism of other fascists rather than constructing a shared identity or ideology.⁴⁷ This dissertation, in contrast, will illustrate that Nazi Europeanists operating outside of Goebbels's control articulated a much more ambitious conceptualization of Europe that was accompanied with a revision of orthodox National Socialism, including direct encounters with Nazi teachings on race and nation.

In doing so, this dissertation joins a group of recent scholars who have explored concepts of Europe in various institutions largely unexplored in the literature on Nazi propaganda.⁴⁸ To be sure, Nazi Europe-propaganda was not a

⁴⁷ See Benjamin George Martin, *The Nazi-Fascist New Order for European Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016).

⁴⁸ One historian whose research complements this interpretation of the Nazi Europe-concept is Birgit Kletzlin, whose book *Europa aus Rasse und Raum* illustrates the extent of determined

monolith. Various scholars have pointed to a plethora of Nazi statesmen and functionaries who articulated different ideas about the New Order of Europe such as Werner Best, the administrator of occupied France and Denmark who had previously been a high-ranking member of the Gestapo. Other examples include idiosyncratic economists connected to the Reich's Economics Ministry who developed elaborate new economic models for integrating European economies, especially the Balkans, into the Reich. However, these efforts rarely went beyond camouflaged justifications for German racial dominance of Europe and they remained largely confined to inner-departmental debates. Furthermore, the producers of these ideas did not make serious attempts to carry these ideas somehow into the postwar period.⁴⁹ This dissertation focuses on Nazi Europe-

Europeanist revisionism in Berlin's academies during the war. In fact, some of the figures examined in part I of this dissertation worked in the very Berlin academies she examined. As such, this dissertation shows how such Nazi intellectualism was disseminated through more far-reaching propaganda outlets. Birgit Kletzlin, *Europa aus Rasse und Raum: Die Nationalsozialistische Idee der Neuen Ordnung* (Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2002). For research on the reception and alteration of Nazi Europe-ideology in Axis-aligned fascist movements, see Robert Grunert, *Der Europagedanke westeuropäischer faschistischer Bewegungen, 1940-1945* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2012).

⁴⁹ See Ulrich Herbert, *Best: Biographische Studien über Radikalismus, Weltanschauung und Vernunft, 1903-1989* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2016). Thomas Sandkühler, "Europa und der Nationalsozialismus: Ideologie, Währungspolitik, Massengewalt" *Zeithistorische Forschungen* 3 (2012): 428-441. Carola Sachse 'Mitteleuropa' und 'Südosteuropa' also Planungsraum: *Wirtschafts- und kulturpolitische Expertisen im Zeitalter der Weltkriege* (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2010). Mazower, *Hitler's Empire*, 121-124.

propagandists who had the widest propaganda reach in Europe, genuinely believed in their new Europe ideology, and clung to the Europe-concept even after the war.

This dissertation distinguishes Nazi Europeanism from what we will call “orthodox Nazi propaganda” in part because the ideas did not emanate from the ideological centers of power, which in the nature of the Third Reich means primarily Adolf Hitler and the indoctrination apparatus run by his immediate propaganda functionaries Joseph Goebbels (Propaganda Ministry) and Otto Dietrich (Press Chief). Instead, Nazi Europeanism came from a network of conservative thinkers who operated in a space outside of the primary propaganda apparatus, something this dissertation calls “secondary level propaganda.” This secondary level of propaganda consisted of conservative publications, academic institutions, military propaganda, and foreign office propaganda – none of which were subject to the regular supervision and censoring process found elsewhere in the Reich, but which nevertheless reached millions of readers across the continent. As a consequence, this space proved to be a vehicle for significant ideological deviation and revisionism. An important question, then, is why this separate space for ideas was allowed to exist in a regime aspiring for totalitarianism. The answer is Machiavellian.

Hitler and Goebbels saw Europe-propaganda as a useful tool in their racial imperialism, a lie capable of placating opposition to their exterminationist rule. This opportunistic dynamic was accelerated by the increasingly dire war circumstances, in particular the desperate need for manpower after the failed

invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941, much of which was addressed by foreign volunteers and conscripts.⁵⁰ This is best evidenced by the way Joseph Goebbels disingenuously appropriated Europe-propaganda into his own propaganda apparatus beginning in early 1943 after the fall of Stalingrad. Before Stalingrad, Goebbels was heard to say that all the “wish-wash about a ‘New Europe’” was merely unproductive “noise.” Everybody already knew, he argued, that the Nazis were fighting for “oil, wheat, and to improve the material standards of our Volk.”⁵¹ Yet after Stalingrad, Goebbels began messaging a narrative of “Fortress Europe” and a distressed call for a defense of European civilization against the godless barbarism of Bolshevism. With his approval, Nazi Europe-propaganda became by the end of the war what Hannah Arendt described as “the Nazis’ most successful propaganda weapon.”⁵² In his diary Goebbels continued to be privately contemptuous of his own Europe narrative.⁵³ Nevertheless, he

⁵⁰ Rolf-Dieter Müller, *The Unknown Eastern Front: The Wehrmacht and Hitler’s Foreign Soldiers* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2014).

⁵¹ Quoted from a memo by Foreign Office Secretary Martin Luther about Goebbels’s opinion towards “New Europe,” September 17, 1942 in the collection of Nazi Europe-propaganda documents put together by Hans Werner Neulen. See Hans Werner Neulen, *Europa und das 3. Reich: Einigungsbestrebungen im deutschen Machtbereich, 1939-1945* (Munich: Universitas Verlag, 1987), 104.

⁵² Hannah Arendt, “The Seeds of a Fascist International,” July, 1945, in Hannah Arendt, *Essays in Understanding, 1930-1954: Formation, Exile, and Totalitarianism* (New York: Schocken, 2005).

⁵³ Neulen, *Europa und das 3. Reich*, 38.

dramatically altered his public position, even giving interviews in foreign papers about the supposed voluntary nature of the “New Order of Europe” and the aspired equal treatment of all Europeans within it.⁵⁴

Hitler, too, was hardly genuine in his appeals to Europe. The literature on Hitler has illustrated his commitment to zero-sum racial competition, some scholars going as far as to argue that he is best understood as a “racial anarchist.”⁵⁵ Nevertheless, Hitler was aware of the potential propagandistic benefit of appeals to Europe, and in his public speeches and pronouncements signaled the legitimacy of Europe rhetoric, which was subsequently picked up by Nazi Europeanists in the secondary propaganda apparatus and used to justify their broader project. Take the following two examples. As early as June 16th, 1940 Hitler gave an interview to an American journalist about German-American relations in which he implored the United States to stay out of the European conflict, saying: “leave America to the Americans; leave Europe to the Europeans!” This interview was subsequently picked up by a Foreign Office propaganda strategist.⁵⁶ Eventually, the phrase “leave Europe to the Europeans!” became, as will be discussed in a separate chapter of this dissertation, the slogan

⁵⁴ See Goebbels’s interview with the Danish paper “Berlinske Tidende” on March 13, 1943 in: Neulen, *Europa und das 3. Reich*, 105.

⁵⁵ Timothy Snyder, *Black Earth: The Holocaust as History and Warning* (New York: Tim Duggan Books, 2015).

⁵⁶ Karl Megerle, “‘Europa den Europäern’: Unterredung des Führers mit einem USA-Journalisten,” in: *Berliner Börsenzeitung*, June 16, 1940, RZ 236/R 27734, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts, Berlin.

for the Foreign Office's propaganda. A second example of this legitimization process can be found in Hitler's first two speeches following the invasion of the Soviet Union. His first, a public proclamation issued on the day of the invasion on June 22nd, 1941, declared:

Today, some 160 Russian divisions stand on our border. For weeks, continual infringements of this border have been taking place....the hour has come in which it is necessary to go into action against this conspiracy of the Jewish-Anglo-Saxon warmongers and Jewish power-holders of the Bolshevik Centre in Moscow.... The task of this front [from Arctic Finland to the Black Sea] is thus no longer the defense of individual countries but the security of Europe and so the salvation of all.⁵⁷

The second speech was an eminently important speech Hitler gave on October 3rd, 1941. In this much anticipated speech (Hitler had not given an open speech to the public since before the invasion of the Soviet Union in June) Hitler broadcast from the Berliner *Sportpalast* a victory proclamation over the collapsing Soviets, described the war on the Eastern Front as a "European Awakening," and praised the specific accomplishments of nearly a dozen different European nations at the front. He also justified the attack as a preventative measure against a Bolshevik regime intending "to set not only Germany but all Europe aflame." The precise phrase "not only Germany but all Europe" is one he repeated four times in his original public announcement of the invasion in June. This phrase and these speeches were enthusiastically referenced by Nazi Europeanists throughout the war.⁵⁸ Then, in February of 1943, Goebbels wrote a secret memo to all

⁵⁷ Quoted in Stargardt, *The German War*, 159.

⁵⁸ See, for example, Karl Megerle, "Im Namen Europas," in: *Berliner Börsenzeitung*, June 25, 1941, RZ 236/R 27735, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts, Berlin. Karl Megerle, "Der

propagandists and administrative leaders in the Reich in which he highlighted the phrase “not only Germany but all Europe” and listed the various times Hitler had employed it. Based on these quotations he subsequently provided a list of seven propaganda principles for messaging Europe-propaganda, including the repudiation that Germany’s foreign policy intended to pursue any kind of “subjugation relationship,” “colonial politics,” or “displacement of populations.” Specifically discussing Eastern Europe, he explained that German intentions must be presented as philanthropic: to modernize the lands for their own economic and political benefit. This memo was circulated by Heinrich Himmler to all SS administrative leaders with the note: “I find it precisely at our current moment in the war to be very important. It is to be followed in the strictest sense by all our positions.”⁵⁹ And, as we will see in our chapter on Waffen-SS propaganda, it was.

The historian Ian Kershaw popularized the term “working towards the Führer” when describing Hitler’s leadership style in the administration of the National Socialist regime; specifically, the way Hitler’s speech signaled genocidal intentions which were received and implemented by lower level functionaries.⁶⁰ Nazi Europeanism functioned similarly, except that it did not reflect Hitler’s genuine intentions. In this case, it was his disingenuous speech which was then

Atem der Geshichte,” in: *Berliner Börsenzeitung*, October 7, 1941, RZ 236/R 27735, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts, Berlin.

⁵⁹ NS 19/279, Bundesarchiv, Berlin-Lichterfelde.

⁶⁰ Ian Kershaw, *Hitler 1889-1935: Hubris* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001). Ian Kershaw, *Hitler, 1936-45: Nemesis* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2000).

selectively instrumentalized. The relationship, then, of Nazi Europeanism to the larger propaganda apparatus in the Third Reich is the story of an unintended space opened up by Hitler and wartime exigencies and seized upon by a network of idiosyncratic conservative writers who filled it with their Europe ideology under the protective umbrella of various institutions that maintained various degrees of independence from Goebbels's and Dietrich's censor regime. This partial independence awarded Nazi Europeanists the ability to revise core aspects of orthodox National Socialist ideology. Chief among them was Nazi racial theory.⁶¹

Arguing that Nazi Europeanists were revisionists is not to deemphasize their complicity in National Socialism. Indeed, Nazi Europeanists energetically supported the Nazi regime until nearly the very end, and many National Socialist principles were easily processed into the Europe-concept. Social Darwinist racial theory, or *Rassenkunde*, on the other hand, presented considerable difficulties for obvious reasons. A theme in this dissertation, therefore, is the steady dilution of Nazi racial theory (albeit with some exceptions).⁶² This process granted Nazi Europe-propagandists access to entire populations otherwise unreachable, such as

⁶¹ The above six paragraphs are substantially drawn from an article published by the present author. See Josh Klein, "Nazi Europeanism as Transnational Collaboration and Transnational Memory," *The Yearbook of Transnational History* 2.1 (2019), 149-173.

⁶² The most important exception to this pattern is the Europe-concept in the Waffen-SS, which was stubbornly attached, however awkwardly, to National Socialist racial doctrines.

Eastern Europeans and even Balkan-Muslims.⁶³ The story of Nazi Europe-propaganda, therefore, points to the malleability of Nazi ideology in its propaganda manifestations across the continent. This is not to argue that Nazi Europeanists were not racists. Although they were not biological *racialists* they were most certainly *racists*. For one, the idea of Europe's superiority over the barbaric, Asiatic East was an animating feature. But, even more importantly, there was one group which was never invited into the European fold: the Jews. In fact, absent the threat of racial inferiors undermining the unification of Europe, Nazi Europeanists focused even more intently on the Jew as a pan-European, unifying threat. As we will see, Nazi Europeanists repeatedly availed themselves of the Judeo-Bolshevist myth described in Paul Hanebrink's recent book *A Specter Haunting Europe*; namely: the assertion of a Jewish plot to conquer the world.⁶⁴ Nazi Europeanists, though, told a uniquely European version of the Judeo-Bolshevist myth in which Jews were the primordial enemies of an ancient European community, the manufacturers of all historical barriers standing in the way of the European revolution, including nationalism and its associated "European Civil Wars" in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.⁶⁵ By

⁶³ See, for example, David Motadel, *Islam and Nazi Germany's War* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2014).

⁶⁴ Paul Hanebrink, *A Specter Haunting Europe: The Myth of Judeo-Bolshevism* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2018).

⁶⁵ This aligns with Jan-Werner Müller argument that the "[t]he Holocaust happened not just in, but at least to some degree in the name of Europe...." See Jan-Werner Müller, "Europe and the

exploring the pliability of Nazi racism in the Europe-concept, this dissertation reinforces Jeffrey Herf's argument that the literature on Nazi racism and antisemitism has too often focused on its biological discourses at the expense of politics and conspiracy.⁶⁶

3. The Postwar Period

That a revised version of the conservative Europe-concept rapidly attained currency in postwar West Germany is due in part to a broader wave of postwar enthusiasm for the idea of Europe that pulsed throughout Western Europe but especially in West Germany. Some historians have mistakenly argued that the initial steps toward European integration were conducted with a democratic deficit. They argue that a general era of public disinterest in politics enabled European idealists, politicians, and technocrats the necessary maneuverability to advance European integration.⁶⁷ Such arguments are based on evidence that in the late 1950s public interest in European integration was lacking, but they oversee the initial groundswell of support for restructuring European politics that existed immediately after the war and only began to wane after various mid-decade defeats. This was particularly the case in the occupied German territories

Holocaust" in ed.s Peter Hayes and John K. Roth, *The Oxford Handbook of Holocaust Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 650-666.

⁶⁶ Herf, *The Jewish Enemy*.

⁶⁷ See, for example, Kiran Klaus Patel, "Germany and European Integration Since 1945," in ed. Helmut Walser Smith, *The Oxford Handbook of Modern German History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 775-794.

and, subsequently, West Germany. Already by 1946, four different Pan-European societies were established in the Western occupied zones.⁶⁸ But the polling evidence shows that Europe-enthusiasm went far beyond liberal adherents of the fringe Pan-European movement. A poll from the same year showed that eighty-two percent of West Germans supported the creation of a “central government for all European countries.”⁶⁹ This enthusiasm largely held into the early 1950s during the debates over the European Political Community and the European Defense Community. In 1952, when asked their feelings about the frequently proposed “unification of Europe,” fifty-nine percent of West Germans expressed themselves optimistically while only fourteen percent expressed themselves pessimistically or skeptically.⁷⁰ In 1953 forty-one percent against twenty-nine percent of West Germans believed that they would live to see the establishment of the “United States of Europe,” a confidence that only reversed a few years later after the defeat of the European Army.⁷¹ Nevertheless, as late as the end of 1955 sixty-eight percent of the West German public expressed themselves in support of

⁶⁸ Walter Lipgens, *A History of European Integration: 1945-47, v.1* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), 388

⁶⁹ Christopher J. Anderson, “Public Opinion and European Integration” in ed. Peter H. Merkle, *The Federal Republic of Germany at Fifty: At the End of a Century of Turmoil* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1999), 313-325, 313.

⁷⁰ Elisabeth Noelle and Erich Peter Neumann, *Jahrbuch für öffentliche Meinung, 1947-1955* (Allensbach am Bodensee: Verlag für Demoskopie, 1956), 339.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 339.

the “United States of Europe” versus seven percent opposed.⁷² The suggestion that West Germans were apolitical is also belied by the fact that the 1949 and 1953 federal elections each witnessed well over seventy-five percent voter participation. Part II of this dissertation will illustrate that this public enthusiasm for a new European politics reached into conservative circles via the influential journalism of post-Nazi Europeanists. As such, this dissertation joins the work of those scholars seeking to rescue the history of European integration from so-called “rational-choice” models that deemphasize the role of European idealism.⁷³ These debates often revolve around interpretations of the motives behind the West European statesmen who implemented European integration.⁷⁴ In contrast, this dissertation focuses on the constituents who supported European integration and the web of ideas that informed this support.

One way to interrogate conservative West Germans’ enthusiasm for Europe during the initial postwar years is to read it through the lens of the

⁷² Ibid., 343.

⁷³ Mark Gilbert, *Surpassing Realism: The Politics of European Integration since 1945* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003). Hewitson and D’Auria, *Europe in Crisis*.

⁷⁴ Take, for example, the famous debate between Alan Milward and Walter Lipgens over whether or not West European statesmen merely pursued European integration in order to “rescue the nation-state.” See Alan Milward, *The European Rescue of the Nation-State* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1992). Lipgens, *A History of European Integration*. For a summary of this debate and its reverberations see Robert Bideleux, “European Integration: The Rescue of the Nation State?” in ed. Dan Stone, *The Oxford Handbook of Postwar European History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 379-405.

Abendland concept, or “Occident” concept, an idea that was resurrected from interwar political Catholicism by many postwar conservatives who aligned with the so-called *abendländische Bewegung* (“Occidental movement”). The Occidental movement was a collection of mostly Catholic theologians and professors who articulated the concept of the Occident at various universities and in several public magazines, most notably *Neues Abendland* and *Rheinischer Merkur*. The Occident concept proclaimed the recent disasters of the Second World War to be an outgrowth of secular modernity. Unleashed by the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, secularization, they argued, had ultimately replaced Christian society with new forms of political association such as nationalism and socialism, each of which eventually mutated into totalitarianism. Consequently, they called for the creation of a post-national Europe re-committed to and organized around the religious values of pre-modern Europe.⁷⁵ As Axel Schildt illustrated, although the Occident movement aligned politically with the Christian Democratic politics of European integration, it was nevertheless fiercely illiberal, considering liberal democracy among the evil outgrowths of secular modernity and, in fact, the pre-cursor to totalitarianism.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ See, for example, Paul Wilhelm Wenger *‘Wer gewinnt Deutschland? Kleinpreußische Selbstisolierung oder mitteleuropäische Föderation* (Stuttgart: Seewald Verlag, 1959). Gerhard Kroll, *Grundlagen abendländischer Kultur – Das Manifest der Abendländischen Aktion* (Munich: Verlag Neues Abendland, 1951). Gerhard Kroll, *Das Ordnungsbild der Abendländischen Aktion* (Munich: Verlag Neues Abendland, 1953).

⁷⁶ Schildt, *Zwischen Abendland und Amerika*.

Several historians have argued that the Occident concept was the driving force of West German conservative approval of European integration.⁷⁷ Vanessa Conze, for example, has argued that there was a broad discursive struggle in German political culture from the 1920s to the 1960s between the Occident idea and what she calls the “West European liberal” idea of Europe, a struggle that culminated in their tactical alliance in the 1950s and, ultimately, the eventual victory of the latter in the 1960s.⁷⁸ Historians such as Conze and Shildt are correct to identify the initial predominance of illiberal concepts of Europe in postwar West Germany, but the exclusive focus on the Occident concept risks oversimplifying the story of postwar conservative Europe-enthusiasm. This is connected to a broad tendency in the literature to define postwar Christian Democracy as primarily a resurrection of interwar political Catholicism.⁷⁹ To be

⁷⁷ Rosario Forlenza, “The Politics of the *Abendland*: Christian Democracy and the Idea of Europe after the Second World War,” *Contemporary European History* 26.2 (2017): 261-286.

⁷⁸ Vanessa Conze, *Das Europa der Deutschen: Ideen von Europa in Deutschland zwischen Reichstradition und Westorientierung, 1920-1970* (Munich: Oldenbourg Wissenschaftsverlag, 2005).

⁷⁹ For a transnational history of Christian Democracy and its roots in interwar Catholicism, see Wolfram Kaiser, *Christian Democracy and the Origins of European Union* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011). James Chappel, *Catholic Modern: The Challenge of Totalitarianism and the Remaking of the Church* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018). For this argument made specifically in the context of postwar West German history, see Maria Mitchell’s monograph on Christian Democracy in Germany, in which she specifically takes issue with the interpretation of interconfessionalism and the role and impact of Protestantism. See Maria Mitchell, *The Origins of Christian Democracy: Politics and Confession in Modern*

sure, there are good reasons to accentuate the role of Catholicism in postwar West German history. After all, as a result of the postwar division of Germany, Catholics made up at least half of the population of Western occupied territories. This, combined with the general public assessment that Catholicism was less tainted than Protestantism by its association with National Socialism, meant that Catholics were disproportionately represented in the CDU.⁸⁰ However, an argument in this dissertation is that postwar West German conservatism was more diverse than one camp in favor of Western integration and one camp in favor of a Catholic Abendland. Specifically, it will aim to establish post-Nazi Europeanism as an important, independent constituency alongside the Catholic Occidentals in the illiberal wing of postwar West German conservatism. This will be done by illustrating how post-Nazi Europeanists were fundamentally different than the Catholic Occidentals. This post-Nazi Europeanism established itself in large part due to the fact that it appealed specifically to the Protestant base within West German conservatism which was considerably more secular and had disproportionately participated in National Socialism.⁸¹ As Stephen Brockmann has argued, the literature on West German conservatism has too often neglected

Germany (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2012). Dietmar Süß, "Lieb Abendland, magst ruhig sein," *Die Zeit*, September 17, 2009.

⁸⁰ Benjamin Ziemann, "Religion and the Search for Meaning, 1945-1990" in ed. Helmut Walser Smith, *The Oxford Handbook of Modern German History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 689-710.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

the still sizable milieu of conservative Protestants. In particular, Brockmann argues that this suggests it is essential to understand the pliability of the Occident concept; specifically, the way in which Protestants articulated their own Protestant definition of the Occident.⁸² This dissertation acknowledges Brockmann's intervention but suggests that Protestant conservatives were motivated predominantly by the secular post-Nazi Europe-concept constructed by the figures of this dissertation, which dominated the pages of most-read conservative Protestant periodicals as well as the activities of the Protestant-dominated veterans' organizations. These post-Nazi Europeanists expressly distanced their postwar Europe-concept to the Catholic Occident concept and to religious readings of European identity as such.

Perhaps the most important difference between the conservative Europe-concept and the Occident concept was the relationship to modernity. Whereas as the Occident movement was explicitly hostile to the modern world and advocated for a resurrection of the past, the conservative Europeanists analyzed in all three time periods of this dissertation were intensely forward-looking. In fact, the Europe-concept was explicitly formulated as the modern solution to the problems bequeathed by the past and as the inevitable endpoint in a teleological reading of historical evolution. This is evident in conservative Europeanists' engagement with Oswald Spengler's thesis of European civilizational decline put forward in the interwar best-seller *The Decline of the Occident*. Before, during, and after the

⁸² Stephen Brockmann, "Germany as Occident at the Zero Hour," *German Studies Review* 25.3 (2002): 477-496.

war, the figures in this dissertation repeatedly engaged with Spenglerian pessimism. Although they believed that Spengler had correctly diagnosed European decline, they attempted to replace his fatalism with the idea of a redemptive European revolution that could reverse civilizational decline. In short, their Europeanism was a reverse Spenglerian optimism. Jeffrey Herf has argued that radical German conservatives were neither reactionary nor modernists, but “reactionary modernists,” which is to say that their project was an attempt to overcome modernity, but only selectively (for there were aspects of modernity which they embraced, such as technology).⁸³ The conservative Europeanists of this dissertation were a unique brand of reactionary modernists. For them, although modernity carried the disease of civilizational decline, it also brought with it the seeds of its own reversal: the economic, political, and social preconditions for the historically brewing “European revolution.” Thus, the “New Europe” was the redeeming aspect of modernity. It was both their vehicle for reacting against cultural modernity as well as the very epitome of modernity. This was demonstrated in their chosen terminology for the coming Europe: a “New Age,” a “New Order,” an inevitable “community of destiny,” a “European revolution,” a champion over nationalist “reactionaries.” This reactionary modernism facilitated and sustained the complicity of conservative Europeanists in the genocidal policies of the revolutionary Nazi “New Order of Europe.” Paradoxically, however, the willingness to read optimism into tumultuous modern

⁸³ Jeffrey Herf, *Reactionary Modernism: Technology, Culture, and Politics in Weimar and the Third Reich* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

changes also proved essential in the de-radicalization of German conservatism after the war.⁸⁴

Methodology

This dissertation adopts a methodology that Jerry Muller calls “representative biography.”⁸⁵ This entails isolating and examining prominent intellectuals who had significant influence because of their social status. In particular, this dissertation focuses on intellectuals who had heightened intellectual influence as a result of their enlarged ability to disseminate ideas as high-profile journalists and propagandists. In contrast to traditional biography, we will examine figures not so much for their personal history, but rather as a lens through which we can ascertain general patterns in political ideology. As such, sources which were distributed and widely read receive special attention throughout this dissertation. This is an implicit defense of traditional intellectual history as advanced by Clifford Geertz and Keith Michael Baker, wherein social elites are conceived of as the producers of “political culture” – the framework of ideas within which broader public mentalities materialize.⁸⁶ Another argument

⁸⁴ The above paragraph is partially drawn from an article published by the present author. See Josh Klein, “Nazi Europeanism as Transnational Collaboration and Transnational Memory,” *The Yearbook of Transnational History* 2.1 (2019), 149-173.

⁸⁵ Muller, *The Other God that Failed*.

⁸⁶ Clifford Geertz, “Ideology as a Cultural System,” in ed. Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York: Basic, 1973). Keith Michael Baker, *Inventing the French Revolution: Essays on French Political Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

undergirding this dissertation is that political conservatism can only be understood by historians willing to take seriously its attendant ideas. In the debate between Corey Robin and Mark Lilla - vis-à-vis whether conservatism should be conceptualized as a disingenuous mask for social and economic hierarchies (Robin) or whether it should be understood as a sincere, albeit sometimes dangerous, tussle with modernity (Lilla) - this dissertation comes down on the side of the latter.⁸⁷ As such, this dissertation treats seriously its subjects' evolving ideas and the resulting political consequences, and it marshals evidence illustrating the sincerity of these beliefs as well as the sincerity of disaffecting from them. This is an essential precondition to understanding liberal democracy and its discontents.

A final methodological goal of this dissertation is to pay special attention to political and intellectual terminology and the different meanings that accompany the life of words and terms. Reinhart Koselleck's work on *Begriffsgeschichte*, or "conceptual history," noted that the meaning of a given concept changes over time even when the linguistic terminology remains constant. He invited the historian to question our often anachronistic assumptions about what a concept meant in the past by exploring the contemporary discursive

⁸⁷ Corey Robin, *The Reactionary Mind: Conservatism from Edmund Burke to Donald Trump* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018). Mark Lilla, *The Shipwrecked Mind: On Political Reaction* (New York Review Books, 2016). For their exchange, see Mark Lilla, "Republicans for Revolution," *The New York Review of Books* 59.1 (January 12, 2012).

struggles over the dominant meaning(s) of a concept.⁸⁸ Melvin Richter, a leading American proponent of conceptual history, has explained that conceptual history is a particularly useful methodology for studying "periods of crisis, of accelerated, radical, or revolutionary change, [which] produce fundamental disagreements about the language of politics and society."⁸⁹ This dissertation examines multiple such "periods of crisis." *Begriffsgeschichte* will be central to this dissertation because, simply put, the term "Europe" meant different things to different people during the tumultuous mid-twentieth century. Consequently, this dissertation will pay extra attention to the way its subjects' ideas of Europe discursively engaged with alternative Europe(s), and to the way their meaning of Europe changed over time and in different contexts.

⁸⁸ See Reinhart Koselleck, *The Practice of Conceptual History: Timing History, Spacing Concepts*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002).

⁸⁹ See Melvin Richter, *The History of Political and Social Concepts: A Critical Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

Part I:
Nazi Europeanism, 1930-
1945

Chapter 2: The Conservative Revolution, the *Europa-Gedanke*, and Giselher Wirsing

Introduction

Although the term “Conservative Revolution” had been used during the interwar period by Hugo von Hoffmannsthal and Edgar Julius Jung, it was actually popularized by historians after the Second World War as a category for understanding a younger cohort of interwar conservative intellectuals opposed to both Weimar democracy as well as the restoration of the Wilhelminian Monarchy. Conservatism, these intellectuals argued, must go beyond the hitherto ill-fated attempt to preserve the values and institutions of the past against the onslaught of post-Enlightenment modernity; instead, the redemption of conservatism could only entail a revolutionary break with the past and present. Ironically, the term “Conservative Revolution” was first promoted by Armin Mohler, a right-wing intellectual sympathetic to the ideas of these interwar conservatives who felt that their reputation had been unfairly tarnished by National Socialism. In his 1950 book titled *The Conservative Revolution in Germany*, Mohler attempted to distance the Conservative Revolution from National Socialism by arguing that they were the Trotskyites of National Socialism, having initially aligned with National Socialism but having then quickly reneged on that support during the 1930s.¹ This apologetic account of the Conservative Revolution has, of course, been significantly revised. Most importantly, historians have illustrated the

¹ Armin Mohler, *Die Konservative Revolution in Deutschland, 1918-1932: Grundriss ihrer Weltanschauungen* (Stuttgart: Friedrich Vorwerk Verlag, 1950).

collaborative connection between the Conservative Revolution and National Socialism. Hans Mommsen pointed out that their rejection of parliamentary democracy was not only a feature of their anti-Weimar activism but also a source of their positive attraction to Hitler who fulfilled their desire for a post-party manifestation of politics.² Other historians have illustrated that their alleged disillusionment with National Socialism was less critical than postwar apologias suggested - most Conservative Revolutionaries accommodated and even supported the Nazi regime to various degrees. Furthermore, their ideas had an important impact having influenced leading National Socialists such as Joseph Goebbels, Heinrich Himmler, and Walter Darré.³ In fact, some historians such as Stefan Breuer have even pushed back against the term “Conservative Revolution” precisely because it masks the essential affinities and entanglements between

² Hans Mommsen, “Government without Parties: Conservative Plans for Constitutional Revision at the End of the Weimar Republic” in ed.s Larry Eugene Jones and James Retallack, *Between Reform, Reaction, and Resistance: Studies in the History of German Conservatism from 1789 to 1945* (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1993).

³ See Frank-Lothar Kroll, “Konservative Revolution und Nationalsozialismus: Aspekte und Perspektiven ihrer Erforschung,” *Kirchliche Zeitgeschichte* 11.2 (1998): 339-354. Larry Eugene Jones, „Edgar Julius Jung: The Conservative Revolution in Theory and Practice,” *Central European History* 21.2 (1988): 142-174. Theodore S. Hamerow, “The Conservative Resistance to Hitler and the Fall of the Weimar Republic, 1932-34” in ed.s Larry Eugene Jones and James Retallack, *Between Reform, Reaction, and Resistance: Studies in the History of German Conservatism from 1789 to 1945* (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1993).

these conservatives and National Socialism.⁴ This chapter contributes to this corrective historiographical trend with the story of Giselher Wirsing, Carl Schmitt, and the so-called *Tat-Kreis*, a network of Conservative Revolutionaries who began developing the Europe-concept during the Conservative Revolution and ultimately obtained high-ranking positions within the Nazi propaganda apparatus from which to disseminate their ideas about Europe.

Understanding the roots of the conservative Europe-concept in the Conservative Revolution is important for a number of reasons. First, this chapter underscores the argument made by Fritz Stern and Jost Hermand that the most important convergence between the Conservative Revolution and National Socialism was the long-standing German utopia of a *völkisch* revolution that could unite the German *Volksgemeinschaft* against its perceived liberal and Marxist opponents, especially the Jews.⁵ This chapter will illustrate that the

⁴ See Stefan Breuer, *Anatomie der Konservativen Revolution* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1993).

⁵ See Fritz Stern, *The Politics of Cultural Despair: A Study in the Rise of the Germanic Ideology* (Berkeley: University of California, 1961). Fritz Stern, *Dreams and Delusions: The Drama of German History* (New York: Knopf, 1987). Jost Hermand, *Der alte Traum vom neuen Reich. Völkische Utopien and Nationalsozialismus* (Frankfurt a.M.: Athenäum, 1988). George L. Mosse, *The Crisis of German Ideology: Intellectual Origins of the Third Reich* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1964). The desire for radical solutions capable of ushering in a *völkisch* revolution had, as Peter Fritzsche has shown, revealed itself even before the establishment of the Weimar Republic when various Conservative Revolutionaries initially greeted the November Revolution of 1918. See Peter Fritzsche, "Breakdown or Breakthrough? Conservatives and the

Europe-concept was a reinvention of the Conservative Revolutionary völkisch utopia which juxtaposed liberalism and Marxism against a conservative European revolution. Second, as Jeffrey Herf has argued, the Conservative Revolution is best understood as a combination of reactionary and modernist political impulses, a point that is essential for understanding the Europe-concept and its capacity to evolve and maintain relevance in the changing circumstances of dictatorship, war, and defeat. Finally, while many historians have focused on the Eastern Front as the impetus for Nazi Europe-propaganda, this chapter will show that Nazi Europeanists had already implemented the Europe-concept into their narratives before the Second World War had begun and subsequently expanded their project in the spring of 1940 after the fall of France. This is important, because although the war with Soviet Communism was integral to the growth of the Europe-concept in Nazi propaganda, the original catalyst was the encounter with the Western democracies and, by extension, liberal democracy. The members of the Tat-Kreis, like many other Conservative Revolutionaries such as the National-Bolshevists, were predominantly concerned with confronting Western liberalism which it perceived as the originator of Marxism and therefore greatest threat to the Conservative Revolution. It is important to understand that the Europe-concept grew out of this engagement with liberal modernity.

Giselher Wirsing

November Revolution” in ed.s Larry Eugene Jones and James Retallack, *Between Reform, Reaction, and Resistance: Studies in the History of German Conservatism from 1789 to 1945* (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1993).

Because he did not collect his life documents in a personal archival holding, Giselher Wirsing's early life is especially difficult to trace. Unlike the postwar years, for which one can utilize documents from the archival holdings of his close friends and colleagues, the documentary evidence for the interwar period is extremely scattered. This is part of the reason why, despite his high-ranking position as a Nazi propagandist as well as his postwar reputation, there nevertheless exists very little biographical literature on Wirsing even in the German language.⁶ Piecing together his early life, then, necessarily depends on a plethora of sources. The primary documents drawn upon in this chapter consist of: 1) a collection of archival documents for the Eugen Diederichs publishing house (which employed him during and after the war). These documents, many of them written by Wirsing, close associates, and family members, range from in-house publishing memos to postwar character-testimonials to even an autobiographical sketch by Wirsing himself.⁷ 2) The records of the United States Central Intelligence Agency contain an entire folder with hundreds of documents on Wirsing, whom they followed quite closely after the Second World War. U.S. intelligence services interviewed Wirsing multiple times, even as late as 1965,

⁶ An exception is Axel Schildt's useful mini-biography of Hans Zehrer, Giselher Wirsing, and Ferdinand Fried (three of the primary ideologues in the Tat-Kreis). See Axel Schildt, "Deutschlands Platz in einem 'christlichen Abendland': Konservative Publizisten aus dem Tat-Kreis in der Kriegs- und Nachkriegszeit" in ed.s Thomas Koebner, Gert Sautermeister, and Sigrid Schneider, *Deutschland nach Hitler – Zukunftspläne im Exil und aus der Besatzungszeit, 1939-1949* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1987).

⁷ A:Diederichs/Eugen Diederichs Verlag, Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach, Germany.

and even temporarily employed him in the immediate aftermath of the war.⁸ Finally, 3) Carl Schmitt's archived correspondences contain dozens of letters between the two conservative thinkers.⁹ These sources together provide helpful biographical insight into Wirsing's early life and the earliest articulations of his Europe-concept.

Giselher Wirsing was born in 1907 in the Bavarian city Schweinfurt, Germany to a wealthy business family.¹⁰ He traded his birth-name, "Max Emanuel," for the more nationalistic "Giselher" while a university student in the interwar years. While still attending *Gymnasium* (high school) he briefly joined the Freikorps Oberland, and was entrenched in a culture of nationalistic opposition to the Weimar Republic, parliamentary democracy, capitalism, Communism, Jews, and the Treaty of Versailles – all of which were opinions which, according to an interview with the American Consul in Stuttgart decades

⁸ The reason for postwar U.S. intelligence work on Wirsing will be discussed in more detail in a later chapter of this dissertation. Folder "Wirsing, Giselher," United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, box 57.

⁹ Thirty-four total correspondences can be identified between Carl Schmitt and Giselher Wirsing between 1932 and 1974, and, according to textual analysis, even this record is quite fragmentary. See Carl Schmitt Nachlass, RW 265, Landesarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Duisburg, Germany.

¹⁰ Paul R. Sweet (American Consul General in Stuttgart) to the United States Department of State, "Dr. Giselher Wirsing and Christ und Welt: A Profile," November 23, 1965, United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, box 57, folder "Wirsing, Giselher."

after the Second World War, Wirsing originally received from his father in his youth.¹¹ Wirsing was, from a young age, an avid reader and, in his own admission to an American intelligence interrogator in 1946, deeply attracted to the political vision of radical conservative thinkers such as Oswald Spengler. As the interrogator reported:

Prisoner [Wirsing] did not regard himself as an unscrupulous opportunist. As a journalist he had observed the wrangles of politicians for many years and prided himself on having few illusions; to him Fascism, democracy and Communism were but symptoms of the age-old clash of cultures, part of the dynamic struggle between decay and growth, the pattern of history blindly and often brutally groping for fulfilment. Nazism was injecting new vigor into a people forgetful of its destiny. In his youth, he had sat at the feet of Oswald Spengler: his was Spengler's philosophy brought to date.¹²

Indeed, before, during, and even after the Second World War Wirsing grappled with Spengler's apocalyptic cultural pessimism in search of an escape from inevitable civilizational decline, and understood his Europeanism as the answer to Spengler, or, as his interrogator put it, "Spengler's philosophy brought to date."¹³

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² United States Counter Intelligence Center, Interrogation Section, "Final Report on Stubaf," October 25, 1946, United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, box 57, folder "Wirsing, Giselher."

¹³ In fact, in his last book written during the Second World War, Wirsing assured his readers that he had spoken with Spengler shortly before his death and that he was guaranteed by Spengler that the latter no longer held to his original cultural pessimism. Wirsing went on to project his Europe-concept as the correction to Spengler's apocalyptic reading of European history: Europe, led by the Nazi regime, was being redeemed from its decline. See Giselher Wirsing, *Zeitalter des*

In 1926 he took this quest to the university level and began pursuing an education in sociology and political science at universities in Munich, Königsberg, Berlin, and, finally, Heidelberg (where he received a Ph.D. in 1931).¹⁴ Wirsing, since his childhood, had been a world traveler, and this became an integral part of his education. Wirsing and many of the members in his network were an awkward mixture of fascists and world-travelling cosmopolitans who delighted in the company of non-Germans. According to CIA records, in the years 1924 to 1945 he visited a foreign country seventy-seven different times - mostly within Europe but as far East as Russia, as far South as Egypt, and as far West as the United States.¹⁵ While much of this was in his wartime capacity as a foreign propagandist, fifteen of those trips were during his collegiate studies.¹⁶ In fact, while at the University of Heidelberg, Wirsing became a graduate assistant in the

Ikaros: Von Gesetz und Grenzen unseres Jahrhunderts (Jena: Eugen Diederichs Verlag, 1944), 69-70.

¹⁴ United States Department of State, "Biographic Data Form – Wirsing, Giselher," November, 1951, United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, box 57, folder "Wirsing, Giselher."

¹⁵ United States Counter Intelligence Center, Interrogation Section, "Final Report on Stubaf," October 25, 1946, Appendix D, "Prisoner's Travels Abroad (1925-1945)," United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, box 57, folder "Wirsing, Giselher."

¹⁶ This is a habit Wirsing took with him into the postwar period as well. As editor of *Christ und Welt* magazine, Wirsing regularly took trips across the globe in order to report on them in the paper.

“Institute of Social and Political Sciences,” through which he received a research travel grant for his dissertation project which ultimately culminated in his first book titled *Zwischeneuropa*, or “The In-between Europe,” by which he meant an enlarged European federation situated in-between East and West.¹⁷ From 1928 to 1931 Wirsing travelled to Poland, Czechoslovakia, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Austria gathering material for his dissertation.¹⁸ These lands, he argued, must form a *großräumliche Völkerordnung* (“large-continental political system”) under German “leadership” capable of economically transcending British and American controlled world capitalism as well as the decrepit and dying institutions of parliamentary democracy. As he put it in an article penned in November, 1930:

If we truly want to think in new forms, then we need to accustom ourselves to not just think about Germany. We in Germany must not deny our responsibility for the space and the people of the East with which we share a destiny. ... A German social transformation will not find its purpose until said transformation transcends borders. The mutual reciprocity of the ‘National’ and the ‘Supranational’ [*des ‘Nationalen’ und ‘Übernationalen’*], out of which a new form of political, economic and social life will be born, will and must produce constant polarity and fixture.¹⁹

¹⁷ Giselher Wirsing, *Zwischeneuropa und die deutsche Zukunft* (Jena: Eugen Diederichs Verlag, 1932).

¹⁸ United States Counter Intelligence Center, Interrogation Section, “Final Report on Stubaf,” October 25, 1946, United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, box 57, folder “Wirsing, Giselher.”

¹⁹ Giselher Wirsing, “Richtung Ost-Südost: das Raumbild des neuen Deutschland,” *Die Tat*, November issue 1930, 628-645, 630.

The In-between Europe brought these ideas together and was ultimately published in 1932 upon Wirsing's completion of his Ph.D. Even as late as 1965 the American Consul in Stuttgart, after interviewing Wirsing, understood the revolutionary and harrowing connection of his ideas to future National Socialist rule:

Germany [Wirsing had argued] must shape its future by [establishing – sic] a new integrated relationship with these states of *Zwischeneuropa*. It should bring into existence a new order in Central Europe, a federalistic, anti-capitalistic, socialistic order which would take fully into account the agrarian social and economic structure of the Eastern part of Central Europe.²⁰

Here, then, was Wirsing's first attempt to rescue Germany and In-between Europe from the Spenglerian crisis. As such, this work was his first articulation of Europeanism. Wirsing was arguing that one must think beyond the capitalist nation-state; that a new federation of peoples in In-between Europe must be forged in order to give Europe economic and political stability and also establish itself against both the West and the East. By 1930, the twenty-three-year-old Wirsing had turned many heads in the Conservative Revolutionary movement and as a young graduate joined the Tat-Kreis, which was already one of the most

²⁰ Paul R. Sweet (American Consul General in Stuttgart) to the United States Department of State, "Dr. Giselher Wirsing and Christ und Welt: A Profile," November 23, 1965 United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, box 57, folder "Wirsing, Giselher."

prolific conservative intellectual clubs in Berlin. Shortly afterwards he became the assistant editor of its official magazine called *Die Tat*.²¹

Throughout the Second World War, Giselher Wirsing was, as will be shown, one of the most influential propagators of Nazi Europeanism. It is essential, therefore, to recognize that the origins of his ideas preceded the Second World War, the invasion of the Soviet Union, and even the National Socialist take-over of German politics in 1933. Nazi Europeanism was not only a tactical response to the demands of the Second World War. Rather, it was an intellectual discourse genealogically tied to the German conservative tradition of cultural pessimism, an attempt to find a more realistic escape from modernity by a group of thinkers who felt that nationalism itself was too weighed down by the baggage of conservatism. Europe, on the other hand, was modern enough to meet the socio-economic and political demands of modernity while at the same time providing a potential vehicle for reversing cultural pessimism and preserving the principle of organic community.

Carl Schmitt, the *Grossraum*-concept, and the Tat-Kreis

It appears, however, that Wirsing did not develop these ideas alone; rather, he had help from other Conservative Revolutionaries including one of the most influential among them: Carl Schmitt. Schmitt had, like Wirsing, been experimenting with new, post-nation-state geopolitical visions. In April, 1939

²¹ United States Counter Intelligence Center, Interrogation Section, "Final Report on Stubaf," October 25, 1946, United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, box 57, folder "Wirsing, Giselher."

Schmitt gave an important speech at the University of Kiel that launched a foreign policy debate among leading Nazi functionaries and intellectuals such as Werner Best and Reinhard Höhn about the relationship between the National Socialist revolution and its neighbors.²² Usually better known for his arguments against parliamentary democracy and liberalism, in this speech Schmitt suggested applying the American Monroe Doctrine to Europe. Just as the Americans had justified their hegemony in the New World while denouncing outside intervention, so too, Schmitt argued, were Europeans justified in denouncing the intervention of foreign continents in their affairs and so too was Germany justified pursuing political hegemony in the Old World. In addendum to the European Monroe Doctrine Schmitt developed an idea which would prove crucial for the thinking of Wirsing and other Nazi Europeanists throughout the war: namely, the concept of the *Grossraum* (“continental space”). Throughout the earth, Schmitt argued, natural continental areas were emerging under the dominance of a single country within that continent. As such, the sovereignty of states was no longer applicable in the modern world unless sovereignty was re-conceptualized in continental terms. Key to maintaining order in this new system of *Grossräume* (“continental spaces”) was to keep each continental space from infringing on the

²² Ulrich Herbert, *Best: Biographische Studien über Radikalismus, Weltanschauung und Vernunft, 1903-1989* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2016). Birgit Kletzlin, *Europa aus Rasse und Raum: die Nationalsozialistische Idee der Neuen Ordnung* (Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2002). Christian Joerges and Navraj Singh Ghaleigh (eds.) *Darker Legacies of Law in Europe: The Shadow of National Socialism and Fascism over Europe and its Legal Traditions* (Oxford: Hart Publishing, 2003).

territories of the others, or, as Schmitt put it, the original “Monroe Doctrine” must be extended to each emerging continental space. Schmitt’s Kiel speech, then, was both a justification of German imperialism on the European continent as well as a repudiation of Anglo-Saxon incursions outside of their continental spaces via free trade and the internationalist politics of Versailles.

As will be shown throughout this dissertation, Nazi Europeanists, especially Giselher Wirsing, enthusiastically took up Carl Schmitt’s *Grossraum* and Monroe doctrine concepts and began propagating them as a center-piece of their Europe-concept in the first wave of Nazi Europe-propaganda in 1939/1940 after Hitler began his offensives in Europe. But it appears that Wirsing developed these ideas much earlier with Schmitt’s help as a mentor. As illustrated above, Wirsing had already begun to use the terminology of *Grossraum* in his dissertation, and the evidence suggests a high likelihood that this was a product of his mentorship with Carl Schmitt developed during his graduate studies. While Wirsing was pursuing his graduate degree in the late 1920s and early 1930s, he spent some time studying in Berlin where Carl Schmitt lectured, and it was there that he very likely initiated a friendship with Schmitt which would extend into the 1970s.²³ The first documented correspondence between Wirsing and Schmitt was in 1932, when Wirsing wrote Schmitt a letter apologizing for not having visited him in Berlin recently and updating him on his most recent arguments in *Die*

²³ United States Department of State, “Biographic Data Form – Wirsing, Giselher,” November, 1951, United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, box 57, folder “Wirsing, Giselher.”

*Tat.*²⁴ In a letter to Schmitt in December, 1937, Wirsing expressed frustration about intellectual developments in the Anglo-Saxon world “about which we, if I’m not mistaken, have been much too silent.” “I have the feeling,” Wirsing explained, “that there are currently attempts underway there, which move beyond the League of Nations ideology into new international-political arguments that are better shaped to fit into modern developments....” He then argued that more of an effort should be made from the German side to respond, and that such a response should follow from Schmitt’s arguments about a new Monroe-Doctrine: “I often ponder various topics from your earlier writings which have now become so important again, for example the study among your Königsberg works about the Monroe-Doctrine.”²⁵ Schmitt’s Grossraum concept, then, preceded his Kiel speech in 1939. Wirsing would not journalistically flesh out his renewed interest in his earlier dissertation topic and Schmitt’s ideas until 1939, but the evidence above suggests that sometime in the mid-1930s he was returning to these topics intellectually with the mentorship of Carl Schmitt. In fact, as subsequent paragraphs will illustrate, Wirsing and his Conservative Revolutionary colleagues were embryonically engaged with the concept of “continental-space” (*Raum*) as early as 1930. This was in the context of their activities in the Tat-Kreis.

²⁴ Giselher Wirsing to Carl Schmitt, March 3, 1932, Landesarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Duisburg, Germany, RW 265/18488.

²⁵ Giselher Wirsing to Carl Schmitt, December 22, 1937, Landesarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Duisburg, Germany, RW 265/18325.

After receiving his Ph.D. in 1932 Wirsing moved to Berlin working as a full-time journalist in a Conservative Revolutionary intellectual circle led by one of the most influential interwar conservative intellectuals named Hans Zehrer. The Berlin-based network, which called itself the Tat-Kreis, or “Action-Circle,” was an intellectual clique of self-identified “new conservatives” dissatisfied with both the Weimar Republic as well as any return to what they considered the “bourgeois” Wilhelminian Monarchy. In the late 1920s Hans Zehrer, a right-wing veteran of the First World War who had participated in the Kapp Putsch and then later served as foreign affairs editor of the Berlin-based *Vossische Zeitung*, took a previously obscure intellectual magazine, *Die Tat*, and re-fashioned it into what some historians consider the leading organ of the Conservative Revolution.²⁶ According to one 1933 literature review it was the “most significant political monthly of the last three years.” The same publisher described its core aim: “to buttress the awakening new nationalism and form it spiritually.”²⁷ When Zehrer took over the magazine it had a circulation of somewhere around 1,000-3,000. Within a few years, Zehrer had injected the magazine with political edge by hiring radical conservative thinkers such as Giselher Wirsing, Ferdinand Fried, and Ernst

²⁶ Jerry Z. Muller, *The Other God that Failed: Hans Freyer and the Deradicalization of German Conservatism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 150; 213-216.

²⁷ Niels Diederichs, “Der Verlag Eugen Diederichs und die Gegenwart, 1933,” in “Der neue Stand: Zeitschrift des deutschen Jungbuchhandels,” May 1933, A:Diederichs/Eugen Diederichs Verlag, Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach, Germany. Schildt, “Deutschlands Platz in einem ‘christlichen Abendland’.”

Wilhelm Eschmann, and the circulation had reached almost 20,000 (*Die Tat* was particularly well-read by the political elite).²⁸ As the American Consul in Stuttgart put it in 1965: “Zehrer transformed the *Tat* almost overnight from a sleepy publication with a small circulation to an influential periodical appealing to young intellectuals.”²⁹

Zehrer drew heavily from Carl Schmitt and Hans Freyer, arguing that modern Germany required an authoritarian “total” state, which could more effectively organize competing social claims by subjecting them to the unity and the larger will of the racial nation. Defining and outlining this new nationalism and its concomitant “national revolution” was a primary task of two men: Ernst Wilhelm Eschmann, a young Berlin academic, and Giselher Wirsing. Wirsing was additionally tasked with exploring the consequences of this national revolution for foreign policy and international relations. Within the sprawling web of Conservative Revolutionary networks in Weimar Germany, the *Tat*-Kreis stood out for its vehement critique of capitalism and its explicit advocacy for a state-sponsored re-structuring of the economy, or what they called a “social

²⁸ Rüdiger Graf, *Die Zukunft der Weimarer Republik: Krisen und Zukunftsaneignungen in Deutschland, 1918-1933* (Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2008), 44.

²⁹ Paul R. Sweet (American Consul General in Stuttgart) to the United States Department of State, “Dr. Giselher Wirsing and Christ und Welt: A Profile,” November 23, 1965, United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, box 57, folder “Wirsing, Giselher.”

revolution.”³⁰ The primary economist in *Die Tat* was Ferdinand Fried, another young Berlin academic who had worked with Hans Zehrer at the *Vossische Zeitung* during the 1920s and who developed ideas for an anti-capitalist “nationalist socialism.”³¹

Despite terminological overlap with National Socialism, the Tat-Kreis was actually hesitantly opposed to the Nazis, who they argued were crude, unsophisticated opportunists not worthy of leading radical right-wing opposition to the established order. The Tat-Kreis envisioned itself as a conservative elite destined to lead the national revolution, but as the National Socialists increasingly garnered support they found themselves unable to rely on a dismissal of Nazi bullishness, and instead turned to arguing that the National Socialists were insufficiently dedicated to overthrowing bourgeois liberalism. Key to the Tat-Kreis’s self-identity was the notion that they were advocates for a “third front” (*dritte Front*), by which they meant an elitist alternative to both the Nazi and Communist parties capable of successfully capturing and directing the healthy impulse behind those movements. In one of Zehrer’s articles from 1931, titled “Right or Left?” Zehrer argued:

The opposition against liberalism in Germany can be summarized in the following way: its right wing [the National Socialists], which due to a natural public reservoir of sentiment for nationalist ideas with socialist tendencies should have had the advantage, has wasted this advantage by refusing to emphasize socialism. The left wing [the Communist Party] is rapidly overcoming its disadvantage by breaking into the right-wing

³⁰ Stefan Breuer, *Anatomie der Konservativen Revolution* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1993), 65-66.

³¹ Bundesarchiv in Koblenz, Nachlass Ferdinand Fried, N 1208.

bastion and guaranteeing nationalist sentiment. There are, thus, two poles within the opposition [to liberalism], one nationalist and one socialist. Each of these wings claims that it satisfies the opposing pole – but this claim is not justified. The National Socialists cannot yet be identified as socialist, the Communists not yet as nationalist.³²

Die Tat, however, struggled to balance its opposition to the Nazi movement with the reality that its readership was a natural bastion of support for Nazi radicalism. And in order to negotiate this challenge, the Tat-Kreis attempted to move the Nazi movement in the correct direction, which meant that in their editorials the *Tat* writers frequently opined in favor of dissidents within the Nazi movement such as the left-leaning Nazi Otto Strasser (who left the Nazi Party in 1930).³³ In fact, *Die Tat's* publishing house, the Jena-based Eugen Diederichs Verlag, wrote to Zehrer in October, 1931 instructing him to work harder to avoid the appearance of an alliance with Otto Strasser. The seeming association with Strasser had led to a “sales stagnation.” If this appearance were not countered, it was explained, “*Die Tat* would, due to the nationalist position and sympathies of many retailers, immediately disappear from relevance.”³⁴ *Die Tat* continued to stubbornly, albeit carefully, oppose the National Socialists up until the *Machtergreifung* in 1933, after which most of the Tat-Kreis reconciled with and even propagated National

³² Quoted in Mohler, *Die Konservative Revolution in Deutschland*, 69.

³³ Enthusiasm for socialism within the Tat-Kreis even led to calls for rapprochement with the Soviet Union, nearly mirroring the concepts of National-Bolshevism. See Giselher Wirsing, “Russland – Nation und Wirtschaft,” *Die Tat*, December issue 1931, 696-717.

³⁴ Unnamed at Eugen Diederichs publishing house to Hans Zehrer, October 16, 1931, “Eugen Diederichs Verlag an Zehrer, Hans, 1931-1939,” A:Diederichs/Eugen Diederichs Verlag, Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach, Germany.

Socialism.³⁵ In the last years of the Weimar Republic the Tat-Kreis became the de-facto media advocate for the authoritarian Kurt von Schleicher, Germany's last Chancellor before Hitler, whom the *Tat-Kreis* saw as the best possible surrogate for their national revolution. After Hitler assumed the chancellorship and began to initiate the *Machtergreifung*, Hans Zehrer was quickly forced down from his position as editor of *Die Tat*, after which Zehrer went into exile on the small island Sylt in the North Sea.³⁶

But to present the Tat-Kreis as anti-Nazi, as some apologists and even Tat-Kreis members themselves did after the Second World War, is disingenuous.³⁷ The Tat-Kreis can better be typified as anti-anti-Nazi, in the sense that their criticisms of National Socialism were comparatively infrequent, measured, and subtle, whereas the brunt of their criticism was aimed at communism and, even

³⁵ To be sure, already in the months before the Nazi takeover in 1933 the Tat-Kreis began to resolve its differences with the Nazi movement. As Stefan Breuer has shown, Zehrer began distinguishing between the Nazi "party" and the Nazi "movement" as a way to identify the increasingly popular National Socialism as a legitimate proponent of the national revolution. See Breuer, *Anatomie der Konservativen Revolution*, 143-145. Mommsen, "Government without Parties: Conservative Plans for Constitutional Revision at the End of the Weimar Republic," 347-374.

³⁶ Ebbo Demant, *Von Schleicher zu Springer: Hans Zehrer als Politischer Publizist* (Mainz: Hase und Koehler Verlag, 1972).

³⁷ This was, for example, one of Armin Mohler's arguments in his postwar attempts to salvage a revolutionary conservative tradition from the German past. See Mohler, *Die Konservative Revolution in Deutschland*.

more so, Weimar democracy. Furthermore, there existed an evident ideological overlap between the Tat-Kreis and the Nazi movement. From antisemitism to anti-Bolshevism to anti-parliamentarism, the Tat-Kreis shared with the Nazis the fundamental animosities of the 1920s and early 1930s. Most importantly, the Tat-Kreis, like the Nazis, anchored their conception of politics in their vision for a radical nationalist revolution against the status quo. As Rüdiger Graf has argued, a key characteristic of the Tat-Kreis (and of German conservatism as such in the years preceding the Nazi take-over) was a jubilant confidence that they were living through a period of water-shed transformation, or what he calls: “consciousness of a turning-point” (*Wendebewusstseins*).³⁸ And, in fact, Wirsing himself used very similar terminology when he frequently called for a “liquidation of the pre-First World War world.”³⁹ Ultimately, this translated into a readiness to welcome the Nazi-caused breakdown of the Weimar system in the early 1930s. In September, 1930 Wirsing was made assistant editor of *Die Tat*.⁴⁰ In his first article as assistant editor, Wirsing euphorically covered what he called a “Turn against parliamentarism” (*Wandlung gegen Parlamentarismus*) sweeping across Eastern and Southeastern Europe and preparing the ground for a common

³⁸ Rüdiger Graf, *Die Zukunft der Weimarer Republik: Krisen und Zukunftsaneignungen in Deutschland, 1918-1933* (Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2008), 182.

³⁹ See, for example, Giselher Wirsing, “Die Siegfriedstellung der deutschen Aussenpolitik,” *Die Tat*, April issue 1932, 14-35.

⁴⁰ United States Counter Intelligence Center, Interrogation Section, “Final Report on Stubaf,” October 25, 1946, United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, box 57, folder “Wirsing, Giselher.”

“destiny” and even future federation with Germany.⁴¹ In other articles, Wirsing praised Italian fascism as a successful national revolution and evidence that the “struggle against Versailles” was part of a broader European “process of evolution.”⁴² And in the lead up to the Nazi break-through election in July, 1932, Wirsing wrote an article urging Germans to take heed of Moeller van den Bruck’s call for an uncompromising rejection of Weimar and its replacement with a vaguely-defined “new system.”⁴³ In the early 1930s, such enthusiasm for liberal disintegration were difficult to distinguish from advocacy for the very agents of that disintegration throughout Europe; namely, fascists. In the end, the ideology of the Tat-Kreis is best described a kind of National Socialism without the street violence. This knowledge was not lost on postwar U.S. intelligence services. According to the American Consul in Stuttgart, quoting a German Professor close to the embassy, *Die Tat* was ““the most interesting, the most active, and the most influential periodical in the fight against Versailles and Weimar, and it was at the same time the organ which stood closest to the ideology of the National Socialist Movement.””⁴⁴ Or, as Wirsing’s first American interrogators put it in a report

⁴¹ Giselher Wirsing, “Richtung Ost-Südost: das Raumbild des neuen Deutschland,” *Die Tat*, November issue 1930, 628-645, 630.

⁴² Giselher Wirsing, “Vorstoss Zollunion,” *Die Tat*, June issue 1931, 212-231, 221.

⁴³ Giselher Wirsing, “Die Siegfriedstellung der deutschen Aussenpolitik,” *Die Tat*, April issue 1932, 14-35.

⁴⁴ Paul R. Sweet (American Consul General in Stuttgart) to the United States Department of State, “Dr. Giselher Wirsing and Christ und Welt: A Profile,” November 23, 1965 United States

from July, 1945: The Tat-Kreis propagated “a kind of nationalsocialism[sic] before the Nazis came to power.”⁴⁵

This proto-Nazi ideology was also central in Wirsing and his colleagues’ budding ideas about Europe. As illustrated above, Wirsing’s In-between Europe concept argued in favor of a vague, post-liberal “new form of political, economic and social life” in Europe, but that this “mutual reciprocity of the ‘National’ and the ‘Supranational’” was not possible until Europeans moved beyond parliamentary democracy.⁴⁶ In a similar vein, Wirsing frequently contrasted his ideas for a new In-between Europe with the Pan-European movement led by Richard von Coudenhove Kalergie, which Wirsing dismissed as a mere extension of French or British “High Capitalism,” underpinned by the disingenuous internationalism of the League of Nations. The Western Allies of the First World War, Wirsing argued, masked their intentions to prey upon and subjugate the agrarian regions Central, Eastern, and Southeastern Europe with the Pan-European movement. Such, for example, were the true intentions behind French Prime Minister Aristide Briand’s calls for Pan-European economic integration. His In-between Europe, in contrast, sought to integrate their agricultural

National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, box 57, folder “Wirsing, Giselher.”

⁴⁵ “Draft Reports from MFIU No.3 (Third Army Interrogation Center),” July 30, 1945, United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, box 57, folder “Wirsing, Giselher.”

⁴⁶ Giselher Wirsing, “Richtung Ost-Südost: das Raumbild des neuen Deutschland,” *Die Tat*, November issue 1930, 628-645, 630.

economies with industrial Germany in a mutually beneficial relationship (the precise economic details of which Ferdinand Fried was asked to outline in his articles suggesting the mutual dependence of Central, Eastern, and Southeastern European resources).⁴⁷ Wirsing repeatedly warned Germans of the Pan-European enticements of the French and British. It would be “the great disappointment of all Europeans,” Wirsing argued, should they fall victim to Western lies only to be abandoned when market vicissitudes produced an immediate retreat by the Westerners, leaving behind dysfunctional capitalist democracies in their wake.⁴⁸ Wirsing’s first flirtations with the Schmitt-influenced idea of “continental space” (*Raum*) originated in these arguments against Western Pan-Europeanism. Take, for example, his discussion of Briand’s suggestions for a European custom’s union:

The biggest difference [between the French and Germans] has to do with continental spaces [*Räume*]. The French sphere of control [*Machtbereich*] is obviously and manifestly distinct from the rest of Europe. Perhaps this is a difference in the spiritual life of the respective peoples. In any case, there is no reason to sentimentally mourn this process of separation. It is simply one of the basic elements of fact in this natural division of Europe.

He continued: “There remains for the moment the sober fact of a self-concentration and beginning isolation of Greater French continental space [*grossfranzösische Raumeinheit*], which is finding it increasingly difficult to reconcile notions of a hegemonic rule over Europe.” In fact, Wirsing argued,

⁴⁷ Giselher Wirsing, “Lex Deux Europes: Deutschland und Frankreich im Südosten,” *Die Tat*, December issue 1930, 721-725. Ferdinand Fried, “Der Umbau der Welt,” *Die Tat*, May issue 1931, 81-126.

⁴⁸ Giselher Wirsing, “Vorstoss Zollunion,” *Die Tat*, June issue 1931, 212-231.

Central, Eastern, and Southeastern Europeans need to begin forming a “Revisionist block” in order to speed up this process:

The idea of a regional integration of the constricted central European states is now emerging. The [French] customs union was the first attack [on that idea].... The people in Geneva [the League of Nations] have tried to hide these facts and preserve the French front in Eastern Europe. Nevertheless, there are three great blocks already emerging from this development: Greater France, inner-Europe [*Innereuropa*], and Russia.⁴⁹

From there, Wirsing proceeded to argue that the French proposal for a customs union, taken alone, was “economically justified” and carried the germ for a truly revolutionary economics which transcended nation-states. Unlike other radical nationalists, Wirsing and Fried decried the idea of national autarchy as a response to global capitalism. Autarchy, by which they meant enclosed and self-sufficient economies structured to the benefit of national groups, was correct as a moral principle but unfit to meet the demands of modern economies. Perhaps Fried’s most significant argument in the Weimar Tat-Kreis was his attempt to square this paradox by simply expanding the autarchic unit into larger continental spaces or “economic blocks” as he called them. In other words, instead of enclosed national economies Fried proposed enclosed continental economies so that the German nation would have access to all necessary resources within continental Europe while at the same time preserving its independence from the vagaries of global capitalism.⁵⁰ Such arguments obviously insinuated German political

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ferdinand Fried, *Das Ende des Kapitalismus* (Jena: Eugen Diederichs Verlag, 1931).

Ferdinand Fried, “Der Umbau der Welt,” *Die Tat*, May issue 1931, 81-126. Over the course of the 1930s Fried combined his ideas about continental autarchy with the emergent Grossraum-concept

hegemony in Europe – after all, a continental autarchy would have to be controlled and administered. Consequently, Wirsing complimented Fried's postulation of continental autarchy by attaching it to his In-between Europe concept. Europe, he argued, must establish an economic union by implementing a new concept of political federalism:

The impossibility to even slightly construct autarchic national economies in either the old or even our contemporary borders forces us to abandon nation-state silliness. It demands an entirely new way of thinking which may contradict the forces of state-centralization. Every large-continental [räumliche] federation of states will have to be modelled after a federally-constructed Reich elastic enough to include Eastern Europe, and thereby simultaneously resolve the minority-question there.⁵¹

In order to make such a federation a real possibility, Wirsing argued in a separate article, Germans would need to recognize that foreign policy and domestic policy were intertwined, that an internal “liquidation” of Weimar could not take place without establishing a lasting “connection to the young forces in Europe” by which he meant radical conservatives and fascists throughout the continent.⁵²

Wirsing and the Tat-Kreis, then, had already been working towards the Grossraum-concept nearly a decade before Carl Schmitt initiated the conversation

and worked with Wirsing to propagate Grossraum economics as a Nazi propagandist. See Ferdinand Fried, *Wende der Weltwirtschaft: Von der Krise des Kapitalismus zu neuen Wirtschaftsformen* (Leipzig: Wilhelm Goldmann Verlag, 1939).

⁵¹ Giselher Wirsing, “Vorstoss Zollunion,” *Die Tat*, June issue 1931, 212-231, 219-226.

⁵² Giselher Wirsing, “Die Siegfriedstellung der deutschen Aussenpolitik,” *Die Tat*, April issue 1932, 14-35, 35.

in 1939, and these subtle justifications for German political dominance in Europe were important pre-cursors to their eventual alignment with Nazi propaganda.

It is important to note that Wirsing was not only opposed to competing Pan-European concepts of Europe. He also situated his In-between Europe in contrast to what could have been a more natural ally: the interwar conservative Catholic Occident movement (*das Abendland*). The problem with the Occident-concept, he argued, was that it was committed to a restoration of a non-existent past. Even more damning for Wirsing, however, was that the Occident movement advocated closer relationships and integration with Catholic Western powers. This, he argued, was just a call for “watered-down imperialism” (*verhinderten Imperialismus*):

Without a doubt there is a not inconsiderable portion of the old forces in Germany who advocate a foreign policy which can be categorized as watered-down imperialism. This cuts across the various parties and attaches itself to those groups which, either consciously or unconsciously, feel spiritually connected to the Western victors. For all those groups, the Occident is still a unifying cultural concept even after Versailles, and is the desired blueprint for political concepts. ...we are dealing in no small measure with more than Pan-European fantasies from ‘the left’, but rather also from the old Right which has unexpectedly been taken over by the Occident-path.⁵³

Wirsing’s earliest Europeanism, then, was adversarial towards the Occident movement, and as such is the first piece of evidence for this dissertation’s claim that his postwar movement, despite tactical alliance with the postwar Christian

⁵³ Giselher Wirsing, “Die Grossmächte und Deutschland: der kämpfende Imperialismus,” *Die Tat*, January issue 1933, 841-851, 850. Wirsing’s similar dismissal of a sentiment among some German conservatives which he calls „Occident-Brotherhood“ in Giselher Wirsing, “Doch Kompromiss? Die vier Sicherungssysteme,” *Die Tat*, November issue 1932, 646-652.

Democratic Occident-advocates, was from the very beginning a different kind of conservative supranationalism.

Key to what this dissertation calls “Europeanism” is an explicit engagement with national identity. And here, too, Wirsing and the Tat-Kreis began to cautiously experiment with revision. To be sure, most of the above nascent Europeanism was geopolitical. But a close reading of *Die Tat* reveals that the Tat-Kreis understood the revolutionary implications of the In-between Europe paradigm for national identity. Ernst Wilhelm Eschmann, future co-editor with Giselher Wirsing of *Die Tat*'s successor magazine *Das XX Jahrhundert*, was tasked by Wirsing and Zehrer after 1930 to explore this topic. In one particularly audacious article, titled “The Transformation of Nationalism,” Eschmann set out to problematize how German conservatives approach nationalism. It is not quite fair, he argued, to suggest that “one is either nationalist or not.” After all, a careful reading of German history would suggest that there are many different kinds of “national consciousness” and that this changes over time. Eschmann pointed out, for example, that German national identity came much later (late nineteenth century) than in other countries. But this need not be a cause for insecurity, he argued. Indeed, while other national patriots before the late nineteenth century were defining their nations, German patriots were defined by their “character as a European people of the Reich” (*europäisches Reichsvolk*) with a “supranational Reich-consciousness” (*übernationales Reichsbewusstsein*). This allegedly meant that, in practice, contemporary Germans were uniquely conditioned to be leaders in Europe because they were historically imbued with a

“Reich-conditioned feeling of responsibility” (*reichsmässiges Verantwortungsgefühl*) towards the other peoples in Europe. This “feeling of responsibility,” unmatched by any other European Volk, supposedly molded with the German nationalist movement of the late nineteenth century, thus making the Germans into a special brand of nationalists prepared by history for reconciliation with other European nationalists. Unlike the anti-nationalist Pan-European and Social Democratic movements, Eschmann argued, German nationalism was both “nationalist” and “supranational”:

Our historical development and that of other peoples in comparison shows us that a nation can live and prosper in a supranational feeling of responsibility or in a self-confident state of being which is undeterred by the problems of nationalism. ... Regardless of whether an accelerated overcoming of nationalism in favor of a new supranational feeling of responsibility should be recommended or whether nationalism should return to a static patriotism anchored perhaps even in class – either way: nationalism has a not yet fully defined role in our destiny.⁵⁴

These convoluted ruminations, however eccentric, were nevertheless audacious in their calling into question the national categories otherwise held sacred and absolute in the politics of radical German nationalism. Under Wirsing’s leadership, then, the Tat-Kreis was dabbling in Nazi Europeanism before the Nazis even took over power in Germany. However, this came to an abrupt pause in 1933.

Reconciliation with National Socialism

⁵⁴ Ernst Wilhelm Eschmann, “Die Wandlung des Nationalen,” *Die Tat*, November issue 1930, 552-560.

After Hitler came to power in 1933, *Die Tat* fell victim to Nazification (*Gleichschaltung*). The Nazis had good reason to settle scores with the *Die Tat*, as it had been one of the largest obstacles in their quest to seize the complete support of radical German nationalists. Within a few short months Zehrer was forced to step down from his position as editor of the magazine, and Wirsing, at the age of twenty-six, was made his replacement in September.⁵⁵ During the next six years Wirsing opportunistically reconciled with the Nazi regime, ended any and all criticisms of the Nazi movement, and, in fact, energetically propagated the Nazi revolution. For the first few months after Hitler's rise to power, *Die Tat* remained awkwardly silent vis-à-vis the new regime, but in April Wirsing signaled a complete reversal of his hitherto tepid anti-anti-Nazism. The first sentence of Wirsing's April article read: "The national and social Revolution in Germany is leading to a two-front war against the internationalism of class struggle and the internationalism of capital." "The theory of the Conservative Revolution," he continued, "is finding a foundation in a new reality [Nazi rule]. We in this magazine have always tried to make possible this new reality by struggling against the remaining pieces of the old Right and the old Left." Wirsing also swiftly distanced himself from his previous supranational sentiments: "Just like the notion of a Marxist World Revolution is mere talk with

⁵⁵ Berlin Document Center to United States Department of State, "Trace Reply, Dr. Giselher Wirsing," May 17, 1967, United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, box 57, folder "Wirsing, Giselher."

no foundation in reality, so too is there no such thing as a ‘Fascist International’.”⁵⁶ By the end of the year, Wirsing’s idiosyncratic commenter on nationalism, Ernst Wilhelm Eschmann, had published a book about the Nazi revolution called *The Purpose of the Revolution*, advertised in *Die Tat* as a work which explored the “unity of state, Volk, and nation” – a far cry from his earlier explorations of European identity.⁵⁷ To be sure, the new magazine occasionally attempted to re-engage with the idea of a new, federal formation in Europe, but masked it with appeals to nationalism. Eschmann, for example, wrote about Herder’s revolutionary Volk-concept and the rise of a new German nationalism based in organic culture rather than Enlightenment “universalism.” But tucked into the back of this article about romantic German nationalism was a section entitled “The Principle of Federation,” in which he argued: “Just like the Volk revolts against society [*Gesellschaft*], so too stands its supranational version, the Reich, against the empire of civilization.” “The supranational significance of National Socialism,” he explained, was to export the Reich concept outside of its borders so as to provide Europe with a “New Order” capable of replacing the universalism of the decadent, rootless nation-state system.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Giselher Wirsing, “Ist Deutschland Weltmacht? Sozialismus und Aussenpolitik,” *Die Tat*, April issue 1933, 32-47, 32-33.

⁵⁷ *Die Tat*, September issue 1933, inner-jacket.

⁵⁸ Ernst Wilhelm Eschmann, “Die Revolution der Völker: Das Erwachen des Völkergedankens,” *Die Tat*, September issue 1933, 433-455, 450-452.

Wirsing likewise flirted with a return to Europeanism a year later in an article titled “Europe in Fever,” in which he argued that the Versailles system had been broken by Hitler and a “Revolution of Europe’s center” was underway.⁵⁹ This revolution, Eschmann explained in the same issue, was turning all of Europe fascist and opening the door to an unknown world beyond liberalism and Marxism. But, careful to not step on the toes of German nationalists, Eschmann finished with:

We would like to state very clearly that European peoples are overthrowing their own respective decays; we are not speaking about European personhood, which is an invention of the era after the Great War. Europe lives inside of each of its peoples. There is no European ‘personhood’, which can be drawn out from these peoples.⁶⁰

In October, 1933 Wirsing defended the Nazi book burnings as a spiritual act against illegitimate intellectualism.⁶¹ By the end of the year, *Die Tat* began signaling an estrangement with Spengler, typifying his pessimism as the right-wing equivalent of left-wing “dangerous intellectualism,” thus combining their Spengler-revisionism with Nazi anti-intellectualism.⁶² Having established itself as an echo-chamber running sophisticated flak for the Nazis, *Die Tat* proceeded to define itself throughout the 1930s as an expert commentator on foreign affairs,

⁵⁹ Giselher Wirsing, “Europa im Fieber,” *Die Tat*, March issue 1934, 913-923, 32-33.

⁶⁰ Ernst Wilhelm Eschmann, “Wird Europa faschistisch?” *Die Tat*, May issue 1934, 81-101.

⁶¹ Giselher Wirsing, “Volk und Geist: Die Gegenkirche der Intellektuellen,” *Die Tat*, October issue 1933, 513-520.

⁶² Ernst Wilhelm Eschmann, “Spengler und die Wirklichkeit,” *Die Tat*, December issue 1933, 673-703.

which meant trumpeting each of Hitler's aggressive foreign policy maneuvers as a path-breaking success. Wirsing's first postwar interrogator summed up best the post-1933 influence of Wirsing and his Tat-Kreis: "[Wirsing] carries an inordinately large share in laying the ideological foundations upon which the conservative elements of Germany could submerge their dislike of the many repugnant aspects of the Nazi regime."⁶³ Wirsing, explained another U.S. interrogator, "persuaded the Conservative element [in Germany] to underwrite Nazism, arguing that the more repugnant aspects were mere teething troubles of a young revolutionary party."⁶⁴ In short, Wirsing became a key apologist for the Nazi revolution by helping German conservatives overcome any remaining trepidations.

Wirsing was rewarded for his new-found loyalty to National Socialism. At the end of 1933 he was made chief editor of the *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten* (MNN), the forerunner to the postwar *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and at the time the largest paper in Southern Germany (it was read daily by Hitler).⁶⁵ Wirsing kept this position through 1942, and used the position to broaden his

⁶³ "Draft Reports from MFIU No.3 (Third Army Interrogation Center)," July 30, 1945, United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, box 57, folder "Wirsing, Giselher."

⁶⁴ United States Counter Intelligence Center, Interrogation Section, "Final Report on Stubaf," October 25, 1946, United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, box 57, folder "Wirsing, Giselher."

⁶⁵ Leon Poliakov and Josef Wulf, *Das Dritte Reich und seine Denker* (Munich: K.G. Saur Verlag: 1978), 477.

public voice by frequently penning front-page articles himself, which he signed “GW.”⁶⁶ Wirsing also brought with him Ferdinand Fried and Ernst Wilhelm Eschmann to the paper as leading editorialists, where, as we will see, the reformed Tat-Kreis returned to their Europe-concept in 1939.

In 1938, Wirsing made a fateful decision: he joined the SS and received the rank of *Hauptsturmführer*. American secret intelligence documents were extremely consternated about the motivations and consequences of this decision, and ultimately unable to decipher the mystery. Wirsing, of course, was highly reticent about the issue throughout his postwar life, only ever arguing that it was an opportunistic decision made in the hope of better positioning himself to change the Nazi regime from within. According to one historian, his primary responsibility with the SS-membership was to serve as an informant, and he was supposedly cherished by the SS as a “willing, diligent, and extraordinary valuable colleague.”⁶⁷ As will be discussed in chapter six of this dissertation, the only other documented task completed by Wirsing in his SS capacity was a series of insubordinate intelligence reports written for the *Reichssicherheitshauptamt*

⁶⁶ Paul R. Sweet (American Consul General in Stuttgart) to the United States Department of State, “Dr. Giselher Wirsing and Christ und Welt: A Profile,” November 23, 1965 United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, box 57, folder “Wirsing, Giselher.”

⁶⁷ Mattias Weiss, “Journalisten: Worte als Taten,” in ed. Norbert Frei, *Hitlers Eliten nach 1945* (Munich: Dtv Verlagsgesellschaft, 2003), 265.

(RSHA) in the attempt to convince Himmler of the war's futility and the subsequent need to overthrow Hitler.

Otherwise, it can be credibly conjectured that his membership in the SS was a means for advancing his career as an antisemite. In 1937 Wirsing went on a long trip to Palestine and subsequently wrote one of the most read antisemitic tracts in Nazi Germany during the late 1930s titled *Engländer, Juden, Araber in Palästina*.⁶⁸ Wirsing's time in Palestine convinced him that Zionism was among the most dangerous components in the Jewish conspiracy to dominate the world. Perhaps in part due to his SS-membership, Wirsing was able to increase his profile as an antisemitic thinker during the late 1930s and early 1940s, even participating with Alfred Rosenberg in a three-day conference from March 26-28, 1941 to inaugurate the "Institute for the Research of the Jewish Question" (*Institut zur Erforschung der Judenfrage*) in Frankfurt am Main.⁶⁹

Giselher Wirsing's Early-war Europeanism, 1939-1943

At the outbreak of war in September, 1939, Wirsing was hired by the Information Department of the Foreign Office in a part-time advisory capacity on international affairs, which he would fulfill alongside his editorial position at the MNN, moving back and forth between Berlin and Munich each week until he

⁶⁸ Giselher Wirsing, *Engländer, Juden, Araber in Palästina* (Jena: Eugen Diederichs Verlag, 1939).

⁶⁹ Wirsing's speech, titled "Die Judenfrage im Vorderen Orient," was given on March 27, 1941 and presented his arguments about the danger of Zionism. For the conference program see Leon Poliakov and Josef Wulf, *Das Dritte Reich und seine Denker*, 140-144.

ceased working for the Foreign Office at the end of 1941.⁷⁰ According to his postwar interrogations by U.S. intelligence services, Wirsing's contacts in the Foreign Office stretched as far back as 1928; in fact, throughout the 1930s Wirsing used his contacts in the Foreign Office to become "the first German editor to organize air-mail deliveries of his paper to foreign countries; from 1935 onwards the MNN was distributed in Poland, Czechoslovakia, the Balkans, Italy, France Switzerland, Spain, and Portugal before any other German paper, and had a foreign circulation three times as high as that of the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, its nearest competitor." This influence abroad reinforced the desire of the Foreign Office to secure a close relationship with Wirsing, who increasingly used his standing in the Foreign Office to travel abroad and establish friendships with a large number of German diplomats. Wirsing's work for the Foreign Office

⁷⁰ "Wirsing, Giselher, Prosa, Bericht über meine Beziehungen zu Dr. Adam von Trott zu Solz," in "Briefwechsel Müller-Plantenberg, Clarita, Eugen Diederichs Verlag, 1969," A:Diederichs/ Eugen Diederichs Verlag, Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach, Germany. This can also be corroborated by documents from the *Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes* outlined in a subsequent chapter of this dissertation. Wirsing was offered this position at a conference of journalists organized by the Foreign Office. Other journalists turned down the offer, such as Ernst Jünger, but Wirsing was not the only journalist to accept the offer. Hans Georg von Studnitz, future assistant to Paul Karl Schmidt in the Press Department of the Foreign Office, also accepted the position. So, too, did Karl Megerle, the originator of Nazi Europeanism in the Foreign Office who later became "Propaganda Commissioner" over the Foreign Office. See "Draft Reports from MFIU No.3 (Third Army Interrogation Center)," July 30, 1945, United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, box 57, folder "Wirsing, Giselher."

revolved around “disseminat[ing] German propaganda in neutral countries.” Additionally, Wirsing participated in various closed-room conferences organized by Ribbentrop to coordinate foreign propaganda.⁷¹ As will be discussed in a separate chapter of this dissertation, the Foreign Office became one of the most important centers of Nazi Europeanism, and it is important therefore to highlight the connection between Wirsing and the Foreign Office. Unfortunately, Wirsing left very few documentary tracks in the records of the Foreign Office, and it is difficult to trace the precise flow of Europeanist ideas from Wirsing to the Foreign Office, or vice-versa. One document, however, does reveal the importance of this network and its intellectual interactions. In a memo to the head of the Foreign Office Information Department in February, 1942, it was announced that the Foreign Office had assisted the Eugen Diederichs publishing house in publishing first Wirsing’s influential Europeanist book published during the war: *Der Masslose Kontinent*. Furthermore, the department announced intentions to circulate the book through their foreign propaganda channels “in every possible way,” including “press directives and reviews,” “radio commentary,” and “access to foreign publishing houses.” This memo illustrates two important points: 1) although Wirsing claimed to have completely ceased working for the Foreign Office at the end of 1941, it is clear that the relationship

⁷¹ United States Counter Intelligence Center, Interrogation Section, “Final Report on Stubaf,” October 25, 1946, Appendix B, “The Information Section of the Auswärtige Amt,” United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, box 57, folder “Wirsing, Giselher.”

continued in some capacity afterwards;⁷² 2) the Foreign Office not only knew of his Europe ideas, but actively broadcasted them within their propaganda system.⁷³ Moreover, as will be discussed in more detail below, Wirsing continued to work indirectly for the Foreign Office from 1943 to the end of the war in his capacity as editor of Nazi Germany's largest foreign-propaganda magazine, *Signal*, which was co-published by the Foreign Office and the German Army. According to Wirsing, at the end of 1940 he was offered by Ribbentrop a high-ranking position in the Foreign Office: the head of the Information Department. But ostensibly due to his distaste for the Foreign Office's rivalry with Joseph Goebbels's Ministry of Propaganda, he declined.⁷⁴ During his time at the Foreign Office from 1939-1941 Wirsing continued his work as editor and contributing editorialist of both the MNN and the *Die Tat*. Beginning in 1939, *Die Tat* was renamed to *Das XX Jahrhundert* ("The XX Century") in order to suggest the ushering in of a new era.⁷⁵ By the end of 1939 the *XX Jahrhundert* had become a leading

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ "Generalkonsul Wuester," to "Luther, Woermann, Schmidt, Ruehle" in the Information Department of the Foreign Office, February 11, 1942, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany, RZ 211/R105119.

⁷⁴ United States Department of State, "Biographic Data Form – Wirsing, Giselher," November, 1951, United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, box 57, folder "Wirsing, Giselher."

⁷⁵ This was a deliberate play off of the British intellectual magazine "*The Nineteenth Century*," in which Wirsing was suggesting that his magazine was a superior modern update compared to the outdated intellectualism of the British. The advertising slogan for the renamed

periodical in Germany; in fact, the largest weekly in Nazi Germany, *Das Reich*, felt threatened enough by *XX Jahrhundert* that it offered a position to Wirsing in September, 1939 in an attempt to weaken the growing magazine.⁷⁶ Already in October, 1938, Wirsing began returning to the theme of Europe in his writings. In an article celebrating Hitler's maneuvers at the Munich Conference in September, 1938, Wirsing described the diplomatic victory as the triumph of "European justice as represented by Germany." The article, titled "The New Europe," declared that Hitler had secured peace but, more importantly, had shattered the 350-year old "classical balance of powers theory" of the British, which had always been a mere excuse to intervene in European affairs. Although unwilling to articulate what it meant, Wirsing proclaimed a new age of European politics without British interference.⁷⁷ Carl Schmitt's Monroe-Doctrine speech in April, 1939 at the University of Kiel, however, appears to have truly spurred Wirsing towards re-engaging with the Europe-concept. Shortly after the speech, Schmitt

XX Jahrhundert was "The Monthly For Our Times." See "Eugen Diederichs Verlag, Dokumente, Plakat zu der Zeitschrift 'Das XX Jahrhundert'," A:Diederichs/ Eugen Diederichs Verlag, Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach, Germany.

⁷⁶ In a letter to Wirsing on September 8, 1939, the Eugen Diederichs Verlag pleaded with Wirsing to decline the offer and not abandon their most profitable venture. It appears that Wirsing was able to leverage the offer to obtain, as a condition for remaining, complete editorial independence as chief editor. See Unnamed author at Eugen Diederichs publishing house to Giselher Wirsing, September 8, 1939, A:Diederichs/ Eugen Diederichs Verlag, "Eugen Diederichs Verlag an Wirsing, Giselher, 1939-1948," Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach, Germany.

⁷⁷ Giselher Wirsing, "Das Neue Europa," *Die Tat*, October issue 1938, 433-444

sent a copy of the speech to Wirsing. In a response-letter to Schmitt on June 1, 1939, Wirsing thanked Schmitt for the copy, saying:

As you know, I have always considered your Monroe-studies from your Königsberg research to be a supreme work in foreign-policy literature. In this most recent work of yours [the Kiel speech], the most important point seems to me that we finally find a way to escape negative differentiation, and instead find the strength to give our own theory of law in international relations. ... All of my editorial work in the last few years has been circling around this same problem.

Wirsing attached in his letter his most recent article in MNN, in which he reviewed Schmitt's Kiel speech to his readers, as well as an article from *XX Jahrhundert*.⁷⁸ Schmitt responded within a few weeks, expressed appreciation for the articles, declared *XX Jahrhundert* to be "excellent," and expressed that "as far as I can remember, [I have] never had this level of happiness finding a necessary accompaniment [to my research] as with your lectures about my essays." Apparently Wirsing had criticized Schmitt's arguments about how Europe must make greater use of the sea in order to expand its hemisphere. Schmitt acknowledged this criticism, admitting he had "been too quick to emphasize" the importance of the sea, and that he agreed with Wirsing that the central division in international relation theories of the future would be between "universalism and Grossraum." He promised Wirsing that he would view Wirsing's future "lectures" in the MNN as a "continuing conversation."⁷⁹ Thus, before the war had

⁷⁸ Giselher Wirsing to Carl Schmitt, June 1, 1939, Landesarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Duisburg, Germany, RW 265/18376.

⁷⁹ Carl Schmitt to Giselher Wirsing, June, 1939, Landesarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Duisburg, Germany, RW 265/13739.

begun Wirsing had injected the Grossraum theory into his journalism at the MNN and *Das XX Jahrhundert*.

This process was accelerated by German victory over France in the spring of 1940. Wirsing subsequently filled pages of MNN with calls for a “New Order of Europe.” Wirsing regularly published, for example, Reich Chief of Press Otto Dietrich’s pronouncements and speeches about a New Order of Europe, often even on the front-page.⁸⁰ He supplemented these with economic commentary on the European Grossraum economy by Ferdinand Fried,⁸¹ as well theoretical explorations of the Grossraum-concept by Ernst Wilhelm Eschmann.⁸² In October, 1940, Wirsing published himself on the front-page in an article titled

⁸⁰ See, for example, Otto Dietrich, “Die Europäische Revolution,” *Münchner Neueste Nachrichten*, October 28, 1940, 1. “Eingehende Ansprache Führer-Duce, Appell Otto Dietrichs an das geistige Europa; Überwindung des entarteten Individualismus,” *Münchner Neueste Nachrichten*, January 21, 1941, 1-2.

⁸¹ See, for example, Ferdinand Fried, “Grosswirtschaftsraum Europa wird geschmiedet: Seine Kraftlinien streben zur Mitte/ Englands Sprengungsversuche völlig vermieden,” *Münchner Neueste Nachrichten*, October 20, 1940, 3.

⁸² See, for example, a front-page article from January, 1941 in which he begins to break down the national idea by suggesting that Europe envelop the “autarky-concept” of nationalism: “One can’t understand the Grossraum-concept until one recognizes it as the continuation of the Autarky-concept. Autarky seeks the security and existence of a Volk in a limited space; the Grossraum-concept expands this idea to the common pursuit of a shared special destiny of connected nations. The Grossraum-concept therefore prioritizes unifying principles over dividing principles.” See Ernst Willhelm Eschmann, “Neue Räume auf dem Erdball,” *Münchner Neueste Nachrichten*, January 12, 1941, 1-2.

“Foundations of the New Europe.” In this article Wirsing first published a series of themes which would become standard mantra in his war-time Europeanism: England committing “treason against Europe”; Europe becoming an “enclosed and self-contained unit”; a “new European continent emerging via the voluntary and in certain respects federal cooperation of the various constituents”; a “diverse family of European peoples”; and a “revolutionary war in which the forces of the future are fighting against the forces of the past.”⁸³ After the invasion of the USSR the dam broke entirely: “Today,” Wirsing explained on the front-page in August, 1941, “we have a Europe-rallying cry, a European program, and the beginning of a new European reality. This is the result of two victorious years of war.” He continued:

[This war] is going much farther than our original goals, which were limited in 1939 to the recognition of our own German right to living space [*Lebensraum*]. At the time, the conditions did not seem ripe for a greater European solution. What England wanted to hinder, the establishment of a continental-European unit, has been accelerated forward by many years, possibly even decades, because of this war and because of German victories.

He continued:

After the outbreak of this war the criteria began to change. Responsibility expanded. After both the Poland-campaign and France-campaign, the Führer proclaimed there was no necessity of continuing the war if the opposing side would only agree to the limited German right to craft its own living space without intervention. ... But meanwhile, via German military victory, a new set of facts have been created in Europe: without it being consciously intended, the responsibility for the entire continent was forced into the hands of the Axis. The struggle for Germany expanded into a struggle for the entire European continent, in which all people found themselves working together to secure their right to existence if they were

⁸³ Giselher Wirsing, “Fundamente des neuen Europas,” *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten*, October 27, 1940, 1-2.

not to be destroyed. This is the German-led European Revolution against the forces of the past, who intend to deny the entire continent its political independence and economic freedom.⁸⁴

As has been shown, unlike many Nazi propagandists, Giselher Wirsing's turn to the Europe-concept was not caused by war on the Eastern Front with the Soviet Union. In fact, if his intellectual thought was catalyzed by anxiety about a great-power opponent, then it was not primarily the Soviet Union, but rather the United States. Before the Second World War began, in a letter to Carl Schmitt, Wirsing explained: "To summarize - in my view the most decisive factor [in international relations] is the potentiality of American intervention. Everything else that happens is just a function of that potentiality."⁸⁵ In the spring and summer of 1938 Wirsing travelled the United States for six months on a trip financed by MNN, and based on which he wrote a sixteen-article series. Wirsing, via his friendship with German ambassador to the United States, Hans-Heinrich Diekhoff, was able to visit many high-ranking American personalities including senators, members of the state department, and even Franklin D. Roosevelt. According to postwar American intelligence reports, it was during this trip that Wirsing became convinced of the supposed out-sized control of East Coast Jewry over Roosevelt and the subsequent threat which the United States posed for

⁸⁴ For his post-Operation Barbarossa writings see Giselher Wirsing, "Der Aufbruch Europas," *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten*, June 29, 1941, 1-2. Giselher Wirsing, "Vom Sinn dieses Krieges," *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten*, August 31, 1941, 1.

⁸⁵ Giselher Wirsing to Carl Schmitt, June 1, 1939, Landesarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Duisburg, Germany, RW 265/18376.

Germany and Europe. At the various stops in his trip, Wirsing “expounded on the beneficial and rational influence of Nazi Germany on Europe.” Ironically, although back in Germany Wirsing was still suppressing his Europe-concept, it appears that he allowed himself to expand upon them while in the United States. For example, while in Chicago he was invited by Northwestern University to give a lecture titled “Pan-European Federation,” after which he was ostensibly criticized by the President of the university.⁸⁶

Based on his experiences during this trip to the United States, Wirsing wrote his most popular book published during the war, *Der Masslose Kontinent* (“The Excessive Continent”), which was published at the end of 1941, sold over 140,000 copies, and was, according to postwar American intelligence services, among the most influential anti-American tracts in war-time German literature. His main argument in *Der Masslose Kontinent*, published at the height of the war on the Eastern Front and right after the United States joined the conflict, was that the United States was actually chiefly to blame for the current war.⁸⁷ The United States, he posited, had outpaced its British competitor in recent decades and developed a new, Jewish-based, materialistic civilization: “Americanism.” Unlike any other civilization, even Sovietism, Americanism threatened Europe because it was the only “continent-transcending power” (*überkontinentale*

⁸⁶ “Draft Reports from MFIU No.3 (Third Army Interrogation Center),” July 30, 1945, United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, box 57, folder “Wirsing, Giselher.”

⁸⁷ Giselher Wirsing, *Der Masslose Kontinent* (Jena: Eugen Diederichs Verlag, 1941).

Macht), by which he meant a civilization expanding beyond its historically and geographically assigned continental sphere. In fact, Wirsing put forward an argument which he would return to in his later propaganda; namely, that the Americans were fighting two wars: one explicit war against Europe and Japan-led East Asia, and one implicit war, or “underground war,” against the British, whom the Americans intended to consume.⁸⁸ This new Americanism proudly proclaimed a doctrine of “universalism,” or “world-integration” based on its liberal ideals, but this was nothing more than a new, more powerful version of British imperialism: “Behind the veil of a resurgent ‘internationalism’ from the Wilson-Era emerges a new world-conquering American imperialism. The attempt to erect a gruesome monopoly of the world’s resources. This would lead to the enslavement of more than half of mankind.”⁸⁹ The only way to resist the “dream for world domination” at the core of Americanism, Wirsing argued, is for Europeans to recognize the need to defend, “not only what is in our own country,

⁸⁸ Giselher Wirsing, “Der unterirdische Krieg,” *Signal*, 1st February issue 1943, 2-3.

⁸⁹ Giselher Wirsing, *Der Masslose Kontinent*, 347. The theme of “imperialism” is one Wirsing returned to in his Europe-propaganda throughout the war in an attempt to harangue the Western Allies as hypocrites. The Atlantic Charta, he often argued, was impossible to square with the British Empire. In fact, the front-page lead-article in the 2nd April issue of 1943 was a special investigation into the history of India and Gandhi’s movement, which was presented as a continental liberation from British rule not unlike Europe’s liberation movement against the Western Allies and Soviets. Wirsing remained interested and supportive of anti-colonial liberation movements in the postwar period, thus illustrating a unique bridge in his ideas to the postwar period. See Giselher Wirsing, “Der Siegreiche Mahatma,” *Signal*, 2nd April issue 1943.

but rather everything that is precious and valuable in our entire continent.”⁹⁰ In his concluding chapter titled “Destiny’s War of Continents,” Wirsing elaborated on what he meant. Europeans, he explained, must oppose the philosophy of “universalism” and “world-integration” not with outdated models of “small space [*kleinäumig*] nationalism” but with a new world-ordering principle which he called *Völkergemeinschaften* (“communities of peoples”). In doing so, he introduced for the first time a theme he would advocate throughout his war-time Europe-propaganda; namely, an identitarian transition from the *Volksgemeinschaft* (“German national community”) to the *Völkergemeinschaft* (“European national community”). As Wirsing explained: “The goal, therefore, is a *Völkergemeinschaft* on our continent, much like earlier the goal in the German lands was a *Volksgemeinschaft*.”⁹¹

In early, 1942, having turned down Ribbentrop’s offer to lead the Information Department of the Foreign Office, Wirsing also put down his work as editor of MNN and joined the army as a war correspondent in a propaganda-company on the Eastern Front.⁹² As will be discussed in a later chapter of this dissertation, it was during this time on the Eastern Front that Wirsing wrote the Foreign Office a long report criticizing German war-time politics towards Eastern

⁹⁰ Giselher Wirsing, *Der Masslose Kontinent*, 4.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 450.

⁹² United States Department of State, “Biographic Data Form – Wirsing, Giselher,” November, 1951, United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, box 57, folder “Wirsing, Giselher.”

European peoples. In December, 1942 he returned from the front and began his most influential Nazi position: lead editorialist and later editor of the largest foreign-language propaganda magazine in the Nazi propaganda regime called *Signal*.⁹³

Giselher Wirsing and *Signal*, 1943-1944

Signal was a periodical administered jointly by the foreign office and the Wehrmacht. In an effort to reach millions of Germans and non-Germans throughout Nazi-occupied Europe, they published this bi-weekly color magazine in twenty-five languages, and very early in the war reached an enormous circulation of 2.4 million (a figure which was maintained into the last year of the war), thus making it the second-most published weekly or monthly periodical in the entire Nazi propaganda apparatus.⁹⁴ Perhaps because it functioned outside of

⁹³ United States Counter Intelligence Center, Interrogation Section, "Final Report on Stubaf," October 25, 1946, United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, box 57, folder "Wirsing, Giselher."

⁹⁴ The *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung* was the only periodical with a higher circulation. Joseph Goebbels saw *Signal* as a threat to his ministry and initially tried to block its publication. But the Wehrmacht and Foreign Office were able to resist Goebbels by negotiating a compromise in which *Signal* would only be sold outside of Germany. Nevertheless, German was a highly-published language due to German readership in the armed forces in occupied territories. Furthermore, as will be discussed below, Wirsing also published his arguments separately to domestic audiences. See Rainer Rutz, *Signal: Eine Deutsche Auslandsillustrierte Als Propagandainstrument Im Zweiten Weltkrieg*, (Essen: Klartext, 2007), 19, 59. For *Signal*'s circulation numbers see Rutz, *Signal*, 10, 73, 95, 97.

Goebbels's Propaganda ministry, *Signal* unfortunately receives short shrift in the literature despite being one of the largest Nazi propaganda projects in the Second World War. The Press Department of the Foreign Office had principal control over the political content in *Signal*.⁹⁵ As we will see in a subsequent chapter of this dissertation, the Foreign Office was another key institution in which, as early as 1940, Europeanism came to organize Nazi propaganda narratives. It is difficult to identify the extent to which Wirsing's work in the Foreign Office between 1939 and 1942 informed the early development of *Signal*, because he did not become explicitly involved in the periodical until 1943. Nevertheless, from nearly the very beginning of the publication in early 1940, *Signal* was cognizant of its role as a facilitator of Nazi ideas to both German and non-German audiences. In fact, in February, 1940, as the Foreign Office was planning the future periodical, the intended propaganda narrative was summarized in a Press Department memo: "Politically, '*Signal*' will pursue a general narrative organized behind the term 'For Europe'. This narrative should be recognizable in all forms of material: pictures, articles, article-series, and also cartoons." This narrative was subsequently broken down into seven tentative components, among them: the

⁹⁵ According to a Press Department memo in the Foreign Office dated February 15, 1940, the Foreign Office and the Oberkommando der Wehrmacht agreed that: "The foreign-propaganda coordination and planning of the periodical, as well as the censoring of political content, will be exercised by the Press Department of the Foreign Office; the coordination and censoring of military content will be exercised by the Oberkommando der Wehrmacht." Günther Lohse (Press Department), memo, February 15, 1940, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany, RZ 701/R123717.

“new economic unity of Europe”; “Grossraum Europe”; and Europe presented as a “utopia.”⁹⁶ By the end of 1941 *Signal* had turned heads across the Atlantic with its audacious Europe-messaging. According to the Foreign Office, the British newspaper, *The Daily Mail*, complained on November 19th, 1941:

Signal is very successful because it has color and pictures, and masks its propaganda in good stories ... its articles are written such that it is assumed that all European countries already accept and share their proposition of Europe and are partners in the ‘New Order’. The European continent is presented as a great economic unity. ‘Europe united’ is the Leitmotif of this unique paper. Rarely is there any talk of German rule.⁹⁷

Indeed, Europe quickly became the concept around which the entire publication revolved: war updates, cultural and entertainment articles, comics and advertisements, and, most importantly, lead-articles in political and philosophical commentary - everything was dressed with an overtly European messaging. Unlike most Nazi propaganda, *Signal’s* targeted audience was never the German *Volksgemeinschaft*; instead, the audience addressed throughout the periodical was the *europäische Völkergemeinschaft* (“European community of peoples”) or the *europäische Schicksalsgemeinschaft* (“European community of destiny”). These striking mutations of turn-of-the-century German nationalist terminology speak to the unique ideological discourse which underpinned the publication. *Signal* came to function as a theoretical space for articulating an explicit romantic pan-

⁹⁶ Unsigned and undated memo, based on surrounding documents most likely January or otherwise early 1940, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany, RZ 701/R123717.

⁹⁷ “Auszung aus der ‘Daily Mail’,” November 19, 1941, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany, RZ 701/R123717.

Europeanism which defined Europe as an organic, cultural-historical entity that transcended race and, eventually, even national identity. Although initially shoe-horning its European pseudo-egalitarianism into race categories by describing European peoples as equal yet different biological entities, eventually, under Wirsing's later leadership, *Signal* abandoned the concept of race, instead defining Europe through cultural inheritance and a shared past. In making this step, *Signal's* Europeanism eventually propagated a European nation to compete with German nationhood.

The first two years of *Signal*, before Wirsing took over the publication, were a mixed bag – the publication, although outwardly European in its intentions, struggled to find a coherent and consistent narrative. The first few months consisted of various braggadocious proclamations of German military, economic, and political superiority which overwhelmed an elusive appeal for a “New Europe.” But by the autumn of 1941, the magazine had developed its Raison d'Être: namely, to facilitate a “new self-conscious Europe.”⁹⁸ Hitler and Mussolini were increasingly presented as original European ideologues, who “with a rock-solid conviction of European reform” set out to end “European Civil War” by leading Europe towards a “community of fate” under German leadership.⁹⁹ Other supranational themes which would later receive more audacious articulation in *Signal* were irregularly introduced over the course of 1941, especially after the invasion of the Soviet Union. Examples include: the

⁹⁸ “Europas Verkehr ohne Grenzen,” *Signal*, 2nd October issue 1941, 41-45.

⁹⁹ Max Clauss, “Europäische Entscheidung,” *Signal*, 1st November issue 1940, 4-5.

notion of a new “continental” age in the history of European civilization;¹⁰⁰ the idea that nationalism was a “narrow” particularism which would be overcome in this new age of “European unity”,¹⁰¹ and the advocacy of a unified, autarchic European “continental economy.”¹⁰² Yet right alongside this initial experimentation with Europeanism in the publication’s early years, *Signal* writers simultaneously reinforced Germany’s claim to imperial dominance. This was accomplished through the euphemism of “German leadership” which was symbolized as the “heart of Europe,” and discussed by the writers as the only state therefore capable of protecting Europe militarily and coordinating Europe economically with its “organizational strength.”¹⁰³ To those fearful of German exploitation, the only recompense offered was that Germany, due to its geographical situation at the center of Europe, had interests “inherently tied to the interests of all European states.” Germany, an intrinsically “continental” state unlike England, was ostensibly unable to compromise the interests of other states without compromising its own.¹⁰⁴ This, they argued, was not unlike the great

¹⁰⁰ F.W. von Oertzen, “Völkerbund? – Völkergemeinschaft! Was Genf unmöglich war, und was in Zukunft möglich sein wird,” *Signal*, 1st July issue 1941, 8-11.

¹⁰¹ “Endlich Soll Europa Ersten,” *Signal*, 2nd June issue 1941, 16, 27.

¹⁰² “Europas Verkehr Ohne Grenzen,” *Signal*, 2nd October issue 1941, 41-45.

¹⁰³ “Europas Verkehr ohne Grenzen,” *Signal*, 2nd October issue 1941, 41-45.

¹⁰⁴ Rudolph Fischer, “Wer kann Europa führen?” *Signal*, 1st June issue 1941, 22-27. , “Der Frieden der nicht Leben Konnte: warum 1939 auf 1919 Folgen Musste,” *Signal*, 1st April issue 1941, 4-6, 8.

Napoleon.¹⁰⁵ Germany was portrayed as geographically positioned and historically destined to “lead” what they called “*Mitteleuropa*,” a term for “Central Europe” which built upon justifications for German imperialism in “Central Europe” and had circulated in conservative German thought since the First World War.¹⁰⁶

By mid-1942, *Signal* publishers began the process of replacing disorganized references to German “leadership” in a New Order of Europe with a much more far-reaching and theoretically thorough Europe-concept. This coincided with Wirsing’s arrival to the magazine. In early 1943 Wirsing was made main editorialist (*Schriftleiter*) of *Signal*, and this enabled him to direct the ideological messaging and further increase print space for his own ideas. Wirsing had each bi-weekly issue open with two main editorial columns (“The War as a World Struggle” and “The New Worldview – the Future of Europe”), in which he always penned the lead-articles, using them to situate the ongoing war into European and world historical context, as well as expound upon the “new”

¹⁰⁵ One interesting way *Signal* writers justified the need for “German leadership” was to make frequent reference to Napoleon as the “precursor” of the New Order, who, unfortunately ahead of his time, nevertheless correctly recognized the need for a “strong will” to enforce the “thrust towards [European] integration.” See Max Clauss, “Europäische Entscheidung,” *Signal*, 1st November issue 1940, 4-5. Rudolph Fischer, “Wer kann Europa führen?“ *Signal*, 1st June issue 1941, 22-27. “Wohin Geht Europa?“ *Signal*, 2nd June issue 1943, 23-26.

¹⁰⁶ Fritz Fischer, *Germany's Aims in the First World War* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1967). Jürgen Elvert, *Mitteleuropa!: Deutsche Pläne Zur Europäischen Neuordnung, 1918-1945* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1999).

European ideology of Nazi Germany. Between 1943-1945, Wirsing wrote at least sixty-six articles in *Signal*, and this does not take into account his editorial direction to articles penned by other authors. The ascension of Wirsing to main editorialist, and by the end of the war chief editor over the entire magazine, enabled a concerted effort to codify the hitherto uncoordinated Europe-concept of *Signal* and more audaciously distance the magazine from many orthodox National Socialist principles.

One of the first Nazi ideas to come under revision in Wirsing's *Signal* was German supremacy. *Signal's* initial bewildering method for accomplishing this was to deny that various central Nazi concepts had anything to do with supremacy. For example, in an article from late 1943 entitled "*Herrenvolk*" Wirsing attempted to roll-back the central doctrine of the "master race." In an astonishing projection of National Socialism upon England, Wirsing argued that in reality the British were the actual *Herrenvolk*. In their pretentious, exploitative posture towards Europe, it was the British, not the Germans, who had failed to understand that "a New Order is only possible if it is not founded upon the rule of a *Herrenvolk*, but instead upon free partnership between free nations." He implored the Europeans to not be deceived by British attempts to slander German intentions by twisting the German doctrine of *Herrenvolk* from its original meaning (which was left undiscussed). The *Herrenvolk* doctrine, he dismissively explained, was not the "important point" when it comes to the European New Order. Rather, "[w]hen Germany professes its belief in the idea of a greater Europe, in the long run this can never happen upon any foundation other than the

voluntary cooperation of all European peoples. There is no other foundation that would be sustainable.”¹⁰⁷

Another example of *Signal's* revisionism is the way *Lebensraum* (“living space”) was reformulated in a mid-1942 article. “The concept of *Lebensraum* is too often misconstrued,” an unnamed author explained; in fact, Germany’s enemies falsely claim that “the German-coined concept of ‘*Lebensraum*’ implies imperialistic tendencies.” Instead, the author insisted that the term *Lebensraum* did not mean expansionism, and nor did it have anything to do with the unilateral strivings of any single Volk; instead, it was actually an inherently supranational concept:

First of all, it must be established that it [*Lebensraum*] does not mean the space needed by a people to survive, space which therefore must be conquered and controlled. To the contrary, it refers to a circle of relationships, consequences, and reciprocal impacts between nations....

Lebensraum, the author continued, was never more than the pursuit of collective European autonomy and creating new historical entities, for which the author used Wirsing’s term “communities of peoples” (*Völkergemeinschaften*). *Lebensraum*, the author argued, simply referred to the space “inhabited by nations with the same needs, by nations that are dependent of one another, and determined to give their social and economic life a steadiness and security based on organizational similarity.”¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷ See Giselher Wirsing, “Herrenvolk,” *Signal*, 2nd October issue 1943, 2-8.

¹⁰⁸ From an article entitled “*Lebensraum* – Buzzword and Reality.” See “*Lebensraum* – Schlagwort und Wirklichkeit,” *Signal*, 2nd May issue 1942, 2.

Arguably the most important revelation in *Signal* concerns what it did not contain: *Rassenkunde* (“racial doctrine”). Indeed, from the very beginning of the publication, the core Nazi concept of race was comparatively absent from the periodicals. That said, race was sporadically present via vague terminology such as “blood,” imprecise deployment of racial synonyms such as race/nation, and, of course, dichotomies which opposed “barbaric” Asia against “civilized” Europe. Yet even when race was present (mostly in *Signal*’s early years of publication) it was explained through absurdly revisionist categories such as, for example, a “European race.” One article from early 1942, for example, advocated for the historical consciousness and solidarity of a “European race” or “Occidental race” (used interchangeably). This race was simply defined as “white” in opposition to “blacks” and “Asians.” As such, the article rebuked English practices of hiring black soldiers in the First World War, and thereby betraying the “solidarity of the European race.” Germany, in contrast, was supposedly unifying the European race in the current war.¹⁰⁹

Early editions of *Signal* often skirted the issue of race by handling the various Axis nations in separate articles. But by the time Wirsing was in charge *Signal* stressed the commonality of Europe’s nations as much as, if not more than, their differences, often employing a unique term which expressed European togetherness: *Europäische Völkerfamilie* (“European family of peoples”). Curiously, such messaging openly incorporated Eastern European nations otherwise understood in orthodox National Socialism as “sub-humans,” and this

¹⁰⁹ A.E. Johann, “Solidarität,” *Signal*, 1st February issue 1942, 8.

took place in *Signal* articles even in 1941 at the height of German euphoria on the Eastern Front. In November, 1941, well before future worsened war prospects would have necessitated it, *Signal* ran an article praising various Eastern European ethnicities and deploring the way Bolshevism had withheld from them the spiritually humanizing power of European civilization. Now, it was argued, they could look to their European captors for re-humanization.¹¹⁰ The idea of re-humanization was a peculiar maneuver, because it enabled Wirsing to circumvent the doctrine of Eastern “sub-humans” by suggesting that Eastern Europeans had been temporarily made sub-human by an artificial communist regime. Take, for example, Wirsing’s front-page lead-article from the last issue in 1943 titled “Dead and Living.” In this article Wirsing contrasted for his readers the materialistic and heartless practice of Bolshevist military burials with the beautiful practice by which Russian soldiers allied to Germany bury their dead. How is it, Wirsing asks, that the two practices, performed by people from the same country, are so different? The answer, he suggests, is that the Bolsheviks are not actually Russians; rather, they have numbed and suppressed the “unchangeable substance” of Russians:

It is thus clear that the Soviet burial methods correspond neither to the Russian tradition nor to the Russian character; rather, that we are dealing with a lamination of the Russian [character] ... which now needs to be awakened in order to break through powerfully to its original form.

¹¹⁰ Willy Beer, “So Sicht der Sowjetsoldat Die Welt: ‘Signal‘ besucht ein Gefangenenlager für Sowjetsoldaten,” *Signal*, 2nd November issue 1941, 8, 16. “Nach 2 Jahren Sowjetherrschaft wieder der erste Gottesdienst,” *Signal*, December Heft 1941, 16. “Für die Rechte ihrer Völker,” *Signal*, December issue 1943, 12-13.

He continued: “Not until these recent years of war in the Eastern territories have the German soldiers been able to understand that the unchangeable substance [of Eastern peoples] has preserved itself much more intact than we could have known.” “It is a matter of survival for Europe,” he asserted, that the Eastern peoples are assisted in the quest to re-find this “unchangeable substance.”¹¹¹

By the end of the war, Eastern Europeans were portrayed as equal, even exemplary, members of European civilization. Take, for example, an article by Wirsing titled “We, the Europeans” which was purportedly written based on his experiences in the propaganda company on the Eastern Front. In this article Wirsing narrated an inspirational story about a young man named Vladimir, a Russian student turned soldier, who at the beginning of the war decided to defect from his Red Army unit and travel many miles to the German lines. It was a long, arduous journey, Wirsing explained, and only one thought kept him going: “[t]his way leads me to Europe.” In this way, Vladimir was like many other Eastern Europeans: “he expressed precisely what tens of thousands, indeed hundreds of thousands, of Ukrainians, Russians, and Byelorussians hazily felt.” Wirsing did not censor his admiration for Vladimir: “Only rarely have I so vividly felt that special thing that defines Europe as I felt in conversation with this lanky, pale, lively young Russian, who possessed deep in his heart such a firm image of what it is that makes Europe.” For Wirsing, the experience with this young Russian was evidence that Europe could not be defined geographically, but rather spiritually:

¹¹¹ See *Giselher Wirsing*, “Tote und Lebende,” *Signal*, 2nd December issue 1943, 2.

For all the geographers of the entire world Europe will never be definable. It is more than a continent, Europe is a spiritual concept. Who a European is - who belongs in our unique and peculiar cultural community - can only be identified by whether or not he professes himself to her, whether or not he exists for her, whether or not he has planted his roots in her [*in ihr seine Wurzeln geschlagen hat*].

The last sentence in that quotation is essential. Here, Wirsing took head-on an established Nazi metaphor (racial roots) and rewrote it to counter its original meaning. One's roots were not inherited; instead, they were consciously "planted" by the individual according to their free agency. Even for Russians, Wirsing explained, Europe was a choice: "Vladimir was a European. He wanted to think and feel as we do. He wanted to profess himself to us. Naturally, he did not want to become a German; rather, he wanted to remain that what he is by blood. But he wanted to do that as a European."¹¹² The above articles were not exceptions to the rule. Indeed, *Signal* periodicals were strewn with a constant flow of articles praising the various Eastern nations of Europe for their participation as Europeans in the war against Bolshevism. In fact, the last magazine for the year of 1943 was a special edition devoted entirely to praising the Eastern European contribution to the war effort and intended to bolster Waffen-SS and Wehrmacht recruitment drives throughout Europe.¹¹³

There was, however, one ethnic group for whom Europe could not be a choice: the Jews. Despite Nazi Europeanists' persistent revisionism, the one Nazi concept which they never rejected was the Jewish conspiracy. Indeed, Jews were

¹¹² Giselher Wirsing, "Wir, Die Europäer," *Signal*, 2nd March issue 1943, 11, 23, 38.

¹¹³ *Signal*, 2nd December issue 1943.

never incorporated into the European “family” by *Signal*. Furthermore, *Signal*’s peculiar form of cultural racism actually serviced a unique representation of Jews in *Signal*: namely, the Jews as the primordial enemy of a unified Europe. It is in this vein that Giselher Wirsing, who had already made a name for himself as an antisemitic writer in the 1930s, refashioned the Jews into the “elite troops of the Anti-Europeans.” Rather than the historical enemy of the German race, the pernicious Jews were expanded by Wirsing into an adversary of both “nations and continents,” a devious enemy which had impeded Europe’s self-fulfillment at all the important historical crossroads which otherwise could have led to European unity.¹¹⁴

Wirsing brought with him to *Signal* the concept at the core of his Europeanism, the Grossraum-concept; in fact, while at *Signal* he even expanded it. In particular, he added the notion of historical inevitability. The Grossraum became more than a geographic space uniquely suited for economic and political

¹¹⁴ Giselher Wirsing, “Im Geheimen Einverständnis: die Kerntruppe der Anti-Europäer,” *Signal*, 1st July issue 1943, 2. The antisemitism in Wirsing’s Europe-propaganda was disproportionately aimed at the United States. He even used the front-page lead-article of the 2nd June issue in 1943 to elaborate on the conspiracy of a “nourishment crisis,” by which he meant an intentional Jewish-organized starvation of the American public via a black market meat corporation called “Meatleggers.” See Giselher Wirsing, “Meatleggers reservieren zwei Hammel für Madam Smith,” *Signal*, 2nd June issue 1943, 2. Another article suggested that American commentator Walter Lippman was a Jewish agent organizing an alleged American shadow war, or “underground war,” against the British. See Giselher Wirsing, “Hammer oder Amboss sein,” *Signal*, 1st April issue 1943, 8, 11.

cooperation; rather, the Grossraum became a cultural community endowed with a collective past and therefore future as well. Just as if the Grossraum had replaced class in Marxism, history became a struggle of Grossraum[s]. Under Wirsing's leadership, *Signal* integrated the Nazi slogan of a "New European Order" into historical narratives which presented the Second World War as the culmination of a world historical development: namely, the integration of nations and states into Grossraum[s]. The New Order of Europe was interpreted as the birth of the European Grossraum. A Grossraum, then, was an updated version of the racial community in orthodox National Socialism, a revolutionary political, economic, and cultural collective historically armed with the capacity to defend themselves from inorganic, foreign influence. For *Signal's* writers, history had, in a reverse Spenglerian sense, reached a wonderful new civilizational epoch which "calculated politically and economically with Grossraum[s]" and would leave behind the era of the nation-state.¹¹⁵ As Wirsing explained in a mid-1943 article: "The unfolding of our century reveals that the most important phenomenon of our age is the development of great continental units which have displaced all other problems that have consisted between individual peoples and states."¹¹⁶ Consequently the Second World War was never presented as a conflict of nations or races; rather, *Signal* declared, "the struggle of continents has begun."¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵ F.W. von Oertzen, "Völkerbund? – Völkergemeinschaft! Was Genf unmöglich war, und was in Zukunft möglich sein wird," *Signal*, 1st July issue 1941, 8-11.

¹¹⁶ "Was ist Europa wirklich?" *Signal*, 1st June issue 1943, 35-37.

¹¹⁷ This line was likely drawn from Wirsing's book *Der Masslose Kontinent*.

Similarly, the National Socialist revolution was sometimes reformulated as a *Raumrevolution* (“continental revolution”).¹¹⁸

Signal writers were so committed to this new spatial paradigm that they discussed it not only as a European phenomenon, but as the “natural” telos for all continents across the globe. In this way, they could imbue their message with an ethos of global inevitability. One method *Signal* employed in this respect was to repeatedly map the Tripartite pact with Japan onto this continental outlook: “The three powers do not view it their responsibility to replace the English imperial system with a new one of similar form, but rather to organize spheres of influence which are determined geographically, politically, and economically according to nature.”¹¹⁹ A common refrain, surely taken from Foreign Office propaganda, was “Leave Europe to the Europeans” and “Leave Asia to the Asians.” As one article explained: “We are fighting together with Japan so that every continent of the earth can determine its path according to his own will: the European according to his, the East-Asian according to his, also the American, the Indian and that of the Middle-East.”¹²⁰

Economically, the Grossraum doctrine was situated into the interwar debates as the perfect compromise between international free-trade and national

¹¹⁸ Ibid. Giselher Wirsing, “Dai Toa Kyoeken: 500 Millionen unter Japans Führung,” *Signal*, 2nd June issue 1943, 18, 23.

¹¹⁹ “Von Genf Nach Berlin: Wie der Pakt zwischen Deutschland, Italien und Japan entstand,” *Signal*, 2nd April issue 1942, 8.

¹²⁰ A.E. Johann, “Solidarität,” *Signal*, 1st February issue 1942, 8.

autarky. *Grossraumwirtschaft*, or “Grossraum economics,” as they called it, taught that all Grossraum[s] were geographically capable of providing for themselves and therefore did not require dependence on the inconsistency of international free trade where a “crisis in some corner of the world” could cause chaos at home.¹²¹ At the same time, they were large enough to overcome the short-sighted isolationism of national autarky. Thus, national protectionism in the form of tariffs or otherwise was equally a threat to European living standards and therefore heavily criticized.¹²² The actual proposed policies presented in conjunction with this Grossraum-economics ultimately represented a wide-ranging list of demands for economic integration, including: de-regulation of interstate transportation within Europe; de-regulation of the interstate passport entity thereby creating a “constant traveling populace across our continent”; “...determining, via accepted trade contracts, the specific quantity of goods while guaranteeing pre-determined established prices”; and “an economically united, no longer divided by tariffs, independent market...”¹²³ This economic package was

¹²¹ “Bisher-Heute-Morgen: Drei Kapitel über aktuelle Wirtschaftsfragen des Kontinents,” *Signal*, December issue 1942, 61-65.

¹²² “Soederstroem kauft eine Uhr,” *Signal*, 1st July issue 1943, 23.

¹²³ “Europas Verkehr Ohne Grenzen,” *Signal*, 2nd October issue 1941, 41-45. Giselher Wirsing, “Wird Europa Arm Sein?” *Signal*, 1st August issue 1943, 8. “Bisher-Heute-Morgen: Drei Kapitel über aktuelle Wirtschaftsfragen des Kontinents,” *Signal*, December issue 1942, 61-65. “Soederstroem kauft eine Uhr,” *Signal*, 1st July issue 1943, 23. Heinrich Hunke, “Zehn Thesen zur Weltdiskussion: Prof. Hunke über die brennendsten Wirtschaftsprobleme des Krieges und der Zukunft,” *Signal*, 2nd November issue 1943, 3-6.

presented as a genuinely socialist project. To be sure, the National Socialists had always presented the Nazi Party as the genuinely socialist party, but *Signal* writers felt that with *Grossraumwirtschaft* they had discovered the anticipated solution to the social crisis of the early twentieth century: “Between Bolshevism and Capitalism stands Europe, which sees in socialism the necessary care of the state for the welfare of its people.”¹²⁴ Under Wirsing’s leadership, *Signal* associated this future European socialism with various historical predecessor movements with which the Nazis never would have associated: for example the Social Democrats of Bismarck’s era as well as the turn-of-the-century *Kathedersozialisten*.¹²⁵ “A laborer,” one article explained, “cannot consider himself honored until he has obtained guaranteed employment, security for his retirement, assistance for sickness, unemployment and maternity, and assurance that wife and child will be taken care of in the case of death.”¹²⁶ *Grossraum* economics, then, replaced the salvific national community of Nazi propaganda with a new redeemer from liberal capitalism: the self-sustaining, integrated European *Grossraum* economy.

Perhaps *Signal*’s most blatant revision of National Socialism was its alteration of Social Darwinism. Take, for example, an article written by an author named Hans Baehr, which attempted to fuse the European “continental ideology” with social Darwinism, but in doing so he turned Social Darwinism on

¹²⁴ “Ein Program für Europa,” *Signal*, 13th issue 1944, 38.

¹²⁵ Walther Kiaulehn, “Das Bist Du, Europa,” *Signal*, 13th issue 1944, 23-26, 30, 34.

¹²⁶ “Für das Recht des Menschen auf Kultur,” *Signal*, 2nd issue 1944, 33-34.

its head. Essentially replacing race with European culture, Baehr argued that the earth's Darwinian struggle for existence was a cultural phenomenon, even describing Europe as an organic *Kulturgemeinschaft* ("community of culture") which was inevitably transformed over time into a *Lebenskampfgemeinschaft* in order to survive extinction (*Lebenskampfgemeinschaft* translates roughly to "community struggling for existence"). History was therefore not presented as a struggle of competing races, but of competing cultural communities. In spite of the frequent occurrence of conflict between European nations in past and present - in reality, Baehr argued, European nations were actually unconsciously "unified in essence." "[O]ur peoples," Baehr explained, were part of a "united historical process and, in spite of their differences, all cooperative stones in the European match." Thus, in total contradiction to Nazi ideology, the European races were subliminally "cooperative" and "united" in a historical metanarrative of European cultural struggle against the East and West. According to Baehr, it was not the racial *Volksgemeinschaft* but the European *Lebenskampfgemeinschaft* that would organically evolve towards "her rights and responsibilities." The ultimate victory of this new community could not be stopped. It was, he explained, "nature's natural selection."¹²⁷

It would be a mistake to conclude that this continental concept was a repudiation of National Socialism. The calculus in *Signal* was to replace the Volk with the continental community ("the European *Völkergemeinschaft*"), a new and

¹²⁷ Hans Baehr, "Europa als Lebenskampfgemeinschaft," *Signal*, 1st August issue 1942, 12, 18.

more inclusive foundational myth from which to derive all political theory. This was an attempt to make National Socialism accessible, palatable, and more modern by mutating key characters and concepts. *Signal* writers, like Nazi ideologues, consistently portrayed the Second World War as Europe's continental struggle against the inorganic *Weltanschauungen* ("world ideologies") of the Eastern Bolshevism and the Western liberalism. Against the mechanistic collectivism of the former, and against the spiritually defunct individualism of the latter, *Signal* writers promoted a discussion of nature's "laws," Europe's "naturally-derived organic origins," and the idea of cultural-historical "organisms."¹²⁸ Such rhetoric appears to mirror the neo-Herderian ideas of National Socialism, but the absurdity of such a *völkisch* ideology in *Signal*, of course, was that Europe was not by any stretch a Volk. Hence, nature's laws could not be formulated as racial; they were, instead, rather awkwardly and vaguely reformulated as cultural. This incongruity was exposed, for example, in an article by Wirsing from early 1944. In it, Wirsing denounced both Western liberalism and Eastern Bolshevism because neither ideology was "*völkisch*." The solution he went on to advocate, though, was not the German Volk; instead, "[t]he European solution must be the solution," he explained, "the middle between both extremes."¹²⁹ In this way, Wirsing subtly disassociated the concept of *völkisch* from the concept of race and attached it to the concept of culture.

¹²⁸ Max Clauss, "Verrat an Europa: Der hoffnungslose Pakt Churchill-Molotow," *Signal*, 2nd August issue 1942, 8. Giselher Wirsing, "Wofür wir Kämpfen," *Signal*, 2nd issue 1944, 8.

¹²⁹ Giselher Wirsing, "Wofür wir Kämpfen," *Signal*, 2nd issue 1944, 8.

Signal at the End of the War

By 1944, *Signal* writers were consistently arguing that the European continental epoch was the inevitable culmination of history. On a theoretical plane this is comparable to Nazi historicism, which placed the Nazis at the end of a historical struggle of races. However, unlike the Nazis, the historical actor (the organic community driving European historical development) was not the German Volk; instead, it was the European continent and its civilizational spirit (for which the term “*Europäertum*” was used). *Signal* frequently published articles on European history, beginning usually with Greco-Roman classical antiquity. Tracing the path of Europe rather than nations, the articles explored Europe’s dialectical rise to the present, a time when political and economic unification had finally become ripe and necessary.¹³⁰ In complete contrast to Nazi historicism, *Signal* often bemoaned the age of nationalism and the rise of nation-states, describing such historical processes as unfortunate steps backward in the evolution of European unity. Too often, *Signal* argued, Europeans blindly followed “the archaic nationalism of yesterday” (*altüberkommener Nationalismus*) into disastrous “European Civil Wars.” Unlike Nazi reverence for the emergence of exclusive nations in Early Modern European history, *Signal* mourned these new nationalisms for the way in which they fostered “false strivings for power, a culture of ‘elect peoples’, geopolitical aggression, and wars

¹³⁰ “Wohin Geht Europa?” *Signal*, 2nd June issue 1943, 23-26.

of robbery.”¹³¹ Wirsing and his writers frequently drew upon a long-term perspective of European history, in which the Greeks overcame their inter-state European civil wars by defeating the Persians and in doing so created a “unifying community of culture” based on a “unified European consciousness” that was passed down to the Europe of the Middle Ages. Unfortunately, however, this metaphysical cultural unity was destroyed from within during the Early Modern era which inaugurated a period of European Civil Wars. This kept Europeans from acknowledging their intrinsic unity and blinded them to the incursions of “foreign continents” such as, eventually, the United States under Woodrow Wilson. In this way, Wirsing conceptualized the Second World War as the long-awaited, restorative “war of European unification” against the incursions and remaining influence of “non-European powers.”¹³² The war then, despite all of its horrors, contained a dramatic silver lining - it was, as Wirsing explained, “birthing the self-consciousness of the European continent.”¹³³

¹³¹“Europäische Kirchturmspolitik,” *Signal*, 17th issue 1944, 10-13. Walther Kiaulehn, “Das Bist Du, Europa,” *Signal*, 13th issue 1944, 23-26, 30, 34. To be sure, many early war articles on European history attempted to have it both ways, arguing that nationalism, although unfortunate for European unity, was a necessary stepping stone in Europe’s historical path: “The idea of [European] unity had to give way to the narrowest of interests. It may well be that this detour was necessary.” See “Endlich Soll Europa Erstehen,” *Signal*, 2nd June issue 1941, 16, 27. By the end of the war, under Wirsing, *Signal* rarely made such concessions to nationalism.

¹³² Giselher Wirsing, “Wir, Die Europäer,” *Signal*, 2nd March issue 1943, 11, 23, 38.

¹³³ Giselher Wirsing, “Die Geburtstunde des Europäischen Soldatens,” *Signal*, 2nd June issue 1943, 8-13.

In the final years of the war *Signal* responded to impending Nazi defeat with an increasingly radical Europeanism, culminating ultimately in a reevaluation of German national identity. Indeed, Wirsing and his writers became increasingly obsessed with the notion of “identity” (for which they used the German term *Bewusstsein*), arguing that the European revolution necessarily altered identity. In short, the seriousness with which *Signal* writers handled their new European *Weltanschauung* eventually necessitated the creation of a new European identity. For if Europe was truly the essential paradigm for viewing the world, past and future, then Europeans would therefore need to think and feel European. Anything short of this would delegitimize the integrity of their elaborate European conceptualization. *Signal*, in its earliest periodicals, made little or no attempt to develop a supranational European identity. Instead, the various nationalisms of the continent (including German nationalism) were praised with sympathetic articles. However, as the European ideology was increasingly cemented into the narrative, the inconsistency between nationalism and Europeanism became too pressing. *Signal's* response was to position nationalism and Europeanism in a kind of symbiotic relationship, purporting that the two were mutually reinforcing. Originally, this European identity was presented as a compliment to national identity. As one article explained, “[t]he German spirit has never refused to assimilate the realization of other European spirits; indeed, from the depths of the Hellenistic spirit, he [the German spirit]

views himself European.”¹³⁴ By 1943 *Signal* had coined the term for this European identity: *Europäische Idee* (“European idea“) or *Europa-Gedanke* (“the Europe-concept“). In the first stages of this identity discussion, *Signal* writers routinely stressed the compatibility of this Europe-concept with national identity even when the logic was completely nonsensical.

In 1944 a new tone established itself. By this point, the “German leadership” narrative had long since given way to a burgeoning discussion of transnational equality and the sovereignty of European member states in a politically integrated “continental unit” (*kontinentale Einheit*). In late 1943 *Signal* was running an article series titled “Europe on the Way Towards a New Weltanschauung” – a not too subtle reformulation of yet another Nazi concept, *Weltanschauung*, or “world ideology.” By 1944 the war was consistently portrayed as the necessarily violent endpoint of a historical teleology towards “European unification,” a process which would replace the nation-state provincialism of old.¹³⁵ Wirsing frequently described the future Europe in terms of a “federation of all peoples on the continent” (*Bund aller Völker des Kontinents*). Europe, he explained, would be a

federation that grants every people, large and small, the same right to existence and the same potential for development. A federation that is founded upon the recognition, which we Europeans have made, that this

¹³⁴ “Das Geheimnis: Die Seele des Menschen, nicht die Maschine siegt in der Schlacht,“ *Signal*, 1st May issue 1942, 7-12.

¹³⁵ Giselher Wirsing, “Kann Man die Uhr Zurückstellen?“ *Signal*, 16th issue 1944, 8-11, 23. Giselher Wirsing, “Vom Weg der europäischen Jugend,“ *Signal*, 1st May issue 1943, 8. Giselher Wirsing, “Wird Europa arm sein?“ *Signal*, 1st August issue 1943, 8.

war is not about a mere coalition-war, such as earlier alliances, but rather the recognition that we are a family.¹³⁶

As a consequence of these developments, nationalism was increasingly diluted and a common European national identity was proposed. The most unashamed advocacy of a new European identity eventually came in articles penned in the very last months of the war. At this late date there was no longer any need for Europeanism – the war was clearly lost and the Reich no longer extended over any non-German territories. Indeed, the last editions of *Signal* subtly hint that Wirsing and his writers were losing hope in the war. In fact, as will be discussed in chapter six of this dissertation, American CIA records reveal that in late 1944 and early 1945 Wirsing worked on a covert project to author a series of defeatist SS-reports in an ultimately failed attempt to convince Himmler to oust Hitler in a coup and approach the Western Allies with diplomatic reconciliation. Yet, as late as April, 1945, Wirsing was still opining on behalf of Nazi propaganda in *Signal* and energetically espousing a fanatical European resistance. One article, after describing nationalism as “excessive” and “chauvinist,” proceeded to argue that a new-age European identity necessitated a disavowal of nationalism. It is worth quoting at length:

[European nations] will not be justified degenerating into the mistake of a stubborn and archaic Chauvinism. From this point of view, today’s national hero will be tomorrow’s European traitor. It will therefore be necessary to design all educative programs of the European states upon the foundation of a new collective identity [*Gemeinschaftsgefühl*]. The accustomed historical consciousness of many nations will therefore have to be displaced. The youth of tomorrow should consider itself, above all

¹³⁶ Giselher Wirsing, “Die Geburtstunde des Europäischen Soldatens,” *Signal*, 2nd June issue 1943, 8-13.

else, a European youth. Everything that is undertaken towards this goal should be placed in the service of this new consciousness, including school, literature, music, travel, radio, and film. Tomorrow's Europeans must consider themselves Europeans when visiting other continents unless they want to be ridiculed, and eventually subjugated, by other conscientiously unified continents as a result of their being Swiss, Germans or Frenchmen.¹³⁷

Few quotations could better reveal *Signal's* internal paradox. A propaganda periodical in the service of the Nazi regime had come to repudiate, by name, German national identity.

Signal challenges the frequent claim the Nazi Europeanism was merely opportunistic and/or mostly limited to eccentric academics. First, circulation numbers illustrate that millions of readers were exposed to this periodical, and the fact that *Signal* was a commodity (sold for consumption on the private market rather than enforced as propaganda training) further reinforces its claim to influence. Second, the length to which these authors went to codify their Europeanism with historical teleology and map this revisionist vision onto Nazi ideas suggests that they took their Europeanism seriously. Unlike some disingenuous Nazi propaganda elsewhere, the idea of Europe in *Signal* was not merely an empty and sporadic supplement; rather, Wirsing made his Europe-concept the central theme around which the entire publication revolved. To be sure, the increasingly desperate situation on the Eastern Front certainly provided an impetus for a more focused and fanatic anti-Bolshevism, and the circulation of *Signal* reached its zenith after Stalingrad. However, as we have seen, Wirsing's

¹³⁷ "Was wird aus der Jugend?" *Signal*, 5th issue 1945, 4. "Was sind deine Aufgaben nach dem Kriege?" *Signal*, 5th issue 1945, 26-30.

network was trafficking in Europe-propaganda well before the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941 as well as before the war irreversibly turned against the Nazis in 1943. Furthermore, *Signal* continued its Europe-propaganda until the very end of the war, even when Germany no longer occupied non-German countries. *Signal* was never merely a response to Germany's evolving war prospects; rather, the evidence suggests that *Signal* was a real attempt to come to terms with the globally expanding scope of the conflict and, importantly, the genocidal nature of totalitarian conflict. *Signal* writers never acknowledged the mass murders taking place in Nazi-occupied Europe. But by situating the Second World War at the end of an inevitable "continental" narrative of Europe's historical journey, the unprecedented crimes and violence of National Socialism could be rationalized as the mere historical collateral damage in Europe's inevitable and salvific birth into a new, modern era. A passage by Wirsing from late 1944 illustrates this point:

In the last few years of this war *Signal* has unceasingly championed the thesis that this war ... is nothing more and nothing less than the preparation for a genuine unification of the European nations, a unification which alone can guarantee the survival of Europe as a meaningful world factor. That such a process could only take place with the greatest of difficulties, blood, and tears is something we never denied. But we have said that these sacrifices are small in proportion to the destiny into which the continent is progressing.¹³⁸

Conclusion: Das Zeitalter des Ikaros

After the war, American intelligence services were surprisingly unaware of, or at least uninterested in, Wirsing's role in one of Nazi Germany's most

¹³⁸ Giselher Wirsing, "Am Abgrund des Hasses," *Signal*, 19th issue 1944, 10-11.

influential propaganda organs.¹³⁹ Much of this had to do with a prioritized focus on Wirsing's insubordinate SS-reports prepared secretly in the RSHA in the last months of the war. But another reason is that they failed to take his Europeanism seriously, dismissing his Europe-propaganda as "deceptive verbiage."¹⁴⁰ Despite uncovering a good deal of evidence vis-à-vis Wirsing's complicity in National Socialism, American intelligence services initially believed a story Wirsing himself was fond of telling: namely, that looking beyond his prewar and early war association with Nazi politics, Wirsing ultimately came to oppose the Nazi regime and attempted to revise it from the inside. "Wirsing," one of his original interrogators argued, "is undoubtedly a courageous man if compared to the common run of Germany's scribes."¹⁴¹ A subsequent interrogator took at face value Wirsing's claim "to have disapproved of the Nazi concept of a 'New Order'

¹³⁹ Most interrogations, collected reports, and prepared biographies either omitted his work at *Signal* or merely glossed over it. A few documents noted his work for *Signal* in passing but failed to understand the significance of either his role or the periodical as such. This was because Wirsing, for good reason, was less than forthcoming about his work for *Signal*, which continued to the very end of the war and compromised his self-presentation as a kind of quasi-resistance operative.

¹⁴⁰ United States Counter Intelligence Center, Interrogation Section, "Final Report on Stubaf," October 25, 1946, United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, box 57, folder "Wirsing, Giselher."

¹⁴¹ "Draft Reports from MFIU No.3 (Third Army Interrogation Center)," July 30, 1945, United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, box 57, folder "Wirsing, Giselher."

in Europe.” As a result of Wirsing’s successful obfuscations with initial interrogators, he was seen as a potential ally in postwar reconstruction, evaded postwar justice measures (denazification) with a mere “fellow-traveler” status and small fine, and was even briefly employed by American intelligence services as a research assistant. The contradictory path of Wirsing as an ardent propagandist yet covert defeatist with a record of oddly revisionist ideas and even opposition to Nazi race policies resulted in a truly amorphous subject for American intelligence operatives. His earliest interrogators, then, were misled into a false representation of his war-time behaviors. But the Americans kept an on-going record and investigation into Wirsing for decades after the war. Already by the end of 1946, one American intelligence operative was beginning to re-assess and criticize the earlier leniency towards him:

Prisoner’s role and importance in Nazi Germany are hard to assess. There is no convenient category into which he falls easily: his SS rank was of no significance, and even during his most influential period he was a mere Lt. in the German Army. Yet Prisoner’s political influence has been of significance.... Prisoner’s claim that he was not a Nazi is not well founded. He was not, it is true, a believer in the Nordic blood myth. He can point to his frequent clashes with the Propaganda ministry, with Bormann, Dietrich, Goebbels, and Ribbentrop, to his cautious public and private criticism during the final stages of the Third Reich (“The war is lost – let us save Germany”), and finally to his timid intrigues to have the, so he believed, more malleable Himmler replace Hitler. But in 1940, when German domination over Europe was almost complete, Prisoner could still talk of moral value, reasoning post factum as he had done before, that external force was an unimportant trapping of a transitional stage which would weld Europe into the political and cultural unity of a pan-German Commonwealth, thus proving once more to the intellectual and doubting minority that Nazi methods were historically inevitable and, therefore, excusable and in the long run unimportant. The record of the Nazi regime is a grim historical fact, for which Prisoner must accept some responsibility. His share in the war guilt was that he shored up a vicious

and cowardly dictatorship by giving it moral values and a historical perspective which he knew to be false.¹⁴²

This agent's ill-fated attempt to hold Wirsing accountable displayed an admittedly shallow understanding of Wirsing's Europeanism, but he very correctly identified Wirsing's complicity justifying and supporting the Nazi empire. What he and all other interrogators missed, however, was the fact that Wirsing energetically continued to propagate his Nazi Europe-concept until the end of the war despite his simultaneous defeatism.

Indeed, although Wirsing told American interrogators that he recognized the war's futility in August, 1944 and consequently began his insubordinate SS-reports, in reality his passionate calls for supporting the Nazi war effort continued until the very end of the war, and not just in *Signal*.¹⁴³ In addition to his work for *Signal*, Wirsing continued throughout the entire war to publish his Europeanism to explicitly German audiences as well. His pre-war intellectual magazine, *Das XX Jahrhundert*, continued to be published during the war, and he used it as a platform for exposing Germans to his arguments in *Signal*. In the early 1940s Wirsing hired his former Tat-Kreis colleague, Ernst Wilhelm Eschmann, to co-

¹⁴² United States Counter Intelligence Center, Interrogation Section, "Final Report on Stubaf," October 25, 1946, United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, box 57, folder "Wirsing, Giselher."

¹⁴³ For Wirsing's August, 1944 claim, see "Draft Reports from MFIU No.3 (Third Army Interrogation Center)," July 30, 1945, United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, box 57, folder "Wirsing, Giselher."

edit the periodical and incorporate his audacious calls for a revision of German nationalism.¹⁴⁴ The periodical frequently published other former members of the Tat-Kreis, Waffen-SS propagandists, and Foreign Office propagandists, including: Ferdinand Fried, Wolfgang Höpker, and Karl Heinz Pfeffer. Additionally, Wirsing published his final war-time book in 1944 titled *Das Zeitalter des Ikaros: Von Gesetz und Grenzen unseres Jahrhunderts* (The Age of Ikaros: A Study of the Laws and Limits of our Century).¹⁴⁵

The purpose in *Ikaros* was to doctrinally codify his “European idea” into a political philosophy on par with Marxism and liberalism and thereby justify uncompromising commitment to the beleaguered Nazi regime. Wirsing explained in a correspondence to Carl Schmitt while writing the book that he hoped to anchor the European idea as a “spiritual concept as opposed to its geopolitical or otherwise vague myths.”¹⁴⁶ Wirsing began his book arguing that the world was experiencing a “crisis of cultures” in which modern technology, politics, and

¹⁴⁴ In March, 1943, *Das XX Jahrhundert* began publishing only once every two months. According to his correspondences with Carl Schmitt, Wirsing likely had Schmitt publish in *Das XX Jahrhundert* (with pseudonym) and the magazine was apparently sold in large quantities to the German military. Wirsing mentions, for example, that the German navy received 10,000 copies per issue. See Giselher Wirsing to Carl Schmitt, October 26, 1943, Landesarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Duisburg, Germany, RW 265/18327.

¹⁴⁵ Giselher Wirsing, *Das Zeitalter des Ikaros: Von Gesetz und Grenzen unseres Jahrhunderts* (Jena: Eugen Diederichs Verlag, 1944).

¹⁴⁶ Giselher Wirsing to Carl Schmitt, October 26, 1943, Landesarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Duisburg, Germany, RW 265/18327.

economics were breaking down centuries of religious and social association; in short, the traditional way of life was “collapsing,” and this had been foreseen by various anti-modern philosophers. The world, as evidenced by the current war, was reaching the critical stage of this “collapse.” But those, such as Spengler, who correctly diagnosed European decline failed to escape their “fearful” predilections for “Occidental cultural pessimism.”¹⁴⁷ Their mistake, and that of other “pathetic” reactionary conservatives, was a failure to realize that the proper prescription was a partial re-birth rather than an unrealistic roll-back of history. As such, the laws of nature would find a new, modern expression.¹⁴⁸ Specifically, this new expression was the *Grossraum*, and it was finally bursting onto the scene of world history as a consequence of the current war.¹⁴⁹ Wirsing parceled the world into four emerging *Grossraum*[s]: “the European, East Asian, Soviet, and Anglo-American.” The rest of the world, he argued, was either not yet transitioning into a *Grossraum* or their fate (such as China and India) was undecided between various *Grossraum*[s].

The notion that the current war was about “nationalism,” Wirsing argued, was merely a “shadow” or “superficial appearance” left over from the early stages

¹⁴⁷ See Wirsing, *Zeitalter des Ikaros*, 69-70.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, chapter 1.

¹⁴⁹ Wirsing took his readers through a history lesson of Europe in order to illustrate that the past can be read into the current European “attempt at unification.” There had been three previous “attempts at unification” in the nineteenth century, all of which failed for their insufficient commitment to overcoming the French Revolution: Napoleon, the Holy Alliance between Russia, Austria, and Prussia, and the Pan-European movement. *Ibid.*, 57-61.

of the conflict.¹⁵⁰ Quite similarly to Karl Marx, Wirsing argued that nationalism and liberalism were a specific stage of history inaugurated by the French Revolution. They were not necessarily bad; in fact, economically speaking “[t]he idea of our age,” he argued, “could not emerge until man had become Lord of his own creations, the machines.” But the ideal of equality ultimately enslaved human beings to capitalism, while the ideals of nationalism and popular sovereignty degenerated into chauvinism and European Civil Wars. The “Grossraum era,” however, would reclaim the valuable aspects of both liberal capitalism and nationalism. As for liberal capitalism, the economically stable Grossraum-units would preserve local “natural hierarchies” and institutions while also facilitating modern levels of economic production. Second, unlike democracies which fail to see that politics is based on the Schmittian friend-enemy distinction, Grossraum[s] would be politically organized such that “natural” forms of European governance would be allowed to emerge, in other words: dictatorship. As such, Grossraum[s] offer the last line of defense against the twin universalistic imperialisms of the United States and the Soviet Union, both of which desire to export unnatural, “foreign” forms of governance to Europe. As for retaining the valuable aspects of nationalism, he explained:

Nationalism is receiving a new purpose. As a *Völkergemeinschaft* [community of peoples], it is definitively moving beyond chauvinism and the pent-up prejudices of our ‘traditional enmities’. Nationalism is losing its exclusive character, which through the increasingly small size of Europe had become an unbearable anachronism. However, it is retaining its original capacity to integrate historically developed groups of people.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 26-27.

Nationalism, then, was transforming into a something larger, the *Völkergemeinschaft*, which, he explained, was a “higher unit that transcends the national unit, and which is historically pre-determined as we see in Europe and East Asia, and needs only to be completed.”¹⁵¹ But, he warned, Europeans should take heed: Europe, although an organic “higher unit,” would lose yet another chance to complete its historically destined unification if Europeans did not have the strength and courage to fight back against the “universalistic civilizations” of “Americanism” and “Sovietism” in the present war. In other words, the age of the *Grossraum* could only redeem Europe alongside some form of Nazi victory in the Second World War.

Michael Geyer has argued that the fanatical resistance of the German population in the late stages of the Second World War were undergirded by a concept he calls *Endkampf*, or “final struggle.” In contrast to Nazi propaganda promising a miraculous *Endsieg*, or “final victory,” many Germans, he argued, were actually not delusional about the war’s prospects. However, because they perceived the First World War to have been a national surrender, German nationalists, he argues, came to believe that some kind of final victory could still be achieved in defeat. By zealously devoting themselves to the struggle, even in the thrall of defeat, they believed they could plant the seeds for a rebirth of the

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 29.

national revolution after the war.¹⁵² Nazi Europeanists such as Wirsing developed a discourse of *Endkampf* for their Europe-concept. Although increasingly disillusioned with Nazi leadership and resigned to the hopelessness of the war, they maintained a fervent belief in the postwar viability of the Europe-concept. Yet, despite eventually detaching the Europe-concept from Nazi ideology, Nazi-Europeanists such as Wirsing continued to place their talents in the service of the war-effort until the very end. Wirsing's late-war Europe-propaganda in *Signal* and other publications such as *Ikaros* suggest that his disillusionment with National Socialism and his insubordinate SS-reports were not, as U.S. intelligence officers believed, born of a genuine change of heart and an opposition to the Nazi regime. To the contrary, Wirsing propagated Nazi Europe-propaganda until the conclusion of the war and only chose to oppose the regime because he believed that its current leadership was failing his European revolution. Wirsing's disillusionment with National Socialism at the end of the war, then, had more to do with the priority he placed on his Europe-concept. Wirsing was no anti-Nazi, but his prioritization of the Europe-concept over National Socialism would prove to be an important foundation for his postwar migration away from political radicalism. As his encounter with U.S. intelligence agents after the war illustrates, Wirsing was uniquely positioned to distance himself from National Socialism in the postwar period. This is a pattern displayed in the lives and work

¹⁵² Michael Geyer, "Endkampf 1918 and 1945: German Nationalism, Annihilation, and Self-Destruction" in ed.s Alf Lüdtke and Bernd Weisbrod, *No Man's Land of Violence: Extreme Wars in the 20th Century* (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2006), 35-68.

of other Nazi Europeanists as well, such as, for example, Europe-propagandists in the Foreign Office – the subject of the next two chapters.

Chapter 3: “Europe to the Europeans!” – Nazi Europeanism in the Foreign Office

Introduction

Despite their revisionist and increasingly unorthodox European ideology, Giselher Wirsing and his writers were able to avoid censure in large part because *Signal* operated in a nebulous realm couched between the Wehrmacht and the Foreign Office which was outside of Reich Propaganda Minister Goebbels’s authority. *Signal*, a joint venture between the Foreign Office and the Wehrmacht, was initially edited and censored by the Foreign Office. But as the war progressed the Foreign Office was gradually pushed out of its role directing the largest propaganda organ outside of the Reich, the responsibilities for which the Wehrmacht subsequently delegated to Wirsing’s editorial direction.¹ However, the Foreign Office oversaw a plethora of propaganda projects of its own. In the late 1930s and at the beginning of the Second World War, Joachim von Ribbentrop, the Foreign Minister, successfully amalgamated under his command the chief authority for propaganda outside of the Reich’s borders. Consequently, the Foreign Office became one of the most important networks for secondary-level propaganda and subsequently for conservative advocates of the Europe-concept, many of whom used their propaganda positions in the Foreign Office to expand the reach of their Europeanism. After the war, many of these figures - including Paul Karl Schmidt (head of the Foreign Office Press Department) and

¹ Rainer Rutz, *Signal: Eine Deutsche Auslandsillustrierte als Propagandainstrument im Zweiten Weltkrieg*, (Essen: Klartext, 2007).

his assistant Hans-Georg von Studnitz, Axel Seeberg (coordinator of the Foreign Office's Berlin-based academic think-tank), and Klaus Mehnert (director of Foreign Office propaganda in the Far East) - took their ideas about Europe with them the into their new journalistic callings in postwar West Germany.

The most important academic research project into the propaganda of the Foreign Office was completed by Peter Longerich, whose primary argument is that the Foreign Office successfully exploited the limits of Joseph Goebbels's Propaganda Ministry and established itself as the largest propaganda apparatus independent of Goebbels.² He argues that the "polycratic" web of competing Nazi bureaucracies with undefined lines of authority allowed Ribbentrop and his subordinate Foreign Office administrators to establish themselves as the highest authority over Nazi propaganda in occupied territories outside of the borders of the Reich.³ They even made inroads into Goebbels's sphere of domestic propaganda by printing their propagandists in local papers, publishing a foreign policy monthly in Germany called *Berlin-Rom-Tokio*, and placing many institutions of academia in Berlin under their authority. Naturally, this produced a fierce competition and animosity with Goebbels's Propaganda Ministry, and Longerich's book is a political history of the power struggle between these bureaucracies. As such, Longerich devotes very limited attention to propaganda

² Peter Longerich, *Propagandisten im Krieg. Die Presseabteilung des Auswärtigen Amtes unter Ribbentrop* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1987).

³ Longerich envisioned his argument as a contribution to the "functionalist" model for understanding the administration of the Third Reich.

content, suggesting that there was little difference between the propaganda content of the Foreign Office and Goebbels's Propaganda Ministry.⁴ To be sure, Longerich acknowledges that Foreign Office propaganda revolved around the term "Europe," but his methodological decision to focus on political rivalry at the expense of propaganda material led him to conclude, like so much of the literature on Nazi Europe-propaganda, that it was largely an empty falsehood because its practitioners were unwilling or unable to concretely formulate a postwar political entity.⁵

The following two chapters, based primarily on a collection of documents from the *Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes* in Berlin as well as documents from the *Bundesarchiv* in Berlin-Lichterfelde, will review Nazi Europeanism in the Foreign Office and illustrate that the Foreign Office was one of the institutions in the Third Reich where Nazi-Europeanists found space to articulate their wide-ranging re-conceptualization of National Socialism and broadcast it to millions of Germans and non-Germans alike. This chapter specifically will examine how the Europe-concept was developed, organized, and disseminated in the higher levels of the Foreign Office, and how it became the center of Foreign Office propaganda narratives under the leadership of Karl Megerle, the propaganda commissioner of the Foreign Office and close assistant of Ribbentrop, as well as Paul Karl Schmidt, the director of the Press Department. A subsequent chapter will introduce a few smaller and lesser known appendages

⁴ Longerich, *Propagandisten im Krieg*, 106-108.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 89, 105.

of the propaganda apparatus of the Foreign Office and examine them as case-studies for the dissemination of Nazi Europeanism. Importantly, both chapters deal with Foreign Office Europe-propagandists who will re-appear in part II of this dissertation in their roles as high-ranking journalists in West Germany. As such, these two chapters build upon the recent historical research into continuities between the Foreign Office and the political culture of West Germany.⁶ This chapter will begin by first examining how Nazi Europeanism came to find a home in the Foreign Office and then outlining the unique shape and form that it took.

Karl Megerle and the Origins of Nazi Europeanism in the Foreign Office

The Foreign Office propaganda apparatus was a collection of various departments, the most important of which were: the Press Department, the Information Department, the Radio Department, and the Cultural-Politics Department. These departments' primary responsibilities and accompanying figures pertinent to this chapter are outlined in Appendix A below. These departments directed the various propaganda projects undertaken by the Foreign Office outside Reich borders. However, the substance of their propaganda was not arbitrarily determined by each respective department; instead, propaganda in the Foreign Office was organized and disseminated primarily by two individuals who, at different times during the war, obtained the title of *Beauftragter für Propaganda* ("Propaganda Commissioner"), an office in close proximity to

⁶ See, most notably, Eckart Conze, Norbert Frei, Peter Hayes, and Moshe Zimmermann, *Das Amt und die Vergangenheit: Deutsche Diplomaten im Dritten Reich und in der Bundesrepublik* (Munich: Karl Blessing Verlag, 2010).

Ribbentrop and, in fact, administered within his “Main Office” (*Ministerbüro*). The Propaganda Commissioner worked closely with Ribbentrop and was tasked with organizing propaganda narratives which were subsequently distributed to the various departments for the purpose of simultaneous and unified propaganda messaging. The first Propaganda Commissioner was Martin Luther, the former diplomat to the United Kingdom, who was appointed after the Nazi victories in the summer, 1940, and who used the position to both expand the scope of Foreign Office propaganda as well as complete what Longerich calls the “Nazification of the Foreign Office” by increasing the share of Nazi party members in key propaganda positions and cementing the Foreign Office’s role in the Holocaust.⁷ A key step in the centralization of propaganda narratives in the Foreign Office came with the invasion of the Soviet Union in the summer, 1941 when Ribbentrop authorized under Luther’s leadership the creation of a “Propaganda Committee” (*Propagandaausschuss*) designed to “intensify foreign propaganda” and subject it to “constant monitoring and examination.”⁸ The Propaganda Committee proceeded to remake the propaganda narrative of the Foreign Office in light of the European crusade against Bolshevism. The key figure in this transition was Karl Megerle, a propagandist appointed to serve as one of Luther’s chairs in the Propaganda Committee, who later replaced Luther and secured the title of “Propaganda Commissioner” for himself.

⁷ Longerich, *Propagandisten im Krieg*, 58.

⁸ *Ibid.*

Karl Megerle, born 1894 in Southwest Germany, was a high school teacher (*Volksschullehrer*) at the outbreak of the First World War but volunteered for enlistment at the beginning of the war, was heavily wounded, and received the Iron Cross, second class. Like many conservative nationalists he completed university training (in German History and Philosophy at the University of Tübingen) in the early 1920s and ultimately received his Ph.D. In the mid-1920s he worked briefly as a teacher, but according to a Foreign Office biographical sketch he departed because of “differences with the socialist and democratic teachers and administration.” Instead, he pursued a career in conservative journalism, starting at the *München Augsburger Abendzeitung* and later the *Hamburger Nachrichten*. While it is not clear whether or not Megerle joined the Nazi Party during these years, by 1931 he had begun working for various papers known as fronts for the party: the *Berliner Börsenzeitung*, the *Völkischer Beobachter*, the *Westfälische Landeszeitung*, and the *NSZ-Rheinfront*. In 1934 he was hired as an aid in Goebbels’s Propaganda Ministry working on propaganda concerning Austria. Rewarded for his service, in 1938 he was given the ceremonial position of a representative in the Reichstag.⁹ At the beginning of 1939 Megerle began doing some scholarly work for the “German Institute for Foreign Policy Research” (*Deutsches Institut für Aussenpolitische Forschung*), a subsidiary academic organization of the Cultural-Politics Department of the Foreign Office formerly of the Berlin University and under the direction of

⁹ “Lebenslauf – Dr. Karl Megerle,” October 19, 1938, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany, RZ 236/R 27667.

Friedrich Berber, which coordinated academic research on questions supplied by the Foreign Office.¹⁰ In August, 1939 Megerle began working directly for the Foreign Office when he was invited to the same journalist conference to which Giselher Wirsing was invited, and which was discussed in the previous chapter of this dissertation. There, both he and Wirsing accepted the invitation to work for the Information Department as researchers and advisers on international affairs.¹¹ Together with Wirsing and a few other journalists, Megerle worked for over a year in this advisory capacity to the Information Department of the Foreign Office. It is difficult to ascertain the whether or not this is where Megerle was first acquainted with Nazi Europeanism. But the close proximity and cooperative work with Wirsing strongly suggest that this was the case.

Charting the emergence of Nazi Europeanism in the Foreign Office is a challenging task, because the incomplete records of the Foreign Office during the Second World War do not contain a separate folder for the Propaganda Commissioner or for the Propaganda Committee. However, they do contain a separate folder for Megerle's personal collection, which, albeit scattered and incomplete, contain hundreds of articles and writings by Megerle. Additionally,

¹⁰ Megerle to Aschmann, January 18, 1939, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany, RZ 236/R 27676. Megerle to Kleinlein, May 5, 1939, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany, RZ 236/R 27676.

¹¹ "Lebenslauf – Dr. Karl Megerle," October 19, 1938, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany, RZ 236/R 27667. Longerich, *Propagandisten im Krieg*, 51. See additionally, chapter two of this dissertation.

the folders for the various propaganda departments within the Foreign Office include amongst their collected memos the various orders from the Propaganda Commissioner and the Propaganda Committee. When pieced together these sources illustrate that Megerle was the inspiration and impetus for Nazi Europeanism in the Foreign Office, having advocated as a journalist for the Information Department in favor of the Europe-concept as early as June, 1940 under a slogan which he later made a center-piece of Foreign Office propaganda: “Leave Europe to the Europeans!”

Megerle’s Adoption of Nazi Europeanism, 1940

Before the Nazis came to power in the early 1930s Megerle had begun working as a foreign policy editorialist in the *Berliner Börsenzeitung* (BBZ), a paper with a circulation at one point as high as 40,000 under the editorial direction of Walter Funk, future Minister of Economics in the Third Reich.¹² Megerle continued to write regularly in the BBZ even after beginning employment at the Foreign Office.¹³ In early 1940 the brunt of his argumentation was that the British Empire was deceiving Europeans and Americans into servicing British imperial interests. Germany, Japan, and Italy, however, represented a “Community of Destiny” (*Schicksalgemeinschaft*) opposing British

¹² Peter de Mendelssohn, *Zeitungsstadt Berlin: Menschen und Mächte in der Geschichte der deutschen Presse* (Frankfurt a.M.: Ullstein, 1982), 457-458.

¹³ The records of the Foreign Office in Berlin suggest that he wrote regularly for the BBZ through at least 1942.

domination of Europe and imperialism as such.¹⁴ Megerle's willingness to bend the ideological rules of National Socialism was already evident in February, 1940 when he wrote an article defending and softening the doctrine of Lebensraum as "a planned economy within a closed territory composed of several states. The economy of these states would have to be constructed in such a way that these states complement one another." His article attracted significant and even sympathetic foreign attention, especially in the Swedish press: "In this way his [Lebensraum] program proves to be a significant upgrade on the originally National Socialist idea of an exclusively German program of self-sufficiency." Already in this article from early 1940 Megerle was criticizing nationalism, which, when excessive, he described as a "unique barrier in the realization of the entire idea [of Lebensraum]."¹⁵

In the summer of 1940 Megerle began to develop ideas about a future Europe in the BBZ. On June 16th, 1940 he developed for the first time what would become a central propaganda slogan in Foreign Office Europe-propaganda: "Leave Europe to the Europeans!" Displaying what would become a key pattern in Foreign Office propaganda, Megerle pursued his early Europeanism by

¹⁴ Karl Megerle, "Bekanntnis zur Schicksalgemeinschaft," *Berliner Börsenzeitung*, January 3, 1940 in Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany, RZ 236/R 27734. Karl Megerle, "Blauer Dunst," *Berliner Börsenzeitung*, January 2, 1940 in Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany, RZ 236/R 27734.

¹⁵ From a summary written in the Swedish radio transmitter "Radio Stockholm," March 2, 1940, in Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany, RZ 236/R 27737.

highlighting under-reported quotations by Adolf Hitler. In an interview with an American reporter, Karl von Wiegand, Hitler turned the legacy of American isolationism against his prying interviewer:

I do not believe that a doctrine such as the Monroe doctrine can be understood as a one-sided claim; because the purpose of the Monroe doctrine was not to hinder European states from engagement in American affairs...but rather that America, too, should not get involved in European affairs. The fact that George Washington himself put forward such a similar warning is evidence of the logic and reason behind this interpretation. Therefore, I say: 'Leave America to the Americans, leave Europe to the Europeans!'¹⁶

Less than a month later, on July 13th and July 14th, Megerle published a special article series in the BBZ titled "Foundations of a New Europe by Karl Megerle." This article, which was reviewed by dozens of newspapers in at least twelve different countries,¹⁷ illustrated Megerle's quick conversion to various crucial themes which we have thus far identified with Nazi Europeanism. "The current collapse and rupture in the realm of military and power-politics," the article began, "has already overlapped onto social and economic territory. ...Europe has found in the victory of Germany and his allies a power-political weight in the middle of the continent and feels that something developing for many centuries is

¹⁶ Karl Megerle, "'Europa den Europäern', Unterredung des Führers mit einem USA-Journalisten," *Berliner Börsenzeitung*, June 16, 1940 in Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany, RZ 236/R 27734.

¹⁷ Megerle's personal document collection contains reviews from the Netherlands, Romania, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Switzerland, Norway, Italy, France, Hungary, Denmark, Finland, and Sweden. See "Pressestimmen: Grundlagen des Neuen Europas," Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany, RZ 236/R 27765.

occurring; a new era has begun.” Europe, he argued, was “objectively” headed towards “a new European solidarity and Community of Destiny” (*Schicksalgemeinschaft*). Europeans were beginning to sense the necessity of a “Grossraum,” he continued, because Europe is “too small to remain divided up into countless units unworthy of life [*lebensunfähig*].” The new era would bring previously unthinkable changes, Megerle warned, and this included the “breakdown of excessive nationalism and the unfounded power-political individualism of small nations.” Megerle argued that it was the responsibility of every European to “acknowledge the untenable nature of previous social, economic, and political systems” and to “participate loyally in the New Order of Europe.” This would not be easy, Megerle warned, because it portended a “foundational, often painful, and sacrifice-demanding commitment to the New and simultaneous rejection of the Old.” His arguments repeatedly employed a reactionary modernist repudiation of tradition in favor of a new, forward-looking modernity which was paradoxically grounded in the pre-ordained destiny of the “Old World.” Megerle’s terminology, the reader will likely notice, mirrored the terminology employed by Wirsing and his writers in *Signal*. Another is the relaying of *Volksgemeinschaft* through the European lens: “European Community of Peoples” (*Europäische Völkergemeinschaft*). Importantly, already in the summer of 1940 Megerle understood the “New Europe” as a human-transforming process. Economic, political, and social transformation were ultimately incomplete in Megerle’s eyes without the concomitant rise of what he called a “new model-human [*neuer Menschentypus*]”:

...a conception of the human being which replaces the alienated, overbred, and life-suffocating intellectual as well as the proletarian mass-human [*Massenmenschen*] with a healthy, happy, brave, and live-gushing human being founded in the harmony of body, soul, and spirit and based on a unification of nature, reverence, discipline, devotion, and community as well as an appreciation of creative personality.¹⁸

On July 16th Megerle received a note from the Press Department that the article series was receiving “strong attention everywhere in the world,” and that his arguments portended a positive, new direction for Foreign Office propaganda.¹⁹ In the fall, Megerle briefly dabbled in what this dissertation calls “Germanic Europeanism,” which, as a subsequent chapter of this dissertation will illustrate, was particularly strong in the Waffen-SS. In an article from October, 1940 titled “Germanic Particularism,” printed in the BBZ (but also in various publications in the Netherlands, Switzerland, Denmark, and Sweden) Megerle argued that the Germanic peoples had been deceived into a sense of “exaggerated individuality” such that they lamentably had chosen to “remain outside of their tribal community.” The “European New Order,” then, would include a special “place for a Germanic community” within it.²⁰ By the end of the year Megerle had

¹⁸ Karl Megerle, “Sonderdruck aus der Berliner Börsenzeitung: Grundlagen des neuen Europas von Karl Megerle,” *Berliner Börsenzeitung*, July 13 and 14, 1940 in Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany, RZ 236/R 27765.

¹⁹ Note from “P XII (Presseabteilung) Eigendienst Ungarn,” July 16, 1940, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany, RZ 236/R 27737.

²⁰ Drawn from reports collected by the German embassy in Copenhagen and sent to the Foreign Office, October 10, 1940 and November 11, 1940, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen

adopted the Grossraum argument, publishing articles in the Foreign Office's political magazine, *Berlin-Rom-Tokio*, about the intrusion of powers "alien to our space" (*raumfremd*) into Grossraum(s) throughout the world, including American and British encroachment onto the Japanese-led Grossraum of East Asia.²¹

While it is tempting to dismiss Megerle's Europeanism as Foreign Office manipulation, the documentary record suggests that Megerle took his new-found Europeanism very seriously and genuinely. In one article, intended for a German and Italian audience, Megerle argued that while Germany and Italy had received the "historical assignment" of "European leadership," it behooved them to carefully consider the appropriate "European-occidental" [*europäisch-abendländisch*] approach to fulfilling this task. Indeed, if Germany and Italy were to inaugurate a true "European community," he argued, then, unlike nationalist "particularists" they must "never work against, but rather only for Europe." This necessitated that "the European leaders [*Führungsmächte*] win over the loyalty of every single member of the New Order." In practice, this meant advocating the highest possible amount of freedom and participation in the emerging Europe: "The more definite and voluntary the integration of the individual parts [of Europe] and the more free and elastic the forms of unification can be, the less contentious will be the questions of military security and

Amtes in Berlin, Germany, RZ 236/R 27737. According to Megerle's own accompanying notes this argument was received poorly in the non-German press.

²¹ Karl Megerle, "Raumfremde Mächte in Ostasien," *Berlin-Rom-Tokio*, December issue, 1940, np.

implementation of the New Order.” This, he declared, was the European “community-task” (*Gemeinschaftsaufgabe*) of Germany and Italy.²²

Megerle’s sincerely held vision for Europe can be confirmed by a series of correspondence he had with Ribbentrop’s secretary, Ernst von Weizsäcker, in late 1942 in which Megerle wrote a memo suggesting that the Foreign Office back an ambitious plan to establish local self-administrative governments throughout Russia as well as a “central committee for the creation of a New Russia.” This, Megerle hoped, would win over the population, subdue partisans, and counter Soviet propaganda. Weizsäcker responded that Megerle’s “special concern for the topic of the treatment of the Russian population” was well known. However, the opportunity for such a measure was long past, Weizsäcker explained, and in any case was impossible to reconcile with Hitler’s “colonial intentions” and the need to keep open the possibility of a separate peace with Stalin.²³ Additionally, in early 1943 Megerle received a rebuke from Paul Karl Schmidt, head of the Press Department, for too forcefully pressing for a more explanatory excavation

²² Karl Megerle, “Europäische Führung und Gemeinschaft,” *Berlin-Rom-Tokio*, November issue, 1940, 16-17.

²³ Karl Megerle to Ernst von Weizsäcker, November 14, 1942 and Ernst von Weizsäcker to Karl Megerle, November 16, 1942, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany, RZ 102/R 29849. It is also interesting to note that Megerle often criticized Bolshevism for its treatment of the Russian people, for the way it destroyed “all that is of beauty and worth in their humanity.” See Karl Megerle, “Der Atem der Geschichte,” *Berliner Börsenzeitung*, October 7, 1941 in Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany, RZ 236/R 27735.

of future roles and functions of member states in the New Order.²⁴ Megerle, then, despite his collaboration in the conquest and exploitation of Nazi-occupied Europe had genuine, even if fantastical and naive, hopes for the Nazi-led New Europe.

By 1941 Megerle's Europeanism was increasingly coming up against orthodox National Socialist principles. In fact, in one article in the BBZ Megerle asked Germans to dismiss any enemy propaganda claiming "that the German master-race desires slave-races for manual labor."²⁵ Ironically, however, it was in 1941 that Megerle received his promotion into the highest ranks for propaganda coordination in the Foreign Office. In early 1941, the records indicate that Megerle had struck up a personal relationship with Ribbentrop, to whom he had begun writing personal correspondences with suggestions for propaganda.²⁶ On May 28, 1941 he wrote Ribbentrop suggesting that

in addition to the concept of the New Order the signed nations of the Tripartite Pact should establish the following peace-slogan: 'Freedom of the seas in war and peace, for all peoples, small and large and without any respect to political governance'.

He continued:

²⁴ Karl Megerle to Paul Karl Schmidt, January 19, 1943, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany, RZ 102/R 29850.

²⁵ Karl Megerle, "Neuordnung und Lebenshaltung," *Berliner Börsenzeitung*, January 5, 1941 in Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany RZ 236/R 27735.

²⁶ As early as May, 1940 Megerle's suggestions for the Grossraum concept and a European Monroe-doctrine were forwarded by the head of the Press Department, Paul Karl Schmidt, to Ribbentrop personally. See Paul Karl Schmidt to Joachim von Ribbentrop, May 20, 1940, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany RZ 247/R 27876.

This theme has the advantage of being a supranational [*übernational*] goal and can be attractive to all peoples with the exception of the Anglo-Saxons. It justifies the partners of the Tripartite Pact presenting themselves as forerunners of a supranational task, and it would represent progress for the notion of positive propaganda which I have repeatedly stressed, and it would be a workable compliment to the concept of the New Order.

Not afraid of addressing the dissonance of his ideas with orthodox National Socialism, Megerle added that while some will suggest this narrative contradicts their “hitherto economic approach of Lebensraum and Autarky” – “I think it possible to harmonize both of these political narratives.”²⁷ There is no evidence that Ribbentrop immediately acted on this suggestion, but in June, 1941 Nazi Germany invaded the Soviet Union. By the end of the year, and likely in part due to the renewed intensity of Europe-propaganda following the opening of the Eastern Front, Ribbentrop hired Megerle as his personal assistant and “Propaganda Commissioner” over all Foreign Office propaganda.

The Propaganda Committee, 1941

On July 22nd, 1941 Ribbentrop sent a memo to all departments of the Foreign Office calling into creation a “Propaganda Committee“ tasked with meeting daily to review and coordinate Foreign Office propaganda. Along with half a dozen directors of the various propaganda-related departments (including Paul Karl Schmidt of the Press Department) Megerle was named as one of the

²⁷ Karl Megerle to Joachim von Ribbentrop, May 28, 1941, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany RZ 703/R 97626, frame 423568.

participating members.²⁸ Megerle's presence on the Propaganda Committee despite not being a ranking department director in the Foreign Office makes more sense in light of a subsequent memo sent by Ribbentrop two days later tasking Megerle with providing him, Ribbentrop, with a weekly summary of propaganda initiatives in the Foreign Office. As such, he ordered the Press Department and Political Office to "work closely" with him. Megerle, then, already one month into the campaign on the Eastern Front was made into a kind of personal propaganda assistant for Ribbentrop. Although Martin Luther was initially made the chair member of the Propaganda Committee, by the end of the year Megerle had used his close position to Ribbentrop to assume the primary position in the Propaganda Committee, and he was subsequently made "Propaganda Commissioner" on December 12th, 1941.²⁹

The first propaganda initiative put into place by the "Propaganda Committee" was a response to the Atlantic Charter. Megerle was tasked with writing up the "prescribed terminology" (*Sprachregelung*) for the various departments of the Foreign Office vis-à-vis putting forward the Axis response. The Atlantic Charter, he explained, was a "betrayal of Europe" (*Verrat an Europa*):

Europe wants to be the Lord of its own house. It rejects any return to an Anglo-Saxon meddling which is alien to our space [*raumfremd*], and it rejects any return to European disharmony. It will not allow the hands of the world-clock to be turned back twenty-three years.... It is determined

²⁸ Memo by Joachim von Ribbentrop to all Foreign Office departments, July 22, 1941, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany RZ 703/R 97625, frame 423551.

²⁹ Longerich, *Propagandisten im Krieg*, 61-65.

to claim the leadership of the cultural world and not allow said leadership to be abdicated to powers alien to our space. With great sacrifice it has fought its way through to the realization that the Old Order was a failure, and a new one, based in European solidarity, must be found.³⁰

The next project was the creation of a “guiding idea for propaganda in light of the second anniversary of the war’s outbreak.” Megerle likely wrote up the ensuing manuscript.³¹ Like the Propaganda Committee’s response to the Atlantic Charter, this manuscript also emphasized the slogan “betrayal of Europe,” but it also added new inflections. The war, it was explained, was thrust onto Germany by the British when they realized that Germany was in the process of replacing the “Versailles system” with the New Order of Europe. Roosevelt and Stalin, described as “enemies of Europe” (*Europafeinde*), realized that the disappearing British claims to continental hegemony likewise threatened their intentions for the continent. Led by Adolf Hitler, Germany recognized these malicious plans for what they were: a threat to the newly “consolidating Europe.” Now, the Propaganda Committee argued, the war was being fought in order to “create an organically integrated Lebensraum for the benefit of the entire continent.” Europeans, therefore, were tasked with three responsibilities: a) a “clear recognition” of the economic unity of the Axis; b) a “clear recognition” of

³⁰ Karl Megerle, Propaganda Committee memo, “Sprachregelung für Propaganda gegen Roosevelt-Churchill-Erklärung,” August 15, 1941, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany RZ 703/R 97625, frame 423615.

³¹ Although the manuscript was not signed by Megerle, an additional manuscript signed by Megerle recapitulates many of the points and was likely the draft upon which the final manuscript was based.

Germany and Italy's leadership roles in the war against Bolshevism; and c) "demonstrations of an awake, political consciousness of unity" (*Einheitsbewusstsein*). They concluded the manuscript with the proclamation: "Long live the powerful, new Europe!"³² On August 27th, 1941 Ribbentrop gave complete approval for the manuscript.³³

In September, 1941 Karl Megerle and Paul Karl Schmidt of the Press Department were each assigned the task of visiting different parts of occupied Europe in order to propagate and examine the reception of Europe-propaganda. When they had returned, they had come to believe that a more "positive German foreign propaganda," was needed, by which they meant a more descriptive and clear elaboration on the political, social, and economic composition of the New Europe.³⁴ Or, as Megerle put it: "It is urgently necessary that we air out the veil over the 'New Order of Europe'. Above all else we need to make clear that the small states will be able to administer themselves as they please as long as they

³² Karl Megerle, Propaganda Committee memo, "Leitgedanken für die Propaganda anlässlich des 2. Jahrestages des Kriegsausbruchs," undated but based on surrounding documents most likely late August, 1941, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany RZ 703/R 97625.

³³ Secretary Krümmer (on behalf of Joachim von Ribbentrop), "Notiz für die Mitglieder des Propagandaausschusses," August 27, 1941, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany RZ 703/R 97625, frame 423634.

³⁴ Unsigned memo of the Propaganda Committee, September 24, 1941, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany RZ 703/R 97625.

accept our foreign policy line.”³⁵ On September 27th, Megerle wrote a memo for the Propaganda Committee called “Positive Press and Propaganda Theses,” which outlined his arguments in more detail. He began his appeal by arguing that “it is necessary to complement our aggressive, debilitating, and polemic propaganda with a positive propaganda, above else vis-a-vis the future of Europe.” He then proceeded to outline ten specific points which must be made in their Europe-Propaganda: 1) the “overcoming of European particularism” through a “European federation”; 2) a Europe-wide partially planned economy, or Grossraum; 3) establishing a permanent peace; 4) guarantees against arbitrary use of German power except for as it pertains to foreign policy; 5) “Leave Europe to the Europeans!” – the elimination of “influence in Europe which is alien to our space [*raumfremd*]”; 6) state-guided elimination of unemployment; 7) Europe-wide social welfare; 8) replacement of liberal individualism and Bolshevik collectivism with a new (unnamed) philosophy capable of respecting both personality and community; 9) promises to foster cultural development in all European peoples, large and small; 10) elimination of Bolshevism from Europe,

³⁵ Secretary Krümmer (on behalf of Joachim von Ribbentrop), “Notiz für Herrn U.St.S. Luther,” September 30, 1941, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany RZ 703/R 97625.

including the “re-conquering for Europe of vast spaces which had been abused economically, culturally, and with respects to their *völkisch* organization.”³⁶

Despite Megerle’s protestations, however, the Foreign Office was not willing to adopt most of his suggestions. This was because they deviated from the key compromise of Nazi Europeanism: Nazi leaders allowed lower-level figures like Megerle to advance Europeanism only in as much as it disingenuously served their imperial and genocidal ambitions for Europe.

On November 11th, 1941, the Propaganda Committee released to all diplomatic missions a “Europe-Program” with various propaganda terms and messages. Only the vaguest of Megerle’s suggestions made the cut. To be sure, a few messages were surprisingly revisionist - such as: “After German victory, towards which all Europeans are working, there will be a securing of Lebensraum, not just for Germany, but also all of Europe.” However, most of the proposed themes were extremely equivocal: “Our fight is not just a fight for Germany, but all of Europe”; “Europe is the fountain of all cultural existence”; “Massive program to improve social conditions which extend well beyond the borders of the German Reich.”³⁷

³⁶ Karl Megerle, Propaganda Committee memo, “Positive Presse- und Propagandathesen,” September 27, 1941, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany RZ 703/R 97629, frame 425791.

³⁷ Ernst von Weizsäcker to “all foreign diplomatic missions and authorities of the Reich in occupied territories,” November 11, 1941, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany RZ 703/R 97629, frame 425832.

Standard Theses and Megerle's Role in 1942

After the Propaganda Committee was disbanded in a bureaucratic restructuring, Megerle was promoted to "Propaganda Commissioner" of the Foreign Office and given authority to direct a new agency in Ribbentrop's Main Office called "Bureau Megerle," authorized with the same responsibilities as the Propaganda Committee: organizing and distributing propaganda narratives to the other propaganda departments of the Foreign Office.³⁸ Cross-department memos (most of which were destroyed at the end of the war but many of which were retained by the Political Office of the Foreign Office) reveal that Megerle and his assistant by the name of von Schmieden used Megerle's new agency to ensure the continued presence of the Europe-concept in Foreign Office propaganda. This continued through at least early 1943, after which the documentary evidence in the Foreign Office records become very fragmentary.

The primary means through which they accomplished this was the issuing of "Standard Theses," point-by-point manuscripts with propaganda themes and

³⁸ "Standardthesen," Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany, RZ 211/R105119 and R105120. See in particular Secretary Krümmer (on behalf of Joachim von Ribbentrop) to all directors of all Foreign Office departments, marked "secret," February 9, 1943, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany, RZ 211/R105120, frame 360858. Megerle's new position was not uncontested. Martin Luther was given a new agency as well, the *Auslandspropagandaleitstelle*, which was likewise tasked with coordinating Foreign Propaganda. The compromise, which appears to have been informally made over time, is that Megerle was given authority over Europe-propaganda while Luther and his new agency were given authority over other propaganda messaging. See Longerich, *Propagandisten im Krieg*, 61-65.

messages to be emphasized in all Foreign Office departments and diplomatic missions.³⁹ A Standard Theses manuscript was drafted by Megerle's agency for each country to which the Foreign Office directed propaganda. Each manuscript tailored Nazi Europeanism to the specific circumstances and contexts of the respective countries in question. Although many Standard Theses manuscripts were destroyed, the following list gives a sample of country-specific Europe-messaging: Spain was told that their status as a "nation of European culture" would be secured by victory against the Atlantic forces which sought to tear Spain's identity from Europe;⁴⁰ Turkey was declared a genealogically "European power" and was promised a future role as a "natural economic partner" in Europe which would liberate Turkey from Russian influence;⁴¹ Propaganda about the English was organized around their "betrayal of Europe" at the hands of Bolsheviks and Americans;⁴² the French were told that their fight against the Nazis in 1940 had been a "Anglo-Judaic" manipulation and that pending their

³⁹ Secretary von Schmieden (on behalf of Joachim von Ribbentrop), memo in the Political Office, February 1, 1942, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany, RZ 211/R105119, frame 360182.

⁴⁰ Memo by von Schmieden archived in the documents of the Political Office, February 1, 1942, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 211/R 105119, frame 360182.

⁴¹ Memo by von Schmieden archived in the documents of the Political Office, February 5, 1942, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 211/R 105119, frame 360189.

⁴² Memo archived in the documents of the Political Office, titled "Nr. 20, Weisungen für die Propaganda nach England," February 12, 1942, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 211/R 105119, frame 360203.

loyalty in this war they, too, had a place in the European New Order (in fact, even their colonies, which were a European “life-necessity,” would be returned);⁴³ Romanians were told that their participation in the war was but a mere continuation of their historical legacy as the first line of defense against Asiatic invasions of Europe.⁴⁴ Even ostensibly racially inferior Balkan and Slavic nations were appealed to in European terms. Nazi-led Europe would “hold open” the possibility of, for example, Serbian and Slovakian membership in the New Europe pending their commitment to the war effort. Aware that such extensions of European solidarity to Serbia would not be received well up the Nazi hierarchy, Serbia’s Standard Theses manuscript came with a note that it should be spread by “mouth” rather than written documents lest it come across as an “official German position.”⁴⁵

Megerle’s agency also distributed “all-purpose” Standard Theses, or propaganda themes for all Foreign Office propaganda regardless of targeted country. The first such “general” Standard Theses manuscript was written at the

⁴³ Memo archived in the documents of the Political Office, titled “Nr. 26, Weisungen für die Propaganda nach Frankreich,” January 8, 1943, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 211/R 105120.

⁴⁴ Political Office memo titled “Nur. 271,” January 8, 1943, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 211/R 105120, frame 360908.

⁴⁵ Von Schmieden to Wüster, October 27, 1942, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 211/R 105119. See additionally a memo to the directors of all Foreign Office departments, titled “Nur. 271,” February 15, 1943, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 211/R105120, frame 360849.

very end of 1941. The manuscript contained eighteen points for general propaganda, of which eight explicitly handled the New Order of Europe and/or the concept of Grossraum.⁴⁶ These all-purpose Standard Theses were regularly updated, oftentimes with new instructions given the changing face of the war. In July, 1942, for example, Megerle's agency sent out an update for propaganda on the Eastern Front. It asked propagandists to stress the territorial advance of Europe into Russia. "Emphasize daily," it added "that Europe is consolidating itself." It continued: "In this manner we should awaken and permanently maintain in the public opinion of our enemies that Germany and Europe together are becoming absolutely impervious to blockade as a result of the territorial gains in the East."⁴⁷ On January 28th, 1943 Megerle wrote a memo as a result of German transition to "Total War." Many of the points resembled themes similar to Goebbels's famous speech at the Berliner Sportpalast in early February: a call for absolute sacrifice and full exploitation of all resources in Europe. One point in particular connected the call for Total War to Europeanism:

With the mobilization of our entire workforce and the adaptation of civilian life to Total War the German Volk (which has already carried the primary burden of the battle against Bolshevism) is now entirely

⁴⁶ Memo archived in the documents of the Political Office, titled "Zusammenfassung der von Herrn RAM angeordneten Standarthesen für die deutsche Auslandspropaganda," December 29, 1941, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 211/R 105119, frame 360196.

⁴⁷ Memo by von Schmieden archived in the documents of the Political Office, July 23, 1942, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 211/R 105119, frame 360297.

committed to the salvation of Europe from downfall and Bolshevist chaos.⁴⁸

Shortly after this memo was written, the Standard Theses were updated on February 9th. The updated Standard Theses were sent to all departments in the Foreign Office and all diplomatic missions with an explicit note from Ribbentrop himself demanding that the updated narratives permeate “in constant repetition the radio, press, and any other medium at our disposal.” The manuscript, code-named “directive 27,” declared four primary themes for Foreign Office propaganda. The fourth and final theme was to increase Europe’s realization of what the “Bolshevization of Europe” would entail. Later in the manuscript, this fourth theme was fleshed out into five points: 1) “The Europe of today has only one choice – that between Bolshevist chaos and a New European Order for all peoples”; 2) If the present war were lost to the “imperialists” of East and West, then Europe would become a “battleground” for “permanent” wars between them; 3) Bolshevist victory means the final destruction of the “Occident” and its cultural heritage; 4) The only thing standing between Europe and the “Bolshevist flood” are the European armies; 5) Axis victory would create lasting peace, an “unheard-of blossoming of culture and well-being,” a New Order in which all European

⁴⁸ Karl Megerle to “all [diplomatic] missions,” January 28, 1943, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 211/R 105120.

peoples, big and small, would be guaranteed “sovereignty and the freedom of self-determination.”⁴⁹

Megerle continued to butt heads with other propagandists in the Foreign Office who, unlike Megerle, saw appeals to Europe in strictly opportunistic terms. A memo from August, 1942 reveals that this rivalry continued into Megerle’s tenure as Propaganda Commissioner. This memo, a report on a conference for non-German “cultural agents” assigned to diplomatic missions throughout Europe, outlines a dispute between Megerle and Martin Luther’s assistant by the name of Krümmer. Megerle had presented his argument for a more fully-defined, “positive” answer to the “Europe question,” to which Krümmer replied in strong disagreement that “any official specifications should be avoided” including any “official prescribed terminology.”⁵⁰ The evidence suggests that officials like Krümmer more often than not won these internal debates. To be sure, it is possible that many of the Standard Theses were in fact victories for Megerle. Nevertheless, the contrast between Megerle’s explicit Europeanism and the more vague, reserved Europeanism of the Standard Theses suggests that Megerle was

⁴⁹ Memo by “Krümmer” sent to the directors of all Foreign Office departments with attached Standard Theses titled “Neue Richtlinien für die Auslandspropaganda,” February 9, 1943, marked “secret,” Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 211/R 105120, frame 360858.

⁵⁰ Memo by Heinz Julius Hugo Trützschler von Falkenstein, archived in the documents of the Political Office, marked “secret,” August 13, 1942, with an attached report concerning the “Tagung der nach Berlin berufenen Kulturreferenten der meisten europäischen Missionen,” which was held on August 10, 1942, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 211/R105119.

frustrated in his efforts, at least until 1943 when the documentary evidence thins out.

Importantly, despite his persistent struggles to advocate a more audacious Europeanism, throughout 1942 Megerle continued to regularly propagate his more “positive vision“ for the New Order of Europe in the BBZ and other publications.⁵¹ In fact, Megerle expanded his journalistic voice as well, using his position in the Foreign Office to have his arguments increasingly published in the foreign press.⁵² By the end of 1942 Megerle, like other Nazi Europeanists, had begun to formulate his Europe-concept as an explicit revision of nationalism and as the harbinger for a new supranational identity. In an August, 1942 article in BBZ titled “For or Against Europe,” Megerle argued that all Europeans are historically integrated with an age-old “occidental feeling of unity”

⁵¹ Take, for example, the following list of articles written in the BBZ and the *Südostdeutsche Rundschau* over the course of 1941 and 1942: “Europa im Aufbruch: Kreuzzug des Kontinents gegen den Bolschewismus,” June 27, 1941; “Gesamteuropäische Solidarität,” July 29, 1941; “Der Atem der Geschichte,” October 7, 1941; “Europas Freiheitskampf,” November 30, 1941; “Totengräber Roosevelt: Der USA-Imperialismus und Europas Freiheitskampf,” December 3, 1941; “Die Wiedergeburt Europas,” March, 1942; “Ein Stück Europa,” March 22, 1942; “England, Europa, und Moskau,” March 29, 1942; “Europa soll bolschewisiert werden: Anglo-amerikanischer Verrat,” May 6, 1942; “Mit oder gegen Europa,” August 3, 1942; “Wall gegen Bolschewismus: Zum Jahrestag des Antikominternpaktes,” November 25, 1942. Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 236/R 27735; RZ 236/R 27736; RZ 701/R 123536.

⁵² Lohse to Karl Megerle, August 8, 1941 and Lohse to Karl Megerle, February 12, 1942, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 701/R 123698.

(*abendländisches Einheitsgefühl*) which had been suppressed for centuries. But the speed of recent history was scraping away the superficial surface of nationally divided countries. The return of this “feeling of unity,” however, would not take the religious form it had in the pre-modern era, because secularism was too advanced. Instead, it would be a “cultural feeling of unity”:

The fusion of cultural elements from the Greek, Roman, and Germanic eras into a European collective consciousness [*europäisches Gesamtbewusstsein*] has created shared commonalities which each European senses. Europe is, just as the Führer says, everywhere where land and people were historically won over by European culture.

He continued:

What Europe is can be felt in every village. What Europe is not can be felt by anybody who has interacted with milieus of a foreign continent and suddenly realized that he is missing the cultural, human, and spiritual climate which is natural to him. This is especially true with respect to North America.⁵³

Although Foreign Office records become scarce after 1942, there is plenty of evidence that Nazi Europeanism continued to have a central role in foreign propaganda in 1943 and afterwards. For example, in 1943 the Foreign Office used the German Institute for Foreign Policy Research to publish a book which would serve as a blueprint for the propaganda of the Foreign Office after 1943: the so-called “Europe Handbook” (*Europa: Handbuch der politischen,*

⁵³ Karl Megerle, “Mit oder gegen Europa,“ *Berliner Börsenzeitung*, August 3, 1942 in Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 236/R 27736.

wirtschaftlichen, und kulturellen Entwicklung Europas).⁵⁴ The Europe Handbook was a large project with entries from leading figures such as Joachim von Ribbentrop, Roland Friesler, Walter Funk, and Paul Karl Schmidt, and was intended as a war-time diplomatic and propaganda guideline about the future Europe for Germans and non-Germans alike. The Europe Handbook even began by listing and briefly describing all thirty member countries of the future Europe.⁵⁵ Nine chapters focused on specific countries' unique historical contributions to Europe, current achievements in the war for Europe, and future importance to the New Order.⁵⁶ Of the remaining eleven chapters, many echoed the Standard Theses for Nazi Europeanism, with titles such as: "Europe as Inheritance and Assignment," "The Axis is the Foundation of the New Europe," "European Consciousness," "Germany and Europe in Course of History," "Lebensraum or Imperialism," "The Theory of Law in the Young Europe,"

⁵⁴ Deutsches Institut für Aussenpolitische Forschung, *Europa: Handbuch der politischen, wirtschaftlichen, und kulturellen Entwicklung Europas*, (Leipzig: Helingsche Verlagsanstalt, 1943). See additionally Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 211/R105120a.

⁵⁵ The last edition of the book listed thirty total countries. The following lists them in the original German: "*Albanien, Andorra, Belgien, Bulgarien, Dänemark, Deutsches Reich, Finnland, Frankreich, Griechenland, Grossbritannien, Irland, Island, Italien, Kroatien, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Montenegro, Niederlande, Norwegen, Portugal, Rumaenien, San Marino, Schweden, Schweiz, Serbien, Slowakei, Spanien, Türkei, Ungarn, Vatikan.*"

⁵⁶ The nine country-specific contributions were for: Italy, France, Spain, Hungary, Bulgaria, Finland, Africa, Southeastern Europe, and Germany (which was described as "the heart of Europe").

“Europe as Cultural Community.”⁵⁷ Other chapters investigated the common cultural inheritances and practices of Europe, with titles such as “Music in Europe” (*Musik in Europa*) and “European Sports” (*Europäischer Sport*). The Europe Handbook was published in the tens of thousands and was distributed abroad to all the diplomatic missions of the Foreign Office. A second edition was published near the end of the war with updated appendices chronicling the historical steps towards the “New Europe” since the rise of fascism (including a list of Hitler’s speeches pertaining to the New Order of Europe).

The Standard Theses, Megerle’s many publications, and the “Europe Handbook” collectively represent the best glimpse into the backroom coordination of propaganda narratives in the Foreign Office after 1941, but they are, like much of the records of the Foreign Office, an incomplete source collection. To be sure, there is evidence that the Europe-concept was enthusiastically picked up by Ribbentrop himself. As early as November, 1941 Ribbentrop gave a long, 90-page speech in Berlin to various invited statesmen of the Tripartite Pact.⁵⁸ The speech, broken down into nine different sections, presented all the different ways Europe was presently finding unity. Ribbentrop

⁵⁷ The titles in the original German: “*Europa als Erbe und Aufgabe*,” “*Die Achse ist die Grundlage des Neuen Europas*,” “*Europäisches Bewusstsein*,” “*Deutschland und Europa im Laufe der Geschichte*,” “*Lebensraum oder Imperialismus*,” “*Das Rechtsdenken des jungen Europa*,” and “*Europa als Kulturgemeinschaft*.”

⁵⁸ Report by the “Deutscher Nachrichtendienst,” including speech text, November 26, 1941 in Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 247/R 27882.

returned frequently to the Europe-concept in his speeches throughout the war, and, as has been noted, made Megerle his personal assistant and “Propaganda Commissioner” in the Foreign Office. But the other direction – namely, the dissemination and execution of Europe-propaganda down the ladders of Foreign Office bureaucracy – is more difficult to trace. For this, one must study individual Foreign Office departments, such as the largest among them: the Press Department.

Paul Karl Schmidt and the Press Department

The second most relevant figure for Foreign Office Nazi Europeanism was Paul Karl Schmidt (also known by his postwar pen name “Paul Carell”). Schmidt, born West of Berlin in 1911, joined the Nazi Party as a twenty-year-old student nationalist in 1931, after which he campaigned for the party in the critical elections of the early 1930s as a speaker. According to an autobiography of his written in 1938 upon joining the Foreign Office, during the years of Nazi take-over Schmidt was a leader in his student nationalist organization which fought against “Jewish Intellectualism.” He was, according to a Foreign Office biographical sketch, the founder of “the first large ‘comrade-committee’ of the National Socialist Student Association in Kiel.” In his own words, Schmidt’s youth passion had been “fighting the un-German spirit.” In the early 1930s Schmidt continued his education at the graduate level and received a Ph.D. in Psychology from the University of Kiel in 1936. There, Schmidt became acquainted with Franz Alfred Six, his future colleague in the Foreign Office. Six, at the time a member of the SS, had connections to the Foreign Office and helped Schmidt enter the Foreign Office as a press-analyst. By 1938 Schmidt had joined

the SS. Within a year, at the age of twenty-eight, he had become the director of the Press Department, and by the end of the war he expanded it into Ribbentrop's largest propaganda department in the Foreign Office.⁵⁹ The primary responsibilities of Schmidt's Press Department were: first, gather information from and about foreign press; second, influence the foreign press by daily press conferences with accompanying instructions for Foreign Office publications, associated publications, and journalist operatives assigned to diplomatic missions; third, endeavor to spread Foreign Office messages to a German audience by working with important figures in the domestic German press such as, for example, Giselher Wirsing.

Like Megerle, it can be credibly surmised that Schmidt's Europeanism can be traced back to Giselher Wirsing. First, Schmidt worked closely with Megerle in the Propaganda Committee of 1941 as well as the Standard Theses afterwards, and, as will be shown, quickly aligned himself with Megerle's European approach. But the connection goes back further still. Schmidt's personal assistant Hans Georg Studnitz worked from 1939-1940 in the small journalists' office of the Information Department in which Wirsing and Megerle also worked during

⁵⁹ For biographical details see Press Department correspondences, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 701/R 123697. "Lebensskizze," Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 247/R 27904. Wigbert Benz, *Paul Carell: Ribbentrops Pressechef Paul Karl Schmidt vor und nach 1945* (Berlin: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag, 2005), 10-16.

the same time period.⁶⁰ In fact, already in the fall, 1939 Schmidt and Studnitz were integrating the Europe-Concept into the primary propaganda periodical of the Foreign Office, *Berlin-Rom-Tokio*, which they edited together (and at the same time they began publishing guest articles by Karl Megerle).⁶¹ Finally, as director of the Press Department Schmidt was administratively in charge of the Foreign Office's leading propaganda organ, *Signal*, which was edited by Wirsing after 1943. Schmidt, then, not only became acquainted with Wirsing's Europe-concept early in the war, but even hired Wirsing as a Europe-propagandist to direct his largest propaganda project. As Schmidt's biographer Wigbert Benz has argued, Schmidt had a quite active interest and hands-on role in the *Signal* undertaking.⁶² In fact, Schmidt's first documented deployment of Europe-propaganda was in connection with *Signal*. Schmidt's correspondences in the

⁶⁰ "Draft Reports from MFIU No.3 (Third Army Interrogation Center)," July 30, 1945, United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, box 57, folder "Wirsing, Giselher."

⁶¹ Paul Karl Schmidt, "War 1939," *Berlin-Rom-Tokio*, October issue, 1939. Editors, "Neuordnung Osteuropas," *Berlin-Rom-Tokio*, October issue, 1939. Karl Megerle, "Eine Bessere Weltordnung," *Berlin-Rom-Tokio*, November issue, 1939. Editors, „Um die Freiheit Europas,“ *Berlin-Rom-Tokio*, December issue, 1939.

⁶² This can also be confirmed in Schmidt's memos and correspondences in the Press Department from 1940 and 1941. Among other things, the records show that Schmidt pushed through the *Signal* project despite push-back, that he ensured a pro-Europe narrative, and that he emphasized publishing leading non-German political figures aligned with the foreign policy of the Reich. See Benz, *Paul Carell*, 26-27. See additionally Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 701/R 123696; R 123697; R 123698; R 123699; and R 123717.

Press Department reveal that he was a leading voice advocating for the undertaking of this unique foreign propaganda periodical, even against the advice of co-workers who felt that “the necessity for the creation of a periodical with this new political direction is not pressing.”⁶³ Nevertheless, Schmidt was able to press forward with the *Signal* project, and in a memo distributed throughout the Press Department even before the Nazi invasion of France in the spring, 1940, the main themes for the periodical were outlined, including the advocacy of a new “European utopia,” a new “European economic unit,” and the historical reality of a European “Grossraum” - all accompanied with “a general narrative organized around the term ‘for Europe’.”⁶⁴ Not long thereafter, roughly a week following the Nazi invasion of France, Schmidt wrote Ribbentrop a personal letter recommending an adoption of Megerle’s suggestion for propaganda against the United States based on a European Monroe Doctrine. Schmidt had Megerle, at the time still a lower-end journalist in the Information Department, draft his

⁶³ Lohse to Schmidt, August 27, 1940, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 701/R 123697. It should be noted that Schmidt, as early as May, 1939, prepared a draft for Ribbentrop’s press release vis-à-vis the signing of the “Pact of Steel” between Nazi Germany and fascist Italy. In it, Schmidt ended the comments with: “This pact establishes a solid, unbreakable foundation for the New Order of Europe and the cooperation of the two nations.” But other than the use of the term “New Order of Europe” there is no other nod to the Europe-concept. Thus, the present author feels justified claiming that Schmidt’s first articulated Nazi Europeanism can be dated to his work preparing the *Signal* project.

⁶⁴ Unsigned Press Department memo, undated but most likely early spring, 1940, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 701/R 123717.

suggestion in an essay, which Schmidt sent in his letter to Ribbentrop. Schmidt even asked Ribbentrop if, should Ribbentrop be uncomfortable with Megerle's suggested propaganda narrative, he could have permission to implement the suggestion covertly.⁶⁵

By the end of 1940, Schmidt had been fully converted to Nazi Europeanism. The first recorded instance of Schmidt's Europe-propaganda in public print came from November, 1940 when he wrote a forward to a history of fascism titled "Revolution in the Mediterranean." In the forward he argued that the fascist revolution was too often understood for its domestic impact. But fascism, he argued, also had a revolutionary assignment in foreign policy:

The Axis must re-structure Europe anew; because in the future only the fascist and National Socialist forms of life will be capable of survival after the Western-liberal principles have lost their capacity to overcome the emergencies of European life.

For Schmidt, this foreign policy mission was a natural outgrowth of fascism's domestic message:

It is one of our primary ideologies that a Volk and a community [*Gemeinschaft*] can only survive as long as each and every link has the strength for healthy life and thus the community can band together organically at every moment. Whenever this law has been broken Europe has begun a spiritual and political decline.

Schmidt, then, was articulating an early example of criticizing nationalism by employing the doctrine of national communities (*Volksgemeinschaft*) to European unity. This "law" of European history was evident in Europe's troubling history of "nationalism," "liberalism," the "Middle Ages," the "reformation," the

⁶⁵ Paul Karl Schmidt to Joachim von Ribbentrop, May 20, 1940, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 247/R 27876.

“Enlightenment,” and even the ostensibly disingenuous “pan-Europe” movement – all examples of European community breakdown. In each case, he argued, Europe’s “constituent members [*Glieder*] forgot the larger whole [*das Ganze*] and in their short-sighted self-assuredness they only saw themselves.” But no longer: Germany and Italy were leading the surgical removal of the inorganic, “Western” influence from Great Britain and the United States. The “organic alliance” of Germany and Italy, he declared, was turning European hearts and minds back to the laws of European history.⁶⁶

Schmidt, therefore, was a natural ally of Megerle’s short-lived Propaganda Committee of 1941. The evidence suggests that the two figures together were the driving force behind the rise of Nazi Europeanism in Foreign Office propaganda. In September, 1941, around the same time Megerle submitted his essay calling for a more “positive” Europe-propaganda, Schmidt submitted to the Propaganda Committee a 19-page essay of his own similarly advocating for a more audacious Europe-narrative. The essay, titled “Working Plan for an Aggressive News and Press Initiative,” opened with two “theses” which should guide Europe-propaganda. First, he agreed with Megerle that Foreign Office Propaganda should be organized around the slogan “Leave Europe to the Europeans!” and added the slogan “Defeat the Enemies of Europe!” Second, he added an emphasis on newer and more equitable social relations in Europe, which he organized under a third slogan “Social Europe,” and which included various calls for Europe-wide

⁶⁶ Paul Karl Schmidt, “Vorwort,” *Revolution im Mittelmeer*, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 247/R 27902.

welfare guarantees. Then, anticipating the country-specific Standard Theses of 1942, Schmidt offered a series of opening thoughts on how to calibrate Nazi Europeanism to different countries ranging from France, to the Scandinavian countries, to the Balkans, and even to the Arab world (which he suggested could be brought into an alliance with Europe because both share an opposition to Zionism). Schmidt even ended his essay with the argument that Europe-propaganda should also be advocated in the German press.⁶⁷ It is important to note that Schmidt, like Megerle, advocated extending Nazi Europeanism to a German audience at such early and optimistic stages of the German war effort, because this bolsters the claim in this dissertation that their Nazi-Europeanism was not, in fact, blatant opportunism but rather something in which they sincerely believed. After the disbanding of the Propaganda Committee at the end of 1941, Schmidt continued to support Megerle's Europeanism by approving and ordering the use of Standard Theses in the Press Department. In February, 1942 Schmidt distributed a memo in the Press Department in which he explained: "the theses approved by Reich Foreign Minister [Ribbentrop] are to be used unceasingly." "Not until a thesis has been explicitly withdrawn," he continued, "is one free from the responsibility to consistently use them."⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Paul Karl Schmidt, "Arbeitsplan für eine offensive Nachrichten- und Pressearbeit," undated but based on context and surrounding documents most likely late September/early October, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 703/R 97629.

⁶⁸ Memo by Paul Karl Schmidt titled "Initiative 10," February 21, 1942, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 701/R 123558. On the other hand, there is also evidence

Nazi Europeanism in the Press Department

Indeed, Schmidt implemented Nazi Europeanism in the duties and functions of the Press Department, and in his press activities throughout the entire war continuously reinforced what he called “our general program for the New Europe.”⁶⁹ Schmidt accomplished this through a variety of means. One way was to coordinate initiatives and events with other institutions and organizations outside of the Foreign Office. As early as July, 1941 Schmidt worked with the Waffen-SS to place non-German journalists in the unique, multi-national divisions of the Waffen-SS as war-reporters who could attest to the European solidarity on the Eastern Front.⁷⁰ In the spring of 1942 Schmidt worked with Goebbels’s Propaganda Ministry to bring together students and soldiers from across Europe at a conference in Dresden called the “Conference for European

that Schmidt was less willing than Megerle to pursue “positive” Europeanism in official propaganda. For example, in early 1943, as explained above, Megerle was criticized by Schmidt for having demanded that the Foreign Office be more transparent about the future composition and rules of the European New Order. See Karl Megerle to Paul Karl Schmidt, January 19, 1943, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany, RZ 102/R 29850.

⁶⁹ Paul Karl Schmidt, memo titled “Notiz für Herrn Gesandten von Rintelen über Herrn Schlottmann,” October 27, 1941, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 247/R 27893.

⁷⁰ Paul Karl Schmidt to Joachim von Ribbentrop, July 15, 1941, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 247/R 27877.

Students and Front Soldiers.⁷¹ From 1940-1942 Schmidt organized through the Press Department “informal evenings” at the Foreign Office in Berlin to which hundreds of German and non-German journalists, as well as foreign diplomats and their guests, were regularly invited. In the second half of 1942, seventy-seven “informal meetings” took place, many of them led by Schmidt himself. The evenings provided cultural entertainment (films, music, orchestras, and theatre) provided by the Propaganda Ministry, but were also a backdoor for Foreign Office propaganda. As one inner-departmental report at the end of 1942 put it:

The informal evenings led by Dr. Schmidt have become a center-piece of club-life and the resulting political discussions have greatly enabled us in our work to spread many proposals and guidelines amongst the active foreign journalists and diplomatic press-attachments of Axis nations.⁷²

Each Tuesday a special evening was led by Schmidt called the “political evening.” Another report from early 1942 explained that “[Schmidt’s] intimate political discussions have definitely strengthened belief in, and understanding for, the increasingly emerging concept of a New Europe.”⁷³

⁷¹ Memo by Paul Karl Schmidt addressed to “Abteilung Pers,” April 16, 1942, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 247/R 27908.

⁷² In 1940 the “informal evenings” only took place once per week and only a few dozen people attended, but by the end of 1942 they supposedly took place multiple times a week with many dozen attendees. See Foreign Office correspondences with the “Auslands- Presseclub,” Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 247/R 27892.

⁷³ Report by “Herr Schneiditz,” undated but most likely early 1942, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 247/R 27892.

Schmidt jealously guarded his Press Department's authority over influencing non-German journalists and dignitaries. In the spring of 1942 Goebbels's Propaganda Ministry attempted to cut into Schmidt's market by establishing the so-called "Union of National Journalists' Associations," an organization which brought together over 400 leading journalists from across Europe via occasional conferences and publications.⁷⁴ Schmidt viewed this organization as a threat to his authority, and quickly moved to ensure that the Press Department review all speeches presented by the roughly one hundred German participants at the first conference in Venice in April, 1942.⁷⁵ After unsuccessfully trying to have the Press Department fully take over the organization, Schmidt maneuvered himself onto the "Presiding Committee" in mid-1943 in order to ensure that the Foreign Office would not lose its influence on the substance of Union conferences and publications.⁷⁶ Schmidt was not afraid to butt heads with the President of the Presiding Committee, Helmut Sündermann, whom he sent an angry letter, accusing him of allowing Hungarians to send Jews, the "number one enemy of our continent," to the upcoming conference in Vienna. Schmidt was particularly critical of a failure on Sündermann's part to use the

⁷⁴ Benjamin George Martin, *The Nazi-Fascist New Order for European Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016), 266.

⁷⁵ "Material zur Tagung in Venedig, 1942," Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 247/R 27886.

⁷⁶ Paul Karl Schmidt to Joachim von Ribbentrop, June 16, 1943, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 247/R 27894.

Union as a “banner of hope for all faithful and fighting peoples in the European crusade.” He asked Sündermann to make Europe-propaganda a more central pillar of the upcoming conference. “Let’s be honest, Mr. Sündermann,” he exclaimed, “if Europe is born on a crooked foundation, then this Europe will self-destruct the next day.”⁷⁷ Perhaps as a result of his protestations, Schmidt was allowed to give the concluding speech at the conference in which he presented the Second World War as a struggle for the preservation of Europe’s cultural heritage. The “European cultural community,” he insisted, would only survive this war if a “European journalism” arose to support it.⁷⁸

Schmidt’s speech at the Union of National Journalists’ Association in Vienna was only one example of his lectures outside of Germany. Indeed, the records indicate that he was quite the travelling lecturer, frequently speaking at many venues both in and outside of Germany, where he was invited to expound upon the European mission of Nazi Germany.⁷⁹ Schmidt was even invited to speak in front of administrators of the domestic press in Germany on January 17th,

⁷⁷ Paul Karl Schmidt to Sündermann, August 2, 1943, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 247/R 27894.

⁷⁸ Paul Karl Schmidt, “Anschlussrede,” Vienna Conference for the Union of National Journalists’ Association, June 25, 1943, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 247/R 27894.

⁷⁹ Schmidt’s scattered personal document collection include evidence that just in the months of May, 1941 to May, 1942 he accepted nearly a dozen invitations in Scandinavia and the Balkans, as well as Hamburg, Bremen, Dresden, and, of course, Berlin. See “Vorträge des Herrn Gesandten Dr. Schmidt,” Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 247/R 27893.

1943, where he was asked to give an account of foreign propaganda. He explained to his audience of German press administrators that, unlike domestic propaganda, his work had to more carefully navigate “the greatest doctrine of the National Socialist movement,” namely: race. This meant finding a propaganda narrative which reconciled race with the Reich’s foreign policy goals. The answer, Schmidt argued, was the “great idea of the New Order of Europe.” This “great idea” made it possible to marry together the most important principles of the European war: “the Occident, Europe, the Nordic-man, and Germania with its racial and cultural values.” This new “motto,” the “New Order of Europe,” Schmidt explained, had been painstakingly and conscientiously developed by the Foreign Office. It had allegedly already forced the Western Allies onto the defensive, leading them to articulate a postwar vision of their own: the Atlantic Charter. Schmidt regarded the Atlantic Charter as a great victory for Nazi Europe-propaganda, because it ostensibly exposed the contradictions behind Western Alliance of imperialists and democrats. Of course, Schmidt also acknowledged the criticism that the new “motto” was silent on the “future composition of the New Order,” but he implored the domestic press to nonetheless assist the New Order narrative, promising that “we will find possibilities in the near future to say more about this, and even illustrate a more specific division of roles.” Yet, Schmidt also explained that this promise would nevertheless not break with a so-called “iron principle”: namely, that only after the war would crucial political decisions about the future be decided. Still, he proceeded to expound for his listeners on the doctrine of Grossraum, which he

argued was a quite explicit economic vision for the postwar New Order.⁸⁰ Schmidt's appeals to the domestic press were important for a few reasons. First, it is yet another example of the Foreign Office's attempts to infiltrate domestic propaganda with Nazi-Europeanism. And the fact that he felt compelled to defend Nazi Europeanism from its lack of specifics suggests there existed a feedback loop between German audiences and Nazi Europeanism. Finally, speaking to a German audience Schmitt could be more candid about the racial components of his Nazi Europeanism, something Schmidt likewise illustrated in a speech to Wehrmacht and Waffen-SS veterans in Dresden on April 19th, 1942. Roosevelt, he explained, had recently presented the war as a struggle for the survival of democracy; in reality, Schmidt argued, it was a struggle for the survival of something much older: the "racial unity" of "old Europe." He explained:

Above the differences of our nations there stands a geographical, racial, and historical unity which separates us from those around us and which - despite centuries of conflicts, errors, wars, and hatreds - pushed us towards an ever closer community of destiny [*Schicksalsgemeinschaft*].

In making this argument, Schmidt was eschewing the distinctiveness of the Germanic race. To be sure, underneath the racial unity of Europe Schmidt saw different "peoples" (*Völker*), and in the nineteenth century the natural evolution of government corresponded to these different "peoples" (Germany was simply a late development in this process). But for Schmidt, unlike for orthodox National Socialists, the fusion of nation and state was not the final stage of history; in fact,

⁸⁰ Paul Karl Schmidt, "Vor der deutschen Presse," January, 17, 1943, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 247/R 27893.

the nation-state era was overtaken by a conspiracy of British and American Jews who created “the Jewish-plutocratic Europe” during the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. The emergence of Bolshevism was only the “most radical form of the Jewish-capitalist undertaking,” and thus an extremist effort to withhold history from further development. The rise of fascist Italy and Nazi Germany, he continued, each initially prioritized only their respective Volk, but together quickly developed into the “Berlin-Rom Axis,” a collective effort to replace the Jewish nation-state system with “the New Racial Europe,” defined as a “racial federation” armed to defeat “the Jewish conspiracy in all of its forms.”

Or, as he put it:

Opposed to the world revolution of the so-called proletariats and opposed to the world reaction of the plutocrats (both of which are mere Jewish phrases) – against both of these there stands an organic Order, a racially determined Grossraum within which there are politically independent and enclosed communities.

Subtly, then, Schmidt surgically removed the concept of “race” from “Volk” while alleging the importance of both: “Volk and Race are the basis of this new form of politics.”⁸¹ As seen in the above quotations, Schmidt was able to hide his unorthodoxy in Nazi racial doctrine by doubling-down and amalgamating an equally foundational pillar of National Socialism: antisemitism. This can be further illustrated by taking a closer look at Schmidt’s most aggressively pursued

⁸¹ Paul Karl Schmidt, speech titled “Der Kampf um das völkische Europa,” at the “Europäisches Studenten- und Frontkämpfertreffen,” April 19, 1942, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 247/R 27893.

policy for disseminating Europe-propaganda in the Press Department: namely, the printed word.

Antisemitism and Illiberalism in Schmidt's Europe-Concept

Schmidt's personal document collection in the archives of the German Foreign Office in Berlin reveal that he regularly propagated the Foreign Office's Europe-propaganda by publishing hundreds of articles in dozens of publications throughout Nazi-occupied Europe as well as German publications in the Reich.⁸² Additionally, Schmidt and his assistant Hans Georg von Studnitz edited and published a monthly periodical directly from the Foreign Office called *Berlin-Rom-Tokio* (hereafter "BRT"), which was published in German and Italian and distributed largely in Berlin, Rome, and in the German diplomatic embassies throughout Occupied Europe. Unlike other periodicals in which the Foreign Office was involved, such as *Signal*, BRT was published directly by Schmidt, who regularly penned lead-articles and therefore used the periodical as the primary organ for articulating Foreign Office Europeanism; in fact, Schmidt himself called BRT the "authoritative periodical of the New Order."⁸³ Schmidt's war-time editorial work, in BRT and elsewhere, is important not just because it is

⁸² See Paul Karl Schmidt's personal documents, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 247/R 27893 and R 27899.

⁸³ Paul Karl Schmidt to "Kleinlein," May 5, 1941, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 247/R 27881. BRT regularly published propagandists who also wrote in *Signal*, the other large Europe-periodical of the Foreign Office. For example, Rudolf Fischer and Max Clauss.

evidence of the proliferation of Foreign Office Nazi-Europeanism such as the “Standard Theses.” It also gives insight into the unique form that Nazi Europeanism took in Schmidt’s Press Office; in particular, the antisemitism and illiberalism.

Jews performed a unique and important role in Schmidt’s Europe-propaganda. One of the most important developments in the historical literature on Nazi antisemitism is a shift from an emphasis on the biological doctrines to the political and conspiratorial nature of Nazi antisemitism.⁸⁴ Schmidt, whose racism as illustrated above did not amount to more than vague notions of shared European racial superiority, likewise deplored the Jews most vehemently because of their supposed world-conspiratorial influence. At the core of this obsession was the notion that the Jews had maneuvered their way into the hallways of power in the United States. The Jews, Schmidt explained to Wehrmacht and Waffen-SS soldiers in April, 1942, had successfully harnessed the chaos of the First World War to infiltrate Woodrow Wilson’s White House with their Wall Street puppet-masters. The result was Wilson’s “Versailles system,” or the “Jewish-Plutocratic Europe” of the inter-war period.⁸⁵ Franklin D. Roosevelt, subsequently, represented the extension and ascension of “world Jewry” to its highest reach of

⁸⁴ Jeffrey Herf, *The Jewish Enemy: Nazi Propaganda during World War II and the Holocaust* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2006).

⁸⁵ Paul Karl Schmidt, speech titled “Der Kampf um das völkische Europa,” at the “Europäisches Studenten- und Frontkämpfertreffen,” April 19, 1942, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 247/R 27893.

power. In fact, Roosevelt, Schmidt regularly argued, was a captain-like figure in a world-wide Jewish grasp for dominance of the entire earth. As he explained in BRT in January, 1942: “Roosevelt is the ultimate initiator of this World War. He acts on behalf of World Jewry.” He continued:

...everywhere you can not only feel but even see with clear evidence the seal of David's star underneath the plans, slogans, lies, and atrocities.... You can see everywhere and always the Jewish origins underneath the commands of those organizations which are leading and directing this war. The Jewish bankers in Paris and the Jewish profiteers in Warsaw have forced the world into war using their money received from Roosevelt and his commissioners.⁸⁶

British imperialism, too, was linked into the conspiracy. In fact, Schmidt and his assistant Hans Georg von Studnitz frequently argued that Zionism was among the most dangerous weapons of the Jewish world-conspiracy, and was supported by the British because of strong Jewish political control there as well.⁸⁷ Finally, Bolshevism, too, of course, was yet another weapon in the Jewish crusade to dominate the globe.

But Schmidt's antisemitism made sense of, and ultimately sought redress for, the vast Jewish world-conspiracy with the help of Nazi Europeanism. How could one make sense of Jewish presence behind both liberal capitalism and

⁸⁶ Paul Karl Schmidt, “Europa den Europäern, Ostasien den Ostasiaten,” *Berlin-Rom-Tokio*, January issue, 1942, 2-5. Paul Karl Schmidt, “Quartiermacher des Bolschewismus,” *Berlin-Rom-Tokio*, December issue, 1942, 2-5. Paul Karl Schmidt, “Todesstoss für die Atlantik-Charta,” *Berlin-Rom-Tokio*, March issue, 1943, 2-5.

⁸⁷ Paul Karl Schmidt, “Leichtfertige Politiker – leichtfertige Strategen,” *Berlin-Rom-Tokio*, May issue, 1942, 2-5. Hans Georg von Studnitz, “Das Davidsbanner – nicht entrollt,” *Berlin-Rom-Tokio*, January issue, 1944, 2-5.

Marxist Bolshevism was a question Schmidt often asked. The answer: lurking beneath both seemingly contradictory ideologies was a repudiation of the principle of organic differences in the world. Both the “world revolution” of Bolshevism and the “dollar-imperialism” of liberalism, he explained in a BRT article in October, 1941, were camouflaged tools of “universalism,” the doctrine that the entire world should be shaped similarly – politically, culturally, socially, and economically.⁸⁸ But the past was no cure to Jewish ascendancy, Schmidt claimed, because the political forms of governance in Europe’s past - imperialism and the nation-state - had likewise been overtaken by the Jewish conspiracy and, in fact, had been used to prevent European unity.⁸⁹ In contrast, the New Order of Europe, described as “an organic federation,” was the only possibility in the modern world to prevent the “Jewish collective in all of its forms.”⁹⁰

Schmidt’s antisemitism was not merely a propaganda tool. As Schmidt’s biographer Wigbert Benz has illustrated, Schmidt may even have participated in the Holocaust. During the years of his postwar literary fame Schmidt was able to

⁸⁸ Paul Karl Schmidt, “Die Überwindung zweier Irrtümer,” *Berlin-Rom-Tokio*, October issue, 1941, np.

⁸⁹ Paul Karl Schmidt, “Der europäische Revolutionskrieg,” *Berlin-Rom-Tokio*, April issue, 1943, 2-3.

⁹⁰ Paul Karl Schmidt, speech titled “Der Kampf um das völkische Europa,” at the “Europäisches Studenten- und Frontkämpfertreffen,” April 19, 1942, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 247/R 27893. See additionally an essay in Paul Karl Schmidt’s personal documents titled “Völker gegen Kliken,” August, 1941, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 247/R 27893.

hide from public view a series of legal proceedings during the 1960s which credibly implicated him in the mass murder of Jews in Hungary. Although ultimately pronounced innocent by postwar West German courts of assisting the mass murder of Hungarian Jews in 1944, one document from the trials at the very least exposes his likely knowledge and support for the massacre of Jews. It was a note written by Schmidt on May 27th, 1944, after the deportation of Hungarian Jews had already begun, to the German diplomat in Budapest Edmund Veesenmeyer:

Having surveyed a very thorough review of the current and planned Jew-actions in Hungary I have surmised that in June a large-action is planned for Jews in Budapest. This planned action will, due to its magnitude, produce quite a bit of attention abroad and will certainly be cause for a hefty reaction. The enemy will scream of human hunts etc. and will attempt to radicalize their own public opinion and that of neutral nations through the use of atrocity-reports. I would like to therefore suggest that one avoid these things by creating external reasons and justifications for the action: for example, uncovering explosive material in Jewish organizations' buildings and synagogues, conspiratorial plans, assaults on police officers, and the use of foreign currencies with the goal of undermining Hungary currency. The final component of such a move would have to be a particularly extreme example such as to justify the round-up.⁹¹

When analyzing Schmidt's antisemitism it becomes clear that he was intensely preoccupied with the United States. In fact, like most Nazi Europeanists in this dissertation, and unlike most other Nazi propagandists, the greatest threat in the world was and always had been the United States and its accompanying political and economic liberalism. Communism was even frequently depicted by Schmidt's Press Department as a function of American liberalism, a "variety" of

⁹¹ Benz, 37-38.

American Jewry.⁹² This primacy of anti-Western over anti-Eastern sentiment meant that much of Schmidt's Europeanism was an attempt to appropriate the claims of the liberal tradition in order to expose the Jews hiding behind the façade of democracy. Take for example the following arguments of Schmidt's written to a German audience on the front-page of the *Frankfurter Anzeiger* on May 4th, 1943:

We are not against democracy, but we are against the kind of democracy which was forced on us with the help of the Jews in order to oppress us.

He continued:

And in the end we are also not against humanism; because in Central Europe (especially in Germany and Italy) humanism was born, spiritually and culturally anchored, and also realized in practice. However, we are against the Jewish kind of humanism, which our peoples have gotten to know all too well. ... This humanism was on display in the history of English concentration camps. This humanism was revealed to the world in the social hell-hole of New York, Washington, and London, as well as on Stalin's Kolkhoz farms. It is demonstrated in the English methods of domination in their colonies, as well as in the proclamation of a bombing war against women and children, and in the starvation of the last war.

He finished:

We have taken a stand against the reaction of the West and her child born in the East. The European peoples are marching with Hitler.⁹³

⁹² Paul Karl Schmidt, speech titled "Der Kampf um das völkische Europa," at the "Europäisches Studenten- und Frontkämpfertreffen," April 19, 1942, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 247/R 27893.

⁹³ Paul Karl Schmidt, front-page article in *Frankfurter Anzeiger* titled "Der europäische Revolutionskrieg," May 4, 1943, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 247/R 27899.

Schmidt also shared this message with non-German audiences. His concluding speech at the “Union of National Journalists’ Associations” in Vienna on June 25th, 1943 was a historical lecture on Europe’s real humanist tradition, something he called “Occidental cultural humanity” (*abendländische Kultur Menschheit*). This tradition, protected over centuries by Europeans against Oriental barbarians, had ostensibly now been reinvigorated by the New Order of Europe and simultaneously rejected by the enemies of Europe in the present war, such as during the Katyn massacre and the murderous bombing raids of the Western Allies. Furthermore, the real “flag of freedom” and “banner of progress” was not found in the liberal tradition, but in the voluntary sacrifice and unification of Europeans in the present war.⁹⁴

Conclusion

Europe-propaganda in Schmidt’s Press Department, then, was articulated and implemented in the Foreign Office to both foreign and domestic German audiences. The Press Department’s Europe-propaganda is an example of how Megerle’s mission to situate the Europe-concept in the highest echelons of the Foreign Office ultimately succeeded. In early 1942 the Foreign Office commissioned a study into the reception of Europe-propaganda abroad and stated that, although most Europeans were frustrated with the lack of specificity, “it is doubtlessly true and can be thoroughly confirmed that the proclaimed war-time

⁹⁴ Paul Karl Schmidt, “Anschlussrede,” Vienna Conference for the Union of National Journalists’ Association, June 25, 1943, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, RZ 247/R 27894.

goal of the Axis powers for a restructured Europe has engaged the populations of all European countries in the most spirited way....” The report, based on interviews with diplomatic missions across Europe, collected dozens of proclamations of support from social elites in the various countries of Nazi-occupied Europe.⁹⁵ The Foreign Office, therefore, was at the very least convinced of the success and importance of Nazi Europeanism in their propaganda efforts. It is difficult to ascertain how effective Foreign Office propaganda was, but the subsequent chapter of this dissertation takes a closer look at a few operations, handling them as case studies for Europe-propaganda in the Foreign Office. As will be shown, many non-Germans enthusiastically collaborated intellectually with the Europe-propaganda projects of the Foreign Office. But just as important, it will show that the Germans who administered these projects, and who after the war would enjoy illustrious careers as leading West German journalists, found their way in the Foreign Office to a world ideology anchored in the Europe-concept.

⁹⁵ Heinz Julius Hugo Trützschler von Falkenstein, report, marked “secret Reich matter,” March 24 and 30, 1942, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany, RZ 211/R 105120.

Chapter 4: Foreign Office Europe-Projects in Berlin and Abroad

Introduction

The following chapter continues the investigation of Europe-propaganda in the Foreign Office by investigating a few case studies of propaganda projects led by three less-prominent Europe-propagandists in the Foreign Office: Frans Alfred Six, Axel Seeberg, and Klaus Mehnert. Six organized and directed a large academic think-tank affiliated with Foreign Office called the “German Foreign Studies Institute.” One of this institute’s most prestigious projects was a yearly conference retreat organized and administered by Axel Seeberg called the “Foreigner Course,” to which hundreds of non-German social elites from across occupied Europe were invited for propaganda instruction on the Europe-concept. Each of these operations will be discussed in the first half of this chapter. A final section of this chapter will introduce Klaus Mehnert who directed Foreign Office Europe-propaganda operations on the other side of the globe in China and the Pacific. Although their war-time profiles were not as large as Megerle’s and Schmidt’s, after the Second World War Seeberg and Mehnert became two of the most influential conservative editorialists in West Germany, and Six worked briefly with United States secret services in a propaganda project funded by the CIA. They are therefore of supreme importance for understanding the transwar influence of Foreign Office Europe-propaganda. The postwar continuities and ruptures in their Europe-concept are the subject of a subsequent chapter. Instead, this chapter will present their work as Europe-propagandists and grapple with the way in which their ideological commitment to the Europe-concept informed their

transition from collaborators in National Socialism to self-proclaimed critics of National Socialism.

Franz Alfred Six and the German Foreign Studies Institute (DAWI)

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the Foreign Office had a close relationship with various academic institutions in Berlin which were integrated into the Foreign Office in order to conduct research on countries and populations throughout the world as well as disseminate Europe-propaganda in intellectual milieus. Such was the case with Friedrich Berber's "German Institute for Foreign Policy Research" (*Duetsches Institut für Aussenpolitische Forschung*), which published the Europe Handbook. As historian Birgit Kletzlin has illustrated, Berber's German Institute for Foreign Policy Research and its subsidiary academic journals were a key gathering ground for German scholars who developed the Europe-concept in the academy during the Second World War.¹ In addition to Berber's institute, there was a second, separate academic organization which was likewise incorporated into the Foreign Office: the German Foreign Studies Institute, or "*Deutsches Auslandswissenschaftliches Institut.*" The German Foreign Studies Institute (hereafter DAWI) was originally the *Hochschule für Politik*, a liberal, pro-Weimar academy in Berlin founded by Friedrich Naumann and Theodor Heuss after the First World War.² In 1933 the

¹ Birgit Kletzlin, *Europa aus Rasse und Raum: die Nationalsozialistische Idee der Neuen Ordnung* (Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2002).

² The surviving documents for DAWI in the Federal Archives of Germany in Berlin-Lichterfelde contain an essay by historian/archivist Ulrich Roeske, who traced the construction of

Hochschule für Politik was taken over by Joseph Goebbels's Propaganda Ministry after most of its employees had either emigrated or were forced to step down. On January 1st, 1940 the *Hochschule für Politik* was combined with the Department of Foreign Languages and Culture at the University of Berlin, the predecessor of Humboldt University. The resulting department, called the "Foreign Studies Department" (*Auslandswissenschaftliche Fakultät*), was led by SS-functionary, and future *Einsatzgruppen* member, Franz Alfred Six, who immediately upon the creation of the Foreign Studies Department created DAWI as a special institute within the department for educating the upcoming administrative generation of the Nazi state on foreign affairs within a more controlled ideological environment.³ Throughout the war Six held various positions in the SS and the Foreign Office, and in his absence DAWI was led by sociologist Karl Heinz Pfeffer, a former Conservative Revolutionary who had published frequently in Wirsing's publications during the Weimar period and continued to publish for Wirsing through the end of the war. Between 1940 and 1943 DAWI matriculated over 4000 students who were supposed to supply the Reich with the highest quality "specialists on foreign peoples" (*Kenner fremder Völker*). Additionally,

DAWI and submitted his research to the on-site finding aid. This is the most useful resource for DAWI's background history. See Ulrich Roeske, "Einleitung," 1992, Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichterfelde, Band I, Findbuch, R 4902, Deutsches Auslandswissenschaftliches Institut.

³ In fact, Six compared DAWI's purpose to that of Chatham House in London and the *École libre des sciences politiques* in Paris. See Franz Alfred Six to Hans Heinrich Lammers, March 16, 1942, Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichterfelde, R 43-II/947a, frame 100.

DAWI funded and published a plethora of foreign studies research projects, many of which were conducted through the prism of the Europe-concept; in fact, the stated purpose of DAWI was to research “the German mission in Europe and European mission in the world.”⁴ According to financial records of the Reich Chancellery, DAWI had a yearly budget of 50,000 Reichsmark.⁵ The Foreign Office, always jealously guarding its authority on foreign policy, successfully appointed Franz Alfred Six to be director of the Cultural-Politics Department of the Foreign Office in 1943 thus using the tool of promotion to make DAWI and the entire Foreign Studies Department an official branch of the Foreign Office.⁶ As such, DAWI in particular became an important vessel for Foreign Office Europe-propaganda.

Like much of the rest of the Foreign Office documentary record, most of the documents for the Cultural-Politics Department were also destroyed or lost at the end of the war. However, the federal archive in Berlin-Lichterfelde has an admittedly partial but nevertheless substantial collection of remaining documents from DAWI. Most of the documents are composed of essays, history reports, and primary sources for research projects conducted by DAWI on the various countries and territories under examination. But there are also several folders which reveal an important propaganda function fulfilled by DAWI on behalf of

⁴ Kletzlin, *Europa aus Rasse und Raum*, 49-53.

⁵ Records of the Reichskanzlei concerning DAWI funding, Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichterfelde, R 43-II/947a.

⁶ Roeske, “Einleitung.”

the Foreign Office from 1943-1945. This section will examine Nazi-Europeanism within Foreign Office-aligned academia by drawing from these documents as well as correspondences between DAWI and the Reich Chancellery concerning finances (the documents for which are also available at the federal archive in Berlin-Lichterfelde). Finally, this section will also make use of a few folders containing DAWI records which found their way to the Political Archive of the Foreign Office in Berlin.

In its first few years of existence DAWI appears to have been primarily focused on providing its students with detailed knowledge of the outside world through the prism of Nazi racial ideology. An early assistant of Six's, Dr. Bruno Kiesewetter, explained in 1940: DAWI was supposed to provide an environment where Nazi academics and administrators-in-training could acquire a comprehensive "view of the world" so that they could more efficiently execute the needs of the Nazi-state.⁷ Nevertheless, even before DAWI was incorporated into the Foreign Office, Franz Alfred Six appears to have been drawn to Nazi Europeanism and incorporated it into the research activities at DAWI. As early as the summer of 1940 one of DAWI's first academic workshops was titled "The New Order of Europe."⁸ In fact, its self-described purpose in its early requests for Nazi Party funding in early 1941 was to improve the image of the Reich among

⁷ Roeske, "Einleitung."

⁸ Hans Heinrich Lammers to Franz Alfred Six, July 5, 1940, Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichterfelde, R 43-II/947a, frames 56-58.

foreigners by academically pursuing sensitive topics in political, economic, and culture as it relates to the “creation of the New Europe.”⁹

The documentary evidence for DAWI reveals that Franz Alfred Six was an early adherent to Nazi Europeanism. Before taking over DAWI, Six had been converted from the student nationalist milieu into the SS in 1935 as a “foreign enemy specialist” (*Gegner-Forscher*).¹⁰ He was eventually promoted to press director of the SD (*Sicherheitsdienst*), where he oversaw research on ideological enemies of the Reich and coordinated press campaigns against them. In 1939 he was transferred to the Reich Security Main Office (RSHA) and took over control of DAWI. Even after assuming leadership of DAWI in 1940 Six continued to work in the RSHA; in fact, in 1941 he was made a “commando leader” in Einsatzgruppe B and, despite his postwar denials, in all likelihood participated in mass executions of Jews.¹¹ Remarkably, while he was stationed in his murderous capacity on the Eastern Front Six continued to direct DAWI from abroad and contribute intellectual material on the New Order of Europe. This he did by editing and contributing to DAWI’s primary intellectual journal, *Zeitschrift für Politik* (ZfP), a monthly periodical published by *Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft*.¹²

⁹ Dr. Achenbach[sic] to Hans Heinrich Lammers and Ulrich Müller, May 19, 1941, Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichterfelde, R 43-II/947a, frames 97-99.

¹⁰ Lutz Hachmeister, *Der Gegnerforscher. Die Karriere des SS-Führers Franz Alfred Six* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1998), 144-199.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 231-238.

¹² After April, 1943 ZfP was only published once every two months.

ZfP co-functioned as both a medium for DAWI's completed academic research as well as a political editorial which even published famous European collaborators, including occupied-Norway governor Viktor Quisling and Belgian Waffen-SS commander Leon Degrelle.¹³ Six regularly penned articles in the politics section titled "Europe and the Reich," where he commented on current events and attempted to present DAWI research on the Europe-concept as an answer to contemporary problems. In November, 1941, while serving in the Einsatzgruppe, Six penned an article in ZfP inaugurating the editorial section. The article, titled "The Reich and Europe" quoted Hitler's October 3rd, 1941 speech wherein he called for a continent-wide European crusade against Bolshevism (discussed in the introduction of this dissertation), and declared the Eastern Front only the latest example of a "more encompassing development," namely: the "powerful new ordering of the continent." He proceeded to discuss various programs for cultural exchange between Europeans. Thus, while contributing significantly to the Holocaust Six was simultaneously embedding a European program into DAWI.¹⁴ In comparison to other Nazi Europeanists, Six's Europe-concept was especially marked by two key elements: the Germanic-concept and Hegelian historicism.

Unlike many Nazi Europeanists, Six was uncompromisingly loyal to the race-concept. In order to square Europe with racial doctrine, therefore, Six relied

¹³ ZfP also published Ernst Wilhelm Eschmann as well as other figures who published in Wirsing's network such as Max Clauss.

¹⁴ Franz Alfred Six, "Das Reich und Europa," *Zeitschrift für Politik*, November issue, 1941, 707-713.

heavily on what this dissertation calls “Germanic Europeanism.” Much like the Europe-concept in the Waffen-SS, for Six the New Order of Europe meant an integration of racially pure Germanic peoples into a unified community. Europe itself, he argued in a ZfP article in March, 1942, was a weak continent torn between Asia (Islam) and the Mediterranean (Christianity) until the Germanic migrations of the Middle Ages secured its independence. The present war, then, was a struggle to defend the Germanic heritage by securing a “European Lebensraum.” For Six, like many Germanic Europeanists, the term “Germanic” was wielded with enough imprecision to leave open the question of who precisely belongs, but the repeated insistence on the revolutionary value of Nazi race concept was a clear suggestion that not all peoples presently in Europe actually belonged.¹⁵

Increasingly over the course of 1942 Six supplemented his Germanic Europeanism with a detailed and codified historicism. His goal was to present evidence that European unity was historically inevitable, but in order to construct such a narrative he had to confront a historical trajectory which so often seemed to condemn Europeans to perpetual conflict among themselves. Six’s answer was to find a hidden Hegelian-like European spirit underneath the surface of intra-European conflict. European history, then, was a series of “European civil wars” which broke up Europe’s original unity, each of which, however, ironically and necessarily left Europe one step closer to an even more powerful moment of

¹⁵ Franz Alfred Six, “Europa und das Weltbild,” *Zeitschrift für Politik*, March issue, 1942, 183-185.

unification; namely, the present war. Six introduced this historicism in a speech given in November, 1942 to hundreds of politicians, journalists, and intellectuals throughout Nazi-occupied Europe who had been invited by DAWI to Germany for a two-week seminar.¹⁶ The speech, titled “The European Civil Wars and the Present War of Unification,” began with the Holy Roman Empire, an ostensibly unified Germanic kingdom which absorbed the strength of the Roman Empire it had defeated and subsequently weaponized its new-found “occidental solidarity” (*abendländische Solidarität*) against the Asiatic barbarians during the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries. Unfortunately, however, during the late Middle Ages the “nation-state concept” conquered the Holy Roman Empire and turned Europeans against one another: “...in replacement of the centralized, dominant, fair Order as well as the occidental consciousness of community there emerged a diverse, decentralized world of states. The age of European civil wars had begun.” The “age of European civil wars,” Six argued, quickly became dominated by a few, self-interested empires, whose competition unwittingly sparked ideas of European unity (the Napoleonic Empire, for example, evolved into an “attempted unification of the European continent” in its struggle against the British Empire). Nation-state competition in the Early Modern time period decimated the heart of Europe (Central Europe) and consequently inadvertently enabled the rise of two nation-states, Italy and Germany, which, unlike other nation-states, rebelled against the “nation-state system” and consequently set out to reverse the “self-immolation of Europe.” The First World War, he continued,

¹⁶ This seminar was one of the “Foreigner Courses” discussed in more detail below.

was caused by the English and Russians who recognized the threat to the nation-state system represented by Germany. And while Allied victory appeared to be a historical confirmation of the nation-state, it produced a justifiably resentful Germany. Germany's rebellion, although it began as a national revolution, underwent an inevitable "change of heart" because it, too, was a rebellion against the nation-state system. The Bolshevik war waged against Nazi Germany produced the most important historical irony of all, "the strongest element of European solidarity has awakened: the consciousness of an occidental cultural unity which spans all European peoples." Hitler himself, Six explained to his guests, had undergone this "change of heart," and he proceeded to quote various Hitler statements vis-à-vis the New Order of Europe. His speech included a ten-page hand-out of the dozens of "European civil wars" throughout European history with accompanying explanations regarding each war's hidden "purpose" in the European-unity metanarrative.¹⁷

By the end of 1942 Six regularly presented DAWI research as centered around the Europe-concept: "At the center of our relevant research apparatus vis-à-vis foreign research and the Reich," he explained in an academic literature review, "is the theme: 'The Reich and Europe'." According to Six, this research theme could be broken down into three constituent parts: "1) the recognition of Germanic Reich concept, its historical structure, and its future greatness; 2) the

¹⁷ Franz Alfred Six, "Die Bürgerkriege Europas und der Einigungskrieg der Gegenwart," Ausländerkursus in Berlin, November, 1942, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany, RZ 106.

spiritual, political, and economic relationship of this Reich-concept to the European peoples and governments and its concrete manifestation in history; 3) the consciousness of Europe's unity and the New Order of the continent." The last 2 constituent parts are revealing. By the end of 1942 Six had either changed his mind about the strict Germanic definition of Europe or, more likely, had seen fit to concede space for research and ideas on Europe outside of the Nordic race. Thus Six spoke of research on "the Nordic race, the core race of the Greater-Germanic space [*grossgermansichen Raum*]" and "the Germanic community concept" (*germanische Gemeinschaftsgedanke*) while at the same time also discussing research on "Europe as a united Lebensraum," and "European consciousness."¹⁸ This paradox endured in Six's DAWI writings throughout the war and remained unresolved. In fact, as discussed below, Six intentionally and disingenuously upheld this paradox in order to placate other DAWI researchers who disagreed with his Germanic supremacism.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that, with or without Six's enthusiasm, the Europe-concept in DAWI expanded to include a non-racial Europe-concept which increasingly presented Europe as a new, emerging nation. In fact, it appears that Six himself occasionally attempted to reframe his Germanic Europeanism in such a way as to incorporate his colleagues' more sweeping vision. According to reviews in several German newspapers, Six gave a speech

¹⁸ Franz Alfred Six, "Das Reich und Europa als Forschungsaufgabe," in "Die Weltliteratur: Berichte, Leseproben und Werden," September/October, 1942 in Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichterfelde, R 4902/12.

before DAWI in early March, 1943 titled “European Consciousness.” According to the reviewers, Six argued that European consciousness was originally established by the Germanic “occidental ethos” of the Middle Ages and actually spread to the East by the “colonial achievements” of Germanic settlers. The era of the nation-state, he argued, destroyed this European identity and replaced it with “particularism” which made Europe vulnerable to domination by “foreign continents” in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. However, “the Adolf Hitler movement, with its irrepressible will to power, established the unity of the European Middle and thereby created a new European consciousness.” “Just like in the age of the hitherto [Holy Roman] empire“ the reviewers continued, “so too today has the German historical consciousness become a European historical consciousness and therefore also a new form of European life.”¹⁹

Despite the peculiarity of Six’s Germanic concept, then, Nazi Europeanism in DAWI increasingly mirrored the non-racial European nationalism found elsewhere in the Foreign Office and Giselher Wirsing’s network. In fact, the records indicate that DAWI, too, even before its official combination with the Foreign Office in 1943 had connections to Nazi Europeanists in the Waffen-SS, the Foreign Office, and Giselher Wirsing’s network. Indeed, this connection can already be established in the first few months of its existence. In the summer of 1940 Six briefly joined the Waffen-SS, but continued to administer DAWI during

¹⁹ Franz Alfred Six, speech given at DAWI titled “Europäisches Einheitsbewusstsein,“ March 6, 1943, reviewed in several newspaper clippings from the *Berliner Morgenpost* and the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichterfelde, R 4902/7190.

the nine months he served in this organization which, as illustrated in chapter five of this dissertation, was likewise seeped in Nazi Europeanism.²⁰ Also, according to DAWI's requests for Nazi Party funding, it had a cooperative relationship with the Foreign Office from the very beginning.²¹ Additionally, there is evidence that DAWI worked closely with and even employed important figures in Giselher Wirsing's network. For example, Wirsing's assistant Ernst Wilhelm Eschmann regularly published articles and books for DAWI,²² and even directed the "France Division," one of DAWI's twenty-two research sub-departments.²³ In fact, both Wirsing and Eschmann were invited as guest speakers to DAWI's first ever

²⁰ Franz Alfred Six to Hans Heinrich Lammers, July 5, 1940 and Franz Alfred Six to Hans Heinrich Lammers, April 1, 1941, Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichterfelde, R 43-II/947a, frames 56-58 and 64-66.

²¹ "Guthoff" to Hans Heinrich Lammers, May 31, 1941, Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichterfelde, R 43-II/947a, frames 99-100.

²² Correspondences within DAWI, Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichterfelde, R 4902/12.

²³ Franz Alfred Six to Hans Heinrich Lammers, March 16, 1942 and "Jahresbericht des DAWI, 1940/1941," Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichterfelde, R 43-II/947a, frames 100 and 125-173. It is likely that, by the end of the war, there existed more than twenty-two sub-departments. But a document from 1941 listed twenty-two sub-departments at the time. They were: Foreign Policy and Research; Military Science Abroad; Foreign Economics Research; Over-see History and Colonial Politics; Geography and Geopolitics; Racial Research and Racial Groupings; Foundations of Law in Foreign Policy; Great Britain; USA; France; Italy, Spain and Spanish America; Scandinavia; Central-Eastern Europe; Southeast Europe; Soviet Union; Turkey; Arabia; Iran; Japan; Southeast Asia; Africa. See Franz Alfred Six, report on DAWI, 1941, Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichterfelde, R 4902/6028.

academic conference on January 31st, 1940.²⁴ Finally, the vice President of DAWI, Karl Heinz Pfeffer frequently published in Wirsing's domestic intellectual journal "*Das XX Jahrhundert*," and several other scholars were likewise published both by DAWI and by Wirsing.²⁵ Both of DAWI's above connections – to the Foreign Office and to Wirsing's network – can be further highlighted with a discussion of the "Foreigner Course," one of DAWI's most important propaganda arrangements.

Axel Seeberg and the Foreigner Course

From 1940 until 1945 DAWI organized and conducted a yearly fourteen-day conference in conjunction with the Foreign Office which invited hundreds of non-German politicians, leading journalists, and intellectuals from across Nazi-occupied Europe and financed their travel to Germany for scheduled lectures, workshops, and cultural entertainment programs. This yearly conference, called the "*Ausländerkursus*," or "Foreigner Course," was one of DAWI's most publicized and prestigious activities; in fact, Six was regularly asked by the Reich Chancellery to report on the Foreigner Course in his yearly appeals for continuing DAWI's budget.²⁶ The Foreigner Course was coordinated by a young intellectual

²⁴ Franz Alfred Six to Hans Heinrich Lammers, March 16, 1942 and "Jahresbericht des DAWI, 1940/1941," Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichterfelde, R 43-II/947a, frames 100 and 125-173.

²⁵ Other scholars who published – and/or gave speeches - for both DAWI and Wirsing were Horst Michel, Willy Beer, and Wolfgang Höpker. See correspondences within DAWI, Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichterfelde, R 4902/12, 1579, 11552, and 7190.

²⁶ Franz Alfred Six to Hans Heinrich Lammers, March 16, 1942 and "Jahresbericht des DAWI, 1940/1941," Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichterfelde, R 43-II/947a, frames 100 and 125-173.

named Axel Seeberg. Seeberg was born in 1904 to a wealthy nationalist, Protestant family and was too young to fight in the First World War but old enough to experience the postwar settlement as a national shame. As a young man he was actively involved in youth organizations such as the *Bündische Jugend*. There is no available information about his education background or his relationship to the Nazi Party, but during the 1930s he lectured at Goebbels's Nazified *Berliner Hochschule für Politik*, the predecessor to DAWI.²⁷ In 1939 he began publishing for DAWI's academic periodical *ZfP*, and according to his postwar testimonials around the same he also began work as a "research assistant" in an unidentified department of the Foreign Office.²⁸ At the end of 1940 Seeberg expanded his propaganda activities when the Wehrmacht awarded him the chief editor position of the Foreign Office's periodical for English-speaking POWs, "The Camp," a position he kept until the end of the war.²⁹ Contrary to Seeberg's

²⁷ Despite his large presence in postwar West German journalism, there is practically no scholarship on Seeberg. The above biographical information was drawn from a 1986 obituary by the German journalist Günther Mack in *Die Zeit*. See Günther Mack, "Ein kluger Skeptiker," *Die Zeit*, issue 27/1986, 27 June, 1986.

²⁸ Seeberg's postwar testimonials in personal document collections for Hans Lilje and Erich Ruppel, Seeberg's postwar colleagues, Hannover Landeskirchliches Archiv, L 3/II, Nr. 51-55; L 3/III, Nr. 250; and N 60/170. "Bericht über Holiday Camps für englische Kriegsgefangene in Deutschland," September 19, 1946, Hannover Landeskirchliches Archiv, L3/II, Nr. 52.

²⁹ The Foreign Office records for "The Camp" project are extremely fragmentary, and mostly consist of letters to the editor (Seeberg) between 1941-1943. See "Betreuung englischer Kriegsgefangener," 1942, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany, RZ

claims after the war, “The Camp” was, in fact very ideological and National Socialist. In fact, “The Camp” appears to have essentially been an attempt by Seeberg to convince British POWs of the futility in fighting against the New Order of Europe as well as the Jewish conspiracy forcing the British into the inadvisable defense of the older order.³⁰ In fact, after the war Seeberg revealed: “[in ‘The Camp’] I increasingly advocated the idea of more active European cooperation. Accordingly, I repeatedly warned of the danger of Russian domination of Europe.”³¹ In 1943 Seeberg extended this work and enlarged his cooperation with the Foreign Office when Paul Karl Schmidt hired him to organize and administer the “Holiday Camp,” a four-week propaganda resort for captured British officers.³²

702/R 67646. However, Seeberg also discussed this work in his postwar testimonials and revealed that he worked this project from 1940 until the end of the war. See Seeberg’s postwar testimonials in personal document collections for Hans Lilje and Erich Ruppel, Seeberg’s postwar colleagues, Hannover Landeskirchliches Archiv, L 3/III, Nr. 250; and N60/170. “Bericht über Holiday Camps für englische Kriegsgefangene in Deutschland,” September 19, 1946, Hannover Landeskirchliches Archiv, L3/II, Nr. 52.

³⁰ “Betreuung englischer Kriegsgefangener,” 1942, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany, RZ 702/R 67646. “Chef des OKW im Auftrage v. Wedel, Oberst d.G. Abteilungschef“ to all POW-camps, titled “Richtlinien für die Betreuerarbeit Nr. 9,” April 7, 1942.

³¹ Seeberg’s postwar testimonials in personal document collections for Hans Lilje and Erich Ruppel, Seeberg’s postwar colleagues, Hannover Landeskirchliches Archiv, L 3/II, Nr. 51-55; L 3/III, Nr. 250; and N 60/170. “Bericht über Holiday Camps für englische Kriegsgefangene in Deutschland,” September 19, 1946, Hannover Landeskirchliches Archiv, L3/II, Nr. 52.

³² Ibid.

In 1940 Seeberg received an additional project in DAWI; namely, organizing and administering six different Foreigner Courses over the years 1940-1945 to which over 1,000 prestigious guests from across Europe were invited. The following table outlines the six courses. A list of high profile speakers as well as some of the highlighted non-German invitees can be found in Appendices B and C at the conclusion of this chapter.

Table: Foreigner Courses, 1940-1945³³

	Where	When	Title	Guest count
Foreigner Course #1	Berlin	March 17-30, 1940	„Germany at War“	200 guests from 38 nations
Foreigner Course #2	Berlin	October 1-15, 1940	“Das Reich“	266 guests from 37 nations
Foreigner Course #3	Berlin	June 1-18, 1941	“For a New Europe“	288 guests from 36 nations
Foreigner Course #4	Berlin	November 5-19, 1942	„Questions for the New Order“	140 guests
Foreigner Course #5	Weimar	November 23-December 4, 1943	“Foundations of, and Tasks for, European Cooperation”	130 guests
Foreigner Course #6	Weimar	January 5-15, 1945	“Europe in Decision“	Unknown

³³ The above information was drawn from review articles in *Zeitschrift für Politik*, as well as Franz Alfred Six’s budget requests sent to the Party Chancellery. See Axel Seeberg, “Fragen der neuen Ordnung,” *Zeitschrift für Politik*, December issue, 1942. Axel Seeberg, “Grundlagen und Aufgaben europäischer Zusammenarbeit,” *Zeitschrift für Politik*, January/February issue, 1944. Axel Seeberg, “Europa in der Entscheidung,” *Zeitschrift für Politik*, January/February/March issue, 1945. Franz Alfred Six to Hans Heinrich Lammers, March 16, 1942 and “Jahresbericht des DAWI, 1940/1941,” Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichterfelde, R 43-II/947a, frames 100 and 125-173.

In order to put together the Foreigner Courses Seeberg worked closely with the Foreign Office, which supplied the “foreigners” through its contacts in the diplomatic missions.³⁴ Additionally, leading personalities in the Foreign Office, such as Paul Karl Schmidt, regularly gave presentations at the Foreigner Courses.³⁵ By 1941 the Foreigner Course was a DAWI/Foreign Office joint project, which, according to their requests for funding, were directed with the sole purpose of advancing the Europe-concept in European intellectual circles.³⁶ Indeed, the third Foreigner Course, held just before the Nazi invasion of the USSR in June, 1941, was titled “For a New Europe.” Reporting on the event in ZfP, Axel Seeberg described the proceedings with a blurb:

Presentations were held about the historical preconditions for the current evolution of the European continent, about the nations in the New Order of Europe, about the concept of sovereignty, about the stages of National Socialist foreign policy in its struggle for the New Order of Europe, about the future of German trade and the new politics for European trade, about the issue of a planned European economy for heavy industries, about the Axis as a foundation for European politics, about the economic cooperation of nations, about the meaning of farming for European culture, about the way to acquaint the European nations, and about the

³⁴ Franz Alfred Six to Hans Heinrich Lammers, May 17, 1941, Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichterfelde, R 43-II/947a, frames 95-96. Franz Alfred Six to Hans Heinrich Lammers, March 16, 1942, Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichterfelde, R 43-II/947a, frame 100.

³⁵ Paul Karl Schmidt, speech at the “Reichsinstitut für Aussenpolitik“ at Strickelplatz 6, Berlin, titled “Der Weg der Aussenpolitik des nationalsozialistischen Deutschlands zum neuen Europa,“ June 10, 1941, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany RZ 247/R 27893.

³⁶ Franz Alfred Six to Hans Heinrich Lammers, April 1, 1941, Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichterfelde, R 43-II/947a, frames 64-66.

consequences of developments in modern war-technology for European politics.

It is important to point out that, at this early stage in the war, DAWI largely presented the Europe-concept through the lens of nationalism. Much like historian Benjamin Martin's model of "inter-nationalism" for describing fascist concepts of Europe, the early Foreigner Courses presented the new Europe as a collection of different, segregated nations rather than a new, united nation.³⁷ Take, for example, Seeberg's final point in the above article: "We will present the national histories of each individual nation next to one another; by learning about other nations through the study of their respective histories and through repeated travel abroad one will be able to strengthen, not weaken, his own patriotism."³⁸

Already by the time of the Foreigner Course in 1942, however, DAWI had integrated the direction of the Foreign Office. The entire conference, for example, revolved around the Grossraum-concept, which presenters argued was geological and historical evidence of not only inherently connected economies but also evidence of a common cultural heritage. In fact, according to another review article by Seeberg in *ZfP* about the 1942 Foreigner Course, the notion of a shared "occidental" heritage was the key missing piece in the "Jewish" pan-European movement of the inter-war period.³⁹ And by the time of the Foreigner Course in

³⁷ Benjamin George Martin, *The Nazi-Fascist New Order for European Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016).

³⁸ Axel Seeberg, "Der Suppenlöffel," *Zeitschrift für Politik*, August issue, 1941, 514-516.

³⁹ Axel Seeberg, "Fragen der neuen Ordnung," *Zeitschrift für Politik*, December issue, 1942, 842-846.

1943, “inter-nationalism” had given way to European nationalism. The conference, titled “Foundations of, and Tasks for, European Cooperation,” revolved around the question of “European consciousness,” by which the presenters meant a shared European identity. Seeberg’s summary of this conference began with a long discussion of Hegelianism. While Hegel was correct to identify inexorable trends underneath the historical surface, Seeberg argued, he failed to see how “consciousness” can be the driver of historical changes. In other words, Europeans must choose to enact the European revolution by committing themselves to it spiritually. Political science, he argued, “will not be able to address the task of facilitating European cooperation until it accomplished a reconstruction of consciousness among the European peoples.”

This meant moving beyond “diversity” (*Vielfalt*) and emphasizing

commonality, the mutual influence upon one another based on their racial cohesion, based on their linguistic affinity, based on their common history, and based on their jointly interconnected Raum. The task, then, is to maintain peculiarities, but also to avoid the danger that these peculiarities are exaggerated and hence become destructive.

Seeberg even used the term “European nationalism”:

A European consciousness always existed in the history of Europe when the European [*das Europäische*] was highlighted against outer-European formations [*das Ausseneuropäische Großgebilde*]. When this contrast was absent, such as after the end of the wars against the Turks, then this consciousness withdrew behind an exaggeration of national individuality. In the present a European nationalism must be developed as a consequence of yet another conflict with outer-European formations. This means acknowledging that a single Volk only exists inasmuch as others exist. Each must learn to see itself as part of a larger whole.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Axel Seeberg, “Grundlagen und Aufgaben europäischer Zusammenarbeit,” *Zeitschrift für Politik*, January/February issue, 1944, 61-65.

At a similar pace as the transition towards European nationalism, racial doctrine gradually declined from the Foreigner Courses. This was likely a result of the increasing European diversity invited to the conferences, itself a consequence of the increasingly dire war circumstances. Despite the public image of a non-racial Europe no longer defined by exclusive Germanic membership, however, many members of DAWI remained committed to these exclusionary interpretations of Europe but only felt able to express them in private circumstances. One such private atmosphere was the “Europe-Seminar.”

The Europe-Seminar

From January 18th, 1944 to March 16th, 1945 DAWI held roughly two dozen secret workshops (roughly every other week) composed of leading academics of the Europe-concept, important figures in the Foreign Office, and leading figures across several different Nazi bureaucracies. The minutes for roughly half of the workshops of this “Europe-Seminar” were surprisingly preserved despite the Europe-Seminar having taken place near the end of the war, and despite orders to have the documents destroyed.⁴¹ A list of Europe-Seminar attending personalities and their respective positions in the Third Reich can be

⁴¹ Unlike much of the documentary material for the Foreign Office, a few folders of documents for DAWI covering the last years of the war have been preserved. Accompanying the documents is an original twenty-page note written by the anonymous person who found the documents, and who had ostensibly heard about DAWI’s Europe-Seminar (discussed below). The anonymous finder allegedly retrieved the documents from a bombed out building at *Unter den Eichen 115* in Berlin-Lichterfelde in the final weeks of the war despite standing orders that the documents not be preserved. See Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichterfelde, R 4902/1.

found in Appendix D below. In 1943, DAWI was officially incorporated into the Foreign Office's Cultural-Politics Department and Franz Alfred Six was made director of the entire department. Consequently, Karl Heinz Pfeffer, a frequent contributor in Wirsing's *Das XX Jahrhundert*, was made acting director of DAWI. In October, 1943 he was approached by one of DAWI's Europe-specialists, Gerhard von Mende, with the request to convene private meetings in which scholars could discuss different ideas of Europe in secrecy. Each workshop was composed of eight to twelve participants, some of whom attended regularly but most of whom attended sporadically. In total, sixty-nine different academics and seven Foreign Office personnel attended the Europe-Seminar at one point or another.⁴² Pfeffer himself, acting in his function as acting director of DAWI, was in charge of the Europe-Seminar. When Pfeffer was not in attendance, then it was Seeberg who presided over the workshop.⁴³ The Europe-Seminar is a valuable source for understanding the dilemma of Nazi Europeanism. As will be illustrated, leading intellectuals of the Nazi Europe-concept were unable to resolve key paradoxes at the heart of Nazi Europeanism even when they made genuine attempts to address them.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Seeberg's heightened role in the Europe-Seminar is in large part due to the connection between the Europe-Seminar and the Foreigner Courses. In the very first workshop of the Europe-Seminar Pfeffer announced that the Foreigner Courses had increased the appetite of many for a more audacious explication of the New Europe. See "Protokoll: 1. Besprechung des 'Europa-Ausschusses', " January 18, 1944, Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichterfelde, R 4902/1.

The participants in the Europe-Seminar were very open about the purpose of the workshop; namely, to create a space for privately discussing the inconsistencies and lack of specifics vis-à-vis the New Order of Europe in such a manner not otherwise possible in official propaganda. This in turn, would lead to a codification of the Europe-concept and plans for a postwar New Order. In the first workshop of the Europe-Seminar Seeberg was invited to open the meeting, and he took the opportunity to explain that the largest barrier hindering the Europe-concept was the inability of propagandists to put forward concrete postwar propositions and that no “codification” had been established across the Reich, thus leading to contradictions. The rest of the meeting consisted of various attempts to answer which specific contradictions were most pressing and needed addressing. The two most agreed-upon issues were the issue of race as well as the future political sovereignty of non-Germans.⁴⁴ As a result, subsequent workshops primarily revolved around these two issues.

Sovereignty and state-hood of non-German peoples was the first issue taken up by the Europe-Seminar. On February 3rd, 1944, Professor Gerhard von Mende gave the key-note presentation and argued in favor of an open espousal of federalism. According to the minutes, a key failure in German Eastern policy, he argued, was the elimination of “national administrative capacities” and the elimination of any self-control for Eastern populations, instead subjecting them to “secret administration,” a euphemism for the genocidal imperialism of Nazi Eastern policy. “For the people in the East,” he argued, “the number one issue is

⁴⁴ Ibid.

the following: will we have representation in the New Europe? Will there be a general assembly for Europe? Will the small states and peoples be allowed, in at least some capacity, to participate in it?”⁴⁵ It is unclear how the workshop responded to his arguments, but it appears that they were favorable. Because in the next workshop, on February 17th, the Europe-Seminar enthusiastically discussed “federalism” as an answer to von Mende’s concern. Led by Karl Heinz Pfeffer, the Europe-Seminar advanced various arguments about how a future federal Europe could be composed. Even the smallest of peoples, they argued, should be guaranteed some kind of representation. The minutes do not make clear how they proposed to resolve the obvious paradox of Nazi dictatorship with self-determination for small and scattered populations throughout Europe. They do suggest, however, that the participants discussed precisely these questions. One of the discussions was titled “The role of small nations and the difference in the treatment of individual nations according to size, whether large, medium, or small nations.” A few other discussions suggested that culture was an avenue for resolving impractical claims to political liberty. For example, one discussion was titled: “The meaning and utility of cultural-politics in replacement of political responsibilities.” Another discussion revolved around copying Soviet practices of guaranteeing language rights to minority populations. Yet another conversation suggested mobilizing prejudice against Jews. This conversation was titled “The

⁴⁵ “Protokoll der 2. Besprechung des Europa-Ausschusses,” February 3, 1944, Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichterfelde, R 4902/1.

fundamental different nature [*Andersartigkeit*] of the Jews (parasites, not a nation).”⁴⁶

While the Europe-Seminar participants generally agreed that federalism was the path forward for the New Europe, there is evidence that they quickly came to disagreements over how to apply it. According to the minutes for the May 18th, 1944 workshop, for example, the participants of the Europe-Seminar were unable to come to agreement on whether or not the new “social state” of the Nazi revolution, with its accompanying economic redistributive elements, should be administered at the federal level or at the constituent state level. For some participants, if the New Europe was to resemble a unified economic *Grossraum*, then such economic integration must also include an integration of social policies as well. The participants also sparred over whether or not constituent members could enter into closer relations with some members than they had with the rest of the members of the European federation. Another conversation haggled over how to overcome religious divides, especially when some religions on the peripheries of the European federation would invite intermingling from large powers of a “foreign *Raum*.”⁴⁷

All of these differences came to a head in June, 1944, when the Europe-Seminar participants unsuccessfully attempted to bring together their various ideas for European federalism into a book for publication. The book was to be

⁴⁶ “Protokoll der 3. Besprechugn des Europa-Ausschusses,” February 17, 1944, Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichterfelde, R 4902/1.

⁴⁷ “Arbeitssitzung,” May 18, 1944, Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichterfelde, R 4902/1.

separated into two parts, which were outlined in a Europe-Seminar workshop on June 15th, 1944. Part one consisted of six chapters, each one illustrating a historical example of federalism, with a final chapter on the Holy Roman Empire as a kind of predecessor federalism to Europe's emerging new-age federalism. Part two consisted of three chapters on the political, economic, and cultural composition of the upcoming postwar European federation. But by the end of the workshop, according to the notes, Axel Seeberg, who presided over the workshop, declared: "It is unlikely that this work, in this form, will achieve its goal of reaching a new doctrine for federalism." According to the minutes, the participants agreed to try and publish Part one, about which there was no controversy, and then move beyond the attempt to come up with a "systematic" or "doctrinal treatment" of federalism.⁴⁸ In addition to disagreements, there is a second reason why the participants of the Europe-Seminar chose not to publish their arguments; namely, fear of political retribution for having pursued unorthodox ideas. Four days after the workshop which had been intended for outlining the book on federalism, acting DAWI director Karl Heinz Pfeffer received a letter from Dr. Herbert Scurla begging him to forego publishing material from the Europe-Seminar unless all participants were aware of the "exact limitations regarding who would receive" the material. Scurla implored Pfeffer to remember that "suggestions or provisions concerning plans for Europe are unwelcome" in many circles, and many academics in the Europe-Seminar would

⁴⁸ "Protokoll der Arbeitssitzung des Europa-Ausschusses," June 15, 1944, Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichterfelde, R 4902/1.

prefer to avoid the perception that they are telling politicians how to structure the New European Order.⁴⁹ As a result, at the next workshop on June 29th, 1944, Pfeffer opened the workshop declaring that, although federalism was the “solution,” it would nevertheless remain an intellectual work-in-progress. However, it would be tabled for the moment. Instead, the Europe-Seminar moved on to an even more divisive issue: the concept of race.

After Pfeffer’s opening remarks about tentatively moving beyond the topic of federalism, the floor was given to a certain Professor Frankenberg associated with DAWI. Frankenberg’s presentation, titled “The Greater Germanic Concept and the Europe Concept” surveyed the history of the Greater Germanic Concept going back to Friedrich Ludwig Jahn, Ernst Moritz Arndt, and the Brothers Grimm. He proceeded to trace it through the development of racial science and then argued that its ultimate fruition was the Waffen-SS. For Frankenberg, the Germanic concept was at the core of National Socialism, but very difficult to square with a New Order of Europe which many thinkers extended beyond the Nordic lands. He finished with three questions which were subsequently discussed, but for which there are unfortunately no records: “1) Can we give people on the outside an answer to the question about the relationship between the Greater Germanic concept to the Europe concept? 2) What is this answer? 3)

⁴⁹ Herbert Scurla to Karl Heinz Pfeffer, June 19, 1944, Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichterfelde, R 4902/1.

Does the Greater Germanic Order not actually stand in conflict with Europe?”⁵⁰

The very next workshop, on July 13th, 1944, continued the discussion of these questions and the minutes reveal that divisions ensued. “Mr. [Axel] Seeberg,” the minutes explained,

takes the most extreme position in this ongoing discussion; namely, that all propaganda, publications, and official treatment should only carve out the objective of a homogenous [*einheitlich*] Europe and therefore all things about ‘Germanic’ or ‘Greater Germanic’ should be absolutely silenced.

On the other side of the debate was a certain Dr. Bran from the Foreign Office who represented the most stringent pro-Germanic opinion, arguing that the Germanics were the most important people to be “activated for the New Europe” and because “the German claim to leadership can only be founded upon its belonging to the Germanic race.” Still others, such as Frankenberg, tried to take a middle ground, arguing that the Germanic concept could be expanded to incorporate more of Europe than previously considered (as illustrated in a separate chapter of this dissertation, this is precisely how the Germanic concept eventually functioned within the Waffen-SS). Still others agreed with Bran that racial doctrine necessitated a strict commitment to Germanic supremacy.⁵¹

But Seeberg’s was not a lone voice. Some Europe-Seminar participants, such as Herbert Scuria, sided with Seeberg, arguing that the German claim to

⁵⁰ “Protokoll der Arbeitsbesprechung des Europa-Ausschusses,” June 29, 1944, Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichterfelde, R 4902/1.

⁵¹ “Internes Protokoll der Besprechung des Europa-Ausschusses,” July 13, 1944, Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichterfelde, R 4902/1.

leadership could actually be justified based on the principle of disproportionate sacrifice (in other words, all peoples who fight on the Eastern Front would and should belong).⁵² In fact, at an earlier workshop about federalism Scurla and fellow DAWI Professor Wilhelm Grewe (a former colleague of Giselher Wirsing's)⁵³ had gone even further, arguing that the entire "Volk concept" needed revision if European federalism was to succeed. According to the minutes, they argued:

We need a new clarification of the 'Volk concept'. In the nineteenth century there emerged a movement which rejected the hitherto tradition of political subservience [monarchical absolutism]. Under French influence it was called the philosophy of nationalities and under German influence it was called the philosophy of the independent Volk. Both of these trends strengthened opposition to the [Holy Roman] empire. Both the French nationality concept as well as the romantic concepts of Volk – whether or not they were good or bad is unimportant – now need to be overcome if there is going to emerge a genuine Order on the continent which otherwise could only ever be a hierarchy. 'Overcoming nationalism' - this overcoming can proceed only in the Hegelian sense of a fruitful synthesis. So Professor Scurla suggested that a new nationalism could build upon the Volk doctrine in German Romanticism.⁵⁴

It is not clear how Scurla envisioned a European nationalism which could be connected to the German Romantic tradition, but based on Nazi Europeanism elsewhere he was likely channeling the concept of a völkisch Europe. In any

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Grewe and Wirsing worked in the same office of the Information Department of the Foreign Office in 1941. Wirsing confirms this in "Wirsing, Giselher, Prosa, Bericht über meine Beziehungen zu Dr. Adam von Trott zu Solz," in "Briefwechsel Müller-Plantenberg, Clarita, Eugen Diederichs Verlag, 1969," A:Diederichs/Eugen Diederichs Verlag, Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach, Germany.

⁵⁴ "Arbeitssitzung," May 18, 1944, Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichterfelde, R 4902/1.

case, here was a Foreign Office academic dismissing the entire tradition of nationalism.

The Europe-Seminar, then, collected a surprisingly diverse and even discordant group of thinkers who were unable to agree on the some of the most fundamental components of the Europe-concept. The Europe-Seminar was a failure. Originally conceived as a workshop for refining the Europe-concept into something more codified, already by November, 1944 it had become clear that this was not going to be achieved. In fact, Franz Alfred Six began attending the workshops himself at the end of 1944, and used his authority as director of DAWI and the Cultural-Politics Department of the Foreign Office to curtail the ambitions of those Europe-Seminar participants, such as Seeberg and Scuria, who were still pushing for a “European Manifesto” to counter the Atlantic Charter. The European Manifesto, Six demurred, would disable them from propagating and tailoring the Europe-concept to individual lands and peoples, which, of course, was code for hiding contradictions otherwise potentially exposed.⁵⁵ Tensions over Six’s decision to diminish the purpose of the Europe-Seminar came to a head at the workshop in late December, 1944 (a rather large workshop with twenty-nine total participants). The workshop began with Pfeffer and Seeberg signaling his subservience to Six (who was present). Pfeffer and Seeberg, the presiding authorities over the Europe-Seminar, explained that the seminar’s purpose should remain “scholarly” and avoid “politics.” Yet a few more brave participants such

⁵⁵ “Protokoll: Arbeitsgemeinschaft Europa-Ausschusses,“ November 23, 1944, Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichterfelde, R 4902/1.

as Scurla and a member of the Ministry for Science, Education, and Culture, Albert Hofelder, were allowed to voice disagreement. They argued that Germany's plans for a New Europe suffered from lack of "trustworthiness" resulting from a failure to codify a program. They agreed to discontinue the "European Manifesto," but insisted that the Europe-Seminar be allowed to continue to pursue an "internal codification" with "clear and binding German positions." But following Scurla and Hofelder's remarks, Six once again pumped the brakes, and ordered the Europe-Seminar to disband such designs and instead focus on how to help advance German propaganda rather than focus on such hopeless "theoretical." Nevertheless, some participants were dissatisfied. In order to express their disagreement, Scurla pressed Six on the "primary decision which needs to be made"; namely, whether or not they could "confirm nationalism and the continuation of the *völkisch* principle as desired in National Socialism." Another DAWI academic came to Scurla's defense, arguing that the *völkisch* principle "necessarily leads to the dissolution of Europe" and "emphasizes dividing lines without fostering commonality." "We cannot escape the need to develop National Socialism into a universal idea," he continued, because otherwise "our cultural politics is built on sand." Six, clearly frustrated, responded that his opponents, by flirting with universalism, were placing themselves on the philosophical side of the enemy. They should replace their desire to find the "universal" in National Socialism, he rebuked, with a satisfaction with the "continental." The "principle of the continent" (*das Kontinentale*), he explained, solved the dilemma of finding European

commonality without bowing to universalism. Six then proceeded to definitively forbid “codification” and ended the workshop.⁵⁶

The Europe-Seminar’s inability to accomplish its intended purpose likely contributed to its gradual dissolution over the course of the first few months in 1945. Interestingly, though, it continued to meet for scholarly discussions on a wide variety of topics, including: “the meaning of the French Revolution,” “Russia in Europe,” “the meaning of Socialism.” They also continued to discuss various topics left unresolved by the discussions of the previous year, including: “modern nationalism,” “the relationship of the Germanic-concept to the Europe-concept,” and the “biological commonality of the European peoples.”⁵⁷ The Europe-concept, then, did not require “codification” in order to continue to capture the minds of Nazi functionaries in DAWI. This is a metaphor for Nazi Europeanism as such, which continued to be propagated throughout the Second World War despite competing and contradictory definitions. The final section of this chapter will present one of the Foreign Office’s most far-flung Europe-propaganda projects which likewise continued to propagate the Nazi Europeanism

⁵⁶ “Protokoll: Arbeitsgemeinschaft Europa-Ausschusses,” December 18, 1944, Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichterfelde, R 4902/1.

⁵⁷ It is not clear whether or not the Europe-Seminar ended on March 16th, 1945, the date for which the last workshop documents exist. The protocols for the March 16th workshop suggest, for example, that the above themes and topics were discussed in subsequent workshops (for which there is no documentary evidence). See “Europa-Seminar: Besprechung,” March 16, 1945, Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichterfelde, R 4902/1.

in the last months of the war; in fact, it continued to advance the Europe-concept even after the war had ended.

Klaus Mehnert and the XX Century in Shanghai

From 1941 to 1945 the Foreign Office funded a propaganda campaign based in Shanghai with a multi-faceted mission: a) instill National Socialism among the thousands of Germans living in the Far East; b) intensify relations with the Japanese; and c) reach English-speaking readers in the Western hemisphere.⁵⁸ The last of these tasks was led by Klaus Mehnert, who would become one of postwar West Germany's most prolific publicists. Despite having published multiple best-sellers and having edited the most highly read weekly newspaper in West Germany after the Second World War, hardly any scholars have closely investigated Klaus Mehnert's illustrious postwar career.⁵⁹ And even less explored is his role as a Nazi propagandist before 1945.⁶⁰ Indeed, although after the war he became a leading advocate of close German-American relations, a staunch defender of NATO, and a self-described "Atlanticist" – his history before 1945 reveals a man deeply implicated in National Socialism, antisemitism, and Nazi propaganda activities. Mehnert's life trajectory was quite remarkable, stretching across the entire globe: he was born in Tsarist Russia, he was raised in Weimar

⁵⁸ Astrid Freyeisen, *Schanghai und die Politik des Dritten Reiches* (Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann, 2000).

⁵⁹ A notable exception is Otto Köhler who discusses Mehnert in a short chapter. See Otto Köhler, *Wir Schreibmaschinentäter: Journalisten unter Hitler – und danach* (Cologne: Paul-Rugenstein, 1989).

⁶⁰ A notable exception is Astrid Freyeisen's *Schanghai und die Politik des Dritten Reiches*.

Germany, he corresponded for Nazi newspapers in the Soviet Union, he lectured at American Universities before the war (and married an American), and he ultimately lived in Shanghai during the war on appointment by the Foreign Office. It is not without good reason that he titled his 1981 memoirs “A German in the World.”⁶¹ It was in Shanghai where Mehnert came to fulfil his primary function in the Nazi propaganda apparatus. There, he edited the Foreign Office’s largest propaganda venture in Asia: a monthly periodical called “The XX Century.” This section sets out to trace Mehnert’s life before 1945, substantiate his connections to the Nazi movement, examine his conversion to the Europe-concept, and illustrate the far-reaching impact of Nazi Europeanist networks in the Second World War. Additionally, it aims to further demonstrate the integration of Wirsing’s propaganda network and the Foreign Office.

The sources employed in this section are drawn primarily from the state archive of Baden-Württemberg in Stuttgart, where Mehnert had his extensive personal document collection archived upon his death in 1984. The thousands of documents in his personal document collection largely revolve around his illustrious postwar career. Probably in part due to the checkered nature of his pre-1945 history, Mehnert appears to have been less generous in terms of submitting pre-war and war-time documents. Nevertheless, a good amount of correspondences before 1945 do exist. Most importantly, Mehnert wrote a 115-page autobiography in September, 1945 just months after the Second World War

⁶¹ Klaus Mehnert, *Ein Deutscher in der Welt: Erinnerungen, 1906-1981* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1981).

ended.⁶² This is a particularly valuable source, and not only because of the chronological proximity to the war. As Mehnert sets out at the beginning of the document (which was accompanied with a note strictly forbidding its circulation or publication), the autobiography was intended as a private, personal rumination on National Socialism through the lens of his life biography – in short, a kind of extended diary entry. The document, titled “personal declaration,” was a genuine attempt at coming to terms with National Socialism and his role in it. He openly admitted and accepted the moral catastrophe and culpability of the Nazi phenomenon. That is not to say that the document is devoid of apologia. To the contrary, Mehnert repeatedly oscillates between, on the one hand acknowledging his seduction to National Socialism, but on the other hand denying his full commitment to it. In fact, a repeated argument throughout the autobiography is that Mehnert, unlike most Germans, maintained intellectual and emotional distance to the regime and its accompanying precepts. One of his primary arguments thread throughout the document, for example, is that although he was raised in a nationalist milieu, and although he was briefly taken in by the nationalist fervor of the Nazi movement - he eventually broke from nationalism in favor of the “Europe-concept,” a term he, like other Nazi Europeanists, explicitly employed.

In the end, Mehnert was very candid in this document, even to the point of admitting to embarrassing and incriminating episodes from his past as if he were

⁶² Klaus Mehnert, “Selbsterklärung (nicht zur Veröffentlichung),“ September, 1945, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 288.

asking for forgiveness from a religious figure. Obsessively tortured by the need to come clean and thereby exonerate himself, Mehnert's writing in the autobiography displays a repeated pattern of contradiction wherein he would deny his complicity in a given evil of the Nazi regime only to immediately thereafter recall examples of his partial complicity which he would subsequently summarize and attempt to minimize. Unwittingly, then, the autobiography exposes Mehnert's relationship to National Socialism and is therefore a useful source for interrogating his intellectual trajectory.

Mehnert's Early Life and Attraction to National Socialism

Klaus Mehnert was born in 1906 in Moscow to a social milieu he described as "Moscow-Germans," a collection of upper-middle class military and business families who spoke German, and the majority of which had recently emigrated from imperial Germany. His father, an engineer, was a reserve officer in the German army, and raised Mehnert to be a patriotic German abroad. On the other hand, Mehnert was always quick to point out, his mother was a "cosmopolitan" who transferred to him a deep interest for other languages and world cultures.⁶³ "Already as a young student," Mehnert bragged in his 1945 autobiography, "I knew more about the world abroad and other nations than many Nazi leaders at the time of the take-over of power in 1933."⁶⁴ With the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, Mehnert and his family were forced to move back to Germany, where they moved close to family in Stuttgart. His experiences as a

⁶³ Klaus Mehnert, "Selbsterklärung," ch.s "Familie" and "Welt-Bürgertum."

⁶⁴ Klaus Mehnert, "Selbsterklärung," ch. "Welt-Bürgertum."

lower-middle class German student during and after the First World War turned him into a passionate nationalist. According to Mehnert, this began with the death of his father on the Western Front in 1917. He described in detail his father's funeral and the way he coped with his father's death by reading the trauma through the lens of national sacrifice and honor.⁶⁵ This catalyzed an active involvement and investment in the war, or as he described it: "a willingness to sacrifice and a recognition of my responsibility." As a very young man, eleven years old, he organized a local humanitarian drive for Germans in the Balkans who wanted to immigrate to Stuttgart. Germany's defeat in 1918 was impossible for him to digest and he refused to do so. He continued to hang a small picture of Wilhelm II. in his room well after the war and the dissolution of the German Empire.⁶⁶

In his 1981 memoirs Mehnert claimed that he supported the new Weimar Republic and its leaders in the Social Democratic Party, and that he never supported the Nazi Party.⁶⁷ His 1945 autobiography tells a different story. He opens his discussion of the 1920s with his first ever attendance at a Nazi rally in 1925 in Hasenheide, where Hitler gave a speech. After distancing himself from the "masses" who fell into naïve, spiritual ecstasy, he admits to having been captured by three themes which galvanized the rest of his young adulthood: nationalism, socialism, and the leadership-principle. Picking up on the death of

⁶⁵ Klaus Mehnert, "Selbsterklärung," ch. "Familie."

⁶⁶ Klaus Mehnert, "Selbsterklärung," ch. "Nationalismus."

⁶⁷ Klaus Mehnert, *Ein Deutscher in der Welt*, 39-86.

his father, Mehnert describes the appeal of nationalism to the lower-middle class of Stuttgart in the 1920s. In school he was taught that “love of Fatherland” was a “matter of course,” and to see an ideological conflict raging in the world between the “idealistic” philosophy of Germany and the “materialistic” philosophies of the West. He recalled, for example, regularly wearing to school and on fieldtrips a black-white-red armband, the colors of imperial Germany, and in the 1920s a symbol of resentment against the new, Weimar democracy.⁶⁸ He energetically participated in nationalist youth organizations such as the “Young Germany Federation” (*Jungdeutschland-Bund*), where he overcame his introverted nature and made his first close friends. Together, they spent hours in extracurricular activities such as hiking and camping, all the while learning to “rebel against the spirit of the large cities, against the division of the Volk into classes, against the spiritual emptiness of modern civilization....” He recalled first getting into politics during his time in the youth organizations, where he and his friends would discuss the national slander of France’s occupation of the Rhine-lands. He even remembered their attachment to the term “Reich.” Most importantly, Mehnert admitted, his time during the youth organizations taught him the value of the “leadership-principle” (*Führergedanke*); namely, romantic associations of collective action with loyalty to a strong figure. He could still remember the names of his group leaders: Zeller and Speidel.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Klaus Mehnert, “Selbsterklärung,” ch.s “Familie“ and “Nationalismus.“

⁶⁹ Klaus Mehnert, “Selbsterklärung,” ch. “Die Kameraden.“

At home, too, Mehnert was raised to hold German nationalism as sacred. Some of his family members were National Socialists, and even if his family did not often discuss the specifics of politics, they nevertheless regularly expressed anger at the sense of shame they associated with the postwar Versailles settlement. One of his uncles in particular was an avid supporter of the Nazis and frequently shared Nazi propaganda brochures with Mehnert. Mehnert makes no mention of any participation in the Social Democratic Party by himself or members of his family; in fact, he seems to indicate that those who did not support the Nazi Party supported the “German Nationalist People’s Party,” a right-wing party also opposed to the Weimar Republic, the majority members of which eventually switched allegiance to the Nazi Party.⁷⁰ But the German Nationalist People’s Party did not attract Mehnert’s support, because their justified rejection of Weimar called for something equally as unappealing in Mehnert’s eyes: a restoration of the past. Here, Mehnert was subtly revealing a transition in his nationalism. His previous commitment to the German empire and Wilhelm II was being replaced by a desire for a nationalist alternative to both Weimar and imperial Germany.⁷¹ This was a key argument of both the Conservative Revolution and the Nazi Party. Mehnert went on to discuss his affinity for reading historical literature, and mentioned by name his favorite author of the 1920s: the Conservative Revolutionary Oswald Spengler. He even listed specific pages from his books which had been particularly important for

⁷⁰ Klaus Mehnert, “Selbsterklärung,” ch. “Familie.”

⁷¹ Klaus Mehnert, “Selbsterklärung,” ch. “Nationalismus.”

him. Spengler's arguments about a new, "Prussian" form of socialism, one amicable with nationalism, were especially important for Mehnert. His family had left much of their belongings in Russia behind and Mehnert deeply resented his lower class status which was further aggravated by the Great Depression. But he could not bring himself to turn to Social Democracy or any form of Marxism, which for him was but an empty "internationalism" and smacked too much of Weimar and Versailles. He refused to abandon nationalism for the sake of socialism, but Spengler taught him that there was a possibility for combining the two.⁷²

Perhaps the most tortured, but also revealing, section of Mehnert's 1945 autobiography is his handling of antisemitism. The fact that Mehnert wrote on antisemitism at great length suggests that he knew full well the centrality of antisemitism in National Socialism. He began his long section on antisemitism by suggesting that the "Jewish problem" was neither important to him nor had it been present in his life. Perhaps realizing the dishonesty in that statement, he immediately began to re-wind. After discussing various uncles of his who had had quarrels with Jews, he proceeded to carefully expose his own prejudices and discriminatory behaviors towards Jews. Some encounters were relatively innocuous, such as resenting a Jewish boy who stole a girlfriend of his. Others were more harrowing. In the mid-1920s, while in Berlin staying with relatives, he confessed to having joined his cousin on an adventure to Kurfürstendamm to "bother Jews," where they proceeded to harass Jewish passer-bys with jokes and

⁷² Klaus Mehnert, "Selbsterklärung," ch. "Sozialismus."

small swastika emblems they had collected. Mehnert promised that such youthful indiscretions did not mean an enthusiasm or even acceptance for the persecution of Jews. In fact, in the late 1920s, when he moved to Berlin to complete a university education, he attested to good relationships with fellow Jewish students and even to having had a close relationship with a Jewish editor at the *Neue Rundschau*. Yet, he then immediately followed up these assurances with an outburst of antisemitism:

On the other hand, my attitude towards the large influence of Jews on the cultural life of Berlin was different. I often went into the theater, or visited art exhibits, or read modern books and many newspapers, and I could not but regret the nearly monopolistic position of the Jewish element in these areas. Because for me, this influence was in so many ways negative, destructive, and unhealthy. And I had certain sympathy for the idea that the Jewish monopoly of cultural life in Berlin, and therefore of much of Germany in general, should be removed.

Then, in a remarkable admission, Mehnert acknowledged the Holocaust: "...if somebody would have told me what Hitler was planning to do to the Jews, and what he actually did to them between the years 1933 and 1945, then I would have said it was not only insane but also a crime against the German people." But for Mehnert, even in the immediate aftermath of the Holocaust, the true crime was against Germans. He continued:

Because these methods necessarily convinced the entire, and considerable, power of the Jews throughout the world against Germany into revenging themselves. That Hitler used antisemitism as a political tool in the years before 1933 is understandable given the emergency of the situation.... But after he had come to power in 1933 he did not need these methods anymore and he should have let off with the antisemitic campaign; instead, he should have attempted to break the Jewish power and de-tooth the dangerous [Jews] without making world Jewry the sworn enemy of Germany. His colleague Stalin actually provided him with a masterful example. He liquidated the Jewish problem in his own house during the great "purges" of 1936 to 1938 by having countless prominent Jews

disappear – including even the most prominent in the entire Soviet Union – without having to use the word “Jew” one single time, instead referring to them with completely general terms such as traitors, oppositional elements, saboteurs, etc....

The above lines are shocking. Mehnert, who began his section on antisemitism with a denial of any prejudice, proceeded to express sympathy with Hitler’s conspiracy of world Jewry and faulted him for not more efficiently conducting genocide. Mehnert finished his thoughts on antisemitism by suggesting that Western liberalism and Enlightenment were at fault for the disastrous Nazi policies towards the Jews, because the goal of assimilation was ultimately untenable.⁷³

Mehnert’s World Travels and Conflict with the Nazi Regime

There is no evidence that Mehnert ever joined the Nazi Party (a fact Mehnert proudly repeated throughout the postwar years). But as the above discussion illustrates, Mehnert was clearly, by his own strenuous admission, fiercely attracted to the Nazi movement while living in Weimar Germany as a young man. But this was not the only side to Mehnert. When he claimed that his mother instilled in him an appreciation of the world outside of Germany the evidence corroborates this claim. After finishing his High-School degree (*Abitur*) in 1924, and after briefly enlisting in the German military, Mehnert decided to embark on an academic career in foreign studies.⁷⁴ He was accepted as a graduate student by Otto Hoetzsch at the *Hochschule für Politik* (the predecessor of

⁷³ Klaus Mehnert, “Selbsterklärung,” ch. “Welt-Bürgertum.”

⁷⁴ Klaus Mehnert, *Ein Deutscher in der Welt*, 87-103.

DAWI) where he initially began an apologetic research project on the “German guilt question” and the First World War. But he soon changed emphasis, ultimately defending a Ph.D. dissertation on the Russo-Japanese War in 1927.⁷⁵ Thus began Mehnert’s long career as a well-known expert on Russia and the Soviet Union. But more importantly, this is when Mehnert began to spend his intellectual faculties on the world outside of German nationalism. As a young high-school student his mother had encouraged him to accept various scholarships to study in different European countries, and after defending his dissertation he accepted his most ambitious study-abroad scholarship yet: a German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) scholarship to study and teach at the University of California, Berkeley in 1928, where he met and married his American wife, Enid Keyes.⁷⁶ In his 1945 autobiography Mehnert claimed that his experiences in the United States revealed to him the “narrowness of a patriotism which is exclusive and only focuses on one’s own Volk.” He allegedly began to see his intellectual purpose as a “mediator between nations.” Specifically, he claimed to have come to his Europe-concept in these years, saying that he came to realize that Europe, just like the German states of the nineteenth century, must begin to unify. This was the “next necessary step” in the history of Europe. These proclamations, of course, are compromised by his desire to distance himself from National Socialism in 1945. But there may have also been a kernel of truth to his claim.

⁷⁵ Klaus Mehnert, “Selbsterklärung,” ch. “Nationalismus.”

⁷⁶ Klaus Mehnert, “Selbsterklärung,” ch. “Welt-Bürgertum.”

Upon returning to Germany in 1929, Mehnert claims to have become a member of Coudenhove-Calergi's inter-war Pan-European movement. In fact, he asserts that he briefly worked as a secretary to Christian Frederick Heerfordt, an influential Pan-Europeanist who wrote a book titled *United States of Europe* in 1924. Ultimately, though, Mehnert found the Pan-European movement's attachment to the League of Nations and the Versailles settlement too distasteful and therefore discontinued his participation.⁷⁷ Instead, he worked full-time for the DAAD in Berlin, coordinating further academic exchange between the United States and Germany.⁷⁸

His intellectual conflict with nationalism can further be seen in the evolution of his Sovietology. In 1932 Mehnert changed work yet again, and was employed by his former Ph.D. adviser as the secretary for the "German Society for the Study of Eastern Europe" (*Deutsche Gesellschaft zum Studium Osteuropas*), a Berlin-based academic association with connections in universities across Germany and with an accompanying publication called *Osteuropa*. Here, Mehnert began his career as a Sovietologist. Already by the end of 1932 Mehnert had published his first serious monograph on the Soviet Union, titled "Youth in Soviet Russia."⁷⁹ Mehnert developed an interpretation of the Soviet Union which was, for a German nationalist, noticeably sympathetic. This put him into conflict with the Nazi regime after 1933, and Mehnert took great pride in his postwar

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Klaus Mehnert, *Ein Deutscher in der Welt*, 175-210.

⁷⁹ Klaus Mehnert, *Jugend in Sowjet-Russland* (Berlin: Samuel Fischer, 1932).

writings for having been slandered, along with his former adviser, as a “Saloon-Bolshevist.” Although he was fond of describing his arguments as “neutral” and “objective,” there was, in fact, an ideological and political motivation behind his Sovietology. As Mehnert himself admits in his 1945 autobiography, he had developed a disdain for capitalism in his youth and long sought after a workable socialism. In line with this, his Sovietology repeatedly presented the Soviet Union as indeed “Jewish” and “internationalist,” but also a lesser evil than liberal democracy and thereby a legitimate, albeit misguided, attempt to overcome “New Deal capitalism.” As he summarized in his 1945 autobiography, his arguments implored Germans to see Bolshevism as a “changing organism,” and therefore a system capable of healthy evolution. Consequently, Mehnert often argued that Germans should seek better relations with the Soviet Union; after all, both states opposed the Western Versailles settlement.⁸⁰

When the Nazis came to power in 1933 Mehnert hoped that they would realize his vision for an amalgamation of nationalism and socialism. Apparently disappointed in the results, Mehnert gravitated towards those affiliated with the Nazi movement who likewise desired a more socialist National Socialism. This appears to have been the impetus for his integration into the Tat-Kreis, the Conservative Revolutionary intellectual circle first led by Hans Zehrer, but subsequently by Giselher Wirsing after the Nazi take-over of power in 1933. As explained in chapter two of this dissertation, the Tat-Kreis was a gathering ground for more left-leaning Conservative Revolutionaries. Mehnert, in his 1981

⁸⁰ Klaus Mehnert, “Selbsterklärung,” ch. “Neutraler ‘Spez’.”

memoirs, recalled joining the Tat-Kreis roughly around the time of Hitler's *Machtergreifung*.⁸¹ Mehnert's first article appeared in *Die Tat*, the intellectual journal published by the Tat-Kreis, in October, 1933, in which he presented his interpretation of the Soviet Union.⁸²

According to his 1945 autobiography, Mehnert had fostered contacts in the late 1920s with Reichswehr members similarly sympathetic to rapprochement with the Soviet Union. This included friendships with Eugen Ott, Kurt von Hammerstein-Equord, and Kurt von Schleicher. Like other members of the Tat-Kreis, he ostensibly hoped that they would take power rather than the Nazis. Mehnert also claimed to have fostered a multi-year, ongoing friendship with Otto Strasser beginning around the year 1930 as Strasser was excommunicated from the Nazi Party for his left-wing activism. Mehnert found in Strasser an ally capable of reforming Nazism in the direction of reconciliation with the Soviets. Shortly after the Nazis came to power, and in the hope that he could moderate Nazi positions towards the Soviet Union, Mehnert alleged to have contacted Ernst Röhm and obtained a personal meeting in which he presented his argument that the Communists had actually achieved important success industrially and should be given a chance to modernize backwards Russia. Already in 1934 Mehnert came into conflict with the regime when he was allegedly censored to some undisclosed extent by Alfred Rosenberg's Foreign Policy Office. Mehnert

⁸¹ Klaus Mehnert, *Ein Deutscher in der Welt*, 311.

⁸² Klaus Mehnert, "Die Grosse Pause: Die Sowjeunion in Spätsommer 1933," *Die Tat*, October issue 1933, 530-543.

claimed to have been saved by the intervention of Giselher Wirsing, who subsequently offered Mehnert a job in Moscow as a foreign correspondent for the paper newly under his direction, the *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten* (MNN).⁸³ It was during this time in Moscow that Mehnert took up a close friendship with none other than the American diplomat and foreign policy theorist, George F. Kennan, who at the time was serving at the American State Department's embassy in Moscow. The two figures witnessed the process of Stalinization in the early and mid-1930s, a process that appears to have gradually pierced Mehnert's ambivalent sympathy towards the Soviets. Correspondences between the two indicate a friendship formed around a shared criticism of Soviet Communism.⁸⁴ This was a friendship which, as we will discuss in Part II of this dissertation, continued well into the Cold War.

In 1936, Mehnert was once again censored by the Nazi regime for alleged Soviet sympathies, this time by Joseph Goebbels, who ordered all of Mehnert's newspaper affiliates to cease publishing him. Mehnert decided that it was not worth the fight and travelled East, through Asia, to the United States. But fearing

⁸³ Mehnert also worked for the *Leipziger Neueste Nachrichten* and *Hamburger Fremdenblatt* as a foreign correspondent. See Klaus Mehnert, "Selbsterklärung," ch. "Neutraler 'Spez'." Klaus Mehnert, *Ein Deutscher in der Welt*, 175-210.

⁸⁴ Mehnert's Personal document collection contains three correspondences between Mehnert and Kennan from the year 1937. These suggest additional correspondence during this time period. See George F. Kennan to Klaus Mehnert, May 18, 1937, Klaus Mehnert to George F. Kennan, June 17, 1937, and George F. Kennan to Klaus Mehnert, July 1, 1937, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 229.

designation as an “enemy of the state” or “political emigre,” Mehnert returned to Germany in the same year and gave himself over to the Gestapo, where, once again with the assistance of Giselher Wirsing, he was able to win his case and have the censor removed. Shortly thereafter, Mehnert travelled for a third time to the USA, but this time for a sustained period of time. In 1937 he was offered a job by the University of Hawaii as a Professor of history and philosophy, a position he kept until 1941.⁸⁵

In his 1981 memoirs Mehnert claims that his run-in with Goebbels’s propaganda administration solidified his opposition to National Socialism and convinced to him to cease publishing in the domestic German press, but the evidence suggests otherwise.⁸⁶ Mehnert continued to work with the Tat-Kreis and intensify his friendship and work relationship with Giselher Wirsing during these years, who, as discussed in a separate chapter of this dissertation, was trending sharply in the direction of reconciliation with National Socialism. For example, Mehnert continued to publish in Wirsing’s MNN after 1938.⁸⁷ Furthermore, in his 1945 autobiography, Mehnert approached his later relationship to National Socialism with more candor. After describing his decision to move to Hawaii,

⁸⁵ Klaus Mehnert, *Ein Deutscher in der Welt*, 211-254.

⁸⁶ Klaus Mehnert, “Selbsterklärung,” ch. “Neutraler ‘Spez’ .“ Klaus Mehnert, *Ein Deutscher in der Welt*, 175-210.

⁸⁷ See illegible (MNN) to Klaus Mehnert, July 14, 1938, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 229.

Mehnert attempted to answer the question why he did not become an American citizen and fully distance himself from National Socialism:

National Socialism seemed to me, just like Bolshevism and the New Deal, to be an answer to the problems of our time. It was an answer which, in many different ways, did not please me, but which – at least how I saw things then and without the knowledge of it leading to a new World War – seemed to me better than the Bolshevist answer or that of the New Deal. ... National Socialism inherited so much from the spirit of post war youthfulness, and I had so much trust in this spirit that I hoped it would gradually improve and expand National Socialism with its idealism.

Mehnert continued by putting forward an argument which he and other former Nazi Europeanists repeatedly made throughout their postwar careers:

“Furthermore, National Socialism was never a finished product – it was constantly evolving, and I had the hope that its evolution would follow a direction that I could support.” Mehnert hoped that he himself could help affect such an evolution and claimed that he only shared this secret intention with Giseler Wirsing, who likewise ostensibly shared these intentions.⁸⁸

Mehnert’s Employment in the Foreign Office

Mehnert’s relationship with National Socialism endured through his four-year professorship at the University of Hawaii. In 1941, as we will see, Mehnert accepted a Foreign Office order to move to Shanghai and conduct foreign propaganda. In both his 1981 memoirs and his 1945 autobiography Mehnert presents this decision as a begrudging concession to an order from his homeland as well as a necessary decision due to increasing hostility towards Germans in the United States. There is evidence, however, that Mehnert had a much earlier and

⁸⁸ Klaus Mehnert, “Selbsterklärung,” ch.s “Neutraler ‘Spez’“ and “Nach 1937.”

enthusiastic relationship with the Foreign Office. Astrid Freyeisen, a historian of Nazi-Chinese relations, points out that he briefly moved from Hawaii to California in 1940 and that this move was directed by the Foreign Office so as to escape suspicions in Hawaii of Mehnert's Nazi connections.⁸⁹ Freyeisen believes, therefore, that Mehnert was a spy as early as 1940.⁹⁰ The documentary evidence from Mehnert's personal document collection complicates this picture. As early as late-1937 Mehnert was in contact with the Foreign Office and had a unique relationship with Berlin. Although apparently not an official spy, Mehnert certainly understood himself as a semi-official operative. By cross-referencing his 1930s correspondences to the Foreign Office with his 1945 autobiography, it becomes clear that Mehnert himself solicited cooperation with the Foreign Office. In November, 1938, Mehnert wrote to the Cultural Department (later Cultural-Politics Department) and sent a kind of resume and summary of his life in Hawaii.⁹¹ A few months later Mehnert sent the same department a detailed propaganda proposition for an "art exhibit" in the United States with the purpose of placating anti-German sentiments in the United States. The letter suggested

⁸⁹ This can be corroborated by documents in Mehnert's personal document collection. In 1940, for example, he applied to an academic position in California (Stanford University) with the promise that he had great respect and admiration for liberal democracy and had no association to National Socialism. See Klaus Mehnert to "Professor K.E. Robinson, December 23, 1940, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 228.

⁹⁰ Freyeisen, *Schanghai und die Politik des Dritten Reiches*, 287-295.

⁹¹ Klaus Mehnert to "Twardowski" (Kulturabteilung, Auswärtiges Amt), November 15, 1937, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 229.

that he himself would direct the project from California. He concluded the proposition with the assurance that he had recently had his press censor lifted and was therefore a reliable partner.⁹² The Foreign Office replied that the idea was good, but that the resources were not currently available. A subsequent correspondence with the Foreign Office reveals that Mehnert even pitched this idea in person to the German embassy in San Francisco.⁹³

In November, 1938, he began writing a German diplomat in Moscow, Gustav Hilger, suggesting that he would accept a position there if asked. By 1940 it appears that Mehnert had likely been told to remain in Hawaii and attempt to improve Germany's image through his university work. In January, 1940 he wrote to Hilger: "I assume that you have still not seen any opportunity for me to discontinue my local work and move to Russia or Germany. ... My work at the university continues to go just fine." Mehnert continued: "Nevertheless, I am sticking with what I told you shortly after the war began: I am at all times ready to break down my tent if you ask me to." Perhaps nervous that he was sounding too forward, Mehnert concluded saying that he fully appreciated the importance of his "beautiful, fully satisfying responsibility in Hawaii."⁹⁴ Hilger responded in April,

⁹² Klaus Mehnert to "Twardowski" (Kulturabteilung, Auswärtiges Amt), May 1, 1938, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 229.

⁹³ Klaus Mehnert to "Twardowski" (Kulturabteilung, Auswärtiges Amt), August 26, 1939[sic - 1938], Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 229.

⁹⁴ Klaus Mehnert to "Hilger" (German embassy in Moscow), January 23, 1940, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 229.

1940 that Mehnert would soon be contacted by Adam Trott zu Solz, a Foreign Office functionary in the Information Department who, Mehnert admits in his 1945 autobiography, had an important influence on his decision to leave the United States for Shanghai.⁹⁵ Trott zu Solz, who eventually joined the resistance and was murdered for his connections to the July 20th, 1944 assassination attempt, had been a friend of Mehnert's ever since he had won a DAAD scholarship under Mehnert's supervision in the early 1930s. According to his 1945 autobiography, Mehnert was personally visited by Trott zu Solz in Hawaii shortly after the beginning of the war, and the two allegedly discussed their criticisms of the Nazi regime and their commitment to changing the regime from within. Mehnert told Trott zu Solz to get into contact with Giselher Wirsing, and when he received the 1941 telegram requesting his assistance in Foreign Office propaganda in Shanghai this was ostensibly a signal that his work in Shanghai would contribute to the collective effort to change National Socialism from the inside.⁹⁶ But as the Hilger correspondences illustrate, his relationship with the Foreign Office began well before the 1941 telegram from Wirsing, which was actually just a continuation of

⁹⁵ "Hilger" (German embassy in Moscow) to Klaus Mehnert, April 15, 1940, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 229.

⁹⁶ Klaus Mehnert, "Selbsterklärung," ch. "Nach 1937." Documents from the political archive of the Foreign Office in Berlin corroborate that Mehnert and Trott zu Solz continued their relationship in 1941 and 1942. Correspondences between the two discuss Mehnert's direction of propaganda in Shanghai. See correspondences in the Cultural-Politics Department of the Foreign Office vis-à-vis German cultural politics in China, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany, RZ 501/R 60664.

an already existing relationship, or perhaps even semi-official partnership, with the Foreign Office.

Nevertheless, Mehnert did in fact receive a telegram from Wirsing in May, 1941. The telegram was quite vague, suggesting the “possibility” of a “meaningful position” publishing a periodical in the Far East which would have an “exceedingly large influence.” Mehnert claimed in his 1945 autobiography that he interpreted this telegram as an order.⁹⁷ He was not entirely wrong. To be sure, in both his autobiography and memoirs Mehnert was attempting to abdicate responsibility for accepting a job in the Nazi propaganda apparatus. However, as he explained in his 1945 autobiography, “in a totalitarian state a request is often a friendly euphemism for a command.” Mehnert’s correspondences with the Foreign Office since 1937 were often quite cryptic. For example, after one letter from Gustav Hilger, Mehnert responded: “I read your letter carefully, and I think I understood it.”⁹⁸ Of course, what Mehnert omitted, was that he had actively sought such a command since 1937 at the latest. In short, despite his claims in his autobiography and memoirs that it pained him to leave the United States in the summer of 1941, in reality, he more likely happily took up the opportunity to participate in Nazi propaganda even if the opportunity came as an “order.”

Mehnert’s Propaganda in Shanghai

⁹⁷ Klaus Mehnert, “Selbsterklärung,” ch. “Nach 1937.”

⁹⁸ Klaus Mehnert to “Hilger” (German embassy in Moscow), May 28, 1940, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 229.

It is difficult to ascertain with precision when Mehnert began advancing Nazi Europeanism. As explained above, Mehnert had briefly been a member in the Pan-European movement in the late 1920s, and he dated his own commitment to the Europe-concept to the late 1920s after travelling the world and seeing the modern futility of nationalism. But this was likely an example of historical revision. It is more likely that he was drawn to the Europe-concept as a result of his connections with Giselher Wirsing's network, with which he began to associate in the early 1930s. There is some evidence to suggest that he first began to deliberate on Europe in the late 1930s while in Hawaii. In a letter to Japan-specialist Friedrich Max Trautz in September, 1938, Mehnert explained: "My [professorial] activities have been quite pleasing and have given me the opportunity to outline a broad interpretation of the term "Europe" and to investigate European-Pacific questions."⁹⁹ Nevertheless, throughout most of the 1930s Mehnert appears to have spent his intellectual capital studying Sovietism. In any case, by the time he began working propaganda in Shanghai he had certainly committed himself to Nazi Europeanism.

The first avenue for Mehnert's Europe-propaganda was to provide history lectures in English to Chinese students and English-speaking diplomats at the "German Medicine Academy" in Shanghai. There he held a weekly two-hour lecture series titled "Europe and its History." According to one director of the academy shortly after the war, over 100 people regularly attended the lectures

⁹⁹ Klaus Mehnert to Friedrich Max Trautz, September 9, 1938, A:Trautz/Mehnert, Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach, Germany.

which were transcribed and re-printed in the German-speaking newspaper *Der Ostasiatische Lloyd*:

For us, his German listeners, “Europe and its History” [lectures] were more than historical surveys. For example, the history of the crusades was especially impressive – they showed us the first break-through of the collective European concept. We began to understand the power such a concept has. Particularly the presentation of Europe as the history of a ‘Grossraum’ was something especially arresting for us Germans at the time, and I believe I am able to say: the history of Europe had never been presented that way before....¹⁰⁰

But the by far most influential propaganda medium employed by Mehnert was a monthly periodical titled “The XX Century,” published in English, which Mehnert claimed had a circulation of 12,000, and which was financed by the Foreign Office.¹⁰¹ Although initially intended for American readers as well, the attack on Pearl Harbor relegated XX Century to an English-speaking readership mostly in Asia (including Japan).¹⁰² After the war, the United States secret services attested to the periodical’s importance: “without a doubt the most important organ for German propaganda in the Far East.”¹⁰³ One historian of Nazi-China relations has called it the “most successful German propaganda operation in Shanghai.”¹⁰⁴ As Mehnert explains in his 1945 autobiography, he was granted considerable maneuverability as editor of the project. Due to the invasion of the Soviet Union shortly after the project was authorized, the Foreign

¹⁰⁰ Frey Eisen, *Schanghai und die Politik des Dritten Reiches*, 243.

¹⁰¹ Klaus Mehnert, *Ein Deutscher in der Welt*, 260.

¹⁰² Frey Eisen, *Schanghai und die Politik des Dritten Reiches*, 296.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 286-287.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

Office was largely distracted from Shanghai and left Mehnert control over the direction of the periodical.¹⁰⁵ Mehnert, of course, intended this point as evidence that he refused to allow his material to be coordinated by Nazi propaganda. But, as we will see, this assertion was actually quite damning, because it establishes his responsibility for the periodical's very National Socialist content. In fact, XX Century essentially evolved into Mehnert's personal space for pro-Nazi editorials. Mehnert ultimately penned forty-seven entire articles, more than double the next most published author. Additionally, Mehnert regularly commented before other authors' articles with a blurb which tied in the article to the Europe-concept.

The periodical's title, "The XX Century," was intended to mirror the ideological purpose of Giseler Wirsing's periodical of the same name (*Das XX Jahrhundert*).¹⁰⁶ Sure enough, the paper reads as an extension of Wirsing's Nazi Europeanist network. Following an introductory issue, the second published issue in November, 1941 opened with an article by Mehnert about the danger of nationalism to the future peace of both Russia and Europe.¹⁰⁷ Then, a subsequent

¹⁰⁵ Klaus Mehnert, "Selbsterklärung," ch. "Nach 1937."

¹⁰⁶ According to historian Astrid Freyeisen, Mehnert admitted in a letter to his mother (which Freyeisen has in her possession) that he named his paper after Wirsing's paper in order to *Signal* gratitude for Wirsing having helped Mehnert obtain the position. See Freyeisen, *Schanghai und die Politik des Dritten Reiches*, 294.

¹⁰⁷ Klaus Mehnert, "The Nations of Russia," *The XX Century*, November issue, 1941, 81-88.

article was supplied by none other than Carl Schmitt, who introduced Mehnert's readers to the Grossraum concept.¹⁰⁸

In both his autobiography and memoirs Mehnert claimed that he was uncomfortable with the idea of pursuing propaganda and therefore made sure that *XX Century* remained largely informational and objective rather than propagandistic. He even claimed that he refused to espouse Hitler, promote antisemitism, or slander the United States of America. As early as 1942, Mehnert claimed, he had become a sort of defeatist in the periodical.¹⁰⁹ All of these claims were patently false. To be sure, *XX Century* repeatedly presented itself as "neutral," but even the most unobservant reader could have seen through this falsehood. The key argument strewn through *XX Century* was that the Second World War, unlike the First World War, was not a war between self-interested nations and that the propensity to view it as such was a lie perpetrated by the Allied powers to mask what Mehnert called a "super-national" conflict, or "a gigantic contest for the shaping of the next phase in human development."¹¹⁰ In January, 1942, he argued:

One of the chief objections of the Anglo-American nations to the Axis peoples is what they call their "narrow nationalism." Yet to anyone who has followed carefully the words and actions of Japan, Germany, and Italy in the past years, the trend away from this "narrow nationalism" is unmistakable [sic]. The Japanese - this can best be seen in North China - are thinking more and more in terms of East Asia, the Italians and Germans in terms of Europe. What to many, perhaps, seemed in the

¹⁰⁸ Carl Schmitt, "'Grossraum' and 'Realm': New Terms for International Law," *The XX Century*, November issue, 1941, 114-119.

¹⁰⁹ Klaus Mehnert, "Selbsterklärung," ch. "Nach 1937."

¹¹⁰ Klaus Mehnert, "The Two Camps," *The XX Century*, June issue, 1942, 401-406.

beginning a matter of domination over obeying inferiors, now appears increasingly as leadership among co-operating equals. The extended living, for example, of millions of German soldiers, administrators, railway workers, and others on foreign soil cannot but widen their horizon and vision and increase their appreciation for the human beings of the other side.

The true meaning of the war, then, transcended nationalism, and only the Axis was pursuing this deeper purpose while the Allied powers set out to hinder it.

Mehnert believed this was a selling message to English-speakers who had travelled the world and were well acquainted with other cultures. In the same article, he established what would become a strikingly cosmopolitan tone throughout XX Century:

The great majority of this magazine's readers have probably one thing in common: they have spent part of their lives outside the boundaries of their own countries - English-speaking Japanese, Chinese, and Europeans, or Americans and Englishmen living in the Orient. They are therefore less likely than those of their countrymen, who have always stayed at home, to see everything in black and white.¹¹¹

Paradoxically, then, the Second World War became, in the pages of XX Century, the Axis powers' war against nationalism. As Mehnert explained: "In the pages of this magazine we have repeatedly pointed out that in the last two years the former nationalistic spirit of the Axis nations has gradually given way to an ideology of increasing scope...." This "ideology of increasing scope," Mehnert went on to explain, was "European on the one hand, East Asiatic on the other."¹¹² This points to one of the peculiar characteristics of XX Century. As

¹¹¹ Klaus Mehnert, "The World at War," *The XX Century*, January issue, 1942, 1-4.

¹¹² From Mehnert's introduction to Baldur von Schirach's, "The Youth of Europe," February issue, 1943, 131-137.

the primary arm for Foreign Office Europeanism in the Far East, *XX Century* reported on the “East Asian Grossraum” just as energetically as it did on Europe. Beginning with Carl Schmitt’s article introducing Mehnert’s readers to the Grossraum concept, *XX Century* established the central role of East Asia in the triumph of “super-nationalism.” Schmitt explained that the American Revolutionary War was the first moment in human history when a portion of the world freed itself from, and established itself independently against, the Old World. But while the United States established the “first modern Grossraum,” East Asia was not far behind. In 1905, by defeating Russia in the Russo-Japanese War, Japan began to establish the second non-European Grossraum. Europe, under Hitler’s leadership, Schmitt explained, was bringing this process back to the Old World.¹¹³ Many articles in *XX Century* attempted to situate the “East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere” (the Japanese propaganda term for their empire during the Second World War) as the organic outgrowth of what was called “Pacific history.”¹¹⁴ Sometimes this was done by Mehnert himself, such as an article in April, 1942 in which he argued that Japanese art and language were uniquely capable of unifying the East Asian Grossraum in ways other cultures could not.¹¹⁵ But most of the time this task was given over to specialists in Asian history such as a certain “IC Hiro Hara,” who wrote the lead-article in the July,

¹¹³ Carl Schmitt, “‘Grossraum’ and ‘Realm’: New Terms for International Law,” *The XX Century*, November issue, 1941, 114-119.

¹¹⁴ Klaus Mehnert, “Pacific History,” *The XX Century*, December issue, 1941, 225-229.

¹¹⁵ Klaus Mehnert, “The Capital,” *The XX Century*, April issue, 1942, 241-250.

1942 issue titled “The Foundations of East Asia,” which presented East Asia as a historically, culturally, racially, and economically united community capable of breaking Western imperial “bondage” if properly unified.¹¹⁶ In another article, Mehnert presented various poems which could become the future national anthems of the European and East Asian Grossraum(s).¹¹⁷ The topic of race figured remarkably little in the pages of *XX Century*, and when it did, then usually as broad declarations of racial commonality within Grossraum(s).¹¹⁸ Mehnert, then, like much of the Foreign Office’s Europe-propaganda, was out of step with National Socialist racial policies. In fact, in Mehnert’s first article inaugurating *XX Century* in October, 1941, he went so far as to express fondness for his time in Hawaii, which he described as a peaceful “melting-pot of races” and therefore an example to the rest of the world for how to overcome racial differences.¹¹⁹

Mehnert’s previous ambivalence towards Soviet Communism was erased after 1941. One of the most prevalent themes in *XX Century* was to present the Eastern Front as a pan-European mission to save the nascent European New Order from Bolshevism.¹²⁰ In fact, Mehnert went to great lengths to present the Eastern

¹¹⁶ IC Hiro Hara, “The Foundations of East Asia,” *The XX Century*, July issue, 1942, 2-8.

¹¹⁷ Klaus Mehnert, “‘Grossraum’ Songs,” *The XX Century*, July issue, 1942, 68.

¹¹⁸ W. Brettschneider, “Germany and Europe,” *The XX Century*, May issue, 1944, 322-329.

¹¹⁹ Klaus Mehnert, “Aloha!,” *The XX Century*, October issue, 1941, 1-7.

¹²⁰ Klaus Mehnert, “The First Front,” *The XX Century*, August issue, 1942, 81-112. Klaus Mehnert, “The Summer War,” *The XX Century*, Decemer issue, 1943, 359-375.

Front conflict as a historical continuation of Europe's confrontation with the East. Europeans must come to understand on the Eastern Front, Mehnert argued, that "Europe possesses not only a common cultural, but also a common political heritage, even though this has been overshadowed by the countless national wars of the European past." This meant revising their understanding of European history. For example, in one particularly long history article Mehnert invited his readers to reconsider the crusades of the Middle Ages as a pan-European conflict with the Orient and therefore a historical predecessor for the contemporary war on the Eastern Front.¹²¹ A similar article re-cast the Holy Roman Empire as a pan-European empire.¹²²

The United States, too, received Mehnert's ire in XX Century, despite his postwar contention that he refused to criticize the United States in the periodical.¹²³ Interestingly, though, Mehnert came to view the United States as the lesser of two evils, a stark reversal of his earlier prioritization of capitalism and liberalism as the greatest problems in modernity. It is difficult to ascertain when Mehnert revised his anti-Americanism. Perhaps it was in the mid-1930s when he befriended George F. Kennan and witnessed Stalinization. Or perhaps it was while interacting with Americans at the University of Hawaii (Mehnert always claimed to have had fond memories and friendships with his American students, for example). In any case, his writings in XX Century reveal a more

¹²¹ Klaus Mehnert, "Crusades," *The XX Century*, July issue, 1942, 42-54.

¹²² Wilhelm Weis, "The First Reich," *The XX Century*, October issue, 1942, 234-245.

¹²³ Klaus Mehnert, "Selbsterklärung," ch. "Nach 1937."

complicated criticism of the United States. Rather than a bottomless hole of materialism, Mehnert presented the United States as an initially wholesome project which only turned sour in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Mehnert argued that the United States was, after all, founded by Europeans and maintained a “spiritual and cultural unity” with the Old World even as they separated themselves diplomatically. Its leaders had been justifiably inspired by the idea of liberty, he argued, and did much to weaken the grasp of “reactionary” monarchs and their suppression of freedom throughout the European continent. Mehnert described the American Revolution and French Revolution as a transatlantic movement against a decrepit and outdated “absolutism.” Together they were what he called the “Great Revolution,” and did much to advance human freedom and weaken arbitrary rule by the few over the many during the nineteenth century.

But by the end of the century the Great Revolution was destroyed by the very nations which had conceived it. First, Mehnert argued, industrialization turned liberty into anarchy and a “struggle of all against all.” Second, Woodrow Wilson and Franklin D. Roosevelt intervened on behalf of European monarchs in the First World War and on behalf of nationalists in the Second World War, thereby making the United States into a champion of the very reactionary forces it had rebelled against throughout the nineteenth century. The contemporary war, Mehnert then argued, symbolized a reversal of 1776, because the forces which had long fought for modern change were now fighting to stop it:

Today it is Europe, under the leadership of Germany and Italy, which is riding the crest of the wave of the future. This Europe champions the new

order, while Roosevelt is the reactionary, who is fighting for the preservation of a state of affairs whose term of life has already expired....

In contrast, the Grossraum powers were fighting for the continuation of the Great Revolution's heritage, because they were inaugurating a second great historical revolution: the "New Revolution." This New Revolution was advancing the cause of freedom against its modern enemies: "democracy and parliamentarism," "individualism," "capitalism," "rationalism," and the "unnatural emancipation of women." Instead, the New Revolution advanced the principles of "community," "spiritual values," and "family." Most importantly, the New Revolution was prepared to displace nationalism:

The Great Revolution began with ideas which were addressed to all mankind, and it ended with the creation of that extreme nationalism which put its mark on the nineteenth century in Europe and elsewhere. The New Revolution started out with nationalistic slogans, yet it has led during the last few years to the creation of super-national Grossraums in Europe and East Asia. Italian and German nationalism has extended to 'Europeanism', and Japan has developed into the idea of the Co-Prosperity Sphere.

Mehnert, then, discovered a historical narrative in which the fascist revolutions of the 1930s were a continuation and completion of the progressive-liberal revolutions of the nineteenth century while the Western Allies were the actual reactionaries. Mehnert's hope was that the New Revolution would, just like the Great Revolution, travel across the Atlantic, but this time in reverse direction:

In this way, the war is bringing the day nearer when the European revolution will be victorious in America too. There was a time when one spoke of Europe against America. Today one speaks of America against Europe. We believe that tomorrow it will be Europe, Asia, and America.¹²⁴

¹²⁴ The above arguments were put forward by Mehnert in two back-to-back lead-articles in the December, 1942 and January, 1943 issues. See Klaus Mehnert, "Europe and America," *The XX*

To be sure, this is not to argue that Mehnert's propaganda against the United States was measured or subtle. His depiction of the United States was that of a materialistic, individualistic threat to civilization led by a manipulative cabal of Jews. Indeed, antisemitism was a recurring theme in Mehnert's discussions of the United States. According to Mehnert, the "four pillars of reaction" against the fascist New Revolution were the United States, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and international Jewry. Franklin D. Roosevelt was depicted as "the New Metternich," a forceful reactionary and puppet of international Jewish circles.¹²⁵ Mehnert denounced the United States as murderous "terrorists" intent on destroying Europe either by sacrificing it to Bolshevism or through its own carpet bombing. The Allied aerial bombing campaigns, Mehnert argued, were nothing short of a barbaric assault on civilization. But the silver linings, he argued, was that they exposed the futility of borders in the modern world. Europeans, he argued, would be forced by the transnational bombing campaign into a tighter community.¹²⁶ Mehnert was perhaps guilty of projection in these claims, because at other junctures it appears he was sensitive to the claim that the fascists were the war's barbarians. In one article, Mehnert defended the Axis nations as the defenders of freedom and justice. But perhaps sensing the hypocrisy of such an

Century, December issue, 1943, 429-437. Klaus Mehnert, "War and Revolution," *The XX Century*, January issue, 1943, 1-9.

¹²⁵ Ibid. Klaus Mehnert, "USA and the USSR," *The XX Century*, November issue, 1943, 281-301.

¹²⁶ Klaus Mehnert, "Socialism from Above," *The XX Century*, March issue, 1944, 157-162.

argument he continued: “To this many will object: ‘That is not true, the issue is clear, it is that between democracy and totalitarianism’. But totalitarianism is not the aim of the Axis nations, it is their method, it is a weapon in their fight....”¹²⁷

Conclusion

In his 1945 autobiography Mehnert claimed to have foreseen the end of the war and even committed defeatism in the pages of *XX Century*. This is not true. Even in the last months of the war Mehnert was espousing the “miracle weapon” narrative and pleading Europeans to fight for every last inch of Europe and, even if defeated, to fight until the last drop of blood:

We will either win back our military superiority and fling the intruders out of Europe in such a way that they will never dare to come back, or, at the worst, we will make them pay such a terrible price for every square mile of European soil that they themselves will decide to get out while there are still some of them left.¹²⁸

Remarkably, *XX Century* published its last issue in June, 1945 after the war had already come to an end in Europe. The issue took the form of an introspection into the recently concluded war in Europe. Predictably, Mehnert presented the war as an unfortunate conflict for which all sides bore equal responsibility and although he acknowledged the disproportionate wrongdoing of Hitler and Nazi Germany, he attempted to explain away Germany’s guilt by pointing to the mistakes of Versailles. He also strongly defended the Axis vision of a “Greater

¹²⁷ Klaus Mehnert, “The World at War,” *The XX Century*, January issue, 1942, 1-4.

¹²⁸ Klaus Mehnert, “The Second Phase,” *The XX Century*, August issue, 1944, 69-72.

Europe.”¹²⁹ In fact, despite defeat, Mehnert remained opposed to the two “global” ideologies which had secured victory: American liberalism and Soviet Bolshevism. Nor did he favor a return to nationalism, something he believed was likewise a false conclusion to draw from the war. Instead, he called on Europeans to remain committed to realizing the Europe-concept in the postwar world:

In spite of the fact that global plans have been championed vigorously and, in the last few years, vociferously, we do not believe that the time has come for their carrying out. Hence, although we have discussed these plans as far as they concern their two chief exponents the USA and the USSR, in this magazine, we have rejected them. On the other hand, we have also refused to identify ourselves with the nationalism which came into being in the eighteenth and nineteenth century and reached its climax in the first World War and the ensuing years. We regard it as a phenomenon no longer in conformity with our age....

He continued:

As we regard the point of view of the nation as too narrow, that of the whole world as too wide, this magazine has made Europe the center of its thought and discussed the various aspects of Europe and its problems in a series of articles. Nor do we intend to shift our ground because the realization of the European idea has once again disappeared beyond the horizon. Indeed, more than ever do we regard the creation of a harmoniously united Europe, independent of the exponents of global plans, as the only means of saving the continent from utter self-laceration. And we do not hesitate to consider the lacking preparation for the European idea as one of the reasons for the failure of the most recent attempt at realizing it. Neither the German people who, in a natural reaction to Versailles, went into the second World War with slogans mainly of a nationalistic nature, nor the other European nations, some of whom still labored under ideologies belonging to the nineteenth century, were able under the pressure of war to further the European idea to such an extent as would have been necessary for its realization. All the more urgent is it today to work in this direction and, in a time which as the

¹²⁹ Klaus Mehnert, “The End of the War in Europe,” *The XX Century*, June issue, 1945, 229-230.

result of the sufferings of the war is inclined to emphasize antagonisms and all that separates, to stress that which unites.¹³⁰

In the crucial months of transition after the Second War, then, Klaus Mehnert fled to the Europe-concept as a means for understanding the Second World War and his participation in it. But equally importantly, he organized his hopes and ideas for the future around a continuation of the Europe-concept. In this way, Mehnert encapsulated the trajectory of many Foreign Office Europeanists after the war. Within a few years after the war Mehnert and his colleague Giselher Wirsing had become the chief editors of postwar West Germany's most read weekly political magazine, *Christ und Welt*. The second most read weekly political magazine, *Sonntagsblatt*, was edited by Axel Seeberg. Paul Karl Schmidt, for his part, was directing an American-financed, covert operation to influence public opinion in Hamburg. All of these projects were, as we will discuss in Part II of this dissertation, organized around modern adaptations of these thinkers' Europe-concept. But before turning to the postwar lives and work of these former Nazi propagandists, we must first present one more important institution in the Nazi regime where the Europe-concept became a central propaganda feature: the Waffen-SS.

¹³⁰ Klaus Mehnert, "Politics and Thought," *The XX Century*, June issue, 1945, 248-251.

Chapter 5: Germanic Europeanism in the Waffen-SS

Introduction

Heinrich Himmler and his paramilitary apparatus in the Nazi regime, the “*Schutzstaffel*” (SS), have justifiably been at the center of literature on Nazi Germany, the Holocaust, and the Second World War. However, the largest contingent of that organization, the Waffen-SS, has received a considerably small amount of that attention. Despite its size, its multi-national composition, its function as a militarized combat force, and its postwar influence, few historians have focused on the Waffen-SS as a unique phenomenon in its own right.¹ But the Waffen-SS was a unique historical phenomenon, above all else because it

¹ To be sure, there is a remarkably large collection of non-academic writing on the Waffen-SS. While the amateur public has avidly explored the Waffen-SS, in particular within apologetic milieus, the academy has devoted considerably less attention, usually subsuming the Waffen-SS within discussions of the SS. This historiographical reluctance is undoubtedly connected to postwar attempts by former Waffen-SS members to distinguish themselves from the SS and thereby separate themselves from postwar discourses of criminality in order to evade culpability and historical justice. Although the topic of Waffen-SS complicity in war-crimes is a complex one, the Waffen-SS was most definitely implicated in the Holocaust. In this way, it is understandable that many historians have been hesitant to distinguish between the Waffen-SS and the SS. But given the current state of research - in particular the general widening scope of culpability, for example the dissolution of the “Wehrmacht myth” – analyzing the Waffen-SS as a unique historical phenomenon does not prevaricate issues of war guilt. For more on postwar apologetics in the Waffen-SS, see David Clay Large, “Reckoning without the Past: The HIAG of the Waffen-SS and the Politics of Rehabilitation in the Bonn Republic, 1950-1961,” *The Journal of Modern History* 59.1 (1987): 79-113.

facilitated one of the most wide-reaching and significant Nazi-Europe discourses in Nazi Germany's propaganda regime. Furthermore, the Waffen-SS practitioners of what this dissertation calls "Germanic Europeanism" were important contributors to the political activities of veterans of the Wehrmacht in West Germany in the early postwar decades. The Europe-concept in the Waffen-SS was, of course, fiercely ironic. The SS was the vanguard of racial chauvinism in the Nazi movement, the gate-keepers of a revolutionary political ideology which fanatically and proudly rejected all forms of political and philosophical internationalism. Racial exclusion was truly the *Raison d'Être* of the SS. Yet, as this chapter will illustrate, by the end of the war the Waffen-SS had not only incorporated into its ranks hitherto deemed racial "inferiors," but had also undertaken a series of ideological revisions to conventional blood and soil SS-ideology, replacing the concept of racial struggle with a narrative of racial exceptionalism and racial segregationism in which all European "Germanic" races were unique, different, and equal.

The earliest scholarship on the Waffen-SS largely neglected ideology. The first authoritative monograph about the Waffen-SS written by George Stein in 1966 depicted the Waffen-SS as an army of a) social misfits abused by economic dislocation, boredom, and social alienation; and b) sadists who gravitated towards the criminal opportunities presented by membership.² The criminal adventurism theory fit well into the early postwar literature on Nazism,

² George H. Stein, *The Waffen SS: Hitler's Elite Guard at War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966), 141-142.

where Hitler and his ideology were given less importance than was the impact of opportunism and Machiavellian power-politics.³ More recent scholarship on the Waffen-SS has echoed the historiographical turn (led by Karl Dietrich Bracher in the 1970s) towards taking Nazi ideology seriously.⁴ The most authoritative, modern history of the Waffen-SS is Bernd Wegner's German-language monograph published in 1990. Wegner attempts to rescue the centrality of ideology in the Waffen-SS, arguing that the Waffen-SS had a "unique ideological and institutional connection" with the larger NS-regime and was, in fact, a "product" of traditional National Socialist ideology.⁵ Therein lies the significance of the Waffen-SS for Wegner, because unlike other military institutions in the "advanced stages of industrial society," the Waffen-SS advanced a uniquely German assault on traditional conservative social institutions and hierarchies (albeit with the objective of replacing them with new racial hierarchies). In this sense, the Waffen-SS was a revolutionary form of politics masked as a military branch of the state – they were, to use his term, "political soldiers."⁶ Key to his argument is the Conservative Revolutionary movement. Indeed, his first chapter,

³ See Alan Bullock, *Hitler: A Study in Tyranny* (Watford: Odhams Press Limited, 1952).

⁴ See Karl Dietrich Bracher, *The German Dictatorship: the Origins, Structure, and Effects of National Socialism* (New York: Praeger, 1970). Karl Dietrich Bracher, "The Role of Hitler: Perspectives of Interpretation," in ed. Walter Laqueur, *Fascism: A Reader's Guide: Analyses, Interpretations, Bibliography* (Berkeley: University of California, 1977).

⁵ Bernd Wegner, *The Waffen-SS: Organization, Ideology, and Function* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990), 16.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 15-18.

entitled “Revolutionized Conservative Value Systems,” situates the Waffen-SS into the Conservative Revolutionary culture of right-wing nationalists after World War I, especially veterans and members of the *Reichswehr* who had been active in the Free Corps movement.⁷ For Wegner, then, the main components of Waffen-SS ideology were already set in place as part of the Conservative Revolutionary movement; in particular, he emphasizes a new nationalism which rejected the nation-state nationalism of the Wilhelminian monarchy. The true German nation for inter-war conservative militarists was, he argued, an unrealized racial ambition which transcended borders, a “dream of the future” (*Zukunftstraum*) which could only be realized through militarized struggle against the forces of diversity, discord, and individualism. This evolved nationalist restlessness among the conservative-military milieu in Weimar, Wegner asserts, bled over into the Waffen-SS program of a racial avant-garde armed with the military resources capable of toppling traditional militaries and states, and replacing them with a new racial elite.⁸

Wegner is undoubtedly correct to situate the origins of the Waffen-SS in inter-war German conservatism. It is no secret that the original leadership cadres of the Waffen-SS were drawn from former Free Corps veterans and the right-wing nationalist movement.⁹ And Wegner is able to illustrate that the social origins of Waffen-SS officers correspond to the social indicators of early nationalist support

⁷ Ibid., 25-34.

⁸ Ibid., 30.

⁹ Richard J. Evans, *The Coming of the Third Reich* (New York: Penguin, 2004), 228.

for the Nazi party (the large majority were Protestant, a majority was middle-class, a majority came from small cities, and a strong plurality was university trained).¹⁰ Although Wegner successfully situates our understanding of the Waffen-SS in ideology, his narrative nevertheless misses a few essential aspects of the Waffen-SS. First, as a social history his approach separates ideology out from the narrative, handling it in a separate chapter. This means that he misses the extent to which ideology within the Waffen-SS was evolving and reacting to changes in the war and to the composition of the Waffen-SS. Second, and more importantly, Wegner's arguments are openly German-centric and neglect the later years of the Waffen-SS. Wegner explicitly acknowledges that "the non-German volunteer movement of the Waffen-SS only finds cursory treatment" in his work and that he intends to focus on the social origins of the Waffen-SS in the pre-war and early war years. He justifies this prioritization by arguing that the Eastern Europeans in the Waffen-SS, while nominally under Waffen-SS command, were never fully integrated into German units or treated as members of the emerging postwar "elite," but instead remained largely a "help troop" to the original Waffen-SS, the foundations of which were established quite early on.¹¹ In short, for Wegner the ideology of the Waffen-SS was a static and logical extension of National Socialism. As this chapter will show, while this point may have been true vis-a-vis institutional discrimination, as well as Himmler's ultimate intentions, it neglects consequential shifts in Waffen-SS indoctrination in the last

¹⁰ Wegner, *The Waffen-SS*, 235-267.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 18.

years of the war which resulted precisely because of the multi-national make-up of the Waffen-SS, and which were propagated to all Waffen-SS personnel, including Germans (especially the German officers charged with training and leading non-German units).

More recent scholarship on the Waffen-SS has emphasized the transnational history of the Waffen-SS, such as, for example, the very recent collected volume *The Waffen-SS: A European History*, edited by Jochen Böhler and Robert Gerwarth.¹² This valuable recent scholarship has rescued the

¹² Böhler and Gerwarth's collection brings together the most recent scholarship by a slew of European historians who for the last few decades have been researching the various non-German Waffen-SS recruits by specific country of origin. See Jochen Böhler and Robert Gerwarth, *The Waffen-SS: A European History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017). Other notable examples include: Peter Scharff Smith, Niels Bo Poulsen, and Claus Bundgård Christensen, who have investigated the Danish recruits. See Peter Scharff Smith, Niels Bo Poulsen, and Claus Bundgård Christensen, "The Danish Volunteers in the Waffen-SS and German Warfare at the Eastern Front," *Contemporary European History* 8.1 (1999): 73-96. Martin Gutmann, in addition to the Danes, has looked at the Swedish and Swiss recruits as well. See Martin R. Gutmann, *Building a Nazi Europe: The SS's Germanic Volunteers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017). Bruno de Wever has investigated the Flemish-Belgian recruits. See Bruno de Wever, "'Rebellen' an der Ostfront. Die flämischen Freiwilligen der Legion 'Flandern' und der Waffen-SS," *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 39 (1991): 581-610. Thomas Casagrande had looked at the ethnic Germans of Eastern Europe (*Volksdeutsche*). See Thomas Casagrande, *Die volksdeutsche SS-Division "Prinz Eugen"* (Frankfurt a.M.: Campus, 2003).

This recent literature, taken as a whole, has confirmed the centrality of ideology in the Waffen-SS, albeit with important new perspectives. First, these scholars have illustrated that the

transnational nature of the Waffen-SS, but the brunt of the research has been done through separate national histories rather than integrating the non-German experiences into a general narrative of the Waffen-SS. This crucially leaves out the question of how the changing transnational composition of the Waffen-SS

Waffen-SS was a gathering ground for a transnational proto-fascist network of conservative nationalists radicalized by the First World War and its aftermath, including a deep anxiety about Bolshevism. “Non-Germans in the Waffen-SS: An introduction” in ed.s Jochen Böehler and Robert Gerwarth, *The Waffen-SS: A European History*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 1-15. To be sure, there is still some debate about the fierceness of ideological motivation behind Waffen-SS volunteers. Martin Gutmann takes the strongest stance in favor of ideology, whereas others, such as Peter Scharff Smith, Niels Bo Poulsen, and Claus Bundgård Christensen see more space for non-ideological motivations. See Martin R. Gutmann, “Debunking the Myth of the Volunteers: Transnational Volunteering in the Nazi Waffen-SS Officer Corps during the Second World War,” *Contemporary European History* 22.4 (2013): 585-607. Claus Bundgård Christensen, Niels Bo Poulsen, and Peter Scharff Smith, “Germanic Volunteers from Northern Europe” in ed.s Jochen Böehler and Robert Gerwarth, *The Waffen-SS: A European History*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 42-75. Second, these have re-centered that ideological discussion from a strictly German ideology to a transnational Germanic ideology which appealed to different Northern European national identities as common heirs of “European civilization” with equal national cultures and histories. As Martin Gutmann has illustrated, the volunteers in the Waffen-SS were not merely “anti-Bolshevist”; rather, he argues, they were actively seeking a new, anti-bourgeois vision of a Germanic modernity. See Gutmann, “Debunking the Myth of the Volunteers.” Finally, the recent scholarship has illustrated the integral relationship between the Waffen-SS and the Holocaust. See Martin Cüppers, *Wegbereiter Der Shoah: Die Waffen-SS, Der Kommandostab Reichsführer-SS Und Die Judenvernichtung 1939-1945*, (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2005).

affected the core German membership, because it treats the Waffen-SS as a collection of separate nationalities rather than a collective institution, which, as will be shown, actually shared a codified indoctrination program across nationalities. Furthermore, Waffen-SS propaganda eventually even sought to breakdown national identities. Indeed, while recent research has provided a more nuanced picture of a cooperative “Germanic Europe” underpinning Waffen-SS ideology, this chapter will illustrate that the idea of “Germanic” was constantly modified in Waffen-SS propaganda, and by the end of the war came to mean a repudiation of traditional nationalisms in favor of an integrated pan-European nation with a shared racial heritage in ancient Europe.

This chapter will emphasize the changing and ephemeral nature of this new nationalism, which we will call “Germanic Europeanism,” because, unlike other iterations of the Europe-concept, the Waffen-SS remained stubbornly committed to National Socialist racial doctrines. As we will see, in order to reconcile racial doctrines with the increasingly multiethnic profile of the Waffen-SS, propagandists turned to the concept of “Germanic” as a way to make racial doctrines more inclusive. Drawing from under-utilized sources (officer indoctrination, soldiers’ propaganda periodicals, and internal documents from the Waffen-SS “Office of Indoctrination”) this chapter will trace the evolution of Germanic Europeanism through four stages: German racial exceptionalism, Germanic particularism, Germanic nationalism, and modified Germanic Europeanism.

Gottlob Berger and the SS-Office for Indoctrination

The Waffen-SS (translated literally “weapon-SS”) grew out of Hitler’s original bodyguard in the SS. In 1923 the SS was formed as a small bodyguard attachment of the larger paramilitary brown-shirt formation, the SA. Heinrich Himmler joined this bodyguard movement and gradually rose to prominence in the organization, eventually appointed “Reichsführer-SS” by Hitler in 1929. Before the Nazi seizure of power in 1933, Heinrich Himmler rapidly expanded the unit from 280 men to 52,000. After the “Night of Long Knives,” when the SA was politically emasculated, Himmler successfully established the SS as the infamous paramilitary force which administered Hitler’s arbitrary, terror-based, and ultimately genocidal rule in Nazi Germany and occupied Europe. But the SS was an amorphous organization, which as early as 1934 began to be subdivided into various different institutions designed for specific tasks in Himmler’s shadow state. This included the *Sicherheitsdienst* (SD), or “Security Service,” for administering intelligence and secret state policing; the “Death’s Head Formations” for administering the concentration camp system; and the “General SS” as a reserve unit. Altogether, these aforementioned units numbered roughly 150,000 by the end of the war.¹³ This number was dwarfed, however, by yet another institution within the SS: the Waffen-SS.

The Waffen-SS, originally called *SS-Verfügungstruppe*, or “provisional force,” was formed by Himmler in 1936 as an expanded and military-equipped version of Hitler’s original SS-bodyguard. In 1938 Hitler issued a decree which

¹³ See Stein, *The Waffen-SS*, xxv-xxxiv. Heinz Höhne, *The Order of the Death’s Head: The Story of Hitler’s SS* (Hamburg: Spiegel, 1966).

established the Waffen-SS as a third standing armed force alongside the army and police. This was a small army directly loyal to Hitler, and did not amount to more than a few divisions until the outbreak of war in 1939, which Himmler used to expand the size of the Waffen-SS. By war’s end, the Waffen-SS consisted of 38 divisions and over 900,000 soldiers, most of them non-German. In one of the most blatant ironies of the Third Reich, Himmler’s racially superior, elitist “Order” eventually comprised of more non-German collaborators than Germans. In fact, by the end of the war it included hundreds of thousands of supposedly racially inferior so-called *Untermenschen* (“sub-humans”), in particular from the Ukraine and Russia. The Waffen-SS even drew upon Baltic Muslim recruits.

Table: Ethnic Composition of Waffen-SS¹⁴

Germans (<i>Reichsdeutsche</i>)	400,000
Western/Northern Europeans (mostly Dutch, Danish, Belgian, French, and Swedish)	125,000
Eastern European ethnic Germans (<i>Volksdeutsche</i>)	150,000
Eastern Europeans (mostly Russians and Ukrainians)	250,000
Total:	Roughly 900,000

¹⁴ For statistic tables by nationality see Chris Bishop, *SS: Hitler's Foreign Divisions: Foreign Volunteers in the Waffen-SS 1940-1945*, (Staplehurst, Kent: Spellmount, 2005). Stein, *The Waffen SS*. These numbers do not take into account a small number of Muslim, British, and Indian recruits.

War-time exigencies, combined with difficult recruiting competition from the army, provided the impetus for its exponential and international expansion from 1940 to 1945. The chief architect behind this and all other Waffen-SS recruiting operations throughout the war was Gottlob Berger.¹⁵ After war began in September, 1939 Berger was able to expand the Waffen-SS from 25,000 to 150,000 within a year. He did so, despite the wishes of traditional military recruiters, by repeatedly transferring soldiers from the “General SS” and concentration camp units into the Waffen-SS and then re-filling those units to their prescribed domestic strengths. The remarkable war-time expansion of the Waffen-SS is largely thanks to Berger’s Machiavellian instincts and his ability to balance Himmler’s scruples against foreign recruitment as well as army trepidation about Waffen-SS recruitment from traditional military pools. Following a successful recruiting campaign in late 1939, Berger himself drew up a proposal to create the *Ergänzungsamt* (Recruiting Office), which would separately organize all Waffen-SS recruitment under his direct command. Himmler agreed and gave him authority for the “total recruitment of the Waffen SS” (*Gesamtrekrutierung der Waffen SS*). This office was created within the SS-

¹⁵ For a short biographical account see Tuviah Friedman, *SS-Obergruppenführer und General der Waffen-SS Gottlob Berger: Chef des SS-Hauptamtes in Berlin und Chef der Gesamtrekrutierung der Waffen-SS: Dokumentensammlung* (Haifa, Israel: Institute of Documentation in Israel for the Investigation of Nazi War Crimes, 1996). Ronald Smelser and Enrico Syring, *Die SS: Elite unter dem Totenkopf: 30 Lebensläufe* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2003).

Hauptamt (“SS Main Office”), which Berger also subsumed under his command.¹⁶

But Berger’s ambition went beyond recruitment. After the Western campaigns resulted in the defeat of France, he brought ideological indoctrination under his supervision as well by taking advantage of a unique institutional restructuring. On August 15th, 1940, in a bureaucratic rearrangement of SS departments, a new department was created to oversee and administer the growing Waffen-SS: the SS Leadership Main Office. Berger was appointed head of the older SS-Main Office, now stripped of most of its authority other than recruiting. But in order to keep his now threatened department from disintegrating or becoming insignificant in the opaque line of SS authority, Berger cunningly reorganized the department, and successfully lobbied to have all ideological indoctrination for the Waffen-SS placed under his direct authority in a sub-department called the *Schulungsamt* (“Office for Indoctrination”).¹⁷ Thus, even though after 1940 it was no longer the central administering department for the Waffen-SS, the SS-Main Office secured continued existence because both indoctrination and recruitment were brought under its umbrella. As such, Gottlob Berger and his propagandists in the SS Office for Indoctrination were, throughout

¹⁶ Stein, *The Waffen SS*, 36.

¹⁷ See Stein, *The Waffen-SS*, 27-59. The SS-Main Office and the SS-Leadership Main Office continued to exist side by side throughout the duration of the war (not without mutual animosity). See Stein, *The Waffen SS*, 105. See Smelser and Seyring, *Die SS: Elite Unter Dem Totenkopf*, 49. See Martin Cüppers, *Wegbereiter Der Shoah*, 99.

the war, the primary source for changes to the ethnic composition as well as the ideology of the Waffen-SS.

Lehrpläne

We can see this propaganda transformation by surveying the ideological instruction of Waffen-SS officers. Waffen-SS unit commanders were, beginning in 1937, given primary responsibility for the subsequent indoctrination of the troops throughout the war. They were a Nazi version of the Soviet commissar – separately trained ideological fundamentalists who were inserted into units in order to ensure a steady diet of ideological program and guarantee that the Waffen-SS retained its ideological tenacity and loyalty (the Waffen-SS motto, in fact, was “my honor is my loyalty”).¹⁸ In other words, Waffen-SS officers were not only trained in ideological fanaticism, they were made into ideological instructors. An analysis, therefore, of the material for officer indoctrination is a valuable prism into the ideological narratives which underpinned the Waffen-SS over time. These German officers were trained at special SS academies called “*Junkerschulen*,” where they were indoctrinated according to a curriculum sketched out in so-called *Lehrpläne* (“Instructional outlines”) published by Berger’s SS-Main Office. Essentially ideology textbooks, the *Lehrpläne* outlined a 6-month instructional plan for the indoctrination of the Waffen-SS officer corps

¹⁸ Other than a limited amount of indoctrination at basic training, Waffen-SS soldiers received the majority of their ideological training from unit commanders and periodicals. Cüppers illustrates that Berger was particularly passionate about cementing this system of ideological training. See Cüppers, *Wegbereiter Der Shoah*, 99. Bernd Wegner, *The Waffen-SS*, 202.

at the SS academies. These sources offer a glimpse into the indoctrination process of the Waffen-SS. Since all *Lehrpläne* followed the same 6-month war-time training program, they are particularly useful in comparison with one another. By comparing an early *Lehrplan* dated to 1941 with a later *Lehrplan* from 1944 one can identify the overall shift that took place in Waffen-SS propaganda from its infancy in 1941 to its peak in 1944.¹⁹

The most important difference between the Waffen-SS of 1941 and the Waffen-SS of 1944 was its ethnic composition. By 1944, the Waffen-SS had completed its war-time evolution into a unit comprising soldiers as far West as France and as far East as Russia. In fact, the 1944 officer manual begins by stating it was published with the knowledge that volunteers from all over Europe were serving in the Waffen-SS, and that “ideological indoctrination should be adjusted accordingly.”²⁰ This “adjustment” ended up being quite radical. As will be shown, key tenets of National Socialism were repeatedly altered or even

¹⁹ The *Lehrpläne* appear to also have been used to a certain extent for training in the General-SS and the police. See *Lehrplan für die sechsmonatige Schulung, erarbeitet und herausgegeben vom SS –Hauptamt (1941)*, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, DC, German Nationalism Series. See *Lehrplan für Die Weltanschauliche Erziehung in der SS und Polizei, erarbeitet und herausgegeben vom SS –Hauptamt (1944)*, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, DC, Nazi Propaganda Literature Series. Although neither *Lehrplan* is dated in the original documents, a thorough analysis of the texts with special consideration to discussed political events and the history of the Waffen-SS reveals with near certainty that the first *Lehrplan* can be dated to mid-1941 and the second *Lehrplan* to 1944.

²⁰ *Lehrplan (1944)*, preface.

replaced throughout the entire six-month program. This can be illustrated by first analyzing a summary of the terminological changes between the two instruction outlines. Then, it can be further illustrated in a more concentrated investigation of three pivotal themes in conventional National Socialism: racial doctrine, Reich ideology, and Nazi historicism.

Terminology

The *Lehrpläne* were broken down into four overarching chapters (each intended to last six to eight weeks of indoctrination). Each chapter was then broken down even further into hourly sub-sections (specific topics for hourly lectures). Already here, in a comparison of the section and sub-section titles, a restructuring of the narrative reveals itself. Two of the four original six to eight week instructional sections were re-titled: “The Struggle for the Reich” to “Europe and the Reich”; and “The Life of the Führer and the History of the Movement” to “The Führer, his Life, and his Meaning for Europe.” Not a single section or hourly lecture in the 1941 *Lehrplan* even mentioned Europe. In the 1944 *Lehrplan*, on the other hand, twenty-six of the thirty-four hourly lectures were re-created as lectures revolving entirely around the Europe-concept, with the term “Europe” even specifically in the title as a replacement for “Germany.” However, the transformation of National Socialist vocabulary extended beyond titles – indeed, the entire 1944 *Lehrplan*, down to hourly lectures, was revised to replace standard German-centric terminology with European terminology. Because each *Lehrplan* follows the same overall structure, the two *Lehrpläne*, compared side by side expose which terms were changed and what they were

replaced with. First, there was a clear transition in audience: from “we Germans” or “German nation” to “Europeans” or “European union”; from “the German Volk,” “the Greater German Reich,” or “German People’s Community” to “Europe,” “European Peoples,” “European Community,” or “European Community of Destiny.”²¹ Sentences originally in bold such as “our Volk is the Community of Destiny” were completely taken out of the second *Lehrplan* because of their inability to fit into the new ideological curriculum.²²

Racial doctrine (*Rassenkunde*)

The doctrine of a racially superior Germanic/Nordic race – “racial theory” (*Rassenkunde*) as Nazi theoreticians called it - was a key component to the Nazi *Weltanschauung*. As a pseudo-science, Nazi racial doctrine oscillated liberally between terms such as “German,” “Germanic,” “Aryan,” and “Nordic” without codifying differences or demarcations between racialist categories. As will be discussed in more detail below, this imprecision was essential for subsequent ideological transformations in Waffen-SS propaganda. But as it pertains to officer indoctrination, it is important to point out that the German-centric narrative of the 1941 *Lehrplan* likewise oscillated between racialist categories. For example, while it sometimes made use of “Germanic” terminology, the 1941 *Lehrplan* also

²¹ For the German translations: “*wir Deutsche*,” “*deutsche Nation*,” “*das deutsche Volk*,” “*das großdeutsche Reich*,” “*deutsche Volksgemeinschaft*” vs. “*Europäer*,” “*europäische Verbundenheit*,” “*Europa*,” “*europäische Völker*,” “*europäische Gemeinschaft*,” and “*europäische Schicksalsgemeinschaft*.”

²² *Lehrplan (1941)*, 47.

occasionally accentuated the superiority of Germans and Germany without the “Germanic” qualifier (e.g. “Deutsche” and “Deutschland”). The twenty-five points of the Nazi party’s first mass party rally, which contained numerous overtones against “non-Germans” (*nichtdeutsche*) and were blatantly German-centric, were listed and proclaimed to “still be the program of the movement.”²³ The 1944 *Lehrplan*, in contrast, removed the twenty-five points completely out of the training. Other times, the 1941 *Lehrplan* allowed for a more expansive supremacism, subtly including “Nordics” into the family of racial superiors. The 1941 *Lehrplan* attacked any notions of racial equality, tied such sentiments to both Marxism and liberalism, and dismissed the idea that

the destiny of all peoples can be improved. For [Marxists and liberals], all men are equal.... But we know: racially and in other ways dissimilar people, even if they are in the same living space and no matter how long the time periods, can never be completely equal. They remain what they are: foreign blood that has to be kept distant from our people [*Volkskörper*].²⁴

A vitriolic disdain for East European and Slavic races was repeatedly articulated, and traditional Lebensraum theory as well as the expulsion of racial inferiors were propagated as measures to protect Germanics from the harmful races in the East:

The great colonization [of the East] through settlement of Nordic farmers will build a wall against the penetration of the Eastern peoples of Slavic language.... Our strength and our spirit will determine and assort a new racial composition of Europe comprising of Germanic peoples.²⁵

²³ Ibid., 11-15.

²⁴ Ibid., 57.

²⁵ Ibid., 58.

The 1944 *Lehrplan*, in contrast, remained surprisingly silent on the topic of Lebensraum. Instead, all European peoples (*europäische Völker*) were presented as equal heirs to the European heritage and landmass. “[T]he racial organization of people,” it proclaimed, “will be based on their biological equality [*Gleichwertigkeit*].”²⁶ And while the Nordics had provided Europe with many historical gifts, “the other [non-Nordic] races of Europe,” it continued, “have also delivered very valuable contributions [in European history], especially regarding the formation of distinctive peoples and cultures [*Volksgruppen und Volkskulturen*].”²⁷

In its discussion of the fight against Bolshevik Russia, the 1944 *Lehrplan* mentioned all the “heroic” peoples that had joined with the Germans in the fight against Bolshevism, including a slew of peoples traditionally viewed by the Nazis as racial inferiors, but who were now fighting in the Waffen-SS: Slovaks, Croatians, Spanish, French, Lithuanians, Latvians and Estonians. All were mentioned by name. Then, astonishingly, far Eastern Europeans likewise received their inclusion into the community of racially “healthy” peoples. Clearly making reference to the Ukrainians and Russians who began entering the Waffen-SS in late 1943, the *Lehrplan* continued:

Yes, even members of peoples in the farthest Eastern portion of Europe, which belonged to the earliest struggles against Bolshevism, are turning against their brutal oppressors under our leadership. *Truly, all healthy*

²⁶ Ibid., 74.

²⁷ Ibid., 75.

*racial powers of Europe are breaking out against the world of destruction and annihilation [italics in original].*²⁸

To be even more blunt about its newfound, paradoxical racial egalitarianism, the *Lehrplan* then commented on some of the achievements of non-European peoples as well, including the Chinese, Incan, and Aztec cultures, which, although different, were nonetheless to be considered “high cultures.”²⁹

“Theory of the Reich” (*Reichsidee*)

The so-called *Reichsidee*, or “theory of the Reich,” so central to National Socialist doctrine, also witnessed a dramatic shift in the Waffen-SS ideological narrative. In the 1941 *Lehrplan*, following traditional National Socialist rhetoric, the term “Reich” was generally used exclusively for the German nation. Thus, the term “Reich” was used synonymously with “Germany,” hence the use of wordings such as *das deutsche Reich* (“the German Reich”) and *das großdeutsche Reich* (“the greater German Reich”).³⁰ In fact, an entire chapter in the 1941 *Lehrplan* was devoted to presenting National Socialism as the historic salvation of the German Volk, culminating with a final sub-section entitled “The Historical Responsibility of National Socialism,” in which “the German Volk in the Greater

²⁸ Ibid., 66.

²⁹ Ibid., 76.

³⁰ “Reich” was also used synonymously with “*deutsches Volk*” and “*Volksgemeinschaft*” (“German Volk” and “Volk’s community,” respectively). While it is true that the term “*großdeutsches Reich*” plays off of pre-National Socialism, irredentist ideas for the unification of all Germans into one state (“*großdeutsche Lösung*”), even this conception of a Reich is clearly confined to an exclusively German-speaking state, albeit an enlarged one.

German Reich” was presented as the movement’s ultimate victor. Written at the bottom of the last page in bold print stood a statement certainly intended to remind the instructors of the symbiotic relationship between Reich and Germany: **“One Volk, One Reich, One Führer.”**³¹

In the 1944 *Lehrplan*, at a time when the Reich employed soldiers from quite a few more than “one Volk,” the reciprocal association between Reich and Germany was severed; the concept of Reich lost its strict national character and became the historical vehicle for international European cooperation. Terminologically, the word “Reich” was replaced with either “Europe,” “European Community,” “European Peoples’ Community,” and “Occidental Community of Destiny,”³² or, when it remained, it became synonymous with the infamous propaganda slogan *Neuordnung Europas* (“New Order of Europe”), the vague political entity which would supposedly administer postwar Europe. Consider the following intermingling of the terms “Reich” and “New Order of Europe”:

Adolf Hitler’s New Order of Europe goes well beyond the sphere of the state, for it is the consequence of a revolution in the entire European way of thinking. The visible expression of the transformed European Peoples’ Community is THE REICH [uppercase in original].³³

³¹ *Lehrplan (1941)*, 47.

³² For the German translations: “*Europa*,” “*europäische Gemeinschaft*,” “*europäische Völkergemeinschaft*” and “*abendländische Schicksalsgemeinschaft*.”

³³ *Lehrplan (1944)*, 48.

Even the very term “National Socialism” underwent reconstruction, often replaced in the 1944 manual with “Revolutionary Socialism” or “European Socialism”:

In the Second World War, in which we see the continuation of a now nearly thirty year struggle, it’s proven more clearly than ever that this is not about Germany alone, but rather all of Europe. Once again, as so often in history, the Reich is standing for the entire Occident against the anti-European powers in the East and West.

It continued:

The Reich represents the outward concerns of the continent, guarantees an equitable reconciliation of the multifold internal national claims, and ensures the autonomous life of every single European nation [bold in original]. The arrangement of the inner-folkish [*innervölkisch*] circumstances of each individual state stands, just as the coexistence of all nations in the continent, under the law of revolutionary European Socialism. According to their proportion of achievement for the whole, every Volk will be guaranteed its due position in the continental community. Amidst the emergencies and pains of a bloody struggle, Europe reaches unity.³⁴

Perhaps the most striking aspect of these passages was the use of federalism when referring to intra-European relations in “European Socialism.” “Nations” were promised an “autonomous life,” “individual states” were assured of “their due position in the continental community,” and “national claims” were guaranteed “equitable reconciliation.” This “European Socialism” was presented as the only philosophy capable of providing “a controlled adjustment of relationships between European peoples.”³⁵ These excerpts from the section on the historical background of the Reich present a Nazi political ideology not only in

³⁴ Ibid., 47,48.

³⁵ Ibid., 21.

contradiction with the earlier *Lehrplan*, but also diametrically opposed to central principles in the National Socialist commitment to Social Darwinism.

This new, supranational character of Nazism was even proclaimed to have been existent since the inception of the Nazi party. The history of the 1933 *Machtergreifung* (the Nazi party's rise to power) was portrayed by the 1944 *Lehrplan* as a European ideological revolution which, paradoxically similar to Marx's proletariat revolution, implied, desired, and expected exportation to its neighbors. Take, for example, the following quotation about the rise of Hitler from a sub-chapter entitled "Adolf Hitler: the Führer of Europe and the Fighter for a Genuine European Socialism": "One knew very well," it explained "that such a basic, life-giving movement would not stop at geographic or political borders."³⁶

Nazi Historicism

Nazi propaganda relied heavily on the use of history to buttress the legitimacy of ideology. This was particularly true in the SS. In fact, three of the four sections in both the 1941 and 1944 *Lehrpläne* (twenty-eight of thirty-six total hours of instruction) were literally ideological indoctrination masked as history lessons.³⁷ An analysis of the use of history in the two *Lehrpläne* provides further

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 69.

³⁷ Each *Lehrplan* contained one section which was especially historical, tracing the history of the Reich concept into the Early Middle Ages or even into classical antiquity. In the earlier *Lehrplan* this section is entitled "The Struggle for the Reich," and in the later *Lehrplan* the title is "Europe and the Reich."

evidence of the dilution of the ideological message, because in order to remain consistent with the new European message traditional Social Darwinist historicism had to be Europeanized in the 1944 *Lehrplan*. In the 1941 *Lehrplan*, the history of the Reich was nothing more than the struggle of the superior German or Nordic race, which “carried the torch of creativity into the ahistorical darkness of antiquity.”³⁸ Once again, the Nordic race was not clearly delineated from “German,” and in fact described as the “fountain of blood for the German Volk”; indeed, the term “Nordic” was often employed interchangeably with “German.”³⁹ In the 1944 *Lehrplan*, however, the history of the Reich was not specifically “German,” but rather a history of the *Entstehung Europas* (“emergence of Europe”). “Europe and the Reich,” it was explained “are fatefully connected together – the one is not historically comprehensible without the other.”⁴⁰ Moreover, the agent for this historical phenomenon was not the Nordic race, but the “Indo-Germanic race,” drawn throughout the narrative as the racial origin of all European peoples. The 1941 *Lehrplan*, in contrast, only mentioned the term “Indo-Germanic” once, but not to praise it. Quite to the contrary, it lamented the term as “quite empty” and “scientifically objectionable.”⁴¹

³⁸ *Lehrplan (1941)*, 28.

³⁹ The second hourly lecture in this history section was titled “The Nordic Race – the Fountain of Blood for the German [deutsch] Volk.” See *Lehrplan (1941)*, 25.

⁴⁰ *Lehrplan (1944)*, 24.

⁴¹ *Lehrplan (1941)*, 26.

In the 1941 *Lehrplan*, the primary means by which the Reich was historicized was through the story of the Nordic race and its mission to retain its racial purity by avoiding contact with other European races and simultaneously conquer Lebensraum from Eastern peoples (especially the Slavs). This Darwinistic supremacism underwent the most drastic reversal in the historicism of the 1944 *Lehrplan*. Charlemagne in the 1941 *Lehrplan*, for example, was depicted as ultimately a failure for having mixed with too many Eastern peoples that were not “Nordic Germanics and Anglo-Saxons,” and hence allowing his kingdom to become “interracial” (*übevölkish*).⁴² Charlemagne was then contrasted with the Germanic leader of the Saxons, Widukind, who rightly opposed the integration of his people with others.⁴³ In the 1944 *Lehrplan*, however, Charlemagne was celebrated for having “given continental form to the developing European Community of Peoples [*europäische Völkergemeinschaft*].” After specifically mentioning the beneficial incorporation of Slavic peoples into the developing Reich, the *Lehrplan* declared that “his kingdom created the masterly connected system of European order.”⁴⁴

A similar ambivalence can be seen in the history of Heinrich I. of Saxony, who in the 1941 *Lehrplan* was exalted for having secured the Germanic Reich Lebensraum by “reconquering” the East from the Slavs.⁴⁵ In fact, Lebensraum

⁴² Ibid., 34.

⁴³ Ibid., 35.

⁴⁴ *Lehrplan (1944)*, 27.

⁴⁵ *Lehrplan (1941)*, 37.

was constantly portrayed as the overriding phenomenon of history. For example, evidence for the “inner strength of the German [*deutsch*] Volk” was their ability to win back much of the East from the Slavs while simultaneously fighting the Catholic church.⁴⁶ Interestingly, the term “Lebensraum” was not employed at all in the 1944 *Lehrplan*. Instead, the history of Lebensraum was replaced with a benevolent gathering mission in which the peoples of the East were brought “law and order,”⁴⁷ and then subsequently given those elements of civilization that ultimately made them European. Thus, in the 1944 *Lehrplan*, Heinrich I. was praised for having “gradually given the Slavs those elements of civilization that enabled them to subsequently be...added among those who have given Europe its lasting elements.”⁴⁸ The alteration of the Slavs’ role in the history of the Reich represents a complete about-face in the two *Lehrpläne*. Initially insidious, racial inferiors, they suddenly became the latest fruitful additions to the European community: “[i]t was Europe itself that went forth with the German [*deutsch*] emigrants towards the East and gathered the Slavic peoples from the Baltic Sea to the Adriatic Sea into the continental community.”⁴⁹

European Racial Exceptionalism

⁴⁶ This comes from a sub-section entitled *Die Rückgewinnung des Ostens* (“The Reconquering of the East”). See *Lehrplan (1941)*, 39.

⁴⁷ *Lehrplan (1944)*, 32.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 29.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 34.

At first glance, one might mistakenly conclude that the 1944 *Lehrplan* had discontinued the concept of race. In fact, at times the text seems to offer the idea of a post-race and post-nation Europe:

For many centuries the peoples of Europe were unable to acknowledge their commonality due to feelings of national uniqueness. In the nineteenth century the last remains of a conscientious continental identity sank in the blood of European Civil Wars while the exaggerations of the national principle and irrational disassociation from one another were nurtured. The consequences of this blindness was endless suffering.⁵⁰

While the 1944 *Lehrplan* was certainly post-nation (advocating for a new “European continental identity” to replace nationalism) it was not, however, post-racial. In fact, the Waffen-SS propagandists were clearly sensitive to such accusations and attempted to preemptively dismiss them:

Whoever thinks that the SS is therefore forfeiting its original character or repudiating the strict principles of race does not understand the revolutionary, nation-state-surpassing idea of National Socialism.

It continued:

The history of Germanic migration and the once-upon-a-time Germanic settlement between the Baltic Sea and the Black Sea and from the Atlantic Ocean to North Africa founded the blood-based relatedness [*blutsmässige Verwandtschaft*] of Europe, and established what we call European culture. The New Order of these peoples will be based on the same foundation.

It continued:

No person in Europe today believes – no matter how this war might end – that there will be a return of small and large states which owe their existence solely to British intervention into European affairs.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 23.

Lastly, it argued, Europeans everywhere were witnessing “the common Germanic roots of the European Family of Peoples taking root once again.”⁵¹ The way to square a post-nation ideology with a pro-racial ideology, then, was to expand the historical definition of “Germanic” to include all of continental Europe (somehow even including Russia). In fact, the 1944 *Lehrplan* went even further, suggesting that all Europeans are racial comrades who share origins in the “Indo-Germanics” who migrated into Europe many thousands of years before and “in this manner created long ago the blood-based foundation for the European continent upon which a later spiritual unification could take place.”⁵² The various tribes which emerged throughout the continent, although they occasionally and unfortunately fought against one another, were actually united with an “Occidental identity” and unconsciously engaged in a meta-historical mission to protect the Indo-Germanic heritage from Jews and “Asians.”⁵³ Near the end of the 1944 *Lehrplan* there appeared a section devoted to codifying this new racialism, in which each modern European nationality was the product of one of six “successor races” (*Erbanlagengemeinschaft*) to the “Indo-Germanic” race: namely, *Nordisch*, *Fälisch*, *Dinarisch*, *Westisch*, *Ostisch*, or *Ostbaltisch*.⁵⁴

⁵¹ Ibid., 20-24.

⁵² Ibid., 25.

⁵³ Ibid., 26-27.

⁵⁴ Here and elsewhere Waffen-SS propagandists made use of the racial categorization put forward by Nazi academic Hans F.K Günther at the University of Berlin. Waffen-SS propagandists began to sporadically deploy these categories as early as 1942 when the SS-Hauptamt published a short seventy-two page book based on Günther’s categorization. See

In other words, racial theory remained in the 1944 *Lehrplan*, but was re-developed into a paradoxical pseudo-egalitarian racial exceptionalism. Each modern European race, it was explained, was its own special combination of “biological” and “cultural-historical” “inheritance,” and should therefore be preserved because of its inherent “biological equality” (*biologische Gleichwertigkeit*) with all other European races, and because of its “distinct” and “unique” contribution to the whole, and because of its origins in the “Indo-Germanics.” Yet despite the alleged commonalities and equalities, racial mixing was nevertheless condemned: “Every racial mixing changes this harmonious racial picture... [and causes] damage to racial peculiarity.” This was an idea peddled by the Jews, the one race which did not belong to the European fold.⁵⁵ Awkwardly overcautious, the 1944 *Lehrplan* struggled to avoid racial supremacy while still attempting to present the important historical role of the modern Nordic race. The Nordic race was presented as having had an “unmistakable influence” for the historical development of Europe; it was the “center of European humanity and the connection to all other [races].” Yet even these cautious attempts to retain some element of Nazi superiority were accompanied with a double-down on the new-found racially egalitarian exceptionalism:

Here we must emphasize yet again that it is not appropriate in the statutory philosophy of racial and racial-historical observations to procure

Rassenpolitik, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, DC, Nazi Propaganda Literature Series.

⁵⁵ *Lehrplan (1944)*, 71-77.

definitions of comparative value. Every form of life and achievement of a race, as a biological and cultural community, will be acknowledged, because we see in it a natural demonstration of life. *When we emphasize in particular the commitment of the Nordic race for Europe, that's not from a standpoint of biological evaluation; rather, it's a result of a real political realization that this race contains historically, as well as currently, the capacity to unite the whole and thereby integrate Europe into a powerful living community* [italics in original].⁵⁶

Leithefte

Having witnessed the stark contrast between 1941 and 1944 officer instruction, the rest of this chapter will switch focus to an examination of this ideological shift over the course of the war in relation to the changing ethnic make-up of the Waffen-SS and subsequent alterations to propaganda narratives in Berger's SS Office for Indoctrination. The above passages hint at the first significant ideological reformulation in Waffen-SS propaganda which this chapter is categorizing "Germanic Europeanism." By June of 1940, Hitler's Blitzkrieg campaigns had resulted in the sudden occupation of Europe. With most of Western and Northern Europe under Nazi rule, Gottlob Berger moved quickly to take advantage of the untapped recruitment pool, and the first wave of a few thousand non-German, Western and Northern European volunteers entered the Waffen-SS. This resulted in the first non-German Waffen-SS formations (*Westland* and *Nordland*), comprised of Dutch, Danes, Belgian "Walloons," and Norwegians.⁵⁷ These regiments were soon after combined with a German

⁵⁶ Ibid., 75.

⁵⁷ Berger also began adding Eastern European ethnic Germans (*Volksdeutsche*) around the same time. See Stein, *The Waffen-SS*, 97, 143-144, 169.

regiment of veterans from the Western campaign to form a transnational Germanic division, the *SS-Panzerdivision Wiking*. The name of the division, “Viking,” speaks to the ideological novelty which the division was intended to pioneer. Under the leadership of German nationalist and former WW1/Freikorps veteran Felix Steiner, *SS-Panzerdivision Wiking* was intended as the vanguard of a new “Greater Germanic” identity for the Waffen-SS now imbued with a mission to unify Europe, and Steiner was proudly aware of this role.⁵⁸ As a result, by the end of 1940 this new narrative dominated Waffen-SS propaganda. A new set of sources illustrate both this transition as well as the essence of this new doctrine.

While the 1941 and 1944 *Lehrpläne* reveal an acute shift in the ideological message for the Waffen-SS between 1941 and 1944, a second set of sources offers insight into the gradual transition towards Germanic Europeanism over those same years. In addition to propaganda instruction from their officers, Waffen-SS soldiers at the front were indoctrinated via an additional medium: monthly periodicals called “*Leithefte*,” or “guide magazines.” These propaganda and entertainment magazines were, alongside officer indoctrination, the next most important source for propaganda in the Waffen-SS. Published monthly by the SS-Main Office and distributed to the various divisions and SS bureaus throughout occupied Europe, the *Leitheft* magazines were designed for continuous indoctrination and entertainment of the soldiers. Like officer instruction, the *Leitheft* magazines were an essential tool for Waffen-SS indoctrination: in fact, at

⁵⁸ Steiner, as will be discussed in more detail below, fully embraced this ideology both during and after the war, and carried it with him into the postwar years as a leader in veterans’ circles.

the Nürnberg Trials Berger claimed that they were the main means of instruction within the SS.⁵⁹ Heinrich Himmler himself, in a speech to SS bureaucrats in January of 1944, acknowledged that the *Leitheft* magazines were a primary means of indoctrination second only to direct instruction from troop commanders.⁶⁰ Moreover, war-time documents reveal the popularity of the magazines among the soldiers. In a report to Himmler in April, 1943, Berger expressed that the popularity of the *Leitheft* magazines among the soldiers had resulted in extremely high demand (400,000 total copies had been printed, and this was supposedly not fulfilling the demand for even more).⁶¹ It is surprising, therefore, that the *Leitheft* magazines have not received their due attention in the historiography, especially because they attest to the penetration of Europeanism beyond the officer corps and into the standard ranks of the Waffen-SS.⁶² In June, 1942 the SS-Main Office

⁵⁹ Wegner, *The Waffen-SS*, 199.

⁶⁰ "Rede des Reichsführer-SS auf der Tagung der RPA-Leiter am 28 Januar 1944," United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, College Park MD, T175, Roll 94, Frame 2614803.

⁶¹ Gottlob Berger to Heinrich Himmler, April 21st, 1943, United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, College Park MD, T 175, Roll 38, Frame 38/7943.

⁶² George Stein only mentions the *Leitheft* magazines once. See Stein, *The Waffen-SS*. Bernd Wegner discusses them primarily in the context of the pre-war years before the Waffen-SS expanded exponentially and internationalized, and even then mostly just on the topic of antisemitism. See Wegner, *The Waffen-SS*. Martin Cüppers similarly uses them only briefly to underscore the extreme levels of antisemitism among the soldiers of a specific unit called the *Kommandostab RFSS* (an auxiliary force under Himmler's control from 1941-1942). See Cüppers, *Wegbereiter Der Shoah*. Josef Ackermann is one of the few historians to give the

circulated a memo from Heinrich Himmler describing the *Leitheft* magazines as a “timeless and permanently relevant ideological source for all-encompassing and scientific instruction.”⁶³

The first publication year for the *Leitheft* magazines was 1935, at which point they fulfilled a much different function than they would later during the war. Similar to the eventual officers’ *Lehrpläne*, the *Leitheft* magazines were originally published for SS officers as instructional guidelines for the further indoctrination of the troops.⁶⁴ Also, it is important to note that at this point they were published for the “General-SS,” rather than primarily for the Waffen-SS. Later, however, the *Leitheft* magazines would become a tool of instruction mainly for the Waffen-SS. Initially they were not yet published by Berger’s SS-Main Office; instead,

Leitheft magazines substantial discussion, but he also employs them primarily in the pre-war context. His use of the *Leitheft* magazines, though, are for a biography of Heinrich Himmler, in which he sees them as a source that speak mostly to the core of Himmler’s ideological beliefs. He likewise does not use them for studying the Waffen-SS after 1940 and Berger’s take-over of indoctrination for the Waffen-SS. See Josef Ackermann, *Heinrich Himmler Als Ideologe*, (Göttingen: Musterschmidt, 1970). Finally, Martin Gutmann has given the *Leitheft* magazines significant attention with respect to Danish, Swedish, and Swiss volunteers and their participation in the “Germanic Recruitment Offices.” In particular, he utilizes the Germanic *Leitheft* magazines discussed below. See Gutmann, *Building a Nazi Europe*.

⁶³ “Erlass des RFSS vom 1. Juni, 1942,“ Bundesarchiv, Berlin-Licherfelde, NS 31/415.

⁶⁴ Issues in the first two years of publication, for example, usually began with a preface entitled *Zur Beachtung* (“Take notice”) instructing “SS-Führer [SS-leaders]” and “Schulungsleiter [Instruction leaders]” regarding which themes to emphasize and how to present the material. See, for example, “Zur Beachtung,” *SS-Leithefte* 1/6 (1935-1936).

they were published by the *SS Rasse- und Siedlungshauptamt* (the SS Race and Settlement Main Office), Himmler's department in the SS responsible for policing racial purity.⁶⁵ It was not until 1938 that the *Leitheft* magazines were published by the SS-Main Office.⁶⁶ And it was not until after the outbreak of war in late 1939, as part of Berger's restructuring of the SS-Main Office, that the soldiers of the Waffen-SS became the primary audience. Around this time, they began to be published in much greater quantity and not just for Waffen-SS leadership cadres, but for all the troops.⁶⁷ Himmler emphasized that they focus primarily on doctrine rather than day-to-day politics such that they could be read by future or

⁶⁵ See "Zur Beachtung," *SS-Leithefte* 2/8 (1936-1937). This is why some historians, like Josef Ackermann, have justifiably used the pre-war *Leitheft* magazines as sources for investigating Himmler's idiosyncratic Nazi ideology. See Ackermann, *Heinrich Himmler Als Ideologe*.

⁶⁶ *SS-Leithefte* 4/4 (1938-1939).

⁶⁷ For example, the preface to an issue in 1937 instructs SS-leaders to cease prohibiting the production of further copies of the *Leitheft* magazines. The *Leitheft* magazines, it was explained, should reach all men in the SS, not just the leadership. See "Zur Beachtung," *SS-Leithefte* 2/8 (1936-1937). Additionally, a new war-time edition of the *Leitheft* magazines called "*Kriegsausgabe*," which corresponded to the beginning of the war in 1939, reveals the extent to which the audience had changed. In these war-time editions, the combat troops of the Waffen-SS were addressed directly and ideological articles begin to be interspersed with various articles for entertainment (stories, jokes, illustrations). See, for example, *SS-Leithefte* 5/5 (1939-1940). It should not be assumed, however, that at this point only the Waffen-SS received the *Leitheft* magazines. An issue after the outbreak of war in late 1939, for example, mentioned that some SD and police units received the *Leitheft* magazines as well. See "Zur Beachtung," *SS-Leithefte* 5/2 (1939-1940).

past generations seamlessly. In particular, he ordered, they should teach the “manly, heroic virtues”; namely: “honor, loyalty, obedience, courage, and comradeship.”⁶⁸ According to another internal SS-Main Office memo, by mid-1942 the SS-Main Office had printed over 250,000 *Leitheft* magazines, with more than half of those going to the Waffen-SS soldiers at the front and the rest to the “General SS” and associated “departments.”⁶⁹ By this time, the *Leitheft* magazines had become the primary vehicle for Germanic Europeanism in the Waffen-SS. The rise of Germanic Europeanism in the *Leitheft* magazines can be divided into four stages: German Racial Supremacism, Germanic particularism, Germanic nationalism, and modified Germanic Europeanism

German Racial Supremacism, 1935-1939

The pre-war and early-war *Leitheft* magazines, which the SS Race and Settlement Main Office began publishing in early 1935, were anchored in the unashamed racial supremacism typically associated with conventional National Socialism. The SS was presented as an exclusively German (*deutsch*) “Order” called to preserve the German race. “I believe in Germany, and that’s what I’m fighting for today, tomorrow, and forever – as long as I live,” declared one of the earliest editions from 1935, “[t]he Volk alone is our Lord, and we serve this Volk

⁶⁸ “Erlass des RFSS vom 1. Juni, 1942,” Bundesarchiv, Berlin-Lichterfelde, NS 31/415.

⁶⁹ SS-Hauptsturmführer Guhivert, “Gedanken zur Gestaltung der Leithefte in Ausführung des Erlasses des Reichsführers-SS vom 1. Juni 1942,” Bundesarchiv, Berlin-Lichterfelde, NS 31/415.

to the best of our knowledge and conscience.”⁷⁰ To be sure, even already in the mid-1930s the *Leitheft* magazines were liberal with their use of the term “German,” often exchanging it interchangeably with “Nordic,” “Germanic,” “Germanic-German,” or “Germanic-Nordic.” For example, the first edition of 1936 was dedicated to expounding upon the political doctrine of “the blood concept” (*Blutsgedanken*) as an alternative political ideology to liberalism, Marxism, Christianity, and Judaism. It declared that the Nuremberg Laws of 1935 were an essential victory in this ideological competition, because it redefined citizenship via blood in contrast to the unrooted ideologies of its competitors. But Reich-citizenship was not only preserved for the German Volk, but also people of “related blood” (*artverwandten Blutes*).⁷¹ The ambiguity in the regularly employed term *artverwandt* enabled SS propagandists to elide specificity in the blood concept throughout the 1930s as well as the war years, because it fudged the demarcations between concepts such as “Volk,” “race,” “blood,” “Nordic,” “Aryan,” “Germanic,” and “German.” The lack of codification resulted in a repeated terminological incongruity in SS propaganda. Indeed, in the very same edition, the term “Nordic,” for example, was used inconsistently across different articles. One article discussed the Nordics as the

⁷⁰“Leitworte,” *SS-Leithefte* 1/6 (1935-1936).

⁷¹“Blut und Boden,” *SS-Leithefte* 2/1 (1936-1937), 10-11. Another article from mid-1937 entitled “National Socialism and Law” explained that proper legal theory in Nazism emulates traditional Germanic tribal law, governing all aspects of society according to race and blood. See “Nationalsozialismus und Recht,” *SS-Leithefte* 3/1 (1937-1938), 39.

historical “predecessors” of the modern Germanics; another article, by Alfred Rosenberg (a frequent guest author in SS propaganda) used “Nordic” synonymously with modern Germanics, declaring the Nordics to be the world’s “strongest state-building and culture-creating power“ and therefore worthy of conquering Eastern Europe.⁷² This ambiguity supplied the origins of Germanic Europeanism, because it left open the possibility of re-anchoring SS ideology in the less German-centric narrative of a brotherhood of Germanic peoples.

Nevertheless, despite the terminological flirtation with Germanic Europeanism, most of the *Leithest* magazines propaganda of the 1930s remained quite German-centric. The “blood concept” was often used interchangeably with the term “German socialism,” which suggested that German history contained a unique tradition capable of overcoming Marxism and liberalism, and under the leadership of Adolf Hitler was just now breaking out of its historical embryo.⁷³ Similarly, the Reich concept was definitively exclusive in these earlier *Leithest* magazines, reserving the Reich for the German Volk alone: “...our understanding of the state is different than before. The state is only a means for the purpose of preserving a Volk and to protect it in its fight for life.” Notions of a European Reich, or even a Reich of separate-but-equal Germanic peoples, were absent.

The first references to a European mission of the Waffen-SS were scattered throughout the early SS propaganda of the mid-1930s, often by Alfred

⁷² “Grundsätze Nationalsozialistischer Geschichtsauffassung,” *SS-Leithest* 2/5 (1936-1937), 54-55.

⁷³ “Deutscher Sozialismus,” *SS-Leithest* 5/5 (1939-1940), 5.

Rosenberg. The first propaganda piece to engage with the Europe-concept was an article by Alfred Rosenberg in the sixth ever edition of the *Leitheft* magazines in late 1935. While referring to “new research” in archaeology, Rosenberg claimed that European culture was the product of Germanic expansion and cultural dominance in the Middle Ages, ultimately leading surrounding races to adopt Germanic culture:

Contemporary research has rescued the often misused name of ‘Europe’, and so if we are to proudly call ourselves Europeans, then we must do so from a deeper consciousness than earlier, rootless cosmopolitans have. Europe was once the spring-board for the great cultures of the world! Europe has been the carrier of all truly great research and discoveries in world history and today it is a concept of a larger, all-encompassing home. The reinforcement of the unity in European life is a fundamental contribution of the National Socialist movement for the renewal of an ideologically and socially polarized continent.

He continued: “cultures do not create mankind, rather, specific racial groups create their specific cultures, which then naturally force other peoples under their spiritual dominance.”⁷⁴

Such early probing of a racial concept for Europe, although scattered throughout early SS propaganda, were the exception to the rule. Nonetheless, by the late 1930s such arguments were more frequent.⁷⁵ By early 1939, this argument increasingly extended into Eastern Europe. SS propagandists presented the history of Eastern Europe as a back and forth racial struggle between Germanics and Slavs, which began with an initial cultural flourishing under the Germanic Teutonic Knights but which was overwhelmed by successive waves of Slavic

⁷⁴ “Germanische Ur-und Frühgeschichte,” *SS-Leithefte* 1/6 (1935-1936).

⁷⁵ “Die Neuordnung Europas durch die Germanen,” *SS-Leithefte* 3/3 (1937-1938), 10-15.

invasion. Hence, the SS increasingly used the historical-cultural narrative of a Germanic Europe to justify Lebensraum expansionism.⁷⁶

Germanic Particularism, 1939-1941

The “Germanic Europe” narrative, as it first emerged in the *Leitheft* magazines in the summer and fall of 1940, was tailored to specific Germanic nations. Europe was the historical inheritance of Germans, Dutchmen, Belgian “Walloons,” Swedes, Norwegians, and Flemish. Each Germanic nationality was handled separately and, importantly, differences and peculiarities were repeatedly accentuated. In other words, Germanic Europeanism, initially, was a kind of “particularism,” as SS propagandists called it, which separated the Germanic nations as historically, culturally, and even racially distinct. Although all of these non-German nationalities were racially “healthy,” they were nonetheless trained to accept German military and political superiority and dominance. One of the first lead-articles which anticipated the Germanic-European mission of the Waffen-SS was written at the end of 1939. The article, titled “Germany’s Struggle for Europe!” spoke passionately about a “European Community,” but repudiated any notions of a common European, or even Germanic, identity, even insinuating that each nation passively submit itself to German rule: “Germany! That is the inner decision that we have spoken about, and that each Volk in Europe must make.”⁷⁷ Or, as an edition from early 1940 put it: Germany was called to “liberate” the Nordic countries, “but not by forcing its idiosyncrasies

⁷⁶ “Germanen gestalten den Ostraum,” *SS-Leithefte* 4/10 (1938-1939), 54-60.

⁷⁷ “Deutschlands Kampf um Europa!” *SS-Leithefte* 5/10a (1939-1940).

onto the foreign peoples; rather, by pointing each people to itself and its own history.”⁷⁸ As such, each Germanic nationality was treated independently in Waffen-SS propaganda. Even traditional Nazi ideas such as “Lebensraum” were fitted onto Germanic particularism. In mid-1942, a series of articles were published under the motto “Battles for Germanic Lebensraum in the East.” The articles attempted to substantiate each respective Germanic Volk’s historical claim to Lebensraum in the Germanic “Destiny Land” in the East by summarizing said Volk’s historical victories and defeats in the history of the Eastern struggle against Slavs.⁷⁹ Following is a small selection of article titles: “Norwegians in the East,” “Danes in the East,” “Dutchman in the Breadbasket of Europe,” and “The Danish Sword Secures Earth for the Danish Plow.”⁸⁰

Germanic Nationalism, 1941-1944

At the end of 1940, a new narrative began to compete with Germanic Particularism in the *Leitheft* magazines. The concept “Reich,” began to lose its strict nationalist treatment and quite literally began referring to a pan-Germanic Reich of a racially pure Germanic nation stretching across Northern Europe. Propagandists began to subtly suggest that all Germanic people (hitherto referred to as separate races, or *Völker*) were in reality just one racial Volk. Thus, one edition from late 1940 declared, the coming Germanic Reich would be based on

⁷⁸ “Wir und der Norden,” *SS-Leithefte* 6/3b (1940-1941).

⁷⁹ “Weltmacht Germaniens,” *SS-Germanische Leithefte* 2/3&4 (1942).

⁸⁰ *SS-Germanische Leithefte* 2/3&4 (1942), 133,138,173; and *SS-Germanische Leithefte* 2/5 (1942), 246.

the “eternal law that a Reich and a nation are ultimately created in the observance that only the Volk of the same or similar blood can belong to a Reich and a nation....”⁸¹ Other articles from late 1940 began speaking about “our race” as a “Germanic race.”⁸² Throughout the year of 1941, and accelerated by the invasion of the Soviet Union in June, 1941, this new message increasingly pushed aside Germanic particularism. In short, Waffen-SS propaganda began proposing a Germanic nation to subsume traditional nationalism.

Internal SS-Main Office documents suggest that the impetus for this shift came from Felix Steiner and Gottlob Berger, and was most likely once again tied to the international transformation of the Waffen-SS. Although a considerable amount of European volunteers joined the Waffen-SS between the summer of 1940 and early 1941, they pale in comparison to the influx of those who joined following the German attack on the Soviet Union in June, 1941. Before the invasion, Berger had received permission to open various “Germanic Recruitment Offices” (*germanische Leitstellen*) in order to coordinate a more intensive recruitment campaign for Germanic volunteers.⁸³ By the beginning of 1942 a total of 20,000 Northern Europeans had joined ranks with the Waffen-SS in what

⁸¹ “Das neue Gemeinschaftsgesetz in Europa,” *SS-Leithefte* 6/5b (1940-1941).

⁸² “Für die Ewigkeit unserer Rasse,” *SS-Leithefte* 6/6a (1940-1941).

⁸³ “Ausbau der Germanischen Freiwilligen-Leitstelle zur Zentralstelle für die germanische Arbeit der Parteigliederungen,” Bundesarchiv, Berlin-Lichterfelde, NS 19/1564.

Hitler called a “European crusade” against Bolshevism.⁸⁴ Indeed, Hitler himself recognized the non-German volunteers in his first public speech after the invasion of the U.S.S.R. on October 3rd, 1941. He continued to praise them throughout 1941 in his public speeches, which *Leithest* magazines energetically referenced and quoted in full. Many of the new Germanic recruits joined an enlarged *SS-Panzerdivision Wiking*, but the large number of volunteer recruits necessitated a new format. Shortly after the invasion, Hitler agreed to have “National Legions” established for each Western and European nationality.

This recruitment drive was an important victory for Berger, but it also presented him with a unique challenge. Many Germanic volunteers understood their involvement in the *Waffen-SS* in traditional nationalist terms. Although allied with Nazi Germany, they were fighting first and foremost for their country. Take, for example, a booklet published by the *SS-Main Office* in April, 1942 called “The Rise of Germanic Volunteers in Letters.” In this short book, likely designed for recruiting subsequent Germanic volunteers, the *SS-Main Office* propagandists attempted to substantiate the notion of a Germanic awakening by publishing quotations from various Germanic volunteers. But the quotations reveal a resistance to Germanic nationalism and an attachment to traditional nationalism. Take, for example, the following collection of quotations:

I want to appeal to all Norwegian boys who have preserved at least some sense of love for their Fatherland: join the Norwegian Legion!; We want

⁸⁴ Gottlob Berger, “Statistische Aufstellung zur *Waffen-SS* und Legion eingestellte, entlassene und gefallene germanische Freiwillige; Stand: 30.10.42,“ Bundesarchiv, Berlin-Lichterfelde, NS 31/455.

to preserve the future potentialities of Flanders regarding its cultural, economic and general racial renaissance...; It's interesting that, although I feel in my heart that I am and will remain a Dutchman, I nevertheless honor [Hitler] as my highest leader; After the War Finland will become great and strong, but only if the Finnish people remains steadfast...; May God protect Sweden, I often think silently; We fight with the conviction that our blood will flow so that our beloved Netherlands can become free.⁸⁵

But for Berger, the purpose of Germanic recruitment in the Waffen-SS was more revolutionary than a mere reinvigoration of traditional nationalism. In August, 1941 Berger wrote a letter to the Wehrmacht administrator of occupied Belgium and Northern France, Eggert Reeder, and made his feelings clear about traditional nationalism. Reeder had written him about a “tension” between “Flemish nationalism” and “Greater Germanic identity.” Berger proceeded to explain that these issues were not new, and had been a focus of his in the Waffen-SS for a long time. The solution, he explained, was a “New Order of the Greater Germanic territories, aka Europe, on the basis of a Greater Germanic way of thinking [*grossgermanisches Denken*] as well as the defeating of nationalist movements in the periphery states.” He explained that political difficulties made it impossible to make this position clear at the moment, but that it was nevertheless the official line of the Waffen-SS. Future policy, he explained, would necessitate that

in the New Europe the Germanic states will be tied into a uniquely close relationship to us, that means that the New Europe will be composed of a Greater Germanic Reich of peoples newly positioned facing the East as an enlarged continent. This conceptualization is the necessary conclusion of the main idea of National Socialism, the blood and race concept.

⁸⁵ *Aufbruch: Briefe germanischer Freiwillige*, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, DC, NSDAP Propaganda Collection.

While the majority of Germanics in Northern and Western Europe may not yet have been prepared to accept such a revolutionary idea, it was nevertheless the path forward, Berger explained, and the policy of the Reich must be to convert Germanics from their “local patriotism” to “Greater Germanic way of thinking.”⁸⁶ Thus, already by mid-1941 Berger had become an enthusiastic Germanic Europeanist. This vision of a new Germanic nationalism is something he remained committed to throughout the war.⁸⁷ Himmler, too, had become a proponent of a Germanic Waffen-SS, most likely already before the war began.⁸⁸ In his mid-1942 memo on the *Leitheft* magazines, he ordered: “I want to emphasize that through the *Leitheft* magazines our men should receive...instruction as to the history of the Indo-Germanic peoples, especially the Germanic-German Volk and a knowledge of its enemies.”⁸⁹ And in a speech to

⁸⁶ Gottlob Berger to Eggert Reeder, „Militärverwaltungschef beim Militärbefehlshaber in Belgien und Nordfrankreich,“ October 7, 1941, Bundesarchiv, Berlin-Lichterfelde, NS 19/1548.

⁸⁷ In 1944 Berger even published a book of his own titled “On the Path Towards a Germanic Reich.” See Gottlob Berger, *Auf dem Weg zum Germanischen Reich* (SS-Hauptamt, 1944), Library of Congress.

⁸⁸ In a speech to Waffen-SS troops on November 8th, 1938, Himmler said: “I really do have the intention to gather Germanic blood from the whole world, to rob it, to steal it wherever I can.” See Peter Black and Martin Gutmann, “Racial Theory and Realities of Conquest in the Occupied East: The Nazi Leadership and Non-German Nationals in the SS and Police” in ed.s Jochen Böhrer and Robert Gerwarth, *The Waffen-SS: A European History*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 16-41, 20. Christensen, Poulsen, and Smith, “Germanic volunteers from northern Europe.”

⁸⁹ “Erlass des RFSS vom 1. Juni, 1942,“ Bundesarchiv, Berlin-Lichterfelde, NS 31/415.

leaders of the SS-Main Office on June 9th, 1942 he explained that this was an eternal task: “To this question of extracting Germanic people [*Germanen*], to which we now - in a war where history is written in blood and foundations are constructed - already devote a very great deal of our attention, we will have to devote ourselves for all time.”⁹⁰

Berger’s preferred model for a Germanic Waffen-SS was Felix Steiner’s *SS-Panzerdivision Wiking*, with Germanic and German soldiers intermingled in the same units, as opposed to separate national legions. By 1942 Berger was convinced that Germanic Europeanism had successfully pierced the hearts of Germanics in the Waffen-SS. In a report on the Germanic national legions, he explained that “the purpose of the Germanic legions is the indoctrination of the volunteers to the “Germanic way of thinking, and leading them to the idea of the Reich.” He continued:

How successful we’ve been in this is confirmed by the many letters from the front that have gone through our hands. It is becoming increasingly clear that a knowledge is growing in the men, that Adolf Hitler is their Führer; that there is only one future for their homes – a return to the Reich; that they are of one blood with their German comrades, that there is nothing which separates the Germanic peoples.

He continued:

The legions stepped forward to protect their homes from the flood of Bolshevism, they fought for a free Norway, Denmark, Holland, Flanders. However, soon there emerged a recognition that there is something higher which is worth fighting for: the great National Socialist Germanic Reich.

⁹⁰ Peter Black and Martin Gutmann, “Racial theory and realities of conquest in the occupied east: The Nazi leadership and non-German nationals in the SS and police,” 16, in ed.s Jochen Böehler and Robert Gerwarth, *The Waffen-SS: A European History*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 16-41

From contact with the National Socialist idea, and from living together with German comrades...grew the idea of the Reich and the knowledge of the Germanic community.

As such, he argued, the separate national legions only hindered the goals of the Waffen-SS by giving aid to “local patriotism” and were therefore going to be discontinued.⁹¹ Indeed, they were: in early 1943 Germanic volunteers in the Waffen-SS were integrated into standard Waffen-SS divisions based on the model of Felix Steiner’s *SS-Panzerdivision Wiking* and upon the suggestion of Felix Steiner himself.⁹²

When analyzing the shift to Germanic nationalism in the *Leitheft* magazines, it becomes clear that Germanic nationalism did not require a radical alteration of fundamental Nazi doctrine. Instead, it can be read as a subtle modification, in which Nazi racialism was refined by mapping historical categories of the German race (“Aryan,” “Nordic,” “Germanic”) onto the contemporary “Volk.” This was facilitated by a rather subtle shift in semantics. The term “Reich” was re-defined from *großdeutsches Reich* (“Greater German

⁹¹ Gottlob Berger, “Statistische Aufstellung zur Waffen-SS und Legion eingestellte, entlassene und gefallene germanische Freiwillige; Stand: 30.10.42,“ Bundesarchiv, Berlin-Lichterfelde, NS 31/455.

⁹² Berger was likely influenced in this decision by Felix Steiner, who wrote to him in September, 1942 with the recommendation of collapsing the National Legions into Viking and other German divisions so as to further the “Germanic idea” and confront the way local nationalist parties had made the legions into “pets,” i.e. manifestations and vehicles of their nationalist ambitions. Steiner to Berger, September 16, 1942, Bundesarchiv, Berlin-Lichterfelde, NS 19/1667.

Reich“) to *großgermanisches Reich* (“Greater Germanic Reich”). Similarly, the term “Europe“ obtained a meaning synonymous with “Germanic Europe.” One article, for example, invited the soldiers to examine the etymology of the word “Europe,” explaining that the words “Germanics” and “Europe” were allegedly “fused together” in linguistic history: “The one is not possible without the other.”⁹³ Furthermore, despite the protestation of Jewish-influenced cosmopolitans, the idea of Europe itself was originally supposedly a racial concept. “Europe,” Waffen-SS propagandists explained, was nothing more than a historical term for “Germanic Reich.” And both terms, moreover, were just expressions of racial essence. “[T]he Reich concept is not an organizational concept,” one article from early 1942 explained, “its origin is to be found in blood.”⁹⁴

Precisely because the concept of “Europe” had such unifying potential, then, it was used in Waffen-SS propaganda as a vehicle for facilitating Germanic racial nationalism. This can be seen in the re-constructed history of the Reich. European culture was argued to have begun when the Romans and Germanics joined together to defend classical Greek culture against the Huns, thus creating a “Germanic Occident” (*Germanisches Abendland*);⁹⁵ the history of Europe was referred to as a coordinated “Germanic creation of Europe” (*Germanische*

⁹³ “Der Europäische Befreiungskrieg,” *SS-Germanische Leithefte* 1/1 (1941), 11.

⁹⁴ “Die Germanische Sendung des Reiches,” *SS-Germanische Leithefte* 2/1 (1942), 34.

⁹⁵ “Der Führer über das Schicksal Europas,” *SS-Germanische Leithefte* 2/1 (1942), 3.

Europaschöpfung);⁹⁶ Charlemagne and Heinrich I. suddenly became Germanic characters who fought hand in hand with other Germanic tribes against the Slavs from the East.⁹⁷ Contrasting this history to the racial mixing in the history of the United States of America, one article argued that Europe should take note of American mistakes: “If Europe wants to avoid losing its peculiarity, then the rule of Nordic blood must be maintained....” The lesson was clear: to preserve the racial tradition of Europe, then the Nordic race must always “represent the ruling class.”⁹⁸

To be sure, the shift to Germanic nationalism did not take place seamlessly in the *Leitheft* magazines. Internal documents from the SS-Main Office suggest that Waffen-SS propagandists were often frustrated in their efforts to convert non-German Germanics from traditional nationalism to Germanic nationalism.⁹⁹ As such, Germanic particularism had a scattered, persistent resonance in Waffen-SS propaganda.¹⁰⁰ But in 1941, the SS-Main Office

⁹⁶ “Schönheit und segnen des Reiches,” *SS-Germanische Leithefte* 2/1 (1942), 8.

⁹⁷ “Die Germanische Sendung des Reiches,” *SS-Germanische Leithefte* 2/1 (1942), 35.

⁹⁸ “Europa wird Wiedergefunden,” *SS-Germanische Leithefte* 1/1 (1941), 22-24.

⁹⁹ Gottlob Berger, “Statistische Aufstellung zur Waffen-SS und Legion eingestellte, entlassene und gefallene germanische Freiwillige; Stand: 30.10.42,” Bundesarchiv, Berlin-Lichterfelde, NS 31/455.

¹⁰⁰ One article from the end of 1944, written by a self-described Flemish volunteer, admitted that among his fellow patriotic Flemish comrades “there exists in the hearts of many an impulse for clear border apportionment and clear finalized conditions.” See “Flandern und der Weg zum Reich,” *SS-Leithefte* 10/9 (1944), 20-22. See additionally a discussion of internal ethnic discord

published a new, separate *Leitheft* series called the *Germanische Leithefte* (“Germanic guide magazines”), which were published simultaneously with the regular *Leitheft* magazines in various Northern European languages, and distributed to divisions with non-German personnel. These did not differ in substance or theme from the regular *Leitheft* magazines – like the regular *Leitheft* magazines, the Germanic *Leitheft* magazines attempted to move beyond Germanic particularism. In fact, as evidenced by correspondence with the Foreign Office, the Germanic *Leitheft* magazines were explicitly designed to win over non-Germans to Berger’s vision of Germanic nationalism by appealing to them in their own languages.¹⁰¹ Interestingly, though, both *Leitheft* series occasionally ran

within the Waffen-SS in Christensen, Poulsen, and Smith, “Germanic volunteers from northern Europe.” George Stein likewise documented evidence of considerable conflict between Germanic soldiers and German soldiers in the Waffen-SS, much of it revolving around perceptions of German chauvinism. See Stein, *The Waffen-SS*, 158-162. de Wever, “‘Rebellen’ an der Ostfront.”

¹⁰¹ In April, 1942, Berger corresponded with Martin Luther, Ribbentrop’s secretary in the Foreign Office, about the Germanic *Leitheft* magazines and Waffen-SS recruitment conferences in Germanic countries. The Foreign Office felt that the magazines were an intrusion into their sphere of authority vis-à-vis foreign propaganda. But Berger explained to Luther in a response letter (which he subsequently sent to Himmler) that they had authorization from the Führer to “undertake with a special intensity the National Socialist and Greater Germanic indoctrination of these units.” See „Tagung des Förderkreises der ‘Germanischen Leithefte‘ (Kulturtagung des SS-Hauptamtes) in Magdeburg, 27-30 April, 1942; mit Teilnehmern aus Finnland, Flandern, den Niederlanden und Norwegen. Anspruch des Auswärtigen Amtes auf Unterrichtung über Ziel, Teilnehmerkreis und Wortlaut der Vorträge vor Genehmigung (Schriftwechsel zwischen Berger

articles espousing particularism. It is not clear whether this was an attempt to coddle the pride of traditional non-German nationalists, or whether this suggests a divide within the SS Office for Indoctrination. Nevertheless, a certain ambivalence pervaded until 1944. The term “Greater Germanic Community,” for example, was sometimes replaced with “Community of Destiny for the Germanic Peoples” (*Schicksalsgememeinschaft der germanischen Völker*) which subtly emphasized a difference between the various Germanics in the Waffen-SS.¹⁰² Nevertheless, by mid-1943, Germanic particularism had mostly given way to Germanic nationalism in both *Leitheft* series. The lead-article from mid-1943 declared that the coming postwar Reich was going to replace the nation-state idea with a New Order of Europe founded in “Germanic thought” and “Germanic solidarity.” The liberal concept of nation-state, it declared, was being supplanted by the “birth of a Reich of race” anchored in the concept of “Germanic blood.” A “German Revolution,” it declared, “has become a Germanic Revolution.”¹⁰³

Modified Germanic Europeanism, 1944-1945

Germanic nationalism remained the narrative in Waffen-SS propaganda throughout 1943 and into 1944. In May, 1943, Gottlob Berger and Heinrich Himmler sat down to discuss an outline for the coming year’s *Leitheft* magazines. Himmler ordered that the next year’s editions resemble a “collection of works on

und Unterstaatssekretär Luther vom Auswärtigen Amt),“ Bundesarchiv, Berlin-Lichterfelde, NS 19/1878.

¹⁰² *SS-Germanische Leithefte* 1/1 (1941), 3-4.

¹⁰³ “Idee und Gestalt des Reiches,” *SS-Germanische Leithefte* 3/7 (1943), 1-4.

the Germanic-German faith, which literally can be read in coming decades just as it could have been read in the past.” He further commanded that the magazines initiate various new topics, among them: the “Indo-Germanic canon.”¹⁰⁴

But in the summer of 1944 the composition of the Waffen-SS was radically different than it had been a year before. Mid-1943, as a result of the progressively ominous military situation, Berger convinced Himmler to begin extending Waffen-SS recruitment to his last remaining source of manpower: the East. At first, Estonians and Latvians were targeted for recruitment, a move which could conceivably fit into the Germanic paradigm. Then, also in 1943, Balkan Muslims were recruited.¹⁰⁵ And by the spring of 1944, entire Waffen-SS divisions of Ukrainians (and a few months later even Russians) had been trained, equipped and sent to the front.¹⁰⁶ It is perhaps the deepest irony in the history of

¹⁰⁴ “Niederschrift über die Unterredung beim Reichsführer-SS in Gegenwart von SS-Gruppenführer Berger am 23.5.43,” Bundesarchiv, Berlin-Lichterfelde, NS 31/415.

¹⁰⁵ David Motadel, *Islam and Nazi Germany's War* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2014).

¹⁰⁶ Eastern European additions to the Waffen-SS were drawn from already existing SS units. During the transition to extermination on the Eastern Front in 1941-1942, Holocaust functionaries had increasingly employed local Eastern Europeans in auxiliary police forces attached to the SD which they called “*Schutzmannschaften*.” These units assisted the Einsatzgruppen in the rounding-up, deportation, and mass-shootings of Jews. In 1944 Himmler reluctantly allowed these units to be converted into Waffen-SS divisions. For a more detailed break-down of the bureaucratic decisions involved in this transition see Peter Black and Martin Gutmann, “Racial theory and realities of conquest in the occupied east: The Nazi leadership and non-German nationals in the SS and police” in ed.s Jochen Böhrer and Robert Gerwarth, *The Waffen-SS: A*

the SS that Himmler's supremacist order had come to rely on hundreds of thousands of allegedly racial inferiors. There is no evidence that Himmler or Berger ever genuinely moved beyond Germanic nationalism. In fact, there is plenty of evidence that this was a reluctant and deceitful decision.¹⁰⁷

Nevertheless, as a consequence of Eastern European recruitment, they began to disingenuously modify Germanic Europeanism so as to bridge the obvious hypocrisies now at the core of the Waffen-SS.

The first signs of this modification came in the *Leitheft* magazines in mid-1943. The impetus for the shift appears to have originated in a secret memo written by Joseph Goebbels on February 16th, 1943 following the disaster at Stalingrad. The memo was addressed to all propagandists and administrative leaders in the Reich, and a copy circulated throughout the SS with Himmler's signature and note: "I find it precisely at our current moment in the war to be very important. It is to be followed in the strictest sense by all our positions." In the memo, Goebbels highlighted the phrase "not only Germany but all Europe" and listed the various times Hitler had employed it. Based on these quotations he subsequently provided a list of seven propaganda principles for messaging

European History, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 16-41. Stein, *The Waffen-SS*, 177-196.

¹⁰⁷ Peter Black and Martin Gutmann, "Racial theory and realities of conquest in the occupied east: The Nazi leadership and non-German nationals in the SS and police" in ed.s Jochen Böhrer and Robert Gerwarth, *The Waffen-SS: A European History*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 16-41.

Europe-propaganda, including the repudiation that Germany's foreign policy intended to pursue any kind of "subjugation relationship," "colonial politics," or "displacement of populations." Specifically discussing Eastern Europe, he explained that German intentions must be presented as philanthropic: to modernize the lands for the inhabitants' own economic and political benefit.¹⁰⁸

Already in mid-1943 the *Leitheft* magazines began to tentatively traffic in this more expansive Europeanism, which they called the "European Concept of Unity" (*europäische Einheitsidee*). The first sign was a gradual silence vis-a-vis Lebensraum rhetoric. Second, articles dropped the racial superiority of the Nordic Germanic race and re-constructed the term "Europe" and "Germanic" to insinuate – and often desperately solicit – the inclusion of Eastern Europeans (even Slavs) into the "European Community." Increasingly, articles about the Germanic idea were accompanied with exhortations to withhold judgement about the precise definition and function of the postwar "European Peoples Community," and instead accept assurance that the "individual Germanic entities" would be rewarded according to their achievement on the battlefield.¹⁰⁹ Other articles from mid-1943 subtly dropped the Germanic adjective to Europe. Take, for example, an article titled "Us and Europe," which was (unlike most *Leitheft* articles) given a named author, Norwegian Waffen-SS volunteer Arild Jadar.

¹⁰⁸ "Heinrich Himmler an alle Hauptämter, Höheren SS- und Polizeiführer, SS- und Polizeiführer, Befehlshaber der Ordnungspolizei, Befehlshaber der Sicherheitspolizei," February, 1943, Bundesarchiv, Berlin-Licherfelde, NS 19/279.

¹⁰⁹ "Idee und Gestalt des Reiches," *SS-Leithefte* 9/7 (1943), 1-4.

Europe, he argued, was defined by a historical struggle to defend itself against incursions from Asia, and in this way could best be described as a “closed cultural area.” He continued with an appeal to diversity:

Today Europe is fighting with a strong belief in the National Socialist concept and in the understanding that the new Europe will preserve the national and cultural independence of each Volk, because National Socialism recognizes the utility of diversity.... On this basis, every nation will find its way to its own National Socialist form of being.

Napoleon’s great historical mistake, he argued, was to try to fuse Europe into one homogenous state (revolutionary France). In contrast, “today we’re seeing a new Europe rise. That does not mean one-sided domination from one single power; rather, the responsibility of all states to the community.” Jadar continued:

This community means a deep-reaching economic solidarity...that will not be determined unilaterally. Could our century strive for anything higher than a synthesis of the peculiarities of the nations, which, as the centuries have gone by, have brought forth such a rich and fruitful European spirit? European unity does not mean centralization, rather a leadership that will be found and led in all parts of this entity.

The Germanics’ role in the future Europe, he briefly suggested at the end of the article, was merely one of leadership because it was the “racial group” which had sacrificed the most in the current conflict.¹¹⁰

In early 1944, race began to lose some of its presence in the *Leitheft* magazines, and found itself increasingly pushed into the background by a narrative of a future pan-European “federation” (*Bund*) of different peoples, including guarantees of cultural and political independence. Some articles, such

¹¹⁰ “Europa und Wir,” *SS-Leithefte* 9/8 (1943), 25-26.

as this article from early 1944 entitled “Europe and Us,” went so far as to proclaim the German army to be the true defender of “unalienable human rights”:

The enemy in the West is not ready to die for a higher world, because he does not know such. The enemy in the East until now has only brought people oppression and defamation. If there are unalienable human rights, then they are being defended at the front by the German army.

The same article, much like the 1944 officers’ instruction manual, felt compelled to deny a departure from racial theory, and briefly attempted to re-define “Germanic” as the collection of all European nations between the Baltic Sea and Black Sea, including Eastern Europeans: “The SS knows that everything has to be done, so that they are fused together with European comrades from the East into battle-companionship just as it is with those from the West.”¹¹¹ Another article from early 1944, titled “European Community,” implored the Slavs to look west to Germany rather than to Russia – just like the Baltic peoples were doing – and in doing so “find their way out of a society of fighting peoples to a peaceful community of a family of peoples.” In this way, the Slavs would “increasingly consider it their great historical fortune that they find themselves...neighbors with Germany. Pan-Slavism, designed to expand Russia, would have degraded the dignified Slavs. A Europe-led Reich will exalt them.”¹¹²

Modified Germanic Europeanism was not simply an off-script idiosyncrasy. It received signaled legitimacy from the top by Berger and Himmler. In the spring of 1944, Berger gave a speech at an unidentified

¹¹¹ “Europäische Aufgabe der SS,” *SS-Leithefte* 10/2 (1944), 21.

¹¹² “Europäische Gemeinschaft,” *SS-Leithefte* 10/3 (1944), 29.

conference entitled “On the Path Towards a Germanic Reich.” His speech was an overview of the history of the Waffen-SS and its evolution towards a Germanic ideology. National Socialism, he argued, always contained within it the seeds of a larger Germanic vision, but most party members were unconscious of this. However, the surprisingly swift victories of 1940 changed that by enabling Germany to “begin re-ordering Europe, unifying the Germanic peoples of our continent under its leadership, and creating a Germanic Reich.” Employing the Grossraum-concept, Berger argued that Japan and America had both begun to consolidate their continental spaces while Europe lagged behind, unable to overcome rivalrous power-complexes, in particular those of England. The Jewish conspirators behind the American Grossraum and the Jewish conspirators behind the Communist world revolution, he alleged, quickly realized the threat of a European Grossraum to their plans and initiated the Second World War. The Waffen-SS and its miraculous story of non-German recruitment, however, was the forefront of Germany’s response. On the one hand, Berger continued to describe the Waffen-SS and its history in the regular terms Germanic nationalism: “It was quickly proven that blood is stronger than all other factors of life. The men of Germanic blood fought just as bravely at the front as the Germans.” Furthermore he summarized the history of Western and Northern European recruitment while conspicuously leaving out Eastern European recruitment, and argued that these men recruited through the Northern and Western European Germanic Recruitment Offices would be the nucleus for the leadership in the postwar Germanic Reich. On the other hand, it quickly became clear that he was modifying the definition of

“Germanic.” For example, the recently added French volunteers to the Waffen-SS were described as a new “Celtic” addition to the Waffen-SS and a valuable contributor to the community of “Germanic blood.” He also included the Estonians and Latvians into the Germanic fold. He concluded arguing that the only way to avoid “Jewish rule” of the world was to initiate a transition from “Greater German thinking to Greater German{ic} thinking.” This meant that “particularism” would have to be overcome in both the Germanic lands as well as in Germany, where too many citizens are beholden to the idea of a “smaller circle of German people.”¹¹³

Berger further authorized the shift to a modified Germanic Europeanism in the summer of 1944, when he intervened in a dispute in the SS Office of Indoctrination. SS propagandists had apparently disagreed about how to formulate the European message in a series of upcoming recruitment brochures. The brochures, formatted as a series of questions answered with “yes” or “no” and accompanying explanations, included a section on the question: “Is National Socialism a German affair?” Originally, the supplied answer was “no,” and this appears to have caused some controversy. Berger intervened with a memo to the SS Office of Indoctrination on June 16th, 1944. Exposing the extent to which Berger was conscientiously aware of Waffen-SS revisionism, he explained that such a formulation would have to be altered, “because we can’t place ourselves into a contradiction with the Führer.” However, he continued, “it can be shown

¹¹³ Gottlob Berger, “Auf dem Weg zum Germanischen Reich,” speech at the “VI Tagung“ at Plassenburg, February 28 – March 5, 1944, Bundesarchiv, Berlin-Lichterfelde, NS 19/3987.

that every European Volk, as long as it is Nordic, can construct its own racial socialism based on the same ideological principles. The National Socialist movements in the non-German lands, therefore, are the harbingers of a New Order.” Then, he suggested that National Socialism will primarily take root in just the Germanic lands, but that this revelation should be avoided due to “political reasons,” i.e. because it would upset non-Germanic recruits. In response to this direction, the SS Office of Indoctrination re-wrote the brochures and sent a collection of them to Berger on September 1st, 1944. The brochures illustrate how Berger’s interventions signaled and legitimized the transition toward modified Europeanism. The first brochure, titled “National Socialism redeems the Nordic-Germanic inheritance of Europe,” defined Europe as a continent-wide collection of “Nordic-Germanics,” who for centuries had been embroiled in a historical struggle against Jews and Asians (the only races defined outside of the newly enlarged “Nordic-Germanic” racial category). The question, “Is National Socialism a German affair?” was reformulated to “Is National Socialism only a German affair?” with the answer that it was a “form of life” for all states of “Nordic-Germanic” heritage. Another brochure, entitled “Europe Constructs Itself and Defends Itself” argued that Europe cannot be defined by borders, but by culture. Specifically, a culture born 4000 years B.C. by the “Nordic-Aryan-Indo-Germanics,” now mortally threatened by Jewish controlled incursions from Asia and America. Directly referencing the “300 million” Europeans between Asia and America, the brochure argued that only the creation of a “collective European sense of responsibility” could prevent this decline, and

that this internal unification must include a rejection of “exaggerated and arrogant nationalism.” The future Europe, it was explained, would overcome nation-states with the concept of the Reich, which was nothing more than family with a father (Hitler) at the top. Each family member would be respected and admired for its unique “ethnic foundation” (*Volkstum*). Race, then, had merely become in these brochures a stand-in for a vaguely defined area between Asia and America, with new, spacious signifiers such as “white” and “Indo-Germanic.”¹¹⁴

Himmler, too, took part in this opportunism and likewise signaled a watered-down modification of Germanic Europeanism. In October, 1944 Himmler gave a speech to an unknown audience titled “The German Volk and National Socialism in the European Discussion.” The speech was recorded and collected among manuscripts to be printed in *Leitheft* magazines at the end of 1944 and beginning of 1945.¹¹⁵ National Socialism, he explained, was born with a very specifically German mission: to redeem Germany from its postwar Versailles mistreatment. But the British refusal to accept peace after the summer of 1940 altered the nature of the war and thereby the meaning of National Socialism. Nazi Germany became for the rest of the world an alternative model to capitalism and Bolshevism. But each of these two “Jewish Internationalisms”

¹¹⁴ “Herausgabe und Drucklegung von Broschüren zwecks Erstellung eines ‘Handbuchs für den weltanschaulichen Unterricht’ (z.T. mit Manuskripten in verschiedenen Fassungen),“ Bundesarchiv, Berlin-Lichterfelde, NS 31/418.

¹¹⁵ Due to the sparsity of *Leitheft* magazines in the final months of publication, the present author was unable to locate the issue in which this speech was published.

recognized this, and mobilized against it. National Socialism, he explained, has since come to have multiple components: a) a “nationalist-one” - Germany’s redemption; b) “a European-one and (in historical perspective) Reich-one, whose purpose and completion will be the Order of Europe.”; c) a “world-political one,” by which he meant a new form of socialism; and d) a “world-historical one,” by which he meant the rescuing of the racial idea for all peoples of the world. On this last point, Himmler proudly proclaimed the ground-breaking novelty of the racial concept, but neglected to define it or limit it to “Germans” or “Germanics.” In fact, he even suggested that the racial concept’s renaissance thus far in the war had touched “the deepest instincts of all non-Jewish-Aryan people of the earth.” Surprisingly confident that in the last few years most Europeans had come to see that National Socialism was no longer just about Germany, he then proudly discussed the allegedly cooperative occupations and even the millions of (slave) workers in Germany from all around Europe.¹¹⁶ Interestingly, based on near-identical essay structure and terminology, it appears this same speech was re-printed in the *Leitheft* magazines near the end of the war, but this time identified as a “proclamation” from Hitler himself, addressed to “the German people, the peoples of Europe and the entire non-Jewish-Aryan world.” Clearly, the essay was just a re-printing of Himmler’s speech, and most likely without Hitler’s approval despite his printed signature. It ended with an appeal which further

¹¹⁶ “Das deutsche Volk und der Nationalsozialismus in der europäischen Diskussion: Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler am 18. Oktober, 1944 beim Aufruf des deutschen Volksturms,” Bundesarchiv, Berlin-Lichterfelde, NS 31-424.

signaled the legitimacy of modified Germanic Europeanism: “I call to the best and most valuable Aryan peoples of the Earth to join the common struggle....”¹¹⁷

By the end of 1944, Waffen-SS officers were being explicitly trained to move beyond Germanic nationalism so as to incorporate Eastern Europeans into the Waffen-SS. Take for example a memo sent to multi-national divisions and titled “The Political Task of the German commissioned and non-commissioned officer in multi-national units of the Waffen-SS.” In it, the Waffen-SS was proclaimed the “harbinger of a political New Order of Europe.” Therefore, Waffen-SS officers must “familiarize themselves with the foundational concept of European Union and Order, and thereby recognize the European purpose of the Reich.” “This war,” it continued “began as a war for Germany. Today, it has become a war for Europe.” Like most late-stage Waffen-SS propaganda, the memo relied on the myth of an ancient “Indo-Germanic” race which founded and unified Europe thousands of years B.C. But this time, the racial history of the “Indo-Germanics” explicitly incorporated Eastern Europeans by racial group. Over the course of ancient European history, the memo explained, the original “Indo-Germanic race” successfully “incorporated itself” into the people of “different blood” such that “Nordic blood” was able to “penetrate” these peoples.

¹¹⁷ The manuscript is not dated, but based on textual references as well as surrounding manuscripts, it is clear that the manuscript was written and published near the end of the war. See “Proklamation der Kriegsziele des nationalsozialistischen Grossdeutschen Reiches: an das Deutsche Volk! An die Völker Europas! An die gesamte nichtjüdische-arische Menschheit!” Bundesarchiv, Berlin-Lichterfelde, NS 31/420.

Over time, Nordic blood came to dominate the racial makeup of all European peoples, which the memo then listed: “Germanic,” “Romanic,” “Baltic,” “Slavic.” Even more audaciously, the memo suggested that all of Europe between the Atlantic and the Russian steppes was a common European “Lebensraum,” which had to be defended from Jewish internationalists. For the first time in Waffen-SS propaganda, modern racial differences between European peoples were explicitly presented as exaggerated, largely ahistorical, and secondary to the creation of a common “European Community of Peoples (*Europäische Völkergemeinschaft*).” “The European Family of Peoples needs to be a brotherhood [*Genossenschaft*], whose separate parts draw nearer to each other like comrades in the Community of Peoples in the Reich.” It continued: “This Brotherhood of Peoples [*Völkergenossenschaft*] will be based on the principle: European common good prioritized over racial self-interest [*Europäischer Gemeinnutz geht vor völkischen Eigennutz*].”¹¹⁸

The documentary evidence for Waffen-SS propaganda in the last months of the war is scattered and incomplete. Although publication continued until the end of the war, *Leitheft* magazines for the year 1945 are generally not included in modern-day archival holdings. But the files for the SS-Main Office include various folders containing manuscripts of articles which were written and

¹¹⁸ The document is not dated, but based on textual references as well as surrounding manuscripts, it is clear that the document was written at the end of the year 1944 or the beginning of 1945. See “Entwurf: Die politische Aufgabe des deutschen Führers und Unterführers in den fremdvölkischen Einheiten der Waffen-SS,” Bundesarchiv, Berlin-Lichterfelde, NS 31/41.

subsequently published in the 1945 *Leitheft* issues. The manuscripts confirm that in the final months of the war, the remaining barriers to a modified Germanic Europeanism gradually gave way. The evidence suggests that the Waffen-SS increasingly shed its exclusive claim to Europeanism and adopted many of the Europe-propaganda narratives by other Nazi institutions (as discussed elsewhere in this dissertation). In fact, they even began publishing Nazi Europeanists from outside the SS. For example, Karl Heinz Pfeffer, the administrator of the German International Science Institute (DAWI) in Berlin and editorialist in Giselher Wirsing's journal the *XX Jahrhundert*, was hired to write articles in the last copies of the 1945 *Leitheft* issues. His manuscripts in the SS Main Office's *Leitheft* files represent the final shift in Waffen-SS propaganda towards modified Germanic Europeanism. Like elsewhere in Nazi propaganda, they were silent on racial theory. In an article titled "European Consciousness," he argued that Europe was a new cultural nation currently mid-birth in a larger transition which he called the "crisis of nationalism":

Europe has a common defensive system, a common transportation system, a common source of natural resources and workforce, a centrally connected system of currencies; it shares a common danger, it has a common tradition, it has a common identity which it has felt over the years.

He continued:

The united Europe cannot destroy the nationalism of the European peoples, but it needs to transcend it [*es muss ihn aufheben*] in the Hegelian meaning of the word – allow it to continue and introduce it as a living element into a larger entity. The enemies of Europe aggravate the nationalism of many nations to the point of suicidal insanity and allow them to bleed out.

Pfeffer was frank that, although the war began well, the recent years of the war had been a set-back in this nation-transcending project. But the climax in the crisis was only more evidence of the emerging watershed in European history:

It all depends on conceptualizing our current moment in European history not as an end, but rather as a blossoming. The first onslaught [the German victories] opened up a realm of possibilities which was not able to immediately ripen. So they are now being plowed and thereby protected from rot and destruction. After the experiences of the stormy spring, the coming harvest will be better planned. The current set-back is not one of desperation, but rather a pause for contemplating a better beginning. He who hasn't been ruined by the set-backs of this last year has only been made stronger.

For Pfeffer, the transition from “nationalism” to “European nationalism” was a natural by-product of social, economic, and technological changes in the twentieth century. The tragedy of European history was not that Versailles shackled Germany, but that it “preserved each nation a state of their own and allowed a return of irredentism” precisely at a world-historical moment when such prescriptions were becoming outdated. The consequence was an “Era of wild nationalism-struggles.” This led some thinkers in Europe to the mistaken belief that nationalism itself must be destroyed, hence the League of Nations and Pan-European movements. The problem was not nationalism; rather, it was the “French national concept” or “liberal nationalism,” which exalted the masses and individual at the expense of unique cultural communities and necessarily led to the “anarchism” of Versailles-Era nationalism. “Völkisch nationalism,” the contrasting German model, has, on the other hand, found its ultimate expression in European nationalism. In other words, Pfeffer was arguing that Völkisch nationalism was not inherently German, but only began as a German movement in

the nineteenth century. The moment German troops entered Prague in March, 1939, he argued, Nationalism realized its historical purpose: restoring the only real cultural community; namely, the “Living European Community” (*europäische Lebensgemeinschaft*).¹¹⁹

One final point merits discussion. antisemitism was always a defining aspect of Waffen-SS propaganda; in particular, the notion of political conspiracy and apocalyptic redemption from Jews. The Holocaust, of course, was implemented by the SS, and the secondary literature has illustrated the particular culpability of the Waffen-SS as a contributor and assistant to the murderous operations of the *Einsatzgruppen*, among other things.¹²⁰ As such, antisemitism had a constant presence in Waffen-SS propaganda (as many of the above examples illustrate). It is important to emphasize though, that antisemitism in Waffen-SS propaganda actually increased in quantity and fervor as the war reached its end. As various racial enemies in Waffen-SS narratives were incorporated into the Waffen-SS, the centrality of Jews was entrenched. Waffen-SS propaganda relied on Social Darwinistic narratives of historical racial struggle, but as “Europe” increasingly replaced “Germany” as the aggrieved racial group, so too were the aggrieved protagonists expanded: “Germans” became “Germanics” became “Indo-Germanic Europeans.” This enlargement process left only the Jews to fulfill the role of the ever-present enemy within. Take, for

¹¹⁹ Karl Heinz Pfeffer, “Die europäische Besinnung,” Bundesarchiv, Berlin-Lichterfelde, NS 31/442.

¹²⁰ See Cüppers, *Wegbereiter Der Shoah*.

example, a manuscript by a French-speaking volunteer, Fernand de Ponthiere, most likely published in an early 1945 *Leitheft* magazine. “The voice,” he argued “of common blood, of an inheritance of similar Nordic-Germanic culture has allowed SS volunteers from Northern, Western, Eastern, and Southeastern Europe stand together against the Jewish-Bolshevist and Jewish-plutocratic enemy.” One way to make Jews the enemy of Germanic Europe was to expose what separated Jews from the rest of Europe: namely, their “internationalism.” Much like Jews had always been portrayed as an unmoored parasite on national traditions, so too could Jews be presented as an unrooted enemy of European “civilization and culture,” to use Ponthiere’s words. Jews, he argued, were a threat to the “blood-determined aspects of European life” because they fostered “foreign racial thinking.” In contrast, “our unification in the New Europe is based on the blood-determined relationship of all Nordic-Germanic men, such as we have integrated them into the SS-community.” Almost as if Europe had become a singular race, Ponthiere concluded his article arguing: “We have no right to betray our race. We will make ourselves worthy of the sacrifice by all those who have fought and died for Europe throughout the centuries.”¹²¹

Conclusion: Felix Steiner’s Revisionist History

As illustrated above, Himmler and Berger were convinced that the *Leitheft* magazines were popular and essential tools, along with officer training, in their endeavors to indoctrinate the Waffen-SS with Germanic Europeanism. Moreover,

¹²¹ Fernand de Ponthiere, “Die SS und Europa: von einem Wallonen,” Bundesarchiv, Berlin-Lichterfelde, NS 31/420.

they believed that these efforts were successful, and that they had molded the Waffen-SS into a brotherhood of Germanic ideologues devoted to the mission of a new, Germanic Europe. Part of the reason for their optimism was very likely a collection of documentary evidence gathered by the SS-Main Office to prove the popularity of the *Leitheft* magazines. These hundreds of documents were collected separately by the SS-Main Office, and are currently archived in the German federal archives.¹²² Ranging from 1941 to 1944, most of the documents are letters addressed to the Germanic Recruitment Offices from Waffen-SS soldiers, their family members, SS functionaries in occupied Europe, and even non-SS affiliated Reich-citizens - all requesting more *Leitheft* magazines. The dozens of letters written by Waffen-SS soldiers expressing enthusiasm about the *Leitheft* magazines and pleading for more editions suggest that Himmler and Berger were not incorrect in their self-evaluation of their propaganda efforts. Even some wives and mothers of Waffen-SS soldiers, having received copies in the mail from their husbands and sons, wrote asking for additional special deliveries to their home. One wife of a *Volksdeutsch* recruit, Mrs. Maria Steiner, wrote on August 29th, 1942 that while reading the *Leitheft* magazines she had deeply appreciated learning “about the correct history of the “*Germanen*,” because as we grew up we didn’t have any idea what Germany was (despite the fact that we’re German and have German blood). But now we understand....” Several division commanders, as well, wrote asking for more editions, for

¹²² “Schriftwechsel, überwiegend Zuschriften von Beziehern und betr. Bezug der Germanischen und *SS-Leithefte*, 1941-1944,” Bundesarchiv, Berlin-Lichterfelde, NS 31/75.

example SS-Sturmbannführer Erwin Reichel of *SS-Panzerdivision Wiking* (Felix Steiner's division which pioneered integrating German and non-German units) wrote on December 13th, 1941 that the Germanic *Leithefte*, in particular, had helped advance unity between non-Germans and Germans in his unit and were very enthusiastically received.¹²³ He even suggested allowing soldiers to contribute articles from the front. Many letters from the low-ranking soldiers of *Wiking* poured in to the Germanic Recruitment Offices from 1942-1944. Domestic publishers from the Reich repeatedly asked permission to re-print *Leitheft* magazines in Germany. Even SS functionaries in occupied territories reported that the *Leitheft* magazines were helping local Germanic populations understand their future belonging to the Reich. One such bureaucrat, R. Thiel, stationed in Nordbrabant, Netherlands, wrote: "The concept of the Reich cannot be emphasized enough. More and more, the Dutch people here are connecting with it. Small-state [*kleinstaatlich*] solutions based in separatist ideas are losing interest." To be sure, some of these sources from unit-commanders and SS administrators are colored by biases towards overly optimistic appraisals of indoctrination efforts. In the end, the best evidence for the penetration of Germanic Europeanism in the Waffen-SS is its persistence in the Waffen-SS milieus of the postwar period.

The key figure in the transition of the Waffen-SS community to the postwar period is Felix Steiner, the divisional commander of *SS-Panzerdivision*

¹²³ The commander of the *Prinz Eugen* Division likewise requested 500 more copies for his division on May 3, 1942.

Wiking, one of the earliest and most important divisions within the Waffen-SS. Although his postwar history will be handled in more detail in chapter nine of this dissertation, it is worth briefly discussing his role in Germanic Europeanism. After the war, Steiner, along with fellow Waffen-SS commander Paul Hausser, became the foremost apologist for the Waffen-SS as a leading member of postwar veterans' associations and a highly-sold publicist. Steiner's primary argument in the postwar years was that the Waffen-SS had been slandered by association with the "criminals" of the regular SS; in reality, he argued, the Waffen-SS had been the path-breaking reformers who began a European revolution against nationalism – a revolution which was only just reaching fruition in the 1950s of postwar Western Europe. In his first postwar book titled *The Military Idea of the Occident*, written in 1951, he wrote: "Therefore, all concepts of a nationalist-kind, which plagued the last century and the first half of the twentieth century, are now automatically collapsing."¹²⁴ The masses across Europe, he argued, were ready for the "Europe-concept" and in fact already "thought and felt European."¹²⁵ This was the result of many millions of Europeans from across the continent joining with the Germans to fight against Bolshevism for the "preservation of occidental freedom." The only missing piece was the malicious collection of modern political "elites" too timid to implement this European revolution.¹²⁶ Steiner audaciously designated the Waffen-SS as the primary harbingers of this European

¹²⁴ Felix Steiner, *Die Wehrdees des Abendlandes* (Parma-Edition, 1951), chapter 8.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, chapter 6.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, chapter 12.

transformation. This was the core idea behind his attempt to resuscitate the honor of Waffen-SS veterans in his 1958 book *The Volunteers: Idea and Self-Sacrifice*. Not shy about attributing himself a chief role in the Europeanization of the Waffen-SS, Steiner argued that although the war began and was administered by Hitler as a war of nationalist aggression, most German soldiers (especially the Waffen-SS) increasingly experienced the conflict differently: “Eventually, during the common struggle there awakened in the hearts of the volunteers a consciousness of European solidarity and a conviction of the necessity of unification....”¹²⁷ Indeed, Waffen-SS soldiers, and specifically those in his *SS-Panzerdivision Wiking*, were ostensibly the earliest proponent of this transition, and worked under his leadership against the will of Hitler and Himmler to become a European brotherhood.

In order to substantiate his revisionist account of history, Steiner included in his appendix various war-time documents which indeed suggest the extent of Europeanism in both himself and his division, but casually omit any notions of Germanic supremacy. Take, for example, his New Year’s proclamation from December 31st, 1941:

Vikings! The New Year approaches. It will be another year of struggle. We volunteers of the Division ‘Viking’ will continue this fight against the forces of darkness. Our goal is a just Order in a free Europe, the preservation of our values and culture, and the victory of a free and honorable spirit against all destructive forces in the world. In this war we will truly protect our families and our homes from both internal and external destruction; we will fight for the safety of our social way of life; we will fight for the development of the creative, healthy, and noteworthy forces of our peoples without consideration of origin, class, or tribe; we will fight for a strong and culture-oriented Community of Destiny

¹²⁷ Felix Steiner, *Die Freiwilligen: Idee und Opfergang* (Göttingen: Plesse Verlag, 1958), 57.

[*Schicksalsgemeinschaft*]. I welcome you into the New Year acknowledge with complete trust my battle-tested, glorious Viking-Division. Hail to you, Vikings!¹²⁸

Using another memo to unit-commanders from June 22nd, 1942, in which Steiner instructs his soldiers to treat all soldiers completely equally regardless of their country of origin, Steiner suggested that the Waffen-SS was nothing but anti-racial and egalitarian.¹²⁹

Yet, as Mark Gingerich has shown in his short biography of the Waffen-SS General, Steiner edited these documents to omit a few crucial adjectives. The original text reads: “Our goal is a just Order in a free Europe, the preservation of our *Germanic* values and culture, and the victory of a *Nordic-Germanic*, free, and honorable spirit against all the *corporate* [*händlerisch* – read: Jewish] and destructive forces in the world.” Steiner’s sleight of hand in these apparent declarations of egalitarianism, then, is to withhold from the audience distinctions between “Germanic” and “non-Germanic,” something he unwittingly exposed in a subsequent document, a speech to Waffen-SS soldiers on September 15th, 1941: “This division has, through the stalwart unity of all of its members, become a symbol. Whether of the German, Dutch, Danish, Norwegian, or Finnish nationality – for all of us the division “Viking” is a symbol of our togetherness and destined communion.”¹³⁰ These documents, all written in the first few years of the Eastern Front, originate from a moment in the Waffen-SS in which

¹²⁸ Ibid., 68.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 64-65.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 104-105.

declarations of European solidarity were anything but post-racial; to the contrary, “Europe” at this moment meant a genocidal “Germanic” community united in a war of blood and soil expansion against racial inferiors in Eastern Europe. Steiner was not unaware of this potential criticism; indeed he tried to confront it in a rather long passage about an alleged divide between Himmler and most Waffen-SS soldiers:

The war-time experiences of two campaigns [France and the Soviet Union] deepened this divide. The chasm between front-averse bureaucracies and front-troops entwined in constant, fierce battle was never greater than it was in the Waffen-SS. Consequently, from the very beginning, [the Waffen-SS] accepted the Berlin-based ideology of a unifying Germanic concept only hesitantly. Because historically and politically it was the purest of romanticism, but as a connective cultural tissue it could be accepted, but only so long as it remained limited to that and did not deteriorate into a convoluted, mythical, or even racial form. However, this concern was unnecessary, because such a degenerate idea ran contrary to the healthy purpose of this fresh, young front-troop. And when imperialistic tendencies later emerged [in the occupied territories], the Waffen-SS was the first, and perhaps the only, institution which loudly protested. The concept of a Germanic Kingdom in the East was met with sharp rejection. ... As the process of adding voluntary units from the Eastern European peoples gathered momentum in the year 1942 and 1943, the Germanic concept was long buried. As such, in the matter of just a few months and in ever-increasing manner there emerged in the thinking and language of the front-troops a historically and politically benevolent idea of a European Community of Destiny [*europäische Schicksalsgemeinschaft*], which encompassed all European volunteers and connected them spiritually with one another.¹³¹

Steiner’s postwar reconstruction of the past was not a complete fabrication. Indeed, the documents he presented, combined with some of the documents in the above chapter, confirm that Steiner was an early convert to Europeanism in the Waffen-SS and that he perceived his division as a

¹³¹ Ibid., 67-68

revolutionary pioneer in Nazi concepts of Europe.¹³² But he concealed a crucial and unique aspect of Waffen-SS Europeanism. Unlike the Europe-concept developed by the Foreign Office, the Wehrmacht, and conservative intellectuals explored elsewhere in this dissertation, Europeanism in the Waffen-SS remained deeply committed to doctrines of race even if it meant, near the end of the war, discharging some of the edge behind racial concepts. The evidence suggests that, during the war, Steiner was among the fiercest advocates of Germanic Europeanism.¹³³ On September 16th, 1942, for example, Steiner wrote to Berger with suggestions vis-à-vis strengthening the concept of a “Greater Germanic Reich” and weakening the nationalism of non-German members of the Waffen-SS. One of the suggestions was to disband the National Legions and fold them into division such as his Viking division.¹³⁴

After the war, despite his war-time commitment to the Germanic concept, Steiner was able to quickly strip the Germanic concept as well as any other racial

¹³² Mark Gingerich, in his short biography of the Waffen-SS General, has documented Steiner’s passion for the Germanic idea by examining his divisional commands in the last years of the war. See Mark P. Gingerich, “Felix Steiner: Himmler’s ‘all-time favorite child’” in ed.s Ronald Smelser and Enrico Syring, *Die SS: Elite unter dem Totenkopf: 30 Lebensläufe* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2003), 431-440.

¹³³ In fact, according to Mark Gingerich, Steiner secured his reputation in the Waffen-SS precisely by pioneering the Germanic concept. His initiative in this regard even won him the nickname “Himmler’s all-time favorite child.” Ibid.

¹³⁴ Berger, as discussed earlier, ultimately implemented this suggestion a few months later. See de Wever, “‘Rebellen‘ an der Ostfront,” 601.

doctrines from his Europeanism and re-cast the Waffen-SS as an innocuous (even anti-Nazi) innovator in European integration, and therefore an ally to the politics of European integration. A few years after the war ended, he founded a veterans' organization. Remarkably, it turns out that this organization was covertly controlled by the American CIA, which had convinced Steiner to cooperate in a project to influence postwar veterans' opinions. How this came about, and the role Steiner played in postwar veteran milieus, will be handled in a later chapter of this dissertation. In any case, by the early 1950s Steiner was the leading intellectual voice in the Waffen-SS and had a powerful presence in the most influential veteran organizations outside of the Waffen-SS as well, and this was to large extent because of American intervention. Like other former Nazi Europeanists in this dissertation, Steiner and his followers in the postwar Waffen-SS veteran community traversed an especially long path towards accepting the postwar democratic settlement. This was certainly possible in large part due to the continued existence of the Soviet Union after 1945. But it was also a product of the modified Germanic Europeanism which emerged in the last stages of the war, and which embedded the potential for a disassociation with nationalism which need not delegitimize their perceived war-time righteousness.¹³⁵ In 1945 there was a very real chance that the construction of postwar German democracy

¹³⁵ There is also legitimate evidence that Steiner increasingly butt heads with Himmler during the last years of the war, thus providing Steiner another postwar justification for disassociation with National Socialism. See Mark P. Gingerich, "Felix Steiner: Himmler's 'all-time favorite child'."

would be unable to overcome illiberal opposition, and most reasonable analysts of German political culture would have identified the Waffen-SS as a group of men most naturally susceptible to radical right-wing politics and the destabilization of postwar West German democracy. That this ultimately did not happen is to significant extent a consequence of the unique history of Germanic Europeanism in the Waffen-SS. This is a story which we will pick up and continue in the final chapter of this dissertation.

Part II:
Post-Nazi Europeanism, 1945-1955

Chapter 6: Transitions across 1945

Introduction

In May, 1948, Peter Diederichs, the owner of the nationalist Eugen Diederichs Verlag through which Wirsing had published his books as well as his war-time magazine *Das XX Jahrhundert*, submitted to a Munich denazification hearing an apologetic account of Wirsing's participation in the Nazi propaganda apparatus. Wirsing, he argued, had been a kind of fifth columnist, a resistance warrior even:

Back then he expressed to me the position that a truly effective fight against the dangerous tendencies of National Socialism would only be possible from the inside, that one must establish counter-weights capable of eventually transforming the Nazi movement and booting out Hitler and his party clique.

Diederichs continued, arguing that Wirsing's SS-membership was merely a step to "cover his position" and avoid designation as a "dangerous outsider." Against all the evidence of Wirsing's war-time propaganda material, Diederichs claimed that Wirsing had always used his position as a propagandist to carefully criticize Hitler's aggressive and irredentist foreign policy, to protest Hitler's launching of the Second World War, and to philosophically defend the "spiritual virtues of the individual" against the collectivist racial doctrines of National Socialism.¹

A common thread throughout postwar apologies by former Nazi Europeanists was that they had ostensibly endured a long-standing discomfort

¹ Peter Diederichs to Staatskommissar Phillip Auerbach, May 13, 1947, in "Diederichs, Peter; Prosa, Gutachten für Giselher Wirsing, Entnazifizierung," A:Diederichs/Eugen Diederichs Verlag, Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach, Germany.

with National Socialism and had seen their war-time association with the regime as an effort to restructure the New Order of Europe from within. By embracing that which was allegedly good in National Socialism and by working to obtain as much influence as possible for their ideas – and because gaining influence in a totalitarian regime is only possible as a propagandist - they were actually attempting to change National Socialism. More specifically, they alleged an intention to improve National Socialism by helping it undergo what they called an “internal evolution” (*innere Wandlung*).

Such a claim should deservedly be met with skepticism; and, in fact, much of this dissertation has illustrated that Nazi Europeanists were fiercely ideological, avowedly Nazi in their convictions, and energetically supportive of Hitler’s war effort. Nevertheless, the first half of this chapter will illustrate that such claims were not entirely baseless. There is substantial evidence that many Nazi Europeanists envisioned their Europe-concept certainly not as a fifth column resistance weapon, as Diederichs would have had us believe, but rather as a fruitful corrective to the perceived ills and exaggerations of National Socialism. Thus, other portions of Diederichs’s testimony on behalf of Wirsing can be corroborated by outside evidence, such as Wirsing’s private frustrations and criticisms of Hitler and Himmler, his contacts with the anti-Hitler resistance movement, and his use of the Eugen Diederichs Verlag (and other publications avenues) to repudiate the Nazi race concept.² And as we discussed in an earlier chapter of this dissertation, the Conservative Revolutionaries in the Tat-Kreis

² Ibid.

originally believed National Socialism was the exterior of a deeper, legitimate “movement” that could be pruned and directed. Seen from this angle, then, the Europe-concept was for the figures in this dissertation a means of intellectual rationalization - a justification for their complicity in a genocidal regime. But it was also during the war a very real source of ideological dissonance which increasingly led to non-conformity, and then ultimately disaffection. After the war, former Nazi Europeanists clung to this dissonance as a tool for reconciling with their immediate past. This was unquestionably a form of opportunistic memory politics, but it was also a vital precursor for their eventual de-radicalization in the 1950s.

Because Soviet Communism existed as a political model until the end of the twentieth century, the literature on intellectual de-radicalization has disproportionately focused on disillusionment with Marxism-Leninism, much of it written by former Communists themselves.³ The de-radicalization of fascist intellectuals, on the other hand, has received comparably less attention leading Jerry Muller to argue that historians were neglecting “the other god that failed.”⁴ Part of the reason for this neglect is that fascism as a political system largely

³ See, for example, the famous “confession” essays by Arthur Koestler, Ignazio Silone, Richard Wright, Andre Gide, Louis Fischer, and Stephen Spender in ed. Richard Crossman, *The God that Failed: A Confession* (New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1963). François Furet, *The Passing of an Illusion: The Idea of Communism in the Twentieth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999). Raymond Aron, *The Opium of the Intellectuals* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2001).

⁴ Jerry Z. Muller, *The Other God That Failed: Hans Freyer and the Deradicalization of German Conservatism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1987).

failed in spectacular and dramatic defeat in 1945 after having committed unprecedented crimes against humanity. This has led many historians to conclude that radical right-wing politics in Europe was immediately de-legitimized and that its former advocates and adherents preoccupied themselves with the concerns of every-day life, religion, and family as an alternative to political fixations.⁵ Such arguments are perhaps less problematic outside of Germany, but as a lens for understanding postwar German political culture they do not accurately reflect the growing body of work illustrating the extent of ideological radicalization in Hitler's Third Reich. Postwar Germans, then, were not instantaneously shorn of the radical ideological convictions they had accumulated as subjects of a totalitarian society. This is especially true as it pertains to intellectuals who had collaborated with the regime, even if after the war their ideological convictions made them into a kind of "secret society of the initiated," to use Jan-Werner Müller's term.⁶

One historian, Dirk Moses, who has tackled this question about the de-radicalization of former Nazis in postwar West Germany divides them and other postwar German intellectuals into two camps: on the one hand, the "German-Germans," who refused to repudiate the German past and sought to rehabilitate some form of respectable German nationalism; on the other hand, the "non-

⁵ Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century* (New York: Vintage, 2000). Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945* (New York: Penguin, 2005).

⁶ See Jan-Werner Müller, *A Dangerous Mind: Carl Schmitt in Post-War European Thought* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003).

German Germans,” who sought a complete break from the past and the creation of a new German national identity.⁷ In some respects, this is an attempt to read the origins of the *Historikerstreit* debates of the 1980s (about whether or not the German past could be salvaged in a democratic political culture) back into the early postwar period.⁸ Such an account misses, however, the extent to which national identity was not static. Former Nazi Europeanists, for example, refused to completely repudiate the German past, as well as their actions in the Second World War, but at the same time they sought to move beyond German national identity by advocating a continuation of their European revolution. The Europe-concept, then, problematizes our understanding of right-wing de-radicalization and the transition of former Nazis into the postwar period.

The following chapter contributes to our understanding of the de-radicalization of Nazi intellectuals by highlighting the importance of ideas that preceded and accompanied their intellectual collaboration with National Socialism, but which in the postwar period could be leveraged against that same collaboration. Within a few years after the war none of the figures in this dissertation had become liberals. But they were also no longer National Socialists. They were politically homeless, stripped of political loyalties outside of their attachment to the Europe-concept which they hoped could salvage the

⁷ Dirk Moses, *German Intellectuals and the Nazi Past* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

⁸ Charles S. Maier, *The Unmasterable Past: History, Holocaust, and German National Identity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998).

Conservative Revolution. Over the course of the subsequent decade this dream for a European revolution died and former Nazi Europeanists began to reconcile with liberal democracy. This chapter argues that the foundation for this process of democratization was established in the transition from the Second World War. As such, this chapter aims to understand right-wing de-radicalization as a process that began before 1945 when Nazi intellectuals began to detach their ideological commitments from the National Socialist regime. This is not to suggest that Nazi Europeanists joined the resistance. To the contrary, despite their misgivings and disillusionment they served the Nazi regime until the bitter end. More narrowly, this chapter explores the intellectual preconditions of de-radicalization. The chapter will begin by exploring Giselher Wirsing as a case study for the ideological contradictions which accompanied Nazi Europeanists throughout the war, but which peaked at the end of the war in the form of defeatism and even defiance against Hitler's regime. It will then present another unique story of ideological insubordination within the conservative military milieu; namely, the efforts by Ernst Jünger at the end of the war to covertly spread a defeatist iteration of the Europe-concept among fellow conservative militarists, some of whom, as discussed in a later chapter of this dissertation, went on to advocate European integration from important positions in the postwar West German military.

The second half of this chapter will discuss the immediate postwar consequences of these figures' deteriorated commitment to National Socialism; namely, a willingness to quickly establish working relationships with American secret services at the conclusion of the war and in doing so align themselves with

the “West” in the emerging Cold War conflict. Indeed, a surprising number of former Nazi Europeanists covertly cooperated with the Americans in the initial postwar years. This alliance married the Americans’ anti-Communism with their ambitions to advance the Europe-concept in the postwar world, and while many of these connections broke off in the early 1950s, chapter nine of this dissertation will, in contrast, illustrate examples of collaborative longevity. The predominant reasons for their initial cooperation with American intelligence most likely revolved around the need for economic sustenance in the postwar period, and, more importantly, the need for good standing with an occupying power seemingly intent on holding Nazis accountable. As such, the suspicion of opportunism weighs heavily in the following analysis. Nevertheless, former Nazi Europeanists’ initial cooperation with the United States proved to be a crucial foundation for their subsequent reconciliation with liberal democracy. In other words, the potential for their future democratization was present during the Nazi years in the form of disillusionment and tension with the Nazi regime. And this potential was exhausted by an American intelligence policy which was willing to employ compromised figures in the pursuit of democratization. To be sure, this is not to argue that former Nazi Europeanists immediately accepted and adopted liberal democracy. To the contrary, as will be shown throughout Part II of this dissertation, they deeply opposed liberalism and felt that contemporary circumstances dictated a necessary but temporary alliance with the West as the most plausible vehicle for re-establishing Europe as an independent alternative force to the East and West. In fact, as we will see, even in these immediate

postwar years some former Nazi Europeanists were drawn to cooperation with American intelligence agencies explicitly because they saw such liaison as a vehicle for a continuation of their Europe-concept. But their early decisions to side with the West in the beginning stages of the Cold War, however disingenuous, set off a trajectory towards eventual democratization.

War-time Disillusionment with National Socialism

The evidence for Nazi Europeanists' war-time disaffection ranges from the expression of private qualms, to official disputes with Nazi leadership, to instances of defeatism and even treasonous actions taken against the state – all of which come together in the interesting case of Giselher Wirsing, the figure at the center of our sprawling network of Nazi Europeanists. As such, this section will return our focus to Wirsing, for whom a wealth of documentary evidence illustrates a gradual, increasing estrangement from National Socialism in the final stages of the war. But Wirsing was not the only one; in fact, his case epitomizes a pattern among Nazi Europeanists. Thus, before outlining Wirsing's estrangement from the Nazi regime, it is worth briefly reviewing some scattered evidence for the similar trajectory of other Nazi Europeanists.

For starters, Wirsing's close colleague Klaus Mehnert, who had worked in the Tat-Kreis and administered the Foreign Office's propaganda campaign in the Pacific, was shown to have been frequently censored by the Nazi propaganda apparatus and to have been torn by his self-described "cosmopolitan" inclinations from an early age. Additionally, cross-referencing his claims with Giselher Wirsing's documents lends credence to his claim that he maintained a close

friendship with Adam Trott zu Solz, a member of the conservative, anti-Hitler resistance. Other members of Wirsing's Tat-Kreis network likewise had an ambivalent relationship with National Socialism. For example, Ferdinand Fried, the Grossraum-economics theorist who published in Wirsing's publications throughout the 1930s and 1940s, was repeatedly censored by Goebbels's propaganda ministry during the war because his arguments about an economic Grossraum seemingly contradicted Nazi ideas of national autarchy and Lebensraum. After publishing an article in early 1943 in the highly influential *Das Reich*, he received word from his editor that they had received significant reprimand from Goebbels's office. A few months later, Fried submitted an article to the *Leipziger Illustrierte*, but Goebbels's censor prevented the article from being published.⁹

Europe propagandists in the Foreign Office likewise had an oftentimes ambivalent relationship with the Nazi regime. The reader will recall that Karl Megerle, originator of Nazi Europeanism in the Foreign Office and personal propaganda assistant to Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop, persistently advocated for a more audacious and expansive Europe-concept even against the desire of many of his colleagues. Megerle even wrote a bold memo that criticized German occupation policies in Eastern Europe, and which, as explained in a

⁹ John Brech (*Das Reich*) to Friedrich Zimmermann (pseudonym Ferdinand Fried), May 19, 1943, Bundesarchiv in Koblenz, Nachlass Ferdinand Fried, N 1208/1. "Schriftleitung der Illustrierten Zeitung in Leipzig" to Friedrich Zimmermann, August 18, 1943, Bundesarchiv in Koblenz, Nachlass Ferdinand Fried, N 1208/1.

previous chapter of this dissertation, was circulated in the Foreign Office and put him into conflict with Foreign Office official secretary Ernst von Weizsäcker. Another foreign office figure who handled academic outreach to non-Germans, Axel Seeberg, likewise came up against the opinions of many of his colleagues in the so-called “Europe-Seminar” when he advocated for a non-racial and non-Germanic Europe-concept.

Even in radically loyal institutions such as the Waffen-SS, important Nazi Europeanists came into conflict with their Nazi superiors. According to biographer Mark Gingerich, Waffen-SS general Felix Steiner, the commander of the first multi-ethnic Waffen-SS division (*Wiking*), allowed open criticism of both Hitler and Himmler in his units, personally quarreled with Himmler as early as 1941, and even expressed private sympathy with the conservative Hitler-resistance movement.¹⁰ Nazi Europeanists of all stripes, then, displayed a considerable ambivalence in their relationship to National Socialism. It is worth re-calling that many Nazi Europeanists had been members of the Nazi-skeptic wing of the Conservative Revolution in the 1920s and early 1930s. However much they reconciled with, aided, and abetted the Nazi regime throughout the war, the evidence suggests that their differences were never fully ironed out. This is best illustrated in the story of Giselher Wirsing.

Giselher Wirsing’s Path to Defeatism and Insubordination

¹⁰ Mark P. Gingerich, “Felix Steiner: Himmler’s ‘all-time favorite child’” in Ronald Smelser and Enrico Syring (eds.), *Die SS: Elite unter dem Totenkopf: 30 Lebensläufe* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2003), 427-428.

The first documented instance of Wirsing's recalcitrance towards the Nazi regime is found in a "declaration" submitted in defense of Wirsing at his postwar denazification hearing. The document, submitted to denazification commissioner Phillip Auerbach in 1947, likely contributed to Giselher Wirsing's ultimate discharge with the mere designation of "fellow traveler" in 1950, and offers insight into the case Wirsing made in his own defense shortly after the war. It was written by a journalist named Fritz Jaffé, a German-Jewish journalist who escaped the Holocaust in 1939. He was able to do so, he claimed, because of the life-saving intervention of Giselher Wirsing. Unlike Peter Diederichs's "declaration" discussed at the beginning of this chapter, Jaffé did not attempt to make Wirsing into a secret resistance fighter. Instead, he conceded that Wirsing's relationship with the Nazi regime was lamentably opportunistic. However, Jaffé suggested that Wirsing's denazification court make their decisions based on what he believed were Wirsing's non-political attributes of graciousness. Jaffé explained that he was hired by Wirsing in the 1930s as a writer at the *Münchner Neueste Nachrichten*, a job Wirsing allowed him to complete secretly so as to hide his Jewish identity. After *Kristallnacht*, Jaffé was imprisoned in a concentration camp and Wirsing allegedly used his contacts to have him released. Jaffé went on to explain that Wirsing subsequently helped him move to Italy and secure employment with an Italian newspaper edited by a friend of Wirsing's. Jaffé was clearly taken in by Wirsing, whom he considered a kind of personal savior. The rest of the "declaration" proceeded to argue that his was not an exceptional case, but that Wirsing had in fact been a consistent advocate for the

Jews and other persecuted minorities – a claim which could not be further from the truth. Wirsing, of course, was deeply compromised by his antisemitism on behalf of the Nazi regime, but Jaffé’s case suggests that Wirsing was involved in subservient behavior as early as the 1930s, even if it did not take the form of criticizing the regime. It is impossible to ascertain whether Jaffé’s story was true, but American intelligence reports from shortly after the war reported that Wirsing did, in fact, save an unnamed Jew from a concentration camp.¹¹ But saving one Jew from Nazi persecution hardly qualifies as an act of resistance or even deliberate confrontation with the Nazi regime. The first evidence for such a confrontation comes from his relationship with anti-Hitler resistance conspirer Adam Trott zu Solz, who was eventually murdered by the Nazi regime for his connections to the July 20th, 1944 plot to assassinate Hitler.

After the war, Wirsing befriended Trott zu Solz’s daughter, Clarita Müller-Plantenberg, and in 1969 he wrote her a detailed six-page autobiography centered around his relationship to her father. In this private correspondence he claimed to have befriended Trott zu Solz in 1940 in the Information Department at the Foreign Office and thereafter begun a close relationship. Wirsing further claimed that Trott zu Solz had fully disclosed with him the anti-Hitler conspiracy in 1943 and that he had been a closeted member of the resistance, i.e. supportive but not actively involved. This is a highly unlikely claim – as we have illustrated,

¹¹ United States Department of State, “Biographic Data Form – Wirsing, Giselher,” November, 1951, United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, box 57, folder “Wirsing, Giselher.”

Wirsing's pro-Nazi advocacy extended well into 1944. Yet, Wirsing's relationship to Trott zu Solz does appear to have been founded in shared criticisms of the regime. On the one hand, this is corroborated by Klaus Mehnert's documents in a previous chapter of this dissertation. But it is also corroborated by a startling admission in this correspondence with Müller-Plantenberg. Wirsing claimed to have shared with Trott zu Solz in 1943 a secret report criticizing Nazi racial policies which he had written to the Foreign Office from the Eastern Front as a war correspondent, and he even quoted himself from the report. This report and accompanying quotation were in fact accurate (the report is discussed in more detail below). Even more corroborative, Wirsing told Müller-Plantenberg that in 1944 Trott zu Solz placed him in connection with Walter Schellenberg, an SS-functionary in the RSHA with whom Wirsing later drafted secret pessimistic analyses of the war situation for Heinrich Himmler. This, too, was an accurate claim, and will also be discussed in more detail below. Other than in private correspondences such as this letter to Müller-Plantenberg, these two instances of recalcitrant behavior were kept secret by Wirsing throughout his life.¹² While Wirsing was certainly no member of the resistance, the more likely explanation is that Wirsing and Trott zu Solz did, in fact, build a relationship based on some shared criticisms of the regime, but Wirsing never

¹² "Wirsing, Giselher, Prosa, Bericht über meine Beziehungen zu Dr. Adam von Trott zu Solz," in "Briefwechsel Müller-Plantenberg, Clarita, Eugen Diederichs Verlag, 1969," A:Diederichs/Eugen Diederichs Verlag, Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach, Germany.

interpreted that as resistance, and Trott zu Solz likely never fully disclosed to Wirsing the extent of the anti-Hitler conspiracy.¹³

Wirsing's next documented expression of Nazi criticism was the above-mentioned report written from the Eastern Front to the Foreign Office at the end of August, 1942. Wirsing, who had been assigned by the Foreign Office as a front correspondent, decided at the end of his deployment to write a twenty-four-page essay to Hasso von Etzdorf, the "representative of the Foreign Office at High Command of the Army (OKH)," in which he criticized Nazi occupation policy. He also later claimed to have shared this report with Adam Trott zu Solz, who subsequently allegedly shared the document with over one hundred people.¹⁴ The report, titled "The Future of German Rule in Russia," was separated into multiple sections, the first of which began by praising the German war effort on the Eastern Front as a justified defensive maneuver against a threatening Bolshevik regime. However, Wirsing argued that maintaining their gains and security "in the long run" would require a better policy towards the seventy to ninety million Russians under occupation - all of whom would come to associate Germans with the treatment they received by occupation authorities (Wirsing used the terms

¹³ To be sure, Wirsing's account of Trott zu Solz's disclosure of the anti-Hitler conspiracy is teasingly detailed, including dates of phone calls and places of meetings in 1944. Wirsing even claims to have been cross-examined by the Gestapo on July 22nd, 1944 as a result of his connections to Trott zu Solz.

¹⁴ "Wirsing, Giselher, Prosa, Bericht über meine Beziehungen zu Dr. Adam von Trott zu Solz," in "Briefwechsel Müller-Plantenberg, Clarita, Eugen Diederichs Verlag, 1969," A:Diederichs/Eugen Diederichs Verlag, Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach, Germany.

“Russian” and “Eastern European” interchangeably). Furthermore, Wirsing argued, Stalin was turning to a new type of warfare, namely partisan warfare, and this new strategy had yet to be countered by German authorities. Careful not to mention explicit errors on the part of German authorities, Wirsing proceeded to argue that German occupation had failed to prioritize the “sentiment of the local population.” In section two of his report, Wirsing compared German occupation policy to American and Soviet “imperialism.” The era of imperialism, Wirsing argued, was currently coming to an end. Ironically, though, while peoples across the globe were freeing themselves from American and Soviet imperialism, Germany was conducting a war which appeared to replace one imperialism with another. In doing so, Wirsing argued that Germans were working against the grain of history, missing an opportunity to constructively channel the liberation impulse of the Russian masses who had undergone a vicious “displacement, agrarian dislocation, and alienation from all existing, familiar, and traditional institutions and then made into acquiescent tools.” Wirsing continued: “If one were to instead show these people the happy prosperity and form of life on a healthy German farm, then they would be completely taken in.” He continued:

To our great fortune, Bolshevism was not able to create a uniform population united together behind a new goal. Rather, the miserable circumstances in which most peoples in the Soviet Union live (especially the farmers) create the psychological preconditions for winning over considerable portions of these populations for a different Order determined by us....

The key to “winning over” Russians, Wirsing argued, was to not only convince them that Germany intended to protect their material interests, but, importantly, to assign them spiritual worth and in doing so reverse Soviet dehumanization.

Bizarrely out of touch with the genocidal policies of Nazi occupation, Wirsing argued that the only alternative to such a policy would have to be “radical extermination,” something he naively assumed would be deemed implausible by the Foreign Office.

In section three of his report Wirsing attempted to undermine prejudiced assumptions of Russian stupidity and economic incapacity. These perceptions, he argued, were more derivative of the dehumanization policies of Bolshevism, which had led too many Germans to accept a false picture of Russians. In fact, he argued that their Christianity was a subtle rebuke of Bolshevism and evidence of their ability to resist colonial control (another warning to German administrators): “We can therefore only control this land in the future if we are able to convince the majority of the population of our usefulness to them.” Sections four and five discussed precisely how Germans could prove such usefulness. The answer, of course, was to contrast the colonial policies of East and West with the German-led Grossraum concept and its accompanying program of political “self-administration.” Wirsing argued that the economics of Grossraum, if properly implemented, would illustrate that Germans did not intend to make slaves of Russians, but rather mutually complimentary economic partners. Wirsing argued that such an approach would have the additional benefit of separating the Russian market from Western empires, thus weakening the Reich’s enemies to the West. Wirsing then argued that Russian participants in the “*Selbstschutz*” units (today remembered primarily as accomplices in the Holocaust) were evidence of the Russian ability to reject “Stalinist and Jewish foreign rule” and instead contribute

to the European Grossraum. Remarkably, Wirsing concluded his report with an appeal against “Lebensraum” and “Race” doctrines as presently understood:

According to our calculations, the concept of Lebensraum has functioned in these territories such that the intelligent milieus, but also simple farmers, are of the opinion that in our lexicon the term Lebensraum simply means that other people will have to work for us.... Our race concept has been understood in the same manner. Never mind that Soviet propaganda has made deep inroads against our race concept – if the Order which we are currently attempting to achieve is to be something that can stand not for decades but rather for centuries, then such concepts that incite resentment and mistrust should not be used. The race concept, for example, should not be emphasized with the exception of our forceful suppression and extermination of Jewry. It needs to instead take on the character of a secret teaching which can be kept alive in the core of the Reich (the Party and the Army).

Aside from the stunning acknowledgement of the Holocaust, the most surprising part of the above statements is the blatant disavowal of Nazi race doctrine to the point of desiring it become relegated to secrecy. It is important to note that Wirsing’s secret report to the Foreign Office is not only evidence of his ideological ambivalence with National Socialism, but that this ambivalence was intricately tied to his Europe-concept. For Wirsing, Nazi occupation policies were problematic not from a humanistic standpoint (after all, as the above quotation shows, Wirsing was perfectly at peace with the extermination of the Jews), but rather because they compromised his vision for a New Order of Europe. A final quotation demonstrates this point particularly well:

[The German] claim to leadership must be realized and secured in such a manner that the people affected by it agree to it. This means that now is the time to develop the key feature of large supranational Reich(s)

[*übernationaler Reiche*]: they have to be established in such a way that the peoples within feel safe and secure.¹⁵

At the end of the war, Wirsing began to signal his nascent disillusionment with the Nazi regime in his writings. Most notably, he published a secret book in 1944 titled *The Politics of the Oil Region: Soviet Imperialism in the Second World War*. The book, authored under the pseudonym “Vindex,” presented itself as a dissection and warning of the Soviet rise to power, but it was more than that. It was also a defeatist account of the Second World War and a plea to the Western Allies to reverse their condemnation of Europe to Bolshevization. Repeating many of his earlier arguments, he suggested that the war had been transformed from a “power struggle” between nation-states to a secular “war of religion” (*Glaubenskrieg*). For the Axis powers this meant the war had become a transformative European revolution. For the Soviets it had become a war for world revolution. For the Americans, ever since the Atlantic Charta the war had become a second Wilsonian crusade for world-wide democracy. Much of the book set out to expose how the Americans, unlike the other two great powers, were not acting in accordance with their own “war of religion.” Increasingly, the Americans were ceding ground to reactionary British imperialism and Soviet world revolution. Meanwhile, the Soviets were expanding their grasp on continental resources and were positioning themselves for the very likely

¹⁵ Giselher Wirsing, “Die Zukunft der deutschen Herrschaft in Russland,” late August, 1942, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany, RZ 221/R 27358/Document # 316916.

conquest of Northern and Western Europe. Thus, the Americans were unwittingly advancing the victory of Soviet world revolution and compromising their own chances for world-wide democracy. The conclusion of his book, titled “The Third World War and Europe,” masked itself as a plea to the Americans to recognize that a Third World War was inevitable and that saving Europe from Bolshevist ruin in the Second World War was the only way to prevent Soviet victory in the coming global show-down. Interestingly, this plea did not take the form of a suggestion for an alliance with the Axis forces but rather a suggestion that the United States recognize the Soviet Union and the Axis as equal enemies.¹⁶

Here Wirsing was signaling an important shift in his intellectual posture towards the United States. As this dissertation has shown, Wirsing and other Nazi Europeanists usually presented the United States as an equal, if not superior, ideological foe compared to the Soviets. Now, Wirsing was placing the hope for the survival of his European vision in the actions of the United States. Importantly, however, this shift was intellectually unscrupulous – America was now favored in his mind not based on any kind of principle but based on the more pressing, immediate threat of Communism and presumed better chances for European survival under American ascendancy. Acquiescence to the Americans was in Wirsing’s mind the vehicle for Europe to re-assert its now delayed revolution in the future. Wirsing revealed this at the very end of the book when he called on European soldiers to continue the fight to the bitter end and then

¹⁶ Vindex [Giselher Wirsing], *Die Politik des Ölflecks: Der Sowjetimperialismus im Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Berlin: Deutscher Verlag, 1944).

proceeded to compare their valiant efforts to the 300 Spartan warriors at the battle of Thermopylae who were ultimately subdued by an overwhelming enemy but not until they had first delayed the Persian invasion of Sparta and inflicted heavy casualties. He ended the book with this final call to arms:

Back then at the battles of Thermopylae and Salamis a foundation was built so that our Europe was able to emerge from the Greeks, Romans, French, German, Spanish, and Nordic peoples, and eventually from the peoples of the Balkans. This time we are building a foundation which will enable our continent to live and blossom in the future.¹⁷

Although more subtly, Wirsing also integrated this defeatism into his final *Signal* articles as the war approached its end. In late 1944 he penned an article titled “About Modern Thinking” and published it conspicuously removed from the front-pages. He argued that “modern thinking” meant acknowledging the inevitable unity of Europe. Unlike so-called “antifascists,” who merely proclaim a desire to liberate Europe, true commitment to modern thinking meant acknowledging Europe’s true enemies to the East and West. However, Wirsing admitted, Europe had indeed “fallen behind” in the current war. Paradoxically, he argued that although the “time was long ripe” for European unification the European peoples themselves were not yet ripe. Nevertheless, it was worth continuing the fight to the bitter end, which he subtly suggested was near. No matter the outcome of the war, he proclaimed, “we are convinced that nothing in this world will go lost if it has been summoned spiritually.”¹⁸

¹⁷ Ibid., 148.

¹⁸ Giselher Wirsing, “Wofür wir Kämpfen,” *Signal*, 11th issue 1944, 14-18.

A few months later, in a similarly camouflaged article, Wirsing continued this idea, arguing that the real victor in a war was not necessarily the military victor, but the power which had overcome “nihilism,” such as Europe presently was overcoming. “The idea of European unification,” he argued, “will continue onwards to the final destination despite everything that is happening now. That is certain...because [Europeans] have shown that they can overcome even the most harrowing of situations.” Europeans would need to be patient, he continued, because “those ideas capable of defining entire eras are never dependent upon constellations of time. They have their own destiny and follow their own wise path.”¹⁹ In one of his last articles written during the war he indirectly admitted the war was all but lost, and challenged the youth of Europe to consider their coming postwar duties to maintain the spirit of the Europe-concept by rejecting nationalism and preserving the unity achieved during the war.²⁰ Wirsing even appears to have carefully broached his new relationship to the United States in *Signal*. In early 1945, in an article likewise camouflaged in the middle pages of the issue, he argued that while Europeans must remain committed to fighting against the Americans: “Maybe one day the time will come in which this North American nation realizes that there are other, better ways to peacefully live with the European peoples. But that is not up to us.”²¹ At the same time he was

¹⁹ Giselher Wirsing, “Am Abgrund des Hasses,” *Signal*, 19th issue 1944, 10-11.

²⁰ Giselher Wirsing, “Was wird aus der Jugend?“ *Signal*, 5th issue 1945, 4.

²¹ Giselher Wirsing, “Roosevelt in der Endphase,“ *Signal*, 2nd issue 1945, 10-11.

penning these words, Wirsing was, in fact, going to great lengths (even treason) to reach out to the Americans.

According to Wirsing's postwar American interrogators, at the end of 1944 Wirsing undertook an operation which was his most defeatist action yet: a covert intelligence campaign to convince Himmler to oust Hitler and seek a peace deal with the Western Allies. Wirsing told his American cross-examiners after the war that the project began in September, 1944, when Adam Trott zu Solz arranged a meeting between Wirsing and Walter Schellenberg, the director of department six in the RSHA (counter-espionage). Wirsing was told by Trott zu Solz that Schellenberg shared his defeatist attitudes about the war, and that the two might find use for one another. Indeed, they did – from October, 1944 to March, 1945, Wirsing was supplied by Schellenberg with large quantities of top-level intelligence documents about the state of the war and enemy capacities, which Wirsing was then asked to combine with knowledge gained through his extensive pool of foreign journalists, and subsequently summarize and draft into a series of reports code-named the "Egmont reports." Wirsing's name was not on the reports, and he was promised total anonymity, but as a co-conspirator in the project he met weekly with Schellenberg at his office in the RSHA.²² The Egmont reports, of which thirteen were ultimately submitted by Wirsing back to Schellenberg, were disguised as intelligence reports, but in reality they were

²² "Draft Reports from MFIU No.3 (Third Army Interrogation Center)," July 30, 1945, United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, box 57, folder "Wirsing, Giselher."

defeatist declarations and, more importantly, calls for a political coup.²³ After receiving them from Wirsing, Schellenberg covertly disseminated the documents through carefully selected networks to leading functionaries in the Nazi regime.

The initial reports were sent to Hermann Fegelein, Schellenberg's SS contact in the Führer Headquarters, with the hope of reaching Hitler indirectly (Fegelein was supposed to carefully relay the arguments to Hitler and convince him to change course). But after just a few reports, Wirsing and Schellenberg changed the direction of their conspiracy and instead focused on convincing Himmler to initiate a coup against Hitler. In fact, the eventual code-name for the reports, "Egmont," was a reference to a line from a play by Goethe: "It is not meet to oppose the king, yet one must stand in the way of the king who takes the first unfortunate steps along the wrong path."²⁴ These reports sent to Himmler were accompanied with instructions on the most successful pitch for each given moment in the war vis-à-vis leveraging the German position into a peace negotiation with the Western Allies (such as, for example, releasing the remaining Jews out of concentration camps and into Western custody).²⁵ Because Himmler was ultimately unwilling to take decisive action beyond carefully probing a few

²³ United States Department of State, "Biographic Data Form – Wirsing, Giselher," November, 1951, United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, box 57, folder "Wirsing, Giselher."

²⁴ "Draft Reports from MFIU No.3 (Third Army Interrogation Center)," July 30, 1945, United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, box 57, folder "Wirsing, Giselher."

²⁵ Ibid.

back-channels to the United States, Wirsing and Schellenberg switched strategies yet again. The last few reports from early 1945 were purportedly sent to former German Chancellor Heinrich Brüning in exile and to Reich Finance Minister Johann Ludwig Graf Schwerin von Kroszig in a last-ditch effort to actualize a possible peace with the Western Allies.²⁶ After the war, American intelligence officers obtained copies for two of the Egmont reports as well as translated summaries for the rest.²⁷ It appears that Wirsing's most repeated argument in these reports was that the U.S.-Soviet alliance was, despite Hitler's fantasies, very much intact and not in fact in danger of dissolution; to the contrary, German authorities would have to take audacious steps to pry them apart.²⁸ During the Battle of the Bulge in December, 1944 Wirsing even attempted to make contact with General Dwight D. Eisenhower, but his advances were not reciprocated. It appears, however, that these advances put Wirsing on the map of the American intelligence services, because his first trace and biographical sketch in his folder

²⁶ United States Department of State, "Biographic Data Form – Wirsing, Giselher," November, 1951, United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, box 57, folder "Wirsing, Giselher." The reports, then, were sent to the following high-ranking figures and in the following succession: Hitler, then Himmler, then von Brüning and von Kroszig. Schellenberg also distributed the Egmont reports to diplomat Walter Hewel and Reich Commissioner of the Netherlands Arthur Seyß-Inquart.

²⁷ "Draft Reports from MFIU No.3 (Third Army Interrogation Center)," July 30, 1945, United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, box 57, folder "Wirsing, Giselher."

²⁸ Ibid.

of the collected postwar CIA documents is dated to January, 1945.²⁹ As we will see, Wirsing's treasonous late-war activities certainly prepared him for the decision to cooperate and assist American intelligence operations in the first months after the war.

Ernst Jünger and *Der Friede*

Disillusionment and intransigence are more difficult to identify in the conservative military institutions of this dissertation. This is in large part because these institutions were in fact less recalcitrant. The Waffen-SS, for example, was a radically ideological and loyal institution which fought to the bitter end in the streets of Berlin in May, 1945 (indeed its motto was "my honor is my loyalty"). As mentioned above, there is some evidence that Felix Steiner may have butt heads with his Nazi superiors, but, as we discussed in a previous chapter, he understood his Germanic Europe-concept not as an alternative or revision to National Socialism, but rather as its fulfillment. Nevertheless, one can trace an anti-Nazi Europe discourse from the West German military reformers of the 1950s back to a secret manuscript that circulated among disillusioned German military authorities beholden to the Europe-concept. This manuscript, titled *Der Friede* ("The Peace"), was written by none other than the Conservative Revolutionary and infamous nationalist author Ernst Jünger. *Der Friede*, subtitled "An Appeal to the Youth of Europe," had three purposes: 1) declare that

²⁹ United States Department of State, "Biographic Data Form – Wirsing, Giselher," November, 1951, United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, box 57, folder "Wirsing, Giselher."

the war was reaching its end; 2) subtly criticize National Socialism; and 3) present a blueprint for future peace. Despite the insubordinate nature of the manuscript, it receives relatively little attention in the secondary literature.³⁰ But although *Der Friede* was a far too feeble and ambivalent criticism of Nazi Germany to qualify as “resistance” literature, it was far more important in its role as an underground promotion of the Europe-concept and therefore as a bridge for those conservative militarists who were seeking a way forward after National Socialism. As we will see, *Der Friede* was an inspiration for several influential German generals who relied heavily on the Europe-concept in their postwar careers (which will be handled separately in chapter nine of this dissertation).

Der Friede, written in 1943 and early 1944, reads quite differently than what one typically expects from Jünger’s literature. Unlike his previous romanticization of war as a fulfillment of human purpose, in *Der Friede* Jünger decries the suffering of the present war and calls for lasting and permanent peace.

³⁰ One of the only brief historical accounts of *Der Friede* was written in the 1950s by a historian named Gerhard Loose. See Gerhard Loose, “Zur Entstehungsgeschichte von Ernst Jüngers Schrift *Der Friede*,” *Modern Language Notes*, Vol. 74.1 (Jan., 1959), 51-58. A more recent examination was completed by Jeffrey Herf as part of an article about the postwar relationship between German conservatism and technology. Herf illustrated that Ernst Jünger’s modernist embrace of technology, which began well before the Second World War, was a driving factor in Jünger’s eventual rebuke of nationalism after the war. See Jeffrey Herf, “Belated Pessimism: Technology and 20th Century German conservative Intellectuals” in ed.s Yaron Ezrahi, Everett Mendelsohn, and Howard Segal, *Technology, Pessimism, and Postmodernism* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1994).

After the war, in a mass letter he sent out to fellow supporters and friends, including Klaus Mehnert, Jünger confronted accusations of hypocrisy by arguing that the relationship between his previous work and *Der Friede* “resembles [the relationship] between the old and new testaments.”³¹ War, he argued in *Der Friede*, was only redemptive if followed by peace. But such a peace, he argued, was only possible if Europeans learned the Hegelian meaning of this war; namely, the necessary decline of nation-states and nationalism, and their replacement by new forms of continental empires, or “great empires” as he called them. The task for Europeans, then, was to discover their “great empire”: a new Europe. The European empire, according to Jünger, had been on the cusp of arrival for hundreds of years, but opportunities for its birth had been squandered: first by Napoleon, then by the architects of Versailles, and, finally, by the Nazis themselves. Jünger’s criticism of Nazism was vague and ambivalent. Although he liberally employed adjectives like “totalitarian” and “nihilistic” and “tyrannical” when discussing the Nazis, he avoided any precise definition of what made National Socialism morally bankrupt, and even made specific room to assign the Nazis an unconscious role in uniting Europeans. The Nazi occupation, he argued, “in spite of all the sufferings it brought, also left the seeds of friendship.” He continued: “the best of the peoples came to know each other, for such fateful times offer occasion for help. Respect, friendship, and love, too, spin

³¹ Ernst Jünger, “Dritter Brief an die Freunde!” September 1, 1946, Bundesarchiv in Koblenz, Nachlass Rudolf Huber, N 1505/461.

a web of fine threads which will endure...."³² Turning towards the future, Jünger implored Europeans to take past examples of radical political restructuring and boldly consider them for Europe:

Europe must be created out of its separate members; then will come new life, freer breath, a more spacious era. Yet forerunners and precedents are not lacking. Among them is the creation of the unified state by Bismarck and Cavour. As the nations were born out of the dynasties and fragments of old empires, so today they must in turn coalesce to form an *imperium*. There is no lack of patterns or models: the world knows states where the most diverse nations, races and tongues are united. Among them are Switzerland, the United States, the Soviet Union and the British Empire. In these structures a mass of political experience has crystallized. To it we can have recourse. To set up a European state means, therefore, to give geographical and political unity to a territory which historical developments were already shaping. The great difficulty lies in the long tradition - the peculiar ways of life which have grown up in its nations. This is what Goethe meant when he said in his day that America was more fortunate than our continent. The time has come, however, when the forms have become fluid and ready for recasting. It is a task which may now reasonably be set; the hopes of the nations rest upon it.³³

Jünger's political philosophy for accomplishing this task proved to be considerably superficial, however. The new European empire, he explained in one chapter, would have to find a way to "reconcile" liberalism and authoritarianism. The chapter actually amounted to a broadside against liberalism. It reduced liberalism to a pluralistic demand for the preservation of cultural "diversity", and consigned politics and economics to authoritarianism's

³² The original manuscript can be viewed in the German Literature Archive in Marbach, Germany. But the English translations for this chapter have been drawn from an English version published in 1948 and translated by Stuart O. Hood. See Ernst Jünger, *The Peace* (Washington D.C.: Regnery Publishing, 1948), 51-52.

³³ *Ibid.*, 58-59.

legitimate demand for uniformity and efficiency. In short, Jünger merely required that different religions, languages, races, and cultural practices be allowed to coexist in a future authoritarian Europe.³⁴ Jünger's disproportionate criticism of liberalism was not difficult to read between the lines: "The peace must not be founded solely on human reason," he explained in one remarkably reactionary chapter about the Western philosophical tradition. "The view is still widely held," he explained, "that to re-establish order it would suffice to return to the liberal state. But that would merely mean returning to our point of departure."³⁵ Thus, Jünger's Europeanism, although conceived in quasi-opposition to the Nazi regime, was nevertheless openly illiberal even in its vision for a post-Nazi future.

The evidence for *Der Friede* and its network of Nazi-criticizers is drawn largely from Ernst Jünger's personal document holdings in the *Deutsches Literaturarchiv* in Marbach, which contains his war-time and immediate postwar correspondences as well as his war-time diaries. Additionally, a few other important postwar figures documented private, personal accounts of *Der Friede* in the immediate postwar years, and these are archived in the *Bundesarchiv* in Koblenz. Take, for example, the well-known conservative historian Gerhard Ritter, who wrote an essay in 1946 dedicated to outlining the history and significance of the manuscript, which he called "a historical document of the greatest significance." Although he never published the essay, it can be found in his personal document holdings. In his essay, Ritter, who himself was imprisoned

³⁴ Ibid., 60-62.

³⁵ Ibid., 69.

for his connections to the July 20th, 1944 coup attempt, testified to the manuscript's significant distribution by hand and re-printing throughout conservative military milieus critical of the Nazi regime. Ritter also suggested that the manuscript was experiencing renewed interest and distribution immediately after the war (and, in fact, it was officially published in 1948 as a consequence of this renewed interest). Ritter apparently wrote his 1946 essay as an attempt to intervene into the immediate postwar debate over *Der Friede*; specifically, Ritter hoped to defend Jünger from leftist accusations that he was actually a Nazi sympathizer trying to white-wash his past. Ritter, in contrast, argued that Jünger and his manuscript were actually key pieces of the resistance movement. Jünger, he explained, was a "European warrior, intellectual, and Nazi-enemy." He continued:

While Hitler was still pursuing the supremacy of the Nordic master race disguised as the 'New Europe', this illegally [behaving] German proclaimed in '*Friede*' a desire for a federation with equal powers and responsibilities. This was a group of progressive Germans and Europeans in Paris and Berlin who, independently of one another, were pursuing the idea of a "United States of Europe" as a long-term goal.³⁶

Ritter never published his 1946 essay, perhaps because Jünger himself was contradicting Ritter's uncritical retrospective incorporation of him into the resistance. In the forward to the publication of his war-time diaries, Jünger admitted that he was not a member of the resistance even though he had befriended many conspirators and was aware of their plans (in his diary Jünger

³⁶ Gerhard Ritter, "Ernst Jünger, 'Der Friede'," December 4, 1946, Bundesarchiv in Koblenz, Nachlass Gerhard Ritter, N 1166/155.

explicitly condemned the coup attempts, arguing that they were the wrong way to express dissatisfaction with the Hitler regime).³⁷ Yet, Jünger was not entirely dismissive of his role in the resistance either, arguing that the *Der Friede* was his way of indirectly supporting the resistance. *Der Friede*, then, became for postwar conservatives such as Ritter a kind of romanticized account of a hidden conservative predecessor to the postwar enthusiasm for the Europe-concept, thus severing conservatives' guilt association with National Socialism.³⁸ One such German conservative who was uniquely animated by this belief was July 20th, 1944 conspirator and future Supreme Commander of NATO, Wehrmacht General Hans Speidel (Ernst Jünger's co-conspirator in the project). As will be discussed in subsequent chapters of this dissertation, Speidel was a key figure in postwar West German rearmament who originally suggested to Konrad Adenauer the idea of rearmament within an integrated European Army.

In 1940, after the defeat of France, Ernst Jünger was transferred to Paris as a reserve officer where he spent the duration of the war. There he became friends with General Hans Speidel, who in 1940 was made Chief of Staff of the German occupying army in France. In an unpublished 1946 essay about his relationship

³⁷ Ernst Jünger, "2nd Paris Diary," in "Jünger, Ernst; Prosa; 'Strahlungen'; 'Nachlass Ernst Jünger, A: Jünger, Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach, Germany.

³⁸ Seen from this angle, Ritter's unpublished essay on *Der Friede* complements his early postwar arguments against the *Sonderweg*. Ritter argued that National Socialism should not be read as a particularly German phenomenon, but rather as an expression of an international trend towards totalitarianism. See Gerhard Ritter, *Europa und die Deutsche Frage* (Munich: Münchner Verlag, 1948).

with Ernst Jünger, based on his personal diaries and records, Speidel documented *Der Friede* project from its inception to its dissemination. According to Speidel, around the time of the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union Jünger was moved to an office in Speidel's headquarters in Paris and tasked with writing essays on the historical significance of recent German victories. Instead, the two gradually developed a friendship around a shared criticism of Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union and began a secret weekly discussion group in the Parisian "Hotel Georges V." for military men critical of Nazi foreign policy. That Speidel and Jünger met regularly is confirmed in Jünger's war-time diaries.³⁹ By the end of the year, Jünger had allegedly confided in Speidel the belief that the war needed to be brought to an end, which was around the same time Speidel joined the anti-Hitler conspiracy network that would eventually culminate in the July 20th, 1944 assassination attempt. Speidel later testified that he confided in Ernst Jünger his involvement in the anti-Hitler conspiracy, and that Jünger refused to join; instead, he committed to working on an anti-war manuscript while keeping Speidel updated on its progress (at the time it was called the *Friedenschrift*, or "peace manuscript"). Speidel and Jünger indeed remained in contact throughout the war and afterwards. In 1942 Speidel was transferred to the Eastern Front, but he went out of his way to place Jünger under the protection of co-conspirator Carl-Heinrich von Stülpnagel, who was eventually executed for his participation in the July 20th assassination plot. In late 1942 Stülpnagel helped Jünger attain a six-

³⁹ "Jünger, Ernst; Prosa; 'Strahlungen', " Nachlass Ernst Jünger, A: Jünger, Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach, Germany.

month tour of the Eastern Front.⁴⁰ Speidel and Jünger remained in written contact before and during Jünger's time on the Eastern Front, and a letter from Jünger to Speidel in March, 1943 at the end of his Eastern Front trip confirms that Jünger was updating Speidel on his developments with *Der Friede*.⁴¹

Jünger's diary entries from his time on the Eastern Front contain veiled criticisms of Nazi barbarism, but equally as many justifications and rationalizations of the German soldier's fight against Bolshevism. In any case, it was during these months that Jünger undertook what he described as a revision of *Der Friede* manuscript. Because the earlier drafts do not exist, it is impossible to surmise what this meant. But it is very possible that this is the moment when Jünger infused his manuscript with the Europe-concept. A few months after returning from the Eastern Front, Jünger's first engagement with the Europe-concept can be found in an October, 1943 diary entry discussing the manuscript. He explained that one book in particular had given him the inspiration for the "second component" of the manuscript (presumably the Europe-concept). The book was titled *Europe and the Soul of the East* by an obscure writer, Walter Schubert. To be sure, he explains that the book merely helped him summarize ideas he had already had, and there is also evidence that he maintained an ongoing pen-friendship with Carl Schmitt during and after the war. Schmitt, with whom

⁴⁰ Hans Speidel, "Daten für den Aufenthalt Ernst Jüngers in Paris," September 2, 1946, Bundesarchiv in Koblenz, Nachlass Rudolf Huber, N 1505/461.

⁴¹ Ernst Jünger to Hans Speidel, March 20, 1943, "Jünger, Ernst an Speidel, Hans, 1941-1944," Nachlass Ernst Jünger, A: Jünger, Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach, Germany.

he discussed his manuscript in war-time correspondences, may well have introduced Jünger to the Grossraum-concept (in fact, the term “Grossraum” does indeed make an appearance in *Der Friede*).⁴² In any case, all that can be credibly established is that Jünger had become a proponent of the Europe-concept by 1943.

In April, 1944, Speidel was transferred back to Paris as Chief of Staff of General Rommel’s army in France, where he continued to work with Jünger on his final drafts for *Der Friede*. In fact, Speidel claimed that he took drafts of *Der Friede* to Rommel in his attempts to win him over for the anti-Hitler movement.⁴³ According to Jünger’s diaries, Speidel sent a courier to pick up the final draft of *Der Friede* on May 1st, 1944, at which point Speidel secretly circulated it through the ranks of the anti-Hitler conspiracy.⁴⁴ In February, 1945, Jünger decided to expand the secret circulation of the manuscript and gave a copy to a young Panzer

⁴² Jünger attended a lecture of Schmitt’s about geopolitics in October, 1941 and subsequently spent the next few days with him. See diary entry for October 18, 1941, “Jünger, Ernst; Prosa; ‘Strahlungen’,“ Nachlass Ernst Jünger, A: Jünger, Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach, Germany. “Jünger, Ernst an Speidel, Hans, 1941-1944,“ Nachlass Ernst Jünger, A: Jünger, Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach, Germany.

⁴³ Speidel claimed that Rommel was particularly moved by *Der Friede* and attributed *Der Friede* much of the credit for supposedly having nearly convinced Rommel to participation in the July, 1944 attempt to assassinate Hitler. See Hans Speidel, “Daten für den Aufenthalt Ernst Jüngers in Paris,“ September 2, 1946, Bundesarchiv in Koblenz, Nachlass Rudolf Huber, N 1505/461.

⁴⁴ “Jünger, Ernst; Prosa; ‘Strahlungen’,“ Nachlass Ernst Jünger, A: Jünger, Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach, Germany.

officer by the name of Manfred Schwarz, whom he had copy and distribute the manuscript secretly throughout the rest of the war.

Immediately after the war, Speidel and Jünger continued their written correspondence about *Der Friede*. Speidel, who was working to chronicle the history of *Der Friede*, advised Jünger against publicly publishing it out of a fear that such an action would be too early and therefore bring unnecessary criticism upon the manuscript. Instead, Speidel advised, Jünger should use his manuscript to work with Speidel to expand the underground network of former military figures and the anti-Hitler resistance who “from the other side of darkness [National Socialism] found their way to us in the light and who are capable of vibrant ideas for our impoverished home and the Occident [*Abendland*].”⁴⁵ Correspondences from 1947 reveal that Speidel was eventually brought around to the opinion to publish *Der Friede*; in fact, he proceeded to help Jünger translate and publish it in the Netherlands and France.⁴⁶ Speidel and Jünger remained in contact throughout the 1950s and frequently discussed together the topic of European integration.⁴⁷ Speidel, as we will see in subsequent chapters of this

⁴⁵ Hans Speidel to Ernst Jünger, November 25, 1946, “Briefe an ihn [Ernst Jünger] von Speidel, Hans u. Ruth, 1941-1948,” Nachlass Ernst Jünger, A: Jünger, Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach, Germany.

⁴⁶ “Briefe an ihn [Ernst Jünger] von Speidel, Hans u. Ruth, 1941-1948,” Nachlass Ernst Jünger, A: Jünger, Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach, Germany. “Jünger, Ernst an Speidel, Hans, 1946-1979,” Nachlass Ernst Jünger, A: Jünger, Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach, Germany.

⁴⁷ “Briefe an ihn [Ernst Jünger] von Speidel, Hans, 1954-1960,” Nachlass Ernst Jünger, A: Jünger, Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach, Germany.

dissertation, became an instrumental reformer in the German military who buttressed his lobbying against traditional German militarism with the Europe-concept he had acquired from Jünger.

Within a few years after the war Jünger had come into contact and aligned himself with Wirsing's postwar network, the impetus for which came from Wirsing's network. On October 28th, 1946 Ferdinand Fried, one of Wirsing's chief propagandists going back to the Tat-Kreis in the 1930s, wrote Jünger a long letter in the form of an invitation for intellectual collaboration. Fried opened the letter praising Jünger's *Der Friede* (he had recently sat in on one of Jünger's lectures about the book). He explained that he was a friend of Carl Schmitt's, with whom he had discussed *Der Friede*, and then proceeded to introduce himself and the Tat-Kreis, which he explained had admired Jünger from a distance and now desired closer contact: "Although we in our circle have kept ourselves distant from you, we nevertheless have trafficked in the same ideas and goals; consequently, we have gravitated towards you, because we all have more or less the same end-goal." The postwar years, Fried proceeded to explain, had opened his group of thinkers into "a newer, deeper knowledge"; namely, the necessity to "gather the youth of Europe." Fried finished his letter with an invitation: "Would you dare to join us on a great, new adventure called '*Der Friede*' and 'Europe?'"⁴⁸ Although the correspondence between Jünger and Fried is incomplete, it appears that Jünger accepted this offer, which he described in a

⁴⁸ Ferdinand Fried to Ernst Jünger, October 28, 1946, Bundesarchiv in Koblenz, Nachlass Ferdinand Fried, N 1208/1.

letter back to Fried as “daring to try and master that which today seems chaotic.” “The idea,” he continued, “that greater ordering forces are hidden underneath the surface and that we are taking part in purposeful restructuring has never failed me before.”⁴⁹ A month later, on December 8th, 1946, Klaus Mehnert wrote Jünger, extended greetings from Fried, introduced himself to Jünger, and invited Jünger to sit down with him. After this letter the archived correspondences between Jünger and Mehnert are very fragmentary, but a late 1949 letter from Mehnert reveals that a working relationship emerged from this contact. In this letter, dated November 21st, 1949, Mehnert invited Jünger to join Carl Schmitt in writing anonymously in his and Wirsing’s recently established periodical *Christ und Welt*.⁵⁰

Early Postwar Cooperation with the United States

Nazi Europeanists, then, increasingly distanced themselves from National Socialism as the war ended, sometimes even culminating in treasonous actions. The remainder of this chapter will illustrate that this disillusionment transitioned at the end of the war into a willingness to collaborate with the United States and side with the West in the emerging Cold War. Remarkably, there is evidence that several figures in this dissertation worked secretly with the United States

⁴⁹ Ernst Jünger to Ferdinand Fried’s wife, November 10, 1946, Bundesarchiv in Koblenz, Nachlass Ferdinand Fried, N 1208/1.

⁵⁰ Klaus Mehnert to Hans Speidel, November 21, 1949 with attached letter Klaus Mehnert to Ernst Jünger, November 21, 1949, “Mehnert, Klaus Dr. An Jünger, Ernst, 1946-1983,” Nachlass Ernst Jünger, A: Jünger, Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach, Germany.

intelligence forces after the war, and, in the case of some of them, this relationship was maintained throughout the 1950s (especially in the military milieu). The following discussion will leave these substantial military liaisons with U.S. intelligence to a separate chapter, and instead focuses on a few of the very immediate postwar connections that emerged as the dust was still settling.

For some of these figures the evidence of their relationship with the Americans is very incomplete. For example, Franz Alfred Six, the head of DAWI and the Cultural-Politics Department of the Foreign Office, was, according to documents released by the CIA under the Nazi War Crimes Disclosure Act, mentioned as an employed spy in the West German spy ring in East Germany called “Operation Gehlen” run by the U.S. Army and later the CIA.⁵¹ The records for Axel Seeberg, DAWI director over academic outreach to non-Germans, likewise suggest that he had a cooperative relationship with the United States. In his postwar correspondences with Hans Lilje, his postwar publisher, Seeberg makes reference to his “secret service people” that helped him avoid a publishing censor.⁵² Yet, like Six, Seeberg’s connections to the Americans cannot be traced in more detail. There are three figures, however, for whom substantial material

⁵¹ Timothy Naftali, “Richard Gehlen and the United States,” in ed.s Richard Breitman, Norman J.W. Goda, Timothy Naftali, and Robert Wolfe, *U.S. Intelligence and the Nazis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 375-418; 384.

⁵² See Seeberg’s postwar testimonials in the personal document collections for Hans Lilje, Seeberg’s postwar colleagues in Hanover Landeskirchliches Archiv, L3/II, Nr. 52.

evidence exists to illustrate these connections: Paul Karl Schmidt, Giselher Wirsing, and Klaus Mehnert.

Paul Karl Schmidt, the CIA, and the “ECA-Mission”

Within a few months after the end of the war, Paul Karl Schmidt, the former head of the Press Department in the Foreign Office, had found his way to Hamburg. There, he immediately sought re-entry into political commentary as a journalist, but did so covertly under the pseudonym “P.C. Holm” in order to avoid the American censors. In 1949 he was approached by his former assistant in the Foreign Office, Hans Georg von Studnitz, with whom he had published the periodical *Berlin-Rom-Tokio*. Studnitz had come with a job offer: to work with the American CIA to journalistically defend the Marshall Plan and European integration.

The material that resulted from this project cannot be found in public archives. The present author accessed the material with the help of German historian/journalist Klaus Körner, who at the time of the writing of this dissertation still maintained a personal, private archive of anti-Communist pamphlets, brochures, and books produced in the West German occupied zones in the late 1940s and the early Federal Republic of West Germany, and allowed the present author to sift through this material for writings penned by Paul Karl Schmidt’s propaganda circle. In addition to his personal archival collection, Körner personally interviewed and corresponded with Paul Karl Schmidt in the 1980s and 1990s while he was a journalist for *Die Zeit*, in which Schmidt was

quite open about acknowledging the historical account that follows. Additionally, Körner kindly agreed to an interview with the present author.

In 1948 the CIA made contact in Hamburg with a former propagandist of the Foreign Office by the name of Bernhard Woischnik, and invited him to lead a propaganda initiative writing pamphlets and brochures supportive of the Marshall Plan, America's financial and humanitarian aid to Europe. The project was run through a series of Hamburg publishing houses which had been set up as fronts by the CIA; specifically, the "*Drei Türme Verlag*" and the "*Deutscher Buch-Verlag*" – each of which was owned by the license-carrier Franz Wilhelm Paulus, a co-founder of the CDU in Hamburg who agreed to publish Woischnik and his colleagues anonymously so as to bypass American denazification censors. The "*Drei Türme Verlag*," in particular, was set up in 1949 as a vehicle for explicitly pro-European integration writings, and in 1950 was overtaken by yet another covert publishing house called the "*Verlag für Publizistik*," under which most of Paul Karl Schmidt's were ultimately published. In 1949 Woischnik invited Hans Georg von Studnitz to join the project, who in turn invited his former boss Paul Karl Schmidt. The three men together, along with two more former Nazi propagandists Rudolf Fust and Eberhard Taubert, set out on what ultimately amounted to a three-year project publishing what they called "*Europa-Werbung*," or "Europe-propaganda." Every two to three weeks they were visited by an American agent who inspected their material and provided them with 20,000 DM in funding which went to printing costs as well as living costs. Given the duration of the Hamburg project, it can be surmised that the United States likely spent

hundreds of thousands of DM on the project.⁵³ The material, although not accompanied with an author's name, can be identified by the publishing house and unique, colorful publishing style used by Schmidt's group. According to Schmidt and Studnitz in interviews with Körner, Schmidt took over leadership of the Hamburg project and authored most of the material.⁵⁴

Schmidt claimed in his interviews with Körner that this Hamburg project was part of a larger propaganda project conducted by the Economic Cooperation Administration (ECA), an agency created by the Americans to administer the Marshall Plan in Europe. This project was called the "ECA-Mission."⁵⁵ This is corroborated by documents released by the CIA under the Nazi War Crimes Disclosure Act. On October 12th, 1950 a so-called "Interdepartmental Foreign Information Organization," a joint State Department and CIA committee of the ECA, met to discuss what, according to the minutes for the meeting, they called "propaganda activity" and "foreign information activities." In this meeting they

⁵³ Klaus Körner, *Die Rote Gefahr: Antikommunistische Propaganda in der Bundesrepublik, 1950-2000* (Hamburg: Konkret Literatur Verlag, 2003), 21-23.

Klaus Körner, "Kalter Krieg und Kleine Schriften," in ed. Karl H. Pressler, *Aus dem Antiquariat* (Frankfurt a.M.: Deutscher Börsenverein, 1992).

⁵⁴ Private interview with historian Klaus Körner conducted by the present author, October 12, 2017.

⁵⁵ Ibid. Some of the Hamburg project's later material was even accompanied with a note: "Published on behalf of the West German Federal Ministry for the Marshall Plan as well as the ECA-Mission for Germany." See "Nicht Vergessen," 1951, historian Klaus Körner's private collections.

concluded that “the most effective propaganda is frequently that conducted by indigenous organizations or groups.” This included, among other things, “financial assistance to European publication[s]” and the “purchase of leaflets or other material supporting Marshall Plan objectives.”⁵⁶ By 1950, Schmidt and his writers had expanded the project into a defense of European integration as such. According to Körner, the Europe-propaganda project was cancelled and stripped of its funding in the summer of 1952 allegedly because the project’s enthusiastic backer, John C. McCloy, the High Commissioner for Occupied Germany, was replaced by a new, less interested commissioner.⁵⁷

The first material from the Hamburg project revolved around the Marshall Plan. In 1950 they published a small ninety-six-page book called “Europe Works: the Worker in the Marshall Plan.” The book was uninhibited in its pro-American enthusiasm, describing Americans as benevolent friends of Europe sacrificing for

⁵⁶ “Informal Minutes of a Special Meeting of the Interdepartmental Foreign Information Organization,” October 12, 1950, CIA CREST files, document #: CIA-RDP80-01065A000500120035-2, United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD. The document is also accessible in the online reading room for the Freedom of Information Act: <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/document/cia-rdp80-01065a000500120035-2>. Coincidentally, Körner claims that influential postwar West German intellectual Eugen Kogon was likewise participatory in the ECA’s larger Europe-propaganda project, for which he was likewise made regular 20,000 DM payments by the CIA. See Klaus Körner, *Die Rote Gefahr*, 28.

⁵⁷ Private interview with historian Klaus Körner conducted by the present author, October 12, 2017.

the good of all Europeans. But it was also frank about the larger purpose of the Marshall Plan; namely, preventing “radical and destructive ideas” which are fostered in economic emergency.⁵⁸ After a few chapters identifying the function and administration of the Marshall Plan, the last thirty pages of the book, beginning with a chapter called “The Great Goals,” appear to have been space for Schmidt’s artistic liberty. The Marshall Plan, he argued, was more than humanitarian aid – it was a forerunner for economic cooperation hitherto unseen in European history. In describing the economic developments in process, Schmidt deployed none other than the Grossraum concept and even subtly suggested that the Marshall Plan was helping Europeans establish an economic future in which they could stand up against both the USSR and the USA:

European mini-states are no longer able to compete with economic Grossraum[s] such as America or the Soviet Union! A Europe that wants to live must increase its production well beyond its pre-war levels. That means it has no choice but to establish a European economic Grossraum! The Marshall Plan is the means to this end [Italics in original].⁵⁹

Schmidt and his writers proceeded to discuss economic resources in Europe and the optimistic blueprint for an enclosed European Grossraum, but he warned that “national egoism” would have to be sacrificed if Europeans were to accomplish their task. Some steps, he explained, would be painful for nationalists, such as, for example, the creation of a common European currency. But in the end they

⁵⁸ “Europa Arbeitet: Der Arbeiter im Marshallplan,” most likely 1950, 27-28, historian Klaus Körner’s personal collections.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 60-61.

would “strengthen the feeling of commonality.”⁶⁰ Schmidt, then, was using the journalistic space opened to him by American intelligence forces, to advocate beyond the Marshall Plan by ascribing it a “higher purpose”:

The higher purpose of the cooperation produced by the European countries in the Marshall Plan is not merely the economic unification of Europe, but rather also the political unification of Europe. The peoples of Europe all have the same culture, the same conception of life, the same standard of living, the same needs, desires, and hopes. There is no reason why they should not finally bury any and all hate, suspicion, and jealousies in order to politically unify for the benefit of everybody and thereby produce a truly lasting peace. ... Every worker must understand that his work is contributing to a New Europe, one in which he and his family and his posterity will have a secure life. Never in the entire history of the continent has the opportunity for this been so promising as it is right now.⁶¹

The last chapter in the book attempted to explain the Second World War as the product of a “false and exaggerated nationalism,” and suggested that the only way to avoid future wars was to accept Schmidt’s interpretation of the Marshall Plan.

The entire pamphlet came to an end with the following appeal:

The European peoples must contribute their part to the unification of Europe. The previous political and economic system of nationalism - which in its very essence is very backwards in light of modern technological and world-economic developments - will otherwise necessarily lead to atom and hydrogen bombs. Today there is only one choice: that between the cooperation of peoples and their downfall. The decision rests with every individual.⁶²

The Hamburg project, then, ostensibly an advocacy group for the Marshall Plan, was actually using its funds to advance more audacious ideas about

⁶⁰ Ibid., 61.

⁶¹ Ibid., 62.

⁶² Ibid., 93.

European unification. But the Americans appear to have both known and accepted this, because in 1951 they began commissioning propaganda pamphlets in support of the Schuman Plan, or European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), the proposal to combine West European coal and steel industries. In a sixteen-page pamphlet titled “What will the Schuman Plan Bring?” Schmidt and his writers argued that the ECSC was the first step towards the “union” (*Zusammenschluss*) of the European peoples. Additionally, they subtly argued that the ECSC was evidence that Europeans were in agreement about the true cause of the Second World War: British “balance of powers” politics. To be sure, Schmidt and his writers did not use the term “British,” but the use of the loaded term was a not so hidden reference to their wartime polemics against an alleged British conspiracy to dominate Europe behind the façade of equal powers and nationalism:

Up until the end of the Second World War the division of Europe in all things political and economic was the consequence of the principle of Balance of Powers. Nobody was supposed to win the upper hand. It was a complicated political game and constant wars were necessary in order to keep this Balance of Powers intact. But with the advance of the Soviet Union to the Elbe this system crumbled in on itself. Now there is only one large power in the European-Asian territories, and it is attempting to extend its influence by all means and at the expense of others.⁶³

The pamphlet, conspicuously silent on the economic aspects of the Schuman Plan, continued to argue that traditional nationalism, because it had caused the recent conflict in Europe, would need to be done away with, and that there were

⁶³ “Was Bringt der Schumanplan?” 1951, 4, historian Klaus Körner’s personal collections.

historical examples of using economic unification as a precursor for political unification. Such, for example, was the German “Zollunion” of the 1830s:

The Zollunion was the precondition for the industrial and economic flourishing of Germany in the last century. The Schuman Plan, however, will inaugurate a new European era; because in this age of the airplane it will eliminate the archaic borders of old and create for us the Grossraum which has been so neglected by the politics of Europe’s peoples.⁶⁴

The rest of the pamphlet proceeded to assuage concerns about losing German “sovereignty,” arguing that, just like a family in a house, each member of Europe would have to learn to sacrifice sovereignty. Indeed, learning to increasingly sacrifice more sovereignty was the path for all Europeans to a future European state. And “then a true European patriotism will replace the divisiveness of nationalism.”⁶⁵

Sometime in 1950, likely towards the end of the year, Schmidt was allowed to publish an eighty-seven-page book as part of the project along with his pseudonym “P.C. Holm.”⁶⁶ Schmidt opened the book, titled *Down with Borders! Europe is our Salvation*, with an introduction that re-packaged many of the themes from war-time Foreign Office Europe-propaganda: he described Europe as a “divided family” or a “family of peoples” (*Völkerfamilie*); he called for a future

⁶⁴ Ibid., 5.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 15

⁶⁶ P.C. Holm, *Die Grenzen Nieder! Europa ist unsere Rettung* (Hamburg: Deutscher Buchverlag, 1950). To the best knowledge of the present author, *Down with Borders!* cannot be accessed in public libraries or archives. Historian Klaus Körner likewise did not have a copy, although he was aware of the book. But another biographer of Paul Karl Schmidt, Christian Plöger, owns a personal copy and kindly shared it with the present author.

“United States of Europe” on the model of the USA; he decried nationalism and nation-states as a false historical path enticing Europeans to abandon their destiny in a Grossraum and political federation; he denounced Europe’s past wars as unfortunate “European Civil Wars” for which all peoples shared equal blame; and, finally, he appealed for Europeans to remember their historical unity in the pre-modern “Occident” (yet made no calls for religious revival).⁶⁷ Yet, despite all the continuity in Schmidt’s Europeanism, *Down with Borders!* also illustrates that Schmidt was in the process of revising his Europe-concept in light of his postwar alliance with the United States.

Much like his war-time entreaties for European unification, *Down with Borders!* relied on historical narratives to justify its Europe-concept. In fact, more than half of the book, a total of forty-seven pages, functioned as a historical account of the Europe-concept. The goal, as Schmidt himself explained, was to “see history from a European perspective, which means examining the question: what has led to the unification of Europe and what has led away from it? In doing so, the events of the past and the forces of history acquire different levels of importance.” Most importantly, one could learn that “the path towards Europe” encapsulates what he called the “direction of the history of our Raum.”⁶⁸ But his treatment of European history in *Down with Borders!* took on a much different form than his war-time treatments. Remarkably, he traced the origins of Europe to the Jews, who inaugurated monotheism and therefore the “foundation of

⁶⁷ Ibid., Introduction.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 27.

European culture.” Schmidt did not belabor this point for more than a few pages, but his inclusion of Jews in the origin story of Europe was a complete reversal of his heightened antisemitism in Foreign Office propaganda (the rest of the text also refrained from antisemitism). Foreshadowing his tepid reconciliation with liberalism later in the text, Schmidt placed the Greeks in the deep genealogy of Europe as well, because they implanted in Europe a commitment to democracy, which he called “the most humane regulation of mankind’s political relationships.”⁶⁹

Schmidt then traced Europe’s birth to the Holy Roman Empire of the Middle Ages, beginning with Charlemagne, which defined itself during the crusades in an identity-building, multi-century struggle against Asians and Muslims. Here Schmidt was continuing one of his war-time themes; namely, that, rather than the nation-state, the European *Grossraum* (defined culturally and ethnically against “Asia”) was Europeans’ true cultural nation, or, as he described it, “a higher, more encompassing community [*Gemeinschaft*] than the belonging associated with tribe or Volk.”⁷⁰ The rest of Schmidt’s history lesson was intended to trace the decline of Europe and the unfortunate “victory of borders” in the Early Modern period. Like his war-time arguments, Schmidt traced the beginning of this “retreat” from Europe to the Thirty Years’ War and the resulting rise of “European Civil Wars.” The Thirty Years’ War, he argued, was not so much a religious conflict, but rather the rise of nation-states and their pernicious

⁶⁹ Ibid., 8.

⁷⁰ Ibid. 10.

effect on European history – something Schmidt called the “core problem of European history.”⁷¹ But unlike his war-time propaganda, Schmidt now found moments in the Early Modern period which carried the European spirit through its era of nationalist descent. Most importantly, he went to great lengths to defend the Renaissance and humanism as underground carriers of a unified European culture unaware of their role in the dialectical metanarrative of Europe’s re-birth. Schmidt’s treatment of these Early Modern intellectual developments was strikingly liberal-progressive. For example, he praised the Renaissance for being secular and dislodging the dogmatic power of theology. In other segments he praised Galileo and Copernicus for establishing the foundation for modern science and research. Schmidt then continued this progressive account into his reading of the Enlightenment (which was likewise presented as an unsuspecting forerunner of European unification).

Although he could not bring himself to use the term “liberal,” Schmidt praised “bourgeois” philosophers such as Locke, Hume, Montesquieu, and Kant. Schmidt even revised his take on the French Revolution, which had been regularly decried in Foreign Office propaganda for cementing the rise of inorganic individualism and universalism. The French Revolution, and its “bourgeois” harbingers, he argued, correctly identified mankind’s basic “human rights” (*Menschenrechte*) – which he defined as the right to self-representation vs. monarchism; the right to property vs. feudalism; and the right to rule of law vs. absolutism. Schmidt even quoted Thomas Jefferson, and defined these rights as

⁷¹ Ibid. 21.

“inalienable.”⁷² Unlike the war-time propaganda of the Foreign Office, Napoleon was presented as an unfortunate revival of monarchism. Nevertheless, the Enlightenment, he argued, was destined to gradually emerge victorious, and with it the Europe-concept. It is difficult to make sense of Schmidt’s seeming conversion to liberalism. But one thing stands out: his silence on the issue of individualism. Although Schmidt correctly identified many pillars of liberalism, he did not identify its most central doctrine: the centrality of the individual. In fact, to the contrary, Schmidt incorrectly read collectivist philosophers into the Enlightenment such as Herder, who, he argued, had been misunderstood as a romantic and nationalist when in reality all he had done was awaken Europeans to their internal “national feeling.” But national feeling, he argued, merely meant the highest “organic level of community” and did not find its culmination in the *Volk* but rather Europe. Repeating a frequent argument from his war-time Europe concept, Schmidt presented Herder and the Enlightenment as harbingers of the *Völkergemeinschaft*: “[Herder] reconciled the concept of nation-ness [*Volkheit*] and nationality [*Nationalen*] with the concept of *Völkergemeinschaft*.”⁷³ In fact, the end of Schmidt’s historical analysis of the Enlightenment was accompanied by a subtle condemnation for it having been incomplete; specifically, for it having

⁷² Ibid., 34. Interestingly, Schmidt was actually well versed in the philosophy of Romanticism, a movement which he condemned for its stubborn attachment to nationalism. But he simply claimed that Herder was not actually a practitioner of Romanticism because he was a “cosmopolitan.” Ibid., 37.

⁷³ Ibid., 30.

retreated from the *Völkergemeinschaft* and instead turned to the dead-end of nationalism:

The peoples [of Europe] were awakened; but they awoke as nations. The wars against one another, caused by the non-presence of a common non-European threat, prevented the emergence of a supranational consciousness in Europe even though humanism had opened the way for such an occurrence.⁷⁴

The nineteenth century in Europe, according to Schmidt, was primarily a story about the rise of three things: democracy, capitalism, and nationalism. The rise of democracy he celebrated, the simultaneous rise of nationalism he condemned; but his take on capitalism was more nuanced. Marx, he acknowledged, was correct to identify legitimate social ills which emerge from industrial capitalism; furthermore, capitalism as an economic system, he argued, was intrinsically at odds with the concomitant rise of the nation-state. But capitalism, for all its problems, could not be reversed. For Europeans to attempt to do so, Schmidt argued, would be “suicide” in an age of global capital.⁷⁵ The problems that accompany capitalism, however, were resolved by Schmidt with the concept of the *Grossraum*, which organically ordered the nation-transcending movement of goods and could therefore more effectively buttress the social welfare state. Europeans, he lamented, were too slow to recognize this transition to the *Grossraum*. Indeed, the politics of Versailles – in particular the misbegotten doctrine of “national self-determination” – was, according to Schmidt, an anachronistic throwback to the nation-state in an age when Europe’s

⁷⁴ Ibid., 37.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 39-42.

rivals to the East and West were transitioning into Grossraum[s]. In stark contrast to his war-time propaganda, Schmidt praised Coudenhove-Kalergi's Pan-European movement, the League of Nations, and French Prime Minister Aristide Briand's plans for European integration as a "missed opportunity." Nevertheless, his attack on the Versailles settlement was a surprising angle in propaganda patronized by the United States.

The second half of *Down with Borders!* enthusiastically outlined and the recent developments towards European unification, something he called the "Europe movement." It included: Churchill's 1946 speech advocating a "United States of Europe"; the establishment of various think-tanks in favor of European integration; the Brussels Treaty Organization; and, most importantly, the establishment of the Council of Europe. Schmidt was clearly caught up in the enthusiasm for European integration and interpreted recent events as evidence for the inexorable drive towards a new European polity. Schmidt energetically supported Adenauer's involvement in this "Europe movement" and, importantly, was confident that the United States likewise supported it because it was based on the principles of democracy and human rights. Indeed, Schmidt presented the "Europe movement" as one piece (the most important piece) in the developing Cold War. "It is indeed natural that the European peoples profess themselves to the West," he argued. He finished with an appeal for Europeans to be forward-thinking: "Let's not forget that Europe is only possible with patriotism; not the patriotism of the nineteenth century, but rather the patriotism of the twentieth

century.”⁷⁶ Schmidt further contrasted the patriotism of the two centuries by suggesting that the traditional love for a “Fatherland” must “give sway to the more encompassing Motherland: Europe.”⁷⁷

It is tempting to interpret Paul Karl Schmidt’s remarkable (if incomplete) conversion to liberalism as rank opportunism. After all, Schmidt was an extraordinarily ambitious individual and postwar West Germany, at least initially committed to denazification, was not an easy place for former Nazis to find money, sustenance, and careers. Given that Schmidt’s work for the CIA was censored weekly, it may appear plausible that Schmidt was merely fulfilling a demand and cashing his checks. A better interpretation is that Schmidt was committed to his Europe-concept, the path for which seemingly had to go through liberal democracy – which meant that Schmidt had to find ways to salvage something out of a hitherto enemy ideology. In short, the survival of his Europe-concept required its revision. This is corroborated by another finding: in addition to his work for the CIA Schmidt also regularly worked for the private, independent newspaper *Die Welt* from October 1950 until the end of 1953 as a foreign policy editorialist with the same pseudonym (P.C. Holm). The present author was unable to discover whether or not this work was commissioned or encouraged by American authorities, but it is unlikely given the fact that he continued his work for *Die Welt* uninterrupted through 1953 (more than a year after the CIA project had been disbanded). In the pages of *Die Welt* Schmidt

⁷⁶ Ibid., 79.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 83.

forcefully defended the USA's foreign policy in the early Cold War as a struggle for freedom against Soviet tyranny, and admonished Germans to align themselves with "the West" and re-make Europe "in the spirit of Western democracy."⁷⁸

But perhaps unrestrained by American censors, Schmidt was also more able to articulate illiberal ideas in his writing for *Die Welt*. For example, Schmidt occasionally flirted with apologia for National Socialism. In November, 1950 he wrote a history article describing an alleged offer by the Soviets to join the Tripartite Pact on the condition that the Germans allow further expansion of their rule over Finland, Turkey, and Bulgaria. The Nazis, Schmidt concluded, nobly refused on behalf of Europe.⁷⁹ Even more telling, Schmidt was occasionally prone to defend non-German fascists. Although consistently critical of Hitler for misguiding Germany into tyranny, Schmidt was more forgiving to Hitler's allies and accomplices, whom, in Schmidt's view, had actually been corrupted by

⁷⁸ P.C. Holm, "Verspielte Partie Polen: Lehrreiche Geschichte von Verhandlungen zwischen West und Ost," *Die Welt*, January 6, 1951. P.C. Holm, "Der General der Technik: Dwight D. Eisenhower, kommandeur der Atlantikarmee," *Die Welt*, December 20, 1950. P.C. Holm, "Ein unpolitischer Degen: Frontoffizier und Spezialist General Ridgeway," *Die Welt*, April 13, 1951. P.C. Holm, "Der Nachfahre der Götter Japans in schwarzem Hut: Kaiser Hirohito begeht als konstitutioneller Monarch seinen 50. Geburtstag," *Die Welt*, April 28, 1951. P.C. Holm, "Der Pioneer des Nachrichtendienstes: Reuters Weg von der Brieftaube zum Hellschreiber," *Die Welt*, July 7, 1951. P.C. Holm, "Sind wir wieder ein Machtfaktor? Zu glauben, Deutschland spiele weltpolitisch eine Rolle, ist gefährlicher Trugschluss," *Die Welt*, February 28, 1952.

⁷⁹ P.C. Holm, "Molotows Bündnis Angebot: Vor Yehn Jahren in Berlin," *Die Welt*, November 11, 1950.

Hitler. One article of his took a stand against the revanchist French public for condemning Marshall Petain and the servants of Vichy.⁸⁰ Likewise, Schmidt lamented Benito Mussolini's decline as the unfortunate story of a man well-versed in the philosophical dilemmas of his time but ultimately incapable of keeping his ideology free from association with Hitler. Mussolini's tragedy, then, was having squandered his opportunity to change the world with fascism.⁸¹ Finally, Schmidt was frequently defensive of Franco's fascist regime in Spain. He decried condemnations of Franco's regime, arguing that Franco had proven the legitimacy of his fascist rule by refusing to be corrupted by Hitler, and that the West should more actively embrace Franco as a potential ally in the Cold War. For Schmidt, then, the Cold War struggle for the "democratic West," as he often called it, was perfectly compatible with Franco's fascism.⁸²

The documentary evidence for Schmidt's life in the mid and late-1950s is very fragmentary.⁸³ But it is safe to assume that, like many post-Nazi

⁸⁰ P.C. Holm, "Der letzte Marschall von Frankreich: Henri Philippe Petain diente seinem Lande in der schwersten Stunde," *Die Welt*, July 24, 1951.

⁸¹ P.C. Holm, "Benito Mussolini starb on Hitler: Heute vor 10 Jahren: 'Modell'-Staatsstreich gegen den italienischen Diktator," *Die Welt*, July 25, 1953.

⁸² P.C. Holm, "Francos Improvisationskunst: Durch Szenenwechsel bleibt Spanien im politischen Spiel," *Die Welt*, August 6, 1951. P.C. Holm, "Weltpolitische Umschau: Der Stimmungswechsel von Paris – Wie steht's um die Saar? – Was am Nil passiert – Franco wird Partner – Ost-West-Temperatur wieder 0 grad," *Die Welt*, October 2, 1953.

⁸³ Wigbert Benz, *Paul Carell: Ribbentrops Pressechef Paul Karl Schmidt vor und nach 1945* (Berlin: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag, 2005).

Europeanists analyzed in this dissertation, Schmidt was discouraged by what was ultimately, in his eyes, the incomplete and failed European integration of the 1950s. Because in the 1960s he began the postwar activity for which he is most famously known for: his career as an amateur military historian. As historians have pointed out, Schmidt's apologetics for the war on the Eastern Front beginning in the 1960s and continuing through the 1990s, became a lynchpin for nationalist accounts of the Second World War on the far Right of late twentieth century German politics.⁸⁴ Schmidt ultimately traversed one of the most wide-ranging intellectual trajectories analyzed in this dissertation: originally a radical student nationalist in Weimar Germany, he eventually became a leading exponent of antisemitic Europeanism in the Foreign Office only to then sharply turn towards a tepid reconciliation with liberal democracy after the war, and ultimately find a home in disgruntled late twentieth century German nationalism.

Giselher Wirsing, Klaus Mehnert, and the Americans

Within a few years after the war Klaus Mehnert had made his way from East Asia back to Germany and Giselher Wirsing had been released from prison. The two quickly reunited and together founded and edited *Christ und Welt*, one of postwar West Germany's most influential political weeklies (the subject of the next two chapters of this dissertation). But before the two began collaborating on a journalistic career, each of them had already begun separately to communicate and cooperate with American intelligence. In November, 1945 Wirsing, who had been taken into the custody of American interrogators almost immediately after

⁸⁴ Ibid.

the war's end, accepted an offer from American intelligence officers to work on public relations. For roughly one month Wirsing toured the American occupation zone with an American officer called "Lieutenant Mittelburger" and wrote evaluations of public opinions towards the American occupiers. According to CIA documents he completed this operation with a former colleague of the Foreign Office by the name of Werner Otto von Hentig, who had been a diplomat to the Middle East working on Nazi outreach to the Arab world.⁸⁵ In all likelihood, Wirsing's primary motivation for engaging in this American intelligence operation revolved around his prisoner-of-war status and subsequent need to evade postwar justice. Due to the scarcity of documents for Wirsing's postwar life and career, it is difficult to ascertain whether or not Wirsing's relationship with the Americans continued past 1945, but it is unlikely that a direct relationship continued. As late as 1965, American intelligence was still tracing Giselher Wirsing and had come to the position that he was an ally of the United States. The CIA believed that he had become a useful ally because he had come around to supporting strong ties to the United States.⁸⁶ In any case, if Wirsing had conducted further work for American intelligence, the CIA document

⁸⁵ United States Department of State, "Biographic Data Form – Wirsing, Giselher," November, 1951, United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, box 57, folder "Wirsing, Giselher."

⁸⁶ Paul R. Sweet (American Consul General in Stuttgart) to the United States Department of State, "Dr. Giselher Wirsing and Christ und Welt: A Profile," November 23, 1965, United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, box 57, folder "Wirsing, Giselher."

trace file under his name would likely have included that information. His close colleague Klaus Mehnert, on the other hand, maintained a documented relationship with the Americans throughout these years. And this can be demonstrated with a wealth of material from Mehnert's exhaustive personal holdings in the state archive of Baden-Württemberg in Stuttgart.

The evidence indicates that Mehnert himself approached the Americans with the desire for a constructive relationship. In November, 1946 Mehnert wrote a long letter to Colonel George E. Arneman, a military attaché at the American embassy in Paris. Mehnert and Arneman had become friends in Hawaii, and upon hearing that Arneman was stationed in Europe Mehnert wrote to him testifying of his anti-Hitler sentiment and professed a desire to work on the "reconstruction" of Germany.⁸⁷ In 1947 it appears his wish was granted when he was invited to participate in the "German Bureau for Peace Questions," an organization established by provisional West German governing authorities in February, 1947 and subsequently approved and financed by American occupation officials. The purpose of the Bureau was to coordinate reconciliation between German and American interests vis-à-vis German occupation. Mehnert was tasked with synthesizing foreign press reports for German representatives.⁸⁸ According to Mehnert's correspondences with an American friend in 1947 and 1948, Mehnert

⁸⁷ Klaus Mehnert to Col. George E. Arneman, November 28, 1946, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 2.

⁸⁸ "Deutsches Büro für Friedensfragen," Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 265 and 266.

was involved in this project from its inception until its dissolution in 1948, around the time Mehnert began co-publishing *Christ und Welt* with Giselher Wirsing.⁸⁹ Even after the German Bureau for Peace Questions had been dissolved, Mehnert continued to work with American occupation authorities. In early 1949 he received a request from the American Office of Military Government for Germany (OMGUS) to send in a questionnaire and report on U.S.-German relations in which Mehnert commented on the most effective ways to train German citizens in the practice of democratic governance.⁹⁰

Around the same time, Mehnert's involvement with the Americans took another step forward when he began publishing a "Germany-Yearbook" with the Rheinisch-Westfälisch publishing house in Essen. Based on correspondences with German representatives of the High Commission for Occupied Germany (HICOG), the book, which summarized yearly developments in German politics and therefore German-American relations, appears to have been at least partially subsidized by the Americans.⁹¹ In one of the correspondences with McCloy's German representatives, in fact, Mehnert was invited to expand his partnership

⁸⁹ Klaus Mehnert to Jim Lee, March 19, 1948, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 3.

⁹⁰ Klaus Mehnert to Major General C.P. Gross, Office of Military Government, Württemberg-Baden, April 25, 1949, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 8.

⁹¹ "Salant" (Bundeskanzleramt, Verbindungsstelle zur Alliierten Hohen Kommission) to Klaus Mehnert, February 18, 1950, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 10.

with the occupying authorities further still; namely, by participating in the reconstitution of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD).⁹² Indeed, in 1950 Mehnert was made a member of the DAAD's managing board, a position he maintained throughout the 1950s and beyond.⁹³ Interestingly, it appears that Mehnert was eventually even invited to participate in HICOG's secret discussions and meetings about German public opinion on sensitive issues such as rearmament and European integration. In March, 1951, Mehnert received an eleven-page secret report from the HICOG office in Stuttgart. The report, marked "restricted," was an evaluation of German public opinion and the threat of Soviet offers of German neutrality in the Cold War.⁹⁴ Around the same time Mehnert appears to have had some relationship with "Radio Free Europe," an anti-Communist American operation funded by the CIA. A few correspondences from 1951 suggest that he advised Radio Free Europe in some capacity.⁹⁵ By 1953 Mehnert had extended his cooperation with American occupation forces into a working relationship with West German governing authorities. In July, 1953 Mehnert received a 1000 DM payment for having completed a research essay

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ "Korrespondenz A-Z Januar - April 1950," Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 11.

⁹⁴ "Two Kinds of Neutralization – Two Kinds of Rearmament," OLC/W/B Stuttgart, HICOG Bonn, March 5, 1951, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 13.

⁹⁵ "Korrespondenz A-Z Januar-April 1951," Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 13.

about Soviet-Middle East relations for the reconstructed German Foreign Office.⁹⁶ As we will discuss in subsequent chapters of this dissertation, Mehnert continued a secret working relationship with the West German government throughout his time as chief editor of *Christ und Welt*.

In addition to his formal relationships with the United States, Mehnert also fostered unofficial ties to the United States. His personal archival holdings contain a variety of correspondences with Americans, including, for example, frequent discussions with American historians at prestigious Universities, including Yale University and the University of Michigan.⁹⁷ But his most telling unofficial relationship with the United States was his long-standing friendship with George F. Kennan. As discussed in a previous chapter of this dissertation, Mehnert befriended Kennan in the 1930s while working as a journalist in Moscow. In 1947 the two figures resumed their written friendship, and continued to correspond regularly throughout their lives. Just between the years 1947 and 1953, for example, Mehnert's personal archival holdings contain eighteen correspondences between them (and their discussions suggest that this record is very incomplete). Their correspondences suggest that they considered one another not just acquaintances, but close friends. In fact, Mehnert hosted Kennan

⁹⁶ Illegible at the German Foreign Office to Klaus Mehnert, July 13, 1953, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 18.

⁹⁷ "Korrespondenz A-Z Mai-November 1952," Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 18.

in his private home in Stuttgart when Kennan visited Europe in the fall of 1951.⁹⁸ Their main topic of interest in their correspondences was, of course, the Cold War and German-American relations, and the two figures regarded each other as allies in the great foreign policy debates of the time. Mehnert was energetically supportive of Kennan's "containment theory," and the two figures found themselves in agreement that the essential foreign policy for Germans after the Second World War was to align themselves with "the West."⁹⁹ Mehnert frequently shared with Kennan his measurement of German public opinion regarding an alliance with the West. In one particularly revealing correspondence from May, 1948, Mehnert explained that he believed most Germans prioritized peace and an alliance with the West more than German unity and therefore accepted Kennan's containment theory. Mehnert proceeded to argue that, despite their history, most Germans could actually be won over to the idea and practice of democracy.¹⁰⁰

Based on the convergence of their foreign policy priorities, Mehnert and Kennan proceeded to use their relationship to advance cultural diplomacy. In the early 1950s Kennan was in and out of work with the U.S. State Department but

⁹⁸ Klaus Mehnert to George F. Kennan, September 6, 1951, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 14.

⁹⁹ Klaus Mehnert to George F. Kennan, June 17, 1952, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 16. Klaus Mehnert to George F. Kennan, May 2, 1948, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 3.

¹⁰⁰ Klaus Mehnert to George F. Kennan, May 2, 1948, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 3.

still desired to influence international politics and sought to use journalism and academia as a vehicle for expanding the reach of his anti-Communism. In fact, according to one correspondence from September, 1951 Kennan had shared with Mehnert an “assignment” he had received from U.S. Secretary of Defense George C. Marshall to influence public opinion through “writing and research.”¹⁰¹ The records indicate that Kennan successfully recruited Mehnert as part of this unofficial project. In one correspondence from the summer of 1951 Mehnert confirms to Kennan that he had, on Kennan’s request, re-instated the “German Society for the Study of Eastern Europe” (*Deutsche Gesellschaft zum Studium Osteuropas*), which, as discussed in a previous chapter of this dissertation, had been one of Mehnert’s academic projects in the early 1930s.¹⁰² According to subsequent correspondences, the re-instated academic society was used to frequently publish Kennan and some of his chosen researchers.¹⁰³ Additionally, according to a request made by Kennan in late September, 1951, it appears that Mehnert used his journalistic acumen to help Kennan find German publishing houses who would accept American funding to publish research chosen by

¹⁰¹ Klaus Mehnert to George F. Kennan, September 6, 1951, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 14.

¹⁰² Klaus Mehnert to George F. Kennan, July 17, 1951, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 14.

¹⁰³ Klaus Mehnert to George F. Kennan, October 8, 1951, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 14.

Kennan.¹⁰⁴ Mehnert also published Kennan's writings in *Christ und Welt* and reported this back to Kennan.¹⁰⁵ It appears that Kennan, in order to return the favors, assisted Mehnert's colleague Eugen Gerstenmaier, who had recently been elected to the West German parliament as well as the parliament of the European Council in Strasbourg, with American networking in 1953.¹⁰⁶

Conclusion

It is tempting to see Wirsing and Mehnert's postwar liaison with the United States as evidence of a quick and thorough conversion to liberal democracy. This is certainly the image they attempted to foster decades later, and it appears that they were not wholly unsuccessful in this endeavor. For example, a 1967 article in *Der Spiegel*, which quoted from Mehnert's recently published book *Der Deutsche Standort*, reviewed Mehnert's life since the Second World War, explaining:

From the very beginning he supported 'progress' as opposed to traditional German 'cultural pessimism'; he supported 'the West' as opposed to traditional German animosity towards civilization and the Enlightenment.... In these matters the Americans were the vital example.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ Klaus Mehnert to George F. Kennan, September 27, 1951, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 14.

¹⁰⁵ Klaus Mehnert to George F. Kennan, July 2, 1952, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 16.

¹⁰⁶ Klaus Mehnert to George F. Kennan, March 26, 1953, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 17. George F. Kennan to Klaus Mehnert, April 9, 1953, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 17.

¹⁰⁷ Golo Mann, "Die Welt – Gar Nicht so Böse?" *Der Spiegel*, August 14, 1967.

But Wirsing and Mehnert's cooperation with the Americans, and even their professed commitment to the West were more complicated than it may seem at first sight. Even Mehnert's correspondences with Kennan reveal this point. In the same 1948 report on German public opinion vis-à-vis the Cold War and democracy Mehnert implored Kennan to encourage American statesmen to pump the brakes on democratic reform. He argued that, although he agreed Germans were receptive to democracy, the Americans should avoid forcing the issue, especially via "military occupation." These were subtle attacks on the American policy of denazification (something Mehnert and Wirsing consistently decried in *Christ und Welt*). Mehnert suggested that a democratic political culture would eventually emerge organically, and that more pressing relations to the United States should be highlighted, such as economic aid and European integration. As Mehnert explained: "[m]y suggestion is: not to insist on the Western Germans' anti-East declarations but rather to give them a chance to express their pro-West choice by hard work on the Marshall Plan and reconstruction of Europe." With these comments Mehnert was revealing what was actually a tenuous commitment to the West and, in fact, a prioritization of his Europe-concept over and above the democratization of Germany.¹⁰⁸

Mehnert was even more forthcoming in his first postwar ventures in domestic journalism. In late 1947, before beginning the *Christ und Welt* project, he worked for just under a year as the primary political editorialist for a short-

¹⁰⁸ Klaus Mehnert to George F. Kennan, May 2, 1948, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 3.

lived American-licensed newspaper called *Neue Woche*.¹⁰⁹ In his articles for *Neue Woche* Mehnert painted the picture of a “competition for Europe” that had broken out between the Americans and the Soviets with Europeans caught in the middle.¹¹⁰ In 1948 Mehnert invited a former Nazi official in the Foreign Office, Wolf Schenke, to join the staff at *Neue Woche*. In a letter to Mehnert regarding his vision for *Neue Woche*, Schenke succinctly summarized Mehnert’s ulterior motives for aligning with the West, and in doing so foreshadowed what would become Mehnert and Wirsing’s primary political narrative in their 1950s journalism:

In my view we need to work towards creating a ‘second third front’, which would encompass the core of Europe, but also any countries of the world who, due to their geographic position, find themselves having become a battleground for the struggle between the two super powers.

Schenke continued, arguing that “Europe needs to be independent from both sides,” and that any military alliance with the West would provoke the Soviets

¹⁰⁹ The paper was only in print for roughly one year and then was closed down not long after Mehnert and Wirsing began the *Christ und Welt* project. Correspondences in Mehnert’s personal archival holdings suggest that the paper was used as a vehicle for former Nazi officials in the Foreign Office such as Wolf Schenke and Werner von Schmieden, the Europeanist colleague of Karl Megerle’s (whom we visited in an earlier chapter of this dissertation). See “Korrespondenz A-Z Juli 1948 - November 1948,” Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 5.

¹¹⁰ For articles written by Klaus Mehnert for *Neue Woche* as well as correspondences with the editorial staff, see “Manuskripte von Artikeln zu Themen der Weltpolitik, hauptsächlich für die Zeitschrift ‘Neue Woche,’” Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 347.

into entrenching Europe as a Cold War battlefield. “Both the East and the West are foreign to us,” Schenke finished.¹¹¹

Mehnert, of course, was more careful than Schenke in his public and private writings (never willing to so unashamedly decry the West as equally foreign to European interests). But the idea of a unified, independent Europe as a “second third front,” or simply “third front,” as it was often called in *Christ und Welt*, became a staple of Mehnert and Wirsing’s foreign policy vision in the 1950s. The origins of this “third front” discourse can be traced back to a *Christ und Welt* editorial staff memo from early 1949. In the document, titled “Germany, Europe, and Stalin,” Mehnert attempted to organize the paper’s general editorial narrative on foreign policy (about which there had apparently been some confusion after *Christ und Welt*’s first few editions). He began with what he called Germans’ age-old dilemma: “Eastern orientation or Western orientation?” His answer: neither. Instead, the correct answer, and the answer to which most Germans subscribed, was: a “re-united, un-occupied, economically vibrant European Germany.” But Mehnert proceeded to explain that accomplishing all of the demands encompassed in such a future Germany was, in the contemporary political climate, entirely unfeasible without support from one of the super powers. And so the actual question facing German politicians and editorialists, he suggested, was the following: what is the position of the two occupying powers to these German aspirations? The answer he gave was that

¹¹¹ Wolf Schenke to Klaus Mehnert, November 8, 1948, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 6.

Germans' long-term goals most closely aligned with the West, because, unlike the East, the West operates within the confines of "negotiable" democracy, and can therefore be influenced. Consequently, he assigned the editorial staff the responsibility to abide by a principle he called "utilization of the West" (*Anlehnung an den Westen*), by which he meant using the Western alliance as a provisional vehicle for accomplishing his long-term aspirations of an independent European federation. Some people, Mehnert explained, might argue that "West Germany needs to completely integrate, by all means at its disposal, into the Western world, including the armed Atlantic Pact [NATO]." Others, he continued, would suggest Germany advance claims for reunification and neutralization between the two superpowers. But both of these positions were to be rejected. Instead, *Christ und Welt* would advocate partial integration with the West, especially as it pertained to European integration, free trade, and humanitarian aid - all of which closely aligned with the future goal of an independent Europe. Mehnert proceeded to argue that this foreign policy narrative would need to be complemented by a domestic narrative supporting a larger social welfare state (so as to fend off Communist insurgency). Additionally, he explained, the paper would need to help make sure that the foundations for European unification were prepared by advocating against nationalism and strengthening the "will to integrate into a larger European body including the forfeiting of national sovereignty." At the end of the memo Mehnert summarized the editorial vision in two points:

- 1) The goal is the de-Bolshevization of as much of Germany and Europe as possible via the swiftest possible roll-back of the Soviets from their

impressively deep advance westward. 2) Rather than war, the path to this goal should be the exploitation of all possible Western political and economic precepts, both the positive ones and the negative ones.

The covert purpose of this editorial direction, he warned, was a very “delicate concept” and should be kept secret.¹¹²

Wirsing and Mehnert’s postwar cooperation and reconciliation with the United States, then, was not born of a new-found commitment to the West, but instead originated in a realization of the need to “utilize” and “exploit” the West for the survival and success of their Europe-concept. One day, Europe would emerge as an independent, alternative political, social, and economic model capable of withstanding intrusion from both East and West. This was the initial formula for former Nazi Europeanists in the postwar period. Their conservative dream of a New Europe could be salvaged from the Nazi past, but doing so would require a shrewd and opportunistic alliance with the democratic world. However, there were domestic challenges which they had to confront as well; in particular, how to define the Europe-concept in a post-Nazi world and how to propagate it to a population still saturated with the legacy of a poisonous nationalism. How this calculus played out in the context of political developments in the first decade of postwar West Germany is the subject of the next chapter in this dissertation.

¹¹² Klaus Mehnert, “Deutschland, Europa, und Stalin,” based on text and surrounding documents almost certainly early 1949, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 347.

Chapter 7: The Origins of Post-Nazi Europeanism in West German Journalism

Introduction

The following chapter introduces the surprisingly industrious postwar careers of former Nazi Europeanists in postwar West German journalism. It outlines their idiosyncratic path to postwar prominence and discusses the challenges they had to navigate in order to attain a voice in West German public discourse. These writers revised and publicized their Europe-concept as a new, modern conservatism. This is a story of how a network of post-Nazi Europeanists was established in the immediate postwar years and how they maneuvered themselves into positions of political influence. A textual analysis of their work in two of the most dominant periodicals in postwar West Germany will be presented in a subsequent chapter. Early on these former Nazi Europeanists were careful to only very rarely employ the term “conservative,” but by the early 1950s they were openly encouraging a conservative European revolution. Anson Rabinbach has described postwar German conservatism as a “community of silence” suffocated and ostracized from mainstream political thought and relegated to careful, private interactions as a result of postwar censors, denazification, and war-time association with National Socialism. And this public silencing of postwar conservatism, he and others have argued, was part of a broader de-politicization of early postwar intellectualism in West Germany.¹ In

¹ Anson Rabinbach, “Restoring the German Spirit: Humanism and Guilt in Post-War Germany,” in ed. Jan-Werner Müller, *German Ideologies Since 1945: Studies in the Political Thought and Culture of the Bonn Republic* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 23-40. Axel

contrast, this chapter will argue that post-Nazi Europeanists found a unique avenue to be openly political and to propagate a new postwar conservatism centered around their Europe-concept, and that they did so from positions of great influence in West German journalism.

Historians often assert a widespread aversion to politics as well as a desire for a return to “normalcy” in early postwar West Germany.² To be sure, there is certainly evidence that the German public was substantially unpolitical or at least defined themselves as such; nevertheless, in June, 1952 twenty-seven percent of West Germans still declared themselves “very interested” in politics (including forty-six percent of men) and only thirty-two percent declared no interest whatsoever. Furthermore, fifty-four percent of West Germans in the same poll admitted to regularly discussing politics.³ The primary means for obtaining political information in postwar West Germany was print journalism, which

Schildt, *Konservatismus in Deutschland: Von den Anfängen im 18. Jahrhundert bis zur Gegenwart* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1998). See additionally the literature on Carl Schmitt and what Jan-Werner Müller calls his “secret society of the initiated,” by which he means the network of conservatives who could only affect political culture indirectly from the background. Jan-Werner Müller, *A Dangerous Mind: Carl Schmitt in Post-War European Thought* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003). Dirk van Laak, *Gespräche in der Sicherheit des Schweigens: Carl Schmitt in der politischen Geistesgeschichte der frühen Bundesrepublik* (Berlin: De Gruyter Akademie Forschung, 2002).

² Richard Bessel, *Germany 1945: From War to Peace* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2010).

³ Ed.s Elisabeth Noelle and Erich Peter Neumann, *Jahrbuch für öffentliche Meinung, 1947-1955* (Allensbach am Bodensee: Verlag für Demoskopie, 1956), 51.

benefited from low printing costs due in part to American-patronized access to cheap paper resources.⁴ In the 1950s television had not yet established itself as a primary source of political information, and according to public polling radio had not yet overcome the newspaper as the most-used media resource. Polled throughout the early 1950s, roughly sixty to sixty-five percent of West Germans consistently reported reading print journalism regularly and only five percent of respondents reported never reading print journalism in their daily lives.⁵ Despite the taboos, then, politics in West Germany was an unspoken interest for many West Germans. This was not lost on the occupying Allied authorities, who implemented a significant censor regime in the West German press as part of their denazification program. Very soon after the war the Western Allies implemented a licensing program, whereby material could only be published in the West German zones by an individual or organization which had been granted a license after a thorough denazification investigation designed to weed out writers who were either Nazi party members or had ever contributed to Nazi propaganda material. The loophole in the system, however, was that license carriers could publish former Nazi propagandists anonymously and after 1949 they could do so explicitly (this was because the newly formed West German state gained control of the licensing regime and refused to take actions against former Nazis that had been designated “fellow travelers”). As historians have shown, this ultimately

⁴ Dennis L. Bark and David R. Gress, *A History of West Germany, Vol. 1* (Hoboken: Blackwell, 1993), chapter 8.

⁵ Noelle and Neumann, *Jahrbuch für öffentliche Meinung, 1947-1955*, 55.

produced a plethora of postwar journalistic careers for former Nazi propagandists.⁶ Two weekly Protestant periodicals in particular, *Christ und Welt* and *Sonntagsblatt* (hereafter *CuW* and *SB* respectively), collected an especially large number of former Nazi propagandists and were edited and directed a network of former Nazi Europeanists analyzed in this dissertation.

Origins of the Postwar Network

CuW and *SB*, both founded in 1948 in Stuttgart and Hamburg respectively, were the two most-read weekly political periodicals in the Federal Republic in the late 1940s and early 1950s, and throughout the decade they each averaged a circulation of roughly 120,000-135,000. The next three closest competitors in the 1950s were: *Der Spiegel*, which was West Germany's predominant left-liberal weekly, eventually surpassing *CuW* and *SB* in circulation numbers by the mid-1950s; *Die Zeit*, which was a secular weekly that was not explicitly conservative; and *Rheinischer Merkur* (the largest conservative Catholic weekly in postwar

⁶ Matthias Weiss, "Journalisten: Worte als Taten," in ed. Norbert Frei *Hitlers Eliten nach 1945* (Deutsche Verlagsgesellschaft, 2003). Peter Köpf, *Schrieben nach jeder Richtung – Goebbels-Propagandisten in der westdeutschen Nachkriegspresse* (Berlin: Links Christoph Verlag, 1998). Christina von Hodenberg, "Die Journalisten und der Aufbruch zur kritischen Öffentlichkeit" in ed. Ulrich Herbert, *Wandlungsprozesse in Westdeutschland: Belastung, Integration, Liberalisierung: 1945-1980* (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2002), 278-311. Norbert Frei and Johannes Schmitz, *Journalismus im Dritten Reich* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1999). Dennis L. Bark and David R. Gress, *History of West Germany, Vol. 1: From Shadow to Substance, 1945-1963* (Hoboken: Blackwell, 1989), chapter 8. Lutz Hachmeister and Friedemann Siering, *Die Herren Journalisten: Die Elite der deutschen Presse nach 1945* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2002).

West German journalism). *Die Zeit* and *Rheinischer Merkur* achieved circulations roughly half of the size of *CuW* and *SB* during the first postwar decade and only began to catch up during the 1960s.⁷ In short, *CuW* and *SB* were the most prominent conservative political periodicals in the first decade of postwar West Germany. Unlike much of print journalism in the postwar years, especially daily newspapers, weekly periodicals such as *CuW* and *SB* were openly opinionated and political, even on the front-pages, and were therefore essential vehicles for public opinion. As American intelligence officials later noted, *CuW* in particular was “one of the most influential journals of political opinion” in West German politics.⁸ The late historian Axel Schildt’s brief discussion of *CuW* and *SB* described them as safe havens for Protestant conservative nationalists who were tainted by National Socialism and who were opposed to the Christian Democratic Party (CDU) which was initially dominated by Catholics.⁹ Some of

⁷ Christof Lenhard, “Die Marketing-Strategien des Rheinischen Merkur und des Deutschen Allgemeinen Sonntagsblattes: Eine ökonomische und historische Betrachtung,” in *Kirchliche Zeitgeschichte* 6.2 (1993): 467-496. Klaus Grosse Kracht, “‘Schmissiges Christentum’: Die Wochenzeitung *Christ und Welt* in der Nachkriegszeit (1948-1958)” in ed.s Michael Grunewald and Uwe Puschner, *Das evangelische Intellektuellenmilieu in Deutschland: seine Presse und seine Netwerke (1871-1963)* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2008), 505-531.

⁸ Paul R. Sweet (American Consul General in Stuttgart) to the United States Department of State, “Dr. Giselher Wirsing and Christ und Welt: A Profile,” November 23, 1965, United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, box 57, folder “Wirsing, Giselher.”

⁹ Schildt, *Konservatismus in Deutschland*.

this assessment is mistaken: first, as the numbers above illustrate, *CuW* and *SB* were hardly ostracized to the fringe of postwar West German politics; second, as we will discuss later, although they were outwardly Protestant and decidedly distinguishable from publications of the Catholic Occident movement (*Abendländische Bewegung*), *CuW* and *SB* were nevertheless generally supportive of the CDU.

That said, Schildt was correct to identify the two periodicals as a home for former Nazis; however, these were not typical right-wing nationalists.

Specifically, *CuW* and *SB* were a gathering ground for a network of former Nazi Europeanists whose past careers span across the institutions of this dissertation and whose friendships in many cases go back to the 1930s. Many kinds of former Nazis were published in these periodicals, but the chief editors of *CuW* and *SB* (who also doubled as the primary front-page commentators on politics) had been key Europe-propagandists in the Tat-Kreis, Wirsing's network, and the Foreign Office. The following table outlines the network operating behind *CuW* and *SB* --

Chief editors, *Christ und Welt*

Chief editors,

Sonntagsblatt

Klaus Mehnert (1949-1954)	Tat-Kreis member and Foreign Office propagandist in East Asia	Hans Zehrer (1948-1953)	Original Tat-Kreis leader
Giselher Wirsing (1954-1961;1963- 1970)	Second Tat-Kreis leader and Chief editor of <i>Signal</i>	Axel Seeberg (1953-1969)	Foreign Office propagandist and director of the Foreigner Course

Hans Zehrer also became chief editor at *Die Welt* in 1953, where he had colleagues from both *CuW* and *SB* regularly contribute articles throughout the 1950s (including acting chief editors of *CuW* and *SB* Giselher Wirsing, Klaus Mehnert, and Axel Seeberg). Other figures discussed in this dissertation and subsequently employed at *CuW* and *SB* throughout the 1950s include: Ferdinand Fried, Wolfgang Höpker, Hans Georg von Studnitz, Ernst Wilhelm Eschmann, and Karl Heinz Pfeffer. In short, former Nazi Europeanists found in *CuW* and *SB* a two-pronged gathering ground for their network in postwar West German journalism. Indeed, although the two periodicals competed for the same target audience (Protestant conservatives), they nevertheless saw themselves as quasi partners. The two periodicals regularly shared writers, maintained correspondences, and pushed nearly identical political arguments.¹⁰ In fact, on at least two different occasions, once in 1949 and once in 1951, *CuW* and *SB* were in serious conversation about a possible merger.¹¹ Until the early 1950s these

¹⁰ The two periodicals even competed over personnel. Klaus Mehnert was offered the chief editor position at both periodicals. Mehnert ultimately took the position at *CuW* but introduced *SB* to Hans Zehrer, who was ultimately hired for the position. See Zehrer to Mehnert, October 21, 1947, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 4. Joh. Renatus Renner to Mehnert, October 27, 1947, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 4.

¹¹ Editorial board of the “Hamburger Allgemeine” to Mehnert, July 27, 1949, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 8. Mehnert to Zehrer, July 21, 1951 in Eugen Gerstenmaier’s collection of correspondences related to the Relief Organization of the

writers, including the chief editors, published themselves either anonymously or under pseudonyms, and their activities had to be pieced together by the present author through the use of editorial papers, personal archival holdings, and cross-referencing other published material.

Finally, there is evidence of more direct continuities between the Nazi Europeanist network of this dissertation and postwar West German journalism; namely, coordinated activity in clubs and conferences. For example, in the fall of 1950 Klaus Mehnert (*CuW*) received an invitation to attend along with Axel Seeberg (*SB*) a conference of journalists and intellectuals in Göhrde to which six members of the Foreign Office's covert 1944/1945 Europe-Seminar were in attendance (the Europe-Seminar was discussed in chapter four of this dissertation). Also in attendance was Werner Otto von Hentig, the man who worked alongside Giselher Wirsing for U.S. intelligence services in 1945. Much like the Europe-Seminar, the conference was a workshop on the concept of the nation and according to Mehnert's invitation the workshop set out to investigate "the overcoming of nationalism"; in other words, to organize journalistic advocacy against nationalism - the perceived cause of Europe's mid-century problems. This meant thoroughly criticizing nationalism as not only a political problem but also a cultural problem. "Are nations [*Völker*] truly the fundamental element of European history?" the conference invitation provocatively asked. "What other possibilities exist," it concluded, "for a historically binding and

Evangelical Church in his personal archival holdings, *Konrad Adenauer Stiftung* in Bonn, 01-210-036/1.

workable human connection beyond the traditional Volk-concept?”¹² Reports on the conference suggest that the Europe-concept was one of the central talking points at the conference.¹³ The Göhrde conference gets to the heart of post-Nazi Europeanism: the search for a workable national identity in an age of discredited German nationalism. The following section of this chapter will briefly summarize their answer to this dilemma (what this dissertation is calling the “revised Europe-concept” or “post-Nazi Europeanism”) and outline how they positioned themselves politically in order to advance their arguments in postwar West German politics.

The Revised Europe-Concept

The conservatives at *CuW* and *SB* believed that, having criticized nationalism during the war, their Europe-concept was uniquely situated to help Germans find a path forward, a path beyond German nationalism towards the fulfillment of their long-held vision for conservative European revolution. From the very earliest issues, *CuW* and *SB* openly declared the intention to transform German national identity into a European identity. Training Germans to embrace a new imagined community capable of liberating them and their neighbors from their own past, or to “think European,” as they called it, was the *Raison d’Être* of *CuW* and *SB* throughout the late 1940s and early 1950s. In doing so, these figures incorporated many aspects of their former Nazi Europe-concept, and chief among

¹² Karl Heinz Pfeffer to Mehnert, September 25, 1950, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 11.

¹³ *Ibid.*

them was the notion of a *völkisch* Europe, an organic historical community that had been corrupted by universalistic ideologies such as liberalism and Marxism, but also nationalism – and which could only be resurrected through a modern political, economic, and cultural revolution in Europe. In the postwar period, Hitler’s National Socialism (which was presented as the most radical extension of nationalism) was added to the list of anti-Europe ideologies which threatened European unity. This was a unique double-edged postwar political memory. On the one hand, their Europe-concept gave them a tool for establishing critical distance to those “few” Nazis whose genocidal racial nationalism had no purchase in the postwar world. For example, *CuW* and *SB* writers repeatedly parried accusations of radical right-wing extremism directed at their periodicals by arguing that they, in their complete disavowal of nationalism, could not possibly be neo-fascists. But on the other hand, the continuation of their Europe-concept also gave them a futuristic vision of supranational identity which did not entirely repudiate their past beliefs and advocacy. Hence they could argue that Hitler and his cronies had merely abused the Europe-concept in pursuit of immoral goals but that the majority of German soldiers and citizens (and Europeans fortunate enough to become acquainted with Germans during occupation) had actually been changed during the war by an emerging commitment to a new Europe. Paradoxically, then, they presented Germany as a historically destined leader in European integration, prepared by the war for a special mission to reconcile Europeans to one another and usher in their European revolution once and for all. But unlike in the Weimar period they chose to advance these claims within the

status quo, and they viewed the transnational European integration movement of the immediate postwar period as their most treasured ally and a manifestation of the inevitability of their European revolution.

European Integration

Indeed, *CuW* and *SB* energetically put their support behind the various of European integration clubs, associations, and political organizations in the late 1940s and early 1950s; in particular, they were fierce advocates of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, an international political organization founded in the spring of 1949 whose members stretched across Western Europe. The Council of Europe was founded with the stated aim of bringing together European politicians in order to organize steps towards a “United States of Europe,” as Winston Churchill famously proclaimed at a speech at the University of Zürich in September, 1946. Before the forerunner to the European Union was established at the Treaty of Rome in 1957, and before European integration settled into the implementation of “incremental” measures such as the economic market, the leaders of the Europe movement in Strasbourg had a more radical vision for a European polity which would replace the nation-state. The writers *CuW* and *SB* quickly came to the conclusion that their long-held belief in the decline of the nation-state and its replacement with a European polity could find its fulfillment in the politics of Strasbourg, and they aggressively campaigned on behalf of international leaders who put forward the most ambitious proposals for removing nation-state sovereignty. To be sure, they projected onto the European integration project many designs which many of the liberal visionaries in Strasbourg did not

hold, the most important of which was the notion of making Europe into a “third front” capable of asserting its independence from not only Communism but liberal democracy as well. Nevertheless, former Nazi Europeanists were willing to marry their ideas onto the European integration project in the hope of directing the tumultuous changes that would have emerged.

From 1949-1954, before West Germany acquired full sovereignty and entered NATO as an equal nation-state among its neighbors, the foreign policy of both the Federal Republic of West Germany as well as the United States aimed for a considerably different and more disruptive outcome in Western Europe: namely, the defanging of the “German problem” via the economic, political, and military integration of Western European states, including Western Germany, into a European federation. In 1951, at the Treaty of Paris, the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) was signed along with a “Europe Declaration” affirming members’ commitment to a “broader and deeper community of peoples” including an eventual “European Political Community” as was being negotiated in the Council of Europe. These intentions came together most forcefully in May, 1952 when the ECSC members signed a momentous treaty agreeing to the creation of a European Defense Community (EDC). The EDC was an unprecedented proposal drafted in 1950 by French Prime Minister Rene Pleven and European integration architect Jean Monnet in response to the Korean War and subsequent calls for West German rearmament (it was originally called the “Pleven-Plan”). It proposed the amalgamation of Western European militaries into a single pan-European armed force administered at the supranational level

like the ECSC. In August, 1954 the French public turned against the process and the French parliament torpedoed the EDC by refusing to ratify it.¹⁴ Nevertheless, from 1950-1954 the conservatives at *CuW* and *SB* followed the developments of the EDC with a religious-like zeal, interpreting its remarkable repudiation of national military sovereignty as the final domino to fall in the process towards the end of the nation-state in Europe and the emergence of a conservative European nation prepared to defend itself militarily.

Christian Democracy and the Occident

The proposal, signing, and ratification of the EDC in West Germany dominated West German domestic politics from 1950-1953. While the West German major parties largely converged on the economic policy of a social market (*Soziale Marktwirtschaft*), in contrast, European integration (especially the EDC) was a flashpoint of intense division. Konrad Adenauer's governing CDU and their policies of European integration within an Atlantic Alliance were met with adamant disapproval from Kurt Schumacher's SPD, the center-left social democratic party which, in a unique reversal of German political culture, became the home for dedicated nationalists. Schumacher, who famously decried Adenauer as the "Chancellor of the Western Allies" for acknowledging Western Allied occupation, repeatedly condemned the CDU's European integration politics as a betrayal of the German nation. In particular, he denounced European

¹⁴ For the most comprehensive English-language account of the EDC and, specifically, West German rearmament within it see David Clay Large, *Germans to the Front: West German Rearmament in the Adenauer Era* (University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 111-204.

integration as a betrayal of East Germans, the reunification with whom became more and more unlikely with every step towards European unification. In a 1951 Bundestag debate over the emerging ECSC, for example, Schumacher declared: “whoever approves this treaty ceases to be German.” As an alternative to Adenauer’s politics of European integration, Schumacher and his successor Erich Ollenhauer pursued a policy dubbed by their opponents as “neutralization,” by which the Federal Republic of Germany would reject diplomatic entanglement with either West or East in order to remain free to negotiate a neutral, reunified Germany which both sides in the Cold War could agree to. The Soviets saw in this as an opportunity to expand their influence and repeatedly dangled the prospect of a neutral, reunified Germany, something Adenauer always promptly dismissed such as, for example, when he rejected the infamous “Stalin Note” in March, 1952. The SPD vehemently protested his unwillingness to prioritize German reunification, and, in fact, was supported by many Protestant pacifists and conservatives as well, including the pastor Martin Niemöller, the nationalist writer Paul Sethe at the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, and even CDU functionary Gustav Heinemann, who left Adenauer’s cabinet as well as the CDU over the issue and founded a briefly relevant nationalist party in 1952 called the “Emergency Community for Peace in Europe.” As we will discuss in more detail below, polling from the early 1950s suggests that these foreign policy debates, wrapped up in discourses of national identity as they were, became in the eyes of voters the most pressing issue of the day. As a consequence of their uncompromising attachment to the EDC, the conservatives at *CuW* and *SB*

became increasingly entangled in these domestic disputes and quickly rallied to Adenauer and the CDU. For them, especially after the rearmament debates began in 1950, the CDU was a combination of an anti-Bolshevist front capable and willing to pursue strong policies of rearmament against the dangerous pacifism of leftists, as well as a party cognizant of the need to transition from nationalism to Europeanism.

Christian Democracy was, in short, a serendipitous home onto which former Nazi Europeanist could project the continuation of their Europe-concept. At first glance it would appear that this project mapped onto what was called the “Occident Movement,” a conservative movement calling for the resurrection of an imagined social, economic, and cultural Christian community from Europe’s deep past in order to heal the wounds of modernity. As Axel Schildt and others have shown, Occident-conservatism was an underappreciated concept at the core of Christian Democracy.¹⁵ A common argument in the historiography of Christian Democracy in Europe is that the Occident-conservatism of Christian Democracy was a creation of and continuation of transnational political Catholicism.¹⁶ Even in the German historiography, historians such as Maria Mitchell have illustrated that the interconfessional character of Christian Democracy in West Germany masked over very real confessional divides and the disproportionately Catholic

¹⁵ Axel Schildt, *Zwischen Abendland und Amerika: Studien zur Westdeutschen Ideenlandschaft der 50er Jahre* (Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 1999).

¹⁶ Wolfram Kaiser, *Christian Democracy and the Origins of European Union* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

influence and continuity in the young movement.¹⁷ But as Stephen Brockmann has contended, such analyses, while true, fail to explain how the Protestant, and therefore more secular, milieus within the CDU found meaning in Christian Democracy, especially the Occident-concept, and therefore chose to associate with the politics of the CDU throughout the 1950s.¹⁸ For Brockmann, the answer lies in finding the Protestant Occident that coexisted alongside the Catholic Occident (and in fact, it is true that many Protestant theologians joined the ranks of Occident Movement). But the conservatives at *CuW* and *SB*, and their accompanying large audience, suggest that Christian Democracy in the early Federal Republic included a constituency motivated by notions of a non-Occident Europe-concept.

The Europe-concept developed at *CuW* and *SB* was fundamentally different than the Occident of their contemporaries, something which the conservatives at *CuW* and *SB* acknowledged not only by very rarely using the term “Occident” (preferring instead “Europe”) but also by directly engaging with the Occident-advocates. The Europe-concept at *CuW* and *SB* differed from the Occident in three crucial ways: First, unlike Occident-advocates, who presented the Occident as a pre-modern antidote to the harmful vicissitudes of modernity, the conservatives at *CuW* and *SB* were forward looking. Modernity, including

¹⁷ Maria Mitchell, *The Origins of Christian Democracy: Politics and Confession in Modern Germany* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2012).

¹⁸ Stephen Brockmann, “Germany as Occident at the Zero Hour,” in *German Studies Review* 25.3 (2002): 477-496.

modern technology, capitalism, and collective political identities were not necessarily bad, and were in fact necessary components for a true European revolution. Modern nationalism, for example, was only wrong because in attaching itself to the Volk it had come to identify the wrong political and imagined community. Substituting the Christian community of faith as well as local communities with large and powerful modern political communities was not the problem but rather the goal and an inevitable process cresting across the world. The issue was identifying the correct modern nation: Europe.

Furthermore, while Occident-advocates presented modern civilization through a Spenglerian lens of decline, the conservatives at *CuW* and *SB* explicitly and repeatedly denounced Spengler's pessimism, arguing that the European breakthrough was only possible as a culmination of modern developments. Indeed, as will be shown, they saw themselves as revisionists of Spengler.

Second, unlike Occident-advocates, the conservatives at *CuW* and *SB* embraced politics as the primary cure to European stagnation and therefore the redemptive vehicle of the European revolution. For them, it did not make sense to denounce politics and political ideologies as dehumanizing and proto-totalitarian, because it failed to give the new Europe any "concrete orientation" and reduced Europe-advocacy to "irrational metaphysical" jargon, as the license carrier of *CuW*, Eugen Gerstenmaier, put it. "All of that noise is useless," he continued. "After all, European unification does not mean a restoration of Charlemagne's empire under the Pope's blessing. Rather, it means understanding the consequences of Europe and the world's technological, economic, military, and political

evolution.” Contrasting his Europe-concept with the Catholic Occident, Gerstenmaier explained: “The politics of European integration, in contrast, revolves around concrete economic, social, political, and military concepts.” For the conservatives at *CuW* and *SB* this meant constructing a new political community and accompanying imagined community of unprecedented size and power. This was in direct contrast to the Occident-advocates who disdained the reach of modern political life and advocated a return to small, local units of social identity and political formation.¹⁹ Third, the conservatives at *CuW* and *SB* refused to center their Europe-concept in Christianity. The Christian heritage of Europe was only relevant to them as a cultural heritage, an expression of a deeper European spirit. Unlike the Occident-advocates, for whom eighteenth and nineteenth century secularism was chiefly to blame for Europe’s modern travails (liberalism, Marxism, totalitarianism), anti-secularism and calls for religious revival were absent in the arguments of *CuW* and *SB* conservatives. As Axel Seeberg argued, Europe’s shortcomings were not the result of a deficit in “moral capacity.” Rather: “the actual roots lie in the enslavement to an archaic nation-state system no longer capable of coping with social, technological, and economic developments, on the one hand, and on the other hand in the emergence of non-European world powers and the inadequate strength of European statesmen.”²⁰

¹⁹ See, for example, the influential book by the Occident-advocate Paul Wilhelm Wenger, *Wer gewinnt Deutschland? Kleinpreußische Selbstisolierung oder mitteleuropäische Föderation* (Stuttgart: Seewald Verlag, 1959).

²⁰ Axel Seeberg, “Wie wird Europa wieder lebendig?“ *Sonntagsblatt*, January 6, 1952.

Yet despite their ambivalence towards religion, it was ironically through German Protestantism that these former Nazi Europeanists found a public voice in the first place. As the translations of *CuW* and *SB* suggest (“Christ and the World” and “The Sunday Page” respectively) – the two periodicals were funded and overseen by Protestant organizations.

The Gatekeepers

Occupation Authorities

Because of their tainted past, former Nazi Europeanists were painfully aware of the dangers in trying to accumulate an influential voice in public journalism. Yet they were not willing to disavow their connections to Nazi propaganda and the radical conservative intellectual tradition. In addition to regularly publishing former Nazis, both *CuW* and *SB* covertly published Carl Schmitt and Ernst Jünger in their pages as early as 1949. The evidence for this is drawn primarily from correspondences between these figures and the chief editors of *CuW* and *SB*, in which secret articles were regularly requested and editorial apologies for the two intellectuals and their works were coordinated.²¹

²¹ See Schmitt/Zehrer, Schmitt/Wirsing, and Schmitt/Mehnert correspondences in Schmitt’s personal archival holdings, Landesarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, RW 265. Jünger/Mehnert and Jünger/Zehrer correspondences in Jünger’s personal archival holdings in “Mehnert, Klaus Dr. An Jünger, Ernst, 1946-1983“ and “Zehrer, Hans an Jünger, Ernst, 1948-1953,“ A: Jünger, Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach, Germany. It appears that Schmitt and Jünger submitted articles which were published with no accompanying author name (a regular practice in the early years of *CuW* and *SB*), although a private correspondence between Mehnert and Hans Speidel suggests that Carl Schmitt was at least occasionally published with the pseudonym “j.c.” See Mehnert to Speidel,

Additionally, both *CuW* and *SB* offered to finance a trip to either have Schmitt travel to the editorial staff or have the editorial staff travel to meet with him in his personal home in Plettenberg.²² Wirsing, in particular, had a close friendship with Carl Schmitt which was continued decades after the war. In his correspondences with Schmitt, Wirsing discussed the misfortune that Hitler had brought upon what he called “the Grossraum thesis that we developed.” He then expressed the desire to re-conceptualize the Grossraum.²³ Wirsing and others even secretly published in the monthly periodical *Nation Europa*, a fringe neo-fascist publication which published former Nazi Europeanists from across the continent, including the British fascist Oswald Mosley. In short, at the same time *CuW* and *SB* writers

November 21, 1949 in Jünger’s personal archival holdings, “Mehnert, Klaus Dr. An Jünger, Ernst, 1946-1983,” A: Jünger, Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach, Germany.

²² Mehnert to Schmitt, November 8, 1949, Landesarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, RW 265/9346. Zehrer to Schmitt, July 19, 1950, Landesarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, RW 265/18491.

²³ Carl Schmitt’s personal holdings contain twenty-seven correspondences between the two intellectuals stretching to the year 1974, and the documents suggest many more. Schmitt even dedicated one of his books to Wirsing. See Wirsing to Schmitt, October 20, 1952 in ed.s Kai Burkhardt, Gerd Giesler, and Stefan Krings, *Carl Schmitt und die Öffentlichkeit: Briefwechsel mit Journalisten, Publizisten und Verlegern aus den Jahren 1923 bis 1983* (Berlin: Duncker und Humblot, 1968), 114-115. See Carl Schmitt, *Hamlet or Hecuba: The Intrusion of the Time into the Play* (Telos Press, 2009). Schmitt was likewise seeking a new Grossraum theory at the time, and had published his first postwar book on the topic of Europe’s position and role in geopolitics. See Carl Schmitt, *Der Nomos der Erde im Völkerrecht des Jus Publicum Europaeum* (Berlin: Dunker und Humblot, 1950).

began developing their ideas to the mainstream postwar Right they were secretly fostering connections to their radical past.

This was not lost on their opponents nor on the U.S. occupation authorities. In September, 1950 the press service of the SPD attacked *CuW* as a periodical that “allows one of the most diligent proponents of Ribbentrop’s narrative in German foreign policy about a ‘New Order of Europe’ to have influence and doesn’t just allow him, but even encourages him to continue advocating Europe-politics in merely a new, slightly different spirit....”²⁴ This accusation, directed at Wirsing, prompted a response from Wirsing to the editors, in which he made his standard claim that during the war he had actually been working against the Nazis from within, and in which he pledged himself to democracy and the postwar German constitution.²⁵ The editorial staff at *CuW* was similarly intimidated by U.S. occupation authorities in West Germany. Wirsing and Mehnert, in their private correspondences during the very beginning stages of *CuW*, frequently lamented the pressure of American denazification and censor measures, calling the military governor of the U.S. zone at the time, Lucius Clay, “Comrade Clay.” As Wirsing complained to Mehnert in a letter about “chaos in the editorial staff”: “There are just some people who don’t have the

²⁴ Copy of the *Sozialdemokratischer Pressedienst*, October 19, 1950, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 12.

²⁵ Wirsing to the editors of the *Sozialdemokratischer Pressedienst*, October 26, 1950, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 12.

nerves to boldly push forward when Comrade Clay raises his eyebrows.”²⁶ Yet, despite their private protestations against fecklessness, Wirsing and Mehnert themselves were not particularly bold in public. As the subsequent chapter to this dissertation will show, anti-Americanism in the journalism of post-Nazi Europeanists was tempered from the onset. It is not difficult to conclude that this was to large degree a product of their being intimidated by the Political Information Branch of the American military government in occupied West Germany which reportedly declared *CuW* an “under-cover Nazi paper.”²⁷ In fact, in 1949 *CuW* received an official warning from American occupation authorities for radical content, and this is likely the reason why Mehnert appealed to George Kennan for help clearing *CuW*'s reputation in May, 1949.²⁸ U.S. occupation and denazification measures, therefore, were important factors in the ultimate trajectory of post-Nazi Europeanism. The United States effectively acted as a gatekeeper by reigning in the maneuverability of former Nazi Europeanists and

²⁶ Wirsing to Mehnert, January 25, 1949, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 7.

²⁷ Köpf, *Schrieben nach jeder Richtung*, 74. For an account of the former Nazis who worked at *CuW* see Kracht “‘Schmissiges Christentum’.”

²⁸ Axel Schildt, “Deutschlands Platz in einem ‘christlichen Abendland’: Konservative Publizisten aus dem Tat-Kreis in der Kriegs- und Nachkriegszeit“ in ed.s Thomas Koebner, Gert Sautermeister, and Sigrid Schneider *Deutschland nach Hitler – Zukunftspläne im Exil und aus der Besatzungszeit, 1939-1949* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1987). Mehnert to Kennan, May 20, 1949, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 8.

indirectly forcing them to moderate their political activism in order to have access to public discourse.

But the contribution of the United States to the de-radicalization of former Nazi Europe-propagandists went beyond the threat of coercive measures. As the last chapter illustrated, the United States actively courted the cooperation of former Nazi Europeanists in various intelligence operations (this practice will be further illustrated in chapter nine of this dissertation with an examination of U.S. intelligence operations in the postwar German veterans' community).²⁹ The American posture towards former Nazi Europe-propagandists, then, was a mixture of both stick and carrot. One of the most important such carrots in the American relationship towards these former Nazis in West German journalism was their open and explicit support of European integration including their espousal of full German participation in the new European institutions. During the early 1950s, the public debate of European integration included many voices calling for radically integrationist proposals such as a European Political Community based on the model of the United States of America ("United States of Europe"), and the United States repeatedly expressed support for such

²⁹ For a detailed account of the United States intelligence community and its liaison with former Nazis during the Cold War, see Richard Breitman, Robert Wolfe, Norman J. W. Goda, and Timothy Naftali, *U.S. Intelligence and the Nazis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

proposals.³⁰ On May 7th, 1952, Dwight D. Eisenhower wrote to Konrad Adenauer the following lines:

My associates and I are encouraged...by your determination to overcome all obstacles to the integration of Germany into the Western European Community by pushing ahead rapidly with the European Defense Community Treaty. I believe, as I know you do, that the hope of all the Western European countries lies in their ever-closer association looking eventually to their economic and political federation.³¹

In a private correspondence to his successor as Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, Matthew Ridgeway, Eisenhower explained that he desired the political unification of Europe because it would “fuse together their fragmented strength” such that “their capacities will increase manifold so that Western Europe will become a strong, independent community of peace and freedom.”³² German statesmen subsequently took American statements of support and presented them to the West German public as evidence that the United States stood behind their policies for European integration. Take, for example, Konrad Adenauer’s speech

³⁰ Holger Schröder, *Jean Monnet und die amerikanische Unterstützung für die europäische Integration, 1950-1957* (Berlin: Peter Lang/Europäische Hochschulschriften, 1994). Leopoldo Nuti, “A Continent Bristling with Arms: Continuity and Change in Western European Security after the Second World War,” in ed. Dan Stone, *The Oxford Handbook of Postwar European History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 339-355.

³¹ Dwight D. Eisenhower to Konrad Adenauer, May 7, 1952, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany, B2-61.

³² Dwight D. Eisenhower to Matthew Ridgeway, April 23rd, 1953, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany, B2-61.

to the West German parliament during the debates over the European Army in March, 1953, in which he said:

Allow me to remind you what Secretary of State Foster Dulles declared in a recent visit to Bonn [in 1952]; namely, that the politics of the United States sets out to support the integration of Western Europe into a bulwark of freedom, peace, and Atlantic defense. If in 1952 the passing of the European Defense Community and the continuation of the Europe-politics of the Federal Republic was necessary, they have become all the more necessary since the assumption of the presidency by Eisenhower and the death of Stalin.³³

Former Nazi Europeanists payed special attention to the public posture of the United States, especially Eisenhower's pronouncements. Oftentimes they quoted Eisenhower directly, relaying to their readers statements such as the following:

The only possibility to persuade the Germans into accepting rearmament and participating in the defense of Europe requires making them equal partners in a continental union. The population of West Germany will not have the conviction that they belong to a political body worthy of defense and capable of surviving international conflict unless that body is being integrated into something larger, something stronger.³⁴

The evidence suggests that post-Nazi Europeanists took these statements at face value. In fact, as we will see in the next chapter, they even frequently misread such statements as a validation of their "Third Front" ideology, having convinced themselves that the United States likewise desired an independent Europe as a neutral alternative and balance to the East/West divide of the Cold War. In short,

³³ Konrad Adenauer, speech before the German Bundestag, March 19th, 1953 in ed. Josef Selbach, *Bundestagsreden* (Bonn: AZ-Studio, 1967), 173-198.

³⁴ CP, "Halber Plan lohnt nicht!" *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, September 20, 1951. Steiner, "Begleitmusik für Paris," *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, November 8, 1951.

post-Nazi Europeanists came to see the United States as a pivotal ally in their cause and this perception increasingly displayed itself in their domestic debates with opponents of European integration. As we will illustrate in the next chapter, these former Nazis increasingly moderated their anti-Americanism in the course of the early 1950s to large extent because of this perceived alliance. This, however, was a gradual process. In the immediate postwar period, the primary influence of the United States on the figures of this dissertation was the threat of coercion exercised by occupation authorities. The writers and *CuW* and *SB* were well aware of the potential restrictions and consequences of political radicalism, and this inclined them to moderate their political advocacy and seek ways to reconcile themselves with acceptable avenues of political discourse in the Federal Republic. This led them into a close alliance with another gatekeeper: German Protestantism.

Hanns Lilje

Both *CuW* and *SB* were published by Protestant institutions and were overseen by high-ranking religious figures. They maintained an open relationship with the Evangelical and Lutheran churches, respectively. Yet, ironically, in both periodicals a unique compromise with the church developed in which the church granted the secular editors near complete independence and in return the editors made space in their inner-pages for a theological section in which various theologians and preachers were invited to advocate Christian revival. The front-pages and political sections, in contrast, were dominated by the editors who generally left the topic of religion untouched (an important exception was in the

event of a Christian holiday, when theologians were invited onto the front-pages). The division was so stark that sometimes the editors openly criticized Christianity and embraced the idea of secularization.³⁵ Consequently, the two periodicals functioned as secular conservative publications with separate theological sections, and this resulted in the two periodicals garnering a reputation as fiercely political publications. The first President of the Federal Republic Theodor Heuss, for example, described *CuW* as “snappy Christianity.”³⁶ This compromise between secular editors and religious administrators often produced conflict, especially in the case of *SB*.

SB was founded in Hamburg as a Lutheran church publication and overseen by Bishop Hanns Lilje, a former member of the Confessing Church who used his anti-Nazi acumen to help Axel Seeberg achieve a light denazification sentence. Lilje was a conservative Protestant concerned about the presence of leftists and pacifists in German Protestantism and was one of the founding members of the so-called “Kronberg Circle,” a group of Protestant theologians who sought to anchor German Protestantism in a more valiant anti-Communism by raising support for rearmament.³⁷ Lilje, who was authorized by British occupation authorities as a license carrier in the West German press, sought as early as 1946 a path to facilitate these ideas in public opinion by sponsoring a

³⁵ Axel Seeberg, “Ja – Zur Säkularisierung,” *Sonntagsblatt*, June 11, 1961.

³⁶ Kracht, “‘Schmissiges Christentum’.”

³⁷ Thomas Sauer, *Westorientierung im deutschen Protestantismus? Vorstellungen und Tätigkeit des Kronberger Kreises* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1999).

weekly periodical, and he eventually hired Hans Zehrer to edit the publication beginning in 1948. Lilje's choice to hire Zehrer, a former Conservative Revolutionary, was a contentious decision. From 1948 until 1953, when Zehrer left *SB* for *Die Welt*, internal editorial staff documents illustrate that a divide emerged within the editing board. This divide pitted Zehrer and his assistant/politics editor Axel Seeberg (who in 1953 took over the chief editor position) against the editors of the theology and cultural inner-pages, who resented *SB*'s perceived lack of religiosity as well as Zehrer and Seeberg's contention that political questions should be highlighted and that such questions were poorly served by referencing Christianity.³⁸ Lilje was barraged by a torrent of requests to remove Zehrer and re-center the periodical on Christian principles.³⁹ Nevertheless, despite his own discomforts with Zehrer's leadership, Lilje felt forced to keep Zehrer on due to Zehrer's ability to attract a large

³⁸ In late 1946 Seeberg wrote a memo titled "Questions for a Politician" which was subsequently circulated among the members of the editorial staff of *Sonntagsblatt*. See Axel Seeberg, "Fragen eines Politikers," Hanover Landeskirchliches Archiv, L3/II, Nr. 52.

³⁹ Friedrich Rasche to Zehrer, January 31, 1948, Hanover Landeskirchliches Archiv, L3/II, Nr. 54. Klassenstein to Zehrer, April 28, 1948, Hanover Landeskirchliches Archiv, L3/II, Nr. 54. Plog, memo, October 31, 1948, Hanover Landeskirchliches Archiv, L3/III, Nr. 249. Ruppel, memo, August 30, 1951, Hanover Landeskirchliches Archiv, N60, Nr. 170. Plog, editorial staff meeting notes, August 31 and September 1, 1951, Hanover Landeskirchliches Archiv, N60, Nr. 170. Plog to Zahrnt, June 10, 1952, Hanover Landeskirchliches Archiv, N60, Nr. 170. "Bericht über die Situation der Redaktion," April 17, 1954, Hanover Landeskirchliches Archiv, N60, Nr. 170.

readership, especially among non-religious readers.⁴⁰ Lilje, then, was aware of the secularization of West German Protestantism (only thirteen percent of West German Protestants attended church regularly and fifty-nine percent attended seldomly or never).⁴¹ This forced his journalistic venture to make concessions to a secular conservative tradition, and this is the space which was opened for these former Conservative Revolutionaries to re-enter the public sphere. The former Nazi Europeanists, for their part, were well aware of their need to tie themselves to German Protestantism. Zehrer reportedly described Protestantism as a “rear cover” for their political activism. The editorial staff of the *Hamburger Allgemeine*, a competitor periodical that briefly sought to merge with *CuW*, explained to Mehnert in July, 1949: “The main barrier standing in the way of a merger appears to still be the peculiar opinion of Zehrer’s that he needs to have the church as rear cover. ‘Without the church,’ he says, ‘we are nothing’.”⁴² But *CuW* conservatives also knew they had leverage of their own. As Wirsing wrote to Mehnert in January, 1949, the “church connection” was not a problem as long as it did not become “dogmatic.” And the church needed them as well; after all, Wirsing continued, most Germans no longer spoke “the language of the church”

⁴⁰ Undated (January) instructions from Lilje regarding advertising, Hanover Landeskirchliches Archiv, L3/III, Nr. 250. Lilje to Gross, undated (fall, 1951), Hanover Landeskirchliches Archiv, N60, Nr. 170.

⁴¹ Noelle and Neumann, *Jahrbuch für öffentliche Meinung, 1947-1955*, 12.

⁴² Editorial staff of the *Hamburger Allgemeine* to Mehnert, July 27, 1949, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 8.

because church leaders had become an ostracized “sect” incapable of spreading a message beyond a very small crowd.⁴³

Eugen Gerstenmaier

Unlike *SB*, *CuW* was overseen by a man both very interested and very involved in politics and the Europe-concept: future Christian Democratic President of the Bundestag Eugen Gerstenmaier. Gerstenmaier, who had received a doctoral degree in theology in the mid-1930s at the University of Rostock, had a rocky relationship with the Nazi regime. During the 1930s he had been briefly jailed for anti-Nazi advocacy in the Confessing Church and, most famously, he was a member of the anti-Nazi “Kreisau Circle” and as a result was indirectly knowledgeable of the July 20th, 1944 conspiracy to kill Hitler.⁴⁴ For this reason, after the war Gerstenmaier quickly developed the reputation of a Christian resistance fighter.⁴⁵ But documents from the Political Archive of the Foreign Office in Berlin suggest that his war-time relationship to National Socialism was actually more complicated. In 1939 Eugen Gerstenmaier joined the Foreign Office and worked until 1942 in the Information Department fostering interconfessional Christian relationships across occupied Europe.⁴⁶ After the

⁴³ Wirsing to Mehnert, January 28, 1949, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 7.

⁴⁴ Biographical outline in Eugen Gerstenmaier’s personal archival holdings, *Konrad Adenauer Stiftung* in Bonn, 01-210.

⁴⁵ See, for example, Robert Strobel, “Eugen Gerstenmaier,” *Die Zeit*, February 3, 1955.

⁴⁶ Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany, RZ 501/R 67651, RZ 214/R 269715, and RZ 214/R 98797.

invasion of the Soviet Union in June, 1941, Gertsenmaier was primarily tasked with visiting Christian leaders in Scandinavia and the Balkans in order to strengthen ecumenical unity in the war against the much-feared atheistic leanings of Soviet Communism.⁴⁷ The evidence suggests that Gerstenmaier passionately pursued this work and that he embraced the Nazi Europeanism of the Foreign Office, giving speeches about how the New Order of Europe was a safe haven for all Christian denominations, each of which would be preserved in their peculiarities.⁴⁸ After the war Gerstenmaier frequently claimed that this work was forced upon him under threat of penalty for his previous anti-Nazi behavior. And, to be sure, there is some documentary evidence that Gerstenmaier completed this work begrudgingly. His handlers in the SS and Foreign Office were often skeptical of his loyalty, occasionally summarizing his work with a warning about his potential as a subversive threat.⁴⁹ But other summaries from other handlers

⁴⁷ Gerstenmaier to Büttner, September 1, 1941, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany, RZ 214/R 98797.

⁴⁸ See, for example, Gerstenmaier's report on his trip to the Balkans in the fall of 1941. "Dr. Habil. Gerstenmaier Konsistorialrat; Berlin-Charlottenburg, den 24. September, 1941; Betr: Orthodoxe Nationalkirchen des Suedostens; Reisebericht, September 1941," October 20, 1941, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany, RZ 214/R 98797.

⁴⁹ Müller (Amt 4, "Chef der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD") to the Foreign Office, November 24, 1941, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany, RZ 214/R 98797.

sometimes pushed back, praising Gerstenmaier as admirably efficient and trustworthy.⁵⁰

In 1941, on behalf of the Foreign Office, Gerstenmaier edited a collection of anti-Communist essays from various theologians across occupied Europe. The book, titled *Orient and Occident: Contributions to Religious Sociology and European Intellectual History*, was introduced by a passionate anti-Communist essay written by Gerstenmaier himself. In the essay, Gerstenmaier not only decried Bolshevism as a threat to Christian Europe, but even more importantly espoused the Nazi New Order of Europe:

The historical evolution of Europe is activating the depth of our spiritual and religious existence. The fight for the efficient New Order of the political and economic relationships of the peoples of our continent is underwritten by a passionate renewal of our common interests.

He continued:

In all sincerity and with a destined fortitude, there is emerging from the ashes of this war a new face of occidental unity. It is secured by the sacrifice of men who have preserved the history of the Occident on the battlefields of Russia and thus secured its future.⁵¹

Going beyond anti-Communism and energetically embracing the Foreign Office's Europe-narrative was not a necessary step, and therefore difficult to square with the notion of a resistance warrior forced into working for the Foreign Office. As

⁵⁰ Illegible author, SD report, May 5, 1941, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany, RZ 214/R 98797.

⁵¹ Eugen Gerstenmaier, "Introduction" in ed. Eugen Gerstenmaier, *Orient und Occident: Beiträge zur Religionssoziologie und Europäischen Geistesgeschichte* (Berlin-Spandau: Wichern-Verlag Herbert Renner K.G.), 5-6, *Konrad Adenauer Stiftung* in Bonn, 01-210-002.

this dissertation has illustrated with other Nazi Europeanists, Gertsenmaier likely oscillated between the oftentimes fluid boundaries demarcating anti-Nazism and collaboration, and the Nazi Europe-concept was an integral piece of that ambivalent relationship. Although, to be sure, Gerstenmaier's complicity in National Socialism does not begin to match the scale achieved by the other active propagandists in this dissertation. Nevertheless, his association with the Nazi Europe-program, however ambiguous, was enough to create postwar connections with figures in this dissertation.

After the war, Gerstenmaier was appointed director of the Relief Organization of the Evangelical Church in Stuttgart. But, like Hanns Lilje, Gerstenmaier was passionate about postwar politics and concerned about the perceived pernicious influence of Martin Niemöller and other Protestant pacifists.⁵² He convinced Bishop Theophil Wurm to allow him to begin publishing a weekly periodical (*CuW*) on behalf of the Evangelical church in Stuttgart, and secured permission to publish from his friend Otto Heinrich Fleischer, a U.S.-authorized license carrier.⁵³ The first person who briefly held the chief editor position was Ernst Hepp, a Nazi party member who had worked for Paul Karl Schmidt in the Press Department of the Foreign Office.⁵⁴ Either through Hepp or through his own war-time work in the Foreign Office, Gerstenmaier had somehow become acquainted with Giselher Wirsing and Klaus

⁵² Gerstenmaier to Dibelius, July 16, 1949, *Konrad Adenauer Stiftung* in Bonn, 01-210-014/2.

⁵³ Kracht "'Schmissiges Christentum'."

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

Mehnert, both of whom he brought onto the editorial staff from the beginning. Wirsing, Mehnert, and Gerstenmaier quickly developed a close friendship and by 1949 Gerstenmaier had elevated them to the highest positions in the editorial staff and made Klaus Mehnert chief editor.⁵⁵ Around the same time, Gerstenmaier decided to begin a career in politics while leaving the control of *CuW* to Mehnert and Wirsing.

In the summer of 1949 Gerstenmaier began to campaign for a seat in the Bundestag as a member of the CDU, and immediately pressed Mehnert to publish advertisements and editorial advocacy for his campaign (something which Mehnert obliged and which subsequently became regular practice throughout the early 1950s).⁵⁶ Already in his very first campaign speeches, Gerstenmaier presented himself to the voters as a Europe-advocate who would help reverse German Protestantism's great historical error: the alliance with German nationalism. His purpose in office, he declared, was to help German Protestants find a new "political home": namely, unified Europe. And this meant pushing back against an unholy Protestant alliance between pacifism and nationalism, as

⁵⁵ Wirsing to Mehnert, January 25, 1949, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 7. Wirsing to Mehnert, January 28, 1949, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 7. Wirsing to Mehnert, February 6, 1949.

⁵⁶ Gerstenmaier to Mehnert, August 4, 1949, *Konrad Adenauer Stiftung* in Bonn, 01-210-014/2.

represented by Niemöller and others.⁵⁷ In a speech at the end of the year after having already won office he explained that his political program would seek to create a more robust welfare state but that the “most important debate” to which he was devoting himself was foreign policy; specifically, he promised to advocate a “rejection of the theory of national sovereignty” and replace it with a: “unified living community of destiny [*Lebens– und Schicksalsgemeinschaft*] in the form of a great European political community.” He continued: “[p]referably, we would call this ‘the United States of Europe’, because that would signal that the hour in which the restoration of many sovereign countries in Europe is finally over.”⁵⁸ The language of a “living community of destiny” was strikingly reminiscent of Nazi Europeanism. It is difficult to say whether this was intended, but it quickly became a pattern in his campaign material, including calls for a “European Community of Peoples” (*Europäische Völkergemeinschaft*) that referenced past victories against Asiatic invasions from the East and that was supposed to resolve the modern need for “community” (*Gemeinschaft*).

Take, for example, a lengthy speech by Gerstenmaier held in February, 1950 at an academy in Karlsruhe. The speech, titled “Christian Occident in the Europe-politics of the Present,” actually consisted of a long discussion of the

⁵⁷ Eugen Gerstenmaier, political speech, “Wandlung des Protestantismus in der Wandlung Europas,” July 9, 1949, Munich, *Konrad Adenauer Stiftung* in Bonn, 01-210-066/2.

⁵⁸ Eugen Gerstenmaier, political speech, untitled, December 15, 1949, Swabia, *Konrad Adenauer Stiftung* in Bonn, 01-210-066/2.

history of the Occident-concept. It began with an attack on the French Revolution, which, according to Gerstenmaier, resulted in an unfortunate “diversity of nations” at odds with one another and in opposition to their traditional harmony as united members of Europe. This fateful error, he argued, produced “totalitarianism” and the disasters of the Second World War. In this way, Gerstenmaier was echoing a common argument in the Catholic-dominated Occident movement that secular modernity created Hitler. But the speech also displayed what would become an important theme in Mehnert and Wirsing’s writings as well: namely, a partial reconciliation with the liberal tradition that emerged from the French Revolution. The Occidental tradition, he argued, shared blame in catastrophe of mid-twentieth century Europe; specifically, it had anchored politics in the supposedly divinely-ordained institution of monarchical absolutism. Therein, he suggested, was the contribution of the liberal philosophic tradition: specifically, the replacement of unholy absolutism with the principle of majoritarian rule. The utility of the Occident-concept, Gerstenmaier continued, should therefore not be drawn from the political models it had erected in the past or the specific religious denominations that had dominated Europe’s various successful defenses against “Asian” invasion (Catholicism). Instead, the Occident should be looked towards as historical fountain of a more transcendent cultural unity it had produced:

In ways different than the Mohammedans who imagine a European unity under Islam, Christianity has shaped European life down to our times in a transcendent way. Although it hasn’t established a lasting political or otherwise institutional unity of the European peoples, it has nevertheless determined Europe’s values and orientation.

The evidence for this transcendent cultural heritage, Gerstenmaier argued, could be seen in the fact that Europe became the most powerful continent in the world despite political and denominational divisions. Therefore, Gerstenmaier concluded his speech arguing that in addition to political and economic unification as a “United States of Europe,” any conclusive Europe-politics of the present must also seek the creation of a “European Community of Peoples” (*Europäische Völkergemeinschaft*): “After all, the United States of Europe should not be an abstract unit of various independent particles, but rather a community [*Gemeinschaft*], an indestructible union of individual *völkisch* units and unique national cultures.” This vision of Europe, Gerstenmaier pointed out, was at odds with the Catholic-dominated Occidental movement, which he criticized for its obsession with Catholic renewal. The creation of a European Community of Peoples and therefore the true Occident, he argued, was a project of much higher importance than denominational disputes.⁵⁹

Over the course of 1950 Gerstenmaier took his political Europe-advocacy to another level when he became the head of the foreign policy committee in the Bundestag (*Auswärtiger Ausschuss*) and joined and presided over the German delegation to the Council of Europe in Strasbourg. His work in this committee and at the Council of Europe became the defining initiative of his time as a representative of the Bundestag until he was appointed President of the Bundestag

⁵⁹ Eugen Gerstenmaier, political speech, “Christliches Abendland in der Europapolitik der Gegenwart,” February 1, 1950, Karlsruhe Volkshochschule, *Konrad Adenauer Stiftung* in Bonn, 01-210-066/2.

in 1954. Gerstenmaier was of crucial assistance to Konrad Adenauer when his plans for West German rearmament within a European Army were leaked to the press in 1950 and portions of the CDU coalition threatened to break up over the issue. One of Adenauer's cabinet members, Gustav Heinemann, led a Protestant pacifist faction within the CDU and eventually split from the party over the issue of rearmament. Gerstenmaier, as a leading Protestant in favor of rearmament within the European Army, was a crucial support to Adenauer's political coalition during this time. Gerstenmaier was again of assistance to Adenauer when in 1952 the treaty for the European Army was signed with a clause requiring any future reunification of Germany only permissible alongside the continuation of German participation in the European Army (the so-called *Bindungsklausel*). For many Protestant nationalists, this clause doomed the prospects of German reunification and prioritized European integration over German nationalism. Once again, Gerstenmaier worked to rally Protestant support for the politics of the administration.⁶⁰ Gerstenmaier's loyalty to Adenauer in these years was born of a belief that the European Army was one piece in a larger movement towards the European Political Community as proposed in the "Europe Declaration" of 1951 and his diplomatic negotiations in Strasbourg.

Throughout the early 1950s Gerstenmaier travelled and spoke to dozens of pro-Europe organizations and clubs where he presented his Europe-politics – and this was in addition to his speeches to constituents which likewise emphasized his

⁶⁰ Ronald J. Granieri, *The Ambivalent Alliance: Konrad Adenauer, the CDU/CSU, and the West, 1949-1966* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2003), 46-58.

Europe advocacy. In his speeches to the Council of Europe, Gerstenmaier repeatedly and consistently called for the most radical steps towards European unification and even advocated the “third front” conceptualization of Europe between East and West.⁶¹ During these years Gerstenmaier developed an important relationship with Konrad Adenauer, with whom Gerstenmaier regularly consulted vis-à-vis European integration. Anticipating future rearmament debates, as early as December, 1949 Gerstenmaier was suggesting in his speeches to constituents that German rearmament was an urgent foreign policy need, and in 1950 he subsequently became Adenauer’s negotiator for the European Army (EDC) in the Council of Europe.⁶² From 1950 to 1954 Gerstenmaier conducted diplomacy on behalf of the EDC in the Council of Europe and advised Adenauer in meetings and correspondences. A consistent thread in his arguments towards Adenauer was the importance of rejecting any compromise that would result in West German entry into NATO as an alternative to the EDC. Gerstenmaier repeatedly warned Adenauer against publicly even admitting that West Germans would consider this as an alternative, because such a mistake would weaken their negotiating position on the EDC and therefore compromise the most important

⁶¹ Eugen Gerstenmaier, speech at the council of Europe, “Was wird aus Europa? Zur Krisis der europäischen Einigung,” undated, *Konrad Adenauer Stiftung* in Bonn, 01-210-067/1.

⁶² Eugen Gerstenmaier, political speech, untitled, December 15, 1949, Swabia, *Konrad Adenauer Stiftung* in Bonn, 01-210-066/2. Gerstenmaier to Adenauer, December 16, 1950, *Konrad Adenauer Stiftung* in Bonn, 01-210-014/2. , *Konrad Adenauer Stiftung* in Bonn, 01-210-015. , *Konrad Adenauer Stiftung* in Bonn, 01-210-035/2.

goal of the moment: European integration.⁶³ In the summer of 1954, as the EDC appeared destined for failure, Gerstenmaier helped Adenauer conduct last ditch diplomacy in the Council of Europe trying to salvage the treaty. When this brought no returns he pled desperately, to no avail, for Adenauer to reject suggestions from other advisers regarding an alternative NATO solution, and to instead seek an alternative, revised EDC treaty.⁶⁴

Conclusion

Wirsing and Mehnert's journalism in *CuW*, then, was part of a larger political project. They saw Gerstenmaier as the politician who most embodied their Europe concept and energetically made *CuW* double as a political organ for the CDU and Gerstenmaier's specific vision within it. This represented a crucial contrast to their conservative politics in the Weimar period, in which their ideas were constructed in explicit opposition to the existing political order. Hanns Lilje, Eugen Gerstenmaier, and the censor regimes of the Western Allied military governments ultimately exerted a decisive moderating influence on former Nazi Europeanists whose only path to influence in the postwar period was through these gatekeepers. From the beginning of their postwar public advocacy, former Nazi Europeanists were deeply invested in the procedures of democratic politics and therefore committed to effecting change from within the constitutional order and from within one of the its mainstream political parties. In the following

⁶³ Gerstenmaier to Adenauer, March 3, 1953, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes in Berlin, Germany, B2-15.

⁶⁴ Gerstenmaier to Adenauer, June 25, 1954, *Konrad Adenauer Stiftung* in Bonn, 01-210-015.

chapter we will turn to a textual analysis of the Europe-concept in *CuW* and *SB* respectively from the late 1940s to the mid-1950s. As we will see, these figures ultimately reconciled with liberal democracy, a surprising process set into action by the failure of the European Army and the resulting disillusionment with the prospects for a sweeping political unification of Europe. But it is important to note that the preconditions for this deradicalization were already present in the form of institutional gatekeepers that exerted a consistent pressure on post-Nazi Europeanists to situate their Europeanism squarely within the acceptable parameters of postwar West German politics.

Chapter 8: *Christ und Welt* and *Sonntagsblatt*

Introduction

The previous chapter outlined the establishment of a post-Nazi Europeanist network in West German journalism. In this chapter we will proceed by analyzing the body of their intellectual work in *Christ und Welt* and *Sonntagsblatt* (hereafter, *CuW* and *SB*, respectively). Immediately upon beginning publication in 1948, both of these magazines anchored their political and intellectual commentary in what this dissertation calls a “revised Europe-concept.” Many key elements were maintained, such as, most importantly, the assertion of an organic European community historically destined for political, economic, and social actualization in the near future. On the other hand, the new Europe-concept immediately denounced National Socialism, Hitler, antisemitism, and the Third Reich. In fact, the recent past became yet another example of the historical tragedy of nationalism. This is not to suggest that *CuW* and *SB* conservatives completely retreated from all of the components of National Socialist ideology to which they had become committed as war-time Europe-propagandists. To the contrary, as we will see, one of the most important patterns in their writings was a repeated flirtation with Nazi-inspired ideas ranging from irredentist aspirations for the New Europe to an anti-Bolshevism and anti-Americanism that frequently echoed war-time propaganda. Like Nazi Europeanism, the revised Europe-concept directly engaged with Oswald Spengler’s thesis of civilizational decline and promised that a reversal was on the near horizon. But whereas the Nazi regime had provided the political vehicle for

the realization of Europe in their war-time propaganda, post-Nazi Europeanists turned to the democratic politics of European integration in the early 1950s as the means for their renewed postwar European revolution.

In part because post-Nazi Europeanists became so deeply committed to the politics of European integration, their initial concerted effort to revise and maintain the radical German conservative tradition eventually and ironically culminated in the de-radicalization of German conservatism by the end of the decade. This is because post-Nazi Europeanists attached their Europe-project to the politics Christian Democracy in West Germany as well as the foreign policy of the United States of America – each of which were central harbingers of liberal revival in postwar Europe. As we will see, post-Nazi Europeanists sought to advance a European revolution from within the institutions of liberal democracy and in 1954, when it failed to come to pass in the form of a European Army and European political federation, they found themselves disenchanted with the Europe-concept and simultaneously accustomed to a new, liberal status quo. The following paragraphs will proceed with separate textual analyses of *CuW* and *SB*, followed by a concluding section that traces this ironic process of intellectual liberalization that began in roughly the year 1954.

Christ und Welt

As explained in the previous chapter, Giseler Wirsing and Klaus Mehnert were the dominant influence in *CuW* from its very beginning. This, despite the fact that their influence was initially covert. This was confirmed by Wirsing years

later to the American consulate in Stuttgart.¹ For the first three years Wirsing used the acronym “er” to sign his editorials and Mehnert, the acting chief editor, was the writing hand behind front-page political editorials (usually signed “CuW”). By 1951 they began using their full names as editorialists. Despite having worked for U.S. intelligence services in 1945 Wirsing was imprisoned at the interrogation center in Nenndorf until 1948 where he completed the several interviews with American interrogators which have been utilized in this dissertation. He was initially fined 2000 DM for his role in the Nazi dictatorship but, as explained in a previous chapter, a few years later he was declared a mere “fellow traveler” and his fine was substantially reduced.² Mehnert, in contrast, largely avoided denazification. At the end of the war he, along with hundreds of other suspected Germans in Shanghai, were detained for eight months but eventually cleared for travel back to Germany in late 1946 where he was once again detained for a brief four-month period in Ludwigsburg only to be released

¹ Paul R. Sweet (American Consul General in Stuttgart) to the United States Department of State, “Dr. Giselher Wirsing and Christ und Welt: A Profile,” November 23, 1965 United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, box 57, folder “Wirsing, Giselher.”

² United States Department of State, “Biographic Data Form – Wirsing, Giselher,” November, 1951, United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, box 57, folder “Wirsing, Giselher.” “Abendland: Intelligenz hat Seltenheitswert,” *Der Spiegel*, April 30, 1952.

without penalty in early 1947.³ Already in 1947 Mehnert and Wirsing were contacting each other and fellow members of their pre-war and war-time network in the hope of cooperating their postwar careers.⁴ By 1948 they had begun their undertaking at *CuW*.

Opposition to Nationalism

The very first issue of *CuW* established its founding narrative when Eugen Gerstenmaier declared that the publication's stated purpose was to "transform the national consciousness."⁵ But the same opening issue also ran an article explicitly denouncing National Socialism and Adolf Hitler as one of the darkest chapters in German history.⁶ Over the course of the first months of publication, *CuW* settled into what would become its overarching argument: the era of the nation was the great historical impediment to a coming European revolution, and the National Socialist disaster was the epitome and climax of the historical tragedy known as nationalism. Effectively, *CuW* conservatives folded the recent Nazi past into their

³ Mehnert to Kennan, July 3, 1947, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 2.

⁴ Mehnert to Eschmann, August 27, 1947 in "Mehnert, Klaus an Eschmann, Ernst Wilhelm, 27.8.47," A:Diederichs/Eugen Diederichs Verlag, Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach, Germany. Mehnert to Eugen Diederichs Verlag, July 24, 1946 in "Mehnert, Klaus an Eugen Diederichs Verlag, 1933-1946," A:Diederichs/Eugen Diederichs Verlag, Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach, Germany.

⁵ Eugen Gerstenmaier, "Eine neue Wochenschrift," *Christ und Welt*, June 6, 1948.

⁶ -CuW, "Der Nationalsozialismus mehr als ein deutsches Problem," *Christ und Welt*, June 6, 1948.

polemics against nationalism by adding Hitler to the already long list of enemies of their Europe-concept. Combined with a deafening silence regarding their own tainted past as Nazi Europeanists, such arguments detached the Europe-concept from the Third Reich and attempted to re-situate it on the right side of history. Nevertheless, anti-nationalism retained many of the aspects it had accumulated in Nazi propaganda. Take, for example, one of the earliest featured articles, written by an unnamed author in March, 1949. The author declared the era of nation-states and nationalism to have reached its end. However, the article's anti-nationalism was explicitly constructed against cosmopolitanism and "internationalism." Establishing what would become a theme in *CuW*, the article explained:

Whoever flees from nationalism into internationalism has been deceived by a terrible trick. Whoever flees from internationalism into nationalism likewise. The era that lived in the struggle between national-international has met its destined end, and whoever thinks in those categories is lost.⁷

The middle-way answer to this dilemma was, of course, the historically and culturally destined New Europe. As Klaus Mehnert explained in one of the many front-page articles celebrating West Germany's entry into the Council of Europe and its ratification in the German parliament: "it is a testament to the very real evolution of Germans' national identity [*nationales Selbstbewusstsein*] that there is no nationalist resentment capable of breaking the will of the German people to irrevocably tie its future to that of other peoples...." "The evolution of the German national identity," he continued, was driven by a resolute march "towards

⁷ Unnamed, "Ein Zeitalter geht zu Ende," *Christ und Welt*, March 10, 1949.

Europe.” Such a “revision of nation-state identity towards a workable European state for the future,” he explained, “demands responsible men courageous enough to continue towards this goal with strict concentration.”⁸

Anti-nationalism in *CuW* was not disingenuous, and *CuW* writers committed themselves to a disavowal of even implicit German nationalism, such as when they wrote a front-page article criticizing the planned construction of a monument to the fallen German soldiers of the World Wars in Rüdeshelm because it fostered “anachronistic historical ideas” that threatened to bolster nationalism and aggravate the resentments of “European Civil Wars” and in doing so compromise progress towards a “conscientious Europe.”⁹ Even more important, *CuW* conservatives began to recognize in the early 1950s that their espousal of a European revolution was, in the context of Cold War politics, at odds with German reunification. This, of course, was a central claim of their center-left political opponents, and although they originally echoed Adenauer’s contentions that reunification and European integration were not mutually exclusive, over the course of the 1950s they gradually came to accept that they were prioritizing Europe at the expense of reunified Germany. As Mehnert argued on the front-page in December, 1951, European integration may for the time being decrease the chances for reunification, but a new Europe would eventually have the political power to reunify not only Germans but all Europeans

⁸ -CuW, “Entscheidung für Europa,” *Christ und Welt*, June 22, 1950.

⁹ -CuW, “Germania – 1870 und 1950,” *Christ und Welt*, July 27, 1950.

by rolling back Bolshevism.¹⁰ During the EDC debates in subsequent years, *CuW* conservatives such as Giselher Wirsing went as far as to describe advocacy for reunification as useless “breath-holding” and he even reprimanded German voters for such sentiments because they damaged West Germany’s standing in the eyes of the French.¹¹

Echoes of Nationalist Resentment

Yet, simultaneous to their repeated Francophile enthusiasm for German-French rapprochement, there was occasionally present a soft undertone of resentment towards Germany’s arch-enemy. It was not uncommon, for example, when deceleration in European integration occurred to find articles that blamed such set-backs on an alleged French narcissism and hatred of Germany.¹² This was but one of many echoes of nationalist resentment that ironically found expression in *CuW*’s Europeanism. In the same vain, *CuW* conservatives were obsessed with Allied denazification measures, which they fiercely condemned as witch-hunts directed at mostly innocent Nazis. In one article, written by an unidentified “former Nazi,” the author pled for deliverance from denazification on the grounds that former Nazis were often more “European” than their accusers:

I can only speak for myself, but I am less ‘nationalist’ than many Bonn-politicians.... I am more genuinely committed to the idea of the ‘United States of Europe’ than many European politicians that accuse us Germans of nationalism. I believe that I have learned a lesson from the unfortunate German past that the dream of a German ‘great-state’ is exhausted.¹³

¹⁰ -CuW, “Unsere Einheit,” *Christ und Welt*, December 27, 1951.

¹¹ Giselher Wirsing, “Sprengt Frankreich Europa?“ *Christ und Welt*, September 24, 1953.

¹² -CuW, “Gegensätzliches Europa,” *Christ und Welt*, March 16, 1950.

¹³ “Ehemaliger Nazi,” “Das Recht auf Wandlung,” *Christ und Welt*, November 24, 1949.

CuW conservatives also recurrently demanded the return of German prisoners of war in the Soviet Union and similarly advocated for the state-funded assimilation of German refugees from the Eastern territories given to Poland after the war (Prussia, Pomerania, and Silesia).¹⁴ Both groups, *CuW* conservatives argued, were the most down-trodden victims of the war having been subjected to the ruthless and murderous barbarism of Bolshevism. Finally, a not so subtle irredentism presented itself in the pages of *CuW* regarding those same Eastern territories, which, *CuW* conservatives repeatedly suggested, were wrongly annexed by Poland at the behest of the Soviets and should subsequently be seen as a mere temporary state of affairs.¹⁵

Perhaps the most incriminating activity strewn throughout *CuW*'s pages was the writers' apologetic handling of the Second World War. Already in 1949 Gerstenmaier, in a campaign speech, signaled a readiness to defend German (if not Nazi) conduct during the Second World War. The "European Community of Peoples" (*europäische Völkergemeinschaft*) coming into life in the Marshall Plan and the Council of Europe actually had roots in the Second World War, he argued. Germans during the war, he explained, slowly yet surely came to accept the "historical end of the German nation" and replace it with a hopeful

¹⁴ See, for example, the special September 4, 1948 edition of *Christ und Welt* about the prisoners of war missing from the Eastern Front.

¹⁵ See, for example, unnamed author, "Die Oder-Neisse-Grenze und der Marshall-Plan: Die wirtschaftliche Leistungsfähigkeit der deutschen Ostprovinzen," *Christ und Welt*, November 19, 1948.

commitment to “a new spiritual, social, economic, and political form of life between the peoples [of Europe] who came to this position as a result of their lived experience dying for one another.”¹⁶ The Second World War, repeatedly handled in editorials as well as special historical article series, was presented as a tragedy with blame to spread around. This included a constant stream of criticisms directed at the Western Allies, not only for their bombing campaigns, but also for even aligning with the Bolshevik East in the first place. Wirsing, for example, ran a multi-week article series titled “How the World was Divided into Two,” where he recapitulated the arguments of his 1944 covertly published book *Die Politik des Ölflecks* (discussed in the previous chapter), in which he had argued that the Americans committed the great error in the Second World War of treating the Soviets as a lesser threat than Nazi Germany.¹⁷ Such arguments were flanked with denunciations of the alleged Western Allied capitulation to the Soviets at the Yalta Conference, which was presented as the cause and beginning of the Cold War.¹⁸ Other article series lamented the German failure to more productively occupy Eastern Europe and others chronicled the history of the Eastern Front from the congratulatory perspective of the German soldiers, such as

¹⁶ Eugen Gerstenmaier, political speech, “Deutschlands Beitrag zum Frieden in Europa,” November 15, 1949, *Konrad Adenauer Stiftung* in Bonn, 01-210-066/2.

¹⁷ -er, article series titled “So Kam es Zur Zweiteilung der Welt,” *Christ und Welt*, early 1949.

¹⁸ -CuW, “Fünf Jahre Jalta,” *Christ und Welt*, February 2, 1950. Giselher Wirsing, “Der Kalte Krieg begann in Jalta: Ideologische Verblendung des Westens bereitete dem Bolschewismus den Weg nach Europa und China,” *Christ und Welt*, February 10, 1955.

the many historical essays written by former SS-propagandist Jürgen Thorwald.¹⁹ Importantly, however, all these echoes of nationalist resentment were fused with *CuW*'s Europeanism. The condemnations of denazification measures, for example, were often advanced with the argument that opening the wounds of the past hindered European unity and merely continued the past half-century's "European Civil Wars" in a more subtle form.²⁰ The German refugee problem was frequently folded into a broader European refugee crisis that perhaps even carried the potential to force more European cooperation; after all, there were millions of displaced persons from across Europe. As one former general of the Africa Corps argued, the refugees were European pathfinders whose experiences uniquely qualified them to advance the great "European solution" of the day:

If we want to adopt the European solution, then the questions of borders as well as a right to your homeland or original place of settlement [*Heimatrecht oder des Siedlungsraumes*] can **only be solved in a European manner**, in other words **together**. Former national borders must one day only have the meaning of administrative units. That's why the refugee organizations have so decisively and in a European manner liberated themselves from the old nation-state way of thinking [bold in original].²¹

Unlike Konrad Adenauer and other leaders in the CDU, many of whom had themselves been persecuted by the Nazi regime, *CuW* conservatives found it more

¹⁹ For an apologetic article series on German occupation policies in Eastern Europe see "Deutsche Ostpolitik im Krieg," *Christ und Welt*, early 1950.

²⁰ See, for example, the front-page of *Christ und Welt*, December 22, 1949.

²¹ Hans Karl Freiherr von Eisebeck, "Besinnung unter den Vertriebenen: Sie sagten sich von nationalstaatlichen Grenzforderungen los," *Christ und Welt*, August 20, 1953.

difficult to completely sever their postwar political activism from their complicit past.

As the above quotation hints at, *CuW* conservatives even integrated their tepid irredentism into a European framework. Returning the Eastern German lands was not a German project in the pages of *CuW* but a common European project to reclaim European land. The German Eastern territories, for example, were presented as an economic heartland without which Western Europe could never reclaim its position in the world. “The German East is an economic necessity for Western Europe!” as one article concluded.²² Accompanying this claim, *CuW* conservatives also argued that reclaiming the Eastern territories was only one part of a broader European mission to reclaim Eastern Europe from Bolshevism and re-integrate it into the European community, or, as the title of one of Mehnert’s front-page articles emphatically put it: “The Elbe river is not the border of Europe!”²³ One article from the spring of 1953, written by Mehnert, even explicitly admonished Germans to re-conceptualize their advocacy for a return of Germany’s Eastern territories. Too often “German politics toward the East,” he explained, was strikingly nationalist, and such activism was only appropriate if it was transformed into a “European politics toward the East,” in which the purpose of reclaiming the Eastern territories was stripped of racial and

²² Unnamed author, “Die Oder-Neisse-Grenze und der Marshall-Plan: Die wirtschaftliche Leistungsfähigkeit der deutschen Ostprovinzen,” *Christ und Welt*, November 19, 1948.

²³ -CuW, “Die Elbe ist nicht die Grenze Europas!,” *Christ und Welt*, December 15, 1949.

ethnic claims to German unity.²⁴ Such irredentism, however subtle and carefully stripped of racialized claims, was nevertheless a far cry from the pragmatic politics practiced by Konrad Adenauer's administration.

The historical apologies in *CuW* were likewise clothed in Europeanism. Take, for example, *CuW*'s coverage of Wehrmacht general Erich von Manstein's guilty verdict for war crimes on the Eastern Front. *CuW* followed Manstein's trial with a fervor, combining their resentment towards denazification with their defense of German soldiers on the Eastern Front. In one article they published half a dozen German soldiers' letters to the editor, all of which echoed the editors' claim that:

From their experiences in war and captivity, the young German generation has emerged with a realization: the German future can no longer be sought after in the nation-state but rather in European togetherness. There is probably more willingness for that among them than anywhere else.

Just like Germans are putting the bombing campaigns behind them for the sake of European unity, the editors continued, so too should the Western Allies leave German atrocities in the past. After all, Europe was ostensibly the real reason Germans got involved in the messy Eastern Front:

It is not made easy for today's front-soldiers to say...that he went into Russia in 1941 not to defend Hitler, but to defend Germany and Europe. He was completely convinced that the war against Communism was a crusade for Europe against a danger no less threatening as the Turks. That concept of a crusade, just like the Americans propagated in their war against Hitler-Germany, resided deep within every German that fought against Bolshevism.

Soldiers' letters to the editors backed up these claims, but with an added threat:

²⁴ -CuW, "Deutsche Ostpolitik – Europäische Ostpolitik!," *Christ und Welt*, April 2, 1953.

If we [soldiers] who understand Europe's present vulnerability to Bolshevism have any political motivation whatsoever, then it is, and can only be, an uplifting European one. ...[T]he only thing that is important and decisive is that we see clearly our responsibility to the future, namely Europe, and that we don't forget this just because presently injustice is being committed against us.²⁵

In other words, any Europeans interested in European integration would do well to remember that German soldiers' support was predicated on a whitewashing of the past. Another article series covered the Waffen-SS and their postwar travails, and titled them as "European freedom warriors" who had been and still were committed to the "Europe-concept" (*Europa-Gedanke*).²⁶ Defending the Waffen-SS was a favorite editorial pursuit in *CuW*, and sometimes even reached the front-pages.²⁷ These absolutions of German soldiers made *CuW* an obvious friend to the postwar German veterans' organizations. *CuW* reported frequently and sympathetically on various veterans' organizations, and even advertised for them (sometimes on the front-page) by inviting leading members to write editorials outlining activities and upcoming events. *CuW* proclaimed veterans' organizations a "bridge to the future," whose experiences fighting for Europe positioned them to lead on the biggest issue of the day:

The great majority of Germans would have preferred it if the entire conversation of a military detachment [to the European Army] would not have been necessary. However, geo-political developments have changed things. But if a German military contribution will one day be required,

²⁵ -CuW, "Europa – Manstein - Heimkehrer," *Christ und Welt*, March 2, 1950.

²⁶ For the first article in the series, see unnamed author, "Ende seiner Illusionen: Von der SS-Junckerschule zur Front," *Christ und Welt*, August 10, 1950.

²⁷ -CuW, "Unbelehrbare Rechts raus!" *Christ und Welt*, November 6, 1952.

then we should allow those very men who at the end of the day would carry the greatest burden of such a decision...to have the say.²⁸

On this point, there was arguably some convergence with Konrad Adenauer's CDU; after all, Adenauer famously declared German soldiers "honorable" in 1952 and even extended this declaration to the Waffen-SS. Nevertheless, *CuW*'s elevation of German veterans to the position of "leaders" in European integration stands in contrast to Adenauer's maneuvers towards the German veterans' community which were considerably more reluctant and tactical.

As explained earlier, *CuW* conservatives were able to parry accusations against these problematic editorials by pointing to their well-established aversion to nationalism.²⁹ Another related topic which distanced them from their conservative past, and which likewise provided cover for their more radical narratives was their consistent rejection of imperialism. Giselher Wirsing in particular, as early as 1949, began to regularly comment on world affairs and took an early and consistent position against Western imperialism, which he likened to the "red imperialism" of the Soviets. Wirsing regularly defended the colonial liberations movements around the world, lumping them into broader communities such as "Arabs" or "Asians" and comparing them to Europeans who were likewise discovering their commonalities and historical need for unification and independence. Europeans' residual attachment to imperialism, he argued, was a

²⁸ -CuW, "'Soldaten – Kameraden': Soldatentreffen – Rückschau oder Brücke in die Zukunft?" *Christ und Welt*, July 12, 1951. -CuW, "Soldaten und Kriegsverbrecher," *Christ und Welt*, August 9, 1951.

²⁹ -CuW, "Christ und Welt nationalistisch?," *Christ und Welt*, October 2, 1948.

barrier in the way of a New Europe; after all, the New Europe would be capable of providing the economic and political power that Europeans had come to rely upon in their colonialism.³⁰ These arguments, of course, mirrored their earlier Grossraum-propaganda on behalf of National Socialism, which presented the emerging European community as an enclosed social, economic, and political alternative to the universalistic imperialisms of the West and East. Furthermore, Wirsing and other Nazi Europeanists had often denounced imperialism in their war-time propaganda and advocated on behalf of liberation movements opposing British imperialism in Asia and the Arab world.

The Grossraum Reconfigured

The actual term “Grossraum,” most likely because of its association with their war-time propaganda campaigns, was largely avoided in *CuW*. An exception was a review by Wirsing of Carl Schmitt’s book *Nomos der Erde*, published as a special highlighted article in January, 1952. As discussed in the previous chapter, Wirsing had discussed a way forward for the Grossraum concept in postwar correspondences with Schmitt, and this article was apparently an attempt to take those thoughts public. Wirsing presented Schmitt’s book as a new take on their shared war-time argument that “there must emerge a new balance of powers in the world between Grossraum(s) constrained by a prohibition against the intervention of foreign [*raumfremd*] powers.” This thesis,

³⁰ See, for example, Giselher Wirsing, “Schicksalstage im Orient,” *Christ und Welt*, February 7, 1952. Giselher Wirsing, “Indochina – Europa – Deutschland: Ein zielloser Krieg, in dem Zehntausende deutscher Legionäre kämpfen,” *Christ und Welt*, September 4, 1952.

Wirsing sympathetically explained, was a legitimate response to the broken “universalisms” of Americanism and Bolshevism as well as the discredited nationalism of old. And although it failed during the war, Wirsing continued, today “it mustn’t necessarily be realized in the same way it was advanced in Europe between the years 1940 and 1944.”³¹ How it would be realized was the subject of his first postwar book, *Schritt aus dem Nichts* (“Stepping Out of the Void”) published in 1951 by Eugen Diederichs Verlag, the same publishing house that had been his home for his pre-war and war-time books and magazines.³²

The book was a long philosophical interpretation of history, and argued that Europeans were experiencing a social, political, and economic “interregnum” between two eras. Combining many of his earlier concepts, Wirsing argued that the Second World War ceased being a nationalist conflict and became an ideological conflict (*Glaubenskrieg*) that not only caused unprecedented human destruction and atrocities, but also set competing conceptions of the world against one another on an increasingly shrinking globe. Wirsing set out to argue that, although the seemingly dominant ideologies in this conflict were the two universal ideologies of the superpowers (Americanism and Bolshevism), the actual “step out of the void” for Europeans must be to rediscover the principle of “community” (*Gemeinschaft*) in a new form capable of preserving the age-old

³¹ Giselher Wirsing, “Carl Schmitt – zwischen gestern und morgen,” *Christ und Welt*, January 24, 1952.

³² Giselher Wirsing, *Schritt aus dem Nichts: Perspektiven am Ende der Revolutionen* (Eugen Diederichs Verlag, 1951).

truth of natural human “connections” (*Bindungen*). Wirsing spent considerable effort arguing that the modern curse of universalism, or “world-state” (*Weltstaat*) ideologies, was the historical outgrowth of the French Revolution and Enlightenment which had injected utopianism and alienation into European political culture. Conservatives, he explained, had failed to confront this utopianism because they were too attached to a backward-looking utopianism of their own (a “restoration,” as he called it). Furthermore, nineteenth century romantics, although they had correctly identified the need for reinvigorated “cultural communities” (*Kulturgemeinschaften*) as opposed to “Civilization” (*Zivilisation*), they nevertheless failed to find these in their delusional quest to create national myths. The nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were, for Wirsing, the story of a great European failure to discover the true path to organic social solidarity.

The second half of Wirsing’s book set out to prescribe solutions to the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries’ failures. His prescriptions, of course, revolved around the identification of Europe as the historically destined space and Europeans as the historically destined cultural community capable of resolving recent centuries’ failures. Specific discussions of how such a Europe would accomplish those tasks included: a political federation strong enough to reassert Europe on the world stage, a unified economy which would provide material security and therefore independence to Europeans, and a cultural community which would mobilize the unique but currently latent European “lifeform” (*Lebensform*) and fulfill the human need for connection and solidarity. *Schritt*

aus dem Nichts, then, encapsulated *CuW*'s Europe-narrative in the late 1940s and early 1950s; namely, the Grossraum silently reconfigured. Throughout the book, Wirsing carefully avoided discussing National Socialism in depth and entirely suppressed his involvement in Nazi propaganda. But at one point he suggested the cunning logic of European history by arguing that National Socialism ironically contributed to the European evolution in its own way. The following quotation from the end of the book is worth quoting at length:

Perhaps National Socialism will have a lasting meaning in Europe: it destroyed for us Europeans the ideology of nationalism and rooted it out entirely; similarly, it threw the internationalism of the previous nineteenth century overboard. The irony of history, which always uses people for unconscious purposes, wanted it this way. A person who considers himself a nationalist following the precepts of National Socialism, and who praises the nation as the highest unit of existence comes across pathetic these days, much like those who call upon the 'international solidarity of the Proletariat'. That explains why today Social Democrats labor to be as nationalist as possible without appearing absurd, and why traditional nationalists now only choose to speak of Europe. This reversal of roles speaks to a new development. Nations are neither linguistic communities nor are they mythical constructs. They are conditions born of consciousness [*Bewusstseinszustände*].... Such a condition is what we are now striving for in Europe. The super-nation is emerging.³³

National Socialism, then, discredited itself and in doing so discredited nationalism, but it also somewhat heroically led the struggle to delegitimize internationalism, thus planting the seeds for a new European "super-nation." The concluding chapters then did something very important: they connected Wirsing's reconfigured Grossraum to the mainstream German and European politics by arguing that the CDU and Council of Europe were effectively carrying out Wirsing's "step out of the void."

³³ *Ibid.*, 310-311.

European Integration

As early as the fall of 1948 *CuW* openly aligned itself with various European unification clubs and organizations such as the “Europa-Union” as well as early discussions for the creation of the Council of Europe. *CuW* conservatives proceeded to report on the contemporary politics of European unification on the front-pages throughout the early 1950s. In the spring of 1949, around the time of the creation of the Council of Europe, Giselher Wirsing began to report weekly or bi-weekly on the negotiations and diplomacy regarding European unification, and this was continued throughout the early 1950s, although eventually taken over by Klaus Mehnert.³⁴ The term *CuW* and *Sblatt* writers generally used for the ongoing European Revolution was “The European Consolidation” (*Der europäische Zusammenschluss*); however, sometimes terminology from the Second World War was also employed, such as “European Community of Peoples” (*Europäische Völkergemeinschaft*).³⁵ It is important to note that their advocacy for the European Consolidation preceded the North Korean invasion of South Korea – a pivotal moment, to be sure. Already in late 1949 and early 1950, *CuW* conservatives had amalgamated the Marshall Plan and the Schuman Plan (eventually the ECSC) into their postwar Europe-program as pivotal stepping stones towards what they called “Small-Europe” (*Kleineuropa*). Here they were

³⁴ -er, “Auf den Baugerüsten Europas: Ist die europäische Einheit nähergerückt? Das Netz der Organisationen,” *Christ und Welt*, April 7, 1949.

³⁵ -er, “Das Ende der Neutralität: Keine Pufferzone mehr in Europa – Die Tragweite der Entscheidung Norwegens – Eisenhowers Einfluss,” *Christ und Welt*, March 17, 1949.

establishing a parallel between the economically integrative steps in the mid-nineteenth century that preceded the unification of Germany as well as the 1848 Frankfurt debates between advocates of *Kleindeutschland* and *Grossdeutschland*. This parallel is how they justified unifying Western Europe first (even without the recalcitrant United Kingdom) while keeping an ultimate eye on the inclusion of Eastern Europe as well.³⁶ In the elections of the fall of 1949, they identified Adenauer's CDU as an ally and attacked the SPD as a nationalist barrier in the way of European Consolidation, and by the spring of 1950 they drew the small radical-right parties (*Deutsche Partei* and *Sozialistische Reichspartei*) under their criticism as well – after all, *CuW* conservatives argued, both right-wing and left-wing extremists had one thing in common: nationalism. Although less common than the polemics against left-wing parties, the attacks on the right-wing fringe parties were an important step towards political moderation, because it was an early indicator of their rejection of political extremism.³⁷ Mehnert even suggested that the real political threat to European Consolidation was not a conservative “restoration” as left-wing critics alleged, but rather an alliance between the radical right and radical left as manifest in the nationalist alliance between the SPD, DP, and SRP.³⁸ In other words, *CuW* presented itself as the sensible center. Although

³⁶ -er, “Die klein-europäische Lösung,” *Christ und Welt*, November 10, 1949. Mehnert continued the Small-Large Germany-Europe parallels into 1952. See Klaus Mehnert, “Kleinst-Europa ist nicht alles,” *Christ und Welt*, October 9, 1952.

³⁷ -CuW, “Auf Europa zu“ *Christ und Welt*, November 24, 1949.

³⁸ -CuW, “Wir all bestimmen den Kurs!“ *Christ und Welt*, May 4, 1950.

enthusiastic about the tangible gains in European integration such as the ECSC, in the early 1950s *CuW* conservatives actually began to express frustration that European integration was progressing too slowly despite the will for rapid unification among the European populace. By 1951 this frustration had spilled over into criticism of alleged fifth-columnists in Strasbourg who were only advocating European integration as a pragmatic, half-way constraint on the nation-state rather than a revolution against it. Wirsing and Mehnert began opining on these internal Strasbourg debates, throwing their weight behind Gerstenmaier and his coalition in Strasbourg who called themselves “Federalists” and supported movement towards a European constitution and parliament.³⁹ These conversations, however, were ultimately drowned out by *CuW* conservatives’ shift in attention to the European Army in the early 1950s. This was a consequence of the Korean War.

The European Defense Community and the “Third Front”

After the North Korean invasion of South Korea in June, 1950 *CuW* and *SB* made the subsequent three-year long negotiations for a European Army the center of their political advocacy for European Consolidation. The idea of a European Army encapsulated their belief in a strong, militant Europe, and the

³⁹ Giselher Wirsing, “Echte und unechte Föderalisten,” *Christ und Welt*, July 19, 1951. See additionally so the article series by Eugen Gerstenmaier titled “Was wird aus Europa? Zwischen einem Paktsystem souveräner Staaten und den Vereinigten Staaten von Europa – Die historischen Gegensätze,” *Christ und Welt*, summer of 1951. -*CuW*, “Europäische Verfassung,” *Christ und Welt*, January 15, 1953.

Communist behavior in Korea appeared to confirm their belief that the Cold War was eventually going to turn hot. Already in the late 1940s, *CuW* conservatives saw the emerging Cold War as an all or nothing struggle, and although they stopped short of calling for an explicit military invasion of the East, they nevertheless consistently spoke of “rolling back Bolshevism” and depicted the Cold War conflict as an intermission in the long historical struggle between European civilization and the “Asian” East. A spring, 1949 article titled “Soviet Asia: Arsenal of the World Revolution,” declared *CuW*’s official position that a delayed victory for Genghis Khan was inevitable if Europeans could not move beyond a mere defensive posture. Europe’s very survival was contingent upon a perceived urgency to not only contain but even defeat Bolshevism, and the planned European Army became for *CuW* conservatives the primary evidence of Europe’s life impulse as a historically organic community.⁴⁰ Military confrontation, then, was constantly in the sub-text of *CuW*’s Europeanism, and they viewed the candidacy and early presidency of Dwight D. Eisenhower as an ally in this aggressive posture. However, this alliance with the United States was designedly utilitarian.

In one of his first articles in 1948 Wirsing assured his readers that the geopolitical carving of the world into Soviet and American spheres was unsustainable, and that a new “European Community of States” would eventually

⁴⁰ Unnamed author, “*Sowjetasien - Arsenal der Welt Revolution*,” *Christ und West*, April 14, 1949.

emerge in order to restore a new-age “balance of powers” between continents.⁴¹ Then, in 1949 Wirsing began emphasizing to his readers the difference between the coming “European unification” on the one hand and the “Atlantic community” on the other, warning them not to confuse the two and prioritize their commitment to the former.⁴² At various moments of euphoria, such as when the Schuman Plan was gathering momentum in 1950, *CuW* conservatives even went so far as to pronounce the beginning of the end of the Atlantic Community.⁴³ But in the summer of 1951 *CuW* conservatives fully came into their argument and began consistently articulating what they called the “Third Front” thesis; namely, that Europeans had been forced by the threat of Bolshevism into a tactical alliance with the United States, but that within this same alliance an embryonic independent Europe was emerging that would eventually remove itself from the Atlantic Alliance and become a Third Front between the United States and the Soviet Union. This European Third Front would be a political, economic, and social alternative to the West and East, and the European Army was the most important step in European self-assertion:

A united Europe needs a united military. Perhaps in one hundred years it will be seen retrospectively that nothing contributed more to the unity of Europe than the European Army. ... We want a European Army not because we want to help Monsieur Pleven or Mr. Eisenhower, but rather because we desire Europe, and because we want an upright Europe to stand on its own feet without American crutches, and because we are

⁴¹ -er, “Die Aussenpolitik des Monologs: ist Rückkehr der Diplomatie möglich? Kollektive Sicherheit und Gleichgewicht der Mächte,” *Christ und Welt*, August 7, 1948.

⁴² -er, “Strassburg und die Dollarkonferenz,” *Christ und Welt*, September 22, 1949.

⁴³ -CuW, “Von der Marne bis zum Niger,” *Christ und Welt*, May 18, 1950.

realistic enough to know that in this imperfect world those without weapons are immediately disempowered.⁴⁴

The national debate over the EDC tied *CuW* even more tightly into Adenauer's political camp and put them squarely at odds with the center-left and far-left pacifists, neutralists, and Communists who opposed the EDC with the nationalist argument that it inhibited German reunification. These debates came to a head in March, 1952, when Stalin attempted to obstruct progress towards a European Army by dangling an offer for a reunified, neutral Germany as an alternative. *CuW* stood behind Adenauer's rejection of the offer and his subsequent signing of the so-called General Treaty in May, 1952, committing West Germany to the EDC. The General Treaty was particularly contentious because Adenauer presented it as a step towards "integration with the West" (*Westbindung*). Interestingly, *CuW* conservatives described Adenauer's summer, 1952 diplomacy without hardly ever referencing *Westbindung* and instead argued that the real significance of the treaty was its preparation for the ratification of the EDC and subsequent path towards a European political federation. As far as they were concerned this was also Adenauer's primary diplomatic motivation.⁴⁵ This, of course, was wishful thinking.

In 1951 Klaus Mehnert had taken over the weekly or bi-weekly commentary on European integration and continued this commentary through 1954 with a special focus on the evolution of the European Army. During these

⁴⁴ -CuW, "Deutsche Aussenpolitik im Herbst 1951," *Christ und Welt*, November 1, 1951.

⁴⁵ Klaus Mehnert, "Noch fehlt die deutsche Antwort," *Christ und Welt*, April 3, 1952.

same years Mehnert was contracted with one of the leading radio transmitters in Germany (*Süddeutscher Rundfunk*) to give a bi-weekly segment on European integration.⁴⁶ Mehnert consistently defended the EDC as a vehicle for European consciousness, independence, and self-assertion. Some Europeans, especially French opponents to the EDC such as Charles de Gaulle, argued that Europeans should instead establish a coalition of national armies as an alternative to the EDC, but Mehnert strongly denounced such suggestions as masked nationalism, insisting that the European Army must break down national military institutions and bring units together from across the continent.⁴⁷ Similarly, Mehnert consistently denounced suggestions of West German participation in NATO as an alternative, because it would reinstate the nation-state as the supreme political unit: “We don’t want to be misunderstood,” Mehnert explained after rejecting NATO proposals, “all of our considerations on this issue revolve around a single purpose: the creation of a European Army as a step on the path towards the creation of a United Europe.”⁴⁸ Remarkably, the personal holdings for former Wehrmacht General Hans Speidel reveal that Mehnert, in addition to his journalism, had an active advisory role assisting the negotiations for the EDC. Speidel, before assisting Adenauer in the negotiations for NATO (and eventually

⁴⁶ Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 263.

⁴⁷ -CuW, “Der Kampf um Europa,” *Christ und Welt*, December 6, 1951.

⁴⁸ Klaus Mehnert, “Mit – nicht gegen Frankreich,” *Christ und Welt*, February 19, 1953. Even after the EDC failed, Mehnert initially continued to reject Adenauer’s push for a NATO alternative. See Klaus Mehnert, “Die nackten Tatsachen,” *Christ und Welt*, September 9, 1954.

becoming a NATO general), was the head of Adenauer's diplomatic mission during the EDC negotiations and a member of the "Blank Office," the predecessor to the eventual West German Defense Ministry. In fact, Speidel was the figure who initially suggested to Adenauer the idea of West German rearmament in an integrated European Army.⁴⁹ Speidel's correspondences with Mehnert in these years suggest that Mehnert regularly sent him advice on the ongoing negotiations as well as various copies of his *CuW* articles, and even conducted for Speidel "sensitive"-marked research reports on European political leaders' opinions vis-à-vis the EDC based on his political and journalistic contacts.⁵⁰

Sonntagsblatt

In 1948 Bishop Hanns Lilje offered Hans Zehrer the chief editor position for *SB*. Zehrer had recently been forced out of his position as chief editor at *Die Welt* due to his association with the Tat-Kreis.⁵¹ It is unclear how Axel Seeberg became the second-in-command – it is possible that Klaus Mehnert, who was originally considered for the position of chief editor, recommended Seeberg, with whom he had become acquainted in the propaganda apparatus of the Foreign Office. In any case, internal documents of the editorial staff reveal that he had

⁴⁹ David Clay Large, *Germans to the Front: West German Rearmament in the Adenauer Era* (University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 48-50.

⁵⁰ Mehnert to Speidel, June 9, 1952, Bundesarchiv Militärarchiv in Freiburg, BW 9/1544. Speidel to Theodor Blank, July 20, 1954, Bundesarchiv Militärarchiv in Freiburg, BW 9/2300.

⁵¹ Ebbo Demant, *Von Schleicher zu Springer: Hans Zehrer als Politischer Publizist* (Mainz: Hase und Koehler Verlag, 1972).

been brought on to the hopeful project in its infant stages already by the end of 1946 as a provisional politics editor after having been considered for the position of chief editor which was ultimately given to Zehrer. He quickly became an ally of Zehrer's in the editorial divide over religion (discussed in the previous chapter) and functioned as a de facto assistant editor with a weekly front-page politics column. Eventually this column was titled "Barometer of World Politics."⁵² In 1953 Zehrer left *SB* to once again preside over *Die Welt*, and Seeberg took over leadership of *SB* until 1969. Seeberg, as front-page politics editor and eventual chief editor, left the most influential footprint on the pages of *SB*; in fact, it appears that even the style of *SB* was based on the newspaper where Seeberg had worked before and during the Second World War (the *Berliner Börsenzeitung*).⁵³ Zehrer and Seeberg then brought Ferdinand Fried, an original Tat-Kreis member

⁵² Unnamed secretary to Hanns Lilje, internal memo, November 13, 1947, Hanover Landeskirchliches Archiv, L3/II, Nr. 54. Seeberg to Lilje, December 17, 1946, Hanover Landeskirchliches Archiv, L3/II, Nr. 52. See additionally the editorial staff conference minutes titled "Bericht über die Hamburger Besprechungen in der Zeit vom 26. bis 30. 1948," July 26-30, 1948, Hanover Landeskirchliches Archiv, L3/III, Nr. 249. "Autorenliste Nr. 6 vom 5.2.1950," February 5, 1950, Hanover Landeskirchliches Archiv, L3/III, Nr. 250. editorial staff conference minutes titled "Redaktionsbesprechung am 6. Juni 1952 in Locum," Hanover Landeskirchliches Archiv, N60, Nr. 170.

⁵³ Plog, memo titled "Entwurf für die erste Ausgabe des 'Sonntag'," undated, Hanover Landeskirchliches Archiv, L3/II, Nr. 52.

and Grossraum-economist for Wirsing, onto the project as economics editor.⁵⁴

The ideological content and political trajectory of *SB* did not differ drastically from *CuW*; in fact, the two periodicals read nearly like twin projects.

Nevertheless, there were a few important idiosyncrasies in *SB* that will be the subject of the following paragraphs.

The Occident

Unlike at *CuW*, *SB* conservatives regularly engaged with the concept of the “Occident” (*Abendland*) and often employed the term in addition to the more common “Europe” and “European Consolidation.” In fact, during the first few years of *SB* there appeared to be a divide between Axel Seeberg and Hans Zehrer, the latter of whom originally wrote about the Occident in much the same apolitical way Occident-advocates elsewhere discussed the concept.⁵⁵ This divide made its way subtly onto the pages of *SB* when Zehrer, in a special highlighted article, criticized Europe advocates who over-emphasized the political development of the Occident as opposed to the spiritual-cultural project that was most pertinent.⁵⁶ But by mid-1950, perhaps in part due to the Korean War and rearmament discussions, Zehrer was brought over to Seeberg’s position. In March, 1950 Zehrer agreed with Seeberg that a true commitment to the Occident

⁵⁴ Fried carefully continued to promote Grossraum-economics - not only in *SB* but even in a separate book published in 1950 with Eugen Diederichs Verlag. See Ferdinand Fried, *Das Abenteuer des Abendlandes* (Eugen Diederichs Verlag, 1950).

⁵⁵ Hans Zehrer, “Europa und das Abendland,” *Sonntagsblatt*, February 15, 1948.

⁵⁶ Hans Zehrer, “Westwind - Ostwind,” *Sonntagsblatt*, January 15, 1950.

meant preserving Europe from becoming a political, economic, and cultural extension of Sovietism or Americanism by establishing a Europe as a “third power” between East and West.⁵⁷

Criticism of Spengler

Part of the reason why *SB* conservatives employed the term Occident is because they spent more time than *CuW* writers engaging with the Spenglerian thesis of an Occident in decline. In March, 1950 *SB* began what would become a five-part series criticizing Spenglerian conservatism. The series began with an article by Ferdinand Fried about the economic potential of a unified Europe. It was accompanied with a forward by Seeberg proclaiming Spengler’s thesis wrong despite the recent world war seeming to have confirmed it.⁵⁸ Seeberg himself wrote the second piece of the series, arguing that Spengler was correct to identify organic, living cultural groups that transcend the nation; however, Spengler failed to see the enduring strength of European culture and the potential in modern politics, economics, and technology to preserve, or “garden-keep,” the living spirit of Europe by giving it new, modern institutions to grow and express itself. The Europe-movement in Strasbourg was purportedly doing just that.⁵⁹ The next

⁵⁷ Hans Zehrer, “Abendland im Untergang? Das Ende des politischen Humanismus in Europa,” *Sonntagsblatt*, April 2, 1950.

⁵⁸ Ferdinand Fried, “Abendland im Untergang? Umriss einer europäischen Wirtschaftsbilanz,” *Sonntagsblatt*, March 12, 1950.

⁵⁹ Axel Seeberg, “Abendland im Untergang? Die Bedeutung Europas für Weltgleichgewicht und Frieden,” *Sonntagsblatt*, March 19, 1950.

article in the series was written by Johann von Kielmansegg, a former Wehrmacht general whom we will introduce in more detail in the next chapter. As a former general it fell to Kielmansegg to explain how European rearmament was one of the essential modern institutions for the reinvigoration of the Occident. Anticipating the European Army, he argued that a combined European military could both defend Europe in what he described as an uninterrupted war with Bolshevism as well as serve as a vehicle for overcoming the nation-state. But a European military could do even more, he argued: “It has become a repeating fact of history that armament and war unite nations. A nation will not be produced until war has become an end in and of itself.” Kielmansegg went on to argue: “This is all revolving around the creation of a European nation [*Nationwerdung Europas*] – that’s what everything must work towards.” In contradiction to other Occident-advocates, then, *SB* conservatives refused to scorn modern politics, economics, and national identity; instead, they presented the Occident as the supreme manifestation of modernity.⁶⁰

European Historicism and Nazi Continuities

Kielmansegg’s essay went even further, however. He explicitly connected the “creation of a European nation” to the recent past:

It is not some disingenuous propaganda to claim that precisely the German soldier would be a good European. He has ‘experienced’ Europe in the truest sense of the word (even if he was led to it by those with other intentions). And he brought with him home either a conscious or unconscious feeling for Europe [*Europagefühl*]. It was often made

⁶⁰ Johann von Kielmansegg, “Abendland im Untergang? Die Notwendigkeit einer militärischen Macht Europas,” *Sonntagsblatt*, March 26, 1950.

painstakingly clear to him that the only salvation of Europe is the restoration of unity to all of its constituent members.⁶¹

Much more explicitly than at *CuW*, *SB* conservatives repeatedly defended the Europe-movement of the Axis powers in the Second World War, suggesting that it was betrayed by Hitler who was unable to see beyond the lens of nationalism.

In one article defending the politics in Strasbourg Seeberg went so far as to argue:

The unification of Europe became during the Second World War the convincing mission of the future. We learned to emphasize commonalities and resist peculiarities. We articulated the economic advantages of larger Raum(s). We believed that the evils of that war (which was seen as a European Civil War) would provide the impulse to restructure the old forms of singular states into one state. The politicians did not commit to these necessities. But remarkable men in all countries put themselves in the service of the Europe-concept.⁶²

In another article, Seeberg reviewed the tragic history of German nationalism and acknowledged that Germany had a historical problem with the mistaken view that the racial Volk was the primary unit of moral and political philosophy. However, the culmination of this historical blunder was not the Second World War, but rather the First World War. And while National Socialism initially appeared to continue this catastrophe, the correction eventually came not in spite of “converted National Socialists” but in part because of them. Nationalists and even many Nazis, he argued, understood that nations were “progressive forces in European history” and the war merely corrected their reductive commitment to the German Volk:

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Axel Seeberg, “Für eine aktive Kontinental-Politik: Deutschland und Frankreich müssen sich suchen,” *Sonntagsblatt*, October 16, 1949.

They discovered that a Volk was predicated on the existence of other Volk(s); in other words, that the community of peoples [*Völkergemeinschaft*] was just as important as the Volk. They learned that the unique community of destiny [*Schicksalgemeinschaft*] could only be found in Europe.⁶³

In a later article, Seeberg even connected Ernst Jünger's *Der Friede* (discussed in the previous chapter of this dissertation) to this very process of war-time nationalist revisionism.⁶⁴ In the last issue of 1950, which was a special review of progress towards European integration, one author explicitly summarized the rise of Nazi Europe-propaganda in 1940 arguing that although it was abused by Nazi leaders it nevertheless had an important and positive effect on many Europeans throughout the continent.⁶⁵

The reason for *SB*'s more audacious Second World War apologias lies in part with their repeated endeavor to give their notion of an organic European community a historical genealogy. Much like Nazi Europeanism, dozens of articles in *SB* set out to outline the chapters of history in which the European community was ascendant contrasted against moments of Europe's decline. In December, 1950, *SB* ran a special end-of-year edition devoted to examining the history, present, and future of the Europe-concept. The issue, titled "For a Third Europe," eerily echoed the Nazis' use of the historical term "third." One of the articles, an introductory historical essay written by an unidentified author, set the tone of the issue by arguing that Europe emerged in the form of the Holy Roman

⁶³ Axel Seeberg, "Nationalisten - Patrioten," *Sonntagsblatt*, February 27, 1949.

⁶⁴ Axel Seeberg, "Ein Abschnitt ging zu Ende," *Sonntagsblatt*, October 11, 1953.

⁶⁵ Kurt Lothar, "Was denkt der 'gute Europäer?'," *Sonntagsblatt*, December 31, 1950.

Empire. This “European empire,” the article argued, was forged in war; specifically, in a series of mostly defensive struggles against Asian invasion over the course of the Middle Ages: the Huns, the Arabs, the Hungarians, the Crusades, and the Turks. Each chapter of ancient history was told through the lens of an organic Europe drifting apart only to be saved by the cunning of history: an invasion that forced the European peoples into a recognition and defense of their shared European belonging and identity. As the article explained in its introduction:

While the peoples of this old empire underwent repeated disintegration and fragmentation, there always emerged, as a result of difficult blows landed by foreign peoples and far-away barbarians a cunning new consciousness, a new unity, indeed a new concept: Europe!⁶⁶

Hans Zehrer penned the final article in the special issue, which carried the same title as the special issue: “The Third Europe.” He began: “[Europeans] should be clear about one thing: that they stand today in one of the most decisive and significant moments of history, a moment that approaches the significance of both the first and the fifteenth centuries.” Zehrer implored *SB* readers to embrace the “Occident” movement for having the insight to connect Europe’s past to its present. But if Europeans were to seize their historical moment, he continued, then they must learn to merge the past with the present; in short, they must fuse the “Middle Ages” and “modernity.” “It’s all about a fusion of authority with freedom, faith with knowledge, capitalism with socialism, bourgeoisie with

⁶⁶ Unidentified author, “Europa - unter Schlägen geschmiedet,” *Sonntagsblatt*, December 31, 1950.

proletariat.” The rest of the article proceeded to explain what Zehrer meant by “Third Europe,” which turned out to be yet another articulation of the “Third Front” concept. Finding this reconciliation of past and present, Europeans would be able to avoid becoming a “cushion and intermediary between East and West.” Zehrer concluded, saying: “Actualizing the Third Europe and thereby making this Europe a Third factor in the world, that is what is demanded from every single European.”⁶⁷

Völkisch Europeanism

As many of the above examples hint at, *SB* conservatives were particularly bold in their advocacy for a völkisch Europe capable of preserving the praiseworthy aspects of the radical völkisch tradition and expanding them. Seeberg even deployed völkisch terminology directly from Nazi Europe-propaganda such as when he called Europe a “*Völkergemeinschaft*,” a “*Grossraum*,” or, in one particularly interesting case, a “Romantic-Germanic-Slavic Family of Peoples.”⁶⁸ Throughout Seeberg’s writings Europe was described as a kind of super-modern Volk. In one article he argued that Europe’s most powerful historical legacy was its “creative vitality,” but that political unification was the only historically prescribed method for preserving and strengthening such a cultural inheritance. The historical tradition of nationalism was pernicious for precisely this reason: it had politically fragmented the people of Europe and in doing so indirectly weakened its organic cultural strength such

⁶⁷ Hans Zehrer, “Das dritte Europa,” *Sonntagsblatt*, December 31, 1950.

⁶⁸ Axel Seeberg, “Wie weit reicht Europa?” *Sonntagsblatt*, February 28, 1954.

that European influence was increasingly challenged by Americans and Soviets. In the same article, Seeberg even assailed German nationalists for prioritizing German reunification at the expense of European integration and in doing so repeating the historical tragedy of nationalism. He implored Europeans everywhere to embrace their special mission to “preserve for white humanity the vitality of the foundations of the past, the foundations of ancient inheritance, and in doing so establish a counter-weight against the superficialities of technology.” “The exorbitance of European nationalism in the last forty years,” he concluded, “is perhaps the deepest source of European decline from its position of leadership. The European task of the present is, in fact, especially difficult in this way because the past must be integrated into the future, diversity must be integrated into unity. We can only accomplish this if we are able to assert our independence spiritually and politically against others.”⁶⁹ Aside from yet another articulation of the “Third Front” concept, an important line from the above quotations was the insistence that nationalism had left Europeans the burden of diversity. In this way, Seeberg was channeling a traditional *völkisch* argument of nationalism in the name of anti-nationalism: the value of homogeneity as opposed to diversity.

Another article of Seeberg’s investigated the history of nationalism and suggested that rapid modernization in the nineteenth century had led to an obsessive fascination with language as the primary source of identity among millions of Europeans increasingly in contact with their neighbors. This led to the belief that the language-group, the *Volk*, was the only conceivable political unit, a

⁶⁹ Axel Seeberg, “Der falsche Weg der letzten 40 Jahre,” *Sonntagsblatt*, August 1, 1954.

mistaken interpretation of the world that Europeans even began to read into the past, thus creating the “myth” of the Volk:

It seemed an incontrovertible guarantee that the Volk had been the intended political life-form since the creation. Everywhere in the world nation-states appeared to be the driving-force, and even ancient history appeared to be the history of the Greek and Roman Volk(s) (what idiocy!)... Man also believed to see that human culture actualized itself in Volk(s) and through Volk(s).

But the two World Wars, Seeberg concluded, had disproven these errors and inaugurated the “path into the European,” which Seeberg described as “patriotism” rather than “nationalism.” This European patriotism revealed that the European community, not the Volk, was the actual motor of history and carrier of culture that Europeans had forgotten and neglected in the age of nationalism. Already during the war, Europeans began to see through the fog of nationalism towards the “European Community of Peoples”

(Völkergemeinschaft):

We realized that this unique community of destiny only exists in Europe, that Americans in the USA were a completely different Volk, as well as the Chinese and Indians. We were won over to the argument that only a small era of history had been the history of Volk(s) [*Völker*] – this was a crucial occurrence. We saw that in this European realm all great achievements that we call culture were produced by many different Volk(s) [*Völker*].⁷⁰

In order to compliment this völkisch Europeanism, Seeberg defined European culture in much the same way he had during his war-time propaganda: namely, by contrasting it with the ostensibly materialistic ideologies of West and East: the collectivism of Bolshevism, the individualism of Americanism, and the

⁷⁰ Axel Seeberg, “Nationalisten - Patrioten,” *Sonntagsblatt*, February 27, 1949.

universalism that underpinned both Bolshevism and Americanism.⁷¹ The key point in all of the above examples is that Seeberg continued his war-time quest to disentangle the völkisch concept of ethnic community (*Gemeinschaft*) from German nationalism as well as racialism, and re-attach it to Europe. As he had during the war, Seeberg declared the emerging European community to be a “conscious group” (*Bewusstseinsgruppe*) in contrast to both the atomized individual and the culture-erasing “world-mission concept” of liberal modernity.⁷² Similar to his Nazi Europe-propaganda, Seeberg anchored the realization of his European imaginary in the politics of the present; but this time in the service of the politics of European integration. And, like *CuW*, *SB* threw its weight behind Konrad Adenauer and the CDU, culminating in a fever of enthusiasm for the EDC in the early 1950s.

West German Public Opinion

It is, of course, difficult to assess the impact *CuW* and *SB* had on West German public opinion, but it is important to note that during the height of their Europe-advocacy in the early 1950s West Germans polled their highest levels of support and enthusiasm for European integration. In 1952, when asked their thoughts on the “unification of Europe,” fifty-nine percent of West Germans responded positively while only fourteen percent responded negatively or

⁷¹ Axel Seeberg, “Abendland im Untergang? Die Bedeutung Europas für Weltgleichgewicht und Frieden,” *Sonntagsblatt*, March 19, 1950.

⁷² Axel Seeberg, “Der Rückfall in das nationalstaatliche Denken: Deutschland – das Spiegelbild der zweigeteilten Welt – Die Tendenzen zur Desintegration,” *Sonntagsblatt*, January 2, 1955.

skeptically.⁷³ In 1953 forty-one percent of West Germans even believed they would live to see the “United States of Europe,” while twenty-nine percent disagreed.⁷⁴ There is evidence that this enthusiasm was tightly connected to the EDC, which was the most salient issue for voters between 1952 and 1954. By 1954 only three percent of West Germans did not know what the EDC was.⁷⁵ When the European Army was first introduced in 1950 West Germans rejected the proposal fifty-two percent to thirty-three percent.⁷⁶ By 1953 public opinion had shifted to forty-four percent in favor and thirty-three percent against, totaling a thirty-point swing. More polling evidence suggests that the EDC was a primary factor in Adenauer and the CDU’s surging popularity in the early 1950s. In 1952 West Germans were largely split over how they viewed the CDU.⁷⁷ But by the fall of 1953, at the height of the EDC debates, Adenauer and the CDU obtained one of their most impressive postwar victories at the polls, something *CuW* and *SB* conservatives interpreted as a democratic confirmation of their Europeanism. There is at least some evidence to suggest they were correct. When voters were given a list of reasons why Adenauer and the CDU had been so successful and were asked to choose which answer they believed best explained the electoral victory, only thirty-five percent chose the economy while fifty-nine percent chose

⁷³ Noelle and Neumann, *Jahrbuch für öffentliche Meinung, 1947-1955*, 339.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 339.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 363-364

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 357.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 258.

an answer relating to foreign policy such as his “negotiation” skills in international relations. In fact, thirteen percent of West Germans specifically stated that his support for the EDC was the primary reason for his electoral success.⁷⁸ The important point here is that the policies of European integration, specifically the negotiations over the European Army, were the most salient political topics of the early 1950s. As David Clay Large has argued, West German rearmament was not *a* but rather “*the* primary question in West German domestic politics of the early 1950s.”⁷⁹ And as the above pages have shown, the CDU’s smashing 1953 electoral victory at the climax of these debates was accompanied by a network of post-Nazi Europeanists at the two most influential political periodicals of the day who sought to rally a significant portion of Protestant conservatism into the CDU’s rearmament voting bloc.

Democratization in *Christ und Welt* and *Sonntagsblatt*

By 1954, *CuW* and *SB* conservatives had become fully committed to the success of the EDC. As Seeberg explained in a 1952 article: “there will be no Europe without a European Army...if the European Army fails, then the concept of European unity will be lost for a generation.”⁸⁰ Consequently, when the French parliament torpedoed the EDC in late August, 1954 *CuW* and *SB*

⁷⁸ To be sure, the most chosen answer was “because there are no better politicians in Germany,” an answer likely chosen by most members of the left-wing parties that had lost to Adenauer. *Ibid.*, 259.

⁷⁹ David Clay Large, *Germans to the Front*, 2.

⁸⁰ Axel Seeberg, “Wie wird Europa wieder lebendig?” *Sonntagsblatt*, January 6, 1952.

conservatives experienced the defeat not as a mere policy set-back but as a ground-shaking crisis of faith in their Europe-concept. For Mehnert, the day the French parliament voted the EDC down was “the black day of Europe.”⁸¹ And while they did not immediately repudiate their Europe-concept, from August, 1954 onwards they began a process of gradual disillusionment and eventually distanced themselves from their former European idealism. This process mirrored what appears to have been a similar thaw in public opinion. A 1953 poll found that thirty-seven percent of West Germans felt a future “European Parliament” should have the last word in legislating politics while only fourteen percent desired such power in the national parliaments. But the same question asked in 1955 only resulted in thirty-two percent of West Germans choosing a European parliament while forty-two percent chose national parliaments – a thirty-three point swing.⁸² Similarly, by 1955 neither a statistical majority or even plurality of West Germans believed any longer that they would live to see the “United States of Europe.”⁸³ The year 1954, then, marks a rupture point not only in the history of post-Nazi Europeanism but also in the history of European integration. The remaining paragraphs of this chapter will set out to illustrate how former Nazi Europeanists initially carried over much of their war-time anti-liberalism into their postwar journalism, but beginning around the year 1954, and in conjunction with their disillusionment vis-à-vis the Europe-concept, *CuW* and *SB*

⁸¹ Klaus Mehnert, “Die nackten Tatsachen,” *Christ und Welt*, September 9, 1954.

⁸² Noelle and Neumann, *Jahrbuch für öffentliche Meinung, 1947-1955*, 341.

⁸³ Noelle and Neumann, *Jahrbuch für öffentliche Meinung, 1947-1955*, 339.

conservatives began a gradual reconciliation with liberal democracy. Having advocated from within the institutions of West German politics they had accustomed themselves to the banality of liberal democracy, and with their European dream shattered they filled their intellectual vacuum with a gradual long-term acceptance of liberalism.

Early Illiberalism

Their hostile relationship with liberal democracy was apparent from the beginning of *CuW* and *SB*, both of which rose to prominence during the debates over the German constitution (*Das Grundgesetz*). The writers in both periodicals initially carefully criticized the emerging constitution only to eventually begrudgingly accept it. Gerstenmaier, for example, set the tone in *CuW* by attacking the principle of popular sovereignty in liberal democracy as anathema to the political traditions of Europe.⁸⁴ As late as 1952 Wirsing was still theorizing about alternatives to the West German constitution, saying: “We most certainly desire to live in freedom, but we don’t have the slightest reason to believe that the current form of democracy is the only possible way to imagine having that.” It is true, he continued, that Germans and other Europeans had failed to find a legitimate alternative to liberal democracy and that the necessary end result was the West German Federal Republic. But the West German constitution, he continued, could still be supplemented with some kind of “strong institution” not

⁸⁴ Eugen Gerstenmaier, “Wird sich die liberale Demokratie behaupten?“ *Christ und Welt*, April 27, 1950.

subject to popular election.⁸⁵ As mentioned earlier, these direct confrontations with the West German constitutional order were rare – most of the time *CuW* and *SB* conservatives criticized West Germany indirectly by suggesting its hypocrisy in matters of denazification. In contrast, liberal democracy in theory was subjected to a torrent of critical examination. The over-arching “Third Front” narrative provided ample opportunity to define Europe in contrast to Marxism and liberalism, most often by tying together these “foreign” ideologies as products of individualism or globalism rather than organic community (*Gemeinschaft*). These criticisms, of course, were strikingly similar to war-time arguments in Nazi-Europeanism.

Sometimes these criticisms were subtle emulations of the Occident-advocates, such as decrying “Humanism” and the Enlightenment project as the origins of mechanistic liberalism.⁸⁶ Another subtle critique of liberalism was the occasional argument that representative democracy’s claim to supervising the implementation of popular will was exaggerated, and that popular enthusiasm for a new Europe was the most genuine expression of popular will regardless of politicians’ trepidation vis-à-vis European integration.⁸⁷ Such arguments were a reformulation of political sovereignty anchored in völkisch nationalism. Other criticisms of liberalism were more explicit. Take for example Hans Zehrer’s contribution to *SB*’s Spengler series in 1950. In the article he repeated the often

⁸⁵ Giselher Wirsing, “Der Staat der Deutschen,” *Christ und Welt*, February 14, 1952.

⁸⁶ See, for example, Wirsing, *Schritt aus dem Nichts*.

⁸⁷ See, for example, -CuW, “Völker als Schrittmacher,” *Christ und Welt*, March 17, 1949.

stated, yet vague, “revolutionary” aspirations of the emerging Europe: “European unity will only be accomplished through revolution – it will never come about through conferences and parliaments and committees and clubs!” But then he went a step further defining the upcoming revolution. The political status quo, he argued, “will witness with it a transformation of the political institutions that created it.” Those “political institutions” according to Zehrer were the: nation-state, democracy, and socialism. “A European polity,” he explained

can only be administered and led in a European manner, and it would be too large to be based on free and secret elections. Democracy, originally the political institution of the city-state, must be made secondary to the responsibility of administering and planning a Grossraum. It is already failing everywhere in our modern mass-states.... The individual is not, as Humanism teaches, good and rational....⁸⁸

Zehrer’s commitment to working within democracy, then, was actually quite thin. A few weeks later Seeberg picked up on this argument in a special highlighted article by taking to task what he called the “political terminology of the West.” In Seeberg’s view the West spoke of freedom, but in reality only misused the concept of freedom as a “political punch-line.” Real freedom, Seeberg argued, was found in the community rather than the individual: “Human relations should not be governed by free trade and rational, good individuals, because they require order.”⁸⁹ At the end of the year Seeberg even directed a threat to the politicians of liberal democracy. The article was titled “Europe Now, Finally!” with a subtitle:

⁸⁸ Hans Zehrer, “Abendland im Untergang? Das Ende des politischen Humanismus in Europa,” *Sonntagsblatt*, April 2, 1950.

⁸⁹ Axel Seeberg, “Über die Freiheit,” *Sonntagsblatt*, June 11, 1950.

“Five years of struggle to no avail – if democracy fails, other movements will intervene.” The essay, written during the initial debates about German rearmament in the context of the Korean War suggested the possibility of a military coup conducted continent-wide and backed by a spontaneous European army. “The prospects for European unification,” Seeberg began,

by which we mean a deconstruction of the nation-state system in favor of European sovereignty, appeared to be good after 1945. The Europe-concept over-shadowed the nation-concept. This was the case in all countries...liberals as well as conservatives and socialists, indeed even the defamed National Socialists.

“The nominal way of democracy,” he continued, was not making the desired progress in Strasbourg. Even worse, Seeberg argued, European democracies appeared to be in the process of emasculating the contemporary natural strength of “Europe-concept” by re-focusing its energy on an expansion and entrenchment of NATO which was nothing more than a “pseudo-European solution” and therefore a “repudiation of the Europe-concept,” as well as a rejection of the will of Europeans. Seeberg concluded his article with a thinly veiled threat: if “democracy in Europe does not prove capable of the great task, the task of the twentieth century” then “other, undemocratic forces would necessarily avail themselves of the Europe-concept.”⁹⁰

CuW and *SB* conservatives were sensitive to accusations of radical right-wing politics, and, as discussed earlier, they confronted these accusations by suggesting that the shifting debates over national identity created a new coalition

⁹⁰ Axel Seeberg, “Nun erst recht: Europa! Fünf Jahre vergeblicher Kampf – Wenn die Demokratie versagt, müssen Bewegungen eingreifen,” *Sonntagsblatt*, December 31, 1950.

of radical reactionaries: left-wing and neo-fascist nationalists. A corollary to this argument was the recurrent notion that the left-right metaphor of politics no longer functioned in the era of European unification, and that a new conservatism was emerging that was neither right nor left; rather, it was “progressive.” In one article, titled “‘Right’ or Conservative?” *CuW* argued that an older nationalist conservatism of the nineteenth century had died with National Socialism. The new conservatism, in contrast, was anchored in the Europe-concept: “it is a matter of course that a coming European Order is being articulated according to the precepts of progress. After all, progress is inevitably our destiny.” The article continued, arguing that this “progressive Europe” would ultimately fail if it was not born of conservative principles.⁹¹ This was a reinvention of the Conservative Revolutionary tradition which juxtaposed liberalism and Marxism against a new European conservatism. As Mehnert often argued, if Europeans were to compete with the East and West, then they would need to find a compelling “idea” to contrast with the ideologies of the two superpowers. And until they discovered that the Europe-concept was precisely that idea, they were destined to second-rate world status.⁹² In short, European völkisch nationalism was the intellectual competitor to Marxism and liberalism.

Reconciliation with Liberalism after 1952

⁹¹ -us, “‘Rechts’ oder Konservative?” *Sonntagsblatt*, October 2, 1952. -CuW, “Konservative ist nicht reaktionär!” *Christ und Welt*, April 16, 1953.

⁹² -CuW, “Wir haben keine Idee!” *Christ und Welt*, September 28, 1950.

The above confrontations with liberalism in *CuW* and *SB* primarily spanned the years 1948-1952. Beginning in the year 1952 *CuW* and *SB* conservatives began to slowly reconsider their ardent opposition to liberalism, and after the failure of the EDC in 1954 they even began to adopt it. A key early factor in this transition was the perception that the United States was their most faithful ally in the debates over European integration. Already in 1950 Ferdinand Fried published a book with the Eugen Diederichs publishing house in which he argued that the United States was the “inheritance” of Europe. In an interview published in *Die Welt* he was pressed by an interviewer who suggested that the United States was in stark cultural opposition to European values, to which Fried agreed but argued that the European revolution underway was capable of “embed[ding] the spirit of the defeated into the spirit of the victor.” In other words, a united Europe was capable of not only re-establishing itself as a third power in the world, but also reshaping the United States in its image.⁹³ Similar arguments found their way into the pages of *CuW* and *SB* over the course of 1952 to the point where Europe began to be described as a member of “the West” (albeit a distinct and equal member to the United States).⁹⁴ Their willingness to see the United States as culturally salvageable was to large extent a product of their perception that the United States under Eisenhower was a fierce advocate of the European Army as well as remaking Europe into the United States of Europe.

⁹³ Ferdinand Fried, *Das Abenteuer des Abendlandes* (Eugen Diederichs Verlag, 1950).

Unnamed author, “Interview mit einem neuen Buch,” *Die Welt*, October 8, 1950.

⁹⁴ Klaus Mehnert, “Idee und Kraft,” *Christ und Welt*, January 3, 1952.

For example, in early 1952 Seeberg wrote an article about the history of the disintegration of the nation-state in Europe with a special section on the role of the United States. He explained that although some unfortunately loud Americans were under the impression Europe was a “dying continent” being remade into an extension of the United States, most Americans and especially their political leaders knew differently:

It must be emphasized again and again that these positions [RE: a dying continent] are in no way the view of leading American statesmen. Men like Acheson or Jessup or Kennan most certainly do not want some kind of Atlantic imperialism. They want to give back to Europe its independence because they are aware of the limits of American resources. This is why Eisenhower has spoken out in favor of the European Army.⁹⁵

Remarkably, a year later Seeberg was arguing that a “European Community in possession of enough power to assert itself against not only the Soviet Union but also against the United States” was actually the “long sought-after goal of the United States.”⁹⁶

Eventually this enthusiasm about the perceived posture of the United States bled over into a willingness to consider a role for liberal democracy in the coming European polity. In May, 1953, for example, Seeberg wrote a long article titled “Parties and Democracy,” in which he attempted to revise his previous hostility towards liberal democracy. While it was true that liberal democracy had many shortcomings, he explained,

[t]he modern state cannot survive without the unification of state and citizen, in other words without the integration of the individual. The participation of the citizen in public matters (which was originally the goal

⁹⁵ Axel Seeberg, “Wie wird Europa wieder lebendig?“ *Sonntagsblatt*, January 6, 1952.

⁹⁶ Axel Seeberg, “Neue Ansatzpunkte zwischen Ost und West,“ *Sonntagsblatt*, August 2, 1953.

of democracy) has become today an outstanding method of the democratic states as it pertains to this integration.⁹⁷

In other words, Seeberg was coming to reject his earlier suspicions that representative democracy could not genuinely facilitate public will. As discussed above, for *CuW* and *SB* conservatives what actually defined the legitimacy of modern politics was whether or not it advanced what they already ostensibly knew was the will of the people: namely, European integration. In 1953 the winds of democratic politics appeared to be blowing in their direction and this softened their opposition to liberal democracy. This was especially true after the fall, 1953 decisive electoral victory for the CDU which *CuW* and *SB* conservatives interpreted as a democratic confirmation of the European Army and the Europe-concept as such.⁹⁸

The defeat of the EDC in August, 1954 had two crucial long-term consequences for the intellectual trajectory of *CuW* and *SB* conservatives. First, their hope for a European revolution was broken. Over the next few years their Europe-advocacy gradually declined, and although they officially maintained the desire to eventually see European unification they openly admitted that this was unlikely in the near future and in their originally desired form.⁹⁹ Many of the writers, especially Giselher Wirsing and Klaus Mehnert, shifted much of their

⁹⁷ Axel Seeberg, "Parteien und Demokratie," *Sonntagsblatt*, May 17, 1953.

⁹⁸ See, for example, Klaus Mehnert, "Scheintoter erwacht: die EVG ist wieder aktuell geworden," *Christ und Welt*, September 24, 1953.

⁹⁹ See, for example, Hoening, "Kommt Europa wieder auf die Beine?" *Christ und Welt*, November 3, 1955.

focus towards world affairs and even began travelling the world, sending back to *CuW* usually non-political essays about world cultures while ceding the diminishing European discussion and domestic politics to other authors. The Europe-concept ceased to dominate the front-pages of either periodical. The second long-term consequence was the gradual reconciliation with liberal democracy. Initially, in the sting of defeat, both periodicals criticized Adenauer's swift pivot towards West German entry in NATO at the London and Paris Conferences, and they pleaded for Europeans to rally to Gerstenmaier and his colleagues in Strasbourg who were seeking alternative routes to European rearmament as an substitute to NATO.¹⁰⁰ But by the end of 1954 writers at both periodicals as well as Eugen Gerstenmaier had come around to begrudgingly supporting West German entry into NATO. By 1956 both periodicals had become energetic supporters of NATO (in fact, both chief editors, Wirsing and Seeberg, were separately invited to NATO headquarters and then reported on these visits very sympathetically).¹⁰¹ Even more importantly, both periodicals now defined the geopolitical struggle in West-East terminology and confessed themselves supporters of the previously derided "Atlantic Community."¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ See, for example, Klaus Mehnert, "Veto und NATO," *Christ und Welt*, September 23, 1954.

¹⁰¹ See, for example, Giselher Wirsing, "Die NATO ist kein Befehlstand," *Christ und Welt*, May 5, 1955.

¹⁰² See, for example, Axel Seeberg, "Das Grosse Lager," *Sonntagsblatt*, July 1, 1956.

In short, after 1954 *CuW* and *SB* conservatives rapidly lost their faith in the Europe-concept while simultaneously transitioning from an exploitative “Third Front” relationship with the Western world to a substantive and emulative relationship. Only a few weeks after the London and Paris Conferences Seeberg wrote an article titled “Conservatives and Liberals” in which he for the first time explicitly accepted liberalism. After outlining the history of liberal philosophy he acknowledged that conservatism had emerged and been driven in opposition to liberalism. But he declared to his readers that conservatism must fuse with liberalism. The bourgeoisie had won its long social struggle against the aristocratic and working classes and had gradually forced conservatives to adopt to this reality, and democracy, too, had proven itself functional. Going forward, then, conservatives would need to seek a way to combine their left-over conservatism with the victorious liberalism.¹⁰³ Around the time of this article Seeberg joined and became a long-term member of the “Kronberg Circle,” a group of Protestant theologians and intellectuals founded to advance Konrad Adenauer’s *Westbindung* position within German Protestantism.¹⁰⁴ Seeberg began advocating *Westbindung* in the pages of *SB*, imploring his readers to end Germany’s “back-and-forth politics” (*Schaukelpolitik*) between West and East.¹⁰⁵ By the 1960s both *CuW* and *SB* had become ardent advocates of the democratic West and even passionate defenders of the United States in an era when public

¹⁰³ Axel Seeberg, “Konservative und Liberale,” *Sonntagsblatt*, November 7, 1954.

¹⁰⁴ Sauer, *Westorientierung im deutschen Protestantismus*, 232-233.

¹⁰⁵ Axel Seeberg, “Das Gespenst von Rapallo,” *Sonntagsblatt*, January 30, 1955.

opinion was beginning to turn against the United States. For example, they focused much of their commentary on a criticism of De Gaulle and his arguments for an independent “Europe of Fatherlands,” which they interpreted as camouflaged nationalism and a threat to the Atlantic Alliance.¹⁰⁶ In 1958 Seeberg ran a special highlighted article criticizing the German tradition of deriding the United States as a spiritually empty civilization. Not only were the Americans equally productive in high culture, he argued, but their political institutions were also an example for Europeans to strive towards.¹⁰⁷ *CuW* likewise rallied to the United States. The final CIA trace on Giselher Wirsing in 1965 stated that “Mehnert and Wirsing are now convinced advocates of the American alliance, and Mehnert is probably the most effective commentator at present on German TV.” The analysis emphasized that Wirsing in particular had been an “outstandingly effective advocate of German support for American cultural policy in Germany.” Specifically, they noted that Wirsing had repeatedly espoused continuing West German funding for the so-called “America-Houses,” bi-national centers for American cultural diplomacy funded by both the American and West German governments.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ See, for example, Axel Seeberg, “Zwiesprache mit der Geschichte Frankreichs,” *Sonntagsblatt*, April 3, 1960.

¹⁰⁷ Axel Seeberg, “Amerikanisches,” *Sonntagsblatt*, May 4, 1958.

¹⁰⁸ Paul R. Sweet (American Consul General in Stuttgart) to the United States Department of State, “Dr. Giselher Wirsing and Christ und Welt: A Profile,” November 23, 1965 United States National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, MD, RG 263, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency, box 57, folder “Wirsing, Giselher.”

Conclusion: Different Trajectories

The general evolution of *CuW* and *SB* conservatives towards liberalism should not obscure the varying paths and degrees of reconciliation that accompanied this transformation. Mehnert, who rapidly embraced liberalism along with his former employer Eugen Gerstenmaier, was an exception to the rule. Within months after the inclusion of West Germany in NATO Mehnert had become an advocate of liberal democracy, and, as the above CIA document suggests, he even became a leading defender of the United States in West German television. In fact, in the 1970s and 1980s Mehnert travelled multiple times to the United States as a guest lecturer at various prestigious American universities and also began publicly criticizing what he described as an unacceptable rising tide of “anti-Americanism” in European politics.¹⁰⁹ He also remained a committed ally of the West German state and was even invited to accompany the centrist Chancellor Helmut Schmidt on his diplomatic trip to China in 1975.¹¹⁰ Mehnert was also uniquely successful in journalism after the 1950s whereas most of the conservatives at *CuW* and *SB* fell into obscurity during the 1960s when both publications experienced rapid declines in readership. By the late 1960s *Der Spiegel* ran an article about Mehnert’s continued celebrity, reporting that his publishers had published more than one million copies of his postwar books. One especially successful book, titled *The German Position*, declared an end to the

¹⁰⁹ Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 197.

Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 184.

¹¹⁰ Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 197.

traditional German “cultural pessimism” and “animosity to the Enlightenment.” Germans, he argued, had found their way to accepting “progress” and “the West.”¹¹¹

Wirsing, on the other hand, had a more fraught path towards liberalism. While Mehnert and other colleagues of his at *CuW* were, by the end of 1954, energetically cheering West German inclusion in NATO, Wirsing’s support was more timid. In his last article of the year Wirsing opened with the admission that underneath the surface of the euphoric events in recent months he felt a certain “discomfort.” This discomfort, he explained, was a feeling for him and many other Germans that something was missing in their identity as Germans and Europeans as the “Middle” between West and East:

Historically we have always been the Middle. But this Middle no longer exists geographically or strategically. The concept of the Middle portends that there is a self-dependent realm between two extreme poles. Is that what is causing our discomfort? This missing law? Not to be misunderstood, if we may be so bold one might call it the missing Reich. Our discomfort is born from the mistrust that they are trying to perhaps make us permanent satellites of the superpowers in the West and East. We don’t want either.... Some like to say that we should be a “bridge between West and East.” But the Middle is more than a bridge. She is also more than a “third power” or any other similar political terminologies that might be used. Being in the Middle – that used to be an existential question for us.

Coming to terms with “the West” was a tortured process for Wirsing, but at the same time no longer something he rejected – merely a “discomfort.” Wirsing proceeded to explain that this ambivalence was a product of suddenly losing the dream of a European Middle:

¹¹¹ Golo Mann, “Die Welt – Gar Nicht so Böse?“ *Der Spiegel*, August 14, 1967.

For a while we hoped that the Europe-concept would fill in the vacuum. It seemed that there was a chance for a re-birth of unity out of the ashes of diversity.... Even though we have not entirely lost our faith in a greater European unity, one must admit that quite often the magical word 'Europe' was a fantasy. It was a replacement for so much that was missing. And it can't replace that. Neither a remote association nor a comprehensive and powerful economic organization can create this Europe. These 'transactional-Europeans' will not fill the vacuum.... The history of the last few years has illustrated that exaggerated expectations for the Europe-concept keep leading into a dead-end.... The empty phrases have trailed off in muffled halls.¹¹²

Wirsing proceeded to declare the Europe-concept another one of the many misguided "utopias" of the early twentieth century such as fascism. This stunning comparison was an attempt by Wirsing to draw a line under his previous revolutionary aspirations for politics. Indeed, Wirsing's political commentary from 1955 onwards became a kind of disgruntled acceptance of liberal democracy as the best, albeit banal, alternative to utopian politics. This put him into conflict with colleagues still attached to the Conservative Revolution. In 1963 Wirsing, who had briefly stepped down as chief editor at *CuW*, was brought back on as chief editor in order to resolve a conflict between conservatives and liberals in the editing staff. Wirsing condemned the conservative fire-brands for living in an alternate reality, ultimately severing his friendship with one of the most well-known Conservative Revolutionaries, Armin Mohler, who subsequently left the paper.¹¹³ By the mid-1960s Wirsing had become a convinced ally of the United States not only in foreign policy but even in domestic cultural diplomacy such as

¹¹² Giseler Wirsing, "Hoffen allein genügt nicht," *Christ und Welt*, December 29, 1954.

¹¹³ Nils Asmussen, "Hans-Georg von Studnity: Ein Konservativer Journalist im Dritten Reich und in der Bundesrepublik" in *Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 45.1 (1997), 75-119.

the “America-Houses.” In 1971 Wirsing even had a quarrel with his long-time friend and associate Klaus Mehnert over the latter’s support for *Ostpolitik*, the SPD’s foreign policy of rapprochement with East Germany. For Wirsing, *Ostpolitik* denied the real and unsurmountable ideological differences between Western freedom and Eastern totalitarianism. Equally as important, it threatened to weaken their alliance to the United States. As Wirsing told Mehnert in private correspondence: “our own problems [in Germany] have to be understood within and subordinated to the larger relationship with the West.”¹¹⁴

A final unique trajectory worth discussing is Axel Seeberg’s extraordinary embrace of cosmopolitanism. Unlike Wirsing, Seeberg did not shed his desire for utopian solutions to the nation-state. However, he found a new utopia in liberal cosmopolitanism, or what he called “world democracy.” Seeberg, as discussed above, had been an especially vigorous proponent of *völkisch* Europeanism which attacked Western and Eastern “universalism” as an affront to the organic community principle. But in May, 1955 Seeberg wrote an article titled “A Receipt for 1945-1955,” in which he attempted to come to terms with the failure of the Europe-concept and proclaimed a desire to finally embrace liberal universalism. The Nazi Reich, he explained, failed to establish itself as the leader of a New Europe, and Europeans were subsequently on the verge of fulfilling that task collectively in the early 1950s. Alas, the forces of nationalism proved too

¹¹⁴ Wirsing to Mehnert, January 15, 1971, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 439. Mehnert to Wirsing, January 3, 1971, Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart, Q 1/30, Bü 439.

strong and Europe had failed. This left Europeans, he argued, with no recourse to defeat nationalism except to return to what he believed was Franklin D.

Roosevelt's original ideology: "world democracy." If technological, economic, and social evolution made the nation-state unsustainable, he explained, then some greater community would need to fill the vacuum where the European revolution had failed.¹¹⁵ Therefore, Seeberg admonished Germans to discard their traditional cultural pessimism about American civilization and find the cultural parallels between Europe and the United States.¹¹⁶ He also acknowledged that a new "world democracy" required rejecting his hitherto held notion of incontrovertible organic community differences between Europeans and Americans and any other democratic populations. West Germans must foster in themselves the will power to accept "the commonality of Western peoples" rather than European peculiarities. He finished: "The United States of Europe can be found in America. The history of America can be found in Europe and the future of Europe is both in Europe and in America."¹¹⁷ By the early 1960s Seeberg went so far as to argue that the West must work towards a political "super-state" in the future. "World democracy," he argued must be more than a defensive "alliance" such as embodied in NATO:

The currently superbly functioning integration of militaries [in NATO] originally happened, not because of the realization that it would increase military strength, but rather due to concern over independent German rearmament. At the time there was much spoken about a supranational

¹¹⁵ Axel Seeberg, "1945 - Eine Zwischenbilanz - 1955," *Sonntagsblatt*, May 8, 1955.

¹¹⁶ Axel Seeberg, "Amerikanisches," *Sonntagsblatt*, May 4, 1958.

¹¹⁷ Axel Seeberg, "Abendland beiderseits des Atlantiks," *Sonntagsblatt*, July 7, 1956.

community [EDC], but all those beautiful words ultimately produced nothing of consequence as it pertains to the fundamental removal of nation-state sovereignty.

He continued:

As long as this system is not fundamentally altered, then there won't be any room in the Atlantic Alliance to maneuver regarding demands for a common Atlantic politics in other areas [other than the military] Naturally, then, we must consider the question whether the time has come to advance the integration of the Western powers through a conscientious transformation of the nation-state character of the coalition.

Seeberg concluded that this necessitated an eventual political "Western super-state" and admonished his readers to patiently advance this long-term vision.¹¹⁸

By "politics in other areas" Seeberg meant, among other things, furthering economic free trade and democratizing the third world.¹¹⁹ Remarkably, it turns out that Seeberg, like Mehnert, was working unofficially for West German officials as early as the spring of 1951. Correspondences in the personal archival holdings of Johann von Kielmansegg (the Wehrmacht General and author of an above-mentioned article in *SB*) suggest that Seeberg had promised Kielmansegg, who worked as a public relations agent in the Blank Office, heightened emphasis and positive coverage on the European Army negotiations in the pages of *SB*.¹²⁰ At the end of 1952 Seeberg was even offered a position working in public relations in the Federal Press Department (*Bundespresseamt*) which he ultimately

¹¹⁸ Axel Seeberg, "Sand im Getriebe des Westens," *Sonntagsblatt*, March 26, 1961.

¹¹⁹ See, for example, Axel Seeberg, "Lehren vom Kongo," *Sonntagsblatt*, July 14, 1960.

¹²⁰ Seeberg to Kielmansegg, April 14, 1951, Bundesarchiv Militärarchiv in Freiburg, N 626/221. Kielmansegg to Seeberg, May 2, 1951, Bundesarchiv Militärarchiv in Freiburg, N 626/221.

turned down because it was not accompanied with a promise of eventual employment in the Foreign Office.¹²¹ Seeberg's turn to liberalism, much like Mehnert's, was preceded by a working relationship with the West German state beginning in the early 1950s.

By the end of the 1950s, then, *CuW* and *SB* conservatives had abandoned their radical conservative opposition to liberal modernity; in fact, as the Seeberg case illustrates, in some cases they came to use some of the most significant journalistic positions in the young Federal Republic to eventually advocate a universal politics of liberalism that went beyond even American postwar liberalism. The conservative network at *CuW* and *SB*, therefore, offers an important case study in the history of democratization and de-radicalization in German politics. The story of *CuW* and *SB* illustrates that some of the most influential conservative propagandists in National Socialism were, from positions of considerable influence, openly adopting Western liberalism already by the mid-1950s. The key to this process was a confrontation with the legacy of *völkisch* national identity through what initially began as a revised continuation of their war-time Europeanism but ultimately culminated in their abandonment of the Europe-concept having become accustomed to the stale but realistic politics of liberal democracy. But, as has been implied in this chapter and the previous chapter, this transformation could not have happened without American and West

¹²¹ Kielmansegg to Seeberg, December 2, 1952, Bundesarchiv Militärarchiv in Freiburg, N 626/230. Seeberg to Kielmansegg, December 4, 1952, Bundesarchiv Militärarchiv in Freiburg, N 626/230.

German intervention. In fact, the final chapter of this dissertation sets out to show how the American and West German authorities played an important role deliberately facilitating and accommodating this transformation in the postwar West German veterans' community.

Chapter 9: Post-Nazi Europeanism in Veterans' Organizations and Intelligence Operations

Introduction

One of the key social groups in this dissertation is the conservative German military milieu. Earlier chapters of this dissertation have examined the Europe-concept in Waffen-SS and Wehrmacht propaganda as well as Ernst Jünger's faction of conservative military critics of National Socialism which transitioned into the postwar period with a belief in a new European empire without the Nazis. The following chapter picks up on this continuity by presenting what this dissertation calls "post-Nazi Europeanism" as it existed in West German veterans' organizations. As will be illustrated, the Europe-concept was continued but also significantly revised in postwar West German veteran culture; specifically, in the most-published veterans' periodical of the postwar period (*Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*) as well as the largest officers' association of the early postwar period (*Gesellschaft für Wehrkunde*). Importantly, both of these veterans' organizations were founded, funded, and directed by covert U.S. intelligence operations which, by 1953, had handed over the projects to West German authorities who subsequently continued the covert operations (one of them until well into the 1960s). The CIA project-codenames for *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung* and *Gesellschaft für Wehrkunde* were Project KMMANLY and Project QKSNITCH, respectively. As this chapter will show, the CIA coopted the Europe-concept as a vehicle in their attempt to democratize postwar West German military conservatism; however, in order to do so they had to work with some of the compromised Nazi Europeanists of this dissertation (most prominently

Waffen-SS general Felix Steiner) who subsequently used the above operations as a space for their Europe-concept. As such, each of these veterans' affairs operations initially continued some of the illiberal elements of Nazi Europeanism. Yet, by the mid-1950s these intelligence operations had successfully integrated liberal concepts into the center of their political narratives, expelled Felix Steiner as a leader of the projects, and begun embracing NATO and the Atlantic Alliance.

In one of the most important monographs on the West German veterans' organizations of the early postwar period, Jay Lockenour argues that veterans accommodated themselves to democracy rather quickly in the postwar period because the Federal Republic of Germany was their only means to address their grievances with Allied denazification and retribution measures against German soldiers and because the politics of the Cold War presented a bridge to their anti-Communism.¹ But this interpretation does not fully explain why West German veterans not only accommodated themselves to democratic politics but specifically aligned themselves with the politics of Christian Democracy. As historian Alaric Searle has discussed, the vast majority of politically active postwar German veterans in the 1950s either supported Konrad Adenauer's Christian Democratic Union (CDU) or its coalition partner the Free Democratic Party (FDP) while scorning the center-left Social Democratic Party (SPD) which

¹ Jay Lockenour, *Soldiers as Citizens: Former Wehrmacht Officers in the Federal Republic of Germany, 1945-1955* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 2001). Jörg Echternkamp, *Soldaten im Krieg: Historische Deutungskonflikte und westdeutsche Demokratisierung, 1945-1955* (Munich: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2014).

was itself avowedly anti-Communist and which put forward considerable effort to win over veterans.² Furthermore, as discussed throughout this dissertation, postwar West German political culture experienced a curious reversal in nationalism, and West German veterans ultimately rallied to a political Right that fiercely rebuked nationalism while the political Left energetically embraced it (albeit shorn of its racial and irredentist inclinations). It is essential to understand how German military conservatism attached itself to the anti-nationalism politics of Christian Democracy in the early 1950s when nationalism had hitherto in German history been the organizing principle of not only German conservatism but especially the German military. In 1955 this alliance ultimately produced the West German contribution to NATO, the Bundeswehr, which was anchored with a liberal “military constitution” and was thus a key piece of Konrad Adenauer’s politics of “Western integration.”³

This chapter will address this question by investigating how the Europe-concept was both a continuity and break with the past, a discourse of identity transformation which was heavily present in the ideological material of postwar West German veterans’ organizations. The de-radicalization of German military conservatism, then, was not only a product of opportunism and Cold War anti-Communism, but also a story of ideas; specifically, the idea that the primary

² Alaric Searle, *Wehrmacht Generals, West German Society, and the Debate on Rearmament, 1949-1959* (New York: Praeger, 2003).

³ David Clay Large, *Germans to the Front: West German Rearmament in the Adenauer Era* (University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 205-264.

rearmament proposal in the European democracies of the early-1950s (the European Defense Community, or EDC) was the redemptive fulfillment of the European revolution. This idea was at the center of U.S. and West German democratization initiatives vis-à-vis veterans as well as the work of a handful of key military reformers in the former German career officer corps who newly enter our story: Robert Knauss, Johann von Kielmansegg, Erich Dethleffsen, and A.W. Uhlig. The first half of this chapter will introduce the two covert CIA operations that initially enabled a widespread illiberal Europeanism in German veterans' organizations which was remarkably similar to that found in the early years of *Christ und Welt* and *Sonntagsblatt*. The second half of this chapter will outline the democratization of these projects and the role played by liberal military reformers connected to the West German government. The source materials for this chapter are drawn from several archives. First, the *Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv* in Freiburg, which supplied the personal holdings for various figures in this chapter as well as the documents from the "Blank Office," the predecessor to the West German Ministry of Defense. Second, the *Bundesarchiv* in Koblenz, which likewise supplied personal holdings, but also documents from the Federal Office of Press and Information, which oversaw the West German takeover of the U.S. intelligence operations in 1953. Finally, once again the records of the United States Central Intelligence Agency disclosed in the Nazi War Crimes Disclosure Act will be utilized.

Context: The Postwar Veteran Milieu

The veterans of the Wehrmacht and Waffen-SS were a very substantial demographic in postwar Germany. Altogether, there were roughly nine million veterans in postwar West Germany in the late 1940s, and another one million prisoners of war would return to West Germany from Soviet captivity throughout the first postwar decade.⁴ Out of a population of sixty-five million, veterans were thus roughly fifteen percent of the West German population.⁵ Yet, at first glance it might appear that the German military milieu had an only very limited impact on postwar West German politics due to a broad public aversion to militarism after the war. For example, in 1949 roughly seventy-five percent of West German men rejected the idea of ever becoming a soldier again and there was very little protest to Allied military occupation and the disbandment of the Wehrmacht.⁶ There is evidence, however, that anti-militarism waned during the height of public

⁴ Frank Biess, "Survivors of Totalitarianism: Returning POWs and the Reconstruction of Masculine Citizenship in West Germany, 1945-1955" in ed. Hanna Schissler, *The Miracle Years: A Cultural History of West Germany, 1949-1968* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 57-82.

⁵ The overall number of service members in the German armed forces during the Second World War (including the Waffen-SS) = 18.5 million, of which five and half million died in combat. Three million were in Soviet captivity, of which one million died, and another one million remained missing. See Rolf-Dieter Müller, *Hitler's Wehrmacht, 1935-1945* (University of Kentucky, 2016), 44.

⁶ Jens Scholten, "Offiziere: Im Geiste unbesiegt," in ed. Norbert Frei, *Karrieren im Zwielficht: Hitlers Eliten nach 1945* (Frankfurt a.M.: Campus Sachbuch, 2001), 132.

support for rearmament in the European Army in the early 1950s.⁷ It was at this time, for example, that Konrad Adenauer felt compelled to pronounce the famous “declaration of honor for the German soldier” (*Ehrenerklärung für den deutschen Soldaten*), in which he pronounced that members of the former Wehrmacht had served honorably. This declaration on December 3rd, 1952 was subsequently extended to veterans of the Waffen-SS a few weeks later in correspondences with Waffen-SS leaders and then publicly before the Bundestag in the summer of 1953. As David Clay Large has illustrated, even the leader of the SPD, Kurt Schumacher, felt compelled to appeal to Wehrmacht soldiers as well as the Waffen-SS.⁸ Thus, veterans had an increasing presence in postwar West German political culture during the early 1950s. This was to large extent the result of an organized and energetic postwar veterans’ movement that emerged during these years.

As Lockenour has shown, West German veterans were very politically active in various influential veterans’ organizations: throughout the entire postwar period over three million soldiers participated as members of various veterans’ organizations which proactively sought to influence political parties, particularly on issues denazification, repatriation and, importantly, anti-Communist foreign

⁷ Searle, *Wehrmacht Generals, West German Society, and the Debate on Rearmament, 1949-1959*, 192.

⁸ David Clay Large, "Reckoning without the Past: The HIAG of the Waffen-SS and the Politics of Rehabilitation in the Bonn Republic, 1950-1961," *The Journal of Modern History* 59.1 (1987): 79-113, 98-101.

policy.⁹ According to Arnd Bauerkämper, in the first few years of the 1950s postwar veterans' organizations already totaled upwards of 600,000 members.¹⁰ Broadly speaking, this veterans' movement can be compartmentalized into three kinds of veterans' organizations in order from their smallest to largest: a) local, decentralized communities such as the Waffen-SS "Interdependent Aid-Communities" (*Hilfsgemeinschaften auf Gegenseitigkeit* or "HIAGs"); b) so-called "Tradition-Communities" (*Traditionsgemeinschaften*) which brought together Wehrmacht veterans who had fought in a particular division or campaign; and, lastly, c) "Ceiling Organizations" (*Dachorganisationen*), or as they were also called "Soldiers' Federations" (*Soldatenverbände*), which organized HIAGs and Tradition-Communities into over-arching, cooperative political lobbies. The largest "Soldiers' Federation" by far was the so-called "Federation of German Soldiers" (*Verband Deutscher Soldaten* or VDS), which was organized in 1951 when most of the largest "Ceiling Organizations" combined together and successfully brought in most "Tradition-Communities" and HIAGs under their umbrella. At the time of its creation VDS already had over 75,000 members. Within a few years it totaled over 100,000 members and represented the largest

⁹ See Lockenour, *Soldiers as Citizens*, 6-7.

¹⁰ Arnd Bauerkämper, "Reisen in die Vergangenheit: Westdeutsche Soldaten, Kriegsgräberfürsorge und 'Schlachtfeldtourismus' von 1945 bis 1990 in transnationaler Perspektive," in *Militärhistorische Zeitschrift* 76.1 (2017): 104-131, 117-118.

veterans' organization in postwar West Germany.¹¹ While it is true that most West German veteran enterprises took place at the local level in smaller organizations and emphasized associational, recreational, and humanitarian activities, VDS was nonetheless very important for a few reasons. First, VDS coordinated veterans' postwar political demands. Indeed, the primary political activity of VDS and other veterans' organizations in the early postwar period was leveraging their political power to obtain pensions and civil service membership for former soldiers and officers, denounce the perceived vilification of German soldiers, put an end to postwar trials against German officers, and advocate for the repatriation of prisoners of war from Soviet captivity. This produced significant legislation in their favor, especially in the form of amnesties favorable to former members of the armed forces and the Nazi Party.¹² But as it pertains to this dissertation, the VDS is primarily important because it declared the above mentioned *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung* as their official magazine, and this magazine was actually overseen by the CIA.

Project KMMANLY, Felix Steiner, and the *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*

¹¹ Ibid., 110. The next most populous "Soldiers' Federation" was the Kyffhäuserbund, which had a membership of over 24,000 members by 1954. See additionally the VDS collections, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, BW 48/81 and BW 48/53.

¹² See Norbert Frei, *Adenauer's Germany and the Nazi Past: The Politics of Amnesty and Integration* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002). As Steven P. Remy has shown, many American administrators and political elites contributed to this public leniency vis-à-vis postwar justice and the German military. See Steven P. Remy, *The Malmedy Massacre: The War Crimes Trial Controversy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017).

In 1947 the newly established CIA created the Office of Policy Coordination (OPC) for conducting covert intelligence operations across the globe. Project KMMANLY was a covert CIA operation run by the OPC which began in early 1951 and was designed to infiltrate the West German veteran milieu. The goal was to target West German veterans with printed propaganda material supporting German rearmament by specifically encouraging support for the European Defense Community (EDC, or the European Army). KMMANLY is largely unknown and has been ignored in the literature of postwar West Germany, yet it was an extensive two-year operation that ultimately cost the United States upwards of 400,000 Deutsche Marks and resulted in the publication of roughly 2,000 open letters to influential periodicals and newspapers, over 60,000 posters, between 450,000-500,000 leaflets and pamphlets, and upwards of 4,000,000 printed issues of the *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung* and its ancillary publications discussed below.¹³ Only one historian, Badis Ben Redjeb, has

¹³ The above costs and numbers are estimates made by the present author based on an analysis of the monthly CIA reports for project KMMANLY. The costs for KMMANLY were redacted or were absent from the documents and are therefore difficult to ascertain. Nevertheless, a rough estimate can be made based on the revelation that West Germany's costs for taking over the *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung* were 10,000 DM per month. If it is assumed that OPC maintained that or a similar level of funding for the *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung* during their twenty-six months administering the project, then the total comes out to roughly 260,000 DM (plus another assumed 100,000 DM for the ancillary projects). A decent estimate for KMMANLY overall project costs is somewhere between 300,000-400,000 DM. Other indirect costs likely made the project even more expensive, and so the above figures are low estimates. The statistical tallies for published material

recently summarized KMMANLY, but limited his analysis to the CIA documents rather than the operation's source material. As such, Redjeb defines the project primarily as an anti-pacifist and anti-neutralist propaganda campaign fixated on the danger of Communism but misses the centrality of the Europe-concept in the operation.¹⁴ The following paragraphs will attempt to expand the examination of KMMANLY by looking at the actual authors involved in the project as well as the texts it produced.

KMMANLY was first discussed in OPC in November, 1950 with the following postulated project objective:

This project is designed to combat overt and covert opposition to West German integration into the defense of Europe by initiating appropriate action against the chief sources of dissension, vis: 1) Communist fronts, 2) The SPD, 3) Certain elements of the German Evangelical Church, 4) Extreme rightist groups, 5) Some tactics of the Bonn government coalition.¹⁵

are more reliable, because, in contrast to project costs, they were explicitly outlined in OPC's detailed monthly status reports and were cumulated by the present author. See "Monthly Project Status Report for Month of November 1952" and "Project Status Report; Reporting Period: December 1952" and "Memorandum for: Deputy Director (Plans); Subject; Request for Budget Allotment under Project KMMANLY; 16 January 1953," Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room, Special Collection "KIMMANLY[sic]."

¹⁴ Badis Ben Redjeb, "Project KMMANLY: U.S. Intelligence and the Subversion of Media in Post-War Germany" in *International Journal of Humanities and Cultural Studies* 2.4 (2016): 384-395.

¹⁵ "Project Outline; Project KMMANLY; Type: Operational," Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room, Special Collection "KIMMANLY[sic]."

Later documents reveal that KMMANLY, which ultimately began operations on February 27th, 1951, was approved because the CIA had come to believe that veterans were an increasingly relevant political factor in West German politics.

As one project status report put it:

Since veteran opinion on the German rearmament question is considered significant, since German veterans represent the nucleus of a future German army, and further, since existing organizations are likely to gravitate toward extremism, it is felt that OPC must attempt to gain a greater degree of influence over the rapidly coalescing veterans' groups in West Germany.¹⁶

As the project gathered momentum three ideological goals emerged as the comprehensive objective for KMMANLY: a) secure "Germany's participation in Western defense"; b) encourage "democratic ideals and objectives and the aims of U.S. foreign policy"; c) bolster the prospects for underground "resistance" to Communism in the case of Soviet invasion and/or occupation.¹⁷ KMMANLY case officers quickly became convinced that their project had been successful and even proposed to OPC that it should be expanded into a larger "master project

¹⁶ "Monthly Project Status Report for Month of November [1951]," Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room, Special Collection "KIMMANLY[sic]." , "Monthly Project Status Report for Month of August [1951]," Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room, Special Collection "KIMMANLY[sic]."

¹⁷ "Monthly Project Status Report for Month of November [1951]," Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room, Special Collection "KIMMANLY[sic]."

(HTANGERD)” which, however, appears to not have been approved.¹⁸ The monthly status reports suggest that KMMANLY case officers were overly optimistic about their project, having assumed that the anti-Communist and pro-rearmament narratives produced in KMMANLY propaganda materials necessarily translated into success in the larger democratizing mission. A large reason for that misplaced optimism has to do with the way OPC’s method of control allowed former Nazi Europeanists to use the project to their own ends

KMMANLY was run indirectly by a case officer named Joseph K. Limming who regularly supervised a Frankfurt-based German editorial staff which was largely granted editorial independence.¹⁹ Limming’s task was to monitor the work of this German editorial board rather than directly control it. As a KMMANLY report explained: “Control...is exercised through editorial guidance and financial aid by an OPC staff officer in Frankfurt.”²⁰ An analysis of KMMANLY materials reveals that the vast majority of the work was produced directly by German military conservatives, and although the material was couched

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Almost all names of American operatives in the KMMANLY documents are redacted. However, the final KMMANLY summary report revealed the name of the staff officer who supervised the project in Frankfurt: Joseph K. Limming. It is possible that Limming was the author of all monthly status reports referenced in these pages. See “Project Status Report; Reporting Period: March 1953,” Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room, Special Collection “KIMMANLY[sic].”

²⁰ “Monthly Project Status Report for Month of May 1952,” Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room, Special Collection “KIMMANLY[sic].”

within a pro-West framework, upon closer inspection it becomes clear that the German writers were carefully pushing the boundaries of liberal democracy. KMMANLY's American operatives actually acknowledged as much, and, in fact, even encouraged it. As one monthly status report put it: KMMANLY material "carries just enough anti-western sentiment (largely concerned with German equality of rights) to hide the United States interest in it."²¹ Another report explained:

Occasionally the [*Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*] attacks a Western policy, or prods the Bonn Government. Such activity does not compare in scope with the firm anti-Communist stand taken by the paper, but does contribute toward the preservation of its indigenous character and appeal for the German reader.²²

In other words, KMMANLY operatives understood that German military conservatives were a potentially radical constituency and the believability of their project relied upon partially catering to an illiberal mindset in order to gradually bridge them into their democratization program. This created space for former Nazi Europeanists to satisfy OPC's demands for anti-Communism, anti-neutralism, and anti-pacifism while simultaneously developing their Europe-concept anew – something that KMMANLY operatives do not appear to have grasped, as evidenced by an important admission in their final summary report in 1953:

²¹ "Monthly Project Status Report for Month of August [1951]," Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room, Special Collection "KIMMANLY[sic]."

²² "Monthly Project Status Report for Month of March 1952," Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room, Special Collection "KIMMANLY[sic]."

This project was originally designed to counter the actions of pacifist and neutralist groups in West Germany who were opposed to ratification of the [General Treaty of 1952]. In practice KMMANLY engaged primarily in efforts to win support for the EDC in the areas of veterans' affairs and military publishing.²³

In short, what began as a counter-propaganda operation ultimately evolved into a journalistic space for former Nazi Europeanists to advocate for the European Army through a revised Europe-concept. The key figure for understanding this process was former Waffen-SS general Felix Steiner.

As discussed in earlier chapters of this dissertation, Felix Steiner, the former commander of the first multi-national Waffen-SS division (*Wiking*), became after the war a leading spokesman of the Waffen-SS who published books presenting the Waffen-SS as the harbinger of a European revolution against nationalism.²⁴ Already by 1948 Steiner had established himself as one of the most important voices in postwar German military conservatism, and the CIA opened a trace under his name. Originally, U.S. intelligence officials were interested in Steiner as one of many potential leaders of an underground anti-Communist resistance movement should the Soviets invade or occupy Western Germany. In fact, Steiner was one of several former career officers who approached American authorities with the request of organizing precisely such an

²³ "Project Status Report; Reporting Period: March 1953," Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room, Special Collection "KIMMANLY[sic]."

²⁴ For more on postwar Waffen-SS veterans' organizations see Karsten Wilke, *Die Hilfsgemeinschaft auf Gegenseitigkeit (HIAG), "1950-1990* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2011).

underground army (the request was denied).²⁵ But Steiner appears to have really captured the attention of U.S. officials with a book he wrote in 1948 under the pseudonym “Felix Y. RYK” titled “The Collapse of Total War.” In the words of one CIA agent, Steiner argued in the book that Europe found itself in a new historical struggle against a “Mongol invasion” and that victory demanded a “categorical European unification against the Bolshevist danger.” In order to avoid another total war, Steiner went on to argue that Europeans must erect a one and half million strong army of elite European soldiers trained in modern technologies and equipped with the necessary resources to take the fight “as fast as possible to the East.”²⁶ Such an elite formation, he argued, could rapidly defeat Communism without descending into total war. In 1949 Steiner created an officer’s club based in Munich called the *Schutz-Bund Deutscher Soldaten* (BDS). By 1951 BDS had over forty chapters in Bavaria and over 4,000 members.²⁷ By the end of the year they totaled over 7,000 members.²⁸ In mid-1950 U.S.

²⁵ Unnamed “USFA agent,” untitled CIA memorandum, November, 1948, Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room, Special Collection “Steiner, Felix Martin.”

²⁶ Untitled CIA memorandum, September 17, 1949, Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room, Special Collection “Steiner, Felix Martin.”

²⁷ Untitled CIA memorandum marked “secret,” April 18, 1951, Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room, Special Collection “Steiner, Felix Martin.”

²⁸ “Aufzeichnung Nr. 54/51,” July 5, 1951, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, BW 9/3085.

intelligence agents began considering a working relationship with Steiner who had started to assemble an editorial team for a German veterans' periodical to be published beginning in 1951, and even though one CIA trace explicitly counseled against working with Steiner due to his "bad character," OPC went ahead and took ownership of the periodical at the very end of 1950.²⁹ The periodical, *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, or "German Soldiers' Paper" (hereafter DSZ), first published in February, 1951, was published weekly and funded by the CIA until 1953 after which West German authorities picked up the project. It had a circulation of 35,000-40,000 throughout the 1950s.³⁰ The DSZ was the largest veterans' periodical in West Germany as well as the largest and most important publication of Project KMMANLY.

²⁹ "Chief of Base, QKFence," untitled CIA memorandum, November 12, 1952, Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room, Special Collection "Classen, Wilhelm." See additionally an untitled CIA memorandum marked "secret," April 18, 1951, Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room, Special Collection "Steiner, Felix Martin." The original idea for the *Deutsche Soldaten Zeitung* can be traced back to a prisoner of war camp where Steiner, along with Waffen-SS officer Joachim Ruoff and two other former Nazi journalists Helmut Damerau and Heinrich Detloff von Kalben came up with the plan. See Günther Paschner, *Falsches Gewissen der Nation: Deutsche National-Zeitung und Soldaten-Zeitung* (Rheinland-Palz: Institut für Staatsbürgerliche Bildung, 1967). Peter Dudek and Hans Gerd Jaschke, *Die Deutsche National-Zeitung: Inhatle, Geschichte, Aktionen* (Munich: Information Verlagsgesellschaft, 1981).

³⁰ Although CIA documents suggest 30-35,000, documents from the *Verband deutscher Soldaten* (VDS) claimed that the circulation was as high as 40,000. See secretary Linde (VDS), to Paul Hausser, June 15, 1953, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, N 5002/11.

Just a few months into the operation KMMANLY officers wrote a secret memo justifying the decision to work with an organization so tightly connected to the Waffen-SS. BDS, they explained, may have many members of the Waffen-SS but it also had many more members from the Wehrmacht and was in general a “sensible” group. More importantly, BDS had allegedly

confined its activities to functioning as a routine pressure group advocating military pensions, disability rights, and a more general recognition of the past and present honor of the German soldier. Intelligently led by well-balanced individuals, it has successfully avoided entanglement with such organizations as the Bruderschaft, Rusty, etc [underground neofascist organizations].

The memo admitted that BDS is “traditionalist, authoritarian and rightist” but insisted that it “strongly denies Fascist or Nazi-ist tendencies. Its head, Felix Steiner, was during the war a four-star SS-General of good repute, not of the war criminal type.” “On balance,” the memo concluded:

weighting (a) the disadvantages of associating covertly at the birth of what might develop into a new Black Reichwehr against (b) the advantages of bringing into being a serious para-military body that may be of some assistance in time of war, we recommend that OPC continue with this project, and exploit General Steiner’s capabilities to the fullest.³¹

KMMANLY, then, began as conscientious compromise with known radicals precisely in order to moderate them. The Americans were also likely comforted with the fact that BDS had already declared its support for the Federal Republic of

³¹ Untitled CIA memorandum marked “secret,” April 18, 1951, Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room, Special Collection “Steiner, Felix Martin.”

West Germany as well as Adenauer's rearmament policies.³² KMMANLY not only funded DSZ costs, but also paid for a large advertising campaign in West German journalism. The DSZ quickly became the most prominent veterans' periodical in West Germany; in fact, one of the liberal military reformers who is introduced later in this chapter (Erich Dethleffsen) negotiated in the fall of 1951 a contract between the DSZ and the largest veterans' organization of postwar West Germany, VDS. KMMANLY, then, successfully maneuvered itself to become the official publication of the largest veterans' organization in West Germany.³³

Although the DSZ was frequently burdened with pseudonyms and initials instead of author names, especially in the first year of publication, Steiner's leadership and outsized editorial influence was not in doubt. A U.S. intelligence agent confirmed that the DSZ's political course was directed by Steiner in one of the last reports on KMMANLY.³⁴ Steiner's articles were also not difficult to identify – his were usually the front-page articles and were accompanied with the initial "S." and eventually with his entire name. Similar to other post-Nazi Europeanists analyzed in this dissertation, Steiner claimed that radical leftists

³² See, for example, Schutzbund Deutscher Soldaten (BDS) to CDU representative Holzapfel, January 17, 1951, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, BW 9/3085.

³³ *Verband deutscher Soldaten* (VDS), "Arbeitsausschuss," 28.11.1951, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, N 648/7. See additionally the archival files for the official VDS newsletters in these years, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, MSG 3/266 and MSG 3/2440.

³⁴ Wilhelm Classen, official criticism of Steiner in the appendix of "Denkschrift über die "Gesellschaft für Wehrkunde," December 10, 1952, Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room, Special Collection "Classen, Wilhelm."

were the true extremists in the postwar period; German soldiers, in contrast, had learned by experience during the war, fighting hand in hand with Europeans across the continent, that nationalism was dead. German soldiers, he explained in one article, had solemnly experienced the death of a “conscious German community” (*deutsches Gemeinschaftsgefühl*).³⁵ To remain a nationalist, he proclaimed in another article, was to be a modern-day “Metternich,” because it had become a historically reactionary rejection of necessary and inevitable modern changes in economics, technology, and social relations.³⁶ Very similar to Waffen-SS propaganda during the war, Steiner argued that the answer to the modern decline of nationalism was a European revolution ushered in by military elites who had been endowed with leadership responsibilities in the new Europe as a result of their war-time experiences. Steiner inaugurated this thought in one of his earliest articles in the summer of 1951 titled “Foundations of the Future,” in which he opened with a racially tinged Europeanism reminiscent of Germanic Europeanism in the Waffen-SS:

Looking back retrospectively on [the wars of the recent past], they seem to have been unholy European civil wars between Occidental [*Abendländische*] peoples who are no more different in their culture, philosophies, and entire way of life than the members of a family. How often have we had to experience conflict between literal blood-relatives? When we look closer at the peoples who have fought we see various streams of blood that flow in and out of each other.³⁷

³⁵ Felix Steiner, “Die Extremisten,” *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, October 11, 1951.

³⁶ Felix Steiner, “Metternichs Schemen,” *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, February 28, 1952.

³⁷ Felix Steiner, “Fundamente der Zukunft,” *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, July 12, 1951.

The subtle racial Europeanism in these lines was not an exception to the rule.

Sometimes the racism was even explicit, such as in an article titled “The

Mongolian Storm of the Twentieth Century has Begun”:

Those who have gotten to know Bolshevism and Soviet methods understand what these shock-troops from the Far East really are: a threatening Asiatic invasion marching into Germany, the heartland of Europe, while methodically infiltrating Eastern European peoples with biologically-foreign racial forces....³⁸

In contrast to post-Nazi Europeanism elsewhere in West German journalism, the DSZ under Steiner’s leadership was considerably less interested in the politics of Strasbourg (such as following the activity at the Council of Europe or the negotiations for the Schuman Plan). In fact, in one article Steiner explicitly dismissed Strasbourg as inorganic and therefore nothing but mis-placed energy. Referencing the failed 1848 national revolution in Frankfurt, Steiner declared Strasbourg the “European *Paulskirche*.” The European idealists at Strasbourg were honest, their hearts in the right place – but they failed to realize that the laws of European unification are not political: “they don’t let [Europe] grow organically, but instead want to pontificate about it theoretically. But history doesn’t let itself be pontificated. It follows its own laws.” How then, could the European revolution be advanced, Steiner asked. The answer, he explained, was grass-roots activism led by social elites such as soldiers and veterans’ organizations who were historically tasked with the ability to overcome the past “with all of its errors, mistakes, and bitterness, and perhaps allow a new light to

³⁸ M., “Mongolensturm des 20. Jahrhunderts hat begonnen,” *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, October 11, 1951.

appear in the form of a true, fair, and organic New Order.”³⁹ If Europe was to emerge not from political deliberation but grass-roots activism led by soldiers, then the sub-text in Steiner’s writings was that it would necessarily emerge from war. Steiner was advocating an anti-political Europeanism, and this was an important reflection of the German radical conservative tradition: the birth of a new *völkisch* community (Europe) was for Steiner a violent, organic society that stood apart and above the state. To be sure, it is important to note that Steiner was not advocating revolution against the West German state and, as noted, had explicitly anchored his postwar activism in declarations against “extremism.” But this hardly amounted to an endorsement of democracy; rather, it was than an acquiescence to democracy accompanied with the suggestion that democratic politics was unimportant and perhaps even a hindrance to the creation of a *völkisch* Europe.

The military, on the other hand, was for Steiner and the DSZ not merely a better ally than politics but rather a defining element of the Europe-concept. Europe, they argued, was created historically by a series of military victories over the East, the latest of which had erupted during the Second World War. One of the recurrent arguments in Steiner’s writings at the DSZ was to compare postwar West Germany to Prussia – a bold argument in an era when “Prussian militarism” was widely seen as a source of the recent war. Prussia, he explained in one article, had a proud tradition defending Europe militarily from foreign threats. But equally as exemplary was its fateful decision in the early nineteenth century

³⁹ Felix Steiner, “Von Hamubrg nach Europa,” *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, October 4, 1951.

to reconsider “hitherto untouchable concepts” such as “state” and “community” (*Gemeinschaft*). Steiner devoted a great deal of attention to the Prussian reformer Heinrich Stein, traditionally understood by German conservatives as a forerunner of German nationalism and unification. For Steiner, Heinrich Stein was indeed a “harbinger of the future” but for reasons lost on German nationalists. The true significance of Heinrich Stein, he explained, was that he was an anti-nationalist: “From the very beginning he was entirely convinced that a future Prussia could only survive in the long-run in a larger community [*Gemeinschaft*] because the era of small absolutist states was necessarily being replaced by larger orders.” Heinrich Stein’s lesson for modern postwar Germans, then, was the necessity of constructing a new “community-concept” (*Gemeinschaftssinn*). Steiner then broadened this interpretation of Prussia into a larger interpretation of the long narrative of European unification underwritten by a repeating law of history: Europe unifies when outside threats force a consolidation. Whenever Europe had made progress towards unification, Steiner argued, this was because “the powers of a nation had proved too weak to stand up against a consolidated, armed [foreign] continent,” and so Europeans were forced to consolidate a continent of their own. Steiner concluded the article arguing that this is why German veterans had such an important role to play as “banner-carriers” of the new, postwar “European federation.”⁴⁰ After all, veterans were the heroic unifiers who had saved at least half of Europe from destruction and were prepared to redeem the lost half. Indeed, in order to encourage soldiers to identify with this mission, the

⁴⁰ Felix Steiner, “Fundamente der Zukunft,” *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, July 12, 1951.

DSZ regularly published soldiers' and generals' letters to the editor, even from non-German soldiers who had fought with the Germans such as a Norwegian Waffen-SS volunteer who wrote a letter titled "Back Then We already Thought Europe [*Europa dachten*]" and argued that the multi-national war against Bolshevism had broken archaic "feelings of solidarity with the Volk."⁴¹ For obvious reasons, Steiner quite often defended and praised the Waffen-SS in the pages of the DSZ.⁴² By centering their postwar Europe-concept around a continuity bridging the European Army and Axis veterans, DSZ writers were engaging in a fiercely illiberal form of militarism. Behind all these argument lurked the suggestion that a state was defined by military strength rather than democratic politics. As Steiner argued in an article titled "To Be or Not to Be," Europeans could only prove themselves worthy of existence if they demonstrated a "will to life" (*Willen zum Leben*). And the "will to life," he continued, was above all else founded in a "determined will to defend oneself" (*entschlossenen Willen zur Verteidigung*). Steiner went on to defend the traditional German concept of "*Soldatentum*" (translated roughly as "soldier-ism" or "militarism") which he suggested had always been a manifestation of a "will to life" rather than

⁴¹ HAFP, "Wir dachten damals schon Europa," *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, September 20, 1951.

⁴² See, for example, Felix Steiner, "Gebt der Waffen-SS Gerechtigkeit!" *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, August 23, 1951

German nationalism.⁴³ In other words, *Soldatentum*, not democratic politics, was the foundation of a new Europe.

The big exception to the anti-political Europeanism in the pages of the DSZ in 1951 and 1952 was, of course, the EDC. Because it was a military policy proposal, the European Army was an opportune bridge to politics for West German veterans. A common argument throughout the DSZ's coverage of the EDC was that the European Army was a reincarnation of the pan-European fight against Bolshevism in the Second World War. Take, for example, an article by Steiner called "The Oder-Front in 1945 - The Bundestag-Front in 1952." As the title suggests, the article argued that those advocating for a European Army in the German parliament and elsewhere were comparable to those who valiantly continued to fight on the Eastern Front at the end of the war.⁴⁴ Like other post-Nazi Europeanists in West German journalism, during the early negotiations for the EDC the writers in the DSZ advocated passionately for the most decidedly integrated proposals of a European Army, castigating suggestions of a diplomatically aligned coalition of national armies as incomplete and even as harmful steps backward on the path towards complete "European consciousness."⁴⁵

⁴³ Felix Steiner, "Sein oder Nichtsein," *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, August 30, 1951.

⁴⁴ Felix Steiner, "Oderfront 1945 – Bundestagsfront 1952," *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, February 7, 1952.

⁴⁵ No author, "Um die Konstruktion der Europa-Armee," *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, September 20, 1951.

Although the vast majority of the DSZ's EDC coverage revolved around anti-Communism, the idea of a powerful European Army rivalling the multi-national Axis forces of the Second World War was also an indirect challenge to the United States and its Allies, because it was consistently described as the nucleus of an assertive and independent Europe. But because it was funded and supervised by the CIA, the DSZ had to be very subtle in its anti-Americanism. As such, DSZ writers frequently and vaguely criticized the Americans for having failed to recognize the threat of Bolshevism during the Second World War, such as when Steiner maligned the United States for enabling the Soviet "Eurasian continent" a chance to dominate the globe during the present Cold War instead of quelling the Soviets during the "Hot War." The insinuation, then, was that the United States should have aligned with Nazi Germany during the Second World War.⁴⁶ Steiner also repeatedly criticized the United States for refusing to ally with fascist Spain in the Cold War.⁴⁷ His insistence that fascist Spain should be an equal member of the new Europe was yet another indication of the shallowness of Steiner's commitment to democracy.

Another example of the DSZ's subtle anti-Americanism was its unique patronage of the "Third Front" ideology. Unlike the "Third Front" ideology discussed elsewhere in this dissertation DSZ writers did not use the term "Third Front"; instead, they turned to the terminology of war-time Nazi Europeanism: "Grossraum" and "Lebensraum." Suggesting that Europe was an independent

⁴⁶ Felix Steiner, "Weltpolitischer Horizont," *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, August 23, 1951.

⁴⁷ Felix Steiner, "Sein oder Nichtsein," *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, August 30, 1951.

Grossraum or Lebensraum does not appear to have caused consternation with the American censors, and this is likely because such arguments were consistently made in the service of attacking “nationalists” and “neutralists” who opposed German rearmament and integration into Western defense systems. Take, for example, Steiner’s article titled “Political Convalescence.” The neutralists opposing Bonn’s rearmament politics, he argued were just camouflaged nationalists who had not drawn the correct lesson from German history. “They believe they can renew the Greater German Reich [*Grossdeutsches Reich*],” he argued. This “childish-seeming nationalism,” he explained, was a naïve yet also dangerous supposition because it unwittingly serviced the Soviet destruction of Europeans’ sense of common “*Volkstum*” (roughly translated as völkisch essence). Indeed, he proceeded to argue that a European Grossraum was a necessary biological advancement. Answering the question why Germans should come to terms with the end of nationalism, he explained:

Because the European peoples are too biologically weak to individually assert themselves in the **Conflict of Continents**. Because nationally isolated they are not economically capable of holding their own in continental economics and technologies, and because they live on a narrow space [Raum] and are therefore unable to initiate a **global** strategy in terms of territory. Because at their borders they have so much national fluidity that they could never survive the conflicts that would result from any attempt at a resolution other than peaceful unification.... [bold in original]⁴⁸

Steiner repeatedly came back to the Grossraum principle, arguing that the “Raum-calculus” (*Raumverhältnisse*) was causing the “break-down of the national

⁴⁸ Felix Steiner, “Politische Rekonvaleszenz,” *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, October 18, 1951.

order.”⁴⁹ Much like war-time Nazi Europeanism, Steiner extended the Grossraum principle to the rest of the world as well:

From Indochina to Morocco, from India to Egypt.... All these peoples are now trying to fight for their independence. But it is somewhat of a tragedy that the historical conditions for acquiring freedom have changed. Just as Europe has the spiritual task to fatefully overcome the nationality-principle in order to make room for larger concepts, so too will these peoples only be capable of overcoming the world dichotomy Freedom-Bolshevism if they subject their newly won freedom to a higher Raum-calculus [*Raumordnungen*].⁵⁰

The carefully worded “world dichotomy” between “freedom” and “Bolshevism” is revealing: for Steiner, the creation of a völkisch European Grossraum was a kind of alternative to both Communism and Western liberalism. Another DSZ contributor, former Western Front general Georg von Sodenstern, carefully engaged with the role and meaning of the United States in the European Grossraum. After all, how could Europe be both independent and yet also aligned with the United States in the Cold War conflict? For Sodenstern, in an article titled “Decision for Europe,” the answer could be found in the historical transition of leadership made necessary by the disaster of the Second World War. For thousands of years, he argued, Germany had “carried the burden of confrontation between two mutually exclusive worlds”: namely, the Germanic Europe and Slavic East:

It is hardly necessary to say that we Germans greet every attempt to overcome the historical conflict between Germanics and Slavs - because we believe that, after the outcome of the Second World War, the time is ripe to transcend it. But we are confident that a peaceful coexistence between the two Lebensraum(s) is impossible as long as the Slavic people

⁴⁹ Felix Steiner, “Der Würfel ist gefallen,” *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, January 17, 1952.

⁵⁰ Felix Steiner, “Weltpolitische HKL,” *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, October 25, 1951.

are subjected to Bolshevist rule and the totalitarian claims of Moscow threaten the Occidental Raum and therefore us [Germans] at their border.

These lines, which are reminiscent of the racially supremacist Germanic Europeanism in Nazi Europeanist propaganda, were followed by the admission that Germany had been emasculated and could no longer lead the defense of Europe. The United States had necessarily stepped into the leadership position.⁵¹

Sodenstern frequently penned articles in the DSZ, and this is because he was one of the leading figures in Operation KMMANLY behind Steiner. As mentioned above, KMKMANLY headquarters in Frankfurt published more than just the DSZ: pamphlets, brochures, posters, and letters to the editors of leading periodicals and newspapers. But KMMANLY also exclusively financed one more periodical originally called *Europäische Sicherheit* (“European Security”) when released in February, 1951 along with the DSZ, but changed to *Wehrwissenschaftliche Rundschau* (“Military Science Review”) in July, 1951. Sodenstern was the chief editor of this smaller military specialist magazine which mostly handled technology, strategy, and global military policies and was published monthly. *Wehrwissenschaftliche Rundschau* appears to have acquired a reputation as a leading journal for Cold War military studies; in fact, U.S. intelligence agents proudly boasted that they had been contacted by the West German government with the request to purchase *Wehrwissenschaftliche Rundschau* and make it into the “semi-official publication when the German

⁵¹ Georg v. Sodenstern, “Entscheidung für Europa,” *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, November 29, 1951.

Defense Army is formed.”⁵² But Sodenstern also occasionally penned articles on the history and theory of European unification, and in these articles he expanded on his thoughts on the United States. He argued that historically exclusive “cultural groups” (*Kulturkreise*) such as Europe were conglomerating into geographic Lebensraum(s). These organic communities were defined by their unique “will to live” (*Lebenswillen*), and because the United States ultimately emerged out of Europe it carried with it a germ of the Occidental “will to live” and thus found itself pressed to help defend the European Lebensraum. But Sodenstern conspicuously described the United States as a temporary “representative” of the European cultural group whose ultimate goal was to “awaken” Europeans to their destiny.⁵³ Thus, KMMANLY’s two largest journalistic endeavors trafficked in subtle forms of illiberalism and anti-Americanism. On the one hand, this was a cunning way to use American resources to their own ends. But as a later section of this chapter will illustrate, it ultimately proved an achievement on the Americans’ part to have attained in leading German military publications even an ambivalent espousal of America’s leadership role in the Cold War, however “temporary” it was labeled. As we will see, this became a foundation for more liberalization in the course of the 1950s.

Project QKSNITCH and the *Gesellschaft für Wehrkunde*

⁵² “Monthly Project Status Report for Month of August 1952,” Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room, Special Collection “KIMMANLY[sic].”

⁵³ Georg von Sodenstern, “Strategische Gedanken zur Gegenwart,” *Wehrwissenschaftliche Rundschau*, June issue, 1951.

Project KMMANLY was accompanied by a twin operation that began a year later and was patronized with roughly the same amount of funds.⁵⁴ This operation was called Project QKSNITCH, and entailed the creation of a veterans' organization for former officers in the Wehrmacht and Waffen-SS called *Gesellschaft für Wehrkunde* (hereafter GfW). GfW was a collection of local clubs, or "chapters," each of which met multiple times a month under the direction of QKSNITCH offices in Frankfurt in order to discuss politics and the future of German military institutions. Officers who wanted to join had to petition for membership, which was granted after a vote by the administrative committee in Frankfurt. It is difficult to identify the total number of members in GfW. According to CIA documents there were 60 branches with upwards of 1000 members by August, 1952.⁵⁵ But by the end of American involvement in early 1953 there were seventy-eight branches in operation with another twenty-nine in the process of being founded, meaning that membership in GfW nearly

⁵⁴ Project QKSNITCH was founded in January, 1952, and roughly 240,000 DM were spent by OPC on Project QKSNITCH during its two-year duration under American control. Funds were camouflaged as donations from a local scientific institution. See "Monthly Project Status Report for Month of May 1952," Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room, Special Collection "KIMMANLY[sic]." Agent file "Prof. Dr. Wilhelm Classen," undated (most likely early-1953), Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room, Special Collection "Classen, Wilhelm."

⁵⁵ "Monthly Project Status Report for Month of August 1952," Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room, Special Collection "KIMMANLY[sic]."

doubled in under one year.⁵⁶ As we will discuss in more detail in a separate section below, GfW was eventually taken over, continued, and even financially expanded by West German officials, but the documents for the West German tenure over the project are unclear about membership numbers. In any case, it is safe to assert that GfW ultimately contained thousands of members of the former German officer corps, and as such was among the most important institutions in the political culture of postwar German military conservatism. Unlike KMMANLY, there is not a project file for QKSNITCH in the CIA documents released by the Freedom of Information Act. However, there is a trace file under the name of the German manager of the operation, Wilhelm Classen, and it contains some of his summary reports for QKSNITCH as well as memos about him and the operation. One memo, dated in 1953 near the end of American supervision of the project, outlined the original objective of the operation:

In full awareness of the nationalist-tinged tendencies of its potential membership, it was decided to restrict membership to those ex-officers and others who were willing to openly promise to oppose political extremism of both Right and Left, to work constructively for the democratic association of West Germany with the Western Allies, and who were willing to accept as respected comrades those former officers who participated in the 1944 plot to overthrow the Hitler regime.⁵⁷

In short, QKSNITCH set out to reform the German military milieu by creating an organization for social elites in the military and restricting membership to men

⁵⁶ Agent file “Prof. Dr. Wilhelm Classen,” undated (most likely early-1953), Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room, Special Collection “Classen, Wilhelm.”

⁵⁷ Ibid.

whose political opinions could be fused with American goals of democratization. QKSNITCH, in other words, recognized the value of social elites and their vital position as disseminators of ideas and values, and hoped to reform German military conservatives from the top-down. The founding document of QKSNITCH, which can be found in Classen's CIA trace file, divided QKSNITCH's propaganda narratives into four groups. Like KMMANLY, three of these directives emphasized anti-Communism, German rearmament in the EDC, and anti-pacifism/anti-neutralism. But unlike KMMANLY, QKSNITCH was also founded with a fourth guiding principle which explicitly emphasized the goal of combating the "radical Right movement." This directive, listed as the first of all four, stated: "Fostering a defense of Western democracy against Communist threat as well as against the threat of other totalitarians; in particular the radical Right movement."⁵⁸ It is all the more surprising, then, that QKSNITCH, like KMKMANLY, was founded on the initiative of Felix Steiner.

In early 1952, roughly one year after he had founded the DSZ magazine with the CIA, Steiner approached the Americans with the idea of expanding his original Munich-based officers' club (the *Schutz-Bund Deutscher Soldaten*, or BDS) in a new name: *Gesellschaft für Wehrkunde*.⁵⁹ The Americans quickly

⁵⁸ Wilhelm Classen, "Denkschrift über die "Gesellschaft für Wehrkunde," December 10, 1952, Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room, Special Collection "Classen, Wilhelm."

⁵⁹ "Rakke" (Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz) to "Lenz" (Presse und Informationsamt der Bundesregierung), January, 30, 1952, Bundesarchiv in Koblenz, B 145/3508.

accepted the proposal and Steiner was immediately made “deputy chairman” of the newly formed GfW, now funded by the CIA as a second West German veterans’ operation. But in a signal of American distrust towards Steiner, the Americans added two figures (designated “chairmen”) to the administrative board alongside Steiner: Vollrath Hellermann, about whom very little can be ascertained, and the above-mentioned Wilhelm Classen. Interestingly, Classen was simultaneously made into the covert “general secretary” and primary American liaison for the project, thus creating a divide in GfW leadership that lasted throughout the years of American supervision. In short, Classen was the highest authority in private, facilitating American demands behind the scenes, while Steiner was the highest authority in public.⁶⁰ Even though Classen was recommended for a role in administration of the project by Steiner himself (based

⁶⁰ “QKSNITCH Final Report,” April 11, 1953, Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room, Special Collection “Classen, Wilhelm.” Identification card, “Classen, Dr. Wilhelm,” Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room, Special Collection “Classen, Wilhelm.” Outside of the administrative board made up by Hellermann, Classen, and Steiner, CIA documents also list a group of secondary founding members of GfW who ultimately made up an advisory council to the administrative board. These founding members included the following former officers of the Wehrmacht: Hasso von Manteuffel (head of the advisory council), Ewald Heinrich von Kleist, Eberhard Graf von Nostitz, Prinz Burchard von Preussen, Detloff von Kalben, and Franz Josef Ritter von Gilgenheim. There were also two important former Waffen-SS career officers on the advisory council: Joachim Ruoff, and, importantly, Franz Riedweg (the former head of the Germanische Leitstelle, the Waffen-SS war-time propaganda office).

on their work together at the DSZ magazine), the administrative and ultimately ideological divide between the two figures was bitter from nearly the onset of the operation. According to CIA documents Classen had served some unidentified role in Wehrmacht propaganda from 1942-1944, and according to West German intelligence he had even served an administrative position in what one memo called the “NS-Rasseamt,” by which the West German operatives presumably meant the SS-Race and Settlement Main Office.⁶¹ Thus, Classen clearly had his own baggage with National Socialism. Nevertheless, as will be discussed in more detail in a later section of this chapter, Classen’s memos and reports on QKSNITCH consistently indicate that he saw his primary role in QKSNITCH as a Westernizer, devoted to re-making German political culture in the image of the United States, and QKSNITCH documents written by unidentified American agents suggest that this is why Classen was put into the ghost-leadership position as an American liaison.⁶² They felt confident about Classen’s commitment to liberal democracy and saw him as a balance to Steiner. Much to the chagrin of

⁶¹ “Lebenslauf, Dr. Wilhelm Classen,” Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room, Special Collection “Classen, Wilhelm.” Agent file “Prof. Dr. Wilhelm Classen,” undated (most likely early-1953), Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room, Special Collection “Classen, Wilhelm.” “Rakke” (Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz) to “Lenz” (Presse und Informationsamt der Bundesregierung), January, 30, 1952, Bundesarchiv in Koblenz, B 145/3508.

⁶² Wilhelm Classen, official criticism of Steiner in the appendix of “Denkschrift über die “Gesellschaft für Wehrkunde,” December 10, 1952, Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room, Special Collection “Classen, Wilhelm.”

Classen, in the first year of its operation, QKSNITCH, much like KMMANLY, was dominated by Steiner's influence. As the final summary report on QKSNITCH admitted:

Although not personally popular with his colleagues (Classen explains this well in [a separate document]), Steiner, by virtue of his alleged role as foster father of the Gesellschaft, and by his aggressive personality, entrenched himself in the organization's leadership circle.⁶³

GfW's primary method for communicating ideas to former officers was to fund and host occasional large conferences (*Veranstaltungen*) held in the various local chapters. Most local chapters were granted at least one large conference during the early 1950s, and some of the larger chapters were the recipients of numerous large conferences. The final summary report on QKSNITCH claimed that a total of eighty-seven large conferences had been held during the years of American patronage with attendance ranging between forty and 350. The same summary reported that sixty-six of the eighty-seven large conferences "were devoted directly to promotion for the European Defense Treaty...."⁶⁴ The small monthly publication for GfW members, called *Wehrkunde*, included regular reports on the large conferences which were sent in by the local chapters. These reports confirm the CIA's assessment that the majority of large conferences revolved around the European Army and its broader significance. Furthermore, as the same summary explained: "Not included in [the above large conference]

⁶³ "QKSNITCH Final Report," April 11, 1953, Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room, Special Collection "Classen, Wilhelm."

⁶⁴ Ibid.

figures are the literally hundreds local *Gesellschaft* discussion evenings to which non-members were invited and debate was stimulated on the European Defense Treaty issue.”⁶⁵ In other words, local leaders of GfW chapters likewise organized their smaller meetings around discussions of the European Army. Articles in *Wehrkunde* reveal that such discussions in GfW went beyond technical details and extended into conversations about history, nationalism, and the Europe-concept. As one GfW member, former Lieutenant-General O.V. Natzmer, proclaimed in a speech about the EDC which was re-printed in *Wehrkunde*:

Let’s celebrate the great task before us! Our Europe is venturing its first tentative steps. Our task will be giving this Europe-Idea some substance that will provide new impetus at the political level and will be welcomed by the leadership of our countries. ... Our will to shape the European future should be irrepressible!⁶⁶

The large conferences, according to U.S. intelligence agents, “proved very popular...and served as an effective means of presenting U.S. policy....”⁶⁷ Reports in *Wehrkunde* illustrate that leading political figures in Adenauer’s political coalition, such as cabinet members Franz Josef Strauss and Theodor Blank, were invited in order to boost attendance and raise the profile of the conferences in the press.⁶⁸ Unfortunately, the present author was unable to obtain

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ O.V. Natzmer, “*Rede: die zur Eröffnung einer europäischen Wehrakademie gehalten werden könnte*,” *Wehrkunde*, issue 4, 1953

⁶⁷ “Monthly Project Status Report for Month of September 1952,” Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room, Special Collection “KIMMANLY[sic].”

⁶⁸ See local chapter reports printed in *Wehrkunde*, 1953.

issues of *Wehrkunde* for the year 1952, but it is important to note that during this initial year of Steiner's leadership, GfW conferences, much like the DSZ magazine in Project KMMANLY, most likely trafficked in illiberal Europeanism in addition to fulfilling the CIA's demands for anti-Communist and pro-rearmament propaganda. *Wehrkunde* issues from 1953 illustrate that although the large conferences were organized and directed from Frankfurt, Steiner's outsized influence in the first year of GfW meant that he contributed many lectures himself while also controlling the admission of other guest lecturers. For example, leading figures in Steiner's Project KMMANLY, such as Georg von Sodenstern, were regularly invited to participate as guest lecturers and even other post-Nazi Europeanists discussed in this dissertation, such as Klaus Mehnert of *Christ und Welt*, also contributed.⁶⁹

American Inroads

As has been illustrated, the American-sponsored veterans' operations were initially founded and administered by a network of former Nazi Europeanists, led by Waffen-SS general Felix Steiner, who exploited the projects as a vehicle for continuing their Europe-concept, much of which was still anchored in a deeply illiberal view of politics and the world. This was not lost on their political opponents to the left. An official SPD newspaper called *Volksrecht*, for example, published an article in September, 1951 titled "Unappointed Europeans," in which it was argued that the DSZ magazine, as the official organ of the largest veterans' organization in West Germany, was the mouthpiece for a dangerous neo-fascist

⁶⁹ Ibid.

revival that camouflaged their recalcitrant Hitlerism “behind European curtains.”⁷⁰ This appraisal of the DSZ was not entirely fair because it failed to take into account the way DSZ writers genuinely distanced the periodical from Hitler and National Socialism (albeit not the war on the Eastern Front). More importantly, the DSZ, as well as other projects in the American-sponsored operations, were more complicated than the SPD newspaper claimed. While it is true that these projects regularly trafficked in historical apologias, denounced postwar justice and denazification, and sought to maintain a militaristic society, they actually also made tentative steps towards reconciliation with liberal democracy. The American democratization program, in other words, was able to make more progress than appears at first glance.

The evidence for this can be found in documents which suggest that Steiner’s presence in the intelligence operations was not uncontested. As explained above, the American operatives carefully placed Wilhelm Classen in a leadership position in order to balance the authority of Steiner with a more trustworthy liberalizer. Near the end of the American tenure over the projects, Classen wrote a summary of his conflict with Steiner, or what he described as two “tendencies” in the project:

There were two mutually opposed tendencies that burdened the internal functioning of GfW. The one tendency, represented by Steiner, was trying to develop the GfW into a domestic political instrument that would eventually be turned against Bonn in right-wing opposition. The other tendency...wanted to make the GfW into an instrument for combating

⁷⁰ “*Unberufene Europäer*,” *Volksrecht*, September, 27, 1951, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, BW 9/3086.

Communism in the Cold War. Neither of these tendencies were ever able to gain the upper hand and over time deep internal divisions emerged.

The quotation reveals that Classen perceived his role as a moderator pushing German veterans towards stronger ties with the United States and West German government, and he believed that Steiner ultimately had radical anti-democratic intentions for the projects. He went on to outline the different spheres where the above competing “tendencies” had the upper hand. Steiner, he explained, had amalgamated near full authority over the DSZ magazine as well as newsletters to GfW’s local officer chapters. But the Americans, he explained, exercised strong control over the pamphlet project. This occasionally led to forced re-drafting and conflict with German writers.⁷¹ The pamphlets, for the first few months originally published by KMMANLY but then by QKSNITCH, can actually be better described as small books published once per month. Over 212,000 copies were printed and distributed during the American tenure of the operation. These pro-Europe propaganda pamphlets, which can be found in a separate document folder in the German federal military archive in Freiburg, represented a striking contrast to the average front-page of Steiner’s DSZ. Most importantly, they consistently praised the foreign policy of the United States and advocated German alignment with the “Atlantic” or “Western” alliance in the Cold War. Some even attempted to reevaluate traditional German perceptions of the United States. Take, for

⁷¹ Wilhelm Classen, official criticism of Steiner in the appendix of “Denkschrift über die “Gesellschaft für Wehrkunde,” December 10, 1952, Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room, Special Collection “Classen, Wilhelm.”

example, the pamphlet titled “The USA in the Perspective of a Soldier,” authored by Günther Blumentritt, a former Wehrmacht general who served on the Western Front.

In his introduction, Blumentritt explained that Germans were accustomed to seeing the United States as something inherently “foreign.” But it was time to re-consider this, he continued: “in a much deeper sense, the values and principles of Western Europe are linked with this America.” Blumentritt proceeded to argue that German soldiers need to “foster a mutual understanding between the soldiers of the Western world.” “I will attempt to deepen,” he argued, “appreciation between the European (especially the German) way of thinking and the often-misunderstood world of the West...” After a chapter which suggested that the American Revolution was actually esteemed by Prussian generals and philosophers, Blumentritt went on to outline the military excellence of the U.S. army and its proven record of success since the American Revolution, a success based on principles similar to the traditional Prussian ethos of order, obedience, and discipline. Recent history, he explained, illustrated the power of the American military in both World Wars, each of which were fought with the selfless intent to liberate Europeans, especially Germans, from dictators. In his conclusion, Blumentritt even made an appeal for democracy tailored to the world view of German soldiers: “The Western world, to which we have always belonged, desires nothing other than peace and freedom.” He continued:

If we contemplate the history of democracy all the way back to antiquity, then it is impossible not to conclude that this world ideology and form of governance was always ready, when necessary, to defend its ideas and ideals with weapon in hand. It is interesting to examine democracy’s

powerful, united will [*Willen*] to defend itself throughout all eras, from the Greek and Roman democracies of antiquity all the way up to the modern days.

Democracy, he concluded, had consistently proven that it possessed the “will” (*Willen*) to defend its existence. And the fact that the United States was investing humanitarian and military aid in Europe was evidence that this “will” was very much alive and Germans would do best to contribute to it. In other words, democracy was supreme not because of its lofty philosophical values but because it had proven itself in the survival of the fittest. In fact, Blumentritt’s pamphlet also made appeals to illiberal sentiments, even racism, such as when he discussed the origins of the United States. The United States, he argued, was populated by Europeans whose “Lebensraum” was too small. Consequently, the United States was founded with a “closer blood-based connection [to Europe] than most commonly accepted.” There were, of course, exceptions such as the “negros,” Blumentritt went on to explain, “[b]ut if we look away from the negro-question, then it’s impossible not to recognize that we are actually of the same clan [*Stamm*]!”⁷² In short, Blumentritt trafficked in a racially-tinged defense of liberal democracy. Nevertheless, the presence of such an energetic defense of the United States and even democracy, however compromised, is an important example of the way American QKSNITCH operatives counter-balanced the influence of Steiner with early inroads for liberalism in the West German veteran milieu.

⁷² Günther Blumentritt, *Die USA in der Sicht eines Soldaten*, 1952, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, BW 47/202.

Even the DSZ magazine, otherwise under the influence of Steiner, exhibited signs of liberal rapprochement. It appears that Steiner, in order to obtain approval for printing the DSZ, regularly allowed the paper to champion the United States in its coverage of Cold War developments, albeit carefully and vaguely. This even included direction quotations from leading American statesmen on the front-pages, such as frequent quotations from Dwight D. Eisenhower. Often, such quotations involved Eisenhower praising European unification but in the context of a broader Western family of nations: “[European integration] is about the future of civilization. We must make place for Germany in the family of Western nations in such a way that it will not need to feel ashamed.”⁷³ To be sure, most of these tepid appeals were rhetorical rather than substantive. Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to devalue the impact of language in the most read military periodical in West Germany. Furthermore, the American influence even occasionally made itself felt substantively. CIA documents suggest, for example, that American operatives attempted to influence German writers on the July 20th plot to kill Hitler.⁷⁴ The July 20th plot, for most German veterans after the war, was still a very distasteful if not outright scandalous rebuke of the German military tradition. But the DSZ regularly ran

⁷³ CP, “Halber Plan lohnt nicht!“ *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, September 20, 1951. Steiner, “Begleitmusik für Paris,“ *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, November 8, 1951.

⁷⁴ “QKSNITCH Final Report,” April 11, 1953, Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room, Special Collection “Classen, Wilhelm.”

articles defending the conspirators.⁷⁵ The Americans, in short, were not naïvely exploited by German radicals. A better interpretation is that they consciously accommodated illiberal sentiment among German veterans in order to moderate it, all the while carefully imbedding the germ of liberalism into the propaganda material of the operations. This paved the way for a broader liberalization undertaken by the West German government upon their taking over the operations in 1952. Before examining this transition in more detail, it is important to first introduce some of the key actors on the German side.

West German Liberal Military Reformers

The German military ceased to exist as an institution in 1945 when Germany was occupied by the Allied forces and subjected to a process that was called “demilitarization.”⁷⁶ Even in 1949, when West Germans regained partial sovereignty with the creation of the Federal Republic, they were explicitly deprived of a military force or even a defense ministry. In the context of the re-militarization debates of the early 1950s, however, the Americans allowed Adenauer to authorize an “administrative office” (*Dienststelle*) for researching questions relating to internal security and a potential future military. This office, eventually led by Theodor Blank and ultimately named after him (the Blank Office), basically amounted to a preliminary defense ministry in Adenauer’s cabinet, and was indeed transformed into the German Federal Ministry of Defense

⁷⁵ Hans Christoph Graf von Stauffenberg, “Die Konjunktur ist am ablaufen!“ *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, September 27, 1951.

⁷⁶ David Clay Large, *Germans to the Front*, 13-30.

in 1955. The Blank Office conducted research and organizational preparations for rearmament, and also handled international negotiations on Adenauer's behalf for the EDC and ultimately, in 1955, Germany's reconstructed military under the umbrella of NATO (the Bundeswehr). In the early 1950s, a few key members of the Blank Office were tasked with the responsibility of accumulating a large influence over German veterans' organizations. This effort was planned and led by former Western Front Wehrmacht general Johann von Kielmansegg, who, among other things, directed an organized effort to infiltrate GfW (especially after it came under direct West German control in 1953). Kielmansegg, introduced in a previous chapter regarding his work in *Sonntagsblatt*, had a long career in the Bundeswehr. Upon its creation he served as a German representative of the Bundeswehr at NATO's supreme headquarters in Europe (SHAPE), after which he served as a divisional general. In the 1960s he worked yet again for SHAPE where he ultimately held key leadership positions. Kielmansegg has a reputation in the literature as a leading liberal reformer and founding father of the Bundeswehr, who along with Hans Speidel, led a movement to reform the German military into a democratic institution. Specifically, he is credited with cementing the doctrine of "Internal Leadership" (*innere Führung*) in the Bundeswehr. In fact, in 1965 he was awarded the so-called Freiherr vom Stein Prize for his role democratizing the German military.⁷⁷ The Internal Leadership

⁷⁷ Karl Feldmeyer and Georg Meyer, *Johann Adolf Graf von Kielmansegg, 1906-2006: Deutscher Patriot, Europäer, Atlantiker* (Berlin: E.S. Mittler & Son, 2007). Kielmansegg's obituary in *Der Spiegel*, June 3, 2006.

concept was a liberal reevaluation of traditional German military ethics which stipulated that soldierly obedience to military authority must coexist with soldierly obedience to internal morality, and was developed and propagated in the early 1950s by Kielmansegg and a few others (Robert Knauss, Erich Dethleffsen, Wolf Graf von Baudissin, and Karl Ernst Ulrich de Maizière).⁷⁸ These figures developed the Internal Leadership concept alongside another concept called “Citizen-Soldier” (*Bürgersoldat*), the idea that a German soldier’s responsibility to fulfill military commands was equal to the responsibility to uphold democracy. The concerted efforts to reform traditional German military codes based in strict, unquestioning obedience to military authority made these figures into the most significant liberal military reformers at the time of the Bundeswehr’s founding. But Kielmansegg was more than a liberalizer. Another traditional problem in the German military, according to Kielmansegg and fellow reformers, was the suspension of all morality in the service of the racial nation (*Volk*). Indeed, as we will see, West German military reformers such as Kielmansegg were also passionate believers in the Europe-concept and developed the Internal Leadership and Citizen-Soldier ideas as a component of their anti-nationalistic Europeanism.

⁷⁸ Wolf Graf von Baudissin in particular was, alongside Kielmansegg, one of the founding liberal reformers of the German military. He worked with Kielmansegg and others on the “Internal Leadership” and “Citizen-Soldier” concepts as early as 1950 on behalf of the West German government in the famous “Himmeroder Conference” (discussed in more detail below). In fact, Baudissin ultimately joined the Blank Office on the recommendation of Kielmansegg. See Detlef Bald, “Neue Wehr, alte Ehr?” *Zeit-Geschichte*, 4 (2018): 82-87. See David Clay Large, *Germans to the Front*, 150.

They spent the early 1950s working to advance their concepts of Internal Leadership, Citizen-Soldier, and the Europe-concept in German veterans' organizations, especially the GfW.

The Origins of the Himmerod-Conference

The Blank Office originally emerged out of an informal network of former generals who were in unofficial contact with the Adenauer administration about participation in a future national defense organization, and who have been outlined in a book by historian Alaric Searle.⁷⁹ This network was led by Hans Speidel, the German general discussed in previous chapters because of his connection to Ernst Jünger and the latter's secret Europeanist tract *Der Friede*. Konrad Adenauer had been privately meeting with Speidel to discuss ideas for West German rearmament since as early as 1948 when Speidel recommended the idea of a European Army.⁸⁰ Speidel and his fellow generals met regularly, discussed contemporary politics and the future of the German military, maintained loose contact with Adenauer's cabinet, but were advised to keep quiet due to the political damage that would be dealt the West German state if their lobbying for rearmament became public. In fact, Adenauer's administration further offended Speidel's group when a general from outside their network, Gerhard von Schwerin, was appointed Adenauer's initial military and security adviser and head of the secret preliminary defense ministry discussed above

⁷⁹ Alaric Searle, *Wehrmacht Generals, West German Society, and the Debate on Rearmament, 1949-1959*. David Clay Large, *Germans to the Front*, 31-61.

⁸⁰ David Clay Large, *Germans to the Front*, 48-50.

(*Dienststelle*). Schwerin, who would eventually be replaced by Theodor Blank, was forced to work with Speidel's network when Speidel, after the invasion of South Korea in the summer of 1950, announced the creation of an "Experts-Committee" to discuss potential plans for German rearmament. Schwerin, who wanted to put a stop to the Experts-Committee, was persuaded by Adenauer to work with the "Experts-Committee" and help organize a conference that autumn with the purpose of putting together a detailed memorandum for Adenauer outlining a path forward for the reconstitution of a West German military. Fifteen former German generals ultimately attended the conference which took place in October, 1950 in Himmerod, Germany. Most of the fifteen generals were drawn from Speidel's network, including Kielmansegg. The result of the conference was the so-called "Himmerod-Memo," a blueprint for not only the organizational reconstitution of the German military, but also a "spiritual" or "psychological" re-founding, as they called it.⁸¹ One of the chapters in the Himmerod-Memo was titled "Internal Structure" (*inneres Gefüge*), which argued that plans for a new German military would have to consider more than technical and organizational details. This chapter instead outlined a set of "new" values and traditions upon which the German military would have to be founded if it were to overcome its weighted past. It was while working on this chapter that Kielmansegg first began advancing his Europe-concept and liberal reformism on behalf of the West German government, and it secured him a position working for the Blank Office in subsequent years.

⁸¹ Ibid., chapter 3.

Because his personal archival holdings are scarce in the years leading up to the Himmerod-Conference, it is difficult to ascertain when and how Kielmansegg first became attached to the Europe-concept and his liberal reformism. But the more detailed available material for his colleague at the Himmerod-Conference, Robert Knauss, are instructive. Robert Knauss was a veteran of the First World War who had obtained a Ph.D in economics in the 1920s and then became a leading figure in the Luftwaffe in the early 1930s where he became known for his pro-Nazi arguments that the German military should adopt mass strategic bombing at the heart of their war-planning because the Nazi “national revolution” had made Germans better prepared than their neighbors to withstand the psychological strains of an air-war conflict. He ultimately became director of the “Air War Academy” in Berlin.⁸² After the war Knauss became a member of Speidel’s network and ultimately worked along with Kielmansegg and others as one of the contributors to the “Internal Structure” chapter of the Himmerod-Memo. But the evidence from his personal archival holdings suggest that he had come to the Europe-concept already during the war. His collection of personal essays dated to the war years, and likely given at the Air War Academy, contain speeches that subtly criticized nationalism and the Nazi racial concept for hindering European solidarity against Bolshevism.⁸³ His memoir written shortly

⁸² Williamson Murray, *Luftwaffe* (Baltimore: The Nautical & Aviation Publishing Co. of America, 1985), 8-11.

⁸³ See, for example, Robert Knauss, “Sittlichkeit und Geschlechtsmoral,” undated (based on surrounding documents most likely 1943), Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, N 758/91.

after the end of the war likewise suggests he had been beholden to Nazi Europeanism. It included an entire chapter titled “The New Order of Europe” in which he lamented Hitler’s missed opportunity to fulfill Germany’s “calling”: namely, unifying Europe against the threat to the “Asiatic” East. National Socialism, he explained, contained a “fresh spirit and healthy concept of a social community with a future,” but Hitler squandered the opportunity to extend this principle to Germany’s European neighbors because he failed to “bring them into the European community as valuable equal members.”⁸⁴ Knauss’s archival material also suggests that he was an enthusiastic reader of Ernst Jünger and even maintained a written correspondence with Jünger, whom he convinced to give a special guest lecture at his Air War Academy.⁸⁵ In fact, according to Knauss’s archival material he received a personal copy of Ernst Jünger’s Europe essay, *Der*

Other leading figures in the GfW likewise have archival holdings that contain essays exhibiting war-time Nazi Europeanism. See, for example, Georg von Sodenstern, essay titled “*Der ‘Feldherr’ Adolf Hitler, Niederschrift vom Sommer 1943, um Vorwort und Fußnoten ergänzt 1946*,” Summer, 1943, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, N 594/9.

⁸⁴ Robert Knauss, untitled testament, May 20, 1946, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, N 758/32.

⁸⁵ Robert Knauss to Ernst Jünger, February 17, 1942, “Knauss, Robert an Dr. Jünger, Ernst, 1942-1956,” Nachlass Ernst Jünger, A: Jünger, Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach, Germany. Ernst Jünger to Robert Knauss, July 21, 1942, “Dr. Jünger, Ernst an Knauss, Robert,” Nachlass Ernst Jünger, A: Jünger, Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach, Germany. Ernst Jünger to Hans Speidel, July 19, 1942, “Jünger, Ernst an Speidel, Hans, 1941-1944,” Nachlass Ernst Jünger, A: Jünger, Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach, Germany.

Friede, at the beginning of 1946 before Jünger had published it, suggesting that he likely was aware of it during the late stages of the war as well.⁸⁶ Indeed, Speidel's network of generals, especially those generals who ended up working on the Himmerod-Memo, appear to have been closely connected to Jünger's network of generals who transitioned from the war beholden to his arguments in *Der Friede*. Indeed, Knauss appears to have been introduced to Speidel by Ernst Jünger (the reader will re-call that Speidel assisted Jünger in the completion and distribution of *Der Friede*). Knauss maintained written contact with Jünger after the war, and in his correspondences with Jünger from the late 1940s Knauss reported meeting with Speidel.⁸⁷

There is no evidence that Kielmansegg likewise came to Speidel's network through Ernst Jünger, although it is very possible. However, there is evidence in his archival holdings that he most likely also was a proponent of Nazi Europeanism and maintained many of its tenets throughout the 1940s. In early 1946 he wrote a short, unpublished thirty-one page history of Europe as a kind of coming to terms with the catastrophe of the Second World War. He argued that Germany, because of its geographic location, had become the battleground of Europe's confrontation with the East: "Ever since Europe emerged as a political concept and ever since we have been struggling and fighting for Europe, most of

⁸⁶ Ernst Jünger, *Der Friede* (copy), February 24, 1946, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, N 758/36.

⁸⁷ Robert Knauss to Ernst Jünger, January 2, 1947, "Knauss, Robert an Dr. Jünger, Ernst, 1942-1956," Nachlass Ernst Jünger, A: Jünger, Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach, Germany.

Europe's wars have, all the way up until the present day, been played out on German land." Prussia, he continued, had been historically called to serve as Europe's "border against different völkisch substance and against foreign völkisch influences [*gegen ein anderes Volkstum und gegen fremdvölkische Einflüsse*]." Unfortunately, however, at the same moment Prussia was leading the European defense in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the French infected Europe with the disease of nationalism, and this eventually spread to Germany. This led to further catastrophes such as the "European Civil War" that was the First World War, as well as the ostensibly nationalistic and anti-German Treaty of Versailles. Indeed, he argued, Germans' nationalistic turn to Hitler was paradoxically a negative by-product of unjust nationalistic treatment. Notably silent on the events of the Second World War, Kielmansegg turned to the postwar period and argued that the time was ripe to reverse the mistakes of the past: "The European question is today the pressing political reality. The exuberance of this space [*Wohnraum*], especially its heart in Central Europe, will influence the entire European transformation and the European reconstruction." Germany, he concluded, would have to play a leading role in the transformation of Europe, and in doing so finally fulfill its long-assigned historical calling.⁸⁸ Other essays written shortly after the war confirm that Kielmansegg considered this interpretation of Europe a continuation of his war-time experiences, such as an

⁸⁸ Johann von Kielmansegg, essay titled "*Zwischen den Zeiten*," undated (based on surrounding documents and the text most likely spring of 1946, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, N 626/329).

essay that proclaimed to have learned of the true anti-European nature of Asiatic barbarism through firsthand experience during the war.⁸⁹

By 1949 Kielmansegg had become even more explicit in his correspondences with infamous Blitzkrieg theoretician Heinz Guderian. Apparently, Guderian had written to Kielmansegg and expressed criticism of Western Allied intervention in the Second World War. In a letter from June, 1949, Kielmansegg replied that such an argument was akin to a “second stab-in-the-back legend” as well as an implicit suggestion that National Socialism was acceptable. However, Kielmansegg then vaguely conceded that the Western Allies made a “great mistake” to have so callously allowed their anti-Nazi foreign policy become a tool to “tear down the thousand-year border wall against the East; namely, Germany.” Kielmansegg then finished with a lengthy appeal to a new Europeanism in Germany. It is worth quoting at length:

I just want to say a few last things: if Europe is to survive and not once again become...an extended island of Asia, then it is the Occidental responsibility to ward off the Eastern storm. This much is obvious. Also obvious is the fact that Germany will have a part to play in this responsibility. On the one hand economically, but also politically and militarily. For precisely this reason I reject any attempt to restore Old-Germany to its traditional great-power-politics (even if political contingencies were to enable this). Not because I automatically have something against nationalism or a strong Germany, but rather because this would be a step backwards – because this old era has come and gone. Such a politics would erase the only advantage that we gained from this war: the demolition of all possible national barriers (something the other [peoples of Europe] will also have to do, whether they like it or not). We must start over and only pursue a Germany within a larger system. Once we are in, then I have no doubt that our natural dominant position (biologically, geographically) will automatically accrue for us a deserved

⁸⁹ Johann von Kielmansegg, essay on the “Russian Soldier,” undated (between 1946-1950), Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, N 626/467.

leadership role. But take note: leadership, not rule. Because that's what Hitler wanted and that's why he was unable to fulfill the European responsibility of Germany, even if he honestly believed in that (which is doubtful).⁹⁰

Kielmansegg apparently won Guderian over to his vision, because by the end of the year he had begun helping Guderian publish a book that Guderian had written and titled *Can Western Europe be Defended?* The book recapitulated these arguments alongside a fiercely apologetic account of German soldiers' and even Hitler's European crusade on the Eastern Front: "You can judge Hitler's deeds however you want, but looked at retrospectively his struggle was European – regardless of the terrible mistakes and errors he made. Our soldiers fought and fell for Europe, even if not all were aware of this fact."⁹¹

As discussed in an earlier chapter of this dissertation, Kielmansegg eventually began publishing this rather apologetic Europeanism, such as writing in early 1950 an article for *Sonntagsblatt* that connected contemporary steps towards European integration with the Eastern Front.⁹² Around the same time he wrote a personal memo that exposed the illiberal side of his Europeanism before attending the Himmerod-Conference. The essay, titled "Thoughts about the Situation in Early-1950," was accompanied with a note: "do not publish." In the

⁹⁰ Johann Kielmansegg to Heinz Guderian, June 6, 1949, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, N 626/247.

⁹¹ Heinz Guderian, *Kann Westeuropa verteidigt werden?* (Göttingen: Plesse Verlag, 1950), 30

⁹² Johann von Kielmansegg, "Abendland im Untergang? Die Notwendigkeit einer militärischen Macht Europas," *Sonntagsblatt*, March 26, 1950. See additionally Kielmansegg's correspondences with publishers, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, N 626/477.

essay, Kielmansegg defended the “Third Front” ideology discussed elsewhere in this dissertation; namely, an equivalence between the Bolshevist East and the liberal West and the notion of working towards a future independent Europe situated between East and West politically and ideologically. Bolshevism, he argued, was imperialistic and founded on the core concept of dominating the world (*Weltherrschaft*). The United States, he continued, “has no spiritual idea comparable, much less superior, to Bolshevism.” What, then, was the European answer? Nationalism, he explained, had been exposed as anachronistic by the emerging “Grossraum-Order” of the modern world. Kielmansegg’s answer to the dilemma was an organic conceptualization of Europe. Once again, it is worth quoting at length: “Only a free, unified, and strong Europe can, as a ‘Third Front’, once again be a factor that will guarantee freedom,” he argued. He continued:

The fundamental world-ideological [*weltanschauliche*] concept of a new, united European nation is based on the notion of an integrated organism, which does not see the whole as a mere sum of its parts, but rather as a fabric [*Gefüge*]. In the same way, human society is not at all a mere sum of rational atoms, but rather a living, growing, hierarchical, dynamic fabric, wherein every individual – with his specific tasks given at specific times and places – is an irreplaceable piece. Just like the greater whole cannot survive without the irreplaceable accomplishment of the individual fulfilling his tasks at specific times and places, so too can the individual never find fulfillment outside of the fabric.

He then distanced this concept from the ideologies of East and West:

This conceptualization from an organic perspective...stands in contrast to the mechanistic world ideology of individualism (the ideal of the New World) as well as to collectivism (the ideal of Bolshevism). Even though both of these try to oppose one another, they are actually two sides of the same coin. They both go back to the interpretations of society formulated during the French Revolution, which construed human society as a mere sum of equally rational pieces and privileged individuals.... Their slogan is: ‘to each the same’.

“Realizing the unification of the West-European peoples on the basis of an organic Europe-concept,” he concluded, “is the responsibility of the war-generation of all these peoples who experienced the suffering of the last few decades ultimately as a kind of common, unifying experience.”⁹³

Remarkably, however, the summer of 1950 proved to be a turning point in Kielmansegg’s Europeanism. The above private essay was the last time Kielmansegg articulated an explicitly illiberal vision of Europe. In fact, from late 1950 onward, Kielmansegg espoused a vision of Europe which can best be described as Atlanticism: a unified Europe integrated into the West politically, diplomatically, economically, and intellectually. The key moment that appears to have unlocked a shift in his thinking was the Soviet-backed North Korean invasion of South Korea in June, 1950. As a result of this aggression, Kielmansegg came to the opinion that a new Europe could only be achieved and defended as part of the broader Cold War, and this meant aligning closely with the United States. In July, 1950 he sought out contact with Winston Churchill and was allowed to meet privately with Churchill’s personal secretary. He described his meeting in a letter to Speidel and included a draft of a letter he was planning to send Churchill. The letter argued that Germany must be allowed to rearm in either NATO or some kind of European combined forces, and that a unique group of former German career officers (himself included) were committed to creating a new kind of German army amenable to such a rearmament. This reformist group,

⁹³ Johann von Kielmansegg, essay titled “*Gedanken zur Lage im Frühjahr 1950*,” April, 1950, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, N 626/371.

he admitted to Churchill, “is probably not incredibly large at the moment.”

However, they had

pondered the past, and while they think like Germans, they don't think nationalistically. They have realized that the dream for German power is over and should stay that way. They are convinced that Germany can only live in a larger Western community and that Western freedoms must be protected.

Furthermore, he added, the older, traditional German career officer corps had been “utterly destroyed” during the war. There was, in other words, a well-positioned group of reformers that could be worked with to rearm Germany in Western image.⁹⁴ In August, 1950, Kielmansegg wrote a memo to members of what he called the “leadership committee of Speidel, Heusinger, and Foertsch” – a reference to Speidel’s declaration of the formation of the “expert committee” that eventually became the Himmerod-Conference. In the memo, Kielmansegg outlined his view that a Third World War was imminent and that such a war would require German rearmament and radical steps towards European political integration. This meant, he continued, that West Germany must “consciously and immediately seek out a partnership with America” and that West German leaders must make these intentions clear to the United States.⁹⁵ Such language must have impressed Speidel and the other members of the “expert committee,” because within a few weeks Kielmansegg was invited to not only participate in the

⁹⁴ Johann von Kielmansegg to Hans Speidel, July 6, 1950, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, N 626/374.

⁹⁵ Johann von Kielmansegg, “*Sätze zur Lage*,” August 16, 1950, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, N 626/185.

Himmerod-Conference, but to also take a leadership role as secretary of the conference.⁹⁶

The Himmerod-Conference and its Aftermath

The actual Himmerod-Conference has been described as both the “Magna Carta” of the new democratic West German army as well as a “restorationist” bastion of former conservative traditionalists seeking military continuity across 1945. This is because both the reformist and traditionalist visions were present at Himmerod, and the memo sent to Adenauer was a compromise, or, better said, the first battle in a tug-of-war that would last for years into the founding of the Bundeswehr.⁹⁷ The “reformists,” as they came to call themselves in the Blank Office, were represented by Wolf Graf von Baudissin who introduced the concepts Internal Leadership and Citizen-Soldier.⁹⁸ The memo was signed by all fifteen participants and individual chapters were not signed, so it is difficult to ascertain who directly contributed which sections of the memo. However, based on their writings, correspondences, and political advocacy before and after the Himmerod-Conference, Kielmansegg and Knauss most likely worked with Baudissin to craft the above-mentioned chapter of the memo called “Internal Structure” (*inneres Gefüge*), in which the Europe-concept as well as the Internal

⁹⁶ Gerhard von Schwerin to Johann von Kielmansegg, September 28, 1950, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, BW 9/3102.

⁹⁷ See Detlef Bald, “Neue Wehr, alte Ehr?” David Clay Large, *Germans to the Front*, 176-204.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

Leadership and Citizen-Soldier concepts were presented as a new “spiritual” or “psychological” foundation for the German military. “Just as important as a soldier’s training,” the chapter declared “is his character-building and education.” It is important for the new German military, the chapter continued, “to create something fundamentally new without relying on the traditions of the old Wehrmacht.” Ironically, the terms “Internal Leadership” and “Citizen-Soldier” must have been too controversial to use explicitly in the memo, but the ideas were tentatively put forward nonetheless. This chapter of the Himmerod-Memo is most well-known for declaring the German soldier responsible not only for defending the nation physically but also defending “freedom in the sense of self-determination.” As it was stated later in the chapter: “German armed units will not be allowed to become a ‘state within the state’. Each individual and the forces as a whole will affirm an inner commitment to the democratic state and form of life.” This was a stark contrast to the apolitical ethos of the Reichswehr and Wehrmacht. But it is important to note that the liberal ideas espoused in this chapter were attached to the coming European revolution: “These values are inalienable,” the chapter continued. “The commitment to Europe, within which these ideals emerged and from which they will emanate, transcends all traditional national commitments.” Or, as it also stated: “Each soldier will perform an oath upon entering [the armed forces] – a solemn promise that they confess themselves to Europe and the democratic state.” One final example is worth quoting:

The creation of a European history framework and the introduction of political, social, and economic issues of the time can be a decisive

contribution to the development of a citizen and European soldier that will have consequences well beyond military service.⁹⁹

In short, Europe functioned in the Himmerod-Memo as a stand-in for the now discredited German nation. Whereas classical liberals might have anchored the principles of “Internal Leadership” and “Citizen-Soldier” in abstract natural law or human rights, the Himmerod writers anchored it in the new, European nation.

Shortly after the Himmerod-Memo had been sent to Adenauer, Kielmansegg wrote down his personal “concluding thoughts” on the conference, in which he specifically praised the “Internal Structure” chapter.¹⁰⁰ In fact, by the end of the year Kielmansegg had joined the Blank Office as a permanent member and established himself as the leading voice on the Internal Leadership concept. At the end of the year Kielmansegg was invited to give a presentation to leading figures in the Blank Office titled “Introduction to the concept of ‘Internal Leadership’.” Kielmansegg’s notes for the presentation likewise illustrate how he intertwined the Europe-concept into his liberal reformism: The “Political Order,” he declared, was marked by three characteristics: “social equality,” the “transition from nation-state to supranational community of states,” and “the transition to modern democracy.” This transition was caused by, among other things, the emergence of economically and technologically enclosed continental Grossraum(s). These historical changes, although challenging, were good.

⁹⁹ Draft of the “*Himmeroder Denkschrift*,” Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, N 626/186.

¹⁰⁰ Johann von Kielmansegg, “*Schlussbemerkungen*,” Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, N 626/186.

“Internal Leadership” and “Citizen-Soldier,” he went on to argue, were important concepts precisely because they were necessary for navigating these historical transformations.¹⁰¹

Democratization

Democratization in *Gesellschaft für Wehrkunde*

The internal documents of the Blank Office reveal a division between self-identified “reformers” on the one hand (or “revolutionaries” as they were called by their opponents), and on the other hand “traditionalists” (or “restorationists” as they were called by their opponents). According to general Adolf Heusinger, who, along with Hans Speidel, was one of the top military advisers to Theodor Blank in the Blank Office, Kielmansegg was the most visible representative of the “revolutionaries” while general Bogislaw von Bonin was the leading “restorationist” voice.¹⁰² Adolf Heusinger, in correspondence with Erich Dethleffsen, Kielmansegg’s colleague and fellow reformer, expressed frustration with the divisions but was especially critical of the “revolutionaries” due to their “impractical” over-emphasis on the Internal Leadership and Citizen-Soldier concepts.¹⁰³ The traditionalists in the Blank Office largely outweighed the

¹⁰¹ Johann von Kielmansegg, “*Einführung in das Gebiet der ‘Inneren Führung’*,” late-1950, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, N 626/516.

¹⁰² Konrad von Kraske (Blank Officer) to Theodor Blank, October 17, 1952, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, N 626/516. Other important liberal reformers included Konrad Kraske, Axel von dem Bussche, Wolf Graf von Baudissin, and Karl Ernst Ulrich de Maizière.

¹⁰³ Erich Dethleffsen, “*Aktennotiz über meine Besprechung mit General Heusinger*,” November 3, 1952, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, N 648/11.

reformists during the 1950s before and after the creation of the Bundeswehr, but the reformists had the ear of Adenauer, his representative Theodor Blank, and the media, and therefore ultimately advanced their reforms over time.¹⁰⁴ Yet documents from the early 1950s, during the EDC negotiations, suggest that even Theodor Blank pumped the brakes on reformists' enthusiasm, arguing against Kielmansegg and Dethleffsen in one closed meeting in October, 1952 that "[i]t would be nonsense to believe that, within a people so undemocratic as the Germans, we could create in the army all of the necessary connections to the state and allegiances to rationality which are missing. The army is, after all, just a reflection of the people."¹⁰⁵ This meant they had to advance their ideas from the ground-up; specifically, by appealing directly to veterans. Not long after joining the Blank Office, Kielmansegg was appointed the director of the "military-political department" tasked with overseeing public relations for the Blank Office

¹⁰⁴ David Clay Large, *Germans to the Front*, 176-204. Detlef Bald, "Neue Wehr, alte Ehr?" Alaric Searle, *Wehrmacht Generals, West German Society, and the Debate on Rearmament, 1949-1959*. Klaus Naumann, "The Great Tradition and the Fates of Annihilation: West German Military Culture in the Aftermath of the Second World War" in ed.s Frank Biess and Robert G. Moeller, *Histories of the Aftermath: The Legacies of the Second World War in Europe* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2010), 251-268.

¹⁰⁵ Erich Dethleffsen, "Akttenotiz über meine Besprechung bei Staatssekretär Lenz," October 22, 1952, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, N 648/11. Konrad Adenauer likewise signaled that he would work with traditionalists even at the expense of "democratizers." See Konrad von Kraske (Blank Officer) to Theodor Blank, October 17, 1952, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, N 626/516.

(in fact, Kielmansegg had already been tasked with reporting to the Blank Office about large veterans' gatherings even a month before the Himmerod-Conference).¹⁰⁶ This made him the third-highest ranking military representative of the Blank Office behind generals Heusinger and Speidel. Kielmansegg used this public relations authority to make his arguments directly to veterans' organizations in the form of countless guest lectures, which included lectures at local GfW chapters.¹⁰⁷ Dethleffsen was Kielmansegg's assistant in these so-called "military-propaganda" endeavors, and also toured West Germany himself as a guest lecturer.¹⁰⁸ In late 1952, Dethleffsen and Kielmansegg worked with the above-discussed Günther Blumentritt, who wrote the pro-United States pamphlet, as well as other liberal reformers as members of the so-called "Workshop for Democratic Circles," a CDU-aligned club and think-tank which was publicly supported by the West German government and which had the stated purpose of "strengthening the democratic idea in Germany" by sponsoring conferences and guest lectures throughout Germany, and especially in the veterans' community. Many of Kielmansegg and Dethleffsen's guest lectures were given through this organization, and once again many of these were presented in collaboration with

¹⁰⁶ Johann von Kielmansegg, Blank Office memorandum titled "*Notiz*," September 18, 1951, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, BW 9/3086.

¹⁰⁷ "*Warum ging Graf Kielmansegg?*" *Das Andere Deutschland*, June 30, 1955, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, N 626/372.

¹⁰⁸ Erich Dethleffsen's correspondences, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, N 648/6, N 648/7, and N 648/2. See, in particular, Johann von Kielmansegg to Erich Dethleffsen, April 1, 1953, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, N 648/2.

the GfW. Kielmansegg's efforts to influence the GfW and tie it to democracy were reinforced by the West German government when it took over and continued the covert patronage of GfW in 1953.¹⁰⁹

In late 1952 American CIA operatives declared their mission accomplished, decided to discontinue Projects KMMANLY and QKSNITCH, and secured a final funding package for the operations through the first months of 1953. However, the West German government was contacted by German officers tied to the projects and decided to intervene and take over the operations.¹¹⁰ In fact, over the course of the next two years the West Germans increased the budget for the two projects, ultimately maintaining their patronage of the DSZ until 1955 and GfW well into the 1960s.¹¹¹ The Blank Office had already explored possible

¹⁰⁹ Konrad von Kruse (Blank Office) to Theodor Blank, "*Vermerk für Herrn Blank über Graf Kielmansegg*," September 29, 1952, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, N 626/200. , Johan von Kielmansegg to Theodor Blank, January 6, 1953, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, N 626/251. For more information on the "Workshop for Democratic Circles" see Echternkamp, *Soldaten im Krieg*, 205, 348-352.

¹¹⁰ "Project Status Report; Reporting Period: December 1952," Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room, Special Collection "KIMMANLY[sic]." "Project Status Report; Reporting Period: February 1953," Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room, Special Collection "KIMMANLY[sic]." "QKSNITCH Final Report," April 11, 1953, Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room, Special Collection "Classen, Wilhelm."

¹¹¹ The chronology was estimated by the present other based on the discontinuing of yearly budget records in the files of the Federal Office of Press and Information, Bundesarchiv in

working relationships with the largest veterans' organization, VDS, throughout late 1951 and 1952, but these efforts were to no avail. Ultimately, they determined that the leaders of VDS could not be successfully coopted as public or covert participants in the Blank Office's rearmament lobby because they were too nationalistic, too stubbornly preoccupied with soldiers' material demands, too trepidatious vis-à-vis the EDC treaty, and in general too apolitical.¹¹² In fact, this likely contributed to Kielmansegg shifting his attention towards GfW already before the official West German take-over of the organization.¹¹³ In any case, in the winter of 1952/1953 the German participants in KMMANLY and QKSNITCH scrambled to find an alternative to American patronage, and appealed to West German authorities in Bonn, even directly to Konrad

Koblenz, B 145/3508 and B 145/3509. "Marcks," (Blank Office), memorandum, June 12, 1954, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, BW 9/768.

¹¹² Unsigned Blank Office memorandum on the VDS, "Bericht über die Gosler Tagung der Soldatischen Verbände," undated (contained in a folder for the years 1951 and 1952), Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, BW 9/3086. See additionally an unsigned Blank Office memorandum on the VDS, "Notiz," May 5, 1952,), Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, BW 9/3089. "Drews" (Blank Office), "Notiz zu S2-Aufzeichnung Nr. 45/52," May 5, 1952, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, BW 9/3089. "Marcks" (Blank Office) to "Redaktion des 'Notwegs'," July 16, 1952, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, BW 9/3089.

¹¹³ According to CIA documents, even Hans Speidel, Kielmansegg's superior, began to regularly participate in GfW activities in mid-1952. See "Monthly Project Status Report for Month of August 1952," Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room, Special Collection "KIMMANLY[sic]."

Adenauer.¹¹⁴ Bonn responded with a demand: Felix Steiner, due to his association with the SS, would have to be removed from all operations.¹¹⁵ Steiner was subsequently approached by German officials in the Federal Office of Press and Information and asked to step down. Surprisingly, he did so without a fight, explaining that the work was too important to be discontinued.¹¹⁶

Immediately after the West German take-over of GfW Kielmansegg was appointed liaison officer and tasked with monitoring GfW conferences while continuing to contribute guest lectures. Dethleffsen continued to assist him in these duties.¹¹⁷ Correspondences between GfW and Blank Office illustrate that during the transition GfW administrators were especially concerned that their

¹¹⁴ Vollrath Hellermann (GfW) to Konrad Adenauer, January 14, 1953, Bundesarchiv in Koblenz, B 145/3508

¹¹⁵ “QKSNITCH Final Report,” April 11, 1953, Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room, Special Collection “Classen, Wilhelm.” Agent file “Prof. Dr. Wilhelm Classen,” undated (most likely early-1953), Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Act Electronic Reading Room, Special Collection “Classen, Wilhelm.” “Marcks” (Blank Office), “Stellungnahme zum Schreiben der Gesellschaft für Wehrkunde an den Herrn Bundeskanzler vom 14.1.53,” January 29, 1953, Bundesarchiv in Koblenz, B 145/3508. “Rakke” (Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz) to “Lenz,” January 30, 1953, Bundesarchiv in Koblenz, B 145/3508.

¹¹⁶ “Marcks” (Blank Office), “Diskussion mit General der Waffen-SS a.D. Steiner über die Gesellschaft für Wehrkunde (GfW) am 7.2.53,” February 9, 1953, Bundesarchiv in Koblenz, B 145/3508.

¹¹⁷ Illegible (Bundeskanzleramt) to Johann von Kielmansegg, February 17, 1953, Bundesarchiv in Koblenz, B 145/3508.

advocacy of the Europe-concept might not be continued. As Classen stated in a concerned letter to Blank: “We are experiencing a daily inpouring of questions from our members suggesting that once again unclarity about the EDC [treaty] and even skepticism are once again emerging.” It continued:

Due to the hundreds of meetings held last year, as well as the over 200,000 total copies of printed pamphlets, we were able to dismantle the often times strong skepticism of the EDC-politics conducted by the administration in Bonn (at least in the former officer milieu). So now we are especially interested that this accomplishment not be reversed by the opponents of EDC-politics....¹¹⁸

This made Kielmansegg the perfect liaison officer to GfW, because in addition to his credentials as a liberal reformer he had established himself in the Blank Office as an outspoken advocate of the European Army. In January, 1953 he had given a presentation to military advisers in the Blank Office in which he argued passionately against those in the Blank Office who were advocating a German national army in NATO as opposed to the EDC. This alternative solution, although perhaps militarily feasible, Kielmansegg argued, failed to acknowledge the EDC’s important political purpose: paving the way for the political unification of Europe.¹¹⁹

Indeed, Kielmansegg and Dethleffsen’s work in GfW in 1953 and 1954 revolved around Europeanism. According to the GfW’s official monthly,

¹¹⁸ Wilhelm Classen to “Drews“ (Blank Office), July 28, 1953, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, BW 9/769.

¹¹⁹ Johann von Kielmansegg, “Vorschlag für eine Sprachregelung zu der Frage: ‘Ist ein deutscher Wehrbeitrag am EVG-Rahmen einer Nationalarmee innerhalb einer Koalition vorzuziehen?’“, Blank Office, January, 1953, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, N 626/251.

Wehrkunde, which listed speeches and events in GfW chapters across West Germany, Kielmansegg and Dethleffsen drastically increased their GfW activities in these years, touring GfW chapters with speeches titled “Wehrmacht and Democracy,” “The Internal and External Structure of the Europe-Soldier,” “The Contribution of Community to Future Soldierly Life,” and “The Spiritual and Social Situation for today’s Career and Non-Commissioned Officers.” But the speeches themselves were not re-printed in *Wehrkunde*. In order to ascertain the substance of their speeches it is necessary to rely on personal copies printed, among other places, in their personal archival holdings. For this task, Dethleffsen’s printed speeches were particularly well recorded.

Erich Dethleffsen had served as a captain on the Eastern Front where he was awarded the Iron Cross and subsequently promoted to General-Major and member of the Army General Staff (OKH). Although the documents in his archival holdings for the late 1940s are scarce, it is evident that he was an early convert to liberal democracy. In 1947 he established a political lobbying organization called *Wirtschaftspolitische Gesellschaft von 1947*, which advanced a pro-American foreign policy vision. Around the time of the Himmerod-Conference in late-1950 this organization was purchased by the West German government and subsequently used to secretly channel funds to local veterans’ organizations that supported West German democracy and the EDC treaty (Dethleffsen organized and monitored these investments).¹²⁰ It is possible that

¹²⁰ See Erich Dethleffsen’s archival holdings, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, N 648/8 and N 648/10.

Dethleffsen began working for Office Blank before Kielmansegg; in any case, the two quickly gravitated toward one another after the Himmerod-Conference due to their shared commitment to reform the German military tradition. Indeed, one of Dethleffsen's most frequently given speeches was titled "Wehrmacht and Democracy," in which he argued that the German military tradition, as evidenced in the history of both the inter-war Reichswehr as well as the Wehrmacht, was antithetical to democracy because it hoisted the soldier to a destructive sphere outside of the state thus weakening the soldier's "political responsibility" and "individuality" (*Individuum*).¹²¹

Dethleffsen's liberal reformism was an audacious argument in a military culture seeped in illiberal and authoritarian ideas since the nineteenth century. Indeed, these arguments were not always received well. For example, the Bonn chapter of GfW explicitly sent GfW administrators a complaint against Dethleffsen in January, 1954, arguing that his "Citizen-Soldier" concept was a "seemingly grotesque" assault on the apolitical "roots" of a good military, and that he was suggesting the creation of an unrealistic army of intellectuals, and, finally, that the military had too many responsibilities to also be preoccupied with creating good democrats. The same letter, however, also conceded a point of agreement with Dethleffsen: namely, his European "community-ideal" (*Gemeinschafts-Ideal*).¹²² This complaint letter hints at an important dynamic at

¹²¹ Erich Dethleffsen, "Wehrmacht und Demokratie," *Wehrkunde*, issue 3, 1953.

¹²² "Sektion Bonn" (GfW) to GfW, January 15, 1954, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, BW 9/766.

play in Dethleffen's strategy for inculcating in West German veterans a commitment to democracy. This can be better understood by examining copies of Dethleffsen's speeches given at GfW chapters. These offer important insights into the way he and Kielmansegg integrated the Internal Leadership and Citizen-Soldier concepts into their advocacy of a new Europe.

Take, for example, a speech Dethleffsen regularly presented titled "The Contribution of Community [*Gemeinschaft*] to Future Soldierly Life." He began the speech by introducing the Citizen-Soldier and Internal Leadership concepts, listing a series of new principles upon which the European Army would be based: sanctity of the individual, soldiers as "agents" not "objects," democratic education, and commitment to the constitutional state. Some might contend, he continued, that these new principles dismiss the German heritage of belonging in a *Gemeinschaft*. But this was not so, he argued, because there was a larger "order of life as represented by the European Family of Peoples [*Europäische Völkerfamilie*]" which was finding its realization in the "conflict between East and West." The task of the new, democratic German military force in the European Army, he continued, was to reinvigorate a new "sense of community" (*Gemeinschaftsgefühl*). This restored sense of community, he argued, must preserve the soldier's "ethical responsibility" to transcend selfish and empty individualism. But it must also avoid devolving community into nationalism, which he described as "a dangerous thing leading us to forget that technology, the reality of Grossraum(s), and the interconnectedness and interdependence of singular states – that these things have overcome the nation-state concepts with

which we were raised during the age of exaggerated nationalism....” The answer to the dilemma, for Dethleffsen, was the “Western world.” The “Europe-idea” alone, he lamented, was unfortunately failing to realize itself as an independent political reality. But an increasingly connected Europe was still emerging as a constituent member of a larger Western community, and this “Western world” was to be the new psychological home of the German soldier.¹²³ This was an avowedly liberal Europeanism. In short, Dethleffsen and Kielmansegg grafted their liberal reformism into the Europe-concept. For Dethleffsen, joining the “Western world“ was more than a temporary and tactical alliance. In fact, he explicitly addressed the “Third Front” argument of other Europeanists and rejected it as just another form of “neutralism” – the pejorative designation for pacifist opponents of Adenauer’s foreign policy. In one of his GfW speeches titled “Is Neutrality an Option for Us?” Dethleffsen began by trotting out all the familiar Europeanist arguments for the necessity and inevitability of European integration: the geographic scope of modern warfare, the reach of modern technology, and the economic Grossraum. Germans, he added, were especially well-suited to lead on European integration:

We can and should be the impetus for the integration of Europe, because we are the most endangered by Bolshevism as a consequence of our geographic position, and because it will be the easiest for us to integrate ourselves into a supranational community since we do not have any sovereignty to give up at this point.

But Dethleffsen denounced the next step taken by Third Front Europeanists:

¹²³ Erich Dethleffsen, “*Der Beitrag der Gemeinschaft zum künftigen Soldatentum,*”

Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, BW 9/2532.

We are the West. There is no doubt on this question. It is a historical lunacy to believe Germany is the heart of Europe – we were and are the border [of Europe]. It has always been to the detriment of Europe when we – whether through our own fault or the fault of others – have mistakenly fought against the West.

But Dethleffsen's liberal Europe-concept went beyond situating Europe in the "Western World." Germans must move beyond the "negative" reasons for joining the "Western community," Dethleffsen continued. There must also be a "positive" affirmations of Western values as well; specifically: "the freedom of the individual, of capital, and of goods."¹²⁴ This was a routine argument for Dethleffsen – even in his closed-door speeches in the Blank Office. For example, in a presentation to Blank Office military personnel, Dethleffsen argued that their effort to promote European integration "will only make sense and be justified inasmuch as it strengthens those forces in this great conflict that are advancing the freedom of nations and individuals." The reason for this, he continued, was because "[t]he traditionally preserved foundations of the German military have been utterly shaken in recent decades. Discipline has become dubious as a result of its perversion during the Third Reich. The notion of duty has lost any once-upon-a-time relationship to ethics." Consequently, the German soldier must learn the sanctity of the individual in a society: "Each officer must venerate in all office duties human dignity and the conscience of the individual. All collectivist

¹²⁴ Erich Dethleffsen, "*Gibt es für uns eine Neutralität?*" Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, BW 9/81.

inclinations harking back to early times (especially in military life) must be countered.”¹²⁵

Already by the early summer of 1954, weeks before the EDC treaty was torpedoed by the French parliament, Dethleffsen had switched from advocating for the European Army integrated in the “Western world” to advocating German participation in NATO as an alternative.¹²⁶ Not long after, Kielmansegg followed suit.¹²⁷ After the failure of the EDC, the floodgates were opened for Kielmansegg, Dethleffsen, and other liberal reformers throughout the rest of 1954, and the topics of NATO, Western values, Internal Leadership, and Citizen-Soldier dramatically increased their presence in GfW activities.¹²⁸ Then, at the beginning of the new year in 1955, a long memo was sent by the Blank Office to local chapter administrators as an instruction manual for scheduled workshops and conferences in 1955. The memo, titled “Materials for Civics Workshops in the GfW,” began with a recommendation that local chapter administrators purchase a copy of the West German constitution. The first chapter instructed

¹²⁵ Based on surrounding documents, this is very possibly the same speech given by Dethleffsen at the 1952 meeting in which even Theodor Blank expressed concern at the extent of Dethleffsen and Kielmansegg’s liberal reformism. See Erich Dethleffsen, “*Der Geist des neuen Offizier-Korps*,” Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, N 648/20.

¹²⁶ Chapter report, “Sektion Wetzlar,” *Wehrkunde*, June issue, 1954.

¹²⁷ Chapter report, “Sektion Hamburg,” *Wehrkunde*, August issue, 1954.

¹²⁸ This is based on a review of GfW chapter reports in *Wehrkunde* in late 1954 as well as a review of the activities of the local GfW chapter in Bonn in these months. See GfW Bonn chapter, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv BW 9/766. *Wehrkunde*, 1954.

them to have a discussion on the “meaning” of democracy, emphasizing that German soldiers learn the difference between tyrannical political ideologies that make disingenuous reference to democracy on the one hand, and real democracy, or “representative democracy,” on the other hand. The latter, it was explained, was based in two principles: a) the rights of individuals; and b) the principle of democratic sovereignty through free elections. Later sections educated administrators on how to confront various traditional arguments against representative democracy.¹²⁹ By the end of 1954, then, Bonn had transformed the original GfW project, designed to propagate the European Army, into an operation with the primary purpose of advancing liberal democracy in the West German veteran milieu. A similar evolution can be examined in the other covert veteran project: the DSZ magazine.

Democratization in the *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*

The West Germans’ chosen replacement for Steiner at the DSZ was a writer who had already written some articles for the magazine while under Steiner’s leadership: Arno Werner Uhlig. Practically nothing has been written in the secondary literature about Uhlig, and his file in the West German Federal Office of Press and Information does not contain biographical information. But according to these West German records, Uhlig worked in public relations on

¹²⁹ “*Materialien für Staatskundliche Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Gesellschaft für Wehrkunde*,” Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv BW 9/768.

behalf of the West German Federal Office of Press and Information until 1969.¹³⁰ Based on his writings, it is very likely that he had been a lower ranking officer in the Wehrmacht. The West Germans had, since as early as 1951, recognized the influence the DSZ had as the largest soldiers' periodical and had even attempted to gain influence over it. For roughly one year, starting in June, 1951, they were in conversation with the DSZ through their Blank Office liaison, Erich Dethleffsen, who unsuccessfully attempted to negotiate the purchasing of DSZ by a Bonn insider. Dethleffsen and the Blank Office were likely unaware that the DSZ had already been infiltrated by the Americans.¹³¹ After taking over the project at the beginning of 1953, the West German Federal Office of Press and Information exerted their influence over the paper through Uhlig, who had already established himself as a liberal reformer in the pages of DSZ, and who was subsequently made chief editor upon Steiner's expulsion from the project. Uhlig served as chief editor of the DSZ from late 1952 until mid-1954, after which he was transferred to other projects. West German officials were pleased with the work he performed during those two years; in fact, future influential conservative politician Franz Josef Strauss wrote a memo upon Uhlig's release from the DSZ project in which he highly recommended him: "He was the chief editor of the DSZ and deserves considerable merit for having steered it out of its radical and

¹³⁰ Arno Werner Uhlig's file in the archival documents of the Federal Office of Press and Information, Bundesarchiv in Koblenz, B 145/5427.

¹³¹ Erich Dethleffsen's archival holdings, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, N 648/9.

militaristic course and into reasonable, clear waters.”¹³² Uhlig’s commitment to liberal democracy and intentions to reform the political culture of the German military were already evident in his early writings in the DSZ, and became even more pronounced upon assuming the chief editor position of the paper.

At the end of 1951 Uhlig began publishing regularly in the DSZ, and over the course of 1952 increased his presence on the front-pages, arguing, like Steiner, for a complete and total European revolution against nationalism and the nation-state. But unlike the apolitical Steiner, Uhlig regularly reported on the politics of Strasbourg and Konrad Adenauer’s foreign policy (both of which he expressly supported).¹³³ In late 1951 Uhlig began expanding his editorials by promoting the American-style of democracy. In one article, Uhlig reported on a conversation with a local U.S. occupation authority about the “poor democrat” in German history. He argued that Hitler had mobilized a traditional German sentiment against democracy and that West Germans’ future relied upon reversing that sentiment and discovering a “passion” for democracy and membership in the

¹³² Franz Josef Strauss to “von Eckart“ (Federal Office of Press and Information), July 29, 1954, Bundesarchiv in Koblenz, B 145/5427.

¹³³ Arno Werner Uhlig, “Entschliesst sich Europa zur Tat?“ *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, November 1, 1951. Arno Werner Uhlig, “Die europäischen Zauderer in der Entscheidung,“ *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, December 6, 1951. Arno Werner Uhlig, “Jetzt hat Die Welt ihren Beweis,“ *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, January 17, 1952. Arno Werner Uhlig, “Die Zeit des Redens ist Vorbei,“ *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, October 18, 1951. Arno Werner Uhlig, “Hat Adenauer eine Schlacht verloren?“ *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, February 14, 1952.

“free world.”¹³⁴ In his next article, Uhlig praised “Western reeducation” of Germans in the “methods of clear, democratic politics.”¹³⁵ Throughout 1952 Uhlig’s advocacy for a politically unified Europe was mapped over the Atlantic Alliance. A succinct example is how he portrayed the signing of the EDC treaty in the spring of 1952: “a fateful step on the path towards Europe and towards a Europe in the Free World.”¹³⁶ Other examples of Uhlig’s emerging liberalism in late 1951 and 1952 include a consistent defense of American foreign policy and Adenauer’s “Western integration” policies, which he connected and described as a “partnership” and a “European-Western Commitment to Defense.”¹³⁷ Over the course of 1952 Uhlig increasingly wrote about the importance of strengthening West German democracy, and appealed to the anti-Communism of West German veterans by arguing that Communist parties should be banned. Communism’s greatest threat to the well-being of Europeans, he argued, was its threat to democracy.¹³⁸

¹³⁴ Arno Werner Uhlig, “Der Aufruf zur Wagnis,” *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, November 1, 1951.

¹³⁵ Arno Werner Uhlig, “Das Spiel mit dem Feuer,” *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, November 8, 1951.

¹³⁶ Arno Werner Uhlig, “Über Bonn nach Europa,” *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, May 29, 1952.

¹³⁷ See, for example, Arno Werner Uhlig, “Partnerschaft auf der Waage,” *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, November 29, 1951.

¹³⁸ Arno Werner Uhlig, “Die falschen Wächter der Demokratie,” *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, February 28, 1952. Uhlig also repeatedly argued that the Social Democrats were likewise a threat

One of the most important articles written by Uhlig was titled “Ideas are more Important than Bullets.” Like many Europeanists examined in this dissertation, Uhlig felt compelled to engage with Spengler’s thesis of civilizational decline and proclaimed the new Europe to be the answer and solution to Spengler’s pessimism. But, importantly, Uhlig explicitly distanced himself from other post-Nazi Europeanists who defined the European revival as an independent “Third Front” between West and East. It is “lunacy” he declared, to believe in “playing the part of a Third Front in the contemporary, global division of the world into two parts, and this will very soon become obvious in the course of time.” Such arguments, he suggested, were ironically similar to the very nationalism proponents of the Europe-concept were decrying:

The politicians and statesmen in Europe have still not yet grasped that they lie within the Grossraum of a world-power [the United States], and that they will gradually need to do away with the concepts of 1914 and the method of promoting nationalist interests in politics.¹³⁹

Uhlig, then, was distancing the term “Grossraum” from Europe and instead arguing that Europe found itself within an even larger Grossraum – the West. To reject Europe’s belonging in the Western world was, for Uhlig, to repeat Germany’s nationalist disaster of proclaiming its spiritual exclusivity from the West at the beginning of the First World War. As we have seen in previous

to democracy. See, for example, Arno Werner Uhlig, “Feuer im Staatsschiff: Woher drohen eigentlich unserer Demokratie ernsthaftige Gefahren?“ *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, March 6, 1952.

¹³⁹ Arno Werner Uhlig, “Ideen sind wichtiger als Kugeln: Die Überwindung des Bolschewismus bedarf einer aus der Zeit geborenen geistigen Erneuerung in Europa,“ *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, December 13, 1951.

chapters of this dissertation, Nazi Europeanists regularly embraced the German völkisch tradition (the “concepts of 1914”) and marshalled it into a new European framework. What Uhlig was doing was wholly different: he was openly rejecting the völkisch, anti-West German political tradition, and superimposing the Grossraum over the Western world instead.

Over the course of 1952 and 1953 Uhlig’s liberalism became increasingly explicit. In one article, Uhlig argued that West Germans must do more than align geopolitically with the United States – they must also adopt the “American way of life.”¹⁴⁰ Uhlig also began printing articles celebrating the French Revolution and the Enlightenment as necessary precursors for the democratization of Europe.¹⁴¹ Another important evolution in the DSZ was the addition of the “Citizen-Soldier” argument to the front-pages. In March, 1953, Uhlig ran an article on the front-page titled “Psychological Foundations for Military Cadres.” The article positively reviewed a recent public conference administered by the Blank Office about the political values being prepared for the new German detachment in the European Army. “A Soldier in a democracy, and especially a soldier who thinks in a European way and is committed to Europe,” it argued, was to be a “Citizen-Soldier.” This meant upholding “the personal freedom of the individual” as well

¹⁴⁰ Arno Werner Uhlig, “Ohne Deutschland keine Sicherheit,” *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, April 11, 1952.

¹⁴¹ Friedrich Wilhelm, “Masse und Persönlichkeit,” *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, May 1, 1952.

as representative democracy as a higher mission than fulfilling military orders.¹⁴² It is clear that such editorials came at the suggestion of the Blank Office; in fact, in April, 1953, Uhlig ran a conversation on the front-page between himself and a liberal representative of the Blank Office, Wolf Graf von Baudissin, about the “Citizen-Soldier” concept.¹⁴³ Such conversational articles with the Blank Office became a regularity.¹⁴⁴ As the fall, 1953 federal elections were approaching, Uhlig put the “Citizen-Soldier” concept into practice, running front-page articles which argued that the veteran generation had a special responsibility to go to the polls and vote because political apathy had killed the first German democracy – the Weimar Republic. Uhlig’s defense of the Weimar Republic was, of course, a significant departure in German military culture.¹⁴⁵ The DSZ also instructed veterans about the correct way to use their vote: namely, for Konrad Adenauer, whose domestic achievements were perhaps “inconsequential,” but whose foreign policy of Western integration was hailed as decisive.¹⁴⁶ Adenauer’s enormous

¹⁴² W...g, “Psychologische Fundamente vor militärischen Kadern,” *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, March 19, 1953.

¹⁴³ Arno Werner Uhlig, “Wie sieht die neue Truppe aus?: DSZ-Gespräch mit Graf audissin vom Amt Blank,” *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, Easter special edition, 1953.

¹⁴⁴ See, for example, Arno Werner Uhlig, “Wir können jederzeit beginnen,” *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, New Year’s special edition, 1954.

¹⁴⁵ Unamed, “Frontgeneration und Politik von Heute: Eine Umfrage der DSZ zur Bundestagswahl,” *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, August 6, 1953.

¹⁴⁶ Arno Werner Uhlig, “Was bei der Wahl auf dem Spiele steht: Die zweite Bundestagswahl und ihre Bedeutung,” *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, September 3, 1951.

victory in that election was subsequently interpreted by Uhlig as a victory for democracy against its political threats from both left and right.¹⁴⁷ Additionally, the election was also described as a victory for the Europe-concept.

Indeed, Uhlig's advocacy of democracy and Adenauer's administration was intertwined with what he described as Adenauer's central accomplishment: the European Army. One article after the election described Adenauer's victory as a confirmation of the European Army and therefore proof that West Germany was a "fountain of democratic stability on the continent." The French, Uhlig argued, now needed to prove their democratic identity as well by likewise confirming the EDC treaty. In other words, Uhlig saw advocating the new Europe as inseparably connected to democratization.¹⁴⁸ This idea was strewn throughout his editorials in the DSZ. In early 1953, for example, Uhlig printed a feature article on the front-page titled "What We Have to Defend: The Commitment to Human Dignity is the Strongest Weapon against Bolshevism." In it, Uhlig argued that German soldiers must support the EDC because it symbolized the German military's new commitment to human rights and democracy.¹⁴⁹ Like post-Nazi Europeanists examined elsewhere in this

¹⁴⁷ Arno Werner Uhlig, "Moskau hat eine Schlacht verloren," *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, September 10, 1953.

¹⁴⁸ Arno Werner Uhlig, "Das totgesagte Pferd läuft munter weiter," *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, September 17, 1953.

¹⁴⁹ Arno Werner Uhlig, "Was wir zu verteidigen haben: das Bekenntis zur Menschenwürde ist die stärkste Waffe gegen den Bolschewismus," *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, February 12, 1953.

dissertation, Uhlig devoted great effort advocating for the most far-reaching policies of European integration, including the eventual formation of a “European political community” undergirded by a new “European patriotism” which together would overcome the nation-state and nationalism.¹⁵⁰ Typically, such arguments were accompanied with a rejection of partial or moderate steps towards European integration such as the suggestion to create a coalition of European national armies under NATO as an alternative to the EDC treaty. But like the liberal reformers in the Blank Office, Uhlig, too, was prepared to pursue the NATO alternative well before the EDC treaty failed.¹⁵¹ In short, over time Uhlig’s loyalty was with the Atlantic Alliance over and above the new Europe.

It is important to note that Uhlig’s injection of liberal democracy into the pages of the DSZ was not by any means immediate or comprehensive. In fact, following the pattern established by the American operatives of KMMANLY, Uhlig frequently balanced his liberalism with outright illiberalism. Allied denazification efforts, for example, were attacked specifically because they were undemocratic, such as in an article titled “Dangerous Concepts” with a subtitle: “If a democracy is politically healthy then it need not take action against

¹⁵⁰ Arno Werner Uhlig, “Soldaten wollen Europa,” *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, March 19, 1953.

¹⁵¹ In fact, Uhlig signaled that NATO was an acceptable alternative to the European Army as early as January, 1953. See Arno Werner Uhlig, “Europa – oder Nationalarmee,” *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, January 15, 1953.

extremists.”¹⁵² Another article celebrated the anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights only to proceed arguing that any genuine commitment to human rights must entail complete amnesty for German soldiers of the Second World War.¹⁵³ In fact, Uhlig went as far as to argue that the Wilsonian ideal of self-determination entailed a Western commitment to returning to Germany the Eastern territories annexed by Poland after the war.¹⁵⁴ Sometimes, Uhlig appealed explicitly to illiberal Europe-concepts, such as in May, 1953, when he printed full excerpts from Ernst Jünger’s secret, war-time European tract *Der Friede*.¹⁵⁵

In a similar vein, Uhlig likewise advanced his Atlanticism by frequently trafficking in anti-American sentiments. One especially recurrent tactic of his was to denounce the Yalta agreements as undemocratic and antithetical to the Western alliance of the Cold War. Take, for example, an article by Uhlig titled “At the Grave of Yalta-Germany.” The Yalta conference, he argued, was the “highpoint” of the mistaken Western alliance with Bolshevism. At Yalta, he argued, Western politicians sacrificed Germans and other Central Europeans to Soviet tyranny, and in doing so compromised the democratic rights of those

¹⁵² Arno Werner Uhlig, “Gefährliche Komplexe: Eine politisch gesunde Demokratie hätte es nicht nötig, sich gegen Extremisten zu wehren,” *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, November 15, 1951.

¹⁵³ Unnamed, “Anbruch einer neuen Welt-Epoche,” *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, December 13, 1951.

¹⁵⁴ Arno Werner Uhlig, “Der schwere Weg,” *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, October 15, 1953.

¹⁵⁵ Arno Werner Uhlig, “Aus Ernst Jüngers ‘Friedenschrift’,“ *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, May 28, 1953.

victims. Fortunately, however, the Americans had come to acknowledge the “horrendous mistake of Yalta” and initiated a Cold War alliance to rectify this mistake. Postwar veterans’ organizations, he continued, had established themselves as leaders in this crusade and had identified the unification of Europe as their predominant task: “German soldiers are among the strongest and most reliable factors in this emerging anti-Bolshevist front – their commitment to the European community is honest and serious.” If there were German soldiers who were ambivalent about the Cold War, Uhlig finished, then it was precisely because the Americans were not fully committed to replacing “Yalta-democracy” with true democracy: “What is the source of [some German soldiers’] distrust? Is it a matter of an honest commitment to democracy? No, today’s former soldiers have become disciplined citizens, their commitment is to democracy – but not to the Yalta-democracy of 1945.”¹⁵⁶ What Uhlig was doing in the above lines was making postwar democracy palatable to German veterans by distancing it from the war-time democracy of the United States. “Yalta-democracy” became a kind of Leitmotif in the DSZ for disparaging the war-time behaviors of the United States, justifying German veterans’ war against the United States, and criticizing the perceived mistreatment of postwar German veterans at the hands of the United States. Most importantly, the “Yalta-democracy” trope made German soldiers into something more respectable than a conquered force coerced into accepting democracy; it made German soldiers into the avant-garde of democracy. It is

¹⁵⁶ Arno Werner Uhlig, “Am Grabe Yalta-Deutschlands,” *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, October 11, 1951.

difficult to ascertain whether Uhlig's appeals to illiberalism and anti-Americanism were genuine or tactical, but the important point is that Uhlig's arguments were made in the explicit service of the American-led postwar international order. Precisely at critical moments such as March, 1952 when Stalin attempted to appeal to German nationalists by dangling an offer of a reunified but neutral Germany Uhlig was arguing that to accept such an offer was to return to the politics of Yalta. The Yalta conference, he explained in an article at the end of the month, was nothing more than the neutralization and therefore subjugation of Germany. By rejecting the "Stalin-note" of March, 1952, he argued, Germans could once and for all repudiate the historical tragedy of "excluding themselves from the Western community just to flail around as political independents between East and West."¹⁵⁷ In the end, this was just a camouflaged re-statement of Adenauer's "Western Integration" foreign policy. In short, Uhlig's leadership of the DSZ trafficked in the an occasional anti-Americanism, but in the service of Atlanticism.

Unlike the GfW which was funded into the 1960s, the funding for the DSZ was discontinued at the end of 1954 around the time of the establishment of the German Bundeswehr within NATO as well as the realization of complete West German national sovereignty at the London and Paris Conferences. The documents suggest that Uhlig's liberal reformism had butt heads with more traditional-minded militarists working on the DSZ project, and so Bonn decided

¹⁵⁷ Arno Werner Uhlig, "Das Ende von Yalta und Potsdam," *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, March 27, 1952..

that their larger project had been victorious.¹⁵⁸ Over the course of the 1950s the DSZ lost its position as the exclusive paper of the largest German veterans' organization (VDS) and gradually became a fringe, far-Right nationalist publication.¹⁵⁹ Still, it is important to consider the impact that the DSZ as well as the GfW had on postwar West German veteran culture in these important years leading up to the West German defense treaties of 1954 when they had tremendous influence due to the patronage of U.S. and West German intelligence forces.

Conclusion: Successful Operations or Vehicles for Extremists?

The objective of the covert veterans' affairs operations examined in this chapter was two-fold: a) increase veterans' support for rearmament in a European Army by revising the German nationalist tradition; and b) democratizing West German veterans' culture by revising the illiberal German military tradition. The impact that these intelligence operations and their German military reformers had on West German veterans should not be underestimated. First, on the issue of rearmament, it can be credibly surmised that the veterans' affairs operations had an important impact. One of the most important developments in West German veterans' culture was the gravitation of veterans to Konrad Adenauer's CDU coalition; in particular, their embrace of European integration and the European

¹⁵⁸ Arno Werner Uhlig to "Marcks" (Blank Office), May 29, 1954, Bundesarchiv in Koblenz, B 145/5427.

¹⁵⁹ See Günther Paschner, *Falsches Gewissen der Nation*. Peter Dudek and Hans Gerd Jaschke, *Die Deutsche National-Zeitung*.

Army – important preconditions for eventual rearmament within the less integrative national army in the American-led NATO. This was never a forgone conclusion; after all, the argument for “neutralization” between East and West, which was advocated with nationalist rhetoric by the SPD and other Protestant conservatives in the early 1950s, could very well have been a more natural home for the German military milieu seeped in the völkisch-nationalist tradition. Indeed, the polling evidence suggests that West Germans in general were initially skeptical of both European and NATO rearmament proposals, and over the course of the early 1950s had to be won over to Adenauer’s position. When the European Army was first introduced in 1950 West Germans rejected the proposal fifty-two percent to thirty-three percent. By 1953 public opinion had shifted to forty-four percent in favor and thirty-three percent against. This represented a thirty-point swing in three years.¹⁶⁰ The early 1950s, then, were a period of remarkable movement in public opinion vis-à-vis rearmament and European integration. This important shift in public opinion did not bypass West German veterans. Although the present author was unable to obtain polling evidence for West German veterans exclusively, the documents explored in this chapter suggest that although West German veterans at the beginning of the decade were

¹⁶⁰Ed.s Elisabeth Noelle and Erich Peter Neumann, *Jahrbuch für öffentliche Meinung, 1947-1955* (Allensbach am Bodensee: Verlag für Demoskopie, 1956), 357. A year-by-year table of public opinion evolution on the European Army reveals that the biggest shift took place during the year of 1952. See Searle, *Wehrmacht Generals, West German Society, and the Debate on Rearmament, 1949-1959*, 192.

more supportive of the European Army than the public writ large, they were nevertheless still divided on the issue. As illustrated above, the American intelligence agents in KMMANLY and QKSNITCH originally initiated their projects precisely because they were convinced that too many veterans were being drawn to the nationalist and neutralist factions of West German politics thus undercutting chances for German rearmament. In 1953, in contrast, they felt comfortable enough with veterans' support of the EDC to call off American funding.

The difficult question is to what extent this shift was assisted by the covert operations of this chapter. And on this point the internal documents of these projects as well as the Blank Office offer some important insight. In May, 1953, the Blank Office, having recently taken over the veterans' affairs operations, conducted a survey of fourteen GfW local officer chapters. The goal was to ascertain how these sections believed the German military should be spiritually re-established; in other words, how effectively GfW had influenced the soldiers at the grass-roots level. Each of the fourteen sections was asked to complete a conference on the topics of spiritual re-founding and acceptable military traditions after which the director of the section would complete a summarized report of his sections agreed-upon conclusions. These local chapter summaries are revealing regarding the penetration of the Europe-concept in the GfW. All of the summaries agreed that West Germans should rearm as members of the European Army, and most of them discussed the need to reform the German nationalist tradition in the German military. Take, for example, the following lines from the

summary of the local chapter Clausthal-Zellerfeld: “In a new armed detachment [of the European Army] it seems more important to produce a European esprit de corps than dwelling upon conventionally understood traditions anchored in historical events.” “Hopefully,” the report continued, “as a result of two lost wars, pride in the anachronistic age of nation-state conflicts will not lead to resentments which could decisively hinder healthy developments.” The report then concluded:

In this age of difficult questions (for the present and future), it seems vital to liberate ourselves from illusions and destructive emotions such as hurrah-patriotism (!) We have to overcome the past and dedicate all of our energy into creating a new purpose and a new spirit.¹⁶¹

Other local chapter reports echoed the above sentiments, but also exhibited a residual nationalism that soldiers were unwilling to give up, such as the report from Mönchen-Gladbach which suggested that German forces should be educated with both European and nationalist values since “there is not yet a uniform military history” for a European army.¹⁶²

The stubborn attachment to nationalism even in the GfW, an officers’ association designed to facilitate support for the European Army and founded by practitioners of the Europe-concept, speaks to an important reality: at the end of

¹⁶¹ Erich Ferdinand Pruck (“Sektion Clausthal-Zellerfeld“), “*Ausarbeitung; Abt.: Wehrwissenschaftlicher Arbeitskreis; Gruppe: I, Wehrwesen, allgemein; Arbeitsthema: ‘Traditionspflege’*,” May 5, 1953, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, BW 9/765.

¹⁶² “Oberstleutnant Taubert” (“Sektion München Gladbach-Rheydt“), “*Ausarbeitung; Abt.: Wehrwissenschaftlicher Arbeitskreis; Gruppe: I, Wehrwesen, allgemein; Arbeitsthema: ‘Traditionspflege’*,” May 5, 1953, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, BW 9/765.

the Second World War most West German veterans were still attached to traditional German nationalism. This is the tradition against which post-Nazi Europeanists were working. In fact, while the veterans' organizations of this chapter sought to revise German nationalism with the Europe-concept, other veterans' organizations were recalcitrant. Take, for example, the largest veterans' association, the VDS. As discussed above, the Blank Office originally turned towards coopting the American veterans' operations in part because they were unable to infiltrate the apolitical and nationalist leadership of the VDS. Gottfried Hansen, the leader of the VDS during the early 1950s, was persistently non-committal and even dismissive of the European Army, writing Adenauer at the end of 1950 that his organization would only support it if denazification were immediately ended, and he inflexibly held to this position in correspondences with the Blank Office as well as Adenauer personally through 1954.¹⁶³ As a result, the Blank Office decided to invest in the former American intelligence operations as a basis for their public relations work towards veterans. But that did not mean that the Blank Office stopped trying to influence the VDS; in fact, it began trying to infiltrate the VDS through its covert officers' club, the GfW, because many former German officers had a double-membership in both organizations. By the fall of 1952 VDS sent out an official declaration encouraging its members to obtain a double-membership in the Blank Office's

¹⁶³ Gottfried Hansen to Konrad Adenauer, January 30, 1952, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, BW 9/3089. Gottfried Hansen to Konrad Adenauer, April 7, 1954, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, BW 9/756.

GfW.¹⁶⁴ And in the spring of 1954, at their largest yearly conference called the “*Vertreterversammlung*,” the VDS hosted guest speakers of the Blank Office to advertise the European Army.¹⁶⁵ What explains this shift? A potential answer to this question can be found in a letter to VDS leadership written by the leaders of VDS in the West German state Nordrhein-Westfalen. The letter explained that their chapter had had no choice but to begin advocating for European integration and the European Army. The reason for this, the letter explained, was the consequence of grass-roots activism within their local chapters driven by “various organizations advocating for European unification and for German soldiers’ sympathy for [European unification].”¹⁶⁶ In other words, during the early 1950s VDS was increasingly pressured from below to take a more active and supportive posture on behalf of the EDC and other measures involving European integration. GfW and the Blank Office were, of course, among the most influential of such organizations advocating the Europe-concept.

On the issue of the European Army and revising the German nationalist tradition, then, the veterans’ affairs operations appear to have been an important player in the evolution of West German public opinion in the early 1950s. On the

¹⁶⁴ Directive for all VDS chapters, September 19, 1952, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, BW 48/110.

¹⁶⁵ Report on the “Jahrestagung” (VDS), Süddeutscher Rundfunk, March 16, 1954, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, BW 9/756.

¹⁶⁶ Local VDS chapter in Nordrhein-Westfalen to “Bundesleitung,” April 22, 1953, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, BW 48/13.

issue of democratization, in contrast, there is very little evidence that the veterans' affairs operations significantly moved West German veteran opinion towards an embrace of liberal democracy. In fact, on this issue the project administrators often received push-back. As discussed above, Dethleffsen and Kielmansegg's liberal reformism even occasionally produced official complaints from local GfW chapters. As one such report from the local chapter in Wiesbaden stated:

It is becoming clearer and clearer that the theories about a 'democratization' of the German military and about a 'liberal' Citizen-Soldier are causing incredible confusion in the public's mind and consequently inflicting great damage to the rearmament argument. Such theories are more or less perfect tools to denigrate the troops as pathetic from the onset.

The report pleaded with GfW administrators to rein in "over-zealous reformers," arguing that: "Many [reformers'] theories seem to just be influenced by the spirit of the 'democratic reeducation camp' and from the aftermath of the defamation years." By "defamation years," the report was referencing the immediate postwar years when the so-called "defamation" of veterans was perceived to have been particularly virulent. The report concluded with a direct repudiation of the Citizen-Soldier concept as antithetical to the German military tradition:

The new ideal for soldiers is not the liberal 'Citizen in Uniform' but rather the hard and ideologically resolute 'fighter', who is driven by an internal commitment to 'duty' and 'readiness to sacrifice', because he knows that his merciless opponent is fighting against the existence of Germany and Europe.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁷ E.V. Pfister ("Sektion Wiesbaden"), *"Ausarbeitung; Abt.: Wehrwissenschaftlicher Arbeitskreis; Gruppe: I, Wehrwesen, allgemein; Arbeitsthema: 'Traditionspflege',* " May 5, 1953, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, BW 9/765.

This complaint from the Wiesbaden chapter of GfW is indicative of many expressions of frustration in veterans' organizations articulated against liberal military reformism. And unlike the Europe-concept, there is very little evidence in the documents of these veterans' organizations suggesting positive or receptive responses to the "Internal Leadership" and "Citizen-Soldier" concepts.

Furthermore, as discussed above, the liberal reformers were themselves a minority within the Blank Office and their historical reputation as the founders of the West German Bundeswehr has largely been retrospectively ascribed. But here, too, the impact of the veterans' affairs operations should not be dismissed.

First, there is some evidence that by 1954 West German veterans were beginning to acknowledge the need for reform. One local chapter of GfW in Bremen, for example, conducted a poll of its more than fifty members on whether the "underlying values" (*das innere Gefüge*) of the rehabilitated German military would need to be changed. Roughly half of the respondents replied in the affirmative while half disagreed. When asked whether German soldiers should undertake education courses about the West German state 100 percent of respondents replied in the affirmative.¹⁶⁸ That said, the primary liberal accomplishment in these veterans' affairs operations was not the penetration of liberal democracy into the hearts and minds of most West German veterans, but rather a tepid rapprochement with the American-led international order as well as the West German Federal Republic. By articulating a few fundamental principles

¹⁶⁸ K. Chr. Trentzsch (head of the local GfW chapter in Bremen) to "Drews" (Blank Office), January 21, 1954, Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg, BW 9/768.

of liberal democracy in military affairs, and by combining it with anti-Communism and the Europe-concept, the liberal reformers in these veterans' affairs operations not only planted a seed for democratization, but also made more palatable an alignment between West German veterans and the Atlantic alliance led by the United States.

Most likely, relatively few West German veterans were transformed by these veterans' affairs operations into ideological liberals. What the projects did, rather, was foster a political culture within which liberal democracy was presented as an ally and acceptable alternative to the new Europe which was supposed to emerge from the EDC treaty. When that treaty failed, and when that Europe did not emerge, and instead a national army built on liberal principles within NATO became the immediate substitute – this new course was in fact received as an acceptable alternative. As discussed throughout this chapter, this subtle compromise with liberal democracy was frequently accomplished hand-in-hand with considerable moral compromise. Both KMMANLY and QKSNITCH were originally organized and administered by political radicals from the Wehrmacht and Waffen-SS, and the materials and activities in both projects repeatedly trafficked in reactionary illiberal sentiment. As this chapter has illustrated, the Europe-concept offered veterans a community which, unlike the ethnic national community (*Volksgemeinschaft*), could be credibly understood as the common denominator of their past and present struggles stretching across the year 1945. This meant that the Second World War was retold as a quasi enduring European struggle within which liberal democracy ironically became understood as an ally.

This was an important early origin in the de-radicalization of German military conservatism in the twentieth century.

Chapter 10: Conclusion - Konrad Adenauer and Post-Nazi Memory Politics

Konrad Adenauer

This dissertation has largely avoided Chancellor Konrad Adenauer's posture towards post-Nazi Europeanism from his position as chief executive of West Germany and leader of Christian Democracy during the first decade of the Federal Republic. This is in part because such an examination was beyond the scope of this dissertation. But an additional reason is because Konrad Adenauer's relationship towards post-Nazi Europeanism was practically non-existent. Konrad Adenauer appears to have prudently cultivated a distant relationship to the journalists, politicians, and military reformers examined in this dissertation, instead opting to associate with this conservative demographic through the intermediaries who administered the covert West German public relations projects analyzed in part II of this dissertation. Most likely, he chose this distant affiliation for the same reason he maintained a remarkable degree of silence towards former Nazis in general: because although their electoral support was important, such voters also threatened to delegitimize his democratic project. Although Adenauer occasionally felt compelled to acknowledge former Nazis and the military (such as, for example, when he issued the *Ehrenerklärung*, or "declaration of honor," for former German soldiers in late 1952), his default posture was to neither antagonize nor venerate Germans who had been tainted by complicity in the Third Reich, meanwhile passing amnesty laws that averted any public conversations and legal proceedings pertaining to historical justice. In doing so, he permitted the membership of former Nazis in his party and

consequently their participation in the democratization of West Germany, without simultaneously compromising that very democratization. This approach to politics in postwar West Germany has been described by some historians as “integrative.”¹ As Axel Schildt explained:

Adenauer’s achievement was to integrate the conglomeration of ideologies of the contemporary governing coalition into one doctrine of statecraft, ranging from neo-liberals, liberal-democrats, Christian-socialists, Catholic-Occidentals, to nationalist-conservatives – all of whom were bound together by anti-totalitarianism. ... [Adenauer] endeavored to appease his own followers but also, additionally, the conservative sceptics. Family-ideology, housing subsidies, and demonstrated proximity to the church for the CDU/CSU; nationalist and military-friendly tones for the FDP, solidarity and support for the demands of the refugee organizations...and accommodation of the wide-ranging right-wing of the political spectrum....²

Adenauer had very good reason to avoid direct association with post-Nazi Europeanists in particular. Unlike the post-Nazi Europe-concept, Adenauer’s political ideology and motivations for European integration were liberal-democratic. In contrast to notions of a European alternative to Western liberalism and Eastern Communism, Adenauer’s long-term goal for West Germany and Western Europe was to join the liberal international order led by the United

¹ Hans Peter Schwarz, *Konrad Adenauer: A German politician and Statesman in a Period of War, Revolution and Reconstruction: The Statesman, 1952-1967* (New York: Berghahn Books, 1997). Axel Schildt, *Konservatismus in Deutschland: Von den Anfängen im 18. Jahrhundert bis zur Gegenwart* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1998).

² Schildt, *Konservatismus in Deutschland*, 227, 230.

States, or what he called *Westbindung* (“integration into the West”).³ That Adenauer’s concept of Europe was different in this respect can be confirmed by the extent to which the postwar West German public relations projects under his administration used the Europe-concept as a wedge to create support for the Atlantic alliance and liberal democracy. Thus, Adenauer’s cautious approach to post-Nazi Europeanists suggests that he considered a direct relationship with them to be an unnecessary risk.

However, despite his distance from post-Nazi Europeanists it would be difficult to conclude that he was unaware of this significant milieu in West German conservative politics. Take, for example, Konrad Adenauer’s speech before the German parliament in the spring of 1953 during the heated debates over the ratification of the European Army. He began the speech declaring the European Army to be the “foundation for the political and economic unification of Europe” and the only way to “redeem Europe from impending doom and downfall.” The rest of his speech proceeded to outline the reasons why West Germans should support a more politically, economically, and militarily integrated Europe. At the very conclusion of his speech he argued that European unification would “once again make Europe into a meaningful factor in world politics and world economics” at which point he was interrupted by a representative of the Communist Party, Friedrich Rische, who shouted “that’s

³ Heinrich August Winkler, *Germany: The Long Road West* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006). Jeffrey Herf, *Divided Memory: The Nazi Past in the Two Germanys* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997).

what the Nazis said!”⁴ This interruption caused a stir in the parliament, but Adenauer completely ignored the comment and finished his speech asking parliamentary representatives to ratify the treaty. The legacy of Nazi Europeanism, then, was present even in the official West Germany parliamentary debates of the early 1950s. Surely Adenauer was aware of Communist attempts to tie his European integration policies to the Third Reich and to the former Nazi Europeanists supporting his administration, but throughout his parliamentary speeches about European integration during the early 1950s, in which he was consistently heckled by Communists and other delegates described in the minutes as “on the left,” Adenauer never responded or even addressed such criticisms.⁵

A more difficult question is whether or not Adenauer and his administration ever actively encouraged the post-Nazi Europeanists. On the one hand, Adenauer and various leading officials in his administration occasionally published articles in the publications associated with the covert West German public relations operations as well as *Christ und Welt* and *Sonntagsblatt*.⁶

⁴ Konrad Adenauer, speech before the German Bundestag, March 19, 1953 in ed. Josef Selbach, *Bundestagsreden* (Bonn: AZ-Studio, 1967), 173-198.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ See, for example, Konrad Adenauer, “Deutschland und die Europa-Armee,” *Wehrwissenschaftliche Rundschau*, January issue, 1951. Theodor Blank, “Der deutsche Verteidigungsbeitrag,” *Sonntagsblatt*, March 22, 1953. Franz Josef Strauss even frequently spoke at officer conferences of the *Gesellschaft für Wehrkunde*. See “‘Eine Dauerlösung anstreben’: Abgeordneter Strauss zum EVG-Vertrag vor der Gesellschaft für Wehrkunde,” *Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung*, October 2, 1952.

Furthermore, Adenauer's public speeches frequently spoke in a language that would have been attractive to post-Nazi Europeanists. Take, for example, the same speech in which he was interrupted by the Communist Friedrich Rische. Earlier in the speech, Adenauer proclaimed the European Army to be just one important step in a larger process of "escaping the ideologies of nation-state concepts." The technological and economic evolution of the world as proven in the Second World War, Adenauer then argued, necessitated this transition:

As the last war illustrated, the development of military technology and technology in general has created entirely different and new world circumstances. There are two world-states: the United States and Soviet-Russia. And then there is the British Commonwealth. And then we have the Western European countries, to which we belong. These countries have been economically and politically impoverished as a result of the war, such that each country is not in a position to guarantee its inhabitants freedom and a decent standard of life.

Adenauer continued, arguing that these "new world circumstances" necessitated European integration so that Europe could be empowered to overcome their new disadvantages:

These Western European countries are no longer in a position to defend themselves each one independently. They are no longer in a position to save European culture each one independently. All of these goals that we have in common, ladies and gentlemen, can only be achieved when the Western European countries unify – politically, economically, and also culturally.

This, he went on to explain, was the real reason for supporting the European Army:

All these reasons necessitate this treaty, which at the end of the day has to be seen as a fundamental step in the further progress towards Europe. This is the only politics that will enable the European peoples to establish peace, to build up Europe, to save European culture, and to once again

make Europe into a meaningful factor in world politics and world economics.⁷

Unquestionably, lines like this must have appealed to former Nazi Europeanists who would have seen them as a confirmation of the post-Nazi Europe-concept they were advancing in West German journalism and veterans' organizations. However, this is not proof that Adenauer intended such an interpretation. In fact, other quotations of Adenauer's explicitly repudiated such an interpretation. Just a few months before the above-mentioned quotations, for example, Adenauer had likewise given a speech to the parliament about the European Army in which his Atlanticist convictions were explicitly articulated:

Whether or not to accept this treaty is, in short, a question about whether or not the Federal Republic of Germany should join the West or not; whether it will join the defense of the Atlantic defense system or not; whether it will be included in the integration of Europe or not; whether it wants the free reunification of Germany in a free Europe or whether it is prepared to tolerate the reunification of Germany, or perhaps its division, in tyranny.⁸

Hans Peter Schwarz has argued that Adenauer saw no contradiction between his commitment to a rejuvenated Christian Europe and his commitment to Western integration. For him, the two commitments were one and the same – a

⁷ Konrad Adenauer, speech before the German Bundestag, March 19, 1953 in ed. Josef Selbach, *Bundestagsreden* (Bonn: AZ-Studio, 1967), 173-198.

⁸ Konrad Adenauer, speech before the German Bundestag, July 9, 1952 in ed. Josef Selbach, *Bundestagsreden* (Bonn: AZ-Studio, 1967), 131-160.

commitment to Western civilization.⁹ This fusion worked conveniently politically, because it allowed him to speak to multiple constituencies at the same time. Post-Nazi Europeanists were likewise able to interpret his pronouncements as a confirmation of their vision.

As such, post-Nazi Europeanists almost always selectively highlighted and distributed quotations from Adenauer that could be construed to advance their Europe-concept. The best example of this is when Adenauer used the term *dritte Kraft*, or “third front,” in a press conference about European integration on May 9th, 1950. It is not clear whether or not Adenauer was intentionally channeling this term that was so widely used among post-Nazi Europeanists, but they certainly interpreted that to be the case. The full quotation from Adenauer is as follows:

In our opinion the purpose behind the development of the European Council can only be one thing: to create a federal Europe that will be an eminently peaceful factor in the world. You all know the situation in the world right now. You know that both of these great-powers – Soviet-Russia on the one side and the United States of North America on the other side – are as a result of ideological differences, as a result of each of their specific development, and as a result of their entire world views completely divided in the Cold War. A conflict that, we all hope, will never evolve into another war. But they are both standing across and against one another. After both world wars that we have experienced, no other state in the world is strong enough to compete with these two states. Even if this acute tension that we are currently experiencing in the Cold War were to come an end, then there will nevertheless continue to be a latent tension so long as the world is governed for all intents and purposes by each of these two great-powers. So, it must be our goal to create in a unified Europe a *dritte Kraft*, a force that will not be nearly so large as

⁹ Hans Peter Schwarz, “Konrad Adenauer – Abendländer oder Europäer? Zur Bedeutung des Christlichen in seiner auswärtigen Politik” in ed. Ulrich von Hehl, *Röhdorfer Gespräche, Band 17: Adenauer und die Kirchen* (Bonn: Bouvier Verlag, 1999).

each of these two great-powers, indeed a force that never could be as large. But a force that will nevertheless be strong enough, economically and politically, such that when latent differences threaten to devolve into acute tensions, it will be able to throw its weight behind the preservation of peace. That is, in our opinion, the goal we must keep in sight when we conduct Europe-politics. In other words, an eminently peaceful goal, the pursuit of which sets out to achieve lasting peace for the peoples of the world.¹⁰

Despite the explicitly non-confrontational and nearly pacifist tone of Adenauer's use of the term "*dritte Kraft*," post-Nazi Europeanists picked up this quotation and presented it as a confirmation that the Chancellor stood behind their calls for a Europe independent of the Western alliance system. Axel Seeberg of *Sonntagsblatt*, addressing critics of his Europe-concept, asked the provocative question: "So do we want to build up Europe as a *dritte Kraft*, such as Adenauer newly believes, or do we want to watch Europe be an instrument in the division of the world into two great groups?" Seeberg, in other words, believed that Adenauer had authorized the idea of Europe as an independent force in the Cold War rather than a member of the Atlantic Alliance.¹¹

Post-Nazi Memory Politics

Understanding the influence, then, of post-Nazi Europeanism on the political culture of West Germany requires focusing on the politically ostracized former Nazis who were granted a large public voice to articulate an interpretation of current events which they could approve of. Because they were working towards Adenauer and his administration by finding ways to reconcile their past

¹⁰ Quoted in Axel Seeberg, "Europa als die 'dritte Kraft'," *Sonntagsblatt*, May 21, 1950.

¹¹ Ibid.

to the present, this dissertation is also a study of political memory. The literature on postwar political memory tends to treat collaboration in what we might describe as “static” categories. Because fascism was so fiercely nationalistic, the assumption often made is that the postwar political memory of the Second World War was similarly nationalistic. Peter Lagrou, for example, famously described postwar West European memory politics as a “nationalization of victimhood” which used the tragedy of mass death to paradoxically reinforce nationalism at the expense of the war’s most victimized groups.¹² In the German literature specifically, historians have debated whether postwar memory politics can best be described as “amnesia” (a selective silence concerning national crimes) or “war stories” (an active construction of German national victimhood at the expense of national complicity).¹³ In both arguments, national categories are accepted as the starting point.

This dissertation suggests that, however important national victimhood was, an important piece of the story is missing. Post-Nazi Europeanism shifted the categories of national identity for many Germans by creating new European

¹² Peter Lagrou, “The Nationalization of Victimhood: Selective Violence and National Grief in Western Europe, 1940-1960” in ed.s Richard Bessel and Dirk Schumann, *Life and Death: Approaches to a Cultural and Social history of Europe During the 1940s and 1950s* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 243-257.

¹³ Norbert Frei, *Adenauer's Germany and the Nazi Past: The Politics of Amnesty and Integration* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002). Robert G. Moeller, *War Stories; The Search for a Usable Past in the Federal Republic of Germany* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).

concepts of identity which subsequently assisted the transition from a tainted nationalism to a new form of “Europe” identity politics. This allowed them to part ways with their Nazi past without having to discard what Fritz Stern called the “temptation” of nationalism, by which he meant the yearning for a transcendent escape from modernity.¹⁴ As this dissertation has shown, Europe functioned as a kind of imagined community which offered a more promising escape from modernity than nationalism. It did so by offering nationalism in a new form, transferring the hopes, sentiments, and ideas behind nationalism onto more expansive categories. But Europeanism was also effective because it enabled a workable bridge to the past that nationalism was no longer capable of fulfilling. By attaching themselves to the Christian Democratic politics of European integration (especially the European Army) they could perceive that their dedication to Europe transcended the “Zero Hour” of 1945; they could continue their war-time quest for a “New Europe” via the postwar politics of European integration, especially the transnational European war of unification against Soviet Communism. And they could do so without carrying any culpability for the nationalist disasters of the Second World War and without immediately embracing liberal democracy. On the one hand, Europeanism gave collaborators a tool for establishing critical distance to those “few” radically nationalist Nazis whose genocidal racial supremacism had no purchase in the postwar world; on the other hand, it also gave them a futuristic vision of

¹⁴ Fritz Stern, *Dreams and Delusions: The Drama of German History* (New York: Knopf, 1987).

supranational identity which allowed them to maintain some aspects of the past. This was, undeniably, a form of evasive and apologetic memory politics. But it might also have been essential for the democratization of German conservatism.

Some historians have argued that European attempts throughout the twentieth century to construct Europe as an alternative identity to the nation have been nothing more than a dangerously dishonest continuation of nationalism in a new name, thus shielding and extending the damaging effects of nationalism and dodging a confrontation with the very notion of an exclusive cultural nation.¹⁵ The post-Nazi Europeanists in particular could certainly be regarded as an especially egregious example of this criticism. After all, in all three time periods their Europe stood in stark contrast to liberal or cosmopolitan discourses of Europe. But the story of post-Nazi Europeanists forces us to consider the arresting question regarding the relationship between memory politics and the democratization of right-wing radicalism. Norbert Frei has argued that the formation of a West German liberal democracy in the half-decade between 1949 and 1954 was built upon a broad political consensus to forgo a genuine confrontation with the crimes and complicity of the past, or what he calls *Vergangenheitspolitik* (“politics of the past”). Further, Frei argues that this historical amnesty, although morally empty and an affront to historical justice, was perhaps necessary in order to circumvent a German revolt against their new

¹⁵ Bo Stråth, “Multiple Europes: Integration, Identity, and Demarcation of the Other” in ed. Bo Stråth, *Europe and the Other and Europe as the Other* (Bern: P.I.E.-Peter Lang, 2000), 385-420.

democracy. Without “politics of the past,” he argues, postwar German democracy may have foundered from the onset. According to Frei, this delayed reckoning with the past may even have prepared the ground for the ultimate *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* (“coming to terms with the past”) that began in earnest in the 1960s.¹⁶ The story of conservative Europeanists and their trajectory from National Socialism to resigned liberals aligns with Frei’s argument. The uncomfortable truth of postwar European history is that liberal democracy had no other path except through illiberal citizenries saturated with complicity in fascist dictatorships (this was especially the case in Germany). The post-Nazi Europe concept functioned as one of the most important intellectual discourses in postwar West Germany that deflected a revolt from within German conservatism. In other words, the memory politics of post-Nazi Europeanism helped many conservative Germans to sanitize their political radicalism while at the same time gradually moving beyond it.¹⁷

¹⁶ Norbert Frei, *Adenauer’s Germany and the Nazi Past: The Politics of Amnesty and Integration* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).

¹⁷ The above three paragraphs are drawn substantially from an article published by the present author. See Josh Klein, “Nazi Europeanism as Transnational Collaboration and Transnational Memory,” *The Yearbook of Transnational History* 2.1 (2019), 149-173.

Appendices

Appendix A: Propaganda departments in the Foreign Office, 1940-1945¹⁸

<u>Department</u>	<u>Responsibilities and pertinent figures</u>
<i>Ministerbüro</i> (Ribbentrop's main office)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Organized and distributed cross-department propaganda narratives <p>-Karl Megerle, Beauftragter für Propaganda (Propaganda Commissioner)</p>
<i>Presseabteilung</i> (Press Department)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Infiltrated foreign press by running articles via occupying administrations or diplomatic embassies, by placing hired journalists, and by financing Foreign Office-operated periodicals <p>-Paul Karl Schmidt, department director -Hans Georg von Studnitz, assistant to Schmidt and editor of <i>Berlin-Rom-Tokio</i>. -Klaus Mehnert, Director of Foreign Office propaganda in the Western hemisphere</p>
<i>Informationsabteilung</i> (Information Department)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Completed and conveyed research on propaganda and opinions abroad and produced propaganda material <p>-Giselher Wirsing, journalist and foreign correspondent -Karl Megerle [originally], journalist -Hans Georg von Studnitz [originally], journalist</p>

¹⁸ For a more detailed and chronological breakdown of the departments within the Foreign Office propaganda apparatus, including an account of their evolution, change, and rivalries, see Longerich, *Propagandisten im Krieg*, 47-68.

Rundfunkpolitische Abteilung (Radio Department)

- Financed radio programs in occupied, neutral, and allied radio broadcasts as well as radio programs which were broadcast into foreign countries

Kulturpolitische Abteilung (Cultural-Politics Department)

- Organized or financed cultural/intellectual programs, conferences, and other venues in order to intensify relationships with occupied, neutral, and allied countries

-Franz Alfred Six, department director after 1943

-Axel Seeberg, "Foreign Course" coordinator

**Appendix B: Speakers (German and non-German) at the Foreigner Courses,
1940-1945¹⁹**

Dr. Paul Karl Schmidt	Reichsbankdirektor Dr. Rudolf Eicke
Dr. Franz Alfred Six	Dr. E. Helfferich
Axel Seeberg	Walther Sommer
Karl Heinz Pfeffer	Dr. Will Decker
Dr. Wilhelm Stuckart	Walter Hebenbrock
Fritz Sauckel	Prof. Dr. Fritz Lenz
Dr. Robert Ley	Prof. Dr. Heinz von Loesch
Walther Funk	SS Brigadeführer Ulrich Greifelt
Jacques Doriot	Prof. Dr. Friedrich Berber
Marcel Deat	Prof. Dr. Gerhard von Mende
Mihail Manoilescu	Hans-Heinrich Dieckhoff
Arnvid Vasbotten	Prof. Dr. Walter Groß
Prof. Dr. Reinhard Höhn	Dr. Wolfgang Pohl
Oberst Ritter Rudolf von Xylander	Dr. von der Declzen
General Horst von von Metzsch	Gesandter Dr. Carl August Clodius
Günther Schulze-Fielitz	Dr. Wilhelm Rentrop
Hans Fritzsche	Dr. Herbert Scuria
Erich Hilgenfeldt	Hans von Tschammer und Osten
Dr. Hermann Reischle	Prof. Dr. Egon von Eickstedt
Dr. Bruno Kiesewetter	Prof. Dr. Werner Frauendienst
Dr. Friedrich Syrup	Dr. Eugen Diesel
Fritz Reinhardt	Dr. Hans Severus Ziegler
Dr. Wilhelm Ziegler	Colin Roß
Dr. Friedrich Sieburg	Nichifor Crainic
Dr. Albrecht Haushofer	Prof. Dr. Wilhelm Grewe
Erich Albrecht	Prof. Dr. Alfred Baeumler
Prof. Dr. Rudolf Mentzel	Wehrmacht Captain Bentmann
Dr. Carl Diem	Prof. Dr. Andreas Predöhl
Dr. Albert Prinzing	Admiral Frierich Lützow
Generalkonsul Rudolf Karlowa	SS Sturmbannführer Jeff van de Wiele
Albrecht Haushofer	Ward Hermans
Oberstleutnant George Soldan	General Konrad Zander
Dr. Friedrich Wimer	Justice Dr. Albert Weh

¹⁹ Due to fragmentary and often illegible documentary sources the above list is incomplete. Notable guest lists are only available for the first three Foreigner Courses, for example. There is no available guest list or speaker list for the final Foreigner Course. Finally, some of the records are barely legible and therefore spelling errors are likely. The above information was drawn from review articles in *Zeitschrift für Politik*, as well as Franz Alfred Six's budget requests sent to the Party Chancellory. See Axel Seeberg, "Fragen der neuen Ordnung," *Zeitschrift für Politik*, December issue, 1942. Axel Seeberg, "Grundlagen und Aufgaben europäischer Zusammenarbeit," *Zeitschrift für Politik*, January/February issue, 1944. Axel Seeberg, "Europa in der Entscheidung," *Zeitschrift für Politik*, January/February/March issue, 1945. Franz Alfred Six to Hans Heinrich Lammers, March 16, 1942 and "Jahresbericht des DAWI, 1940/1941," Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichterfelde, R 43-II/947a, frames 100 and 125-173.

**Appendix C: Selected, highlighted guests at DAWI's Foreigner Courses,
1940-1945²⁰**

Gheorghe Rasu (Romania)	Margarita Johow (Chile)
Einar Anderberg (Sweden)	Ejaar Hovalt (Denmark)
Nils Sonesson (Sweden)	Andreas J. Pappas (Greece)
Jämastare G. Tamm (Sweden)	Professor Dr. Giuseppe Lo Verde (Italy)
Hans Oehler (Switzerland)	Professor Dr. Giovanni Sandrini (Italy)
Luis Diez del Corral (Spain)	Mr. Pokrajeic (Yugoslavia)
Nicolas Ramiro (Spain)	Wilhelm Rasmussen (Norway)
Stasys Reatikis (Lithuania)	Geza Birkas (Hungary)
Karya Kirpa (Lithuania)	Elemer Buocz (Hungary)
Dr. Jahan Beethowwers (Netherlands)	Dr. Sipoz (Hungary)
B.H.C. te Hennepe (Netherlands)	Edmond de Goeyze (Belgium)
Thor Halse (Norway)	Oberst Guillermo Gaalzer-Netto (Brazil)
Antonio de Menezes (Portugal)	Warna Dimiter Sarafov (Bulgaria)
Dr. Harilau Biala (Romania)	Agnar Christensen (Denmark)
Stefan Hlavaty (Slovakia)	Vilho Helanen (Finland)
Professor Ludwig Knappek (Slovakia)	Phandit-Bhatts (India)
Otto Wallen (Sweden)	Paolo Amisano (Italy)
Dr. Andreas von Keoves (Hungary)	Gastone Guzzoni (Italy)
Kalman von Moricz (Hungary)	Madshiko Izaji (Japan)
Oberstleutnant Antonov (Bulgaria)	Erwin Ticac (Yugoslavia)
Dr. Berbarov (Bulgaria)	

²⁰ Ibid.

Appendix D: Europe-Seminar attendees and accompanying positions in the Third Reich²¹

<p><u>DAWI academics:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prof. Dr. Gerhard von Mende • Prof. Dr. Heinz von Loesch • Prof. Dr. Wilhelm Grewe • Karl Heinz Pfeffer • Karl Haushofer • Prof. Dr. Werner Frauendienst • Dr. Bruno Kiesewetter • Karl Epting • Axel Seeberg • Wolfgang Höpker • Sugg-Bellini • (?)Beyer-Prag • (?)Donat • (?)Alsdorf • (?)Schoberth • (?)Pischel • (?)Wagner • (?)Frankenberg <p><u>Other academic institutions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hans-Joachim non Merkatz • Walter von Puttkammer • Gerhard Isenberg • (?)Wissler <p><u>Ministry for Science, Education, and Culture:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Herbert Scurla • Albert Holfelder • (?)Adams <p><u>Foreign Office:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Axel Seeberg • Klaus Achenbach • Franz Alfred Six • Alexander Werth 	<p><u>Führer Chancellery:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (?)Hagert • (?)Hederich <p><u>Party Chancellery:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (?)Dammer <p><u>Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (?)Muchow <p><u>Secret Service (SD):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eugen Steimle • Alexander Dolezalek • (?)Makowsky • (?)Franz <p><u>IG Farben:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (?)Reithinger • (?)Müller <p><u>Non-Germans:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (?)Vasiljevic (Belgrad) • (?)De Vries (Leiden) • (?)Genechten (Netherlands) • (?)Korinistu (Finland) • (?)Milkovic (Bulgaria) • (?)Wladikin (Sofia) <p><u>Others:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wolfgang Pohl • Fischer (Rudolf – likely) • (?)Dahnke • (?)Makowski • (?)Goepel • (?)Schmidt-Salzburg • (?)Bueler
---	---

²¹ The above information is drawn from a table put together by the anonymous finder of the Europe-Seminar files as well as a table of attendees within the folder itself. Many names have been cross-referenced with the present author’s research in order to provide many first names otherwise missing. Where a first name could not be identified it has been replaced with “(?)” See Bundesarchiv in Berlin-Lichterfelde, R 4902/1.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (?)Bran • (?)Böhm <p><u>Ministry for Propaganda:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paul Hövel • Wolff Heinrichsdorff <p><u>Ministry for Nutrition and Agriculture:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Karl Müller <p><u>Ministry of Economics:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (?)Poll • (?)Siegert <p><u>High Command of the Wehrmacht:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (?)Bentmann 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (?)Weber • (?)Buehler • (?)Saure • (?)Lambillon • (?)Van Huffel • (?)Praet • (?)Zum Steeg • (?)Esser • (?)Rahorti • (?)Roth • (?)Gamillschegg • (?)Koehler • (?)Fahrner • (?)Schmaus • (?)Mönch • (?)Höfler
--	--

Bibliography

Primary Sources:

Archival Collections

Bundesarchiv, Berlin-Lichterfelde

NS 19

NS 31

R 43-II

R 4902

Bundesarchiv, Koblenz

B 145

N 1166

N 1208

N 1505

Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv, Freiburg

BW 9

BW 47

BW 48

N 594

N 626

N 648

N 758

N 5002

Deutsches Literaturarchiv, Marbach

A:Diederichs/Eugen-Diedereichs-Verlag

A: Jünger

A:Trautz/Mehnert

Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, Bonn

01-210

Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg, Stuttgart

Q 1/30

Landesarchiv Nordrhein-Westfalen, Duisburg

RW 265

Landeskirchliches Archiv, Hannover

L 3/II

L 3/III

N 60

Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, Berlin

B2-15

B2-61

RZ 102

RZ 106

RZ 211

RZ 214

RZ 221

RZ 236

RZ 247

RZ 501

RZ 701

RZ 702

RZ 703

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, D.C.

German Nationalism Series

Nazi Propaganda Literature Series

NSDAP Propaganda Collection

United States National Archives and Records Administration (NARA),
College Park, MD

CIA CREST files, special collection "Classen, Wilhelm"

CIA CREST files, special collection "KIMMANLY[sic]"

CIA CREST files, special collection "Steiner, Felix Martin"

RG 263

T 175

- Berger, Gottlob, *Auf dem Weg zum Germanischen Reich*. SS-Hauptamt, 1944.
- Burkhardt, Kai, Gerd Giesler, and Stefan Krings. *Carl Schmitt und die Öffentlichkeit: Briefwechsel mit Journalisten, Publizisten und Verlegern aus den Jahren 1923 bis 1983*. Berlin: Duncker und Humblot, 1968.
- Deutsches Institut für Aussenpolitische Forschung. *Europa: Handbuch der politischen, wirtschaftlichen, und kulturellen Entwicklung Europas*. Leipzig: Helilngsche Verlagsanstalt, 1943.
- Fried, Ferdinand. *Das Abenteuer des Abendlandes*. Jena: Eugen Diederichs Verlag, 1950.
- *Das Ende des Kapitalismus*. Jena: Eugen Diederichs Verlag, 1931.
- Ferdinand Fried. *Wende der Weltwirtschaft: Von der Krise des Kapitalismus zu neuen Wirtschaftsformen*. Leipzig: Wilhelm Goldmann Verlag, 1939.
- Guderian, Heinz. *Kann Westeuropa verteidigt werden?* Göttingen: Plesse Verlag, 1950.
- Historian Klaus Körner's Private Collections
- Jünger, Ernst. *The Peace*. Washington D.C.: Regnery Publishing, 1948.
- Kroll, Gerhard. *Das Ordnungsbild der Abendländischen Aktion*. Munich: Verlag Neues Abendland, 1953.
- *Grundlagen abendländischer Kultur – Das Manifest der Abendländischen Aktion*. Munich: Verlag Neues Abendland, 1951.
- Mehnert, Klaus. *Ein Deutscher in der Welt: Erinnerungen, 1906-1981*. Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1981.
- *Jugend in Sowjet-Russland*. Berlin: Samuel Fischer, 1932.
- Noelle, Elisabeth and Neumann Erich Peter. *Jahrbuch für öffentliche Meinung, 1947-1955*. Allensbach am Bodensee: Verlag für Demoskopie, 1956.

- Poliakov, Leon and Wulf, Josef. Editors. *Das Dritte Reich und seine Denker*. Munich: K.G. Saur Verlag, 1978.
- Schmitt, Carl. *Der Nomos der Erde im Völkerrecht des Jus Publicum Europaeum*. Berlin: Dunker und Humblot, 1950.
- Schmidt, Paul Karl [Pseudonym: P.C. Holm], *Die Grenzen Nieder! Europa ist unsere Rettung*. Hamburg: Deutscher Buchverlag, 1950.
- Selbach, Josef. *Bundestagsreden*. Bonn: AZ-Studio, 1967.
- Steiner, Felix. *Die Freiwilligen: Idee und Opfergang*. Göttingen: Plesse Verlag, 1958.
- *Die Wehridee des Abendlandes*. Parma-Edition, 1951.
- Wenger, Paul Wilhelm. *‘Wer gewinnt Deutschland? Kleinpreußische Selbstisolierung oder mitteleuropäische Föderation*. Stuttgart: Seewald Verlag, 1959.
- Wirsing, Giselher. *Der Masslose Kontinent*. Jena: Eugen-Diederichs-Verlag, 1941.
- *Engländer, Juden, Araber in Palästina*. Jena: Eugen-Diederichs-Verlag, 1939.
- *Schritt aus dem Nichts: Perspektiven am Ende der Revolutionen*. Jena: Eugen-Diederichs-Verlag, 1951.
- *Zeitalter des Ikaros: Von Gesetz und Grenzen unseres Jahrhunderts*. Jena: Eugen-Diederichs-Verlag, 1944.
- *Zwischeneuropa und die Deutsche Zukunft*. Jena: Eugen-Diederichs-Verlag, 1932.
- [Pseudonym: Vindex]. *Die Politik des Ölflecks: Der Sowjetimperialismus im Zweiten Weltkrieg*. Berlin: Deutscher Verlag, 1944.

Newspapers and Magazines

Berliner Börsenzeitung (1940-1942)

Berlin-Rom-Tokio (1939-1944)

Christ und Welt (1948-1965)
Deutsche Soldaten-Zeitung (1951-1954)
Die Welt (1950-1953)
Das XX Jahrhundert (1939-1945)
Die Tat (1930-1938)
Münchener Neueste Nachrichten (1940-1941)
Signal (1940-1945)
Sonntagsblatt (1948-1961)
SS-Leithefte (1935-1944)
SS-Germanische Leithefte (1941-1943)
The XX Century (1941-1954)
Wehrkunde (1953-1954)
Wehrwissenschaftliche Rundschau (1951-1952)
Zeitschrift für Politik (1941-1944)

Interviews

Klaus Körner. Historian and postwar interviewer of Paul Karl Schmidt.

October 12, 2017.

Secondary Literature:

- Ahonen, Pertti. "Germany and the Aftermath of the Second World War." *The Journal of Modern History* 89.2, 2017.
- Anderson, Benedict R. O'G. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 1991.
- Anderson, Christopher J. "Public Opinion and European Integration" Ed. Peter H. Merkle. *The Federal Republic of Germany at Fifty: At the End of a Century of Turmoil*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1999. 313-325.
- Arendt, Hannah. "The Seeds of a Fascist International." July, 1945. Ed. Hannah Arendt. *Essays in Understanding, 1930-1954: Formation, Exile, and Totalitarianism*. New York: Schocken, 2005.
- Aron, Raymond. *The Opium of the Intellectuals*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2001.
- Asmussen, Nils. "Hans-Georg von Studnity: Ein Konservativer Journalist im Dritten Reich und in der Bundesrepublik." *Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 45.1, 1997. 75-119.
- Bajohr, Frank and Michael Wildt. *Volksgemeinschaft: Neue Forschungen zur Gesellschaft des Nationalsozialismus*. Frankfurt a.M: Fischer Taschenbuch, 2009.
- Baker, Keith Michael. *Inventing the French Revolution: Essays on French Political Culture in the Eighteenth Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- Bald, Detleff. "Neue Wehr, alte Ehr?" *Zeit-Geschichte*, 4, 2018. 82-87.
- Bark, Dennis L. and David R. Gress. *A History of West Germany, Vol. 1*. Hoboken: Blackwell, 1993.
- Bauerkämper, Arnd. "Reisen in die Vergangenheit: Westdeutsche Soldaten, Kriegsgräberfürsorge und 'Schlachtfeldtourismus' von 1945 bis 1990 in transnationaler Perspektive." *Militär-geschichtliche Zeitschrift* 76.1, 2017. 104-131.
- Bauerkämper, Arnd and Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe. *Fascism without Borders: Transnational Connections and Cooperation between Movements and Regimes in Europe, 1918-1945*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2017.

- Ben Redjeb, Badis. "Project KMMANLY: U.S. Intelligence and the Subversion of Media in Post-War Germany." *International Journal of Humanities and Cultural Studies* 2.4, 2016. 384-395.
- Benz, Wigbert. *Paul Carell: Ribbentrops Pressechef Paul Karl Schmidt vor und nach 1945*. Berlin: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag, 2005.
- Berger, Stefan. *Inventing the Nation: Germany*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2004.
- Berghahn, Volker. "The Debate on 'Americanization' among Economic and Cultural Historians." *Cold War History* 10.1, 2010. 107-130.
- Bessel, Richard. *Germany 1945: From War to Peace*. New York: Harper Perennial, 2010.
- Bideleux, Robert. "European Integration: The Rescue of the Nation State?" Ed. Dan Stone. *The Oxford Handbook of Postwar European History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012. 379-405.
- Biess, Frank. "Survivors of Totalitarianism: Returning POWs and the Reconstruction of Masculine Citizenship in West Germany, 1945-1955." Ed. Hanna Schissler. *The Miracle Years: A Cultural History of West Germany, 1949-1968*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001. 57-82.
- Biess, Frank and Robert G. Moeller. *Histories of the Aftermath: The Legacies of the Second World War in Europe*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2010.
- Bishop, Chris. *SS: Hitler's Foreign Divisions: Foreign Volunteers in the Waffen-SS 1940-1945*. Staplehurst, Kent: Spellmount, 2005.
- Black, Peter and Martin Gutmann. "Racial Theory and Realities of Conquest in the Occupied East: The Nazi Leadership and Non-German Nationals in the SS and Police." Ed.s Jochen Böhler and Robert Gerwarth. *The Waffen-SS: A European History*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017. 16-41.
- Blackbourn, David and Geoff Eley. *The Peculiarities of German History: Bourgeois Society and Politics in Nineteenth-Century Germany*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984.
- Böhler, Jochen and Robert Gerwarth. *The Waffen-SS: A European History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.

- Bracher, Karl Dietrich. *The German Dictatorship: the Origins, Structure, and Effects of National Socialism*. New York: Praeger, 1970.
- "The Role of Hitler: Perspectives of Interpretation." Ed. Walter Laqueur. *Fascism: A Reader's Guide: Analyses, Interpretations, Bibliography*. Berkeley: University of California, 1977.
- Breitman, Richard, Robert Wolfe, Norman J. W. Goda, and Timothy Naftali. *U.S. Intelligence and the Nazis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Breuer, Stefan. *Anatomie der Konservativen Revolution*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1993.
- Brockmann, Stephen. "Germany as Occident at the Zero Hour." *German Studies Review* 25.3, 2002. 477-496.
- Brubaker, Rogers. *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- Bullock, Alan. *Hitler: A Study in Tyranny*. Watford: Odhams Press Limited, 1952.
- Casagrande, Thomas. *Die volksdeutsche SS-Division "Prinz Eugen."* Frankfurt a.M.: Campus, 2003.
- Chandler, William M. "Integration and Identity in German Politics." Ed. Peter H. Merkl. *The Federal Republic of Germany at Fifty: The End of a Century of Turmoil*. New York: New York University Press, 1999.
- Chappel, James. *Catholic Modern: The Challenge of Totalitarianism and the Remaking of the Church*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018.
- Christensen, Claus Bundgard, Niels Bo Poulsen, and Peter Scharff Smith. "Germanic Volunteers from Northern Europe." Ed.s Jochen Böhler and Robert Gerwarth. *The Waffen-SS: A European History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017. 42-75.
- Conze, Eckart, Norbert Frei, Peter Hayes, and Moshe Zimmermann. *Das Amt und die Vergangenheit: Deutsche Diplomaten im Dritten Reich und in der Bundesrepublik*. Munich: Karl Blessing Verlag, 2010.

- Conze, Vanessa. *Das Europa der Deutschen: Ideen von Europa in Deutschland zwischen Reichstradition und Westorientierung, 1920-1970*. Munich: Oldenbourg Wissenschaftsverlag, 2005.
- Craig, Gordon. "The German Mystery Case." *New York Review of Books* 33.1. January 30, 1986.
- Cüppers, Martin. *Wegbereiter Der Shoah: Die Waffen-SS, Der Kommandostab Reichsführer-SS Und Die Judenvernichtung 1939-1945*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2005.
- De Wever, Bruno. "'Rebellen' an der Ostfront. Die flämischen Freiwilligen der Legion 'Flandern' und der Waffen-SS." *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 39, 1991. 581-610.
- Demant, Ebbo. *Von Schleicher zu Springer: Hans Zehrer als Politischer Publizist*. Mainz: Hase und Koehler Verlag, 1972.
- Doering-Manteuffel, Anselm. *Wie westlich sind die Deutschen? Amerikanisierung und Westernisierung im 20. Jahrhundert*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1999.
- Dudek, Peter and Hans Gerd Jaschke. *Die Deutsche National-Zeitung: Inhalte, Geschichte, Aktionen*. Munich: Information Verlagsgesellschaft, 1981.
- Echternkamp, Jörg. *Soldaten im Krieg: Historische Deutungskonflikte und westdeutsche Demokratisierung, 1945-1955*. Munich: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2014.
- Eley, Geoff. "Corporatism and the Social Democratic Moment: The Postwar Settlement, 1945-1973." Ed. Dan Stone. *The Oxford Handbook of Postwar European History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012. 37-59.
- "Europe after 1945." *History Workshop Journal* 65.1, 2008. 195-212.
- Elvert, Jürgen. *Mitteleuropa!: Deutsche Pläne Zur Europäischen Neuordnung, 1918-1945*. Stuttgart: Steiner, 1999.
- Evans, Richard J. *The Coming of the Third Reich*. New York: Penguin, 2004.
- Feldmeyer, Karl and Georg Meyer. *Johann Adolf Graf von Kielmansegg, 1906-2006: Deutscher Patriot, Europäer, Atlantiker*. Berlin: E.S. Mittler & Son, 2007.

- Fischer, Fritz. *Germany's Aims in the First World War*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1967.
- Forlenza, Rosario. "The Politics of the *Abendland*: Christian Democracy and the Idea of Europe after the Second World War." *Contemporary European History* 26.2, 2017. 261-286.
- Friedländer, Saul. *Nazi Germany and the Jews: The Years of Persecution, 1933-1939*. New York: First Harper Perennial, 1998.
- Friedman, Tuvia. *SS-Obergruppenführer und General der Waffen-SS Gottlob Berger: Chef des SS-Hauptamtes in Berlin und Chef der Gesamtrekrutierung der Waffen-SS: Dokumentensammlung*. Haifa: Institute of Documentation in Israel for the Investigation of Nazi War Crimes, 1996.
- Frei, Norbert. *Adenauer's Germany and the Nazi Past: The Politics of Amnesty and Integration*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2002.
- "Die Langen Fünfziger: Wirtschaftliche Dynamik und biedermeierliche Restauration, materielle Modernisierung und Kontinuität nationalsozialistischer Funktionseliten." *Die Zeit*. February 16, 2006.
- Frei, Norbert and Johannes Schmitz. *Journalismus im Dritten Reich*. Munich: C.H. Beck, 1999.
- Frevort, Ute. "Europeanizing Germany's Twentieth Century." *History and Memory* 17.1-2, 2005. 87-116.
- Freyeisen, Astrid. *Schanghai und die Politik des Dritten Reiches*. Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann, 2000.
- Fritzsche, Peter. "Breakdown or Breakthrough? Conservatives and the November Revolution." Ed.s Larry Eugene Jones and James Retallack. *Between Reform, Reaction, and Resistance: Studies in the History of German Conservatism from 1789 to 1945*. Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1993.
- *Life and Death in the Third Reich*. Belknap Press, 2009.
- Furet, François. *The Passing of an Illusion: The Idea of Communism in the Twentieth Century*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999.

- Gassert, Phillip. "The Spectre of Americanization: Western Europe in the American Century." Ed. Dan Stone. *The Oxford Handbook of Postwar European History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012. 182-200.
- Geertz, Clifford. "Ideology as a Cultural System." Ed. Clifford Geertz. *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*. New York: Basic, 1973.
- Gellner, Ernest. *Nations and Nationalism*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983.
- Geyer, Michael. "Endkampf 1918 and 1945: German Nationalism, Annihilation, and Self-Destruction." Ed.s Alf Lüdtke and Bernd Weisbrod. *No Man's Land of Violence: Extreme Wars in the 20th Century*. Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2006.
- Gilbert, Mark. *Surpassing Realism: The Politics of European Integration since 1945*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003.
- Gingerich, Mark. "Felix Steiner: Himler's 'all-time favorite child'." Ed.s Ronald Smelser and Enrico Syring. *Die SS: Elite unter dem Totenkopf: 30 Lebensläufe*. Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2003. 431-440.
- Gosewinkel, Dieter. *Anti-liberal Europe: A Neglected Story of Europeanization*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2014.
- Graf, Rüdiger. *Die Zukunft der Weimarer Republik: Krisen und Zukunftsaneignungen in Deutschland, 1918-1933*. Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2008.
- Granieri, Ronald J. *The Ambivalent Alliance: Konrad Adenauer, the CDU/CSU, and the West, 1949-1966*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2003.
- Grunert, Robert. *Der Europagedanke westeuropäischer faschistischer Bewegungen, 1940-1945*. Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2012.
- Gutmann, Martin R. *Building a Nazi Europe: The SS's Germanic Volunteers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017.
- "Debunking the Myth of the Volunteers: Transnational Volunteering in the Nazi Waffen-SS Officer Corps during the Second World War." *Contemporary European History* 22.4, 2013. 585-607.
- Hachmeister, Lutz. *Der Gegnerforscher. Die Karriere des SS-Führers Franz Alfred Six*. Munich: C.H. Beck, 1998.

- Hachmeister, Lutz and Friedemann Siering. *Die Herren Journalisten: Die Elite der deutschen Presse nach 194*. Munich: C.H. Beck, 2002.
- Hamerow, Theodore S. "The Conservative Resistance to Hitler and the Fall of the Weimar Republic, 1932-34." Ed.s Larry Eugene Jones and James Retallack. *Between Reform, Reaction, and Resistance: Studies in the History of German Conservatism from 1789 to 1945*. Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1993,
- Hanebrink, Paul. *A Specter Haunting Europe: The Myth of Judeo-Bolshevism*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2018.
- Herbert, Ulrich. *Best: Biographische Studien über Radikalismus, Weltanschauung und Vernunft, 1903-1989*. Munich: C.H. Beck, 2016.
- *Wandlungsprozesse in Westdeutschland: Belastung, Integration, Liberalisierung, 1945-1980*. Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2002.
- Herman, Jost. *Der alte Traum vom neuen Reich. Völkische Utopien and Nationalsozialismus*. Frankfurt a.M.: Athenäum, 1988.
- Herf, Jeffrey. "Belated Pessimism: Technology and 20th Century German Conservative Intellectuals." Ed.s Yaron Ezrahi, Everett Mendelsohn, and Howard Segal. *Technology, Pessimism, and Postmodernism*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1994.
- *Divided Memory: The Nazi Past in the Two Germanys*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997.
- "Multiple Restorations: German Political Traditions and the Interpretation of Nazism, 1945-1946." *Central European History* 26.1, 1993. 21-55.
- *The Jewish Enemy: Nazi Propaganda during World War II and the Holocaust*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2006.
- *Reactionary Modernism: Technology, Culture, and Politics in Weimar and the Third Reich*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984.
- Hewitson, Mark and Matthew D'Auria. *Europe in Crisis: Intellectuals and the European Idea, 1917-1957*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2012.

- Hitchcock, William I. *The Struggle for Europe: The Turbulent History of a Divided Continent, 1945 to the Present*. Norwell: Anchor, 2004.
- Hoffman, Stefan Ludwig. "Germany is No More: Defeat, Occupation, and the Postwar Order." Ed. Helmut Walser Smith. *The Oxford Handbook of Modern German History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. 593-614.
- Höhne, Heinz. *The Order of the Death's Head: The Story of Hitler's SS*. Hamburg: Spiegel, 1966.
- Jarausch, Konrad H. *After Hitler: Recivilizing the Germans, 1945-1995*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Joerges, Christian and Navraj Singh Ghaleigh, *Darker Legacies of Law in Europe: The Shadow of National Socialism and Fascism over Europe and its Legal Traditions*. Oxford: Hart Publishing, 2003.
- Jones, Larry Eugene. "Edgar Julius Jung: The Conservative Revolution in Theory and Practice." *Central European History* 21.2, 1988. 142-174.
- Judson, Pieter M. "Nationalism in the Era of the Nation-State, 1871-1945." Ed. Helmut Walser Smith. *The Oxford Handbook of Modern German History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. 499-526.
- Judt, Tony. *Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945*. New York: Penguin, 2005.
- Kaiser, Wolfram. *Christian Democracy and the Origins of European Union*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- Kießling, Friedrich. *Die undeutschen Deutschen. Eine ideengeschichtliche Archäologie der alten Bundesrepublik, 1945-1972*. Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2012.
- Keller, Sven. *Volksgemeinschaft am Ende: Gesellschaft und Gewalt, 1944/45*. Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2013.
- Kershaw, Ian. *Hitler 1889-1935: Hubris*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2001.
- *Hitler, 1936-45: Nemesis*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2000.
- *The End: The Defiance and Destruction of Hitler's Germany, 1944-1945*. London: Penguin Books, 2012.

- Klein, Josh. "Nazi Europeanism as Transnational Collaboration and Transnational Memory." *The Yearbook of Transnational History* 2.1, 2019. 149-173.
- Kleßmann, Christoph. *Zwei Staaten, eine Nation: Deutsche Geschichte, 1955-1970*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1988.
- Kletzlin, Birgit. *Europa aus Rasse und Raum: Die Nationalsozialistische Idee der Neuen Ordnung*. Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2002.
- Kluke, Paul. "Nationalsozialistische Europaideologie." *Vierteljahrshefte Für Zeitgeschichte* 3.3, 1955. 240-75.
- Kocka, Jürgen. "German History before Hitler: The Debate about the German Sonderweg." *Journal of Contemporary History* 23.1 (1988). 3-16.
- Kogon, Eugen. *Die unvollendete Erneuerung: Deutschland im Kräftefeld, 1945-1960. Politische und Gesellschaftspolitische Aufsätze aus zwei Jahrzehnten*. Frankfurt a.M.: Europäische Verlag-Anstalt, 1964.
- Koselleck, Reinhart. *The Practice of Conceptual History: Timing History, Spacing Concepts*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002.
- Koestler, Arthur, Ignazio Silone, Richard Wright, Andre Gide, Louis Fischer, and Stephen Spender. Ed. Richard Crossman. *The God that Failed: A Confession*. New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1963.
- Köhler, Otto. *Wir Schreibmaschinentäter: Journalisten unter Hitler – und danach*. Cologne: Paul-Rugenstein, 1989.
- Köpf, Peter. *Schrieben nach jeder Richtung – Goebbels-Propagandisten in der westdeutschen Nachkriegspresse*. Berlin: Links Christoph Verlag, 1998.
- Körner, Klaus. *Die Rote Gefahr: Antikommunistische Propaganda in der Bundesrepublik, 1950-2000*. Hamburg: Konkret Literatur Verlag, 2003.
- "Kalter Krieg und Kleine Schriften." Ed. Karl H. Pressler. *Aus dem Antiquariat*. Frankfurt a.M.: Deutscher Börsenverein, 1992.
- Kracht, Klaus Grosse. "'Schmissiges Christentum': Die Wochenzeitung *Christ und Welt* in der Nachkriegszeit (1948-1958)." Ed.s Michael Grunewald and Uwe Puschner. *Das evangelische Intellektuellenmilieu in Deutschland: seine Presse und seine Netzwerke (1871-1963)*. Bern: Peter Lang, 2008. 505-531.

- Kroll, Frank-Lothar. "Konservative Revolution und Nationalsozialismus: Aspekte und Perspektiven ihrer Erforschung." *Kirchliche Zeitgeschichte* 11.2, 1998. 339-354.
- Kühne, Thomas. *Belonging and Genocide: Hitler's Community, 1918-1945*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010.
- *The Rise and Fall of Comradeship: Hitler's Soldiers, Male Bonding and Mass Violence in the Twentieth Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017.
- "Todesraum: War, Peace, and the Experience of Mass Death." Ed. Helmut Walser Smith. *The Oxford Handbook of Modern German History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. 527-547.
- Lagrou, Peter. "The Nationalization of Victimhood: Selective Violence and National Grief in Western Europe, 1940-1960." Ed.s Richard Bessel and Dirk Schumann. *Life and Death: Approaches to a Cultural and Social history of Europe During the 1940s and 1950s*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003. 243-257.
- Lammers, Karl Christian. "Europe between Democracy and Fascism: Hermann Heller on Fascism as a Threat to Europe and Democracy as a Community of Values." Ed.s Lars K. Brunn, Karl Christian Lammers, and Gert Sørensen. *European Self-Reflection between Politics and Religion: The Crisis of Europe in the 20th Century*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013. 44-57.
- Large, David Clay. *Germans to the Front: West German Rearmament in the Adenauer Era*. University of North Carolina Press, 1996. 111-204.
- "Reckoning without the Past: The HIAG of the Waffen-SS and the Politics of Rehabilitation in the Bonn Republic, 1950-1961." *The Journal of Modern History* 59.1, 1987. 79-113.
- Lenhard, Christof. "Die Marketing-Strategien des Rheinischen Merkur und des Deutschen Allgemeinen Sonntagsblattes: Eine ökonomische und historische Betrachtung." *Kirchliche Zeitgeschichte* 6.2, 1993. 467-496.

- Lilla, Mark. "Republicans for Revolution." *The New York Review of Books* 59.1. January 12, 2012.
 ----- *The Shipwrecked Mind: On Political Reaction*. New York Review Books, 2016.
- Lipgens, Walter. *A History of European Integration: 1945-47, v.1*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982.
- Lockenour, Jay. *Soldiers as Citizens: Former Wehrmacht Officers in the Federal Republic of Germany, 1945-1955*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 2001.
- Longerich, Peter. *Propagandisten im Krieg. Die Presseabteilung des Auswärtigen Amtes unter Ribbentrop*. Munich: Oldenbourg, 1987.
- Loock, Hans-Dietrich. "Zur 'Großgermanischen Politik' Des Dritten Reiches." *Vierteljahrshefte Für Zeitgeschichte* 8.1, 1960. 37-63.
- Maier, Charles S. *The Unmasterable Past: History, Holocaust, and German National Identity*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998.
- Martin, Benjamin George. *The Nazi-Fascist New Order for European Culture*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016.
- Mazower, Mark. *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century*. New York: Vintage, 2000.
 ----- *Hitler's Empire: How the Nazis Ruled Europe*. New York: Penguin, 2008.
- Mazower, Mark, Jessica Reinisch, and David Feldman. *Post-War Reconstruction in Europe: International Perspectives, 1945-1949*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Mendelssohn, Peter de. *Zeitungsstadt Berlin: Menschen und Mächte in der Geschichte der deutschen Presse*. Frankfurt a.M.: Ullstein, 1982.
- Milward, Alan. *The European Rescue of the Nation-State*. Abingdon: Routledge, 1992.
- Mitchell, Maria. *The Origins of Christian Democracy: Politics and Confession in Modern Germany*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2012.
- Moeller, Robert G. *War Stories; The Search for a Usable Past in the Federal Republic of Germany*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001.

- Mohler, Armin. *Die Konservative Revolution in Deutschland, 1918-1932: Grundriss ihrer Weltanschauungen*. Stuttgart: Friedrich Vorwerk Verlag, 1950.
- Mommsen, Hans. "Government without Parties: Conservative Plans for Constitutional Revision at the End of the Weimar Republic." Ed.s Larry Eugene Jones and James Retallack. *Between Reform, Reaction, and Resistance: Studies in the History of German Conservatism from 1789 to 1945*. Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1993.
- Moses, Dirk. *German Intellectuals and the Nazi Past*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.
- Mosse, George L. *The Crisis of German Ideology: Intellectual Origins of the Third Reich*. New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1964.
- Motadel, David. *Islam and Nazi Germany's War*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2014.
- Muller, Jerry Z. *The Other God That Failed: Hans Freyer and the Deradicalization of German Conservatism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987.
- Müller, Jan Werner. *A Dangerous Mind: Carl Schmitt in Post-War European Thought*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003.
- "A Post-Post-Liberal Order: How Western Europe Emerged from its 30-Year Crisis." Ed.s Lars K. Brunn, Karl Christian Lammers, and Gert Sørensen. *European Self-Reflection between Politics and Religion: The Crisis of Europe in the 20th Century*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013. 193-212.
- *Contesting Democracy: Political Thought in Twentieth-Century Europe*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011.
- "Europe and the Holocaust" in ed.s Peter Hayes and John K. Roth, *The Oxford Handbook of Holocaust Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 650-666.
- *German Ideologies Since 1945: Studies in the Political Thought and Culture of the Bonn Republic*. London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003.

- Müller, Rolf-Dieter. *Hitler's Wehrmacht, 1935-1945*. University of Kentucky, 2016. 44.
- *The Unknown Eastern Front: The Wehrmacht and Hitler's Foreign Soldiers*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2014.
- Murray, Williamson. *Luftwaffe*. Baltimore: The Nautical & Aviation Publishing Co. of America, 1985.
- Naftali, Timothy. "Richard Gehlen and the United States." Ed.s Richard Breitman, Norman J.W. Goda, Timothy Naftali, and Robert Wolfe. *U.S. Intelligence and the Nazis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005. 375-418.
- Naumann, Klaus. "The Great Tradition and the Fates of Annihilation: West German Military Culture in the Aftermath of the Second World War." Ed.s Frank Biess and Robert G. Moeller. *Histories of the Aftermath: The Legacies of the Second World War in Europe*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2010. 251-268.
- Neulen, Hans Werner. *Eurofaschismus und der Zweite Weltkrieg: Europas verratene Söhne*. Oslo: Universitas, 1980.
- *Europa und das 3. Reich: Einigungsbestrebungen im deutschen Machtbereich, 1939-1945*. Oslo: Universitas Verlag, 1987.
- Nipperdey, Thomas. *Deutsche Geschichte: 1800-1866*. Munich: C.H. Beck, 1983.
- "1933 und Kontinuität der deutschen Geschichte." *Historische Zeitschrift* 227.1, 1978. 86-111.
- Noelle, Elisabeth and Erich Peter Neumann. *Jahrbuch für öffentliche Meinung, 1947-1955*. Allensbach am Bodensee: Verlag für Demoskopie, 1956.
- Nord, Philip. *France's New Deal: From the Thirties to the Postwar Era*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010.
- Nuti, Leopoldo. "A Continent Bristling with Arms: Continuity and Change in Western European Security after the Second World War." Ed. Dan Stone. *The Oxford Handbook of Postwar European History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012. 339-355.

- Overy, Richard. "Interwar, War, Postwar: Was There a Zero Hour in 1945?" Ed. Dan Stone. *The Oxford Handbook of Postwar European History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012. 60-78.
- Paschner, Günther. *Falsches Gewissen der Nation: Deutsche National-Zeitung und Soldaten-Zeitung*. Rheinland-Palz: Institut für Staatsbürgerliche Bildung, 1967.
- Patel, Kiran Klaus. "Germany and European Integration Since 1945." Ed. Helmut Walser Smith. *The Oxford Handbook of Modern German History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. 775-794.
- Poliakov Leon and Josef Wulf. *Das Dritte Reich und seine Denker*. Munich: K.G. Saur Verlag: 1978.
- Port, Andrew I. "Democracy and Dictatorship in the Cold War: The Two Germanies, 1949-1961." Ed. Helmut Walser Smith. *The Oxford Handbook of Modern German History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. 615-639.
- Prettenthaler-Ziegerhofer, Anita. "Richard Nikolaus Coudenhove-Kalergi, Founder of the Pan-European Union, and the Birth of a 'New' Europe." Ed.s Mark Hewitson and Matthew D'Auria. *Europe in Crisis: Intellectuals and the European Idea, 1917-1957*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2012. 89-110.
- Pritchard, Gareth. *Niemandsland: A History of Unoccupied Germany, 1944-1945*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.
- Prowe, Diethelm. "The 'Miracle' of the Political-Culture Shift: Democratization between Americanization and Conservative Reintegration." Ed. Hanna Schissler. *The Miracle Years: A Cultural History of West Germany, 1949-1968*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001. 451-458.
- Rabinbach, Anson. "Restoring the German Spirit: Humanism and Guilt in Post-War Germany." Ed. Jan-Werner Müller. *German Ideologies Since 1945: Studies in the Political Thought and Culture of the Bonn Republic*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003. 23-40.

- Remy, Steven P. *The Malmedy Massacre: The War Crimes Trial Controversy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017.
- Richter, Melvin. *The History of Political and Social Concepts: A Critical Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Ritter, Gerhard. *Europa und die Deutsche Frage*. Munich: Münchner Verlag, 1948.
- Robin, Corey. *The Reactionary Mind: Conservatism from Edmund Burke to Donald Trump*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018.
- Roth, Karl Heinz and Barry McLoughlin. "Revisionist Tendencies in Historical Research into German Fascism." *International Review of Social History* 39.3, 1994. 429-455.
- Rutz, Rainer. *Signal: Eine Deutsche Auslandsillustrierte Als Propagandainstrument Im Zweiten Weltkrieg*. Essen: Klartext, 2007.
- Sachse, Carola. *'Mitteleuropa' und 'Südosteuropa' also Planungsraum: Wirtschafts- und kulturpolitische Expertisen im Zeitalter der Weltkriege*. Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2010.
- Sandkühler, Thomas. "Europa und der Nationalsozialismus: Ideologie, Währungspolitik, Massengewalt." *Zeithistorische Forschungen* 3, 2012. 428-441.
- Sauer, Thomas. *Westorientierung im deutschen Protestantismus? Vorstellungen und Tätigkeit des Kronberger Kreises*. Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 1999.
- Schildt, Axel. "Deutschlands Platz in einem 'christlichen Abendland': Konservative Publizisten aus dem Tat-Kreis in der Kriegs- und Nachkriegszeit." Eds. Thomas Koebner, Gert Sautermeister, Sigrid Schneider. *Deutschland nach Hitler – Zukunftspläne im Exil und aus der Besatzungszeit, 1939-1949*. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1987.
- *Konservatismus in Deutschland: Von den Anfängen im 18. Jahrhundert bis zur Gegenwart*. Munich: C.H. Beck, 1998.
- *Zwischen Abendland und Amerika: Studien zur Westdeutschen Ideenlandschaft der 50er Jahre*. Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 1999.

- Schildt, Axel and Arnold Sywottek. *Modernisierung im Wiederaufbau. Die westdeutsche Gesellschaft der 50er Jahre*. Richmond: Dietz, 1998.
- Scholten, Jens. "Offiziere: Im Geiste unbesiegt," Ed. Norbert Frei, *Karrieren im Zwielficht: Hitlers Eliten nach 1945*. Frankfurt a.M.: Campus Sachbuch, 2001.
- Schonfield, Ernest. "The Idea of European Unity in Heinrich Mann's Political Essays of the 1920s and Early 1930s." Ed.s Mark Hewitson and Matthew D'Auria. *Europe in Crisis: Intellectuals and the European Idea, 1917-1957*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2012. 257-270.
- Schröder, Holger. *Jean Monnet und die amerikanische Unterstützung für die europäische Integration, 1950-1957*. Berlin: Peter Lang/Europäische Hochschulschriften, 1994.
- Schwarz, Hans Peter. *Konrad Adenauer: A German politician and Statesman in a Period of War, Revolution and Reconstruction: The Statesman, 1952-1967*. New York: Berghahn Books, 1997.
- "Konrad Adenauer – Abendländer oder Europäer? Zur Bedeutung des Christlichen in seiner auswärtigen Politik." Ed. Ulrich von Hehl. *Röhndorfer Gespräche, Band 17: Adenauer und die Kirchen*. Bonn: Bouvier Verlag, 1999.
- "Modernisierung oder Restauration? Einige Vorfragen zur künftigen Sozialgeschichtsforschung über die Ära Adenauer." Ed.s Kurt Düwell and Wolfgang Köllmann. *Rheinland-Westfalen im Industriezeitalter, Band 3. Vom Ende der Weimarer Republik bis zum Land Nordrhein-Westfalen*. Wuppertal: Peter Hammer Verlag, 1984. 278-293.
- Searle, Alaric. *Wehrmacht Generals, West German Society, and the Debate on Rearmament, 1949-1959*. New York: Praeger, 2003.
- Sheehan, James J. "What is German History? Reflections on the Role of the Nation in German History and Historiography." *The Journal of Modern History* 53.1, 1981. 1-23.

- Smith, Helmut Walser. *The Continuities of German History: Nation, Religion, and the Long Nineteenth Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Smith, Peter Scharff, Niels Bo Poulsen, and Claus Bundgård Christensen. "The Danish Volunteers in the Waffen-SS and German Warfare at the Eastern Front." *Contemporary European History* 8.1, 1999. 73-96.
- Snyder, Timothy. *Black Earth: The Holocaust as History and Warning*. New York: Tim Duggan Books, 2015.
- Sørensen, Gert. "Italian Intellectuals and the European View: Corce, Nitti and Chabod between Dictatorship and Democracy." Ed.s Lars K. Brunn, Karl Christian Lammers, and Gert Sørensen. *European Self-Reflection between Politics and Religion: The Crisis of Europe in the 20th Century*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013. 25-43.
- Spiering, Menno and Michael Wintle. *Ideas of Europe since 1914: The Legacy of the First World War*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002.
- Stargardt, Nicholas. *The German War: A Nation Under Arms, 1939-1945*. Basic Books, 2017.
- Stein, George H. *The Waffen SS: Hitler's Elite Guard at War*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966. 141-142.
- Stern, Fritz. *Dreams and Delusions: The Drama of German History*. New York: Knopf, 1987.
- *The Politics of Cultural Despair: A Study in the Rise of the Germanic Ideology*. Berkeley: University of California, 1961.
- Stråth, Bo. "Multiple Europes: Integration, Identity, and Demarcation of the Other" Ed. Bo Stråth. *Europe and the Other and Europe as the Other*. Bern: P.I.E.-Peter Lang, 2000. 385-420.
- Süß, Dietmar. "Lieb Abendland, magst ruhig sein." *Die Zeit*. September 17, 2009.
- Van Laak, Dirk. "From Conservative Revolution to Technocratic Conservatism." Ed. Jan Werner Müller. *German Ideologies Since 1945: Studies in the Political Thought and Culture of the Bonn Republic*. London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003. 147-160.

- *Gespräche in der Sicherheit des Schweigens: Carl Schmitt in der politischen Geistesgeschichte der frühen Bundesrepublik*. Berlin: De Gruyter Akademie Forschung, 2002.
- Von Hodenberg, Christina. "Die Journalisten und der Aufbruch zur kritischen Öffentlichkeit." Ed. Ulrich Herbert. *Wandlungsprozesse in Westdeutschland: Belastung, Integration, Liberalisierung: 1945-1980*. Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2002. 278-311.
- Wegner, Bernd. *The Waffen-SS: Organization, Ideology, and Function*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990.
- Wehler, Hans-Ulrich. *The German Empire, 1871-1918*. Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1985.
- Weiss, Mattias. "Journalisten: Worte als Taten." Ed. Norbert Frei. *Hitlers Eliten nach 1945*. Munich: Dtv Verlagsgesellschaft, 2003.
- Wilke, Karsten. *Die Hilfsgemeinschaft auf Gegenseitigkeit (HIAG), " 1950-1990*. Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2011.
- Winkler, Heinrich August. *Germany: The Long Road West*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Ziemann, Benjamin. "Religion and the Search for Meaning, 1945-1990." Ed. Helmut Walser Smith. *The Oxford Handbook of Modern German History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. 689-710.