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**Mediated Immediacy: Published Diaries of
World War II as Media of War Memory
in East and West Germany 1945-1990**

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Year: 2009

Degree: PhD

Declaration

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SUMMARY

Mediated Immediacy: Published Diaries of World War II as Media of War

Memory in East and West Germany 1945-1990

More than any other genre, the diary is often assumed to be the most authentic textual medium of historical experience. This assumption was particularly prevalent in Germany in the years immediately following World War II, when, in response to calls for truthful reflection on the events of that war, diary publications soared, and the writer Gerhard Nebel declared Germany to be in the midst of an “age of diaries”. With the foundations of East and West Germany, the dictum to remember was increasingly qualified by political considerations, and the publication and reception of war diaries assumed a greater political dimension in both German states.

This study explores the specific role played by published diaries in the negotiation and re-negotiation of public war memories in East and West Germany from 1945 to re-unification. It does so by asking which war diaries were published in the GDR and the Federal Republic, which public narratives of specific war events they collaborated or contested, and what public response they elicited at different times, and in different contexts. Following a more general survey of these questions in my introduction, I focus on three case studies to illustrate how war diaries were shaped by and in turn also shaped memory discourses current at the time of their publication in East and West Germany.

My chosen diaries offer personal accounts of three pivotal episodes of World War II – Stalingrad, the expulsion of Germans from Eastern Europe, and the Holocaust. An analysis of the diary texts themselves, their publication, and reception histories, offers a vantage point from

which to view developments in the public remembrance of these events from the end of the War to the mid-1990s. As all three diaries were published and read in East Germany, this study is particularly insightful with regard to the construction and purposes of World War II remembrance in the GDR. It describes spheres of GDR society where a more critical discussion of German Fascism, World War II, and German guilt took place, thus challenging many existing studies which equate an East German *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* [Coming to terms with the Nazi past] with the narratives of the Third Reich and World War II propagated by the SED.

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Introduction

“Das Tagebuch, ‘privat’ seinem Wesen nach, oft heimlich geschrieben, an keinen Leser denkend, nicht einmal an ihn glaubend, übernimmt für eine heillose Epoche und ihre verheerendsten Untaten das Amt des unbestechlichen, gerechten und wahrhaftigen Zeugen.”¹

A now long forgotten East German novel of the early 1950s by Emil R. Greulich bears the title *Das geheime Tagebuch*.² The first chapter finds the unemployed and cynical protagonist Werner Braß preparing to leave West Germany to spend some months in the GDR on a mission. Under the guise of a committed communist Braß plans to write daily reports on his experiences, what he calls a “Tagebuch”, which he will sell to West German newspapers buying for bad news from the other Germany. Braß boards the train to the dreaded “Ostzone” with a heavy heart and consoles himself that his stay there will be a short and hopefully lucrative one. Greulich’s novel traces Braß’s personal transformation through his interaction with GDR society over the course of a single year. Thoroughly convinced by the socialist values espoused by his young East German friends, the hero soon decides to make the GDR his home. He breaks off his engagement to the West German Ingrid and finds new love in Doris, a shining example of East Germany’s *Aufbau* generation. And he abandons his original underhand diary project in favour of a very different diary. In the last scene of the novel Braß goes out to meet some friends leaving his diary wide open on his desk: “Da lag das Tagebuch. Kein geheimes, sondern ein offenes, ehrliches Dokument seiner Zeit. Zeugnis der Entwicklung eines deutschen Menschen in einem knappen Jahr.”³

Greulich’s novel is one of a plethora of stories of personal ideological conversion that circulated in 1950s East Germany. What I find most interesting about the book is how it

¹ Christa Wolf, 1972, p. 16

² E.R. Greulich, *Das geheime Tagebuch*, Verlag Neues Leben, 1951

³ *Ibid.*, p. 403

reflects and draws its political impetus from the tension between the diary genre as a 'private' and a 'public' text. Braß's diary is ostensibly personal and private, yet from the outset it is conceived as a means to fulfil specific ideological functions in the public sphere. His 'secret' diary is originally written for a prospective West German audience with the intention of undermining the political system of the GDR. Yet over the course of Braß's stay in East Germany we see how the diary develops into a declaration of the superiority of that German State, addressed to the potential fictional readers of his 'offenes, ehrliches Dokument', and to the real 1950s East German readers of Greulich's novel. Braß's diary also represents a synthesis of the personal and the social in which his individual experience is seen to offer insights into the sweeping progress of GDR society.

An understanding of the diary as a public document, with the potential to describe broad historical developments and influence public perceptions of them, is central to my study of diaries of World War 2 published and read in East Germany. The same sentiment informs Christa Wolf's appreciation of the diary form encapsulated in the above quote from her 1964 essay 'Tagebuch – Arbeitsmittel und Gedächtnis'. Here Wolf reflects explicitly on the value of diaries of the Second World War as authentic public testimony for later readers. Paradoxically it is the very 'privacy' of these texts that for Wolf makes their publication and mass distribution all the more urgent in the present.⁴

Recent studies have problematised the concepts of "witness" and "testimony" with regard to personal recollection of the Second World War.⁵ Some commentators have raised doubts as to the possibility of any authentic witness to the events of that War, while others have merely urged caution in our reading of World War 2 testimonies as accurate representations of

⁴ Wolf discusses *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz* in her essay and I will return to her remarks in my chapter on that diary.

⁵ In what follows I capitalise 'War' whenever World War 2 is implied.

historical reality.⁶ Yet these considerations have rarely filtered down from academia to destabilise the broad public consensus that diaries written by contemporary observers offer unparalleled insights into World War 2 and the Nazi dictatorship. The publication and media discussion of War diaries in Germany have typically been accompanied by claims of these texts' "Authentizität", "Unmittelbarkeit", "Anschaulichkeit", and "unverhüllte Wahrheit". The diarist's individual perspective has often been seen as an ideal vantage point from which to describe World War 2. And a belief in the authority and public relevance of published War diaries has facilitated the integration of their personal narratives of World War 2 into collective memory.

Focusing on three case studies, my PhD explores the important contribution of published War diaries to processes of public remembrance of World War 2 in the GDR. It shows how the personal narratives of specific diarists entered and shaped public discourse about the War at various junctures in East German history. The mediation of these 'immediate' autobiographical testimonies to a public audience is central to my analysis. I ask how the diarist's memory was appropriated and used, by whom, at what times, in which contexts, and for what purposes?⁷ In the way they were presented and discussed as they were successively published and republished in East Germany, the diaries examined in this study have been used by diverse political and cultural players to substantiate particular accounts of three pivotal events of World War 2. In each of my main chapters I locate the narratives of resistance, the expulsions of Germans from Eastern Europe (*die Vertreibung*), and the Holocaust that were articulated in and via my chosen War diaries, in relation to

⁶ For recent contributions to this discussion see Weigel (1999), Baer (2000), Margalit (2002), Agamben (2003), Blasberg (2006) and Assmann (2007). Against the sceptics Ruth Klüger (1996) argues for the retention of a concept of testimony and autobiographical truth in relation to texts by witnesses to the Holocaust.

⁷ These questions reflect the 'working principle' for the study of collective memory as formulated by Natalie Zemon Davies and Randolph Starn: "whenever memory is invoked we should be asking ourselves: by whom, where, in which context, against what?" (Zemon Davies and Starn, 1989, p.2)

contemporary public narratives of these War episodes in East Germany. I show how the diary's narrative engaged with East German memory discourse current at the time of its publication, supplementing, revising, or affirming given public accounts of the War. Without aiming to present a global view on collective memory processes in the GDR, these case studies can nonetheless illuminate tendencies and developments in East German public discourse on World War 2 at specific times after 1945. In many cases they challenge or refine prevailing assumptions on how and when particular War events were publicly remembered in the GDR. Against the temptation to view collective memories of resistance, German expulsions and the Holocaust in isolation, I seek to highlight the interdependencies of public narratives of these three events in the East German context. Although the three main chapters are each focussed on the public remembrance of a specific War episode, I try to show the broader memorial context in which this took place. In my first chapter on Erich Weinert's *Memento Stalingrad*, I ask, for example not only how that text was implicated in the construction and propagation of public memories of anti-fascist resistance, but also query the assumptions regarding the Holocaust which underlay those memories. While the primary focus of this study is on World War 2 remembrance in the GDR, I show how public War narratives in East Germany were often formed and developed in reaction to positions articulated in other memorial contexts. This study highlights the huge significance of the Cold War divide as a background to any public statements on World War 2 in the GDR. Particularly with reference to those War diaries also published and read in the *Bundesrepublik* and Poland, I highlight the dynamic interrelationship - encompassing degrees of both symmetry and divergence - of collective memories invoked in East Germany and in neighbouring states.

In the following three introductory chapters, a review of the relevant literature is woven in to my discussion of the diary genre, theories of collective memory, and recent approaches to the study of War remembrance in East and West Germany. Here I highlight issues pertinent to my investigation of specific published War diaries and clarify the terms and methods with which I will work. The case studies of Erich Weinert's *Memento Stalingrad*, Paul Peikert's *Festung Breslau in den Berichten eines Pfarrers*, and *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz* follow.

The Diary as a Medium of World War 2 Memory

A Genre of War and War Remembrance

The prevalence of diary-keeping among Germans during World War 2 and the prominence of published War diaries in Germany after 1945 would seem to illustrate Astrid Erll's observation on the role of genre in processes of individual and group remembrance: "gerade stark konventionalisierte Gattungen [werden] in bestimmten erinnerungshistorischen Konstellationen bewusst oder unbewusst als 'kulturelle Paradigmen' herangezogen, um schwer zu deutende kollektive Erfahrungen durch bekannte Darstellungsmuster sinnhaft zu gestalten."⁸ Historically, the diary has been an important text form for the representation and remembrance of conflict. In its pre-18th century usage the word 'diary' designated, among other types of public record, the battle chronicle.⁹ Hocke draws attention to the many diaries of the Thirty-Years War and their role in shaping later perceptions of that event.¹⁰ Soldiers' diaries were well represented in the literature of World War 1 published in the Weimar Republic and in many cases they became the basis for claims of a betrayed German Nation on both left and right wings of the political spectrum.¹¹ In the years between 1939 and 1945 an ever increasing number of Germans turned to the diary as a form to represent their experiences in battle and on the home-front. Writing in the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* in 1942, Ursula von Kardorff noted the popularity of diary-keeping at this time in Germany: "Es scheint, daß seit einigen Jahren das Tagebuchführen im allgemeinen wieder zunimmt, ungeachtet des Totalanspruchs, den das heutige Leben an die Zeit des Einzelnen stellt."¹² Against post-War claims that diary-writing was a punishable

⁸ Erll, 2005, pp. 146-7. She gives the example of the pastoral as a favoured mode for the representation of traumatic war experiences in English novels of World War 1.

⁹ See Nussbaum, 1988, p.131

¹⁰ See Hocke, 1963, p.59

¹¹ For details see Schneider, 1994

¹² Quoted in Zur Nieden, 1995, p. 110

offence in the *Wehrmacht*, German soldiers were encouraged to keep a daily record of their experiences.¹³ With the collapse of the postal system in the latter part of the War, many Germans began to write diaries as a substitute for letters to family members and friends.¹⁴ In war people grasp themselves as subjects of history more keenly than at other times and their perception of the historical relevance of their lived experience increases. To a greater extent than any previous major conflict the Second World War entered and impinged on the lives of Germans, making any separation between the War and everyday existence untenable.¹⁵ Under these circumstances, autobiographical forms, and in particular diaries, served as a means for individuals to record for posterity the historical events in which they were involved.¹⁶ This orientation of diary practice to a future audience became particularly acute towards the end of the War, when diaries often functioned as apologies with which their authors attempted to cast themselves in a good light to prospective readers.¹⁷

The proliferation of published diaries of World War 2 in Germany after 1945, and a discussion of genre arising from these publications have heightened the perception of the diary as a genre that can best reflect the circumstances of war. The immediate post-War years witnessed a flurry of War diary publications in Germany. Beyond merely acknowledging an unmistakable trend in published War literature at this time, many contemporary observers posited an interdependence of the diary genre and war. The conditions of war were often

¹³ As Peitsch (1990, p. 266) writes: "Es lässt sich im Gegenteil nachweisen, daß durch die militärische Vorgesetzten das Tagebuchschreiben gefördert wurde."

¹⁴ Margrit Boveri's diary of the final months of the War in Berlin, *Tage des Überlebens*, is written in the form of letters to friends which she was unable to contact at that time. Erich Kuby's War diary, published in 1975 as *Mein Krieg*, also comprises letters to friends and family.

¹⁵ As Wurm (1999, p. 241) writes with reference to wartime Berlin: "Durch das Flächenbombardement und die Eroberung der Stadt erreichte das Kampfgeschehen im Gegensatz zum ersten Weltkrieg selbst den privaten Bereich der Frauen und Familien. Für die meisten Menschen fiel so der historische Ausnahmezustand mit einem individuellen zusammen."

¹⁶ Ursula von Kardorff summed up the purpose of her own War diary as follows: "Später erinnern, wie es war." (*Berliner Aufzeichnungen 1942 bis 1945*, Munich, 1994, p. 145)

¹⁷ Von der Lühle shows this convincingly in her essay on the War diary of Ruth Andreas-Friedrich: "the memory of the diarist is not focused on the past of Nazi terror, but on the future. The diaries were written with regard to the end of the war and the 'reckoning' that was to be expected then, that is to say, in full knowledge that there would be a need for defence and justification." (Von der Lühle, 1999, p. 34)

seen to be more conducive to diary-writing than to other literary forms; and diaries in their alleged formlessness were frequently judged to be the textual equivalent of the chaos of war. In his diagnosis of “ein Zeitalter des Tagebuchs”¹⁸ in 1948, Gerhard Nebel took cognisance of the War diary as a publishing phenomenon in post-War Germany, but he also underlined the appropriateness of the genre to reflect the experience of World War 2 and its aftermath. For Nebel the diary was the only viable text form for the apprehension of war by the individual writing in its midst: “Der Zustand, in den der Mensch geworfen ist, wenn ihn der Leviathan verschluckt hat, erlaubt keine Formung, kein größeres Werk. Zeit und Kraft reichen nur zu abgerissenen Notizen.”¹⁹ This sentiment was echoed in the discussion of Ernst Jünger’s *Strahlungen*²⁰ and other published War diaries in the immediate post-War period. One contemporary reviewer of Jünger’s diary asserted that in time of war “die einzige Zusammenhangsform, die der Welt bleibt, ist die heraklitische des Werdens, des ewigen Weiterflusses.”²¹ In Jünger’s conception the ‘private’ diary represented a last bastion of free expression for the individual living in a totalitarian dictatorship; it was “im totalen Staat das letzte mögliche Gespräch.”²² The association of the ‘introspective’ form with escape and inner detachment from war and dictatorship is also clear in Nebel’s statement on his own War diary: “Es ist mir eine Burg, die meine Freiheit schützt, und eine immerwährende Bestätigung dafür, daß mein eigenes Leben sich in Räumen abspielt, die dem Zugriff des Kasernen Tolpels Ares entzogen sind.”²³

A conception of the diary which emerged in this post-War discussion as the most appropriate form to describe the individual’s experience of war, has informed the publication

¹⁸ Introduction to Nebel’s own War diary, *Bei den nördlichen Hesperiden. Tagebuch aus dem Jahr 1942*, Wuppertal, 1948

¹⁹ Quoted in Boerner, 1969, p. 64

²⁰ Ernst Jünger, *Strahlungen*, Heliopolis, Tübingen, 1949

²¹ Quoted in Peitsch, 1990, p. 241

²² Quoted in Sader, 1996, p. 46

²³ Nebel, in Peitsch, 1990, p.257

and reception of War diaries in Germany since 1945. Elements of this early discussion continue to characterise the treatment of published War diaries in the German media and critical literature. For Hardtwig, such diaries do not merely describe the Second World War, but their very form reflects the lived experience of that War: “gerade das Zeitzeugentagebuch aus dem Krieg [reproduziert und symbolisiert] die Form- und Ordnungslosigkeit des Lebens darstellerisch. Insofern erscheint das Tagebuch als eine der Kriegserfahrung besonders angemessene Form.”²⁴ Reviews of the re-published anonymous diary *Eine Frau in Berlin* suggested that its style was an effect of the diarist’s traumatic experience of the final days of the War in Berlin.²⁵ The disordered arrangement of entries in the diary of a child victim of the Holocaust has been described as “a figure of the utter loss of control of the victim’s own historical destiny under the force of the total spatial tyranny of Nazism.”²⁶

This study recognises published diaries as central media of War memory and holds that the German reception of key events of World War 2 has been more significantly shaped than is generally acknowledged by diary representations. As Hardtwig notes: “Tagebücher spielen in der literarischen Öffentlichkeit und damit auch in der Erinnerungskultur Deutschlands seit 1945 eine beträchtliche Rolle.”²⁷ The number of published War diaries and their prominence within a corpus of War literature have meant that they have had an important role in the transmission of diverse War experiences to audiences in post-War Germany. Not only have these texts provided narratives of specific War events to a reading public, but the credence generally placed in such narratives has often given them priority over other representations of the same events. Historically marginalised as a literary genre, in the

²⁴ Hardtwig, 2005, p. 178

²⁵ See Rosenholm and Bonner, 2005

²⁶ Langford and West, 1999, p. 12

²⁷ Hardtwig, 2005, p. 147. The author sees two high points for War diary publications in post-1945 Germany – the immediate post-War period, and the ten-year period from the 50th anniversary of the War’s end in 1995.

context of War and its remembrance, the diary has often been privileged over other forms of representation. Against the background of an imperative to remember the events of World War 2 in Germany after 1945, conventional beliefs in the immediacy and authenticity of the diary genre become particularly salient. James Young has described how a belief in the diary's capacity to represent the past truthfully becomes especially urgent in the context of representing and remembering the Holocaust.²⁸ I would suggest that the renewed abundance of War diaries in the literature of World War 2 published since 1990 is symptomatic of a public desire for reliable repositories of War experience at a time when the number of living witnesses to the War is quickly diminishing.

A reading of diaries as 'immediate' transcriptions of reality overlooks the fact that, like any genre, the diary is "a highly coded form of signification."²⁹ The diarist is guided by a diary concept which shapes the style and the content of his text.³⁰ Immediacy and authenticity are the perceived effects of a conventionalised diary style.³¹ They are themselves aesthetic categories which have been taken as guarantors of the diary's truthful reflection of reality. Yet such considerations have been largely absent in the publication and reception of War diaries. The assumed temporal immediacy of the diary to the events it describes and the status of its author as an involved observer have given these texts an "evidentiary authority"³² which other kinds of autobiographical testimony of World War 2 are seen to lack.³³ Helmut Peitsch refers to "das Dogma der Authentizität"³⁴ which characterised the discussion of War diaries published in the immediate post-War period in Germany. Silent on the fact that

²⁸ See Young, 1998

²⁹ Hassam, 1993, p. 34

³⁰ Zur Nieden (1993, pp. 28-9) emphasises the role of published diaries as literary models for individual diary practice.

³¹ See Hassam 1986 and Zur Nieden, 1993, pp. 23-4

³² Young, 1998, p. 24

³³ Due to their creation in media res, Young writes that "diaries can be far more convincing of their factual veracity than more retrospective accounts." (Ibid., p. 25)

³⁴ Peitsch, 1990, p. 233

many of these texts had been subject to significant editing and rewriting after the War, the diarists themselves, their publishers, and the German media insisted on their value as true, unadulterated testimony.³⁵ A persistent conviction in the diary's authenticity, deriving from its assumed immediacy, has meant that published War diaries have often been ideal texts on which to base claims of historical truth about the War in Germany after 1945. To a certain degree diaries, their publishers, critics, and readers have been instrumental in determining *whose* experience is remembered, *how* it is remembered, *when* it is remembered, and, in the context of a divided Germany, *where* and *for what purpose* it is remembered.

Through their publication, 'private' War diaries have become public texts; they have entered and contributed to German discourse on World War 2 at different times since 1945. Helmut Peitsch has shown how the diary became the genre par excellence of inner emigration in the Western Zones of occupation and West Germany in the immediate post-War period.³⁶ Emphasising the assumed privacy and introspection of the genre, genuine and would-be inner emigrants presented their published wartime diaries as evidence that they had remained aloof from and even resisted National Socialism while living and working in the Third Reich.³⁷ In the context of re-education and an assumed Allied hypothesis of collective German guilt, these texts offered counter-narratives of a groundswell of German opposition and 'private' resistance to Nazi ideology. War diaries issued around the same time in the Soviet Occupied Zone and later GDR tended to describe more combative anti-fascist

³⁵ In introductions to their published texts the diarists themselves often assured readers that nothing had been altered in the manuscript. Ursula von Kardorff promised readers in the introduction to her *Berliner Aufzeichnungen 1942 bis 1945*: "Es ist nichts frisiert, nichts nachgeschönt." In Ruth Andreas-Friedrich's introduction to her published diary she writes: "Dieses Buch will kein Kunstwerk sein. Dieses Buch ist Wahrheit." Erich Kästner described the task of preparing his diary for publication as "eher die eines Konservators als eines Schriftstellers." Hugo Harting insisted in the foreword to *Schlesien 1944/45 Aufzeichnungen und Tagebücher* that he did not embellish his "einfache Notizen" prior to their publication.

³⁶ See *ibid.*, pp. 232-306

³⁷ "Tagebücher eigneten sich als Eintrittskarten ins politische Leben des besetzten Deutschland, weil schon die Form zu entlasten schien." (Peitsch, 1990, p. 232) Peitsch also suggests that through re-writings of her War diary Ruth-Andreas Friedrich stylised herself as a resistor. (*Ibid.*, p. 301) On the same diary see von der Lüche, 1999. On diaries of inner emigration see also Bluhm, 1991.

resistance and were implicated in the attempted prioritisation of the experiences of exiled German communists in public statements on the War in this memorial context.³⁸ Diaries have influenced historical discourse on World War 2. They have been important source material for German historians of the Nazi era, and in many cases, diary extracts have been incorporated into their studies and anthologies.³⁹ Published diaries by Holocaust victims raised public consciousness of Jewish suffering under National Socialism in both Germanys on various occasions after 1945. In a 1958 publication, East German readers became familiar with the harrowing diary of Polish Holocaust survivor Leon Weliczker, three years before the same text was used as evidence in the trial of Adolf Eichmann in Jerusalem.⁴⁰ From its first German publication in 1950 *Das Tagebuch der Anne Frank* prompted reflections on the Holocaust in both German States and influenced how that event was publicly remembered.⁴¹ It has been argued that the predominance of Anne's diary and her status as *the* representative Holocaust victim often prevented a more thorough German examination of the different experiences of other Jewish victims of the Nazis.⁴²

The function of diaries as media of War remembrance in Germany has been particularly evident in recent years. War diaries have been very prominent in the literature of World War 2 published in Germany since the mid-1990s. The quantity and resonance of these texts would suggest that this period too has been a "Zeitalter des Tagebuchs."⁴³ In many cases War

³⁸ Wurm (1999, p. 259) sees the War diaries of Kantorowicz (1949) and Weinert (1951) as representative.

³⁹ Examples include the 1950s West German *Dokumentation der Vertreibung* project sponsored by the Ministry for Expellees, the GDR-published *Faschismus-Getto-Massenmord. Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges* (Rütten und Loening, 1960), and later anthologies edited by Breloer (1984 and 1999), Zur Nieden/Hammer (1992) and Martin/Schoppmann (1996).

⁴⁰ Arnold Zweig (ed), *Im Feuer Vergangen. Tagebücher aus dem Ghetto*, Rütten und Loening, 1958

⁴¹ On the German publications and reception of Anne Frank see Rosenfeld (1991), Loewy (1999), and Kirschnick (2009).

⁴² See Kirschnick, 2009, p. 7

⁴³ War diaries published since the 50th anniversary of the end of the War in 1995 include: Viktor Klemperer's best-selling *Ich will Zeugnis ablegen bis zum letzten: Tagebücher 1933-1945* (Aufbau, 1995), the anonymous diary *Eine Frau in Berlin* (Eichborn, 2003), Walther Kempowski's *Echolot* project (1997-2007) and Vladimir Gelfand's *Deutschlandtagebuch* (2005).

diary publications have fuelled debate and controversy on specific War events and their remembrance. The texts gathered in the form of a collective diary in Walther Kempowski's *Echolot* project drew public attention to four distinct episodes of the War.⁴⁴ Although it was not the first published diary on the subject,⁴⁵ the best-selling anonymous diary *Eine Frau in Berlin* was seen to break a German taboo on the experience of many German women at the end of the War. It was the subject of an intense discussion in the German media which focused on questions of the author's identity and the authenticity of her text.⁴⁶ The publication of the diary of the Russian soldier Vladimir Gelfand in 2006 led to a discussion of the role of the Red Army in the final months of the War which often challenged previous East and West German stereotypes of "Befreier" and marauding aggressors.⁴⁷

Carsten Wurm has alleged that War diaries were published far less in East Germany than in the Federal Republic because their narratives reflected a pre-1945 perspective which was often incompatible with post-1945 interpretations of World War 2 propagated in official discourse in the Soviet Zone of Occupation and the GDR: "Die Seltenheit des Tagebuches im Osten dürfte der kulturpolitischen Konstellation geschuldet sein: Das zeitgeschichtlich orientierte Tagebuch war trotz der Möglichkeit der Bearbeitung und Bevorwortung von der inneren Logik an den Wissensstand der Zeit vor 1945 gebunden und konnte so nicht in gewünschter Eindeutigkeit zu dem grundsätzlichen Problem der Bewertung des Krieges und der Rolle der Sowjetarmee bei der Zerschlagung Hitlerdeutschlands Stellung nehmen."⁴⁸ To reinforce his argument Wurm cites the refusal by GDR authorities to publish Ilse Langner's

⁴⁴ The four volumes in the project appeared in the following order: *Das Echolot. 1. Januar-28. Februar 1943* (1993), *Das Echolot. Barbarossa '41. Ein kollektives Tagebuch* (2002), *Fuga Furiosa. Ein kollektives Tagebuch. Winter 1945* (2004), and *Abgesang '45. Ein kollektives Tagebuch* (2007). *Culpa: Notizen zum Echolot* appeared in 2007. All were published by the Albrecht Knaus Verlag.

⁴⁵ *Eine Frau in Berlin* was first published in German in 1959. See also the extracts from *Das Tagebuch der Brigitte E.* published in *Drucksache 6*, 1993/94

⁴⁶ See my paper on the diary and its reception given at the German Studies Postgraduate Conference in Newcastle in November 2005. See also Rosenholm and Bonner, 2005

⁴⁷ See my paper on the diary presented at the Bradford Colloquium in Leeds, Summer 2006

⁴⁸ Wurm, 1999, p. 240

Flucht ohne Ziel in 1950, a diary which described the expulsion of Germans from Eastern territories in the wake of the Red Army's advance at the end of the War.⁴⁹ Against Wurm's thesis, my investigations have shown that, though never as numerous as in the Federal Republic, diaries were quite well represented in the literature of World War 2 published in the GDR.⁵⁰ In East Germany diary publications were often grasped as opportunities to reinforce an official SED interpretation of German fascism and the War. Yet it would be a mistake to reduce them to this function. As I will show with reference to my chosen case studies, many War diaries which appeared in the GDR told a story at variance with the official 'anti-fascist' narrative of World War 2, and they frequently stimulated a discussion of the War in certain East German contexts which challenged the prevailing SED interpretation. Differences in the publication and reception of War diaries in East and West Germany lie not merely in the *quantity*, but also in the *type* of diaries favoured for publication and their concrete *functions* in the respective memorial contexts. In many cases War diaries which were published in East Germany never appeared in the Federal Republic and vice versa. GDR readers had access to translations of Russian diaries which were unheard of in West Germany.⁵¹ These texts opened a vista onto particular aspects of and perspectives on World War 2 which were often absent in the War literature published in the *Bundesrepublik*. War diaries which appeared in both German states were subject to different emphases at different times in each memorial context. The diary of Anne Frank was for example a stimulus to reflections on the Holocaust in both Germanys, but the nature of these reflections was different in East and West.⁵²

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 244. The diary was eventually published in 1984 in West Germany.

⁵⁰ See the appendix of published War diaries in East and West Germany included with my bibliography.

⁵¹ See for example the War diaries by Rolnikaite (1968), Polewoj (1975), Konew (1978), Visnewskij (1978).

⁵² As footnote 33 above

*“All memories, even the memories of eyewitnesses, only assume collective relevance when they are structured, represented, and used in a social setting. [...] the means of representation that facilitate this process provide the best information about the evolution of collective memories.”*⁵³

The issue of mediation - memory's articulation, transmission and reception in a social context - represents a particular focus of recent collective memory studies. Against a tendency to psychologise processes of public remembering observed in previous scholarship, Kansteiner and others stress that while individual memory proceeds largely spontaneously, collective memory “is always mediated”⁵⁴ in conscious acts of remembering.⁵⁵ To gain access to the field of public memory any memory must be articulated, transmitted, and received in a social setting.⁵⁶ Each of these stages presupposes agents and media which operate in particular historical contexts. Increasingly, it is recognised that the media through which memories are articulated and transmitted are themselves implicated in memory's construction and steer reception processes. In their explicit reflections on the mediation of collective memory and on the agents and media involved, recent studies may be seen to redress a shortfall of established theories of collective memory which have not devoted enough attention to these issues. Maurice Halbwachs' contribution to our understanding of the social basis of all remembering should not be underestimated. Yet while he acknowledges the existence of multiple group memories in any society, Halbwachs does not explore the means by which they interact outside the consciousness of the remembering individual. In his primary focus on the transmission of collective memories by word of mouth, he neglects to enquire into the role of other media as the connective tissue between

⁵³ Kansteiner, 2002, p. 190

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 180

⁵⁵ As Aleida Assmann writes: “Während im Individuum Erinnerungsprozesse weitgehend spontan ablaufen [...] werden auf kollektiver und institutioneller Ebene diese Prozesse durch eine gezielte Erinnerungs- bzw. Vergessenspolitik gesteuert. Da es keine Selbstorganisation eines kulturellen Gedächtnisses gibt, ist es auf Medien und Politik angewiesen.” (A. Assmann, 1999, p. 15)

⁵⁶ As Erll writes: “persönliche Erinnerungen [können] erst durch mediale Repräsentation und Distribution zu kollektiver Relevanz gelangen.” (Erll, 2004, p. 251)

‘individual’ and group memories and between coexisting group memories in society.⁵⁷ For Kansteiner, the use of psychoanalytical models to describe processes of collective memory often by-passes the crucial issues of mediation, agency, and functions of remembrance in particular historical contexts: “The concept of trauma [...] neither captures nor illuminates the forces that contribute to the making and unmaking of collective memories [...] the delayed onset of public debates about the meaning of negative pasts has more to do with political interest and opportunities than with the persistence of trauma or with any ‘leakage’ in collective unconscious.”⁵⁸ Kerwin Lee Klein is similarly critical of historical studies which speak of ‘memory’ as an historical actor, without examining the people, institutions, and media implicated in its transmission.⁵⁹

The processes of mediation which underlie collective memory are a central concern of this study. The published War diary is examined here in its role as a specific ‘medium of memory’ by means of which individual memories of significant events of World War 2 come to participate in the construction and ongoing negotiation of public memories of those events in East Germany after 1945. Alon Confino insists on locating representations of the past in the context of their reception and he argues that studies which fail to do so “implicitly make an assumption, [...], that the representation is a transparent expression of a historical mentality, of social and political values. In reality, the crucial issue is not what is represented, but how this representation has been interpreted and perceived.”⁶⁰ This insight and a definition of ‘*Medien des kollektiven Gedächtnisses*’ offered by Astrid Erll will inform my study of published World War 2 diaries as media of War memory.⁶¹ Erll’s concept of

⁵⁷ As Peitsch notes: “Für die Art dieser Vermittlung interessiert sich Halbwachs allerdings nicht.” (Peitsch, 1990, p. 13)

⁵⁸ Kansteiner, 2002, p. 187

⁵⁹ “The new ‘materialisation of memory’ thus grounds the elevation of memory to the status of a historical agent, and we enter a new age in which archives remember and statues forget.” (Kerwin Lee Klein, 2000, p. 136)

⁶⁰ Confino, 1997, p. 1392

⁶¹ See Erll, 2005, pp. 130-137

Gedächtnismedium urges the study of representations of the past in conjunction with their production, transmission and consumption in concrete historical settings. The term *Gedächtnismedium* designates not merely the tangible medium in and through which the past is invoked, but always considers that medium in its interaction with diverse factors in a specific memorial context: "ein Gedächtnismedium [...] konstituiert sich erst durch das Zusammenspiel von auf verschiedenen Ebenen anzusiedelnden Faktoren. Dieses Zusammenspiel findet zudem in spezifischen erinnerungskulturellen Kontexten statt."⁶² The 'medium of memory' thus fuses the concrete medium with its mediation. It encompasses the material representation of the past and the techniques and forms employed in that representation. In addition it takes account of the medium's role(s) in a social setting which become clear in an examination of its production and reception by various agents in specific contexts.

"Medien sind keine neutralen Träger oder Behältnisse von Gedächtniszeichen. An mediengestützten Erinnerungs- und Deutungsakten bewahrt sich stets auch die 'Spur' des Gedächtnismediums. Wir haben es - auf individueller wie auf kollektiver Ebene - mit einer Medienabhängigkeit und -geprägtheit der Erinnerung zu tun."⁶³ - With Erll and others⁶⁴, this study emphasises the media-specific nature of collective memory. It recognises that media structure both the representation and the reception of past events in the public domain. The case studies illuminated here demonstrate how a particular medium – the War diary – fulfils particular memorial functions in the context of post-War East Germany. Conventions of the diary form shape the individual diarist's account of his War experience and, in the case of published diaries, assumptions about the diary genre have a bearing on

⁶² Ibid., p. 135

⁶³ Ibid., p. 125

⁶⁴ Like Erll, Birgit Neumann draws attention to the specific role of literature as a medium of collective memory in Neumann, 2004, pp. 169-172. See also Humpfrey, 2004 and Schmidt, 2004

readers' appreciation of the text and the experiences it describes. Erll focuses on literary fiction as a distinct medium of collective memory with specific roles and privileges.⁶⁵ While they may not be seen to stand in the same referential relation to reality as documentary accounts, works of literature nonetheless provide interpretative paradigms for our perception of reality and the past: "Literarischen Werken entstammen Modelle und Schemata, die unsere Begegnung mit der Wirklichkeit präformieren, unsere Vorstellungen von Vergangenheit formen und unsere persönlichsten Erinnerungen mitprägen."⁶⁶ The authors of literary texts are at liberty to invent. They engage with extra-literary elements of collective memory and reconfigure them for a public readership. Fictional accounts of the past may rehearse existing public memory narratives, prompt their revision or supplement them with new perspectives.⁶⁷ Works of literature may also function as a kind of metadiscourse, thematising processes of collective memory outside the fictional text.⁶⁸ Erll contends that inherent features of literary representations of the past shape collective memory of the events they describe. She suggests that the way in which the past is represented in the medium of literature, the perspective from which it is recounted, and the

⁶⁵ Her concept of the 'collective text' represents a conscious refinement and expansion of the Assmanns' 'cultural text' term to allow for a more in-depth exploration of the interrelationship of literature and collective memory. While the 'cultural text' designates a broad range of media which through their reception have become the bearers of a national, canonical memory, Erll's 'collective text' refers exclusively to literary fiction and includes works within and outside the canon. (See Erll, 2004, pp. 262-264)

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 259. Looking back to Halbwachs and his observations on the role of Dicken's novels in forming his perception of the city of London, Erll describes literature as a "cadre médiale": "Die Lektüre literarischer Texte scheint das individuelle Gedächtnis ebenso zu prägen wie die soziale Interaktion in Gruppen." (Ibid., p.162). Birgit Neumann confirms this view: "Die im Medium der Fiktion inszenierten Erinnerungs- und Identitätskonzepte wirken bei entsprechender rezipientenseitiger Aktualisierungen auf die extraliterarische Erinnerungskultur zurück und können auf diese Weise die Herausbildung und Reflexion von individuellen ebenso wie von kollektiven Vergangenheitsbildern beeinflussen." (Neumann, 2004, p. 169)

⁶⁷ As Erll writes: "Literarische Texte können neuartige, aber an die symbolische Sinnwelt einer Erinnerungskultur anschließbare imaginäre Wirklichkeiten erzeugen, indem sie Selbstbilder, Geschichtsvorstellungen oder Werte und Normen auf prägnante und anschauliche Weise darstellen, sowie Vergessenes und bis dahin Unartikulierbares in die Erinnerung einspeisen. Sie können jedoch auch bestehende Gedächtnisnarrative hinterfragen, dekonstruieren oder deutlich umgestalten und somit Geschichtsbilder, Wertstrukturen oder Vorstellungen vom Eigenen und vom Fremden revidieren." (Erll, 2004, p. 266)

⁶⁸ "Literarische Texte stellen die Prozesse und Probleme des Gedächtnisses so dar, dass sie Gesellschaften eine Beobachtung und Kritik der Erinnerungskultur ermöglichen." (Erll, 2005, p. 165)

language in which it is narrated are potential factors in the public reception of past events via literary texts: “Wenngleich [...] von ‘intrinsischen Qualitätsgarantien’ nicht auszugehen ist, stellt sich doch die Frage nach Merkmalen literarischer Texte, die im Sinne eines ‘Wirkungspotentials’ zu einer Rezeption als kollektive Texte anregen können.”⁶⁹ She has distinguished four narrative strategies or ‘rhetorical modes of collective memory’ that embody different approaches to the past within literary texts and that may steer the reception of past events by readers.⁷⁰ Responding to Erll’s dictum: “Literarische Formen und erinnerungskulturelle Kontexte müssen zusammengedacht werden”,⁷¹ in this study, I consciously reflect on the specific characteristics of the diary genre as a ‘medium of memory’ and show how they may function in the construction of public narratives of World War 2 in the GDR. As demonstrated in the following chapters, a concept of genre held and invoked by publishers and readers often represents a ‘horizon of expectations’ which informs a reading of published War diaries and the events they portray.

“In looking for the story of events, we need to look at how each story is being told and then being used afterwards”⁷²

This study takes issue with two common assumptions about the diary genre which are voiced time and again in discussions of wartime diaries. It problematises the notion of the genre’s immediacy in relation to published War diaries and dispenses with claims of a

⁶⁹ Erll, 2004, p. 262. Yet she does stress that a ‘Wirkungspotential’ of a literary text may not always be realised in its actual reception: “Entscheidend dafür ob Leser das Potential von Texten des Symbolsystems Literatur, als Medien des kollektiven Gedächtnisses zu dienen, im Rezeptionsprozess aktualisieren, werden immer individuelle und kollektive Rezeptionsstrategien, Verfahren der erinnerungskulturellen Institutionalisierungen und (nicht zu unterschätzen:) der massenmedialen Diskussion und Bewerbung von Literatur sein.” (ibid. p. 267) Neumann makes a similar point: “Ob ein bestimmter Text affirmativ oder aber subversiv gelesen wird, ist somit nicht nur eine Frage inhaltlich-formaler Aspekte, sondern auch soziokultureller Kontexte und Rezeptionspraxen.” (Neumann, 2004, p. 171)

⁷⁰ See Erll, 2005, pp. 167-76

⁷¹ Erll, 2004, p. 270

⁷² Young, 1998, p. 32

fundamental dichotomy between the 'personal' testimony of the diary and forms of 'collective' or group remembrance. An examination of the role of published War diaries in East Germany shows how they are enmeshed in processes of public remembrance; their narratives are shaped by, and themselves shape memory discourses outside the text.

In a recent article on personal narratives and commemoration, Samuel Hynes writes of diaries of World War 2 that "experience there is not filtered and mediated by time or by an audience beyond the self."⁷³ Hynes' statement rehearses a common view that the diary is an immediate reflection of reality addressed to nobody but the writing self. The temporal proximity of the diarist to the events he or she describes and the assumed self-reflexivity of his text are often seen to preclude a narrative rendering of his experience. Commentators rarely acknowledge that diaries are narrative constructions. They often fail to interrogate the role of genre as a filter of experience in the diary⁷⁴ and overlook the narrative strategies which operate in diary-writing and the real and implied addressees for whom the diarist writes. For Kuhn-Osius the diarist lacks the prerequisites of narrative, a "story-teller's past" and a "a discernible illocutionary force [...] a recognisable purpose."⁷⁵ Boerner draws a contrast between retrospective autobiography and the 'immediate' diary: "Das Tagebuch sieht die Dinge lediglich aus dem erlebnisreichen Moment der Niederschrift und bietet weithin ungeformte Gegenwart, die Autobiographie beruht auf die inzwischen gewonnene Distanz und kann deshalb das Vergangene bereits gestalten."⁷⁶ A diary entry may well be a "discursive event rooted in a distinct time and place",⁷⁷ and it may well be a scribbled note by

⁷³ Hynes, 1999, p. 211

⁷⁴ As Humpfrey writes: "Jede Wahl einer literarischen Gattung trifft eine Vorentscheidung über das Erzählwürdige, setzt Erzählprioritäten und –wahrscheinlichkeiten." (Humpfrey, 2004, p. 78)

⁷⁵ Kuhn-Osius, 1981, pp. 167-169

⁷⁶ Boerner, 1969, p.13. Picard's list of diary features makes a similar claim: "Formlosigkeit, Fragmentarität, Inkohärenz, Vorläufigkeit, Spontanität, Abkürzung, seine Freiheit von Handlung, Kontext, Stilschranken, thematischen Grenzen, sein lebensweltlicher Bezug." (Picard, 1986, p. 22) See also Wuthenow, 1990, p. 214

⁷⁷ Langford and West, 1999, p. 7

the diarist not intended for public consumption, but it is nonetheless always a narrative. As Zur Nieden writes with reference to diaries of World War 2: "Erinnerungen, auch aus der kurzen Distanz, sind narrative Konstruktionen."⁷⁸ Any diarist's representation of his lived experience is mediated and structured by several factors including his perception of the diary genre, an imagined or intended readership, the manifest and latent purposes of his writing, and his point-of-view on the events he describes.⁷⁹ The function to bear witness, often ascribed by diarists to their texts, assumes both a story and an audience to whom that story is told. Even in the case of diaries with no discernible addressee and where no publication is intended I would suggest that the text is nonetheless pitched at the assumed knowledge of an implied reader. In the case of the 'private' diary this knowledge typically corresponds to that of the diarist himself.⁸⁰ The communicative function of diary practice is particularly evident in many War diaries which were written with the firm intention to publish.⁸¹

While retrospective autobiography may offer a view of a life from a single vantage point, the diary typically represents a serial narrative of the diarist's experience told in regular entries over a given period of time. A concept of identity as positionality may be productively applied to the diary as a form of autobiography. This concept views identity as a linguistic construct, a discursive position adopted by the writing subject at a particular moment vis-à-vis the various discourses in which he is enmeshed: "Was Identität konstituiert, charakterisiert und immer wieder modifiziert, hängt [...] von den zahlreichen und sehr

⁷⁸ Zur Nieden, 1993, p. 53.

⁷⁹ As Young writes: "For even the [Holocaust] diarists themselves - once they enter immediate experience into the tropes and structures of narrative - necessarily convert experience into an organised, often ritualised, memory of experience." (Young, 1998, p. 25)

⁸⁰ As Thomsen argues: "Diese Intimität ist [...] keine wirkliche, sondern eine vermittelte, und selbst das simpelste Merkheft, das nur Gedächtnisstütze sein will, stellt eine 'kommunikative Öffentlichkeit' her, und sei es nur zwischen dem Ich, wie es jetzt ist, und dem Ich, wie es einmal sein wird." (Thomsen, 1994, p. 373)

⁸¹ Examples include the diaries of Anne Frank, Ernst Jünger and Viktor Klemperer.

heterogenen Positionen ab, die das Subjekt sowohl gleichzeitig als auch nacheinander, im Laufe seines Lebens, einnimmt – oder auch nicht einnimmt; Identität wird zudem nicht nur von der Positionalisierung des Subjekts innerhalb oder ausserhalb einer Vielzahl diskursiver Felder bestimmt, sondern auch von deren untergeordneten oder dominanten Stellenwert innerhalb eines ganzen Netzwerkes von Diskursen.”⁸² To a far greater extent than retrospective autobiographies, diaries reveal identity as a series of subject positions taken through and in relation to language. While a retrospective autobiography may effect a more or less coherent self over the span of a life reviewed, an unedited diary shows identity as a provisional, ever-changing construct.⁸³ How a diarist represents himself and his experience in today’s entry may differ considerably from how he represents himself and his experience in later entries. In close readings of my chosen diaries I attempt to reconstruct the narratives of specific events of World War 2 manifest in these texts, highlighting the aims of the diarist, the audience he addresses and the shifting perspectives he adopts with regard to his own identity and the events he witnesses.

In the case of published diaries, assertions of their immediacy and authenticity become even more problematic. The diary is written in and for one context, but it is published in and for another. Publication involves the transmission of the diary to a general public readership at varying temporal removes from the chronology spanned by the original text and it often entails a reorientation of the diary narrative to a new public context. Many diaries of World War 2 which appeared in Germany after the War were subject to significant editing, rewriting and censorship before publication. A diary style and the structure of consecutive dated entries were usually preserved, but the perspective from which these texts were

⁸² Finck, 1999, p. 132. Bonner and Rosenholm apply this concept productively in their treatment of the anonymous diary *Eine Frau in Berlin*, showing how “das Ich selbst wird zum Ort der kulturellen Diskursivität und bringt sich durch die diskursive Positionalisierung hervor.” (Bonner/Rosenfeld, 2005, p. 299)

⁸³ Nussbaum (1988, p. 129) confirms this stating that “the discourse of diary [sic] is particularly open to a series of coterminous and contradictory subject positions.”

presented to a public audience was equivalent to that of retrospective memoirs. As Carsten Wurm writes with reference to published War diaries in Germany: "Die Authentizität [...] wurde in vielen Fällen durch die Rücksichtnahme auf die herrschende Meinung und Eingriffe der Zensur in Frage gestellt. Namentlich die Tagebücher, die durch die Gleichzeitigkeit von Erlebnis- und Schreibprozeß den größten Anspruch auf Unmittelbarkeit erheben, erhielten durch Weglassungen und stilistische Umarbeitungen eine mitunter stark veränderte Gestalt."⁸⁴ Kuhn-Osius describes how Luise Rinser, through later insertions in her published *Gefängnistagebuch*, contrives a triadic plot structure which was not manifest in the original manuscript.⁸⁵ Diary entries in Margrit Boveri's *Tage des Überlebens* are interspersed with lengthy commentaries which relate her War experiences to the Cold War context. Various studies have shown how War diaries published in the immediate post-War years were often edited and rewritten so as not to invite criticism of the diarist's wartime past.⁸⁶

Like many other scholars, Samuel Hynes views wartime diaries as the antithesis of grand historical narratives, suggesting that "by existing they refute and subvert the collective story of war that is military history."⁸⁷ Aleida Assmann similarly categorises the diary as a genre of the 'communicative' memory of witnesses to historical events, opposed to the 'cultural' memory formed and cultivated in state institutions and official commemorative ceremonies.⁸⁸ Against the assumptions of Hynes and Assmann I would argue that the published War diary is more correctly located at the *intersection* of personal and 'collective' public remembrance. In the East German context, the publication and reception of War

⁸⁴ Wurm, 1999, p.248

⁸⁵ Kuhn-Osius, 1981, pp. 172-3

⁸⁶ As zur Nieden writes: "Many post-war diaries took the shape of political and moral exoneration, and the supposedly contemporary reflections came to be primarily structured by a subsequent need for (self-) justification." (1999, p. 150) See also Peitsch, 1990, pp. 233-306

⁸⁷ Hynes, 1999, p. 220

⁸⁸ Assmann, A., 2006, p. 28

diaries were never arbitrary, but contingent on changing constellations of World War 2 remembrance. Throughout this study I ask which factors favoured the publication of specific War diaries at certain times over the course of the GDR's history, and which factors facilitated or hindered the reception of these texts. I show how, through processes of mediation, the personal narrative of the War diary engages and interacts with memory discourses contemporary to its publication. On entering the arena of public memory, the diary has the potential to influence and supplement public discourse on World War 2. At the same time, through its publication and reception, the diary's narrative is often suffused with current perspectives on the events it describes. Editing processes, the role of paratexts as framing devices⁸⁹ and decisions regarding the print-run and intended audience of the diary, as well as its subsequent reception, including transpositions into other media such as film and drama, are all aspects I consider in the mediation of the personal memories manifest in the original diary text.⁹⁰

The published War diaries examined in this study reveal several layers of mediation by various agents acting within the system of literary production and reception in the GDR. All bear traces of post-War interventions which re-orientated the original manuscript to an East German audience and presented a reading of its content in the light of current memorial concerns. The transition from 'private' to 'public' text involved the input of various 'writers' and 'readers.' While they continued to be read as the 'immediate' autobiographical testimony of an eye-witness, in these published diaries we often find a convergence of different degrees of hindsight, perspectives and voices. In this way the published diary became a medium for diverse positions on the events of World War 2 at

⁸⁹ The concept of the paratext developed by Gérard Genette is central to my reflections on the mediation of published War diaries. 'Paratexts' denote the texts which frame the published text, including its title, subtitle, forewords, epilogues and notes, as well as the texts and media involved in its reception. See Genette, 1997

⁹⁰ For Peitsch processes of re-writing, editing and reinterpretation of textual representations of war reveal "the social and historical context of remembering." (Peitsch, 1999, p.xxxi)

different times after 1945. In many cases the paratexts which framed the published diary distorted or selectively interpreted its narrative to corroborate a particular view of the events of World War 2.⁹¹ The diary's message was also filtered in the reception and public consumption of the text. Reviews of the diary in the GDR press offered a reading of its narrative from a particular perspective, to a particular audience, with a particular purpose. Similar to the paratexts these reviews often reflected contemporary positions on the event described in the diary. The responses elicited by the diary both in the GDR media and among East German readers were often indicative of the status of specific War events in broader public discussions of World War 2.⁹²

An examination of the War diary, together with its publications and reception, offers a vantage point from which to view and analyse the negotiation of World War 2 remembrance at certain moments in the history of the GDR. Without presuming to give a comprehensive overview of memory processes in East Germany, my examination of the mediation of published War diaries over time can nonetheless illuminate some tendencies and developments in GDR discourse on specific War events. The presentation of a given War diary to the reading public and the discussion it prompts in the public sphere reflect aspects of the interpretation and hierarchisation of War experiences by various agents at different levels of East German society. In a kind of textual archaeology, this study lays bare the mediation of my chosen diaries, the people and institutions involved, their perspectives, and motives. I analyse the positions on specific episodes of World War 2 which are articulated in the publications and reception of a given diary and locate them in relation to coexisting public narratives of the War. Successive editions of the diaries I treat were subject to further

⁹¹ As Wurm has written of published War diaries and memoirs: "Die rezeptionsleitenden Vorworte, Schlüsse und Kommentare an herausgehobenen Stellen enthalten oft Bekenntnisse, die durch den eigentlichen Text nicht gedeckt sind." (Wurm, 1999, p. 249)

⁹² Where possible I differentiate between media treatments of the diaries I examine and the sometimes diverging interpretations of individual readers.

structural changes, new presentations and re-interpretations. I seek to explain these changes with reference to shifts in the political, historical and literary discourse on World War 2 in the GDR. It will become clear that the assimilation of the diary's narrative into public remembrance is always a dialectical process. With reference to the reception of my chosen case studies, I ask to what extent the published diary brought new impulses into an existing memory discourse and expanded public perceptions of the War in East Germany.⁹³ At the same time, I show how the diary in question was often realigned and interpreted in accordance with existing public narratives of World War 2.

The term 'instrumentalisation' is frequently used in descriptions of how the SED regime attempted to harness the memory of World War 2 for political ends. In official statements the memories of anti-fascist resistance by German communists typically served to legitimise the existence of the 'anti-fascist' East German State and at the same time criticise a 'revanchist' *Bundesrepublik*. The decision to publish, revise, censor, and add framing commentaries to East German editions of specific War diaries often had a strong political dimension. In the way they were presented to the reading public these texts were frequently used to endorse the official GDR stance on particular events of World War 2. In many cases the paratexts surrounding the published diary repeated key tenets of a state-sanctioned 'anti-fascist' narrative of the War, which may or may not have been confirmed in the diary itself. The problem with claims of 'instrumentalisation' lies in their implication that the attempts to transmit a political message via War diaries and other media were successful in the East German context. They reduce such media to a narrow ideological function and fail to explore the possibility of other less orthodox readings in the public reception of these texts. In my central chapters I show how War diaries often became the bearers of the official SED

⁹³ Erll points to the reception of literary representations of the past as an indicator of "[der] Eingang ihrer Gedächtnisnarrative in die Erinnerungskultur und auf ihre das kollektive Gedächtnis refigurierende Wirkung." (Erll, 2005, p. 153)

view on the events they described. However, in my examination of the reception of these texts I draw attention to how the same texts were for particular readers in particular contexts media of War remembrance that diverged from the official line.⁹⁴

The Diary Genre in Context

Jochen Hellbeck views the diary genre not as a stable and timeless form, but suggests that it is subject to particular emphases in particular historical and cultural settings: “categories such as history, the self and privacy, often accepted as an unquestioned syntax of the diary across time and space, are constructions of an age, highly malleable in meaning and identifiable only through careful, contextualised analysis.”⁹⁵ In the historical development of the genre, the diary has come to be associated with certain formal and stylistic features, with a certain aesthetic value, and with a certain relation to time and to the writing subject. Yet diary attributes are invoked in different ways and fulfil different functions for both diarists and their readers in specific contexts. In this study I demonstrate that, far from representing a purely aesthetic category, genre is contingent on historical and political developments. Established diary conventions and connotations of the genre acquire a new significance in the context of World War 2 and its remembrance. I mentioned above how assumptions of the diary’s privacy, secrecy and introspection were the basis for claims of inner emigration in the immediate post-War years in West Germany. In what follows, I reflect further on how these and other attributes of the genre may apply both in the writing of War diaries, and in the reception of the diary’s narrative on publication. In the case of published War diaries,

⁹⁴ In her recent study on the East German reception of *Das Tagebuch der Anne Frank*, Sylke Kirschnick has highlighted the different levels of the text’s reception, showing how an official East German interpretation of the Holocaust propagated in the presentation of the published diary, and in the 1959 DEFA film *Ein Tagebuch für Anne Frank* was not always binding in the private readings of individual East German readers. (Kirschnick, 2009)

⁹⁵ Hellbeck, 2004, p. 621

how might aspects of genre structure both autobiographical memory within the text and group or 'collective' remembrance outside it?

The French designation 'journal intime' foregrounds the diary's long-standing association with the concepts of privacy, intimacy, and the self. Commentators locate the autobiographical turn of the genre in the 18th century. Previously understood as a form of public record, the diary came at this time to be seen as a form for private introspection. For contemporary German writers and the reading public, Lavater's *Geheimes Tagebuch von einem Beobachter seiner Selbst* (1771) epitomized this new diary concept.⁹⁶ In present-day discussions the diary continues to be viewed as a genre for the private exploration of the diarist's self over time.⁹⁷ War diaries may be written from the perspective of an individual participant, but they are seldom self-absorbed. War often precludes a strict separation of the private and public spheres. As Hassam points out with reference to war diaries, subjectivity "is itself dialectically dependent on the public fact of the war."⁹⁸ The individual diarist is often dragged into the public events of war and his diary is inevitably preoccupied with them. Commentators have highlighted the affinities between the war diary and reportage.⁹⁹ The diarists examined by Wolfgang Hardtwig are more focused on the external events of World War 2 than on their personal lives: "sie [notieren] viel weniger Gefühle als Fakten, visuelle und optische Wahrnehmungen, Gespräche, - also 'Objektives', Faktisches."¹⁰⁰ "Infolge des Krisenerlebnisses erinnerte sich der Schriftsteller stärker als in historisch weniger bewegter Zeit stellvertretend im Namen einer oder mehrerer Gruppen, die der Verlauf der Geschichte, die politische Überzeugung, rassische Herkunft, berufliche und militärische Stellung zu unterschiedlich festen sozialen Gemeinschaften verschmolzen

⁹⁶ See Hocke, 1963, p. 58

⁹⁷ As Hassam writes: "Our current cultural norm privileges the private diary." (Hassam, 1993, p. 24)

⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 62

⁹⁹ See Hassam (1987 and 1993); Boerner, 1969, p. 54; Hocke, 1963, p. 233

¹⁰⁰ Hardtwig, 2005, p. 176

hatten.”¹⁰¹ Wurm’s observation regarding the autobiographical literature of World War 2 is corroborated by many War diaries where the prevalence of the first-person plural is striking. In these texts the pronoun ‘wir’ is often favoured over the ‘ich’ one expects from autobiography and the ‘introspective’ diary. For many diarists the experience of War strengthens their affiliation with a collective, be it national, political, racial or gender. By writing in the first person plural, they set their experience in the context of a collective fate and depict themselves as representatives of a specific group. In her references to “wir” and “uns” the anonymous diarist of *Eine Frau in Berlin* presents her experiences as typical of many German women at the end of the War. Hardtwig’s examination of six prominent published German War diaries shows how the diarists’ reflections on their subjectivity were bound up with reflections on German national identity. “Die Selbstverständlichkeit eines gesteigerten nationalen Bewusstseins”¹⁰² during the War made itself felt in their frequent recourse to the pronouns ‘wir’ and ‘unser.’ War diaries are thus often not so much explorations of a unique subjectivity, as they are constructions of individual identity in relation to projected collective identities. Such texts are at one and the same time autobiographical accounts and characterisations of the group(s) into or outside of which the diarist inscribes himself.¹⁰³ The first person plural arises throughout each of my chosen diaries and in the following chapters I explore the significance and function of the pronoun ‘wir’ for all three diarists. Regardless of which person the diarist favours - ‘ich’ or ‘wir’ - in the mediation of his text to a public audience, the diarist’s individual experience has often been presented as typical or representative of a particular group. In discussions of *Das Tagebuch der Anne Frank* Anne emerged as *the* representative Jewish victim of the Nazis and claims to her representativeness coloured German perceptions of the Holocaust and its

¹⁰¹ Wurm, 1999, p. 243

¹⁰² Hardtwig, 2005, p. 165

¹⁰³ The ‘Wir’ invoked by the diarist is often implicitly delimited from other groups.

victims.¹⁰⁴ In this study I show the extent to which the War diaries I examine prompted reflection on the experiences of a given collective and I ask which functions a retrospective identification of the diarist and his experience with a particular group or groups may have fulfilled in post-War East Germany.

The title of a recent collection of essays on the diary, *Marginal voices, Marginal forms*, foregrounds the genre's link with literary and social marginality.¹⁰⁵ Assumptions of the diary's inferior aesthetic value often go hand in hand with a wholesale identification of diarists with the oppressed and the disenfranchised in society. As Langford writes "The formal marginality [of the diary] is often directly linked with political, racial or gender marginality."¹⁰⁶ Studies have focussed on the diary as a female form.¹⁰⁷ Hocke views it as a genre of "politisch Heimatlosen."¹⁰⁸ Victims and social and political outcasts do not have a monopoly on the diary form. Yet in discussions of World War 2 diaries a tendency to essentialise the diary as a genre of the marginalised becomes especially acute. For Thomsen the genre is so fused with the concept of suffering that a 'perpetrator diary' is a contradiction in terms. Thus he sees the authenticity of War diaries predicated on the suffering of their authors: "Die Opfer des Nationalsozialismus werden durch die Authentizität ihres Leidens glaubwürdig."¹⁰⁹ Of course for many diarists their experience of World War 2 *was* one of terrible suffering, oppression and marginalisation and their texts bear witness to this. Yet far from being the preserve of inner emigrants, resisters and victims, diary-keeping was actively encouraged by the Nazis.¹¹⁰ Helmut Peitsch reminds us: "Zwar konnte das Tagebuchführen

¹⁰⁴ See especially Kirschnick, 2009

¹⁰⁵ Langford and West, 1999

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 9. Nussbaum's observation on the genre is typical: "The marginalised and unauthorised discourse in [the] diary holds the power to disrupt authorised versions of experience." (Nussbaum, 1988, p.136)

¹⁰⁷ See for example Niemeyer, 1986

¹⁰⁸ Hocke, 1963, p. 66

¹⁰⁹ Thomsen, 1994, p. 382

¹¹⁰ Zur Nieden writes that diary practice was "von nationalsozialistischer Seite nicht nur nachdrücklich unterstützt, sondern auch seit Beginn des Krieges verstärkt propagandistisch eingesetzt." (Zur Nieden, 1993, p. 59)

als Erkennungszeichen von oppositionell gesinnten Intellektuellen fungieren, aber diese Qualität war nicht schon mit dem Schreiben als solchem gegeben.”¹¹¹ Susanne zur Nieden’s study of unpublished War diaries by German women shows an almost total identification of their authors with National Socialist ideology.¹¹²

The association of the diary genre with marginalisation has made it an ideal form for projections of individual and collective suffering and resistance in post-War Germany. War diaries have been texts in and through which people have positioned themselves as victims and/or resisters, whether or not these roles tallied with their actual War experiences. Many German diarists writing at the end of the War portrayed themselves as victims or opponents of National Socialism in anticipation of future interrogations of their ideological stance during the Third Reich. Commentators have pointed to Luise Rinser’s self-construction as a victim of the Nazis in her *Gefängnistagebuch*.¹¹³ And an abiding belief that the diary is a genre of the marginalised and oppressed has supported the self-justificatory function of specific published War diaries. Gerhard Nebel’s assessment of the diary as “eine Literatur des Kerkers”¹¹⁴ in 1948 facilitated a reception of published War diaries as testimonies of inner emigration in the early post-War period. Furthermore, the real or contrived marginalisation of individual diarists reflected in their texts, has often served to illustrate claims of widespread German suffering and alienation from National Socialism after 1945.

An habitual mode of reception, which views War diaries primarily as testimonies of marginalisation, often fails to take account of another key motivation behind diary practice. Citing the influence of Pietism on the development of the genre, commentators note the diary’s link to confession. In its Pietist conceptualisation the diary is an examination of

¹¹¹ Peitsch, 1990, p. 266

¹¹² Zur Nieden, 1993. Similarly Hellbeck’s study of private diaries kept in Stalinist Russia show a collusion of their authors with contemporary ideology and an identification with an ideal Soviet subjectivity. (See Hellbeck, 2006)

¹¹³ See for example Peitsch, 1990, pp. 191-7

¹¹⁴ Introduction to *Bei den nördlichen Hesperiden*, 1948

conscience and a confrontation with personal guilt which culminates in atonement. It becomes “[ein] Medium der Beichte, der Selbstbeobachtung, der Selbstkontrolle.”¹¹⁵ In some cases, diaries of World War 2 represent secular confessions where diarists reflect on their personal culpability and on that of their fellow Germans. Such diaries contain admissions of guilt on behalf of their writers and the collective(s) they represent.¹¹⁶ Yet the issue of guilt has generally been bypassed in the German reception of these texts. Although the anonymous diarist of *Eine Frau in Berlin* engages with her own complicity with National Socialism in her text, this aspect of her experience was completely overlooked in the media’s portrayal of her as a representative female victim of the Russian victors at the end of the War in Berlin.¹¹⁷ The question of personal and collective German culpability with regard to specific episodes of World War 2 arises in all three of the published War diaries I examine. In an analysis of their publication and reception I ask to what extent these texts provoked discussion of German guilt in the East German context and I describe the nature of this discussion.

The Diary Genre in the GDR Context

Each of the War diaries examined in this study appeared and was received in the GDR. Parallel to the publication of these and other War diaries, GDR writers and cultural authorities engaged in a discussion of the diary genre. In a number of programmatic texts, and in literary experiments with the diary form, the genre was invested with meanings and

¹¹⁵ Wuthenow, 1990, p. 215. For Hocke (1963, p. 27) a principal motivation of diary-writing is “Sich-selbst-beichten”; for Niemeyer (1986, p. 18) the diary is “Gewissensforschung, Selbstprüfung, Selbsterkenntnis.”

¹¹⁶ Erich Kuby’s published diary of World War 2, *Mein Krieg* (1975), insists on the burden of guilt born by ordinary German soldiers who fought in World War 2: “Kuby klagt [...] den Mann von der Straße an, letztlich für den Erfolg des National Sozialismus verantwortlich zu sein. Hohe Nationalsozialisten sind für ihn keine Verbrecherminderheit, sondern exemplarische Deutsche der Zeit.” (Wagener, 1977, p. 255)

¹¹⁷ See Rosenholm and Bonner, 2005, p. 289. See also my paper on the diary presented in November 2005.

functions specific to the East German context. Without presuming to present an exhaustive analysis of the importance of the diary genre in GDR literature, in what follows I recapitulate a number of key positions on this text form that emerged in East German literary discourse from the 1950s to the 1980s. Although these discussions were not primarily concerned with diaries of World War 2, I view them nonetheless as a relevant backdrop to the publication and reception of the texts I examine.

While it was not subject to a wide reception when first published, Johannes R. Becher's *Auf andere Art so große Hoffnung. Tagebuch 1950*,¹¹⁸ may be seen as a key reference point for all subsequent appraisals and literary appropriations of the diary genre in East Germany. By the example he set in his *Tagebuch 1950*, and in commentaries on the genre throughout his text, Becher sought to redefine the diary for the GDR context. Retrieving the diary from its customary low ranking in the literary hierarchy he suggested its centrality to a projected GDR "Literaturgesellschaft." In Becher's vision, the diary's long-standing association with privacy, subjectivity, and introspection is overturned. Far from being a private literature of the boudoir, in Becher's view the diary embodies a desired synthesis of literature and the project of GDR national and social development. It is a thoroughly public text in which the individual traces his own development in relation to the broader social developments in which he participates. In the diary Becher finds "Allgemeines und Besonderes in ausgeglichener Mischung, das Private nicht entartend zum Privatissimum, sondern zur Person führend, und die wiederum zur Persönlichkeit sich erhebend."¹¹⁹ In his attempt to chart his own experiences of the year 1950 in their relation to events in the GDR's first year of existence, Becher seeks to realise this conception of the genre as a bridge between the

¹¹⁸ Johannes R. Becher, *Auf andere Art so große Hoffnung. Tagebuch 1950*, Aufbau, 1969

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 164

individual and society. Becher's comments on the diary are suffused with the language of *Aufbau*. For both the diarist and the society in which he lives the diary is "ein Mittel zum Anderswerden."¹²⁰ Diary practice is seen to bring forth "einen neuen Menschen" and show "ein 'Werden' [...] in seiner ganzen Unmittelbarkeit und Widersprüchlichkeit."¹²¹

Initiated in the context of the *Bitterfelder Weg* in the late 1950s, the *Brigadetagebuch* fulfilled key criteria of Becher's re-conceived diary genre. As a public chronicle of factory life written by ordinary workers, the *Brigadetagebuch* was one attempt to realise Bitterfeld's professed aim of a symbiosis of literature with current GDR social and economic reality. A contemporary observer described it as "eine wichtige Gattung unserer sozialistischen Nationalkultur."¹²² Unlike the private diary, these texts were collective endeavours written as a public account of the constant evolution of GDR society. For Wolfgang Neuhaus, *Brigadetagebücher* not only recorded current developments in East Germany but acted as motors for future progress and transformation: "Indem sie [die Arbeiter] die Chronik ihrer Zeit schreiben, helfen sie gleichzeitig mit, den sozialistischen Umwandlungsprozeß zu beschleunigen."¹²³

An essay by Christa Wolf on the diary, written in 1964, and included in her *Lesen und Schreiben* may be seen as a delayed response to Becher's ruminations on the genre and its significance for GDR literature and society.¹²⁴ Similar to Becher, Wolf valorises the diary form for the East German context, arguing that GDR literature should look for inspiration to real lived experience: "Literatur verfällt dem Verdikt der Sterilität. Der Vorstoß zu den Fragen unserer Zeit ist [...] an das Alltägliche gebunden."¹²⁵ Against the perceived aridity of

¹²⁰ Ibid., p.21

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Neuhaus, 1960, p. 21

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Christa Wolf, 'Tagebuch: Arbeitsmittel und Gedächtnis' in *Lesen und Schreiben*, Aufbau, 1972, pp. 13-27

¹²⁵ Ibid., p. 18

epic literary forms, the diary is seen to offer new perspectives and a fresh impulse for herself as a writer and for a projected GDR literature. While the diary may not in itself constitute literature, in Wolf's view it offers a fertile basis for literary explorations. Wolf does not pretend that the *Brigadetagebuch* from which she cites is a literary achievement. Yet she insists that it is "literaturwürdig"¹²⁶ in the way it provides a store of valuable everyday material on which authors may draw in their writing.

Both Wolf and Becher foreground the ethical dimension of the diary genre, and this is where their reflections touch on the significance of published War diaries in East Germany. For both, a preoccupation with "das Alltägliche," which is given in the diary, offers immunity against the worst excesses of ideology. In Becher's *Tagebuch 1950* the diary is at one and the same time "Kunstform" and "Lebensform."¹²⁷ Recalling the Pietist conception of the genre, the author emphasises that in diary practice "das Wichtigste bleibt die menschliche Konfession."¹²⁸ As a form that encourages constant reflection on one's actions, the diary is seen to foster personal accountability and is in its essence anti-totalitarian: "Das Persönliche, die privaten Einsprengsel, das Alltägliche werden das Offizielle ausgleichen und es nicht zum übermäßig herrschenden Ton werden lassen."¹²⁹ Becher is critical of Ernst Jünger's diary because of that writer's perceived renegeing on this fundamental principle of diary practice. Rather than an honest confession, Becher sees Jünger's text as a contrived shirking of moral responsibility in the form of a diary.¹³⁰ While Becher focuses on the diary as confession, Wolf points to its importance as authentic testimony of the events of World War 2: "Das Tagebuch [...] übernimmt für eine heillose Epoche und ihre verheerendsten Untaten das Amt des unbestechlichen, gerechten und wahrhaftigen Zeugen."¹³¹ With

¹²⁶ Ibid., p. 20

¹²⁷ Becher, 1969, pp. 20-21

¹²⁸ Ibid., p. 21

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ See Becher's discussion of Jünger's diary in *ibid.*, pp. 89-96

¹³¹ Wolf, 1972, p. 16

reference to the War diary of Holocaust victim Dawid Rubinowicz, Wolf claims that the diary is the best form to represent this episode of German history: “Das Schicksal des Dawid Rubinowicz könnte kaum anders als in der subjektiven und zugleich streng dokumentarischen Form seines Tagebuchs überliefert sein.”¹³² Although they are written under vastly different circumstances, Wolf sees a link between the *Brigadetagebuch* and Dawid’s testimony in their preoccupation with the mundane. Like Becher, she suggests that this preoccupation “[ist] allein wirksame und dauerhafte Garantie gegen Treblinka.”¹³³

Becher and Wolf both suggest a central role for the diary in a future socialist literature in the GDR. Yet the experiment with the *Brigadetagebuch* was shortlived. In publications from the 1970s onwards, the diary may be seen increasingly to occupy a position on the periphery of a state-sponsored literary scene.¹³⁴ Literary experiments with the diary genre and published anthologies of writers’ diaries and letters at this time were often the basis for a critical questioning of the GDR literary establishment and East German society in general. We can view Christa Wolf’s own engagement with the diary form in works from the 1970s and 1980s such as *Nachdenken über Christa T.* and *Kassandra* in terms of her critique of current GDR reality. Against Becher’s concept of the diary as a public chronicle of national development, both literary and non-literary diaries published at this time reclaim the principle of diaristic privacy and subjectivity. Karin McPherson attributes the popularity of published writers’ diaries after 1970 to the insights they were seen to give into a domain generally hidden from public view in the GDR. In their open thematisation of the situation of GDR writers and the writing process itself, these texts were “von ganz besonderer Brisanz

¹³² Ibid., p. 16

¹³³ Ibid., p. 20

¹³⁴ See Karin McPherson’s essays on this subject from 1986 and 2002

in einer Gesellschaft, deren Künstler unter dem Druck von Zensur und Selbstzensur stehen.”¹³⁵

¹³⁵ McPherson, 2002, p. 430

Collective Memory: Theories and Terminology

This study is primarily concerned with the media, agents, motives, contexts and phases of World War 2 remembrance in the GDR. It shows how personal testimonies participated in the construction and propagation of public narratives of that War in East Germany at various times after 1945. "Collective memory" is understood here as the sum of narratives¹³⁶ or representations of the past which assume public relevance through their articulation in public settings. In *La Mémoire Collective* Maurice Halbwachs underlined the 'collective' component of all remembering, arguing that the memories of any individual are never wholly 'personal,' but contingent on the social networks or collectives with which he engages. When he remembers an episode from his past the individual employs codes, images, language and narrative patterns or myths which he has imbibed from his social environment.¹³⁷ However, a distinction between individual and collective memory must still be upheld - the memory of an individual can only gain access to the domain of collective memory through its communication in public discourse. Halbwachs conceived the remembering individual as a locus for the expression of 'collective' or group memories: "das Individuum erinnert sich, indem es sich auf den Standpunkt der Gruppe stellt, und das Gedächtnis der Gruppe verwirklicht und offenbart sich in den individuellen Gedächtnissen."¹³⁸ Yet he gave little consideration to how memories may be articulated by other means. Here I treat published War diaries as *loci* or *media* for diverse collective memories of the events of World War 2 throughout the history of the GDR. In what follows I outline some key principles on the operations of collective memory and clarify the concepts with which I will work in my investigation.

¹³⁶ Jan Assmann highlights the equivalence of memory and narrative: "Verinnerlichte – und genau das heißt: erinnerte – Vergangenheit findet ihre Form in der Erzählung." (Assmann, J., 1992, p. 75)

¹³⁷ "The individual memory could not function without words and ideas, instruments the individual has not himself invented but appropriated from his milieu." (Halbwachs, 1992, p.51)

¹³⁸ Quoted in Erll, 2003, p. 20

With Maurice Halbwachs this study stresses the fundamental heterogeneity of collective memory.¹³⁹ In any given memorial culture different social collectives function as communities of memory with differing approaches to the past. Astrid Erll speaks of “eine Vielzahl koexistenter, häufig konkurrierender Erinnerungsgemeinschaften” in any society.¹⁴⁰ In terms of what they recall and how they recall it, the priorities they set and the purposes of their remembering, specific groups in society construct the past in specific ways. One and the same event may simultaneously be the subject of diverse group memories with differing emphases and functions in a particular context of remembrance. Scholars of World War 2 remembrance in East and West Germany have often contrasted a pluralist memory discourse in the *Bundesrepublik* with a monolithic ‘anti-fascist’ narrative of the War which prevailed in the GDR. This study highlights the diversity of collective memory in East Germany as revealed in the publication and reception of my chosen texts. Given the fact of censorship and a state-controlled media, the possibilities for the articulation of a range of positions on World War 2 in the public sphere may have been more limited in the GDR than in West Germany. Nevertheless, the following case studies show how an official SED interpretation of the fascist past was refracted and at times challenged by various agents acting in specific East German contexts. The Churches, literary discourse, and oppositional circles represent some of the fora where the published War diaries I examine prompted discussions of the War that departed from contemporary official narratives.

“Die Erinnerung ist in sehr weitem Maße eine Rekonstruktion der Vergangenheit mit Hilfe von der Gegenwart entliehenen Gegebenheiten.”¹⁴¹ Memory, whether ‘collective’ or ‘individual,’ is always a re-construction of the past in the present where current concerns

¹³⁹ Halbwachs theory foresees a plurality of coexisting group memories for which the remembering individual is the mouthpiece. He argues that “die Erinnerung an ein und dasselbe Ereignis in viele Bezugsrahmen hineinpasst, die verschiedenen Kollektivgedächtnissen angehören.” (Halbwachs, 1985, p. 200)

¹⁴⁰ Erll, 2005, p. 102

¹⁴¹ Halbwachs in Erll, 2003, p. 21

dictate which aspects of the past are selected for remembrance and how they are remembered. Invocations of the past are never arbitrary or unbiased, but reflect the current perspectives and aims of those who remember. Studies have emphasised the role of collective memories in the construction and stabilization of group and national identities. As Birgit Neumann writes: “Die Praxis des gemeinsamen Erinnerns bildet [...] den Ausgangspunkt der Entstehung einer Kollektividentität. Durch die geteilte Aktualisierung von vergangenen Erfahrungen in Geschichten, Riten oder Ritualen schaffen sich Gruppen eine überindividuelle Identität.”¹⁴²

In each of the case studies treated here, the transition from diary manuscript to published, ‘public’ text was anything but straightforward. My examination of the publication and reception of selected War diaries seeks to understand why and how their narratives were assimilated into a public discussion of World War 2 at particular points in the history of the GDR. And it asks conversely, with reference to processes of collective remembrance, why the same diaries fell into relative obscurity at other times. In the presentation and reception of each text, its narrative was often manipulated or selectively interpreted to confirm a given view of a specific episode of World War 2. I contextualise the various re-presentations of the diarist’s experience in East German public discourse and show the purposes they served for particular communities of memory.

As understood in this study, collective memory is a site of endless struggle between multiple group memories that vie with each other for domination in the public sphere. Memories are always articulated in a context; they constantly interact and are defined in their shifting

¹⁴² Neumann, 2004, p. 159. Jan Assmann makes a similar point in *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis* (J. Assmann, 1992, p. 72).

relations to each other.¹⁴³ The agents engaged in “the social production of memory”¹⁴⁴ include the Government and its institutions, the judiciary, heritage organisations, academic historiography, publishers, writers, the media, grass-roots organisations, and individuals in their daily interactions with family, friends, and colleagues. In what have been termed “acts of memory”, they vocalise and propagate memories in society.¹⁴⁵ Studies have highlighted the imbrication of collective memory and power. In the national context, group memories are arranged in a fluid hierarchy. At any given historical juncture those in positions of political and cultural authority may be seen to determine which aspects of the past are privileged in national memory and which aspects of the past are excluded or marginalised from this memory. Through the control they exercise over the means by which memories enter the public sphere, Government, and state heritage institutions play a leading and sometimes domineering role in the organisation of collective memory at a national level. But the status of a particular memory as ‘dominant’, ‘marginalised’ or ‘oppositional’ is always a provisional and negotiable position; it shifts in accordance with changing power dynamics in any society. Helmut Peitsch urges us “to ask whether the labels official, public and popular, can be fixed to memories permanently or if it is a conjuncture at a given moment which ascribes legitimacy to a version of remembering through a consent which bridges the official, the public and the popular.”¹⁴⁶ Moreover, a memory or narrative of the past, which might be termed ‘national’ or ‘official’, may have varying levels of acceptance among different

¹⁴³ Here I am informed in particular by a concept of ‘popular memory’ outlined in a programmatic essay by the Popular Memory Group. (Popular Memory Group, 1982, pp. 205-215) See also Peitsch’s discussion of the operations of collective memory. (Peitsch, 1999, pp. xx-xxv) Alon Confino underlines this dimension of collective memory: “We should stress the interaction between a given memory and other memories in the society and take cognizance of society and culture as global entities where distinct memories interact.” (Confino, 1997, p. 1400)

¹⁴⁴ Popular Memory Group, 1982, p. 210

¹⁴⁵ “Einige Aspekte der [...] Gewebe des kollektiven Gedächtnisses manifestieren sich in Akten kollektiver Erinnerung: in der Durchführung einer Schweigeminute, in dem Gespräch über einen vergangenen Urlaub oder in der Produktion und Verbreitung einer historischen Studie über das Mittelalter.” (Erlil, 2005, p. 103) See also Mieke Bal, 1998

¹⁴⁶ Peitsch, 1999, p. xx

communities of memory. As put by the Popular Memory Group: “conceptions of the past that acquire a dominance in the field of public representations are neither monolithically installed nor everywhere believed in.”¹⁴⁷ Reception processes are the key to measuring degrees of consensus and divergence between state-endorsed narratives of the past and the memories asserted by individuals and groups positioned at varying distances from hegemonic structures.

My examination of three World War 2 diaries published in the GDR in conjunction with their reception highlights overlaps and discrepancies between official versions of specific episodes of that War and other coexisting memories of the same events. These texts are on the one hand vehicles of state-ordained narratives of the Nazi past, but in their appropriation and interpretation by specific agents and groups in the GDR they *also* mediate versions of the past which do not tally with those dominant narratives. I treat the steps involved in the publication and reception of my chosen War diaries as ‘acts of memory’ in which various agents and institutions in the GDR contributed to the collective memory of three major War episodes: resistance, German expulsions from the east, and the Holocaust. I plot the narratives of World War 2 events asserted in and via the published diary in their relation to other coexisting narratives of the same events in East and West Germany. Official GDR statements on the War often took explicit aim at narratives of World War 2 alleged to prevail in the *Bundesrepublik*. Yet in many cases, the positions of the East German Churches, writers and other groups on specific War events, were strikingly similar to those of their counterparts in West Germany. In a further step I also query the interrelationship of the three themes - resistance, German expulsions from the east and the Holocaust - in East German collective memory. It has often been claimed that the predominance of an official ‘anti-fascist’ narrative of World War 2, with its focus on

¹⁴⁷ Popular Memory Group, 1982, p. 207

communist resistance, led to the exclusion and marginalisation of memories of the Holocaust and German expulsions. With reference to my case studies I ask how the collective memory of each of these events influenced public discourse on the others. In what hierarchical arrangement in collective memory did the three themes stand for different communities of memory at different points in East German history? And how and why did these constellations change over time?

A theoretical apparatus to describe collective memory developed by Jan and Aleida Assmann is frequently applied to the case of post-War Germany. Their concepts of 'communicative' and 'cultural' memory, the 'cultural text', and the modes of 'actuality' and 'potentiality' are part of the common parlance of both academic and non-academic discussions of collective memory processes in Germany. In what follows I briefly recapitulate their theory and highlight some of its limitations.

The Assmanns distinguish between two forms of social memory - the 'communicative' and the 'cultural'. Communicative memory describes collective memory as it is formed and transmitted in everyday communications between individuals and groups with reference to a past that encompasses their own lived experience. It includes those forms of collective memory considered by Halbwachs in the context of the family, generations and political parties. Dependent in the main on transmission by word of mouth, the temporal horizon of communicative memory is limited to the lifespan of those who recount it.¹⁴⁸ 'Cultural' memory refers to a collectively binding memory which forms the basis of a national identity. It is conserved in archives and transmitted via rituals and material objectifications, which guarantee its far greater longevity over the more fleeting communicative memory.¹⁴⁹ The

¹⁴⁸ For Jan Assmann the duration of communicative memory is no longer than 80 to 100 years. (Assmann, J., 1995, p.127)

¹⁴⁹ As Jan Assmann explains: "Unter dem Begriff kulturelles Gedächtnis fassen wir den jeder Gesellschaft und jeder Epoche eigentümlichen Bestand an Wiedergebrauchs-Texten, -Bildern und -Riten zusammen, in deren 'Pflege' sie ihr Selbstbild stabilisiert und vermittelt, ein kollektiv geteiltes Wissen vorzugsweise (aber nicht ausschließlich) über die Vergangenheit, auf das eine Gruppe ihr

vehicles of cultural memory are termed 'cultural texts' by the Assmanns, where 'text' refers not only to written representations of the past, but to any conceivable object, place, image, or concept through which a national past is seen to be invoked.¹⁵⁰

The Assmanns' concept of cultural memory tries to take account of collective remembrance and its underside, collective forgetting. Their theory differentiates between two modes which operate within cultural memory: the mode of actuality - *Funktionsgedächtnis* and the mode of potentiality - *Speichergedächtnis*.¹⁵¹ The *Funktionsgedächtnis* comprises those aspects of the past which are foregrounded in the cultural memory of a nation at a given historical juncture. The *Speichergedächtnis* designates the reservoir of memories from which the *Funktionsgedächtnis* draws. It includes aspects of the past which do not find expression in a given constellation of cultural memory. The divide between both modes is permeable. Depending on circumstances, elements of the *Speichergedächtnis* may enter the *Funktionsgedächtnis* and vice-versa.¹⁵²

In its almost exclusive focus on a national and hegemonic 'cultural' memory in the singular, the Assmanns' theory offers only a partial view of collective memory. It neither explicitly acknowledges the coexistence of dominant memories with other versions of the past in the public sphere nor does it describe their interrelationship. Birgit Neumann accuses the Assmanns of a "Homogenisierung" of collective memory which is "kaum dazu geeignet, der zunehmenden Pluralität von Kollektivgedächtnissen, den Rissen und Verwerfungen innerhalb der Vergangenheitsauslegung [...] Rechnung zu tragen."¹⁵³ The dichotomous model of communicative and cultural memory does not allow for an exploration of the ways

Bewußtsein von Eigenheit und Einheit stützt." (Assmann, J., 1988, p.15)

¹⁵⁰ Aleida Assmann defines the 'cultural text' in her essay 'Was sind kulturelle Texte?' (Assmann, A., 1995, pp. 232-45)

¹⁵¹ The English terms are taken from Jan Assmann's essay 'Collective Memory and Cultural Identity' in *New German Critique*, 65 (Spring/Summer 1995).

¹⁵² For a detailed description of both modes see Aleida Assmann, 1999, pp. 130-48.

¹⁵³ Neumann, 2004, p. 163. Erll is similarly critical of an assumption of a monolithic and stable national 'cultural' memory that informs the Assmanns' theory. (Erll, 2003, p. 51)

in which the two modes overlap and interact.¹⁵⁴ With reference to World War 2, Erll points to how it was, and continues to be, the subject of both cultural and communicative memory.¹⁵⁵ Witnesses to the events of World War 2 have remembered that War as their lived experience. At the same time, key episodes of World War 2 have been publicly recalled in terms of a foundational past or 'myth' at the origins of the post-War German State(s). These episodes have also been remembered by diverse groups within German society in ways that did not always coincide with 'cultural' memory narratives. This study shows how the various registers of collective memory are intertwined. An examination of published War diaries reveals how the 'communicative' memory of eye-witnesses to specific events of that War influences and is influenced by public narratives of those events. On the one hand, these first-hand accounts may be seen to supplement and qualify official and other versions of the past with 'authentic,' lived experience. On the other hand, the published diaries have been the subject of re-writings and re-interpretations which attempt to align their autobiographical narratives with various interpretative frameworks for the events they describe.

The Assmanns' conceived exchange between the *Speicher-* and the *Funktionsgedächtnis* tends to suggest that the operations of 'cultural' memory are relatively unproblematic. This is far from the case in post-War Germany. Beyond the caesura of 1945, the articulation of War memory by individuals and groups was rarely straightforward, but more typically represented a highly fraught act. With particular reference to the Holocaust and the "doppelte Diktatur" of Nazism and GDR communism Eigler writes: "Der Verlauf der deutschen Geschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts hat [...] zu Mechanismen geführt, die die

¹⁵⁴ Erll suggests viewing 'communicative' and 'cultural' memory as "modi memorandi" or approaches to the past which may coexist and determine each other. (Erll, 2005, p. 115) Alon Confino makes a similar point in his criticism of Bodnar's division between 'vernacular' and 'official' memory: "Not only is vernacular memory not as saintly and official memory not as brutal, but they constantly commingle." (Confino, 1997, p. 1402)

¹⁵⁵ Erll, 2005, p. 115

Weitergabe von Erinnerungen blockieren, behindern und verformen.”¹⁵⁶ The model of *Speicher-* and *Funktionsgedächtnis* is adequate to describe *which* aspects of the past are remembered and forgotten in hegemonic memory narratives. Yet it does not explicitly engage with the issues central to this study – the questions of how and why specific aspects of the past are remembered and forgotten, the media and agents involved in their articulation and repression, and the particular contexts in which this happens.¹⁵⁷ The portrayal of a fluid exchange between the *Funktions-* and the *Speichergedächtnis* cannot adequately describe the very deliberate acts of remembrance and repression that determine this exchange in specific memorial contexts.¹⁵⁸ The concept of the ‘cultural text’ designates a vast array of media representations of the past that have canonical status in constructions of national memory. The term does not adequately discriminate between the diverse media of ‘cultural’ memory or query their specific memorial functions.¹⁵⁹

This study of processes of collective memory in the GDR dispenses with much of the theoretical terminology which has arisen in the burgeoning discipline of memory studies. I use the terms ‘memory’ and ‘narrative’ as synonyms qualified by the adjectives ‘personal/private’, or ‘public/collective/ official/national/dominant/prevaling/unorthodox’ to indicate their status within East German discourse on World War 2 at any given time. With the terms “remembrance” and “commemoration” I refer to processes of public

¹⁵⁶ Eigler, 2005, p. 42

¹⁵⁷ Eigler is critical of a view of the *Speichergedächtnis* as a neutral archive of memory that does not contemplate the processes of active repression and selection which determine it: “Wenn Archive, Museen und die Wissenschaften als Institutionen genannt werden, dann stellt sich aber die Frage, inwiefern die Instrumentalisierung und die Selektivität, die das Funktionsgedächtnis auszeichnen, nicht in anderer Weise auch auf die Institutionen des Speichergedächtnisses zutreffen.” (Ibid., p.46)

¹⁵⁸ In a recent essay Aleida Assmann does acknowledge mediation as an important factor of the *Funktionsgedächtnis*. Yet she continues to describe the *Speichergedächtnis* as society’s *mémoire involuntaire*, a neutral archive of memory, and doesn’t recognise the conscious exclusion of certain memories from the public domain as a form of (negative) mediation. (Assmann, A., 2004, pp. 47-49)

¹⁵⁹ In *Erinnerungsräume* Aleida Assmann does reflect more explicitly on these questions. As she writes in her introduction to that book: “Jedes Medium eröffnet einen je spezifischen Zugang zum kulturellen Gedächtnis. Die Schrift, die der Sprache folgt, speichert anders and anderes als die Bilder, die sprachunabhängige Eindrücke und Erfahrungen festhalten.” (Assmann, A., 1999, p. 16)

remembering over time in the GDR context rather than to specific memories.¹⁶⁰ Borrowing Erll's term *Gedächtnismedium*, I discuss the diaries I treat as 'media of War memory.'

¹⁶⁰ This is a distinction made by Jay Winter in his studies of the 'remembrance' of both World Wars. See

Winter, 1999 and 2006

Remembering World War 2 Remembrance in East and West Germany: Methodological Issues, Phases and Tendencies

“Beide Teilgeschichten benötigen daher einander, um ein vollständiges Bild zu bieten.”¹⁶¹

Dismissive of a tendency by German contemporary historians to treat processes of collective remembrance in East and West Germany in isolation from each other, recent studies have called for more conscious reflection on the complex interdependencies which operated in the articulation of World War 2 memories in both Germanys.¹⁶² Jürgen Danyel has recommended “eine vergleichende und zudem auf Wechselwirkungen und Interdependenzen zielende ‘Bewältigungsforschung.’”¹⁶³ While focussed on War remembrance in the context of East Germany, this study recognises that fluctuating political and cultural relations with West Germany and neighbouring Eastern European states were an important background for all public discourse on World War 2 in the GDR. With particular reference to the *Bundesrepublik* and Poland it shows how East German memories of specific World War 2 events were always formed and propagated in dialogue with other memorial contexts.¹⁶⁴

In outlining his concept of “asymmetrische Verflechtung,” Christoph Kleßmann has highlighted the role of the *Bundesrepublik* as “stets eine Referenzgesellschaft” for East Germany.¹⁶⁵ Throughout the history of the GDR public narratives of specific World War 2 events engaged with assumed or actual positions on the War in contemporary West

¹⁶¹ Jaraus, 2004, p. 14

¹⁶² See for example: Herbert and Groehler (1992), Danyel (1995 and 1999), Jaraus (2004), Kleßmann et al (2005) and Hammerstein (2007)

¹⁶³ Danyel, 1995, p. 13

¹⁶⁴ As Danyel (ibid., p. 12) writes: “Die DDR und ‘ihr’ Umgang mit der problematischen deutschen Vergangenheit von 1933 bis 1945 erklärt sich nicht nur aus der Binnengeschichte von Herrschaft und Ideologie im realsozialistischen ostdeutschen Staat, sondern ist auch Produkt jener politischen Konstellationen, die den Kontext dieser vierzigjährigen Episode abgaben.”

¹⁶⁵ Kleßmann, 2005, p. 22

Germany. As I will show in my first chapter, the official East German remembrance of anti-fascist resistance in the 1950s and 1960s cannot be fully understood divorced from the context of West German discussions of resistance in this period. Public statements on the War in the GDR were often motivated by the desire to undermine West Germany's allegedly spurious coming to terms with the Nazi past and thus challenge its legitimacy as a political entity. Much East German scholarship on the Holocaust sought to highlight continuities between National Socialism and the *Bundesrepublik*. Less orthodox War memories cultivated in niches below the threshold of official GDR remembrance received important impulses from West German discussions. This can be shown in the communications between the Churches and expellee groupings in East and West. Albeit on a smaller scale, West German remembrance of World War 2 was shaped by East German discussions.¹⁶⁶ The propaganda campaigns launched from East Germany against former Nazis in public office in the *Bundesrepublik* in the 1960s have been acknowledged as an important factor leading to a more thorough public scrutiny of German War guilt in West Germany after the 1950s. And a prioritisation of communist resistance in official East German memory hindered West German recognition of this branch of resistance outside of radical left-wing circles until the 1970s.

While it is right to highlight the interrelationship of collective War remembrance in East and West Germany, some recent studies run the risk of emphasising the influence of the *Bundesrepublik* on memory processes in the GDR to the exclusion of other factors. Katrin Hammerstein has attributed an opening of the discussion of World War 2 in 1980s East Germany to "ein Erinnerungstransfer" from the West which the weakened SED was

¹⁶⁶ As Kleßmann (ibid., p. 23) writes: "Trotz dieser ausgeprägten Asymmetrie sind bestimmte Prägungen der inneren Entwicklung und der politischen Kultur der alten Bundesrepublik ohne die Nachbarschaft und den 'Anschauungsunterricht' durch eine kommunistische Diktatur jenseits der Grenze nicht zu verstehen."

powerless to stop.¹⁶⁷ Martin Sabrow has similarly suggested that a more progressive West German discourse on the War enveloped East Germany towards the end of its existence.¹⁶⁸ Without disputing the fact of an intensified West German contribution to GDR discussions of the War in the 1980s, it would be a mistake to view West Germany as the sole motor and reference point for collective War memory in the GDR at this and other times. Each of my chosen diaries was published in Eastern Europe before it appeared in East Germany.¹⁶⁹ By incorporating the Polish perspective on specific War events into my analysis I highlight how East German collective memories were also shaped by contemporary discourses on World War 2 in other Eastern Block states.

In a programmatic essay Konrad Jarausch has warned against a tendency to judge East and West German collective remembrance of World War 2 from the perspective of the events of 1989/90 - the ultimate triumph of Western democracy over the German communist state. Such a tendency has resulted in comparative studies where East Germany is presented as “[eine] Negativfolie” to West Germany in a teleological narrative of the latter state’s successful coming to terms with the Nazi past.¹⁷⁰ Clouded by knowledge of the demise of the GDR, these studies have often overlooked the complexity of collective remembrance in East Germany. As Jarausch writes: “eine ostdeutsche Mißerfolgsgeschichte [...] leugnet ostdeutsche Erfolge, und sie wird den widersprüchlichen Erinnerungen nicht gerecht, die zumindest teilweise auch ein ‘richtiges Leben im falschen System’ im Gedächtnis verankert

¹⁶⁷ “Über Rundfunk und Fernsehen sowie oppositionelle Gruppen, insbesondere im Bereich der Kirchen, die gemeinsam mit den westlichen Institutionen das christlich-jüdische Verhältnis eindringlich diskutierten, schlich sich der von einem intensiven Gedenken geprägte bundesrepublikanische Gedächtnisdiskurs gleichsam in die DDR ein. Diesem Erinnerungstransfer konnte die SED-Führung nur mit der Etablierung eigenen Gedenkens etwas entgegensetzen; letztlich konnte sie sich ihm nicht entziehen.” (Hammerstein, 2007, p. 30)

¹⁶⁸ “Im letzten Jahrzehnt der deutschen Teilung durchlief die Bundesrepublik schließlich eine förmliche historische Revolution, die in eine bis heute anhaltende Memorialisierung und Viktimisierung mündete, in deren Sog erst am Ende parallel zu ihrer legitimatorischen Herrschaftserosion auch die DDR und ihre historische Herrschaftskultur gerieten.” (Sabrow, 2005, p. 139)

¹⁶⁹ Erich Weinert’s diary was first published in the Soviet Union and the diaries of Paul Peikert and Dawid Rubinowicz first appeared in Poland.

¹⁷⁰ Jarausch, 2004, p. 1

haben.”¹⁷¹ By the same token “eine triumphierende Westgeschichte [...] überspielt [...] die schwierigen Kämpfe, die solche Errungenschaften begleitet haben, und ignoriert ihre Schattenseiten.”¹⁷²

Many scholars have contrasted a pluralist and dynamic memorial culture in the *Bundesrepublik* with a monolithic and static ‘anti-fascist’ narrative of World War 2 in the GDR. Rainer Lepsius’ dichotomous model of *Internalisierung/Externalisierung* to describe how both states processed their shared fascist past differently continues to inform recent studies.¹⁷³ Using the Assmann’s terms, some German contemporary historians have suggested that while West German collective remembrance drew largely on the ‘communicative memory’ of diverse participants in the War, in East Germany ‘communicative memory’ was stifled by an all-encompassing ‘cultural memory’ ordained by the ruling SED.¹⁷⁴ With reference to East German censorship, Carsten Gansel argues that the normal exchange of memories between the ‘Funktionsgedächtnis’ and the ‘Speichergedächtnis’ was suspended for the duration of the GDR: “von 1949 bis 1989 [waren] die Grenze scharf bewacht und das latente Reservoir abgetrennt, Alternativen, Widersprüche, Relativierungen, kritische Einsprüche blieben ausgesperrt, ein wirklicher Wandel des Funktionsgedächtnisses kam nicht zustande, weil ganz bestimmte Inhalte verabsolutiert wurden. Insofern gilt für die DDR, was für totalitäre Staaten schlechthin

¹⁷¹ Ibid., p.3

¹⁷² Ibid., p.2. Danyel (1995, p. 12) contends similarly “Angesichts der ‘Sündenfälle’ des ‘Antifaschismus’ wurde die ‘zweite Schuld’ der Westdeutschen schon bald zur Legende erklärt.” Jarausch’s call is seconded by Kleßmann (2005, p. 25): “Zu einer Geschichte des geteilten Deutschlands gehören nicht nur die Gründe für Erfolg und Scheitern, sondern auch das Eigengewicht und die Besonderheiten, die das wechselseitige Verhältnis dieser beiden Teile ausmachten.”

¹⁷³ In Lepsius’ model, East Germany ‘externalised’ the Nazi past – it divested itself of guilt for fascism and German War crimes through an ‘anti-fascist’ narrative which equated fascism with capitalism and presented West Germany as the ideological successor of Nazi Germany. By contrast West Germany is seen to have ‘internalised’ the Nazi past by accepting and critically engaging with German responsibility for Hitler’s rise to power and the War. (See Lepsius, 1993, pp. 229-45)

Frei (1995, p. 130) and Hammerstein (2007, p. 129) rehearse Lepsius’s thesis.

¹⁷⁴ See Münkler, 1998, p. 460-2 and Sabrow, 2005, p.141

zutritt, sie eliminieren das Speichergedächtnis zugunsten des Funktionsgedächtnis.”¹⁷⁵ While acknowledging the very different conditions of collective remembering in both German states, in this dissertation I treat the underlying assumptions of the aforementioned studies critically. The SED interpretation of the fascist past may well have dominated in the East German public sphere, but it should not be simply accepted as the sum of collective memory in the GDR.¹⁷⁶ Against the claims of scholars such as Carsten Gansel and Herfried Münkler I argue that state control over processes of public remembrance was never total in East Germany. In an examination of the publication and reception of my chosen texts it becomes clear that official World War 2 narratives were challenged, supplemented and/or refracted in various East German sub-contexts at specific times. In my case studies I also ask whether the ‘anti-fascist’ narrative of the War underwent modifications in terms of both its content and its functions over the forty-year history of the GDR and I query why this may, or may not, have been the case.

The history of World War 2 remembrance in East and West Germany has been divided into different phases with characteristic tendencies. The years before the respective foundations of the *Bundesrepublik* and the GDR in 1949 are often described as a period of vibrant and spontaneous remembrance by diverse witnesses to the Nazi dictatorship and the events of World War 2. They also marked a phase of ‘denazification’ under the auspices of the Allies which is generally agreed to have been far more rigorous and brutal in the Soviet Zone of Occupation than in the Western Zones.¹⁷⁷ With the official division of Germany and early Cold War tensions, an initial diversity of memories was sacrificed in the 1950s to constructions of the fascist past by political elites in both German states which were geared

¹⁷⁵ Gansel, 2007, p. 27

¹⁷⁶ Jürgen Danyel (1999, p. 132) argues that “die historische Forschung [...] sollte [...] die Lebenswelten, die Alltagskultur und die Teilöffentlichkeiten der ostdeutschen Gesellschaft nicht mehr in einem Maße unter das Herrschaftssystem subsumieren, wie es dem SED-Machtapparat in seiner politischen Praxis nie gelungen ist.”

¹⁷⁷ See Herbert, 1992, p. 19 and Frei, 1995, p. 126

towards social and political integration and stability.¹⁷⁸ With differing focal points and emphases, public remembrance of the War in this decade was characterised in both Germanys by a general evasion of the issue of German guilt for National Socialism and atrocities committed during the War.¹⁷⁹ In the GDR an interpretation of the Nazi past put forward by returning Communist emigrés around the SED leader Walther Ulbricht gained the upper hand over other memories. This interpretation conceived German fascism as a consequence of corrupt capitalism. Such a reduction of the causes of National Socialism to economic and class factors avoided a confrontation with the strong racial dimension of Nazi ideology,¹⁸⁰ with personalised guilt¹⁸¹ and with the fact of mass German support for Hitler.¹⁸² The failure of the German working class to resist fascism adequately was typically overlooked, and it was presented as the victim of a betrayal by Hitler and his capitalist sponsors.¹⁸³ In official commemoration the heroic anti-fascist resistance of German communists was prioritised to the exclusion or marginalisation of other branches of resistance and the memory of Jewish victims of the Nazis.¹⁸⁴ It has often been claimed that the Holocaust was never sufficiently thematised in East German discourse and treated at best as “bloße Folgerscheinung der vorrangig zu behandelnden Klassenherrschaft und des Imperialismus.”¹⁸⁵ GDR leaders appropriated the memory of communist and working class resistance as the exclusive heritage of the ‘anti-fascist’ East German state and often presented

¹⁷⁸ “Eine zunächst sehr differenzierte und plurale Erinnerungskultur der Opfer, Widerständler und rückkehrenden Emigranten und deren moralisches Gewicht werden von den sich durchsetzenden politischen Machteliten gewissermaßen enteignet und als ein System von identitätsstiftenden Leit- und Feindbildern neu konstruiert.” (Danyel, 1999, p. 134)

¹⁷⁹ See Sabrow, 2005, p. 145

¹⁸⁰ See Hammerstein, 2007, p. 28

¹⁸¹ “Die innere, moralische Auseinandersetzung jedes einzelnen mit seinem eigenen Verhalten während des Faschismus [...] fand nicht statt.” (Groehler, 1992, p. 31)

¹⁸² “der Massenanhang des Faschismus [blieb] also weitgehend ausgeblendet, während der finanziellen Unterstützung der NSDAP durch Großkapital und Großagrarier umso größeres Gewicht zugeschrieben wurde.” (Ibid., p. 34). See also Sabrow, 2005, p. 132-33

¹⁸³ “Zum einen erscheint das deutsche Volk, vor allem die deutsche Arbeiterschaft, im wesentlichen als Opfer des Nationalsozialismus, während die Verantwortlichen ausschließlich bei den Eliten, insbesondere beim Großkapital ausgemacht werden.” (Herbert, 1992, p. 22)

¹⁸⁴ See Groehler (1995) and Danyel (1995)

¹⁸⁵ Herbert, 1992, p. 23. See also Sabrow, 2005, p.139 and Confino, 2005, p. 53

West Germany as the political heir to the Third Reich. The 1950s has been characterised as a decade in which narratives of German victimhood under National Socialism dominated in the *Bundesrepublik*.¹⁸⁶ Against an assumed Allied thesis of collective German guilt, many West Germans presented themselves first and foremost as victims – victims of Hitler and a small group of leading Nazis, victims of the War, and victims of over-zealous de-nazification procedures by the Allies after 1945. The suffering of expellees and German prisoners-of-war in Soviet captivity came to epitomise the alleged suffering of the German majority in the Third Reich.¹⁸⁷ In the context of an overriding focus on German suffering in this period, little public attention was given to German guilt, and the presence of many former Nazis in Government and the civil service went practically unmentioned. The suffering inflicted by Germans on other nationalities and on the Jews was largely ignored.¹⁸⁸ Confino has shown how on the rare occasions it was mentioned in the West German media in the 1950s, the Holocaust usually served to illustrate that Germans had suffered just as much as the Jews.¹⁸⁹ Many commentators see the first breaks in the “communicative silence”¹⁹⁰ about difficult aspects of the Nazi past in West Germany at the beginning of the 1960s.¹⁹¹ The high profile trial of Adolf Eichmann in Jerusalem and the subsequent “Auschwitz” trials in Frankfurt are widely recognised as the catalysts of a more intense public engagement with the Holocaust and German guilt.¹⁹² Kansteiner points to the publication of texts by Günther Grass and Rolf Hochhuth as literary forerunners of a more critical West German debate on German

¹⁸⁶ See Kansteiner, 2006, p. 108; Sabrow, 2005, p. 134; Herbert, 1992, p. 12

¹⁸⁷ See Confino, 2005, p. 49

¹⁸⁸ On the Holocaust in West German debate in the 1950s Sabrow (2005, p. 134-5) writes: “Nicht er bildete das zentrale Negativereignis der NS-Zeit im Bewusstsein der Zeitgenossen, sondern der Zweite Weltkrieg und hier besonders die von der Roten Armee Zug um Zug zurückgedrängte Wehrmacht und das mit dem Krieg einhergehende Leid der Zivilbevölkerung, das durch Massenvertreibung, Bombenkrieg und Niederlage geprägt war.”

¹⁸⁹ See Confino, 2005, p. 54

¹⁹⁰ Hermann Lübke’s term to describe West German discourse on the Nazi past in the 1950s.

¹⁹¹ See Frei, 1995, p. 127 and Kansteiner, 2006, pp. 112-20

¹⁹² See Herbert, 1992, p. 15-16

fascism and the War which was to gain momentum in the student protests of the late 1960s.¹⁹³ Frei has identified the same period in the GDR with “einer weitgehenden Erstarrung der antifaschistischen Geschichtserinnerung.”¹⁹⁴ An alleged stasis in the East German remembrance of the Nazi dictatorship and World War 2 is seen by most commentators to have persisted until the 1980s. Only then do they find evidence of some limited modifications and minor challenges to the dominant ‘anti-fascist’ narrative of World War 2.¹⁹⁵ With reference to 1970s West Germany, Kansteiner contrasts “the relative indifference toward Nazism” in the mainstream West German media with a lively and dynamic discussion in the alternative left-wing and artistic circles.¹⁹⁶ His view of the 1980s as the “climax of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*”¹⁹⁷ in the Bundesrepublik, when debates about the meaning of the Nazi past took centre stage in politics and history, is confirmed by many others.¹⁹⁸

Periodisations offer us a helpful compass for the study of tendencies in collective War memory in post-War Germany, but they should not be accepted as absolute. Alon Confino has suggested that, if taken at face value, the label “repression” which is often applied to the 1950s may divert attention from which aspects of the War were actually remembered and forgotten at this time.¹⁹⁹ Confino also warns us against being too quick to read representations of the past in the past retrospectively as corroborations of an assumed memory constellation at a given time: “By analysing utterances as expressions of hidden agendas, of power, denial, selective memory, and concealed intentions, we run the risk of

¹⁹³ Kansteiner, 2006, p. 117

¹⁹⁴ Frei, 1995, p. 127

¹⁹⁵ Groehler (1995, p. 30) points to a partial broadening of the discussion of anti-fascist resistance as early as the 1970s. See also Sabrow, 2005, p. 139 and Hammerstein, 2007, p. 30

¹⁹⁶ Kansteiner, 2006, p. 121-4

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 124

¹⁹⁸ See for example Frei, 1995, p. 127; Sabrow, 2005, p. 139; Hammerstein, 2007, p. 29

¹⁹⁹ “By focussing on the sins of omission, a fundamental question may be ignored: just what exactly *did* Germans and other Europeans remember of the war and of the genocide?” (Confino, 2005, p. 53)

failing to listen attentively to what people in the past tell about themselves, often in simple words.”²⁰⁰ The War diaries I examine were often published in order to serve the memory agenda of the SED, but it would be wrong to view them merely as vehicles of an ‘instrumentalised’ GDR state memory. I show how in their reception the same texts also fulfilled different memorial functions in non-official contexts. While many commentators view the foundation of the GDR in 1949 as a point of no return beyond which only the ‘anti-fascist’ narrative of World War 2 could be publicly articulated, Jürgen Danyel argues for a more flexible understanding of this and other landmark dates: “die Zäsur des Jahres 1949 [ist] nicht absolut, vielmehr handelt es sich bei den genannten Entwicklungen um einen längerfristigen Übergang mit deutlichen Phasenverschiebungen in verschiedenen gesellschaftlichen Bereichen.”²⁰¹ Danyel suggests that a lively, spontaneous and diverse memorial culture which had characterised the immediate post-War years was not completely suppressed in East Germany after 1949.²⁰² The case studies which follow both confirm and challenge conventional chronologies of collective War remembrance in the GDR. They reveal moments and contexts where official memory was suspended or reappraised, even before the perceived ‘opening’ of the East German debate on World War 2 in the 1980s.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 55

²⁰¹ Danyel, 1995, p. 31

²⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 35

A forgotten Memento? Visions and Revisions of German Resistance and German Guilt in the East German publications and reception of Erich Weinert's *Memento Stalingrad*

Introduction

The mythologisation of the Battle of Stalingrad as an unprecedented *Opfergang* or blood sacrifice of German soldiers which began with the first National Socialist responses to the German defeat, continued in subsequent accounts of the Battle and it persists today. In recent German commemorative events and representations of Stalingrad, commentators see striking continuities with the narratives of German victimisation which dominated in discussions of this War episode in 1950s West Germany.¹ With its exposure of *Wehrmacht* crimes against civilians at Stalingrad the controversial 1993 *Wehrmachtsausstellung* was a notable exception.²

While other battles were arguably more decisive for the final outcome of World War II, in Germany Stalingrad continues to symbolise the beginning of the end of that War. The defeat of the 6th Army under Commander Friedrich Paulus in January 1943 with devastating German losses came as a fundamental shock to a German public bolstered by reports of the *Wehrmacht's* invincibility on the Eastern Front in the preceding months. Under Goebbel's direction the Nazi propaganda machine quickly sought to capitalise on the event. Following an initial moratorium on reporting, the German media were given strict guidelines for the representation of Stalingrad– the Battle was to be portrayed as the blood sacrifice of young German lives for the national cause. The *Völkischer Beobachter* titled its first frontpage article on the Battle “Sie starben, damit Deutschland lebe!”³ In Goebbel's famous ‘Palast’ speech days after the defeat at Stalingrad he drew parallels with the Battle

¹ See for example Ebert (2003 (a) and (b)) and Wolfram Wette's critique of recent Stalingrad literature and films in Germany in Wette, 1999, pp. 689-691.

² See Wette, 1999, pp. 690-1

³ *Völkischer Beobachter*, 4.2.1943

of Thermopylae and the Nibelungen saga. Using the Battle as an opportunity to further demonise the Soviet enemy, he called for a 'total' German War against the Soviet Union.⁴

In claims of widespread German War suffering in the early *Bundesrepublik*, fallen *Wehrmacht* soldiers at Stalingrad and prisoners-of-war taken by the Red Army became exemplary figures. Crimes committed by the German soldiers against the civilian population during their advance on Stalingrad were usually bracketed out of a West German public discourse focussed on their identities as victims. In the context of the Cold War the German invasion of the Soviet Union was not condemned per se, rather the means by which it had been conducted. In the so-called *Generalsmemoiren* published throughout the 1950s in West Germany, Stalingrad was represented as a battle which German forces could have won, were it not for the interference of Hitler and leading Nazis.⁵ The soldiers were generally portrayed as double victims – victims of Hitler who had 'misled' them into battle at Stalingrad, and victims of the 'totalitarian' Soviet Union which continued to hold many of them in captivity.⁶ Prominent literary and pseudo-documentary accounts of the Battle were typically told from the time of the encirclement of German forces in late November 1942 and recalled the dire situation of ordinary soldiers in the weeks before the defeat.⁷ The event Stalingrad was thus isolated from its concrete historical context within 'Operation Barbarossa' and came to epitomise pure German suffering in 1950s West Germany.

This chapter examines a legacy of Stalingrad commemoration which is often overlooked in examinations of the Battle's public remembrance in Germany since 1943. The National Socialist heroic narrative of Stalingrad was not without its German detractors. During and immediately after the Battle exiled German communists in the Soviet Union who had witnessed developments at

⁴ For details of the National Socialist interpretation of Stalingrad see Ebert (1999), Kumpfmüller (1996), Wette (1999) and Jahn (2003).

⁵ Erich von Manstein's *Verlorene Siege* (1955) is prototypical here.

⁶ For details of a discussion of German victimhood at Stalingrad in the *Bundesrepublik* of the 1950s see Ebert (2003 b) and Frei (2005).

⁷ Examples include *Letzte Briefe aus Stalingrad* (1950), Heinz Schröter's *Stalingrad ... 'bis zur letzten Patrone'* (1954), Heinz G. Konsalik's *Der Arzt von Stalingrad* (1956), Heinrich Gerlach's *Die verratene Armee* (1957) and Fritz Vöss' *Hunde, wollt ihr ewig leben?* (1958)

Stalingrad at first hand wrote texts which challenged contemporary accounts within Germany and sought to raise German opposition to National Socialism. In this chapter I examine one such text – the writer Erich Weinert's *Memento Stalingrad* – and show its involvement in the public remembrance of Stalingrad during the War and in 1950s East Germany.

Erich Weinert was born in Magdeburg in 1890. As the author of popular satirical poems and ballads he became a prominent literary figure in the Weimar Republic. In 1924 he joined the German Communist Party (KPD) and emigrated to Moscow in 1935. Following the German invasion of the Soviet Union, Weinert was active in the propaganda section of the Red Army together with other exiled German Communists, including the exiled leader of the KPD, Walter Ulbricht, and the writer Willi Bredel. All three travelled from Moscow to Stalingrad in late 1942 on a mission to convince German soldiers there to lay down their arms and cross over into Soviet captivity. The text which would later be published as *Memento Stalingrad* is Weinert's diary of his time in Stalingrad in which he details the resistance activities of this small cell of exiled German Communists from behind Soviet lines. He describes their impassioned broadcasts to the German frontline via loudspeaker. The numerous pamphlets they composed and distributed to German soldiers are re-produced in diary entries. Dialogues with German prisoners-of-war recorded in the diary show their attempts to convert the soldiers to anti-fascism. Yet Weinert's text documents the failure of anti-fascist resistance at Stalingrad - "der Mißerfolg unseres leidenschaftlichen Bemühens, das Leben dieser verblendeten Deutschen zu retten."⁸ It reflects the disillusionment of the KPD after Stalingrad and the dashing of its hopes that the German working class would rise up against the National Socialists. As described in the diary, the efforts of the German Communists to win over German troops are largely unsuccessful. When the soldiers halt their fire during his initial broadcasts, Weinert interprets this as a sign of their receptiveness to the anti-fascist message.⁹ Yet beyond such momentary ceasefires they

⁸ *Memento Stalingrad*, 1951, p. 175 (hereafter MS)

⁹ See for example Weinert's hopeful observation: "Unsere Reden sind nicht kurz. Aber kein Mensch drüben schießt. Sie hören." (Ibid., pp. 70-71)

show no active resistance. In his conversations with prisoners-of-war Weinert is generally dismayed by their tolerance of or fervent support for National Socialism. In contrast to contemporary National Socialist representations of Stalingrad, throughout his diary Weinert confronts German soldiers and the broader German public with their responsibility for the rise of German fascism, for heinous acts committed against other nationalities during the War, and ultimately, for their own suffering and death. At the end of the diary Weinert's despondency stems not so much from the fact of Germany's defeat at Stalingrad, as from the knowledge that the vast majority of Germans did not play a more active role in bringing about this defeat. For this reason he cannot share in the Soviet festivities at the end of the Battle: "Ich fühle mich stolz, an ihrer Seite für die große Sache zu kämpfen. Aber ich bin auch Deutscher, und ich kann über die Schande, die unser Volk über Deutschland gebracht hat, wohl erst hinwegkommen, wenn unser Volk selbst gegen das Hitlergesindel erhebt."¹⁰

Weinert's diary ends on the 1st of February 1943, the day of the official capitulation of German forces at Stalingrad. In the months after the battle Weinert played a leading role in the establishment of the anti-fascist organisations, the *Nationalkomitee Freies Deutschland* (NKFD) and the *Bund Deutscher Offiziere* (BDO) by *Wehrmacht* soldiers and officers in Soviet captivity. He was elected president of the former on its inauguration on the 13th of July 1943. Weinert returned to the Soviet Zone of Occupation in 1946 where he was vice-president of the *Zentralverwaltung für Volksbildung*. He died in 1953.

In his assertion in 1993 that "Stalingrad war eigentlich das Ende der DDR"¹¹ the writer Heiner Müller consciously played with the official GDR understanding of the Battle as the origin of a collective transfiguration or *Wandlung* of Germans which had led to the foundation of the 'anti-

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 175. In this chapter I take issue with Michael Kumpfmüller's classification of Weinert's text within a corpus of early Communist literature on Stalingrad which, he alleges, looked with optimism to Germany's future while describing current circumstances: "Sie [these texts, AB] reklamieren für sich, über die 'wirkliche Lage' zu informieren, [...], und gehen über einen solchen Anspruch doch insofern hinaus, als sie unbeirrbar immer wieder den Traum einer Versöhnung beschreiben, die nicht nur eine Versöhnung mit dem Gegner ist (Stichwort: deutsch-sowjetische Freundschaft), sondern auch eine Versöhnung der Deutschen mit sich selbst (Stichwort: das Neue Deutschland)." (Kumpfmüller, 1996, p. 137)

¹¹ See Heiner Müller, *Gesammelte Irrtümer* 3, p. 204

fascist' German State.¹² My case study on *Memento Stalingrad* examines the significance with which this War episode was invested in the GDR's first decade of existence. It asks how and why Stalingrad played such a prominent role in the early East German commemoration of World War II. In an analysis of the complex publication and reception history of Weinert's text I highlight the positions on Stalingrad which were propagated through the published diary and locate them in relation to other contemporary accounts of the Battle in East and West Germany. In particular I query the interrelationship of the concepts of German guilt, German resistance and German suffering in the Stalingrad narratives invoked via this text. As I will show, a discussion of German guilt which is central in *Memento Stalingrad* is successively overlooked in the 1950s reception of the text.

Following a close textual analysis of Weinert's diary, this chapter follows the structure of the text's publications and reception in the period 1943 to 1961. During the War extracts from the diary first appeared in May 1943 in the Moscow-based journal *Internationale Literatur*. Further publications of the same text by organisations in America and Great Britain followed in late 1943 and 1944. In the GDR *Memento Stalingrad* was first published in 1951 by *Volk und Welt* with an initial print-run of 10,000 copies. The text was introduced in a foreword by Weinert. It was re-issued twice in the anniversary year of 1953, with print-runs of 10,000 copies per issue. Four years would pass before a further edition of the text was published in the GDR, this time as part of volume five of Weinert's collected works published in 1957 by *Volk und Welt* and edited by Weinert's wife and the writer Willi Bredel. The volume brought together several of Weinert's writings on Stalingrad - the text of 1951 was supplemented by poems, speeches, photographs, transcripts of Weinert's radio broadcasts contemporary to the battle and the author's later history of the *Nationalkomitee 'Freies Deutschland'*. The anthology was framed by Weinert's earlier foreword to *Memento Stalingrad* and an epilogue added by the editor, Bredel. This volume was issued three times between the years 1957 and 1961

¹² See for example the article by the Soviet General A. I. Jeremenko in *Neues Deutschland* (3. 10. 1961) 'Stalingrad und die Geburt der DDR.' I will discuss this conception of the Battle in greater detail below.

with varying print-runs. Just 3,000 copies were issued in 1957, increasing to 5,000 for the second edition of 1960 and to 19,500 for the 1961 edition (4,500 plus 15,000 for the so-called 'kleine Hausbibliothek'). After 1961 the text was never again re-published in its entirety in East Germany.¹³

Weinert's discussion of German guilt in *Memento Stalingrad* in context

Recent appraisals of a German discussion of *Kollektivschuld* highlight the absence of a thoroughgoing public engagement with the question of broad German collusion with National Socialism in the immediate post-War years. Summarising a range of German positions on collective guilt at this time, Jan Friedmann and Jörg Später conclude: "Über Schuld wurde ausschließlich auf einer Metaebene gesprochen, die konkreten Taten weiträumig umgangen. Die frühen Schriften zur 'Schuldfrage' wiesen eine Verengung des Schuldbegriffs auf, faßbar in einem Vokabular aus dem Bereich der Naturkatastrophe und der fatalistischen Schicksalserfahrung. Der gesamte Schulddiskurs wurde 'metaphysiert' und mit einem pseudo-wissenschaftlichen Überbau versehen."¹⁴ Friedmann and Später show how an early German discussion was shaped by the need to counter assumed claims of collective guilt from abroad.¹⁵ Responding in particular to the "all Germans guilty" thesis of Lord Vansittart in Great Britain, German commentators were often at pains to point out the blamelessness and suffering of the majority of their compatriots during the Nazi years.¹⁶ A distinction drawn between "de[n] Mordgesellen Hitlers und Himmlers" and "ein Riesenheer unschuldiger Menschen" in a 1945 speech by the Catholic Bishop of Freiburg is typical of a view propagated by the German Churches in the years 1945-48.¹⁷ Where collective guilt was conceded it was defined solely in terms

¹³ For details of editions and print-runs of the diary see AdK Weinert: 280

¹⁴ Friedmann and Später, 2002, p. 82

¹⁵ The entry for *Kollektivschuld* in Heidrun Kämper's *Wörterbuch zum deutschen Schulddiskurs 1945-1955* shows how the term was typically used in the context of its vociferous denial in German public discourse. (Kämper, 2007, pp. 151-67)

¹⁶ Friedmann and Später argue that the positions of Vansittart and the historian A. J. P. Taylor on collective guilt, which were actually marginal to a generally pragmatic British debate on German War guilt, came to represent for Germans the dominant position of 'das Ausland' on the issue. Indeed, they suggest that in its German reception, Vansittartism was itself radicalised to become a by-word for a grossly exaggerated and unacceptable thesis of the guilt of all Germans (See Friedmann/Später, 2002, pp. 68-69).

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 70

of a political liability borne by the German people¹⁸ or traced back to philosophies and movements associated with modernity.¹⁹ Public discussion of individual crimes and their perpetrators was evaded and at times actively discouraged.²⁰ Norbert Frei sees the defensive posturing of many German contributors to a debate on German guilt in the years after 1945 as a reaction against a thesis of collective guilt which was nowhere formally elaborated: “Man sucht danach vergebens. Vieles spricht dafür, daß es sich bei alledem in erster Linie um Konstruktionen des deutschen Kollektivbewusstseins – vulgo: des schlechten Gewissens – handelte. [...] Während damals eine Vielzahl von Abhandlungen mit dem Anspruch auf Wissenschaftlichkeit die Verfehltheit der Entnazifizierung nachzuweisen suchten, entstand Vergleichbares für die angebliche Kollektivschuldthese nicht.”²¹

Frei's statement requires some qualification. In their almost exclusive focus on the debate as it unfolded in the western zones of occupation and the early *Bundesrepublik*, recent histories tend to overlook the far more critical stance of the KPD as it developed over the course of World War II and culminated in the proclamation of the 11th of June 1945 in which it was stated: “Um so mehr muß in jedem deutschen Menschen das Bewusstsein und die Scham brennen, dass das deutsche Volk einen bedeutenden Teil Mitschuld und Mitverantwortung für den Krieg und seine Folgen trägt. Nicht nur Hitler ist schuld an den Verbrechen, die an der Menschheit begangen wurden!”²² Among German Communists a class-based interpretation of National Socialism as elaborated by Georgi Dimitroff at the 7th World Congress of the Communist International in 1935 had dominated well into the War.

¹⁸ Of the four categories of guilt outlined by Karl Jaspers in *Die Schuldfrage* only political guilt for the acts of the National Socialist regime applies to the Germans as a collective. (Ibid., pp. 71-72)

¹⁹ Church representatives saw the preconditions of National Socialism in the secularisation characteristic of all modern Western societies. (Ibid., p. 71) The historian Gerhard Ritter is representative of “eine Entnationalisierung der Schuld” by German historians who viewed the totalitarian regimes in Germany and the Soviet Union as the culmination of democratic and revolutionary movements across Europe since the French Revolution. (Ibid., p. 79)

²⁰ For Jaspers in *Die Schuldfrage*, beyond political liability, guilt is a matter of individual conscience and cannot be appropriately addressed in public debate. (Ibid., p. 75) The Churches argued similarly that the public sphere was not a suitable forum to treat individual guilt and held that “wahres Schuldbewusstsein” arose in private, personal reflection. (Ibid., p. 72)

²¹ Frei, 2005, pp. 153-54

²² Quoted in Bach, 2007, p. 66

German fascism was seen as an outgrowth of the capitalist system, Hitler and his main supporters were allied with big industry, and it was assumed that the German working class would resist fascism and act to overthrow the Nazi regime. In the face of developments in the War and the lack of any noteworthy working class opposition to National Socialism many German Communists came to abandon this definition of fascism. In particular the opening of the so-called *Lubliner-Lager* at Majdanek by the Red Army in the Spring of 1944 precipitated a shocked acknowledgement by leading Communists of the complicity of all sections of the German population in the organised mass extermination carried out there. In their responses to the revelations at Majdanek, members of the KPD recognised the *kollektive Mitschuld* of all Germans, including the working class, and adopted a position approaching that of Lord Vansittart in Great Britain.²³ In his 1944 essay *Schicksalswende* Georg Lukács spoke of “die Tiefe der Vergiftung des deutschen Volkes” and suggested that “das Todeskombinat von Lublin [konnte] nur durch die Zusammenarbeit von Menschen der verschiedensten Volksschichten Deutschlands entstehen.”²⁴ Erich Weinert too contributed to this discussion. In a grave commentary on a bundle of fourteen letters to murdered Majdanek inmates which had never reached their addressees, he wrote that they should be read and re-read by Germans as a reminder of their shared guilt for atrocities committed at the camp: “Möge der deutsche Leser sie nicht nur einmal und von Zeit zu Zeit wieder lesen. Sie gehören zu den Dingen, die nie vergessen werden sollen!”²⁵ Before the discoveries at Majdanek, Stalingrad represented an epiphanic moment for the KPD which prompted its crisis of faith in the German working class and a critical searching for the complex origins and consequences of German guilt for National Socialism and the War. First published contemporaneous to Lukács *Schicksalswende* in

²³ Friedmann and Später (2002, p. 65) summarise the views of Vansittart: “‘The German nation is responsible’ – das war die ‘Essenz des Vansittartismus,’ zugleich Diagnose und Therapie. Vansittart behauptete nicht, daß jeder Deutsche schuldig sei oder daß alle Gruppen und Klassen gleichermaßen für die Verbrechen verantwortlich seien, aber er insistierte darauf, daß kein Bevölkerungsteil schuldlos sei, und verkündete, ohne die Übernahme der Gesamtverantwortung durch die deutsche Nation werde man keine ‘Reeducation’ erleben.”

²⁴ Lukács, 1955, p. 139

²⁵ *Vierzehn von Millionen*, AdK Weinert: 854

Internationale Literatur, Weinert's Stalingrad diary represents one of a number of texts by Communists written during and in the immediate aftermath of the Battle in which their profound disappointment in the German people and a revision of previous class-based conceptions of fascism becomes clear. Serialised in 1943 in *Internationale Literatur*, Theodor Plievier's novel *Stalingrad* also described guilt at all levels of the the German army exposed by Stalingrad and it represented German suffering and death as a just punishment.²⁶

Memento Stalingrad is an indictment of ordinary German soldiers and the German people they represent by a figure who had been one of their most outspoken defenders. In the pamphlets and broadcasts by Weinert and his comrades to the entrenched German troops cited in the diary, a class reading of National Socialism persists. Here Hitler and his capitalist sponsors are identified as the primary culprits responsible for the soldiers' plight.²⁷ Yet in the diary itself Weinert vents his disappointment and frustration in the light of the soldiers' willing participation in war crimes and their failure to show adequate resistance to the Nazi regime. We see this especially in the many passages where Weinert quotes and reflects on the letters and diaries of named *Landser* in which they describe their brutality towards Soviet civilians. As he writes in the entry for the 2nd of December 1942: "Das ist eine Lektüre, die mich immer entsetzlich verstimmt und mich mit Kummer belastet, den ich oft tagelang mit mir herumschleppe. Wie viele Tausende von Briefen – von Menschen aller Klassen – habe ich seit Kriegsbeginn schon gelesen! Ach, und wie wenige waren darunter, wie wenige, aus denen die Stimme des Widerstandes gegen das Mörderregime vernehmbar war."²⁸ In the extracts from these letters included in the diary, German soldiers revel in stories of the plundering and burning of civilian property on their advance on Stalingrad and detail their participation in the murder of partisans.²⁹ For Weinert the so-called *Festzeitungen* of army units on the Eastern Front

²⁶ On Plievier's treatment of the guilt question in *Stalingrad* see Peitsch, 1981, pp. 88-91.

²⁷ In the pamphlet of the 4th of January 1943 addressed to *Wehrmacht* officers we read: "Ihr opfert euch nur für den imperialistischen Welteroberungswahn Hitlers und der Berliner Rüstungsmillionäre." (MS, p. 128)

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21

²⁹ See especially the letters quoted in *ibid.*, pp. 22-25 and pp. 33-39

with their descriptions of the rape of Russian and Ukrainian women “unter der Rubrik Humor” further evidence the moral decrepitude of the *Wehrmacht*. Following a series of quotes from these bulletins he remarks: “Das ist ihre Kultur, mit der sie andere Völker beglücken wollen.”³⁰ Weinert views *Wehrmacht* soldiers as the antithesis of their Soviet counterparts - he describes them as “primitive[n] oder verdummt[e] Menschen,”³¹ “Banditen”³² and “Marodeure.”³³ In the diary, liability for the soldiers’ acts of brutality extends to a wider German society. Incriminating diaries and letters quoted in *Memento Stalingrad* indict not merely their authors but testify to the guilt of all Germans: “Sie sagen Bezeichnendes aus über das Wesen der Deutschen zu Hitlers Zeit.”³⁴ A correlation between the soldiers’ brutality and a degenerate German *Volk* implied by Weinert throughout *Memento Stalingrad* is particularly clear in his lament: “O wie ist unser Volk auf den Hund gekommen, daß die Kerle, die sich Soldaten nennen, freiwillig und mit Wollust auf Menschenjagd gehen! Nicht einer! Tausende! Hunderttausende!”³⁵ In his diary Weinert considers the consequences of National Socialism for Germany and employs the juridical rhetoric of crime and punishment with reference to the guilt of specific individuals and to the liability of the German people. The soldiers’ letters and diaries are “Anklagematerial”³⁶ to be kept as evidence for future legal proceedings against them. At times Weinert himself pre-empt the future sentencing of these War criminals: “solche Räuber sollte man nach dem Kriege dorthin schicken, wo sie ihre Verbrechen begangen haben, zur Zwangsarbeit, um ein Weniges von dem wiedergutzumachen, was sie angerichtet haben.”³⁷ Yet frequent references to “eine Rechnung” and to “Verbrechen” which must be “vergolten” are used both in connection with the concrete penalties to be borne by individual perpetrators and the less tangible punishment which awaits the German people after the War. In the

³⁰ See *ibid.*, pp. 78-82

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 21

³² *Ibid.*, p. 31

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 147

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 22

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 64

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 25

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 25

entry for the 2nd of December 1942, a series of quotes from soldiers' letters in which they boast about robbing and terrorizing Russian peasants prompts Weinert's outburst: "O Deutschland, Welch eine Rechnung wird dir einst präsentiert werden!"³⁸ In this direct address to 'Deutschland,' Weinert broadens the focus of his accusations from the soldiers to implicate the entire German nation in the radius of guilt and retribution.

"Schlägt den anständigen Deutschen immer noch nicht so etwas wie ein Gewissen?"

Invocations of *das 'andere' Deutschland* by exiled Germans towards the end of the War responded to assertions of collective German guilt in allied countries. Pitched against the arguments of Lord Vansittart and others, they highlighted the existence of a significant community of Germans who were fundamentally opposed to National Socialism and thus without blame for the rise of Hitler and World War II. Energetic proponents of *das 'andere' Deutschland* in Great Britain included the publishers Viktor Gollancz and Heinrich Fraenkel as well as the Czech-German Communist, Eduard Goldstücker. Ulrich Frösche has shown how claims of an 'other,' 'better' Germany were implicitly addressed to the Allied powers, often with the aim of securing a role for its alleged representatives in the political re-ordering of Germany after the War.³⁹

A belief in the oppositional potential of *das 'andere' Deutschland* finds reflection in *Memento Stalingrad*. Although the expression does not arise in the diary, in his first weeks at Stalingrad Weinert continues to assert a fundamental discrepancy between fascism and an innate German character. He and his Soviet comrades differentiate between "wahre Deutsche" and "Hitlerknechte."⁴⁰ The *Wehrmacht* bombers which attack the Soviet frontline are described as "faschistisch" rather than "deutsch."⁴¹ In Weinert's view National Socialist convictions are not

³⁸ Ibid., p.22

³⁹ "Der Topos implizierte eine Empfehlung an die Alliierten, das im Exil, aber auch das im Reich lebende 'andere Deutschland' bei der Kriegszielpolitik und der Nachkriegsplanung zu berücksichtigen." (Frösche, 2004, p. 69)

⁴⁰ "Wie frei sind die Sowjetmenschen von Chauvinismus, und wie sorgfältig unterscheiden sie zwischen den wahren Deutschen und den Hitlerknechten!" (MS, p. 15)

⁴¹ See *ibid.* p. 20 and p. 25

inherent to German soldiers at Stalingrad but represent “die Staubwolke, die mit ihnen ging” which quickly dissipates in Soviet captivity: “Es ist, als habe das Leben müssen in den Dunstkreisen der Nazis eine partielle Lähmung seines Intellekts erzeugt, die sich hier in der Freiheit löst.”⁴² He frequently invokes the concept of a healthy German “Instinkt” which has been numbed by exposure to Nazi ideology.⁴³ In a description of a young German soldier at work in Soviet captivity Weinert writes: “Du bist auch kein geborener Krieger.”⁴⁴ Throughout the diary, metaphors of seeing and hearing imply that the Germans’ intrinsic faculties have been temporarily arrested under National Socialism. In Nazi Germany Weinert alleges that “die meisten Deutschen einer Massensuggestion unterworfen sind, die sie verhindert, die Wirklichkeit unversehrt zu sehen.”⁴⁵

Memento Stalingrad traces Weinert’s growing despair and doubt in the existence of *das ‘andere’ Deutschland* over the course of the Battle of Stalingrad. In the diary it is precisely the putative representatives of a positive German identity who are indicted as Weinert points to the responsibility borne by ordinary, ‘decent’ Germans for their active and passive support of National Socialism. Often the focus of constructions of *das ‘andere’ Deutschland*, the concept of *Volk* is increasingly invoked by Weinert in the context of charges levelled against the German masses. The extent of Wehrmacht crimes on the Eastern Front leads him in December to the painful recognition that blame for War atrocities cannot be limited to Hitler and a small contingent of specially trained army units: “Ich habe lange nicht einschlafen können. Immer wieder traten mir die Greuelthaten deutscher Soldaten vor Augen, quälend wie Zwangsvorstellungen. Weil ich es nicht glauben will, daß mein Volk so tief verwahrlost sei, versuchte ich, zum Trost, mir einzureden, daß die Mörder und Schinder alle nur Nazis sein können, diese verkommene Unterwelt, die an die Macht geschwemmt wurde. Sicher sind das Tausende und Abertausende. Aber die Massenhaftigkeit der Verbrechen in aller Welt,

⁴² Ibid., pp. 48-9

⁴³ Those soldiers who have been the least receptive to Nazi ideology are described as having a healthy “Instinkt.” See *ibid.*, p. 66 and p. 75

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 91

⁴⁵ Ibid., pp. 48-49. German soldiers at Stalingrad are described as “harthörig” (*ibid.*, p. 66) and “verblendet.” (*Ibid.*, p. 116 and p. 145)

vor allem hier, läßt den Gedanken gar nicht zu, daß hier nur zu besonderer Verwendung ausgebildete Henkerkommandos am Werke waren; hier muß der 'brave' Landser, der von all den Greueln nichts gewußt haben will, tatkräftig mitgeschlachtet und mitgebrandschatzt haben."⁴⁶ A lieutenant who admits in his diary to crimes against Russian civilians is "nicht einmal ein Nazi."⁴⁷ In the entry for the 7th of December quotes from the letters of soldiers who write gleefully about their participation in "Partisanenjagden" prompt Weinert's comment: "So sieht Hitlers harmloser Landser aus. Das tötet nicht nur auf Befehl, das mordet sogar mit Lust!"⁴⁸ In the same entry sarcastic references to "eine[r] so schöne[n] deutsche[n] Soldatenseele" and to "der kleine neugebackene Soldat" challenge the received view of the 'innocent' *Landsers*.⁴⁹

Weinert condemns not only those soldiers who commit terrible war crimes. In the numerous dialogues between himself and German prisoners-of-war reproduced in the diary, we see him confronting ordinary soldiers with their passive tolerance of National Socialism. It is here that Weinert's mounting ambivalence vis-à-vis the German working class becomes clear. Far from offering an alibi to German soldiers, in *Memento Stalingrad* membership of the proletariat augments their guilt, because they are seen to have had a particular responsibility to lead resistance to Hitler. Weinert notes the class origins of all his interviewees. For the most part they are young representatives of the working class and many claim to have socialist or communist leanings. A meeting with a group of six German soldiers of working class origins with whom Weinert is impressed leads him to observe "wie wenig die faschistische Seelenfängerei bei dieser Schicht ausrichten konnte."⁵⁰ Yet most of the soldiers Weinert encounters demonstrate a complete lack of Communist ideals; they have little knowledge of or interest in the broader political context of their (class) exploitation under National Socialism. If they are dissatisfied with Hitler it is generally

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 63

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 31

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 34

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 35

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 109

because they have not profited personally under his Regime. A former Communist who justifies his failure to resist Hitler with the excuse: “Was kann man als kleiner Mann dagegen tun?” typifies the political apathy of the German working class which so irks Weinert. His dismissal of this soldier: “Und Sie wollen Kommunist gewesen sein? Machen Sie sich nicht lächerlich! Bessere Untertanen wie Sie kann Hitler sich gar nicht vorstellen”⁵¹ is characteristic of Weinert’s overall attitude towards the German working class which has reneged on its duty to oppose the class enemy.

The diary thus invokes *das ‘andere’ Deutschland*, yet continually undermines the latter’s moral integrity by pointing to the failure of its representatives to resist National Socialism and overthrow their Nazi leaders. Weinert’s exasperated question - “Schlägt den anständigen Deutschen immer noch nicht so etwas wie ein Gewissen?”⁵² - reflects a fundamental scepticism provoked by Stalingrad regarding the Germans’ basic goodness. A distinction between ‘Faschisten’ and ‘wahre Deutsche’, upheld by Weinert for much of his diary, collapses towards the end of the Battle when, in his frustration, he begins to refer to ordinary German soldiers as “Faschisten,”⁵³ “Hammelherde”⁵⁴ and “Landesknechte.”⁵⁵

“Jetzt habt ihr kein Recht mehr, euch zu beklagen”

In its portrayal of German soldiers as victims who are not without guilt Weinert’s diary diverges from subsequent literary treatments of the battle. The recognition in *Memento Stalingrad* of the soldiers’ autonomy of action in the Battle distinguishes it from 1950s portrayals of them as passive victims. In entries from the 9th of January 1943⁵⁶ references to the suffering and countless deaths of the soldiers increase. Weinert describes scenes of devastation left in the wake of the Red Army’s offensive against

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 73

⁵² Ibid., p. 31

⁵³ Ibid., p. 102

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 148

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 149

⁵⁶ The day the final Soviet assault on German positions at Stalingrad began following the refusal by the German Military Command of a capitulation offer.

Wehrmacht strongholds at Stalingrad. He observes processions of defeated German prisoners-of-war on their way into Soviet captivity. In Weinert's account they are pathetic figures, dishevelled and emaciated. A description of them in the final entry of *Memento Stalingrad* reads: "Auf der öden wüsten Landstraße von Wertjatschi nach Norden schleichen endlose Züge von Gefangenen. Sie sind auf dem Weg zur Bahnstation. Alle gehen vornübergebeugt mit schleifenden Schritten. In ihren strüppigen Bärten hängen Eiszapfen. Alles, was sie finden konnten an alten Lumpen, Säcken und Woilachs, haben sie sich um den Kopf und Schultern gewickelt, um ihre Lederstiefel oder ihre nackten Beine haben sie Stroh mit Draht festgeschnürt."⁵⁷ Yet the fact of the soldiers' suffering does not mitigate their guilt in *Memento Stalingrad*. Their lamentations to Weinert fall on unsympathetic ears. Far from pitying their fate, the narrator is repulsed by their "wehleidige Geplärre."⁵⁸ To calls for revenge on Hitler and their leaders coming from a crowd of German prisoners-of-war Weinert responds: "Die Gelegenheit hättet ihr schon gehabt, ehe hunderttausend zum Teufel gehen mußten. Jetzt habt ihr kein Recht mehr, euch zu beklagen."⁵⁹ While the diarist does not dispute that the soldiers have been betrayed by their leaders, in *Memento Stalingrad* their suffering is seen as a deserved punishment for their *own* betrayal of their dead comrades by failing to resist Hitler.

Panoramic vistas of death and destruction towards the end of the diary are comparable to similar scenes in Plievier's novel *Stalingrad*. Yet, in *Memento Stalingrad* such scenes do not approach the pathos of *Stalingrad's* depictions. Here naturalistic descriptions of the dismembered bodies of German soldiers strewn among the detritus of war tend towards the grotesque. In one account of an abandoned battle scene any compassion which might be elicited by the portrayal of dead German soldiers is defused by Weinert's ironic tone which becomes especially clear at the end of the passage: "Und zwischen all dem Krempel liegen die Toten, grotesk verkrümmt, Mund und Augen noch offen vor Entsetzen, steif gefroren, mit abgerissenen Hirnschalen und herausgeschleuderten Eingeweiden,

⁵⁷ MS, pp. 183-84

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 148

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 184

die meisten mit Verbänden an Händen und Füßen, noch durchtränkt von der gelben Frostsalbe. Ausgezehrte, die der Tod auf dem Strohsack im Lazarett noch nicht ganz fertig gemacht hatte. Das waren die Frostkranken, Invaliden und Halbtoten, um die sich bei der Flucht kein Mensch gekümmert hatte. Da liegen sie, die armseligen Hakenkreuzritter, von wein- und biergedunsenen Propheten in alle gelobten Länder getrieben.”⁶⁰ On another occasion Weinert quotes from a letter found among the possessions of a dead German soldier: “Ja, Vati, schneidig siehst Du in der Sommeruniform aus.” Any potential for pathos in this quote is neutralised by Weinert’s immediate quip: “Ja, schneidig siehst du aus, Mann in der Sommeruniform in der Eissteppe.”⁶¹ In contrast to the soldiers, German mothers, wives and children are seen as legitimate victims and in references to their suffering Weinert abandons his sarcastic tone. In one pamphlet where he quotes from the letters of German mothers and wives to the soldiers we read “Leid und Tränen der deutschen Mütter und Kinder sind unermesslich.”⁶² Weinert also underlines the suffering of Soviet victims of the Germans in *Memento Stalingrad*. On the 25th of January he soberly records the discovery of a mass grave of Russian prisoners-of-war: “In einer Schlucht finden wir einen Berg von Leichen russischer Kriegsgefangener, fast entkleidet, mager wie Skelette, die Haut schon schwarzbraun, alle auf einen Haufen geworfen. Sie müssen schon längere Zeit hier liegen, verhungert oder zu Tode gequält.”⁶³

“Für ganz Deutschland schämte ich mich mit.”

Vansittart and other proponents of German collective guilt during World War II looked to Germany’s historical development for the roots of National Socialism and proposed a radical re-education of all Germans to follow Hitler’s defeat.⁶⁴ Vansittart argued that the effectiveness of any re-

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 150

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 155

⁶² Ibid., p. 103. See also his reference to “unsere deutschen Mütter” in *ibid.*, p. 169

⁶³ Ibid., p. 164

⁶⁴ For Georg Lukács in *Schicksalswende* the years of Nazi rule represent “eine historisch folgerichtige Entwicklung.” (Lukács, 1955, p.145) He explains the perceived moral bankruptcy of the German people with reference to the Prussian values of duty and obedience and their amplification under National Socialism. Arguing that any future democratic renewal of Germany will depend on the complete removal of the roots of Nazism:

education measures initiated by the Allies would depend entirely on a genuine recognition of their guilt by the German people. The Allied treatment of the Germans after the War should therefore be guided by the need to instil in them a keen sense of their wrong-doing. Später and Friedmann summarize his position as follows: “Ohne Reue kein Bekenntnis, ohne Bekenntnis kein geistiger Wandel, ohne Wandel keine Zukunft.”⁶⁵ In *Memento Stalingrad* Weinert would seem to embody the same severe attitude towards Germans and their failings as advocated by Vansittart. He too implies that an awareness of Germans’ collective responsibility is a prerequisite of individual change and national renewal. Weinert wishes that the qualms of conscience of a lieutenant for acts perpetrated by his fellow Germans might be felt by more soldiers at Stalingrad: “Fänden wir solche Stimmungen bei denen im Kessel vor Stalingrad vor [...], so könnte wohl doch gehofft werden, daß sie uns hören, handeln und [...] gegenüber den Offizieren und Nazis die Kapitulation mit Gewalt erzwingen.”⁶⁶ The concept of *Scham* is inscribed into a positive German identity in *Memento Stalingrad*. It is implied that a sense of shame for acts committed in Germany’s name is the only morally tenable position for all Germans at the end of World War II. Here Weinert articulates a concept of collective German shame which was frequently invoked by German Communists at the end of World War II.⁶⁷ As in Plievier’s *Stalingrad*, in *Memento Stalingrad* it is the ‘good’ Germans who feel ashamed on behalf of their countrymen.⁶⁸ The anti-fascist Weinert has himself internalised this national ‘Scham’ and feels

“Nur das Ausrottung ihrer Wurzeln ist die einzig mögliche wirkliche Überwindung.” (Ibid., p. 146)

⁶⁵ Friedmann/Später, 2002, p.65. In Lukács’ *Schicksalswende* “die Stunde der Peripetie” refers to the sudden and necessary recognition by Germans of their collective guilt which he sees provoked by the opening of the Lubliner Lager. (Lukács, 1955, p. 149)

⁶⁶ MS, p. 31

⁶⁷ In a text by Walter Ulbricht from 1945 we read “Erst wenn unser Volk von tiefer Scham erfaßt ist über die Verbrechen des Hitlerismus, erst wenn es von tiefem Scham erfaßt ist darüber, daß es diese barbarischen Verbrechen zugelassen hat, erst dann wird es die innere Kraft aufbringen, einen neuen, einen demokratischen, einen fortschrittlichen Weg zu gehen.” (Ulbricht in Kämper, 2007, p. 228)

The notion of ‘Scham’ in *Memento Stalingrad* must be differentiated from the ‘Kollektivscham’ of Germans proposed by Theodor Heuss in 1949 as an alternative to ‘Kollektivschuld’. Heuss invokes ‘Kollektivscham’ in the context of a denial that the majority of Germans bear any responsibility for the acts of Hitler and “seine[n] Gesellen.” By contrast in *Memento Stalingrad* shame is the desired personal response to the recognition that *all* Germans are guilty after the Battle of Stalingrad. On Heuss’ concept see Friedmann and Später, 2002, p. 86 and Kämper, 2007, pp. 227-228.

⁶⁸ In *Stalingrad* the positive characters officer Vilshofen, Gnotke and the soldier Widomec are aware of their guilt and the atonement which must follow.

guilty by association with his people. When his conversation with a repentant Austrian soldier is interrupted by a Red Army officer, Weinert describes how the Austrian's shame transfers onto himself: "Dem Österreicher war der prüfende Blick des Russen peinlich, das fühlte ich. Die Mörderuniform! Und ich schämte mich mit. Für ganz Deutschland schämte ich mich mit."⁶⁹

*"Diese Freundschaft wird unserem Volk nach seiner Leidenszeit einmal ein Segen sein"*⁷⁰

Contrary to National Socialist propaganda, Weinert's diary invokes a long-standing affinity between the Russian and German peoples which persists through the current War. For Weinert the ruins of a German settlement from the 18th century in Krasnoarmeisk recall a Russian-German friendship which pre-dates the enmity between the two nations contrived by the Nazis: "diese friedlichen Erbauer hatten sich auch nicht träumen lassen, daß einmal erobersüchtige deutsche Horden bis hierher kommen und ihre stillen Häuser in Brand schießen würden."⁷¹ The same symbiotic relationship is realised in the present in the cooperation of German anti-fascists with the Red Army at Stalingrad. Weinert's diary tells the story of how exiled German Communists were assisted by their Soviet brethren in their common struggle against fascism. In his own descriptions Weinert himself appears to embody an ideal synthesis of German and Russian identities. German soldiers are shocked when he addresses them in perfect German "denn ich sehe wohl in meinen Filzstiefeln, meinem Schafpelz und meiner Fellmütze so urrussisch aus."⁷² The 'wir' implied in Weinert's references to the Red Army as "unsere Armee"⁷³ is a community of anti-fascist Russians and Germans. Looking ahead, the diarist suggests that Germany's future depends on a renewal of "seine alte Freundschaft" with "das Sowjetvolk."⁷⁴ In the description of his warm embrace of the Russian poet Dolmatowski in

⁶⁹ MS, p. 160

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 116

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 101

⁷² Ibid., p. 57

⁷³ See for example *ibid.*, p. 149

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 116

the ruins of Stalingrad, Weinert yearns for the future reconciliation of both nations: “Wann werden nicht nur zwei Dichter, wann werden zwei Völker sich brüderlich umarmen!”⁷⁵

The wartime publications of Weinert’s Stalingrad diary

“Nun haben manchmal nicht nur Bücher, sondern auch Notizbücher ihre Schicksale”⁷⁶

In his foreword to the first 1951 GDR edition of *Memento Stalingrad*, Weinert recalled the wartime publications of his text in Allied countries. Extracts from the diary first appeared in the Moscow-based journal *Internationale Literatur* in May 1943⁷⁷ and they were later re-published by organisations in America and Great Britain. In its presentation to British and exiled German readers in these contexts, Weinert’s text became a vehicle for arguments against a thesis of collective German guilt. The pessimistic outlook on German anti-fascist resistance in the diary itself found little reflection in paratexts which highlighted the strength and unity of ‘*das andere Deutschland*’ in opposition to Hitler. We will see how elements of this wartime reception of Weinert’s text later resurface under different circumstances in the GDR.

Years after the first American publication of his diary, Weinert described its title, *Erziehung vor Stalingrad*,⁷⁸ as “irreführend” and “etwas anspruchsvoll.”⁷⁹ For the text’s intended readers, a community of German exiles in the United States, the allusion to Arnold Zweig’s novel of World War 1, *Erziehung vor Verdun*, would have been clear. First published in exile in 1935, Zweig’s novel narrates the conversion of a young bourgeois German-Jewish soldier to Communism at the Battle of Verdun. Through his contact with older working class soldiers, the protagonist, Werner Bertin, is educated in the nature of class exploitation as manifest at Verdun and joins in the Communist

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 152

⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 5

⁷⁷ Erich Weinert, ‘Stalingrader Kampagne. Notizblätter aus meinem Fronttagebuch’, *Internationale Literatur*, 13. Jahrgang, 5, 1943, pp. 15-33

⁷⁸ Erich Weinert, *Erziehung vor Stalingrad. Fronttagebuch eines Deutschen*, The German American Inc, New York, 1943

⁷⁹ MS, p.5

struggle against capitalism. The comparison Verdun-Stalingrad had been previously drawn by the Nazis in their portrayal of the World War II Battle as an epic German defeat which would be avenged.⁸⁰ In its reference to Zweig's novel, the German-American publishing company implied that German Communists had been successful in their attempts to convert German soldiers to anti-fascism at Stalingrad, thus pre-empting a reading of Weinert's text which the diary itself did not confirm.

This positive re-interpretation of Weinert's narrative continued in the foreword to the American edition by the exiled German Communist writer Oscar Maria Graf and may be seen in the context of efforts to raise consciousness of a rising tide of German resistance to Hitler among exiled Germans in the United States.⁸¹ A class reading of fascism from which Weinert successively distances himself in his diary underlies Graf's piece. While Weinert's text reflects the author's crisis of faith in *das 'andere' Deutschland* after Stalingrad, the introduction to *Erziehung vor Stalingrad* affirms its continued strength in the German working class. Graf invokes a lineage of engaged German Communist writers from Ferdinand von Freiligrath through Zweig to himself and Weinert, whose biographies are seen to reflect "die Schmerzensstationen" of German workers. In Graf's description they are the vanguard of a 'real' Germany represented by the working class: "Von diesen nüchternen, mutigen Menschen zählt jeder Eine mit hundert! Denn in ihnen kristallisierte sich gleichsam dasjenige, was man als das wirkliche 'Deutsche' bezeichnen darf." While Weinert holds the German people and German workers in particular accountable for the rise of Hitler and the War in his diary, Graf rehearses an earlier position of the KPD, highlighting the guilt of "d[ie] herrschenden, reaktionären Kräfte" and "die Halbheit und Feigheit des zurückweichenden Bürgertums" during the Weimar Republic. German workers are depicted as victims of Hitler and "das verbrecherische Nazigesindel;" they are "die betrogenen Millionen" for whom Weinert and other Communist writers speak. In the foreword,

⁸⁰ See Ebert, 2003 a, p. 16

⁸¹ *Erziehung vor Stalingrad*, pp. 5-8

Stalingrad becomes yet another instance of the betrayal of the German people by its capitalist leaders - Graf anticipates the future remembrance of the battle as “der Missbrauch eines ganzen Volkes.”

While Weinert condemns German soldiers for their failure to resist, Graf represents them as “sinnlos sich Aufopfernden einer verlorenen, zusammengefrorenen Armee.”

In 1944 an English translation of Weinert's text⁸² was published by the *Free German League of Culture*, an organisation of German and Austrian exiles in Great Britain. *Stalingrad Diary* represents one of a number of publications through which this group sought to raise the profile of German anti-fascist resistance among the British public and thus counter claims of collective German guilt growing louder since the first public revelations about Nazi concentration camps.⁸³ In its defence of German soldiers the editor's introduction⁸⁴ to the diary approximates the arguments of Viktor Gollancz and other German exiles against collective German guilt at this time.⁸⁵ As in the American edition of the diary, the issue of the soldiers' complicity, which is so central to Weinert's text, finds no mention here. Characterised by their “humanity,” German soldiers at Stalingrad are portrayed as victims whose “capacity to distinguish between right and wrong” was “destroyed by the poison of Fascism.” Hitler alone is held accountable for devastating German losses at Stalingrad: “Hitler himself must take the responsibility for having given the order which led to the encirclement of his army and the senseless sacrifice of a quarter of a million German soldiers.” The introduction seeks to highlight the existence of a united front of German anti-fascist resisters operating within and outside Germany. Differences in the ideological outlook of various German resistance groups and the specific

⁸² Erich Weinert, *Stalingrad Diary*, Inside Nazi Germany, London, 1944

⁸³ Other contemporary publications of Inside Nazi Germany included Hans Kahle, *They Plotted against Hitler* (1944), Siegbert Kahn, *The National Committee Free Germany: Background, Tasks, Men* (1943) and Paul Merker, *Germany Today...and Germany Tomorrow* (1943).

Friedmann and Später describe the growing public acceptance for a thesis of collective German guilt in Great Britain following confirmation of the organised German annihilation of Jews in 1942 and the opening of the Buchenwald concentration camp in the Spring of 1945. (Friedmann/Später, 2002, p. 57 and p. 62)

⁸⁴ *Stalingrad Diary*, pp. 3-4

⁸⁵ In *What Buchenwald really means* (1945) Gollancz argued with reference to the German inmates who formed the majority in this concentration camp that Germans were more the victims than the accomplices of Hitler. Citing the tremendous risks involved in resistance activities he excused German passivity in the face of Nazi crimes. (See Friedmann and Später, 2002, p. 58)

contexts of their activities are elided. The writer makes no direct reference to Weinert's Communist affiliations and describes his resistance circle as "a small part of that small minority of Social Democrats, Catholics and Communists who have never ceased their dangerous underground resistance against Hitler in Germany itself." A biographical note on Weinert foregrounds his participation in the Spanish Civil War when "Weinert was the comrade and companion of all those who, in the International Brigades, fought for the peace of the world." The broad-based international opposition to Franco's fascism represented by the Brigades is seen to be repeated in the current context where Germans and Allies stand on the same side against "the menace of Hitlerism."

The publication and reception of *Memento Stalingrad* in East Germany 1951-55

With his decision to leave the Soviet Occupied Zone for West Germany in 1947, Theodor Plievier fell out of favour with East German authorities. His *Stalingrad*, which had been one of the most successful post-War publications of the *Aufbau-Verlag*, was banned in 1948 and would not be re-published in East Germany until 1984.⁸⁶ The sequels to *Stalingrad*, *Moskau und Berlin*,⁸⁷ were also never published in the GDR. Weinert's *Memento Stalingrad* was first published by *Volk und Welt* in 1951 and it soon came to occupy a position previously held by *Stalingrad* as the canonical text on the Battle in East Germany. The status of Weinert's diary in the GDR of the early 1950s is indicative of the high profile of the event Stalingrad in East German public discourse at this time. Following the initial 1951 edition the text was re-issued twice in the anniversary year of 1953.⁸⁸ In 1952 Weinert was awarded the *Nationalpreis erster Klasse* for *Memento Stalingrad* and his diary of the Spanish Civil War, *Camaradas*. A list of publications in which *Memento Stalingrad* was discussed evidences the

⁸⁶ For details of the publication and reception history of Plievier's novel see Peitsch (1981).

⁸⁷ Both sequels reflected Plievier's increasingly critical stance towards the Soviet Union and his scepticism at post-War developments in the Soviet Zone of Occupation. They first appeared in 1954 in the Kurt Desch Verlag, Munich.

⁸⁸ The first three GDR publications each had print-runs of 10,000 copies.

huge breadth of its reception in the period 1951-54.⁸⁹ There is hardly a national or regional East German newspaper which did not review the diary in these years. The huge presence of the text in the GDR print media was paralleled by regular readings from the diary on national radio.⁹⁰ In the following analysis of the early East German publications of *Memento Stalingrad* I explore the various functions of Stalingrad remembrance in the GDR at this time and locate Weinert's text and its reception in the context of an emerging discourse of anti-fascist resistance, efforts towards social and political integration, and the Cold War.

*"Stalingrad in für die Gegenwart fruchtbare Erinnerung rufen:"*⁹¹ *Constructions of 'Widerstand' and 'Wandlung' in the reception of Memento Stalingrad 1951-55*

Analysts of the East German remembrance of anti-fascist resistance describe developments towards an exclusive focus on and exaggeration of the contribution of Communist resisters, in particular of the members of KPD leadership, the so-called *Gruppe-Ulbricht*, who had operated from their Moscow exile.⁹² The beginnings of "jener dogmatisch verengten Widerstandsrezeption"⁹³ coincided with the formation of the SED and the establishment of the GDR state in the late 1940s. From this time onwards non-Communist resisters, including the 20th of July plotters and representatives of bourgeois, Christian and Jewish resistance groups were increasingly marginalised in East German public discourse. The order to dissolve the East German branch of the *Vereinigung der Verfolgten des Naziregimes* in 1953, an organisation which had gathered and published accounts by a wide range of resisters and so-called *Opfer des Faschismus*, is often seen to evidence homogenising tendencies in the

⁸⁹ This list was kept by the publisher *Volk und Welt*. (AdK Weinert: S 0) A total of 35 articles on *Memento Stalingrad* in the GDR press are listed for the first 1951 edition alone.

⁹⁰ Readings from *Memento Stalingrad* usually coincided with the anniversary of the capitulation of the Sixth Army on the 1st of February 1943. For details see Fischer, 2001, pp. 137-38

⁹¹ This phrase is taken from a review of *Memento Stalingrad* in *Heute und Morgen* (Sept. 1952, p. 591): "Und vor allem: das 'Memento' des Titels, dieses 'Denkt daran!' anhand des Geschehens noch einmal und immer wieder interpretieren, indem man den Untergang der deutschen Heere vor Stalingrad in für die Gegenwart fruchtbare Erinnerung ruft."

⁹² See for example Groehler (1995), Danyel (1995) and Barck (1997, 2000 and 2003)

⁹³ Groehler, 1995, p. 26

East German discussion of anti-fascist resistance at this time.⁹⁴ Its successor organisation, the *Komitee Antifaschistischen Widerstandes*, limited its publication activities to texts by and about Communist resisters.⁹⁵ Narratives of heroic Communist resistance to National Socialism functioned to legitimise the rule of the SED under Walter Ulbricht in the 1950s.⁹⁶ As evidence of their past struggles against fascism, they gave German Communists a mandate to lead the new 'anti-fascist' East German State. In this context the modest achievements of the KPD were frequently (re-)interpreted as triumphs of anti-fascism which the GDR could recall as its ideological heritage.⁹⁷ Simone Barck has shown how the real divisions and deficiencies of Communist resistance under National Socialism were successively suppressed in official East German representations of this past. With reference to a relatively critical textbook from 1951 which jarred with the idealistic accounts of anti-fascist resistance propagated by the SED at this time, she writes: "Dieses kritische Eingeständnis der äußerst begrenzten Wirkungen der eigenen Seite angesichts einer nationalsozialistisch beeinflussten Bevölkerung und des brutalen Terrors wurde als Diskursfigur abgeschafft. Aus den Niederlagen der umgekommenen Widerstandsakteure wurden die virtuellen Siege der SED-Führung, in denen das Vermächtnis des Widerstandes aufgehoben war."⁹⁸

The first East German publications and responses to Weinert's Stalingrad diary must be seen in the context of the above developments. As an account of the resistance activities of key members of the *Gruppe-Ulbricht* during the Battle of Stalingrad, *Memento Stalingrad* represents one of several GDR publications of the 1950s through which the primacy of Communist anti-fascist resistance was asserted. In its transmission to a 1950s East German audience, its central message was distorted. The overall failure of resistance at Stalingrad, which Weinert acknowledges throughout his diary, was

⁹⁴ See Barck, 1997

⁹⁵ See *ibid.*

⁹⁶ As Danyel (1995, p. 37) observes: "Widerstand und Opfertod erhalten [...] ihren Sinn nicht mehr allein aus dem historischen Kontext des NS-Regimes, sondern aus der gesellschaftspolitischen Ordnung der DDR."

⁹⁷ "Der Funktionskorps der KPD erklärte sich quasi zum Bestandteil der siegreichen sowjetischen Militärmacht und deutete die Niederlage der KPD von 1933 und das Scheitern des Widerstandes in Deutschland entsprechend um." (*Ibid.*, p. 33)

⁹⁸ Barck, 2000, p. 138

construed as a success in the text's East German reception. The rather bombastic title *Memento Stalingrad*, conceived for the first East German edition, was in itself characteristic of the official glorification of Stalingrad as a pivotal victory for anti-fascism under the guidance of Ulbricht and leading German Communists.⁹⁹ Commentaries on *Memento Stalingrad* implied that the Soviet victory at Stalingrad was also a triumph of German anti-fascism and they celebrated the achievements of Ulbricht and his comrades. The reviewer of *Die Arbeit* recalled how Weinert fought "gemeinsam mit unserem stellvertretenden Ministerpräsidenten und dem bekannten Hamburger Arbeiterschriftsteller Willi Bredel [...] Schulter and Schulter mit den ruhmvollen Sowjetarmisten an der Front um Stalingrad gegen die faschistischen deutschen Eindringlinge. Aufklärend und mahnend dringt die Stimme des wahren deutschen Volkes aus dem Munde der deutschen Antifaschisten in die Gräben und Stellungen der vom Zerfall und Zusammenbruch gezeichneten 6. Armee Hitlers. Tag und Nacht unter dem Bomben- und Granathagel appellierten einige der besten Söhne des deutschen Volkes an die Vernunft und Besinnung ihrer Landsleute mit dem Ziel, deren Leben zu retten und den Untergang der faschistischen Kriegsmachine zu beschleunigen."¹⁰⁰ Against Weinert's own bleak assessment in his diary, it was alleged that the activities of German Communists precipitated a mass desertion of German troops at Stalingrad. Gustav Schrammel claimed that "die Worte Weinerts klärten eine große Zahl der irregeleiteten deutschen Landser auf. Viele liefen aufgrund der überzeugenden Worte Weinerts zur Roten Armee über."¹⁰¹ The reviewer of the *Berliner Zeitung* contended similarly: "Groß ist die Zahl der deutschen Soldaten, die durch Lautsprecher-mahnungen und Flugblätter deutscher Antifaschisten veranlaßt wurden, sich in sowjetische Gefangenschaft zu begeben."¹⁰² Under the headline "Mit Walter Ulbricht vor Stalingrad" *Neue Deutsche Literatur*

⁹⁹ Weinert himself was unhappy with this title suggested by *Volk und Welt*.

¹⁰⁰ Karlheinz Krull, 'Erich Weinert *Memento Stalingrad*' in *Die Arbeit*, July, 1952

¹⁰¹ Gustav Schrammel, 1954, p. 34

¹⁰² 'Eine warnende Chronik', *BZ am Abend*, 5.2.1952

printed those entries of Weinert's diary where the SED-leader featured, thus endorsing Ulbricht's current leadership with reference to the role he played in anti-fascist resistance at Stalingrad.¹⁰³

In the presentation and reception of *Memento Stalingrad* in East Germany, Stalingrad became a by-word for a collective transfiguration or *Wandlung* of Germans culminating in the foundation of the East German State. This was consistent with countless other contemporary GDR representations of the Battle and the War as a whole.¹⁰⁴ Michael Kumpfmüller has highlighted the significance of Stalingrad as "eine Art staatlicher Gründungsmythos" in the early GDR.¹⁰⁵ And Jens Ebert points to numerous East German texts where Stalingrad is "[der] Ausgangspunkt eines schmerzlichen Wandlungsprozesses im Bewusstsein nicht nur von einzelnen, sondern von weiten Teilen der deutschen Bevölkerung."¹⁰⁶ An article by Jürgen Kuczynski from 1950 in which he claimed: "Wir, die Werktätigen unserer Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, sind stärker als unsere Feinde [...]. Denn unser Ursprung ist jener Tag von Stalingrad vor sieben Jahre"¹⁰⁷ is characteristic of a view of the event which dominated in the GDR at this time. The representation of Stalingrad as "unser Ursprung" was consistent with the prioritisation of the *Gruppe-Ulbricht* in an emerging hierarchy of anti-fascist resistance in East Germany. If Stalingrad stood at the origin of the 'anti-fascist' German State, then logic dictated that Communist resisters had played a far more significant role in Germany's turn from fascism than other resistance groups. The same interpretation of the Battle which had been invoked in the wartime publications of Weinert's text, as a moment when German soldiers had been 'educated' and converted to anti-fascism by German Communist resisters, now resurfaced with a slight variation. In the reception of *Memento Stalingrad*, the GDR was seen to embody the 'other,' better Germany symbolised by the soldiers who had been changed and stirred

¹⁰³ NDL, July 1953. These extracts appeared just weeks after the uprising of the 17th of June 1953, at a time when Ulbricht's authority was in need of reinforcement.

¹⁰⁴ On the discourse of *Wandlung* which permeated the East German media in the 1950s see Hartewig, 2000, pp. 245-50.

¹⁰⁵ Kumpfmüller, 1996, p. 170

¹⁰⁶ Ebert, 2003 a, p. 16

¹⁰⁷ Quoted in Kumpfmüller, 1996, p. 172

into action at Stalingrad. At the end of his 1951 foreword to *Memento Stalingrad* Weinert recalled the leading role of Stalingrad veterans in the foundation of “die große Widerstandsbewegung ‘Freies Deutschland’” and the *Bund Deutscher Offiziere* and referred to “die Wandlung im Bewusstsein dieser Deutschen” which originated in their experience of Stalingrad.¹⁰⁸ Reviews of *Memento Stalingrad* frequently confirmed a trajectory from an assumed *Wandlung* of German soldiers at Stalingrad to the militant pacifism of the early GDR. A commentary in *Zeit im Bild* referred to “Hunderttausende ehemaliger Soldaten, die heute als Patrioten für den Frieden kämpfen.”¹⁰⁹ An understanding of the battle as a watershed was clear in abundant references to “die entscheidenden Tage vor Stalingrad” in reviews of *Memento Stalingrad*. Yet while Weinert made explicit reference to the *Nationalkomitee* and the *Bund Deutscher Offiziere* in his foreword to *Memento Stalingrad* as resistance movements which demonstrated German soldiers’ and officers’ turn to anti-fascism, there is no mention of these organisations in responses to the published diary. This notable absence reflects ambivalence in the GDR of the early 1950s towards the role of former *Wehrmacht* members in anti-fascist resistance.¹¹⁰ In the context of an overwhelming emphasis on the anti-fascist resistance of German Communists in East German discourse at this time it would seem that the contribution of these organisations could not yet be accommodated. We will see how this changes in an examination of the later publications of Weinert’s diary.

Commentators on *Memento Stalingrad* also discussed Stalingrad as the inception of a German-Russian ‘friendship’ which was fulfilled in the GDR’s current political and cultural attachment to the Soviet Union. With reference to the scene in *Memento Stalingrad* where Weinert embraces the Soviet poet Dolmatowski, Günter Caspar claimed that “ihre Freundschaft vor Stalingrad bezeichnet auch den Wendepunkt in der künftig glücklicheren Beziehung zwischen ihren Völkern.”¹¹¹ Citing the

¹⁰⁸ MS, p. 12

¹⁰⁹ *Zeit im Bild*, Dresden, 20.02.1952

¹¹⁰ Paul Heider refers to the “große Vorbehalte” of Communists “gegen ehemalige Wehrmichtsangehörige, die als Teilnehmer der Bewegung ‘Freies Deutschland’ und von Antifa-Schulen der Sowjetunion zurückgekehrt waren” in the early 1950s. (See Heider, 1995, p. 162-163)

¹¹¹ Caspar, Günter, ‘Memento Stalingrad’ in *Aufbau*, 19.04.1952

same passage from Weinert's diary the writer Alfred Kantorowicz wrote: "zwei Dichter zweier Nationen umarmten sich auf dem Schlachtfeld von Stalingrad. Im Berlin des August 1951, im Berlin der Weltfestspiele erlebten wir es, wie sich zwei Völker brüderlich umarmten – wie Millionen Deutsche beseelt waren von der Freundschaft zur helfenden und großmütigen Sowjetunion."¹¹²

The issue of German guilt in the reception of Memento Stalingrad

The KPD's earlier self-critical position on German guilt during and immediately after World War II was abandoned in an official discourse of anti-fascist resistance propagated by the SED in 1950s East Germany. As Jürgen Danyel writes: "In dem Maße, wie im Selbstverständnis der 'Sieger der Geschichte' die kommunistische Opposition gegen den Nationalsozialismus in eine Erfolgs- und Siegesgeschichte umgedeutet wird, verkümmert jene selbstkritische Ansatz, für den das Versagen der Deutschen und das Scheitern der Linken noch ein zusammengehörendes Thema war."¹¹³ In this context the Communist perception of Stalingrad underwent a sea-change. While the Battle had previously epitomised for Communists the *kollektive Mitschuld* of all Germans for National Socialism and the War, after 1949 a view of the soldiers as 'misled' and 'betrayed' victims of Hitler and a small cohort of *Wehrmacht* Generals took precedence. Invocations of the soldiers' suffering at Stalingrad in 1950s East Germany parallel contemporary West German depictions of the Battle, with the exception that in the *Bundesrepublik* a 'demonic' Hitler and the Soviets were held responsible for the plight of the 6th Army and German defeat at Stalingrad. In both Germanies the imperative to absorb former soldiers and generals into the respective societies led to a focus on the guilt of a relatively small group of prominent Nazis in public discourse.¹¹⁴ Assertions of the soldiers' victimisation at Stalingrad must be seen in the context of measures towards the integration of former *Wehrmacht*

¹¹² *Tägliche Rundschau*, 5.02.1952

¹¹³ Danyel, 1995, p. 32

¹¹⁴ See Hartewig, 2000, pp. 241-45. On West Germany see Moeller, 1996.

members into East German society from the late 1940s.¹¹⁵ The announcement of an end to the process of de-nazification in the Soviet Zone of Occupation in February 1948, the foundation of the NDPD¹¹⁶ in the same year and successive laws passed by the GDR *Volkskammer* in the early 1950s¹¹⁷ granting full rights to former *Wehrmacht* officers represent an important background for appraisals of Weinert's text at this time.

The fact that *Memento Stalingrad* was published in significant numbers shows that Weinert's uncompromising position on German guilt in the latter years of World War II could still be articulated publicly in the GDR of the 1950s. Indeed, in contrast to West German literary treatments of the Battle in the 1950s, many East German publications continued to acknowledge the soldiers' guilt. Franz Fühmann's autobiographical *Die Fahrt nach Stalingrad* (1953) may be read as a response to Weinert's accusations in *Memento Stalingrad* by a former young *Wehrmacht* soldier who realised the depth of his complicity with National Socialism in Soviet captivity and underwent a painful and extended process of ideological transformation. Walter Ulbricht's own diary of Stalingrad was published in volume 2 of his *Zur Geschichte der deutschen Arbeiterbewegung* (1953). While a class-reading of German fascism dominates here, Ulbricht nonetheless holds German soldiers accountable for their crimes on the Eastern front and their lack of resistance.¹¹⁸ Yet, as I will show with reference to Weinert's text, there was often a disjunction between the critical content of these texts and their interpretation by the GDR media. Weinert's treatment of the guilt question in

¹¹⁵ On the discourse which accompanied the integration of former *Wehrmacht* soldiers in the Soviet Zone of Occupation and later East Germany, Jörg Echternkamp writes: "Die Notwendigkeit ihrer Integration in den neuen, sozialistischen Staat präjudizierte eine Sicht des Krieges, die den westdeutschen Entlastungsstrategien und ihrer pathologischen Metaphorik ähnelte. [...] Die deutschen Soldaten wurden passive Opfer ihrer Geschichte." (Echternkamp, 2002, p. 308)

For details of the gradual retreat from the KPD's former hardline position on German guilt in the early GDR see also Hartewig, 2000, pp. 242-45.

¹¹⁶ The *Nationale Demokratische Partei Deutschlands* was founded in 1948 to accommodate former NSDAP and *Wehrmacht* members. In the 1950s its members were increasingly absorbed into the SED. For details see Hartewig, 2000, p. 243

¹¹⁷ For details see Danyel, 1995, pp. 42-43

¹¹⁸ As Ulbricht writes: "Sage keiner, so seien sie nicht alle. Das ist nicht die Frage. Was haben jene, die mit diesen Verbrechen nichts gemein haben wollen, gegen Hitlers Kriegsverbrechen unternommen? Was haben sie getan, um die Unzufriedenen im Volke zum mutigen Kampf gegen Hitlers Krieg, gegen die nazistischen Feinde der deutschen Nation zu ermuntern und zu organisieren? Was haben sie getan, um dem Sowjetvolk zu helfen, den Hitlerfaschismus zu vernichten? Das ist die Frage." (Ulbricht, 1953, p. 294)

his diary finds little reflection in the reception of *Memento Stalingrad*. In his foreword to the 1951 edition Weinert himself appears to revise his former hardline stance on the guilt of German soldiers, implying that they were unwilling participants in the Battle: “Bei Stalingrad wurden die Hunderttausende, die wohl alle eine friedliche Lösung vorgezogen hätten, mit der gewissenlose Lüge, die Russen machten keine Gefangenen, zum Widerstand aufgehetzt.” Here guilt is transferred from the soldiers to the origin of the “gewissenlose Lüge,” and, against Weinert’s insistence on the soldiers’ freedom of action in *Memento Stalingrad*, their agency is diminished in the passive construction “wurden [...] aufgehetzt.”¹¹⁹ In the reception of *Memento Stalingrad* in the GDR press, a prevailing understanding that German soldiers and the German people were deceived and exploited by their leaders relieves the majority of Germans of blame. As represented in most reviews of Weinert’s text the ordinary German soldier is more victim than perpetrator. The reviewer of the *National Zeitung*, the official newspaper of the NDPD, claims erroneously that Weinert’s diary presents “Anklagen gegen die Unmenschen, die über 100,000 Soldaten zum Aushungern und Verbluten zwangen und alle bösen Instinkte in ihnen entfesselten.”¹²⁰ The soldiers are portrayed as victims of their military superiors; they are “die durch Aushaltebefehle und Angst Gebundenen.” Weinert’s book is seen to describe “die Kälte, die Stürme, de[n] Hunger und das einsame Sterben bei den Deutschen.” Where Weinert uses the term “Verbrechen” with reference to German crimes against Soviet civilians in his diary, this reviewer speaks of Hitler’s Eastern campaign as “ein großes Stalingrad-Verbrechen” committed against Germans and Russians alike. Repeated claims of the soldiers’ “Verirrung” and “Vergiftung” in reviews of *Memento Stalingrad* excuse their participation in the War.¹²¹ Such claims are often followed by references to the soldiers’ subsequent conversion to anti-fascism. A review in the *Berliner Zeitung* refers to “die furchtbare Verirrung [...], in die der

¹¹⁹ MS, pp.10-11

¹²⁰ *National Zeitung*, 24.01.1952

¹²¹ See for example Franz Fühmann’s description of German soldiers at Stalingrad as “irreführte, zum schändlichsten Werk verleitete Interventen” in an obituary for Weinert in the *National Zeitung*, 25.4.1953.

Hitlerfaschismus unser Volk getrieben hatte” and to “die Vergiftung durch den Faschismus.”¹²² For Günter Caspar writing in *Aufbau*, Weinert’s text shows “wie sehr wurden die Massen faschisiert,” but he assures readers that the soldiers’ beliefs were soon discarded in Soviet captivity where “die Gefangenen [...] die faschistische Phraseologie abwerfen wie eine Maske und als ‘vernünftige Wesen’ zu reden und zu denken beginnen.”¹²³

In contrast to the majority of reviewers, in the *Tägliche Rundschau* the writer Alfred Kantorowicz makes explicit reference to German War crimes and emphasises the scale of the soldiers’ complicity.¹²⁴ In *Memento Stalingrad* “spricht die Stimme des deutschen Gewissens.” Kantorowicz speaks here of “die unsühnbaren Verbrechen, die von Mordbuben und entarteten Mitläufern im Namen Deutschlands begangen wurden” and he suggests that vast numbers of German soldiers were involved in these crimes. In its postulation of collective German guilt, a review in the *Betriebszeitung Aufwärts*¹²⁵ surpasses the severity of Weinert’s judgement in *Memento Stalingrad* and represents a notable exception in the diary’s GDR reception. In this piece the diary is “eine flammende Anklage gegen die Verderbe des deutschen Volkes, die Millionen Menschen auf ihr Gewissen geladen haben.” The writer points to Hitler, “deutsche[n] Monopolherren,” and “hitlerhörige Generäle” as the primary instigators of the War, yet he insists that no German can shirk responsibility for the death and suffering it brought: “Millionen Frauen, Mütter und Kinder würden heute nicht um ihren Liebsten trauern müssen, wenn sie mitgeholfen hätten, das Schreckgespenst des Nazismus zu beseitigen. Keiner kann sich heute freisprechen und sagen, ich habe es nicht gewollt, daß es zu diesem Völkermorden kam. Das Wollen war wohl nicht vorhanden, aber das Dagegenangehen war auch nicht vorhanden.” Here German suffering is seen as a logical consequence of the German people’s failure to resist Hitler.

¹²² ‘Eine warnende Chronik’, *BZ am Abend*, 5.2.1952

¹²³ *Aufbau*, 19.04.1952

¹²⁴ *Tägliche Rundschau*, 5.02.1952

¹²⁵ *Betriebszeitung Aufwärts*, Nr. 14, 20.02.1952

“Höre Deutschland ehe es zu spät ist!”¹²⁶ - Memento Stalingrad as a warning against a ‘second Stalingrad’

The discussion surrounding the first publications of Weinert’s text in the GDR was marked by Cold War tensions. In a letter to his editor at *Volk und Welt* prior to the first East German publication of *Memento Stalingrad* Weinert urged that the text be issued as soon as possible “da es eine politische Mission erfüllen kann.”¹²⁷ The exact nature of this “Mission” became clear in the writer’s foreword to the 1951 text. Here Weinert describes his motivation to publish the diary not so much because of its “historischer Wert”, as out of the conviction “daß es gerade jetzt von Nutzen sein könnte.”¹²⁸ West German re-militarisation, invocations of “d[er] ‘Ehre’ des Soldaten” and the political lassitude which Weinert sees prevailing among West Germans all remind him of the situation at Stalingrad. Letters and reports from West Germany are evidence “daß viele Menschen dort sich heute in einem Seelen- und Geisteszustand befinden, der dem der deutschen Soldaten vor Stalingrad ganz ähnlich ist. Sie wissen nicht aus noch ein, fallen auf alle möglichen Versprechungen herein, legen ihr Geschick in die Hände von ‘Führern’ und verfallen schließlich einer nihilistischen Stimmung [...] Genauso dachten die dreihundertdreißigtausend im Kessel von Stalingrad, bevor es zu spät war.”¹²⁹ The lie drummed into German soldiers at Stalingrad that the Red Army took no prisoners is paralleled by “die Lüge von heute, man müsse den Widerstand, daß heißt den Krieg, vorbereiten, weil die Sowjetunion Deutschland überfallen wolle.”¹³⁰ Against the background of an assumed threat of a Third World War from the West, Weinert represented his diary as a timely “Warnung” to West German readers,

¹²⁶ The headline of a review of the diary in *Die Tat*, 2.2.1952

¹²⁷ AdK Weinert: 506

¹²⁸ MS, p. 13

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, p.11

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 13

who, he hoped, would heed its “Lehre [...], damit unserem Lande ein neues, aber weit entsetzlicheres Stalingrad erspart bleibt.”¹³¹

Weinert’s foreword to the 1951 text rehearsed a familiar paradigm for the interpretation of the current Cold War stand-off with reference to the Battle of Stalingrad in 1950s East Germany. Invocations of “ein zweites Stalingrad” in the context of East German criticism of the *Bundesrepublik* as the alleged reincarnation of fascist Germany were common at this time.¹³² Public commemoration of Stalingrad was grasped as an opportunity to reaffirm the anti-fascist basis of the GDR State in contrast to the alleged “revanchism” of Adenauer’s Germany.¹³³ Michael Kumpfmüller points to the frequency of claims of ‘ein zweites Stalingrad’ with reference to West German re-militarisation and the integration of the Federal Republic in a western military and political alliance in statements by former Stalingrad veterans in the GDR media of the early 1950s.¹³⁴ In the context of the SED’s *Deutschlandpolitik* in the 1950s warnings against a second Stalingrad in West Germany by GDR commentators typically prized East Germany’s role in “der Kampf für den Frieden” which would culminate in a united anti-fascist Germany.¹³⁵

A view of contemporary German politics and the political function of *Memento Stalingrad* in Weinert’s foreword is echoed in the many GDR reviews of the text. Political developments in West Germany, more specifically moves towards re-militarisation, integration with the West and an alleged “antisowjetische Hetze” are interpreted as preparations towards a new German military campaign

¹³¹ The reproduction of a pamphlet to German soldiers at Stalingrad by Weinert on the cover of the first GDR edition of *Memento Stalingrad* is significant given the role assigned to the text by its author.

¹³² See Fischer, 2001, pp. 132-3

¹³³ An assumed opposition between the anti-fascist GDR and the Bundesrepublik was an integral part of the legitimacy discourse of the East German State: “Als permanentes Kontrastelement benötigt diese legitimatorische Komponente die Entwicklung in der Bundesrepublik, deren Umgang mit Nationalsozialismus als Antipode per se wahrgenommen und gedeutet wird.” (Danyel, 1995, pp. 37-38)

¹³⁴ Kumpfmüller, 1996, pp. 173-75

¹³⁵ As Echternkamp writes “Die SED machte sich die Erfahrung des Zweiten Weltkriegs für ihre Warnung vor einem Dritten Weltkrieg dienstbar, um sich selbst als Partei des Friedens zu präsentieren.” (Echternkamp, 2002, p. 309). The following appeal signed by the former Generals Lattmann and Lenski and by Wilhelm Adam appears in *Neues Deutschland* on the 2nd of February 1951: “Kein zweites Stalingrad! Ehemalige Stalingrader rufen am Jahrestag von Stalingrad zum aktiven Kampf gegen die Remilitarisierung auf.” An article by Otto Rühle in the *National Zeitung* to mark the anniversary of the battle in 1951 entitled *Damit Deutschland lebe!* calls for the overthrow of the Adenauer government.

against the Soviet Union and its allies. In this context, Weinert's text is seen as a timely warning, addressed to West German readers, against a repeat of the scenario at Stalingrad. For Alfred Kantorowicz in the *Tägliche Rundschau* the diary is "von brennender Gegenwärtigkeit" in the light of "neue verbrecherische Kriegsabenteuer" currently being prepared "unter amerikanischem Druck."¹³⁶ Weinert's text is "eine schreckliche Warnung an alle die Rasenden, die neue Kriegsüberfälle vorbereiten." In *Aufbau* Günter Caspar emphasises the text's "außergewöhnliche[r] Aktualität im Friedenskampf unserer Tage." The diary "warnt die Deutschen vor solchen Politikern wie Adenauer, Hallstein, die sie einem neuen Stalingrad entgegentreiben wollen."¹³⁷ While the reviewer in *Heute und Morgen* highlights the "erzieherische Wirkung" of *Memento Stalingrad* for West and East German readers alike,¹³⁸ for most commentators the text's anti-war message is valid for West Germans alone. For the writer in *Zeit im Bild* the text belongs "in die Postsendungen nach Westdeutschland, besonders an die Adresse derjenigen unserer Landsleute, die noch glauben, man müsste auf einen Befehl von oben warten, um das neue Kriegsverbrechen an unserem Volke zu verhindern."¹³⁹ The reviewer of the *Berliner Montag* calls on East Germans to pass on a copy of the text to their "Brüder in Westdeutschland."¹⁴⁰ The *Tägliche Rundschau* publishes the letter of an unidentified worker from Hamburg who in his appreciation of *Memento Stalingrad* as "das Licht des Friedens, aus dem Osten uns leuchtend" confirms East German claims regarding the Federal Republic and the role of Weinert's text.¹⁴¹ This ideal West German reader of the diary is, in all likelihood, the author Pelle Igel.¹⁴² The letter is a composite of phrases taken from a much longer unpublished typescript by Igel entitled "Betrachtungen zum Buche 'Memento Stalingrad' von Erich Weinert."¹⁴³ Allegations in the GDR reception of Weinert's text of a resurgence of fascism in the

¹³⁶ *Tägliche Rundschau*, 5.02.1952

¹³⁷ *Aufbau*, 19.04.1952

¹³⁸ *Heute und Morgen*, 9.09.1952

¹³⁹ *Zeit im Bild*, 20.02.1952

¹⁴⁰ *Berliner Montag*, 8.09.1952

¹⁴¹ *Tägliche Rundschau*, 29.12.1954

¹⁴² A pseudonym for Hans Peter Woile

¹⁴³ AdK Weinert: S81

Bundesrepublik reach their apotheosis in this highly melodramatic piece. West Germany is “diese Finsternis des Ewiggestrigen” where “die Herren Hitler, Goebbels, Streicher und Himmler [...] grausige Urstände feiern” and “ein zweiter Angriffsplan ‘Barbarossa’ ausgeheckt wird.” Igel compares the political course followed by the current State Secretary of the *Bundesrepublik*, Hallstein, to the aggressive expansionism of his National Socialist predecessor Herbert von Bismarck. A recent “Woche der Kriegsgefangenen” is illustrative of a revived militant nationalism in West Germany: “Die ‘Helden’ von gestern. Sie sind tot. Aber sie sollen weiterleben. Bonn will es so. Bonn braucht es so. Also leben sie in Hunderttausenden von Exemplaren in den Gefangenenlagern der SU weiter. Es i s t die Gelegenheit, die Menschen in die Schweigemärsche zu bringen und an die Gefallenendenkmäler. An Ort und Stelle wird die ‘Heldenrieselungsanlage’ aufgedreht. Der Herr Bürgermeister. Der Herr Pfarrer. Der Herr 1. Vorsitzende der chem. Kriegsgefangenen [...] Die uniformierte Feuerwehr. Die uniformierte Musikkapelle. Der Herr Gesangverein.”¹⁴⁴ In the light of these developments in West Germany Igel suggests that *Memento Stalingrad* can have a necessary “Schockwirkung” on the West German population.

“Unsere neue Freiheitsarmee”¹⁴⁵- the publication and reception of *Memento Stalingrad* 1957-61

In 1957 Weinert’s Stalingrad diary was re-published as the first part of volume five of his collected works edited by Willi Bredel and Weinert’s wife Li.¹⁴⁶ The volume brought together a number of the author’s writings on the theme of Stalingrad. The diary was followed in part two by selected poems and the scripts of radio broadcasts written by Weinert during and immediately after the Battle. Part three contained extracts from his hitherto unpublished report on the formation of the *Nationalkomitee ‘Freies Deutschland’* and the *Bund Deutscher Offiziere* from the year 1945, as well as

¹⁴⁴ The underlining is in the original text.

¹⁴⁵ Weinert’s description of the *Nationalkomitee* and the BDO in his speech to mark the inauguration of the latter cited in MS, 1957, p. 250

¹⁴⁶ *Memento Stalingrad*, zusammengestellt von Willi Bredel, Verlag Volk und Welt, Berlin, 1957. This edition of Weinert’s text was re-issued in 1960 and 1961. The print-runs for each issue were as follows – 1957: 3,000, 1960: 5,000 and 1961: 4,500 plus an additional 15,000 for the *kleine Hausbibliothek* series.

the texts of speeches he made at their respective inaugurations in July and September 1943. This section is illustrated by photographs from that time showing Weinert in consultation with German prisoners-of-war who were active in both organisations. The whole volume was introduced by Weinert's foreword of 1951 and an epilogue by the editor, Bredel,¹⁴⁷ appeared at the end of part three.

The media coverage of Weinert's text in the GDR after 1957 was only a fraction of what it was in the early 1950s. In most cases extracts from the diary were printed in East German newspapers with little or no additional commentary.¹⁴⁸ My analysis of the reception of the later edition of *Memento Stalingrad* is therefore focused on Bredel's epilogue¹⁴⁹ and the first West German discussion of Weinert's text in the newspaper of the *Vereinigung der Verfolgten des Naziregimes* (VVN), *Die Tat*.

In 1950s West Germany narratives of German suffering at Stalingrad made an important contribution to the construction of the myth of a "saubere Wehrmacht" which the newly founded *Bundeswehr* could claim as its legacy.¹⁵⁰ We have seen how in the earlier part of that decade East German representations of Stalingrad often targeted the *Bundesrepublik's* re-militarisation. In the discussion of the first GDR editions of *Memento Stalingrad* West German "Militarismus" was often opposed to an alleged East German "Kampf für den Frieden." With moves, from the mid-1950s, towards the foundation of GDR military institutions, the anti-militaristic rhetoric which had previously characterised East German public discourse was toned down. In the context of the founding of the *Nationale Volksarmee* (NVA) in 1956 and the establishment of the

¹⁴⁷ Bredel was at that time a member of the *Zentralkomitee* of the SED and a member of the *Kulturkommission*. His own Stalingrad novel, *Der Sonderführer*, was first published in the GDR in 1948.

¹⁴⁸ Between 1957 and 1961, extracts from the diary were printed in the following newspapers and journals: *Neues Deutschland*; *Volksstimme*; *Volkswacht*; *Leseheft*; *Unser Prenzlauer-Berg*; *Tribüne: BZ am Abend*; *Freiheit*; *Mitteilungsblatt der Arbeitsgemeinschaft ehemaliger Offiziere*; *Neue Erziehung*; *Märkische Volksstimme*.

¹⁴⁹ The epilogue first appeared in *Neues Deutschland* on the 13/14th of July 1957, prior to the publication of the collected works edition of *Memento Stalingrad*.

¹⁵⁰ "Für die Verankerung der Bundeswehr in der Gesellschaft und das Absehen von den Verbrechen der Wehrmacht war gerade die Schlacht um Stalingrad von Nutzen, da sich der Opferstatus der 6. Armee tief in die kollektive Erinnerung der Deutschen eingegraben hatte." (Ebert, 2003 b, p. 78) On West German constructions of a "saubere Wehrmacht" in the 1950s, see also Echternkamp, 2002.

*Arbeitsgemeinschaft ehemaliger Offiziere*¹⁵¹ and the *Institut für Deutsche Militärgeschichte*, two years later, official commemoration of World War II in the GDR sought increasingly to invoke a positive military heritage. It is no coincidence that in the concept for the *Neue Wache* memorial in East Berlin agreed in 1956, German soldiers were to be commemorated together with 'anti-fascist' resisters and victims of Nazi persecution.¹⁵² From this time representations of Stalingrad in the GDR assumed a comparable function to their counterparts in West Germany. This change of emphasis can be traced in the later reception of *Memento Stalingrad*.

We have seen how the *Nationalkomitee* and the *Bund Deutscher Offiziere* (BDO) remained a blind-spot in a discussion of anti-fascist resistance conducted in East German reviews of *Memento Stalingrad* in the early 1950s. The 1957 edition of Weinert's text and its reception reflected and participated in the growing official recognition in the GDR after 1955 of the resistance of these organisations.¹⁵³ Weinert's text was one of a number of East German histories and (auto)biographical studies of the *Nationalkomitee* and the BDO which began to appear from the mid-1950s.¹⁵⁴ This literature accompanied and legitimised East German 'remilitarisation,' providing positive military models for the new GDR organisations.¹⁵⁵ At the same time it challenged a host of apologetic Generals' memoirs appearing in West Germany, many of which were focussed on the Battle of Stalingrad.¹⁵⁶ In this context it is significant that extracts from Weinert's diary appeared prominently in both the *Armeerundschau* and the *Mitteilungsblatt* of the *Arbeitsgemeinschaft ehemaliger*

¹⁵¹ This organisation provided a haven for former *Wehrmacht* officers who, following a decision by the Politbüro in February 1957, were let go from the NVA. On the organisation and its functions see Heider, 1995, pp. 165-69.

¹⁵² See Echternkamp, 2002, p. 314-5

¹⁵³ From the 12th of August 1958 former members of the NKFD and their families were officially recognised as *Verfolgte des Naziregimes* (see Groehler, 1995, p. 29). For a detailed analysis of the early East German historiography of the NKFD and its functions see Heider (1995) and Hartewig (2000).

¹⁵⁴ Weinert's report on the foundation of the NKFD was also published separately in 1957.

¹⁵⁵ As Hartewig (2000, p. 249) writes with reference to the autobiographies of members of the NKFD published by Verlag der Nation from the mid-1950s: "Die Autobiographien des Militärs im NKFD spielten, nicht ganz zufällig, die Begleitmusik beim Aufbau der NVA. Sie sollten eine andere militärische Tradition in der DDR begründen helfen."

¹⁵⁶ See Hartewig, 2000, pp. 248-9. In a 1954 essay Franz Fühmann labelled these West German texts "eine Literatur des Kesselrings."

Offiziere.¹⁵⁷ And where these dates had previously gone unnoted in East Germany, many GDR newspapers and periodicals now chose to print excerpts from *Memento Stalingrad* on the anniversaries of the foundations of the *Nationalkomitee* and the BDO.¹⁵⁸ The trajectory Stalingrad-NKFD/BDO-GDR was thus foregrounded.

As in the early 1950s, the later editions of Weinert's text were the basis for claims of the suffering and innocence of the vast majority of soldiers at Stalingrad. In his epilogue Wille Bredel recalled his presence at the official capitulation of German forces at Stalingrad on the 31st of January 1943. His narrative of this episode supports the view that German soldiers were victims of a terrible betrayal by their military authorities. In their negotiations with Soviet military leaders outlined here, German Generals show no concern for the fate of their soldiers: "Mit keinem einzigen Wort fragten die deutschen Generale nach dem weiteren Schicksal ihrer noch lebenden Soldaten. Kein Wort darüber, ob den Typhus- oder Frostkranken geholfen werden könne. Auch kein Wort darüber, ob in dieser trostlosen und abgelegenen Steppe für die Zehntausende Gefangenen Verpflegung vorhanden sei."¹⁵⁹ Towards the end of the epilogue Bredel recapitulated the history of the *Nationalkomitee* and claimed this military lineage for the GDR. He described the political awakening to anti-fascism which precipitated the formation of the *Nationalkomitee* by German soldiers, officers and generals after Stalingrad and underlined the role they went on to play in post-War East Germany: "Die meisten Anhänger des *Nationalkomitees* zählten nach 1945 zu den ersten Aktivisten, die unter den schwersten Bedingungen und größten Entbehrungen selbstlos darangingen, in der damaligen Ostzone am demokratischen Wiederaufbau zu arbeiten, und zwar nicht nur Arbeiter und Bauern, die den Soldatenrock getragen hatten, sondern auch junge und ältere Intellektuelle, die Offiziere und in einigen Fällen sogar Generale in der *Wehrmacht* gewesen waren."¹⁶⁰ He ascribed an altogether

¹⁵⁷ *Armeerundschau*, September, 1957 and *Mitteilungsblatt der Arbeitsgemeinschaft ehemaliger Offiziere*, January, 1961

¹⁵⁸ Extracts from the diary are printed in the July 1957 edition of *Neue deutsche Literatur* and also in *Neues Deutschland* (14.07.1957), the *Volksstimme* (13.07.1957) and the *Armeerundschau* (September, 1957).

¹⁵⁹ MS, 1957, p. 263

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 266

different military heritage to West Germany. We have seen how commentators on *Memento Stalingrad* in the early 1950s alleged an unbroken continuity between National Socialist Germany and the *Bundesrepublik*. In his epilogue Bredel restated this comparison, but here the focus of his criticism is confined to the *Bundeswehr*.¹⁶¹ He alleged that unrepentant Nazi Generals were at the helm of the West German army: “Das Oberkommando der neuformierten deutschen Wehrmacht ist den alten Hitlergeneralen übertragen.”¹⁶² References to named former *Wehrmacht* generals and officers who continued to fulfil important functions within the West German military reinforced his argument.¹⁶³ Against the background of the latter’s alleged war-mongering at the end of the 1950s, Weinert’s text was once again cast in the role of a warning against a Third World War.¹⁶⁴ While Bredel did not draw an explicit contrast between the *Bundeswehr* and the NVA, this opposition was implied. He invoked opposing military heritages for East and West Germany - in the logic of the epilogue the GDR had inherited the redeemed German soldiers and officers of the *Nationalkomitee*/BDO while West Germany was a haven for “d[ie] alten und unbelehrbaren Hitlergenerale und reaktionären Militärs.”¹⁶⁵

Paul Heider has shown how East German historians of the *Nationalkomitee* tended to exaggerate its influence on resistance groups within Germany and to imply, falsely, that its aims were identical with those of the KPD.¹⁶⁶ “Die Zuordnung des NKFD zur Geschichte des antifaschistischen Widerstandes der KPD”¹⁶⁷ is typical for GDR histories of the movement which, in their portrayal of the *Nationalkomitee* as an extension of the German Communist Party, obscure the political and

¹⁶¹ This is consistent with Kumpfmüller’s observation that claims of “ein zweites Stalingrad” targeted at West Germany as a whole waned towards the end of the 1950s in the context of increased East German acceptance of the fact of division. (See Kumpfmüller, 1996, p. 174)

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 259

¹⁶³ Bredel refers to Speidel, Heusinger, Milch and Globke.

¹⁶⁴ “Angesichts solcher Gefahr für die Menschheit [...] ist es wohl angebracht, das müde Gedächtnis der Menschen ein wenig wachzurütteln. Kein Werk vermöchte dies wirkungsvoller als Erich Weinerts Frontnotizbuch.” (*Ibid.*, p. 260)

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 267

¹⁶⁶ In Ulbricht’s *Zur Geschichte der neuesten Zeit* first published in 1955 the *Nationalkomitee* is portrayed as a “führendes Zentrum” of antifaschist resistance under the influence of the KPD (See Heider, 1995, p. 163).

¹⁶⁷ Heider, p. 170

social diversity of its members.¹⁶⁸ Weinert's *Bericht über das Nationalkomitee 'Freies Deutschland'* in part three of the 1957 edition of *Memento Stalingrad* does not suggest that the ideological platform of the NKFD was equivalent to that of the German Communist Party. It rather describes the cooperation between various strands of anti-fascist resistance which led to the establishment of "eine alle Lager umfassenden Organisation [...], die im Namen aller deutscher Antifaschisten sprechen konnte."¹⁶⁹ Yet the short introduction to Weinert's report reflects the official East German view of that organisation which Heider has outlined. Here the stated aims of the *Nationalkomitee* coincide with those of the KPD. We read that members of the *Nationalkomitee* believed that "die imperialistischen Monopole und die deutschen Militärs [...] entmachtet werden müssen" and that "das Schicksal unseres Vaterlandes in die Hände des werktätigen Volkes, insbesondere in die der Arbeiterklasse gelegt werden muß, wenn Frieden und Demokratie gesichert sein sollen."¹⁷⁰ In this way Weinert's report served as the basis for a claim which it did not actually corroborate.

The unprecedented attention granted to the NKFD/BDO in the GDR of the late 1950s was motivated by both internal and external memory politics. An acknowledgement of the resistance of the *Nationalkomitee* and the BDO also responded to the increased public recognition granted to the 20th of July plotters in West Germany at this time.¹⁷¹ Just as the NKFD and BDO came to represent a desired military heritage for East Germany, the *Wehrmacht* generals involved in the attempted assassination of Hitler provided positive models for the *Bundeswehr*. The appropriation of the NKFD and the BDO within a narrative of communist 'anti-fascist' resistance in the GDR precluded

¹⁶⁸ For Heider the homogenisation of the NKFD and the BDO in East German discussions of anti-fascist resistance was absolute: "Zu keiner Zeit wurden [...] in der DDR-Literatur die aus sozialpolitischen Bindungen herrührenden divergierenden Interessen der verschiedenen im NKFD und BDO zusammenarbeitenden Kräfte und unterschiedlichen politischen Strömungen erörtert." (Ibid., p. 172)

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., p.200. Weinert makes particular reference to the group of *Wehrmacht* officers around Dr. Ernst Hadermann who opposed Hitler and played a leading role in the NKFD. (MS 1957, p. 197-8)

¹⁷⁰ MS 1957, p. 193

¹⁷¹ Heider makes this link between the East German rehabilitation of the NKFD/BDO and the concurrent recognition of the 20th of July Plotters in West Germany. (See Heider, 1995, pp. 170-1) For details of the commemoration of the 20th of July Plotters in West Germany from the early 1950s see Echterkamp, 2002, pp. 312-4 and Reichel, 2001, pp. 97-106. The first public acknowledgement of the 20th of July Plotters in East Germany can be dated to a ceremony organised by the *Arbeitsgemeinschaft ehemaliger Offiziere* on the 20th anniversary of the attempted Hitler assassination. (See Heider, 1995, pp. 168-9)

West German recognition of the resistance of these organisations for many years. The mutual exclusivity of the two branches of resistance – KPD/NKFD and 20th of July plotters – within opposing discourses of resistance in the GDR and the *Bundesrepublik* is the context for the only West German treatment of Weinert’s text from this time. To mark the fifteenth anniversary of the Stalingrad capitulation the *Vereinigung der Verfolgten des Naziregimes* published extracts from Weinert’s diary in its newspaper *Die Tat*.¹⁷² In an introduction to the text the writer took aim at the West German exclusion of “de[r] deutsche Widerstand hinter den russischen Linien” and attempted to recuperate the *Nationalkomitee* for a discussion of resistance in the Federal Republic. His scepticism regarding the resistance of “Nazigegner mit dem Hakenkreuz auf der Uniform” bears remarkable similarities to contemporary East German dismissals of the resistance of the 20th of July plotters as reactionary.¹⁷³ His praise for German resistors who operated behind Soviet lines can be read as an oblique rejection of the so-called *Generalsverschwörung*: “Wir wollen heute einen derer zu Wort kommenlassen, die als Deutsche bei Stalingrad *wirklich* die Freiheit, die abendländische Kultur und Deutschland verteidigt haben.”¹⁷⁴ Contrary to East and West German representations of the *Nationalkomitee* as an adjunct of the KPD, this writer stressed the broad political spectrum of that organisation: “[sie war] alles andere als ein kommunistisches Parteiorgan, vielmehr eine vorbildliche antifaschistische Einheitsfront wie immer gearteter demokratisch denkender Deutscher.” Furthermore, against a perceived over-politicisation of the *Nationalkomitee* in the context of German division he argued: “Für die deutschen Antifaschisten [...] ging es [...] kaum noch um politische Belange, ihr verzweifeltes Ringen galt schließlich nur noch der nackten Lebensrettung für eine möglichst große Anzahl ihrer Landesleute.” This review of Weinert’s text with its praise for the

¹⁷² *Die Tat*, 1.02.1958

¹⁷³ Heider refers to a history of the NKFD by Otto Winzer from the year 1955 which describes the 20th of July plotters as “reaktionäre Verschwörer, deren politisches Ziel es gewesen ist, den Mehrfrontkrieg zu beenden und ihn allein an der Front gegen die Sowjetunion weiterzuführen.” (Heider, 1995, p. 164)

¹⁷⁴ My emphasis. The view expressed here in *Die Tat* recalls a debate within the VVN in the late 1940s, which sought to privilege Communist resistance over conservative and bourgeois resistors within Nazi Germany. (See Danyel, 1994, pp. 616-8)

achievements of the *Nationalkomitee* was an anomaly in a discussion of resistance in the *Bundesrepublik* of the 1950s. It would be the 1980s before the history of this organisation was included in the exhibition at the *Gedenkstätte Deutscher Widerstand* in West Berlin.

Conclusion

A forgotten Memento? The fate of Weinert's text after 1961

From a text which was canonical in the early part of the 1950s, *Memento Stalingrad* faded from East German public consciousness at the end of that decade. After the third issue of the collected works edition in 1961, the text was never again published in its entirety. In the 1960s extracts from Weinert's diary did appear occasionally in the GDR media¹⁷⁵ and in other publications,¹⁷⁶ but they were no longer invested with a political function in the current context. Printed in newspapers to mark the anniversary of the German capitulation at Stalingrad, such extracts seemed instead to serve a purely ceremonial function in a ritualised commemoration of the Battle which restated the established trajectory Stalingrad - *Nationalkomitee*/BDO - GDR. The diminishing presence of *Memento Stalingrad* may be seen in the context of an overall shift in the GDR reception of the Battle of Stalingrad towards the end of the 1950s. Michael Kumpfmüller speaks of a "Historisierung und Marginalisierung der Schlacht" in East German public discourse at this time.¹⁷⁷ From the annual marking of the German capitulation at Stalingrad in the early 1950s, by the early 1960s public commemoration of the battle was increasingly limited to significant anniversaries.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁵ Examples include: *Märkische Volksstimme*, Potsdam, (3.02.1963), *Freiheit*, Halle, (2.02.1963 and 27. 08. 1964) and *Neue Erziehung* (June 1962)

¹⁷⁶ Extracts from *Memento Stalingrad* were included in a 1960 brochure to mark Weinert's 70th birthday for *Kulturbund* members, in an almanac to mark Willi Bredel's 60th birthday by the *Aufbau-Verlag* in 1962 and in a Weinert anthology published by the *Kinderbuchverlag* in 1968. In a letter to publisher *Volk und Welt* in December 1961 the *Urania-Verlag* requested permission to publish extracts from the diary in a planned history book, *Wer macht Geschichte*. I have not been able to locate a book bearing this title.

¹⁷⁷ Kumpfmüller, p. 183

¹⁷⁸ See *ibid.*, p. 184. Kumpfmüller claims that towards the end of the 1950s "die Bedeutung des Themas Stalingrad [nimmt] in den verschiedenen (Partei-) Zeitungen allmählich ab." (*ibid.*, p. 182)

Kumpfmüller's contention of Stalingrad's "Marginalisierung" in 1960s East Germany must be qualified. The prominence of autobiographical accounts of the battle by former Stalingrad veterans and *Nationalkomitee* members published in the 1960s suggests that this episode was still very much present in the East German public sphere at this time.¹⁷⁹ While the Stalingrad texts of anti-fascist resisters such as Weinert, Ulbricht and Bredel had been the chief mediators of Stalingrad memory in the GDR of the 1950s, in the following decade this function was fulfilled by another set of Battle participants – former *Wehrmacht* officers who then occupied important positions in GDR public life.¹⁸⁰ In their representations of Stalingrad as a gross betrayal of German soldiers by Hitler and leading Nazis and their generally apologetic impetus these texts had much in common with the West German "Generalsmemoiren" of the 1950s. Even the title of Helmut Welz' autobiographical novel *Verratene Grenadiere* (1964) recalled Gerlach's *Die Verratene Armee* (1957). And as was the case in the earlier novel, in Welz' text "die Schuldproblematik stellt sich [...] als eine kaum verwickelte dar: hier gute Soldaten, da Nazis."¹⁸¹

Jens Ebert has drawn attention to how documentary material relating to the Battle, far from contributing to a greater understanding of the facts, has been persistently exploited and manipulated in the construction of Stalingrad myths in post-War Germany.¹⁸² Accounts of the Battle have typically foregrounded their authenticity with reference to the lived experience and real documents on which they were allegedly based. Yet in many cases, an insistence on the authenticity of representations of Stalingrad by both authors and critics has actually helped to conceal the full facts of the Battle and corroborated versions of this event which were desirable in different post-War West and East German contexts. The text *Letzte Briefe aus Stalingrad* (1950) was one of many West German publications of the 1950s through which the innocence and honour of ordinary German

¹⁷⁹ For example: Helmut Welz, *Verratene Grenadiere* (1964), Wilhelm Adam, *Der schwere Entschluß* (1965), Otto Rühle, *Genesung in Jelabuga* (1967) and Luitpold Steidle, *Entscheidung an der Wolga* (1969)

¹⁸⁰ Welz was Mayor of Dresden, Adam and Rühle were active in the *Volkskammer*, Steidle was Minister for health and later Mayor of Weimar.

¹⁸¹ Bernig, 1997, p. 145

¹⁸² See for example, Ebert, 2003 (a) and (b)

soldiers were articulated.¹⁸³ It is only in recent years that the truth of the falsification and manipulation of these letters has come to light. Theodor Plievier's *Stalingrad* was based on the letters and diaries of German participants in the Battle to which the author had access in the immediate aftermath of the event. German commentators on this text emphasised its status as authentic document, yet at the same time overlooked Plievier's complex treatment of the guilt question in the novel to depict German soldiers at Stalingrad as victims.¹⁸⁴

This chapter has illustrated a similar (mis)appropriation of authentic documentary material in the service of retrospective politicised interpretations of Stalingrad in East Germany during the 1950s. The message of Erich Weinert's *Memento Stalingrad* was distorted and aligned with official narratives of the Battle in the East German reception of this text. In this case study I have shown the significance of Stalingrad in shifting official hierarchies of anti-fascist resistance throughout the 1950s in the GDR. In the early part of that decade *Memento Stalingrad* was implicated in an official prioritization of the resistance of the *Gruppe-Ulbricht* which endorsed the leading role of its members in GDR politics and society. The later editions of the text contributed to an official historiography of the *Nationalkomitee* and the *Bund deutscher Offiziere* which constructed a legitimising heritage for new East German military structures and facilitated the integration of former *Wehrmacht* members into GDR society. Through its reception this text participated in East German criticism of the Federal Republic as the alleged successor state to Nazi Germany.

Weinert's preoccupation with the *kollektive Mitschuld* of Germans in his diary was eclipsed in the public discourse of anti-fascist resistance and collective German transfiguration which dominated in 1950s East Germany. His stance on German guilt, expressed in the pages of his diary, found no outlet in appraisals of the text which represented Stalingrad as a triumph of Communist resistance leading to the foundation of the GDR. Any East German acknowledgement of Weinert's treatment of the

¹⁸³ See Ebert, 2003 (a), pp. 82-3

¹⁸⁴ For details of the reception of *Stalingrad* see Peitsch, 1981 and Bernig, 1997, pp. 241-44

guilt question in *Memento Stalingrad* was limited to the private sphere. While individual readings of Weinert's text by GDR readers do not strictly fall within the purview of this chapter, the copies of *Memento Stalingrad* I have examined in the course of my research provide an interesting supplement to my findings.¹⁸⁵ Without aiming to give an exhaustive analysis, I mention these texts here because they give us some information about the relationship between public and private memory discourses in 1950s East Germany. In many cases it is the passages where Weinert points to the guilt of ordinary German soldiers and details their crimes which seemed to have attracted East German readers' particular attention as evidenced by comments scribbled on the margins of the text and liberal underlining and deleting. One reader underlined the graphic descriptions of German soldiers' brutality against partisans and civilians in the Soviet Union and highlighted the names of the culprits given in Weinert's diary. Another was moved to contradict Weinert's accusations, writing comments such as "keine Ahnung!" and "Haß" in the margins of his text. Yet another reader was provoked to write "er verschönt" in a passage where Weinert is less severe in his judgement of German soldiers at Stalingrad. Regardless of whether they appeared to agree or disagree with Weinert's position, these texts and their handwritten paratexts demonstrate that his discussion of German guilt elicited an emotional response among GDR readers below the threshold of official discourse. Judging from these examples, the gap between Weinert's account and later public narratives of the Battle of Stalingrad which East German commentators sought to conceal was indeed noticed and remembered by individual readers of *Memento Stalingrad* in the GDR.

¹⁸⁵ I am grateful to Professor Helmut Peitsch at the University of Potsdam for lending me some of his private copies of *Memento Stalingrad*.

“Auf äußerst zwiespältige Weise präsent”¹: The publication and reception of Paul Peikert’s
‘Festung Breslau’ in den Berichten eines Pfarrers in Poland, the GDR and West Germany

Introduction

In the past decade, narratives of *Flucht und Vertreibung*, the traumatic expulsion and flight of Germans from present-day Eastern Europe at the end of World War II, have abounded in Germany.² The expulsions and their aftermath have been the subject of literary reflection³ and historical research,⁴ televised documentaries,⁵ high-profile exhibitions,⁶ films and plays.⁷ The *Zentrum gegen Vertreibung* proposed by the *Bund der Vertriebenen* has been a source of recurring political controversy between Germany and its eastern neighbours.⁸ Commentators view the recent prominence of the theme of the expulsions in the German media in terms of a return of the repressed.⁹ In the case of West Germany, it has often been assumed that the issue of “die Vertreibung”

¹ Michael Schwartz’ observation “In der Erinnerungskultur der DDR waren die Heimaten der Vertriebenen, der historischen Osten Deutschlands und die deutschen Siedlungsgebiete Ost- und Südosteuropas, auf äußerst zwiespältige Weise präsent” (Schwartz, 2005, p.71) seemed to me appropriate to describe the resonance of Peikert’s diary in Poland, the GDR and the Federal Republic.

² There are no neutral terms to describe the German expellees and their experience. The German designations “Flucht und Vertreibung,” “Vertriebene,” “Umsiedlung” and “Um-/Aussiedler” arose in the context of politically charged and conflicting representations of this War episode in East and West Germany after 1945. Throughout this chapter I use the terms “expulsion,” “forced migration” and “expellees” not so much as synonyms for “die Vertreibung” and “Vertriebene,” but as descriptions of those Germans who were forced to migrate westwards at the end of World War II and their experience. On most occasions where I use the German terms I refer to specific positions on the issue in East and West Germany in the period surveyed by this chapter. For a cogent discussion of the terms *Vertreibung/Vertriebene* and their usage see Ther (1998, pp. 89-105) and the discussion by Eva Hahn and Henning Hans in *Deutsche Erinnerungsorte*, Vol. 1, Munich, 2001, pp. 335-51

³ Günter Grass’ *Im Krebsgang* (2002) was seen to break with a literary taboo on the issue of the expulsions in Germany. It appeared in the context of other literary representations of this War episode and the troubled integration of expellees such as Hans-Ulrich Treichel’s *Der Verlorene* (1997), Tanja Dücker’s *Himmelskörper* (2003), Reinhard Jirgl’s *Die Unvollendeten* (2003) and Christoph Hein’s *Landnahme* (2004). Diaries and memoirs of the expulsions feature in the last volume of Walter Kempowski’s *Echolot* project, *Abgesang ’45* (2005).

⁴ See for example Ther (1998), Kleßmann (2001), Urban (2005) and Lotz (2008)

⁵ For example the ARD’s televised series *Die Vertriebenen* in 2001

⁶ In the Summer of 2006 the *Bund der Vertriebenen* organised a controversial exhibition on the expulsions entitled *Erzwungene Wege*. At the same time the exhibition ‘*Flucht, Vertreibung, Integration*’ could be seen in the *Deutsches Historisches Museum* in Berlin.

⁷ The film *Die Flucht* was shown on ARD in February 2007. In January of the same year a Polish-German production of a play on the expulsions, *Transfer*, ran in the HAU-Theater in Berlin.

⁸ See discussions of the proposed *Zentrum gegen Vertreibung* by Karl Schlögel (pp. 5-13) and Danyel/Kleßmann (pp. 31-6) in the special edition of the *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft*, 51 (1), 2003

⁹ See for example the interview with historian Hans-Ulrich Wehler in *Der Spiegel*, 25.03.2002, pp. 61-4. Michael Schwartz (1997, p. 183) speaks of “das Wiedererwachen der Erinnerung an Vertreibung und Vertriebenenintegration” in the mid-1990s. In an article in *Die Welt* on the 5th of February, 2002 Wolfgang

was increasingly excluded from public discussion during the late 1960s in the context of *Ostpolitik*, the successful integration of expellees into West German society and a public focus on German War guilt prompted by the trials of prominent Nazi criminals at the beginning of that decade.¹⁰ A “Tabuisierung der Vertreibungserfahrung”¹¹ in the GDR is seen to date from that state’s official recognition of the Oder-Neisse border with Poland in the *Görlitzer Abkommen* of 1950. There, the memories of expellees and the subject of the eastern *Heimat* were excluded from official discourse because of the threat they were seen to represent to the validity of the new East German-Polish border and to the official GDR narrative of a ‘liberation from fascism’ by the Red Army at the end of World War II.¹²

This chapter returns to the period frequently identified with a collective silence on the issue of the expulsions in both Germanies. In an examination of the publication and reception of a diary testimony of the flight of Germans from the East in Poland, the GDR and West Germany I ask how this World War II episode was remembered through the medium of this text, by whom, in what context and for what purpose. Paul Peikert’s diary of the Siege of Breslau at the end of the War was first published in Polish translation by the *Ossolineum Publishing House* in Breslau in 1964.¹³ A German edition of the text, published by the East German *Union-Verlag*, followed two years later.¹⁴ Between 1966 and 1974 the diary was issued five times in the GDR with a total print-run of 57,000 copies. My analysis seeks to highlight the interrelationship of positions on the expulsions in Poland, the GDR and West Germany as articulated in the publication and reception of Peikert’s testimony from the mid-1960s until the 1980s. In the case of both Germanies I locate a discussion of the

Büscher suggested that Günter Grass had broken an established German taboo on the expulsions with his book, *Im Krebsgang*.

¹⁰ For proponents of this periodization of West German remembrance of “Flucht und Vertreibung” see for example Faulenbach (2002), Schwartz (1997), Urban (2005), Kelletat (2005) and Beer (2005)

¹¹ Schwartz, 1997, p. 189

¹² On the official East German position regarding the expulsions see for example Ther (2004), Bilke (2003), Schwartz (2005) and Lotz (2008)

¹³ Paul Peikert, *Kronika Dni Oblężenia* [Diary of the Days of the Siege], edited by Karol Jonca and Alfred Konieczny, Ossolineum, Wrocław, 1964

¹⁴ Paul Peikert, *Festung Breslau in den Berichten eines Pfarrers. 22. Januar bis 6. Mai 1945*, Union-Verlag, Berlin (Ost), 1966 [Hereafter FB]

expulsions stimulated by Peikert's text in relation to contemporary public narratives of German War guilt and anti-fascist resistance.

Textual Analysis

Paul Peikert's diary of the Siege of Breslau from January to April 1945 represents the last part of an eight-volume chronicle of parish life he wrote during his time as parish priest of the Catholic St. Mauritius' Church. Peikert was one of the few members of the clergy permitted to stay in Breslau following the decision by the German military command to turn the city into a fortress so as to impede the Soviet advance in the final months of the War.¹⁵ In the Polish and East German editions of the text, the diary is followed by a short report written by the priest in June 1945 which summarizes events in the Fortress from January to May 1945. In addition to keeping a meticulous record of attendances at mass, communicants and confessions, in his diary Peikert documents the progress of the War from within the besieged city. He describes the flight of Germans from Breslau and the destruction of the city by a combination of Russian bombardments and German military operations. He gathers and comments on contemporary documents, including reports from the *Schlesische Tageszeitung*, the decrees of Nazi administrators, a speech by Hitler and numerous anti-fascist pamphlets.

*"Eine so grosse Heimatlosigkeit, die in der Geschichte ihresgleichen sucht, ist über unser deutsches Volk gekommen"*¹⁶

In his diary Peikert bears witness to the mass exodus of Germans from the East in the last months of World War II and he describes the chaotic evacuation of Breslau's civilian population. His discussion of forced German migration is concentrated in diary entries for the month of January 1945, a time

¹⁵ On the history of wartime Breslau see Norman Davies and Roger Moorhouse (2002, pp. 326-407) and Gregor Thum (2003).

¹⁶ FB, p. 46

prior to the complete encirclement of the city by Soviet troops, when Breslau was an exit point for German civilians fleeing westwards from East Prussia, the Wartheland and Silesia. In the entry for the 21st of January we read: “Aus dem ganzen Osten des Grossdeutschen Reiches sind über 6 Millionen Menschen unterwegs. Die Flucht traf mitten in den kältesten Winter hinein.[...] Schon jetzt wird die Zahl dieser Opfer auf 150 000 bis 200 000 Menschen gezählt und man sagt, dass diese Zahl noch zu niedrig sei.”¹⁷ Peikert illustrates the situation at Breslau’s train stations where hordes struggle to get a place on overcrowded trains leaving for the West. In the ensuing confusion mothers lose sight of their children and Peikert reports that “auf dem Hauptbahnhof allein gegen 60-70 Kinder zu Tode erdrückt oder zertreten wurden.”¹⁸ Most of the evacuees have to make their journey on foot and this section of the diary is full of harrowing descriptions of the processions of fleeing Germans who pass through Breslau in January 1945.¹⁹ In the months after January 1945 the priest’s attention turns to the forced evacuations of Breslau’s remaining civilians from one city district to another prior to the destruction of their homes by German *Zündkommandos*.²⁰

In post-War German discussions the word *Vertreibung* has come to signify the violent expulsion of German civilians from the East by the Red Army and the non-German population of territories in present-day Eastern Europe.²¹ Peikert’s diary records a time towards the end of World War II when

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 38

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 33

¹⁹ I quote just one: “Unbeschreiblich groß war das Elend derer, die auf der Strasse flüchten mussten.

Unabsehbare Kolonnen von Frauen und Kindern mit Kinderwagen oder kleinen Handwagen marschierten auf der Strasse. Die Strassen sind infolge des harten Winters mit Schnee und Eis bedeckt. Die kleinen Wagen, die für die ebenen Strassen der Großstadt sich eignen, gehen aus den Fugen [...]. Die armselige Habe muss dann mit der Hand weitergeschleppt werden, sodass die Kolonnen nur langsam vorankommen. Viele Kinder und Erwachsene sind in der strengen Winterkälte erfroren und blieben im Strassengraben liegen. [...] Wir werden wohl niemals die Zahl der Toten erfahren, die infolge der Flucht im strengen Winter ihr Leben einbüßen mussten.” (Ibid., pp. 33-34)

²⁰ In his diary Peikert describes how military authorities in Breslau gave orders to special units to destroy city buildings in order to create room for defensive artillery fire.

²¹ In their essay ‘Flucht und Vertreibung’ in *Deutsche Erinnerungsorte* (2001, pp. 335-51) Eva and Hans Henning Hahn describe how more than the historical event itself, the terms “Flucht und Vertreibung” and “Vertriebene” came to denote a particular remembrance of the event in post-War Germany. They were monopolised by members of *Vertriebenenverbände* in West Germany who identified themselves as the victims of unlawful and violent expulsions by Russians, Poles, Czechs and Hungarians at the end of World War II. Those expellees who did not participate in the organised public remembrance of the *Vertriebenenverbände* tended not to refer to themselves as *Vertriebene*. In the GDR and Poland the word “Vertreibung” was typically placed in inverted commas in the context of a denial of the claims of West German *Vertriebene* and their sympathisers. On the remembrance of this episode of World War II in Poland, the GDR and West Germany see my more detailed

Germans were ordered to leave their homes by the Nazi administrators of the eastern territories.²² In describing the mass migration of Germans from Breslau and the surrounding regions he uses the terms “die Flucht” and “die Zwangsevakuierung.”²³ He states repeatedly that the fleeing Germans have been forced to leave their homes by their own leaders. Peikert alludes to the successive evacuation orders of the Gauleiter Karl Hanke and he decries the brutality with which these orders are enforced by the SS and the Gestapo in Breslau.²⁴ In January he writes that “Die deutsche Staatsführung hat dem Volke das letzte zugemutet und ihm alles geraubt, nun auch seine Heimat; die Scholle, für die all diese Männer kämpfen, sie musste im Stich gelassen werden.”²⁵ The diarist judges the role of the advancing Red Army in the flight of Germans from the East as marginal. He dismisses claims of widespread Soviet atrocities committed against German civilians as “eine Greuelpropaganda”²⁶ which is spread by the German instigators of the evacuations. Indeed as Peikert sees it, the progress of Allied forces holds the promise of the liberation of the German people from Nazism. At the end of March 1945 he refers to Allied successes against Germany in the following terms: “Wie eine Lawine ergiesst sich nun, [...], der befreiende Feind über deutsches Land, um der schlimmsten Erniedrigung des deutschen Volkes ein Ende zu machen.”²⁷

discussion later in the chapter.

²² For details of the evacuations of the German population of the eastern territories in the last months of World War II by their own leaders see Ther, 1998, p. 54.

²³ In Peikert’s retrospective report he does use the term “die Vertreibung”, but here it is synonymous with “die Zwangsevakuierung” of Germans by the Nazis: “Die schnelle Offensive der russischen Armee nach dem schlesischen Raum hatte zur Folge eine der schlimmsten Wahnsinnstaten des Nationalsozialismus, die Zwangsevakuierung des flachen Landes und der Städte, das ist die *Vertreibung* der deutschen Bevölkerung.” (FB, p. 278, my italics)

²⁴ In January he criticises “die Drangsalierung und Terrorisierung der Bevölkerung seitens der Parteiorgane, Breslau zu verlassen.” (FB, p. 37)

²⁵ Ibid., p. 30

²⁶ Ibid., p. 52. Peikert is mild in his judgement of Russian crimes against the Germans, claiming “Sie versuchen sich so schadlos wie möglich zu halten für das ungeheure Werk der Zerstörung, welches wir in Russland angerichtet haben.” (Ibid., p. 115)

²⁷ Ibid., p. 254

“O Gott, wie lange noch? Und doch ertragen die Völker, die wir überfielen, dieses Leid schon
Jahrelang”²⁸

The topos *Flucht und Vertreibung* has been a key element of a post-War discourse of German suffering. Representations of the flight of millions of Germans from the East at the end of World War II have often focussed on their plight without acknowledging German War guilt as a primary factor in the expulsions.²⁹ In bearing witness to the fleeing German masses in his diary, Peikert reflects on the broader context of their suffering and he highlights a causal link between the misery of German evacuees in the present and the misery inflicted by Germans in the past. While he sees the immediate cause of German migration in the Red Army’s advance and in the orders of Nazi leaders, he views the current evacuations as the logical consequence of developments under National Socialism; they are “die Elendsbilanz eines zwölfjährigen Hitlerregimes.”³⁰

Peikert plots the origins of a German “Heimatlosigkeit” much earlier than January 1945. He views the current evacuations as the latest phase in a continual loss of *Heimat* which has characterised the Nazi period. In the recent history of the German people’s displacement he includes aggressive German expansionism under Hitler, the German invasions of World War II and the present flight of Germans from their home-place in the East.³¹ In the entry for the 26th of March he describes an encounter with a group of German men from the *Auslandsdeutschenlager* in Breslau. He tells of how they were forced years earlier by the Nazis to abandon their homeland and occupy “geraubte Bauernhöfe und Geschäfte [...] im eroberten Polen und Russland” before being uprooted yet again in recent times.³² Peikert reasons that their current homelessness is the continuation and the inevitable

²⁸ Ibid., p. 237

²⁹ For a discussion of the self-victimisation characteristic of many post-War German representations of *Flucht und Vertreibung* see for example Ther (1998), Hahn and Hahn (2001), Kleßmann (2001), Urban (2005), Kelletat (2005) and Beer (2005). I will discuss this issue in more detail later in the chapter.

³⁰ FB, p. 53

³¹ In a prayer on Holy Thursday, Peikert invokes a community of homeless Germans comprising of the recent expellees and others before them: “Wohin ist doch der deutsche Mensch durch Hitlers Tat verschlagen worden? Ich denke an all die Männer und Frauen, die heimatlos irren und das Brot der fremde essen, an die Kinder, an die Jugend, an die zerissenen Familien, an all die Lieben im Wehrdienst, besonders die an den Fronten und auf hoher See. Sie alle versammle ich heute am Gründonnerstag um den Opferaltar unserer Pfarrkirche.” (Ibid., p. 255)

³² Ibid., p. 234

outcome of their previous wrongful resettlement under Hitler. In a statement in January Peikert reminds an implied German readership of the widespread German atrocities which preceded recent Russian acts of brutality towards his compatriots and he suggests that the expellees are well aware of this context. Here German suffering in the present is relativised with reference to the catalogue of suffering which Germans have caused in the past: “Es mögen vielleicht einzelne Fälle barbarischer Taten seitens der Russen vorkommen, aber denken wir daran, was seitens unserer Waffen-SS und Gestapo gegen die überfallenen Völker geschehen ist. Denken wir an deren Greueln und unmenschliche Grausamkeiten gegenüber den eigenen Volksgenossen in den Konzentrationslagern. Denken wir an die Massenmorde an der jüdischen Bevölkerung aller Länder. Denken wir an die unmenschliche Grausamkeit gegen die Bevölkerung der überfallenen Völker. Darum war es auch nur möglich, die ländliche Bevölkerung durch brutalen Zwang, oft mit vorgehaltener Revolver, zu solcher Verzweiflungstat zu zwingen.”³³ For much of the diary Peikert is preoccupied with the troubles of German expellees. However, on a visit to Breslau’s *Ausländerlager* to say mass for its inmates he is confronted with the suffering of “diese[n] Heimatlosen.”³⁴ His encounter with the foreigners prompts Peikert to reflect on the German part in *their* forced migration: “Ja diese Menschen, diese Ausländer, die werden an Deutschland denken. Die werden es in ihre Heimat tragen, wie sie jeder menschlichen Würde und Persönlichkeit hohnsprechend untergebracht werden. Jedes Haustier, das wird anständiger behandelt, als diese Menschen, die man gewaltsam riss von ihrer Scholle, und die nun das karge Brot der Verbannung mit Tränen essen müssen.”³⁵

Throughout his diary Peikert portrays the German *Volk* as the victim of its political leaders.³⁶

However, in contrast to descriptions of the foreigners’ suffering, in Peikert’s diary a discussion of

³³ Ibid., p. 53

³⁴ Ibid., p. 178

³⁵ Ibid., p. 180

³⁶ In January he writes with reference to the evacuations: “Hartherzig wird ein ganzes Volk aufgeopfert, weil dem deutschen Volke jede Mitbestimmung seines Schicksals geraubt worden ist. Es ist nur noch Schlachtopfer seiner Führer.” (Ibid., p. 30)

German victimhood is qualified by the fact of German guilt.³⁷ Developments within the Fortress challenge his belief in the moral integrity of the *Volk* and force him to contemplate its complicity with National Socialism. The actions of ordinary German soldiers and the passive acceptance of their fate by German civilians are interpreted by the priest as signs of the German people's "seelischer Zusammenbruch" under Hitler.³⁸ For the diarist, the soldiers' involvement in "Orgien der Zerstörung" is symptomatic of a general moral decline of Germans under Hitler: "Was vor 30 Jahren der deutsche Soldat noch nicht getan hat, heute tut er es. Wie schlimm die Zersetzung der seelischen Substanz unseres Volkes!"³⁹ Charging ordinary Germans with their "innerer Ohnmacht" in the face of Nazism, Peikert implies that they have been accessories to their own suffering because of their failure to show adequate resistance: "Wie ist der deutsche Mensch in den 12 Jahren seelisch zermürbt worden, dass er nicht mehr fähig ist, solcher Brutalität ein einfaches Nein entgegenzusetzen, und so übernimmt ein Volk im Dienste dieser Tyrannei die allergrössten Leiden und Opfer, nur die Leiden und Opfer, die es kostet, sich von dieser Tyrannei zu befreien, die wagt es sich nicht auf sich zu nehmen. Darum, muss das deutsche Volk den Kelch des Leidens trinken bis zur letzten Neige."⁴⁰ Peikert claims repeatedly that the suffering of German expellees is "sinnlos." However, in his biblical allegorisation of contemporary events the German exodus becomes meaningful as God's retribution and as a necessary penance prior to the future redemption of the German people. Peikert views the Germans' current plight as "das Gottesgericht über unser Volk, dessen Staatsführung seit 12 Jahren gegen alles, was Gottes ist, gefrevelt hat."⁴¹ Although Peikert locates direct guilt with the Nazi leadership, in his interpretation of the evacuations as "das Gottesgericht" he assumes that all Germans are liable for acts committed in Germany's name. In the days leading up to Good Friday on

³⁷ A view of the expulsions as "das Gottesgericht", which acknowledged the collective answerability of Germans for acts perpetrated under National Socialism, was typical of the Protestant and Catholic Churches in post-War East and West Germany. (See Lotz, 2007, p. 258)

³⁸ Ibid., p. 153

³⁹ Ibid., pp. 215-6

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 157

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 78.

the 30th of March 1945, *Karfreitag* becomes Peikert's preferred metaphor to describe the fate of the German people at this point in the War.⁴² Like Christ on the road to Calvary the *Volk* is seen to bear a cross and the evacuations represent a penitential way of the cross:⁴³ "Nun stehen wir mit unserer Seele unter Christi Kreuz und sagen wir zu unserem so schweren Kreuz ein volles Ja. [...] Leiden wir mit Christus und tilgen wir eigene Sündenschuld und die so grosse Schuld unseres Volkes. Es wird auf diesen Karfreitag, den wir jetzt erleben, auch ein Ostern kommen."⁴⁴

Constructions of Heimat in Peikert's diary

More than just a physical place, the German *Heimat* Peikert evokes is synonymous with the Church and Christian values. The religious connotation of *Heimat* is clear in the priest's wistful recollection of the homes Breslauers have been forced to abandon: "Mühsam und redlich haben sie sich emporgearbeitet und freuten sich an dem geringen Besitz eines freundlichen Heims und waren glücklich in seiner Geborgenheit und glücklich in der religiösen Weihe, die sie diesem Heim gaben durch ihr christliches Leben."⁴⁵ For Peikert, Breslau's German heritage is bound to its identity as a Christian ecclesiastical centre.⁴⁶ In the diary the physical dislocation of Germans at the end of World War II is represented as the final act in the history of their moral and spiritual "Heimatlosigkeit" under National Socialism.⁴⁷

If National Socialism and the War represent a loss of *Heimat* for Germans, the Church and religious devotion offer the possibility of its symbolic restoration. The exiled foreigners of the *Ausländerlager*

⁴² See for example *ibid.*, p. 231

⁴³ On the 11th of March Peikert writes: "Das war bisher ein langer Karfreitag seit dem 15. Januar, dem Beginn der furchtbaren Elendsprozession unserer zwangsevakuieren Bevölkerung aus dem Osten." (*Ibid.*, p. 155)

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 252

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p.232

⁴⁶ "Breslau ist eine schöne Stadt mit herrlichen Zeugen seiner vergangenen christlichen Kultur." (*Ibid.*, p. 72)

⁴⁷ Throughout his diary Peikert foregrounds what he perceives as the anti-Christian basis of National Socialism. For the diarist the stationing of defensive posts in Breslau's Churches and graveyards is symptomatic of "die Religionsfeindlichkeit" of the Nazi regime. The participation of the *Volk* in such acts of sacrilege is a sign of its own abandonment of Christian values under National Socialism: "dem deutschen Menschen ist durch dieses Regime, das einen Menschen vergottete, jede Ehrfurcht vor jenen Dingen geraubt worden, die dem deutschen Menschen bisher als heilig galten, Gotteshaus und Friedhof." (*Ibid.*, p. 87)

in Breslau find solace in religious observance. On Peikert's visit there to say mass he remarks how "Ein Stückchen Heimat dämmert diesen Heimatlosen auf, als nun das heilige Messopfer beginnt."⁴⁸ In the same way German evacuees appear to seek and find refuge in the Church during the last weeks of the Siege. In this context Peikert views his St. Mauritius Church as "unser gemeinsames Vaterhaus," a place where "eine Notgemeinschaft" of dispossessed Christian Germans can gather "geschart um das Opfer des Altares."⁴⁹

The diarist's conception of *Heimat* affords no scope for a discussion of Jewish forced migration and systematic deportations from Breslau and the surrounding regions under National Socialism. This is a significant blind-spot in Peikert's testimony of the evacuations and their historical context. In his contextualisation of the expulsions of Germans in his diary Peikert privileges Christian victims of Nazi expansionism in Central and Eastern Europe. There is no acknowledgement of Breslau's Jewish heritage and the Jewish exodus which preceded the flight of Christian Germans from the region.⁵⁰

Later in this chapter I will discuss how aspects of Peikert's language presented the GDR publishers of his text with a challenge. For the priest writing in 1945, Breslau still has the status of a German city. He refers to the Polish forced labourers there as "Ausländer." He views the eastern territories from which German expellees have fled as a lost German *Heimat* and he mourns this loss in his diary. Throughout the text we find references to Breslau and the surrounding regions as "unsere Heimat"⁵¹, "die Scholle, für die all diese Männer kämpfen"⁵² and "die Kornkammer des Grossdeutschen Reiches."⁵³ In his recurring use of the first person plural Peikert addresses and invokes a community of Germans scattered by the War whose rightful home is "unser schönes Schlesierland."⁵⁴ He wonders

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 178

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 250

⁵⁰ On one occasion in the diary Peikert refers to "die Massenmorde an der jüdischen Bevölkerung aller Länder" (Ibid., p. 53), but he does not treat their loss of *Heimat* and expulsions in any detail in his diary.

⁵¹ For German soldiers there Breslau is "ihre schöne Heimatstadt" (Ibid., p. 75). Peikert is saddened by news that the fleeing Germans are to be resettled in Southern Germany "so fern ihrer schlesischen Heimat und wie hängt der Schlesier an seiner schönen Heimat." (Ibid., p. 39)

⁵² "Die Scholle für die all diese Männer kämpfen, sie musste im Stich gelassen werden." (Ibid., p. 30)

⁵³ Ibid., p. 46

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 303

if this *Heimat* will ever be restored: “Wie lange wird es in Breslau wieder dauern, bis wir von unserem Hauptbahnhof wieder einmal zu unseren Angehörigen fahren können? Wird es möglich sein, die Millionen Evakuiertes aus den Ostgebieten einmal wieder zurückzuführen?”⁵⁵

The expulsions of Germans and Poles in Eastern and Central Europe 1944-1947

In the period 1944 to 1947 the territories east of the Oder and Neisse Rivers were the site of a population transfer on a massive scale, where Germans and Poles were both the victims of forced migrations and its instigators. In this geographical and historical context “die Vertreibung” encompasses a complex series of events, from the first chaotic evacuations of Germans ordered by Nazi administrators as early as 1944 and the simultaneous flight of Germans westwards in the wake of the Red Army’s advance, to the later more systematic expulsions and persecution of Germans by the Soviet and Polish administrators of Silesia, Pomerania and East Prussia and the Polish resettlement of these areas after World War II.⁵⁶ Philipp Ther divides the expulsions into three overlapping phases: “Flucht, wilde Vertreibung und die vertraglich festgelegte Vertreibung nach dem Potsdamer Abkommen.”⁵⁷ During the first phase the impetus for the flight of Germans from the eastern territories often came from the Nazi leadership,⁵⁸ while in the latter two phases Germans were expelled by force and/or more subtle intimidation by Soviet and Polish authorities. Although depleted, the German population of the eastern territories was still significant at the end of the War⁵⁹

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 117

⁵⁶ Thum (2003, p. 115) points to the inadequacy of the term “die Vertreibung”: “Der Exodus der Deutschen aus den Gebieten östlich der Oder-Neisse-Linie war ein außerordentlich komplexer Vorgang, der sich mit dem Terminus ‘Vertreibung’ kaum angemessen beschreiben lässt.” For accounts of the different phases of the expulsions of Germans and Poles in the period 1945 to 1947 see Urban (2004), Thum (2003), Kleßmann et al (2001), Siebel-Achenbach (1999) and Ther (1998).

⁵⁷ Ther, 1998, p. 54. While Ther underlines that all three phases overlap, the first roughly spans the period from the end of 1944 up to the end of the War, the second began in the last months of the War and continued until the Potsdam agreement in August 1945 and the third is dated from that agreement until the late 1940s.

⁵⁸ With reference to the belated evacuation orders issued by many German administrators in the eastern territories from the end of 1944 onwards, Ther claims that “erhebliche Schuld an dem Ausmaß des Chaos hatte die deutsche Regierung.” (*Ibid.*, p. 54)

⁵⁹ An estimated 5 million Germans still lived in territories east of the Oder-Neisse Line at the end of the War. The German population of Breslau at this time numbered 300,000. One million Germans who had fled in the Spring of 1945 returned to their homes immediately after the War (Urban, 2004, pp.116- 119).

and the future status of these lands was yet to be formally agreed. Yet even before the Potsdam Agreement of August 1945 which placed the territories provisionally under Polish administration and set out conditions for the “orderly transfer” of the German population,⁶⁰ measures were taken by the Poles to remove the remaining Germans forcibly from the region. With the support of the Soviet Union the Polish Communist leader Władisław Gomułka sought to make Polish rule of these territories a *fait accompli* prior to the formal decision on their status.⁶¹ Studies have documented the ruthlessness of this phase of the expulsions.⁶² A specially appointed Polish militia was responsible for the terrorisation and expulsion of German civilians at this time.⁶³ In May and June 1945 its members sealed off bridges over the Oder and Neisse to prevent German expellees returning to their homes from the West.⁶⁴ In addition to the tens of thousands of Germans forced to leave their homes and join *Trecks* heading westwards in the Spring and Summer of 1945, an estimated 520,000 Germans were deported to labour camps in the Soviet Union.⁶⁵ Although intimidation of Germans in the eastern territories continued beyond the Potsdam Agreement, the use of brute force to expel Germans did subside in the last phase of the expulsions. Land and property left behind by the fleeing Germans were taken over by Poles, many of whom had themselves been the victims of forced migration from territories in former Eastern Poland ceded to the Soviet Union at the end of the War.⁶⁶

⁶⁰ On the provisions of the Potsdam Agreement see *ibid.*, pp.119-120.

⁶¹ Ther cites a speech by Gomułka at the end of May 1945: “An der Grenze ist eine Grenzschutz aufzustellen und die Deutschen sind herauszuwerfen. Denen, die dort sind, sind solche Bedingungen zu schaffen, daß sie nicht dableiben wollen. [...] Der Grundsatz von dem wir uns leiten lassen sollen, ist die Säuberung des Terrains von den Deutschen, der Aufbau eines Nationalstaates.” (Ther, 1998, p. 56)

⁶² Thum (2003, p. 115) writes that “zwischen dem Ende der Kampfhandlungen und dem Abschluß der Potsdamer Konferenz am 2. August kam es zu völkerrechtlich nicht sanktionierten Aussiedlungsaktionen, die vielfach die Form unkoordinierter und äußerst brutaler Vertreibungen annahmen.” For details of the Polish role in the violent expulsions of Germans from the eastern territories and the systematic persecution of German civilians who remained in these areas see Urban, 2004, pp. 112-141.

⁶³ Urban, 2004, p. 114

⁶⁴ Ther, 1998, p. 55

⁶⁵ Urban, 2004, p.117

⁶⁶ For a detailed discussion of the expulsion of Poles during and after World War II see Ther, 1998, pp. 67-88

Kronika Dni Oblężenia in the Polish context

“Es hat in der Geschichte Volkspolens nur wenige Themen gegeben, die ähnlich tabuisiert waren wie die ‘Vertreibung’ der Deutschen 1945-1950.”⁶⁷ Borodziej and others write of the silence which prevailed on the matter of German expulsions in Polish public discourse until the 1990s.⁶⁸ The expulsion of Germans from territories east of the Oder-Neisse Line and the resettlement of these areas by Poles were necessary for the political stability of Poland after 1945.⁶⁹ From the Polish perspective, any discussion of the brutal expulsion of Germans at the end of World War II which acknowledged the Polish part in this episode would have threatened the legitimacy of Poland’s new western frontier and raised the spectre of possible German restitutions. It would also have left the issue of the expulsion of Poles from territories annexed by the Soviet Union in Eastern Poland at the end of the War open to public criticism. Where at all used, the word “Vertreibung” appeared in inverted commas in the context of Polish criticisms of a perceived West German falsification of history.⁷⁰ In official Polish discourse the terms “repatriation” and “resettlement”⁷¹ were the preferred designations for the expulsions of both Germans and Poles in the period 1945 to 1947.⁷² Each of these terms implied that the forced migration of Germans and Poles at the end of the War was lawful and had been carried out in an orderly manner, as laid out in the Potsdam Agreement.⁷³ They

⁶⁷ Borodziej, 2001, p. 36

⁶⁸ Of Polish histories of Breslau in the Cold War period Thum writes: “Den Bevölkerungsaustausch, der das zentrale Ereignis in der Geschichte Breslaus im 20. Jahrhundert war, übergehen die meisten Darstellungen mit Schweigen.” (Thum, 2003, p. 335) Kleßmann plots the beginning of a critical appraisal of this episode of Polish history by Polish historians in the 1990s. (Kleßmann, 2001, p. 37) Claudia Kraft writes that “politische Implikationen [verhinderten] lange Zeit eine Auseinandersetzung sowohl mit der Vertreibung der Deutschen als auch der eigenen Landsleute.” (Kraft, 1998, Internet article)

⁶⁹ “Die Vertreibung der Deutschen war zweifellos eine essentielle Bedingung der Stabilisierung nicht nur der kommunistischen, sondern einer jeden polnischen Gesellschaftsordnung im Jahre 1945.” (Borodziej, 2001, p. 37)

⁷⁰ See Urban, 2004, p. 177 and Borodziej, 2001, p. 38

⁷¹ *repatriacja* and *przesiedlenie*

⁷² See Borodziej, 2001, p. 38. In 1944 Polish and Soviet authorities had used the term “evacuation” with reference to the forced resettlement of Poles from areas of eastern Poland soon to be ceded to the Soviet Union. With the foundation of the National Repatriation Bureau (PUR: Państwowy Urząd Repatriacyjny) in the Spring of 1945 the term “repatriation” became the established designation for the expulsions of both Poles and Germans.

⁷³ “Die ‘Repatriierung der Deutschen’, wie es nun genannt wurde, galt also als Akt der ‘historischen Gerechtigkeit’” (Urban, 2004, p. 182) Elke Mehnert writes that “In Polen hat man die ausgewiesenen Deutschen meist ‘Übersiedler’ oder ‘Aussiedler’ genannt und so die staatlich erwünschte Überzeugung von historischer Gerechtigkeit gegenüber den Kriegsschuldigen deutschen *Volk* auch sprachlich zum Ausdruck gebracht.” (Mehnert, 2001, p. 140)

challenged contemporary West German claims that Germans had been wrongfully expelled from the eastern territories by Poles. In Polish accounts, it was claimed falsely that the vast majority of Germans had fled in the context of the Nazi evacuations of the eastern territories in the last months of World War II, and that the Poles had simply occupied lands which had been left vacant.⁷⁴ The dominant Polish interpretation of German ‘resettlements’ was informed by a concept of collective German guilt. While Polish crimes against Germans at the end of the War were denied, it was publicly accepted that the ‘repatriation’ or ‘resettlement’ of Germans was a legitimate punishment of the German people for German crimes against Poles during World War II.⁷⁵

The German heritage of Silesia, Pomerania and East Prussia was negated in Polish histories which underlined the organic Polish character of these territories.⁷⁶ The “Erfindung einer polnischen Tradition”⁷⁷ for Breslau/Wrocław in the post-War context is exemplary. Popular histories emphasised its seamless Polish history. Thum describes the “Repolonisierung” of the city after the War which involved the renaming of streets and the removal or destruction of obvious German landmarks. In Polish accounts the devastation of Wrocław by the Nazis at the end of World War II was typically portrayed as the final act in the history of the city’s brief domination by the foreign power, Germany, before its return “zum Mutterland” after 1945.⁷⁸

Yet there were spheres in which alternatives to the dominant official position on the expulsions were articulated before the 1990s in Poland. An open letter by Polish Bishops addressed to their West

⁷⁴ This view informs a history of Breslau by Ignacy Rutkiewicz from 1973 quoted in Thum, 2003, p. 333: “Die Vernichtung Wroclaws im Winter und Frühjahr 1945 und die Evakuierung des überwiegenden Teils der Bewohner war das Werk der Deutschen selbst. [...] Auf deutschem Befehl ist die deutsche Zivilbevölkerung vertrieben worden. Dieses leere Blatt sollte eben von den Polen erneut beschrieben werden.”

⁷⁵ “Dass es zwischen 1945 und 1949 zu Verbrechen an Deutschen gekommen sei, wurde grundsätzlich bestritten, die Aussiedlungen sei überdies Folge der deutschen Verbrechen im Krieg.” (Urban, 2004, p. 182)

⁷⁶ Ther points to the strong nationalistic character of the Polish discussion of the so-called ‘wiedererlangte Gebiete’: “In den Aufnahmegebieten für die [polnischen] Vertriebenen, den ehemaligen deutschen Ostgebieten, war der Nationalismus als Bestandteil der polnischen Kultur besonders ausgeprägt, da diese Territorien für Polen gesichert und besiedelt werden sollten.” (Ther, 1998, p. 17)

⁷⁷ Thum, 2003, p. 304

⁷⁸ See Urban, 2004, p. 181 and Thum, 2003, pp. 332-3. A quote from the sermon of the Polish Cardinal Wyszyński in Breslau’s Cathedral in 1965 is illustrative of the tendency to negate the city’s German heritage: “Hier waren wir, und hier sind wir wieder. [...] Wenn wir dieses Gotteshaus sehen, [...], dann wissen wir, dass es kein deutsches Erbe ist. Das ist die polnische Seele. Sie waren niemals deutsch und sind nicht deutsch.” (Cited in Urban, 2004, p. 183)

German brethren in November 1965 was unprecedented in its acknowledgement of the suffering of German expellees and its plea for forgiveness for Polish crimes against Germans at the end of the War contained in the sentence “Wir vergeben und bitten um Vergebung.”⁷⁹ In the 1980s dissident Poles writing in underground and exile publications challenged the dominant Polish account of German expulsions and called for a more open discussion of Polish crimes against Germans at the end of World War II.⁸⁰ In an article in the Paris-based exile journal *Kultura* in 1981 Jan-Jozef Lipski confronted Poles with their guilt for German expulsions: “Wir haben uns daran beteiligt, Millionen Menschen ihrer Heimat zu berauben, [...] Das uns angetane Böse, auch das größte, ist aber keine Rechtfertigung und darf auch keine sein für das Böse, das wir selbst anderen zugefügt haben.”⁸¹ While the theme of German expulsions and the former German *Heimat* was generally avoided in post-War Polish literature, texts by Günther Grass, Ernst Wiechert, Horst Bienek and Siegfried Lenz on the subject were published and widely read in Poland before the 1990s.⁸²

Peikert’s diary was first published in 1964 in Polish translation by the *Ossolineum Publishing House*⁸³ in Breslau with an introduction and extensive footnotes by the historians Karol Jonca and Alfred Konieczny. Jonca and Konieczny had unearthed Peikert’s testimony in the archdiocesan archives in Breslau in the course of their research for an earlier published collection of documents relating to the Siege, *Festung Breslau. Documenta Obsidionis*.⁸⁴ While the editors repeatedly vouch for the authenticity of Peikert’s diary in their introduction, the text was in fact censored prior to publication.

⁷⁹ On the letter and the scandal it caused in Poland see Urban, 2004, pp. 183-4 and Kleßmann, 2001, p. 33

⁸⁰ For details see Urban, 2004, pp. 188-90

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 188-9

⁸² Eva Konarska (2001, p. 211) gives details of the Polish publications of Wiechert’s *Missa sine Nomine* (1978), Grass’ *Die Blechtrommel* (1959), Bienek’s *Gleiwitzer Tetralogie* (1975-82) and Lenz’ *Heimatmuseum* (1978). Of these four texts only two were published in the GDR—*Die Blechtrommel* (Volk und Welt, 1985) and *Heimatmuseum* (Aufbau, 1980). In the 1990s Polish authors such as Stefan Chwin, Maria Nurowska und Pawel Huelle began to treat the issue of German and Polish expulsions.

⁸³ The prestigious Ossolineum archive, library and publishing house were moved from Lemberg to Breslau in 1946. With its particular focus on texts which documented the Polish past of Breslau and Silesia to the exclusion of their German heritage the publishing house played an active role in what Thum has called the “Erfindung einer polnischen Tradition” for these territories. On the Ossolineum Publishing House and its programme see Thum, 2003, pp. 397-8.

⁸⁴ *Festung Breslau. Documenta Obsidionis*, Ossolineum, 1962

Two passages where Peikert refers to the rape of German women in a nearby village by Red Army soldiers were removed. The introduction also neglects to mention that the published text was a fragment. The decision to end the diary on the date of the German capitulation of Breslau on the 6th of May 1945 ensured that entries beyond that date and letters Peikert wrote in the Summer of 1945 containing references to the role played by Poles in the expulsion of Germans did not enter the public domain.⁸⁵

An analysis of the paratexts shows how this publication was grasped as an opportunity to discredit contemporary West German representations of the Siege of Breslau and German expulsions and thus reaffirm the official Polish interpretation of these events. In their introduction, the Polish editors of Peikert's diary presented it as a timely retort to biased West German accounts of the Siege and its aftermath, which they saw exemplified in the memoirs of the former Nazi governors of the city, *So kämpfte Breslau*.⁸⁶ The authenticity and immediacy of Peikert's diary were contrasted with the retrospective bias of West German accounts.⁸⁷ "Die Wahrheit"⁸⁸ of the former was distinguished from the "Polemik"⁸⁹ of the latter. In the Polish framing of his text by others Peikert thus became an advocate for the official Polish stance on German guilt and on the expulsions of Germans from the eastern territories.

⁸⁵ I gleaned this information in interviews with Alfred Konieczny and Professor Elżbieta Dzikowska (Łódź University). Sebastian Siebel-Achenbach refers to the deliberate omissions in the Polish editions of the diary and their function: "Die Herausgeber von Peikerts Breslauer Tagebuch beenden die Untersuchung zweckdienlich mit Mai 1945, indem sie den Eindruck erwecken, dass das von den Zivilisten erlittene Unrecht ausschließlich von der Führung von NSDAP und Wehrmacht herrührte." (Siebel-Achenbach, 2006, p. 295)

⁸⁶ General von Ahlfen, General Niehoff, *So kämpfte Breslau. Verteidigung und Untergang von Schlesiens Hauptstadt*, Gräfe und Unzer Verlag, Munich, 1959 [Hereafter SKB]

⁸⁷ For the Polish editors *So kämpfte Breslau* is typical of West German accounts of the siege which are based on unreliable memory rather than documentary evidence: "Ungenauere Beschreibungen und nicht selten absichtlich falsche Beurteilungen untergraben den wissenschaftlichen Wert so mancher westdeutschen Publikation" (FB, p. 7). They repeatedly underline the authenticity of Peikert's diary and point to the fact that the typescripts of the chronicle were authenticated by the priest: "Die Authentizität der Tagebuchaufzeichnungen von Pfarrer Peikert weckt keine Zweifel. [...] Beide im Archidiözesanarchiv zu Wrocław aufbewahrten Maschinenschriften beglaubigte Pfarrer Peikert, indem er am Ende der Chronik über die Belagerung Breslaus [...] seine Unterschrift setzte." (FB, pp. 11-12)

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 12

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 7

In *So kämpfte Breslau*, Generals von Ahlfen and Niehoff represented the destruction of Breslau and the defeat of German forces there as a triumph of German military planning and civic cooperation in the spirited defence of the German city against the Russian enemy.⁹⁰ Reviewed from the perspective of the late 1950s, in this text the ‘defence’ of Breslau in 1945 was celebrated as a military achievement which prevented the further encroachment of the Russians into ‘western’ territory.⁹¹ There was no reference to Breslau’s post-War Polish status. Instead we find numerous allusions to the city as a German stronghold and to Silesia as “unsere Heimat.”⁹² In their reflections on events after the capitulation of the Fortress in May 1945 the authors recalled the terrible suffering of Germans and their “Austreibung” from their eastern homeland by Russians and Poles.⁹³ They barely mentioned the evacuations of Germans in the final months of the War.⁹⁴ Although von Ahlfen and Niehoff did not make an explicit demand for the reinstatement of Breslau and Silesia, in their contention that Germans were wrongfully expelled from these territories they implicitly challenged the validity of the Polish western border.⁹⁵

In the introduction to *Kronika Dni Oblężenia* by Jonca and Konieczny, Peikert’s text was presented as a counter-narrative to the memoirs of von Ahlfen and Niehoff - Peikert “entzieht nicht nur der Verherrlichung der militärischen und politischen Befehlshaber in der Stadt Wroclaw jegliche

⁹⁰ In their introduction Generals von Ahlfen and Niehoff write “Breslau – keine Festung im klassischen Sinne – wurde, bereits im Kampf zur Festung, weil es gelang, die Breslau innewohnenden seelischen Werte gemeinsam mit den in dieser Großstadt befindlichen materiellen Kräften und Gütern militärischer wie ziviler Art so zu beleben, daß es zu gutem Zusammenwirken gekommen ist.” (SKB, p. 7)

⁹¹ In their concluding remarks the authors claim that their actions in the Fortress “einen rascheren und auch weiteren Stoß der Roten Armee nach Westen mit verzögert und verhindert hat” (Ibid., p. 119)

⁹² See *ibid.*, p. 7 and p. 116. In their conclusion von Ahlfen and Niehoff quote an unnamed officer who refers to “das geliebte Breslau, diese[n] Edelstein unserer deutschen Heimat.” (Ibid., p. 112)

⁹³ “Die leidgeprüfte Bevölkerung wurde vogelfrei und verfiel völliger Rechtlosigkeit, bis sie dann noch ausgetrieben wurde.” (Ibid., p. 110)

⁹⁴ They explain this absence in their description of events in Breslau as follows: “Diese Ereignisse sind so bekannt, daß sich hier eine Schilderung erübrigt.” (Ibid., p. 18)

⁹⁵ In his journal of a visit to Breslau in the 1960s, published as part of *Die Schrift an der Wand* in the *Bundesrepublik* in 1967 and two years later in the GDR, Günter Anders engages critically with the main tenets of *So kämpfte Breslau*. He is repelled by the way in which von Ahlfen and Niehoff reinterpret events in Breslau in 1945 to cast themselves in a glorious light and lend credence to the myth that Germany was “im Felde unbesiegt.” Their discussion of “Austreibungen,” which nowhere acknowledges the context of German War guilt, is repeatedly targeted by Anders. On numerous occasions he suggests that the loss of former German territory was a painful yet just consequence of German aggression during World War II. For his discussion of *So kämpfte Breslau* see Anders, Günter, *Die Schrift an der Wand*, Union Verlag, Berlin, 1969, p. 317, p. 368, pp. 383-4, pp. 392-3 and pp. 412-13.

Grundlage (eine solche Apotheose versuchte u.a. die Generäle von Ahlfen und Niehoff in *So kämpfte Breslau*), sondern er wird gleichzeitig zum Ankläger ihres Vernichtungswahnsinnes während der Belagerung selbst.”⁹⁶ The editors endorsed the priest’s “strenges Urteil über die Nazis”⁹⁷ and in footnotes they documented and corroborated Peikert’s accusations against the Gauleiter Karl Hanke, von Ahlfen and Niehoff.⁹⁸ A focus on the evacuations of Germans from the eastern territories in the final months of the War in the published diary and in the Polish paratexts implicitly challenged a discussion of “Ver-/Austreibungen” in West German publications.⁹⁹ Footnotes which quoted from evacuation decrees from 1945 backed up Peikert’s assertions that Germans were forced to migrate by their own Nazi leaders.¹⁰⁰ The editors’ reference to “die nach dem Kriege durchgeführten Repatriierung der deutschen Bevölkerung nach Deutschland”¹⁰¹ reflected the official Polish position on the forced resettlement of Germans from present-day Poland at the end of the War. In a reference to Peikert’s own “repatriation” to West Germany after the War they implied that it was voluntary and unproblematic.¹⁰² Jonca and Konieczny outlined Peikert’s position on the guilt of his fellow Germans: “Bezeichnend, daß er zu den wenigen Deutschen gehörte, die sich für die Verbrechen der Nazis an den besiegten Völkern mitverantwortlich fühlten.” Against the background of West German claims to the contrary, Peikert’s acknowledgement of the answerability of all Germans for German War crimes, and his interpretation of German migration at the end of the War as “eine Sühne” lent credence to the dominant Polish standpoint that the “resettlement” of Germans from the eastern territories was both justified and irreversible.¹⁰³

⁹⁶ FB, p. 15

⁹⁷ Ibid., p.15

⁹⁸ See footnotes: 27 (p. 62), 70 (p. 129) and 81 (p. 147)

⁹⁹ See the references to the evacuations in the introduction *ibid.*, p. 9 and p. 15

¹⁰⁰ See the following footnotes: 9 (p. 37), 11 (p. 39), 22 (p. 47), 38 (p. 83), 54 (p. 107), 63 (p. 123), 76 (p. 137) and 101 (p. 188)

¹⁰¹ FB, p. 10

¹⁰² “Nach dem Kriege verliess er Breslau und begab sich nach Westdeutschland.” (*Ibid.*, p. 19-20)

¹⁰³ In their introduction, Jonca and Konieczny quote from a letter the priest wrote after the War where he claimed that “Die Zukunft unseres Volkes ist ein Opfer- und Leidensweg sondergleichen. Wohin hat das verruchte Naziregime das deutsche Volk gebracht? Nun müssen wir Sühne leisten für die Greuelthaten und Frevel, die dieses Regime begangen hat in dem Zerbrecen und Zertreten jedes Gottesgesetzes.” (*Ibid.*, p. 21)

The Polish reception of Kronika Dni Oblężenia

The publication of Peikert's diary was a significant event in 1960s Poland. Beyond the domain of historiography the text attained a huge media presence. Similar to Jonca and Konieczny's earlier text, *Festung Breslau*, Peikert's published testimony cast light on a period of Breslau's history which had been largely absent in post-war Polish discourse and it prompted an intense public discussion of the events within the Fortress at the end of World War II. The text was the subject of numerous newspaper articles and extracts were read on *Radio Warszawa* and on Polish national radio.¹⁰⁴ This reception of the diary concurred largely with the reading suggested by the Polish editors. Peikert's representation of the evacuations of Germans by their own Nazi leaders and his condemnation of Hanke, von Ahlfen and Niehoff were cited repeatedly in the Polish media in corroboration of the official Polish position on the expulsions and German War guilt.¹⁰⁵ Indeed the diary featured in early Polish public investigations into the Nazi Era. In his presentation at the Polish Commission of Enquiry into Hitler Crimes in February 1966, the Polish Justice Minister Stefan Walczak quoted extracts from Peikert's text on the evacuations as evidence of German War crimes in Poland.¹⁰⁶ The diary was seen to expose the falsity of contemporary West German accounts of the Siege which foregrounded the role of Poles and Russians in "die Vertreibung" of Germans at the end of the War. Polish commentators referred to the suffering of the German expellees, but they described it as a consequence of German actions and crimes. The author of an article in the Warsaw-published journal, *Polish Perspectives*, wrote that "Fr. Peikert's judgement acquires an added edge when contrasted with the distortions of history peddled by revisionist propagandists in west [sic] Germany. Here is an impartial eye-witness whose evidence

¹⁰⁴ Discussions of the text and the events it describes appeared in journals and newspapers such as *Odra* (Nr. 17, 1964, p. 16), *Nowe Książki* (Nr. 11, 1964, pp. 440-1), *Życie Warszawy* (Nr. 137, 1964, p. 4), *Sztandar Młodych* (15/16.8.1964), *Kierunki* (Nr. 25, 1964, p.8) and *Wieź* (Nr. 10, 1969, pp. 137-40). Jonca refers to the radio readings on the 26th of June 1964 and between January and March 1965 in his letter to *Union* on March 31st 1966 (BArch DR1 2424a, p. 306). The text was also adapted by Wiesław Wodecki for a television play, *Rzecz o Zagładzie Miasta*, broadcast in 1970 and performed in 1975 in a Breslau theatre (for details see Sawko-Von Massow, 2001, pp. 123-7).

¹⁰⁵ Thum writes that following the publication of his diary in Poland Peikert's "wütende Anklagen gegen die Rücksichtslosigkeit der militärischen Führung beim Umgang mit Breslau immer wieder zitiert wurden." (Thum, 2003, p. 332)

¹⁰⁶ Jonca refers to this in his letter to *Union*. (BArch DR1 2424a, p. 306)

leaves no doubts about who it was, that had the majority of the Germans in these areas driven out – before the Soviet and Polish armies appeared on the scene.”¹⁰⁷

“Von Tabu kann man nur im Bezug auf die DDR sprechen”? - Positions on the expulsions in the GDR and West Germany

“Von Tabu kann man nur im Bezug auf die DDR sprechen. Dort war es regelrecht verboten, über die Vertreibung zu reden. Vertriebene hießen nicht Vertriebene, sondern Umsiedler; so war die Sprachregelung, und entsprechend wissen die Menschen im Osten heute nichts mehr über diesen Teil der Geschichte.”¹⁰⁸

Günter Grass' statement repeats the common assumption of a general silence on the matter of the expulsions in East Germany. For many commentators, the fact that the terms “die Vertreibung” and “Vertriebene” were absent from the official East German narrative of this War episode points to a blanket taboo which, they frequently allege, persisted in the GDR until the 1980s.¹⁰⁹ An East German evasion of the issue has often been contrasted with the public debate on “die Vertreibung” assumed to have taken place in post-War West Germany.¹¹⁰ In his recent study of the discussion of the expulsions in East and West Germany in the period 1948 to 1972, Christian Lotz challenges the thesis of a GDR taboo, showing rather how in both Germanies the public remembrance of this episode was selective and highly politicised in the context of the Cold War: “Es erscheint daher nicht geeignet, von einer Tabuisierung der Geschichte von Flucht und Vertreibung sowie der Geschichte der Ostgebiete in der DDR zu sprechen.”¹¹¹ While official discourse in the GDR focussed on

¹⁰⁷ ‘Agony of a City’ in *Polish Perspectives*, Warsaw, Nr. 8, August 1969, p. 97

¹⁰⁸ Grass interview cited in Bilke, 2003, p. 137

¹⁰⁹ Urban (2004, p. 163) writes that “das Thema [war] mit einem Tabu belegt” in the GDR. For a similar claim see Ther, 1998 p. 14, Mehnert, 2001b, p. 138 and Schwartz, 1997, pp. 182-3. Bilke (2003, p. 159) and Kleßmann (2001, p. 15) point to the first historical treatments of the expulsions in the last years of the GDR by Wolfgang Meinecke and others.

¹¹⁰ This negative comparison with a discussion of *Vertreibung* in the *Bundesrepublik* is clear in Bilke’s criticism of East German authors: “Was bis 1980 von ostdeutschen Autoren in Mitteldeutschland an literarischer Aufarbeitung von Kriegsende und Heimatverlust geleistet wurde, war beschämend wenig und reichte in keiner Weise an das heran, was in Westdeutschland inzwischen vorlag.” (Bilke, 2003, p. 157)

¹¹¹ Lotz, 2008, p. 91

“geordnete Aussiedlungen,” a parallel discussion in the *Bundesrepublik* was centred on “die gewaltsamen Vertreibungen” of Germans by Poles and Russians at the end of World War II.¹¹² In what follows I describe the ideological context of publicly articulated positions on the expulsions in the GDR and West Germany with a particular focus on the 1960s.

Official Polish and East German accounts of the expulsions coincided. As in Poland, in the Soviet Zone of Occupation and later GDR German expellees from the East were called “Umsiedler” and their forced migration was described euphemistically as “die Umsiedlung.” The exclusion of the dimension of German suffering and Polish/Russian guilt from the official East German narrative of ‘Resettlement’ was politically expedient in the early years of the GDR. An open acknowledgement of the suffering of German expellees, which highlighted the loss of their eastern homeland at the end of World War II, was incompatible with the claim of a “Befreiung vom Faschismus” by the Soviets in official discourse. Such an acknowledgement would also have challenged the legitimacy of the Oder-Neisse border with Poland recognised by East Germany in the 1950 *Görlitzer Abkommen*.¹¹³ As it was for Poland, the resolution of the border question was crucial for the political stability of the GDR.¹¹⁴ Numbering 4.4 million in 1949,¹¹⁵ expellees accounted for one quarter of East Germany’s population, and the Görlitz Agreement made their integration a *fait accompli*, on paper at least.¹¹⁶ Thus for political reasons, the personal memories of expellees’ suffering and references to their often

¹¹² Ibid., p. 91

¹¹³ Bilke dates the “Ideologisieren des Themas” in the GDR from the 1950 border agreement: “danach konnten Flucht und Vertreibung nur so dargestellt werden, dass sie als unausweichliche Folge des ‘faschistischen Krieges’ erschienen.” (Bilke 2003, p. 137) In the years before the *Görlitzer Abkommen* leading cultural and political figures in the Soviet Occupied Zone and later GDR had voiced their opposition to any permanent handover of the eastern territories to Poland. In a speech in 1946 Wilhelm Pieck called for their return to the German people and in 1948, Johannes R. Becher refused to lead an SED delegation to Wrocław because he could not accept “ein polnisches Breslau.” However, with the official GDR recognition of the Oder-Neisse border these positions were marginalised from official discourse. After 1950 any discussion of the former eastern *Heimat* could be discredited as ‘revanchist.’ For details of these pre-1950 discussions see Wirth (2008, pp. 367-8), Bilke (2003, pp. 137-41) and Schwartz (2005, p. 72).

¹¹⁴ Schwartz (1997, p. 192) emphasises this point.

¹¹⁵ By 1961 this number had dwindled to approximately 3 million. Expellees accounted for one-third of all Germans who left the GDR for the West before the building of the Berlin Wall (Schwartz, 2005, p. 70) – an indication that their ‘integration’ was by no means complete by the early 1950s.

¹¹⁶ With reference to the 1950 agreement Michael Schwartz writes “Das war zumindest das Ziel der SED, denn die DDR-Gesellschaft benötigte keine Fremden auf gepackten Koffern, sondern dauerhaft Bleibende und entsprechende Leistungswillige.” (Schwartz, 2005, p. 73)

troubled integration could not be articulated in official discourse in East Germany: “Es war eine merkwürdige Angst vor der Geschichte, mit der die SED Politiker [...] behaftet waren. Was in den Erinnerungen der Flüchtlinge und Vertriebenen und auch der Zeitzeugen in Mitteldeutschland noch weiterlebte, sollte niemals existiert haben.”¹¹⁷ Mirroring the ‘repolonising’ tendencies of Polish historiography, East German histories of the eastern territories highlighted their Polish heritage to the exclusion of their German past. They were characterised by a pedantic avoidance of the former German names of places in present-day Poland.¹¹⁸ From the East German perspective references to ‘Breslau’ were suspect, while the designation ‘Wrocław’ endorsed the city’s current Polish status. As Lotz writes: “Mit der Parole <Wer an ‘Breslau’ festhält [...] will Revanche> [diffamierte] die SED jeden Verweis auf deutsche Spuren in den verlorenen Gebieten als ‘Revanchismus’. [...] die ursprünglich geographische Vokabel ‘Schlesien’ [wurde] zu einem politischen Forderungsbegriff verformt.”¹¹⁹

The official GDR position developed in opposition to a parallel discussion of “die Vertreibung” in West Germany. There representations of the expellees’ suffering were often the basis of veiled or explicit demands for the restitution of territories east of the Oder-Neisse Line. References to ‘Umsiedler’ and ‘Umsiedlung’ were thus made in the context of a challenge by GDR authorities to the assumed “revanchism” of the *Bundesrepublik*. As in Poland, the legitimacy of the Oder-Neisse frontier was often invoked in the GDR with reference to German guilt. While contemporary West German representations of “die Vertreibung” tended to view expellees’ suffering divorced from German War guilt, statements by prominent GDR figures in the late 1940s and early 1950s highlighted this connection. The loss of German territory after 1945 was conceived as justified punishment for German War crimes in Eastern and Central Europe and for the failure of ordinary,

¹¹⁷ Bilke, 2003, p. 154

¹¹⁸ Bilke (2003, pp. 143-7) refers to East German histories and encyclopaedias which scrupulously avoid references to the German names of places in the eastern territories and bypass the German history of these areas.

¹¹⁹ Lotz, 2008, p. 256

decent Germans to show adequate resistance to their fascist leaders.¹²⁰ In an article in 1948, Walter Ulbricht justified Germany's territorial losses with reference to German atrocities against the Poles: "Nachdem schließlich die deutsche Armee das furchtbarste Verbrechen gegen das polnische Volk begangen und sechs Millionen Polen vernichtet hat, müssen wir jetzt mit der Abtretung östlicher Gebiete dafür zahlen."¹²¹ Christian Lotz summarises the position of the East German branch of the SED-linked Helmut von Gerlach Gesellschaft (HvGG) in the early 1950s as follows: "Zwar hätte man Verständnis für das Heimweh der Umsiedler und deren schweres Los, jedoch wären die Deutschen selbst für ihre Schicksal verantwortlich: Zur Revolution von 1918 sei es ihnen nicht gelungen, die Kapitalisten und Junker zu entmachten und zu verhindern, daß diese 1939 einen neuen Krieg entfachen. Der Osten Deutschlands hätte den Kriegstreibern immer als militärisches Aufmarschgebiet gedient, von dem aus Deutschland zwei Weltkriege geführt und die gegen die Völker Osteuropas gerichtete Ausrottungspolitik begonnen hatte. Die Deutschen hätten damit den östlichen Teil des eigenen Landes verspielt."¹²²

There were certain fora in which alternative positions to the official East German line on the expulsions were articulated before the 1980s.¹²³ While expellees in the GDR were forbidden from forming representative organisations, there is evidence that they held unofficial meetings and cultivated contacts with West German *Landsmannschaften*.¹²⁴ The Churches represented one of the few spheres in which the expellees' experience and the issue of the eastern territories could be treated

¹²⁰ Urban overlooks this aspect of the GDR discussion in his claim that "Das Argument, die Vertreibung sei Strafe für die Verbrechen des faschistischen Deutschlands, konnte nicht angeführt werden, denn die DDR hatte je als das Lager der Antifaschisten zu gelten" (Urban, 2004, pp. 163-4)

¹²¹ Quoted in Schwartz, 2005, p. 72

¹²² Lotz, 2008, p. 86. In an article in the HvGG magazine, *Blick nach Polen*, in January 1949, the philosopher Wolfgang Harich, himself an expellee, acknowledged the basic goodness of the majority of (East) Germans, but nonetheless saw German suffering and the loss of the eastern 'Heimat' as a punishment for their failure to resist the Nazis: "Wenn ich meine Heimat, die ich liebte, und die ich auch nicht vergessen kann, verloren habe, so verdanke ich dies einzig und allein der beschämenden Tatsache, daß wir friedliebenden und zu guter Nachbarschaft bereiten Deutschen den Chauvinisten, unserem Feind und Verderber im eigenen Land, nicht rechtzeitig die Kriegsflagge zu entreißen vermochten." (Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 86)

¹²³ As Lotz claims with reference to the East German discussion of the expulsions "Politisierung von Erinnerung war [...] in der Frühzeit der DDR ein Vorhaben, keine durchgesetzte Praxis." (Lotz, 2008, p. 91)

¹²⁴ For details of how GDR authorities tackled the 'problem' of gatherings of discontented 'Umsiedler' see Schwartz, 2005, p. 73-4.

in ways which diverged from official GDR parlance.¹²⁵ Christian Lotz has shown how the controversial *Denkschrift* on *Die Lage der Vertriebenen und das Verhältnis des deutschen Volkes zu seinen östlichen Nachbarn* issued by West German Bishops in September 1965¹²⁶ prompted a critical engagement with the issue of the expulsions and the border question among their East German brethren.¹²⁷ In his response to the *Denkschrift*, Bishop Jänicke of Saxony appeared to flout official pronouncements on the legitimacy of the Oder-Neisse border by suggesting that “die Frage nach dem Recht auf Heimat” was “weder völkerrechtlich noch theologisch letztlich beantwortet.”¹²⁸

Against the assumption that the theme of the expulsions and the lost German *Heimat* was completely neglected by GDR authors until the 1980s,¹²⁹ Günter Wirth and others have highlighted its abiding, yet spectral presence in literature written and published in East Germany.¹³⁰ The personal experience of expulsion and the autobiographical memory of the lost *Heimat*, which were excluded from official remembrance, found an outlet in works by writers such as Johannes Bobrowski, Hans Cibulka, Franz Fühmann and Christa Wolf. However, this aspect of their literary production was

¹²⁵ As Lotz writes “Die Kirchen boten einen von den wenigen Räumen, in denen solche Themen ohne die offiziellen Floskeln über die ‘Revanchistenverbände’ behandelt werden konnte.” (Lotz, 2008, p. 246)

¹²⁶ I treat this Memorandum in greater detail below. For a discussion of the *Denkschrift* see Kleßmann, 2001, pp. 31-32

¹²⁷ See Lotz, 2008, pp. 250-57

¹²⁸ Quoted in Schwartz, 2005, pp. 76-7

¹²⁹ In *Landschaften der Erinnerung* Elke Mehnert suggests that the theme of expulsions only began to be addressed by GDR authors in the 1980s. She cites texts published in that decade by Helge Schütz, Armin Müller, Elisabeth Schulz-Semrau and Ursula Höntsch-Harendt (Mehnert, 2001a, pp. 151-153). Commentators see Höntsch-Harendt’s novel *Wir Flüchtlingskinder* (1985) and its sequel *Wir sind keine Kinder mehr* (1990) as the first GDR texts to break a perceived East German literary ‘taboo’ on the subject of the expulsions. Helbig writes that “Der Roman *Wir Flüchtlingskinder* ist bisher der einzige DDR-Roman, der sich in ganzer Breite mit den Themenkreisen ‘alte Heimat’, ‘Kriegsende und Befreiung’, ‘Umsiedlung’ und ‘Ankunft im werdenden Sozialismus’ auseinandersetzt.” (Helbig, 1996, p. 201) Elke Mehnert praises Höntsch for the way in which “sie das Schweigen über die polnische und deutsche Vertriebenenproblematik gebrochen hat.” (Mehnert, 2001b, p. 215)

¹³⁰ The secondary literature on German literary representations of ‘Flucht und Vertreibung’ usually notes a dearth of texts on the theme by GDR authors and assumes that the expulsions represented both a political and a literary taboo. Louis Helbig’s treatment of East German literature on the expulsions in *Der ungeheure Verlust* is cursory and he claims that “Die soziale Eingliederung der Vertriebenen, die sich bei Kriegsende in der späteren DDR befanden, war dort mit ganz wenigen Ausnahmen literarisches und literaturwissenschaftliches Tabu.” (Helbig, 1996, p. 201). East German authors find no mention at all in Wolfgang Schweiß’ study of the literature of expulsion *Flucht, Vertreibung und verlorene Heimat im früheren Ostdeutschland: Beispiele literarischer Bearbeitung*, Peter Lang, 1996. By contrast Wirth notes a marked increase in literary texts by East German authors on the subject from the mid-1960s. (Wirth, 2008, p. 376) He writes: “Den Begriff des Vertriebenen gab es in der DDR offiziell nicht und füglich auch nicht in der DDR-Literatur. [...] Das Stichwort ‘Umsiedler’ ist in der DDR-Literatur gängig vorhanden.” (Ibid., p. 365) Michael Schwartz (1997, p. 183) also acknowledges the treatment of the issue in East German literature in spite of an official silence on the expulsions.

often overlooked by GDR critics.¹³¹ East German writers typically used the official terms “Umsiedler” and “Umsiedlung” in their texts, but in many cases they presented nuanced treatments of the theme of expulsions and the eastern *Heimat*. While references to the German past of territories in Eastern Europe were generally avoided in contemporary GDR histories and textbooks, texts by Johannes Bobrowski and Hans Cibulka from the 1960s evoke a pre-War German *Heimat* in the East and mourn its loss.¹³² Franz Fühmann’s short story *Böhmen am Meer* (1962)¹³³ appears to repeat many of the clichés of the official East German discussion of ‘resettlement’ while at the same time reflecting on the traumatic loss of *Heimat* and the difficulties of integration for expellees.¹³⁴ Texts by Werner Heiduczek and Alfred Kumpf from the late 1960s also recall the ‘resettlement’ as a personal trauma which has repercussions in the present.¹³⁵ Christa Wolf’s *Kindheitsmuster* (1976) is often cited as a landmark text due to its allegedly unprecedented personal account of expulsion and to the author’s use of the term “die Austreibung.”¹³⁶ Yet her family’s flight from the Wartheland is also the subject of an earlier short story, *Blickwechsel*.¹³⁷ In that text Wolf’s remembrance of the suffering endured by her family at the end of the War challenges the official East German narrative of

¹³¹ Wirth shows how the theme of the lost eastern *Heimat*, which is central in the work of Hans Cibulka, was ignored by GDR interpreters of his work. (Wirth, 2008, p. 373)

¹³² See for example Hans Cibulka’s *Sizilianisches Tagebuch* (1960) and *Umbrische Tagen* (1965) and Bobrowski’s *Levins Mühle* (1964) and *Litauische Claviere* (1966)

¹³³ Franz Fühmann, *Böhmen am Meer*, Hinstorff, Rostock, 1962

¹³⁴ The narrator, Fühmann’s alter ego, is an ‘Umsiedler’ from Bohemia who has fully integrated into GDR society. He tells of an encounter with an ‘Umsiedlerin’ from the same region on a visit to the Baltic Sea coast. It emerges that she has never properly settled in the seaside village and has an irrational fear of the sea. Towards the end of the story we learn that her trauma originates in her ruthless exploitation by a German Landlord in Bohemia. Here Germany’s territorial losses after 1945 are explained with reference to the aggression of a German Junker class. In an account of a visit to West Berlin the narrator also criticises the ‘Revanchismus’ of West German *Landmannschaften*.

¹³⁵ In *Abschied von den Engeln* (1968) Werner Heiduczek describes the failed attempt of an expellee to return to his home in East Prussia in the Summer of 1945 after Poles have sealed off bridges across the Oder and Neisse. Alfred Kumpf’s story *Die vergrabene Uhr* (1968) describes the visit of an expellee to his former home in the Sudetenland during which feelings of shame for German War crimes mingle with bitterness over the loss of his *Heimat*.

¹³⁶ See for example Bilke, 2003, p. 156

¹³⁷ Wolf, Christa, ‘Blickwechsel’, in *Lesen und Schreiben. Aufsätze und Betrachtungen*, Aufbau Verlag, Berlin, 1971, pp. 31-49

“Befreiung” by the Soviets and views the experience of expellees in the context of German guilt for War crimes against the Poles.¹³⁸

While the issue of the expulsions was marginalised from public debate in the GDR and couched in the language of “Umsiedlung,” in West Germany the experience of *Vertriebene* became one of the most important foci of a discourse of German victimhood in the 1950s and early 1960s. In the Adenauer Era the expulsions represented “eines der wichtigsten innenpolitischen Themen.”¹³⁹ The *Bundesministerium für Vertriebene*¹⁴⁰ was established to address the special needs of expellees; they received financial subsidies and represented, through *Vertriebenenverbände* and *Landsmannschaften*, an important lobby in West German politics.¹⁴¹ A discussion of *Flucht und Vertreibung* in the *Bundesrepublik* was focussed on the expellees’ ‘martyrdom’ in the months immediately after World War II. The term ‘Vertreibung’ was generally used in the context of West German accusations against the Poles, the Czechs and the Russians and demands for the return of the lost German *Heimat* in Eastern Europe. With references to “die zur Zeit unter fremder Verwaltung stehenden deutschen Ostgebieten,”¹⁴² official statements reflected a refusal to recognise the permanence of the Oder-Neisse border with Poland. There was little public reflection on the broader historical context of the expulsions: the contributory factors of aggressive German expansionism under Hitler and German War crimes as well as the evacuations of Germans ordered by their own political leaders before the

¹³⁸ The narrator in *Blickwechsel* recalls an encounter with a group of Polish concentration camp inmates during the trek westwards with her family and other expellees: “Wir wußten bescheid. Wir alle, wir Unglücklichen, die man von ihrem Hab und Gut vertrieben hatte, von ihren Kaufmannsläden und muffigen Schlafzimmern und aufpolierten Wohnstuben mit diesem Führerbild an der Wand – wir wußten: Diese da, die man zu Tieren erklärt hatte, und die jetzt langsam auf uns zukamen, um sich zu rächen – wir hatten sie fallenlassen. Jetzt wurden die Zerlumpten sich unsere Kleider anziehen, ihre blutige Füße in unsere Schuhe stecken, jetzt würden die Verhungerten die Butter und das Mehl und die Wurst an sich reißen, die wir gerade erbeutet hatten. Und mit Entsetzen fühlte ich: Das ist gerecht, und wußte für den Bruchteil einer Sekunde, daß wir schuldig waren. Ich vergaß es wieder.” (Ibid., p. 44)

¹³⁹ Urban, 2004, p. 164. In their article on *Flucht und Vertreibung* in *Deutsche Erinnerungsorte* (2001, p. 334) Hans Henning and Eva Hahn write that in the 1950s and early 1960s “Kaum eine andere kollektive Erinnerung wurde mit so viel Nachdruck in der Bundesrepublik gehegt und gepflegt wie die an ‘Flucht und Vertreibung.’”

¹⁴⁰ This Ministry was disbanded in 1969.

¹⁴¹ For details of the *Lastenausgleichsgesetz* and the financial support it afforded to expellees in West Germany see Urban, 2004, pp. 166-7.

¹⁴² A quote from the 1953 *Vertriebenengesetz* in Urban, 2004, p. 95

end of the War.¹⁴³ Historians too were selective in their interpretation of the expulsions. There is critical of West German studies which tend to begin their narrative of the expulsions in the Summer of 1945 and thus view the expellees' suffering in isolation from the events of World War II.¹⁴⁴ With few exceptions West German literary and documentary representations of the expulsions published in the 1950s invoked German suffering and the eastern *Heimat* with no acknowledgement of German War guilt.¹⁴⁵ While the historians who worked on the project *Dokumentation der Vertreibung* in the 1950s strove for comprehensiveness and historical accuracy, before the 1980s only those sections of the collected documents which portrayed the brutal expulsions of Germans gained prominence in West Germany.¹⁴⁶

Commentators have suggested that in the context of a new focus on Germans as perpetrators prompted by the trials of Nazi War criminals in the early 1960s, the issue of *Vertreibung* was increasingly marginalised from West German public discourse.¹⁴⁷ Bernd Faulenbach has even claimed that at this juncture a discussion of *Flucht und Vertreibung* was eclipsed by a discussion of the Holocaust.¹⁴⁸ However, it is more correct to say that a discussion of the expellees' suffering was now qualified by an increased public awareness of German War guilt in the *Bundesrepublik*. From the mid-1960s onwards the victim-narratives of *Vertriebenen* were supplemented and increasingly marginalised by narratives of the expulsions told by those who did not identify with the political

¹⁴³ With reference to West Germany, Urban (2004, p. 168) writes that "in der Publizistik der fünfziger Jahre [vorherrschte] die Tendenz, die Deutschen als Opfer der Polen darzustellen."

¹⁴⁴ Ther, 1998, pp. 90-1. Kleßmann (2001, p. 28) claims similarly with reference to the West German historiography of the expulsions that "In Westdeutschland wurde der Zusammenhang zwischen Besatzungspolitik und Vertreibung zunächst stark in den Hintergrund gedrängt und wenig bewusstgemacht."

¹⁴⁵ Examples include: Erich Dwinger, *Wenn die Dämme brechen* (1950); Jürgen Thorwald, *Es begann an der Weichsel* (1950) and *Das Ende an der Elbe* (1950); Johannes Kaps, *Die Tragödie Schlesiens* (1952-3); Mühlberger, Josef, *Verhängnis und Verheißung. Roman einer Familie* (1952) and *Die Vertreibung. 6 Novellen und Erzählungen* (1955); Normann, Käthe von, *Ein Tagebuch aus Pommern* (1955); Schell, Margareta, *Ein Tagebuch aus Prag 1945-6* (1957); Storm, Ruth, *Das vorletzte Gericht* (1953) and *Ich schrieb es auf. Das letzte Schreiberhauer Jahr* (1961). For a discussion of representations of the expulsions in the early *Bundesrepublik* see Hans Henning and Eva Hahn (2001, pp. 340-6).

¹⁴⁶ For a discussion of the *Dokumentation der Vertreibung* and its reception in West Germany see Faulenbach (2002, pp. 46-9) and an informative article by Mathias Beer (2005). The *Dokumentation* was published in its entirety for the first time by dtv in 1984.

¹⁴⁷ See for example Kelletat, 2005, p. 137, Urban, 2004, p. 13 and Beer, 2005, p. 26

¹⁴⁸ Faulenbach writes that the public remembrance of the expulsions "[geriet] zunehmend in den Schatten des Holocaust" in the 1960s (Faulenbach, 2002, p. 50). Urban (2004, p. 13) makes a similar claim.

agenda of the *Landsmannschaften*. For several different reasons the influence of the *Landsmannschaften* waned in West German public life and their remembrance of the expulsions as martyrdom was increasingly limited to their own circles.¹⁴⁹ The theme of the expulsions continued to be addressed in literature and politics, but it was in many cases no longer bound to demands for the restitution of the lost eastern territories.

In this context there are several signs of an increased acknowledgement and accommodation of Polish and East German positions on the expulsions and the Oder-Neisse border within West German discourse. The memorandum *Die Lage der Vertriebenen und das Verhältnis des deutschen Volkes zu seinen östlichen Nachbarn* issued by German protestant bishops in September 1965 has been judged as a milestone on the way to the *Ostpolitik* of the social-liberal coalition under Willy Brandt. This statement was an attempt by the Church to ease political tensions and encourage dialogue between Poland and West Germany. The bishops acknowledged the “Unrecht” of the expulsions, but they called on Germans to revoke any lingering claims to former German territory in Poland.¹⁵⁰ In 1967 Günter Anders’ diary of a visit to his birthplace Breslau in 1966 was published as part of *Die Schrift an der Wand*.¹⁵¹ Anders described his sense of dislocation on his return to the Polish Wrocław where he re-visited the visible and often no longer visible places of his childhood. In the same text he recorded a visit to Auschwitz and throughout the diary he drew connections between the expulsion

¹⁴⁹ Christian Lotz has described how the arguments of the West German *Vertriebenenverbände* in favour of the restoration of the eastern territories came to represent a minority position in the context of the 1960s. Among other reasons – the successful integration of expellees into West German society, international pressure on the Federal Republic to recognise the Oder-Neisse border and the effects of SED propaganda – Lotz suggests that the Nazi trials of the early 1960s prompted widespread acknowledgement of the causal link between German War guilt and the expulsions: “Den wahrscheinlich entscheidenden Faktor für die sich ausbreitende Einsicht in den Ursachenzusammenhang zwischen Krieg und Vertreibung wird man in den Gerichtsverfahren gegen NS-Verbrechen suchen müssen.” (Lotz, 2008, p. 259) Beer (2005, pp. 26-7) argues similarly.

Urban (2004, p. 171) writes that following Brandt’s appointment as Chancellor “der Bund der Vertriebenen und die Landsmannschaften verloren immer mehr an innenpolitischen Einfluss.” Schwartz sees the marginalisation of “die Vertriebenenfrage” in late 1960s West Germany in the context of the successful integration of expellees into West German society and the new political constellation at that time: “Ursprünglich im Zuge des Kalten Krieges positiv funktionalisiert, wurde sie [die Vertriebenenfrage] mehr und mehr als Belastung empfunden und schließlich beiseite geschoben.” (Schwartz, 1997, p. 191-2)

¹⁵⁰ For details of the *Denkschrift* and the controversy it sparked see Urban (2004, pp. 169-70) and Kleßmann (2001, pp. 31-2).

¹⁵¹ Günther Anders, *Die Schrift an der Wand. Tagebücher 1941 bis 1966*, Beck-Verlag, Munich, 1967. The same text was published in 1969 by the Union-Verlag, Berlin.

of Germans at the end of the War and the guilt borne by Germans for the events at Auschwitz/Birkenau. In a challenge to calls for a reinstatement of the lost eastern territories, articulated in the existing West German literature on *Flucht und Vertreibung*, the diarist contended that because of Auschwitz there is and can be no German *Heimat* in present-day Poland.¹⁵² Horst Krüger similarly underlined the right of Poles to the former German territories in his reports of a visit to Poland broadcast and published in West Germany in the late 1960s.¹⁵³ Persistent East German allegations of West German ‘revanchism’ were increasingly unwarranted in the context of new approaches to the *Vertreibung* gaining ground in the *Bundesrepublik* at this time. New literature on the subject of the expulsions published in the 1970s by authors such as Horst Bienek,¹⁵⁴ Siegfried Lenz¹⁵⁵ and Christine Brückner¹⁵⁶ tended to view this episode in its broad historical context and exuded an acceptance for the loss of former German territories in the East.¹⁵⁷

The GDR publications of ‘*Festung Breslau*’ in den *Berichten eines Pfarrers* 1966-74

The first GDR publication of Peikert’s diary in 1966 was the end product of protracted behind-the-scenes negotiations between the *Union-Verlag*, the GDR *Ministerium für Kultur* and the original Polish editors of the text. An examination of the reports submitted to the *HV Verlag und Buchhandel* by the *Union-Verlag* and the correspondence of *Union’s* chief editor with the Polish

¹⁵² Anders repeatedly acknowledges the right of Poland to the former German territories with reference to German War guilt. From Breslau/Wrocław he writes: “Recht haben hier allein die Heutigen. Und die Morgigen. Die jungen Polen hier. Denen gehört dieser Boulevard. [...] Und von denen ein Gefühl zu erwarten, daß der Grund, auf dem sie leben, aus den Trümmern des Gewesenen bestehe, und daß sie in ihrer Grabiszynska über den Gräbern der <Gräbschner> wohnen, das wäre wahrhaft eine Zumutung. Eine Zumutung, die um so absurder wäre, als ja das, was hier gewesen war, nicht nur nicht ihre Welt gewesen war, sondern auch nicht von ihnen zerstört worden ist. Vielmehr war es die Welt derer, die erst einmal ihr Land Polen verwüstet und beschnitten und ihr Volk der Polen dezimiert haben. Und die sind es auch gewesen, die ihre eigene ehemalige Stadt verwüstet haben.” (Anders, 1969, p. 333)

¹⁵³ See his contribution ‘Breslau oder Wrocław’ broadcast in November 1966 on *Südwestfunk* and the text ‘Tragikomische Polenreise’ in *Merkur*, Heft 1, 1967, pp. 37-54

¹⁵⁴ *Die erste Polka* (1976), *Septemberlicht* (1977) and *Zeit ohne Glocken* (1979)

¹⁵⁵ *Heimatmuseum* (1978)

¹⁵⁶ *Jauche und Levkojen* (1975) and *Nirgendwo ist Poenichen* (1977)

¹⁵⁷ Bill Niven drew attention to this aspect of the published literature on the expulsions and the eastern *Heimat* in 1970s West Germany in a paper presented at the workshop ‘Geerbte Geschichte. Faschismus und Krieg in Literatur und Film um 1969’ organised by the University of Potsdam in November 2008. See also Hahn, 2001, pp. 346-50

publishers shows the delicate nature of the project. The reports' authors (*Gutachter*) underlined the relevance of Peikert's testimony to the current political context and urged that it be published as soon as possible. Yet at the same time they were wary of the possible misinterpretation of certain aspects of the diary by GDR readers.

The East German *Gutachter* of Peikert's diary invested it with a political function in the context of a contemporary debate on the events of 1945 in Breslau in the GDR, West Germany and Poland. Like the Polish editors of *Kronika Dni Obleżenia* they presented Peikert's text as a necessary corrective to *So kämpfte Breslau* and other West German representations of the Siege of Breslau and *die Vertreibung*. Translator Kurt Kelm valued the diary as "[ein] Gegengewicht zu den westdeutschen Publikationen."¹⁵⁸ Against "den Versuch einer Rechtfertigung des deutschen Oberkommandos in Breslau" undertaken by von Ahlfen and Niehoff in their memoirs, he suggested that Peikert's text was "eine Anklage der Tätigkeit von Ahlfens und Niehoffs in der belagerten Stadt."¹⁵⁹ In their respective reports *Union* editor Günter Wirth and Dr. Horst Dohle of the *Staatssekretariat für Kirchenfragen* both gave Peikert's text a role in the context of a discussion of the Oder-Neisse border prompted by the 1965 Church Memorandum on *Die Lage der Vertriebenen und das Verhältnis des deutschen Volkes zu seinen östlichen Nachbarn*. With reference to the "evangelische Denkschrift," Wirth argued that "die baldige Herausgabe dieses Buches von außerordentlicher Bedeutung [ist] und würde uns in unserem offensiven Kampf gegen den westdeutschen Revanchismus und für die Entspannung in Mitteleuropa eine außerordentliche Hilfe leisten."¹⁶⁰ More than the Memorandum itself, the discussion it provoked in the *Bundesrepublik* was seen by GDR authorities as evidence of a persistent "Relativisierung" of the Oder-Neisse border in West Germany.¹⁶¹ Against this background Peikert's narrative was judged by the *Gutachter* to defend the legitimacy of the Polish-GDR frontier against

¹⁵⁸ BArch: DR1/2424a, p. 317

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 315

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 314

¹⁶¹ See Kleßmann's discussion (2001, pp. 31-2)

perceived threats emanating from the West. In the reports, the publication was presented as an opportunity to reinforce the official GDR account of the expulsions and document the *Befreiung vom Faschismus* by the Red Army. Wirth and Dohle both highlighted those aspects of Peikert's text which tallied with the official GDR view of the events of 1945. For Wirth "Die Chronik macht deutlich, daß die 'Heimatvertreibung' auf das Konto der Nazis kommt, und daß sie mit der Schuld der deutschen Menschen zu tun hat, die dem Nazismus nicht widerstanden."¹⁶² He pointed to Peikert's assessment of the Red Army as "die Befreier."¹⁶³ Under the heading "Marxistisch-leninistische Wertung" in his report, Dohle emphasised the diarist's portrayal of the Nazis' "Brutalität bei der Vertreibung der eigenen Bevölkerung." Peikert was seen to bear witness to the *Befreiung* of ordinary Germans from their fascist leaders by the Red Army at the end of World War II.¹⁶⁴

In pleading the case for the publication of the diary the reporters devoted much attention to an aspect of Peikert's chronicle which is marginal to his narrative of the events in Breslau at the end of the War – anti-fascist resistance. A positioning of Peikert's diary within a canon of East German resistance literature attempted here confirms what has been shown elsewhere on the tendency to subsume all War experience under the rubric of anti-fascist resistance in the GDR.¹⁶⁵ As I mentioned above, Peikert gathered contemporary documents in his diary including articles from the *Schlesische Tageszeitung*, copies of evacuation orders and a number of anti-fascist pamphlets by German resisters. The *Gutachter* focused in particular on the latter, they overestimated their presence in the text and misrepresented Peikert's diary as a testimony of anti-fascist resistance. For Wirth the diary's collection of "Flugblätter des Nationalkomitees 'Freies Deutschland', von Widerstandsgruppen in Breslau selbst, sowie solche der Sowjetarmee" made it "eine[r] wertvolle[n]

¹⁶² BArch: DR1/2424a, p.313

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 313

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 309

¹⁶⁵ See for example Danyel (1995), Groehler (1995) and Barck (1997, 2000 and 2003)

Geschichtsquelle.” He listed the members of the *Nationalkomitee* mentioned in these pamphlets now living in the GDR, including Luitpold Steidle and Lieutenant Löschle.¹⁶⁶ Dohle judged the diary to be “eine beachtliche historische Dokumentation” because of the “Flugblätter der polnischen Widerstandsbewegung und des Nationalkomitees” it contained. Peikert’s text was seen to document anti-fascist resistance in the final months of World War II: “Das Manuskript enthält [...] Hinweise über die Arbeit deutscher Staatsbürger, die als Mitglieder des Nationalkomitees das humanistische Anliegen der Roten Armee, [...], unterstützten.”¹⁶⁷ Indeed Peikert himself is portrayed as an anti-fascist resistor in the reports. All three *Gutachter* referred to the priest’s arrest by the Gestapo in 1937 in connection with the discovery of an open letter criticising Goebbels. It was claimed that his anti-fascist convictions were deepened through an engagement with the arguments of resistance groups such as the *Nationalkomitee*. Dohle suggested that Peikert’s long-standing opposition to the Nazis on the grounds of their anticlericalism gave way to political anti-fascism during the Siege: “Seine Erfahrungen mit der faschistischen Barbarei ließen ihn zu einem überzeugten Antifaschisten werden.”¹⁶⁸ Kelm noted Peikert’s membership of the anti-Communist Centrist Party, but he claimed similarly that the priest’s experiences in the last months of the War made him a fervent political opponent of the Nazis: “Die Ablehnung der Nazis und ihrer Methoden ist vor allem auf deren Abkehr von der Religion und Verfolgung der Kirche zurückzuführen. Doch während der letzten Kriegsmonate [...] kommt Peikert zu einer eindeutigen Meinung.”¹⁶⁹

While they point to the political expediency of Peikert’s diary, the *Gutachter* did suggest that the planned East German publication was not unproblematic. Horst Dohle registered “erhebliche Bedenken” with regard to the first section of the diary which, as I have mentioned, is focussed on the evacuation of Germans from Silesia by their Nazi leaders. It was the language of these passages of the

¹⁶⁶ BArch: DR1/2424a, pp. 313-4

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 309

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 308

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 316

diary to which he objected. Citing phrases such as “deutscher Osten”, “mit Gewalt vertriebenen Bauerngeschlechter”, “wie hängt der Schlesier an seiner schönen Heimat” and “Die Scholle, für die all diese Männer kämpfen, sie musste im Stich gelassen werden” Dohle urged that all of Peikert’s references to Silesia and the eastern territories as a German homeland be removed in a “sprachlich korrigierte Zusammenfassung” of the diary, “da sie doch in der jetzigen Fassung zeitgenössisch wohl verständlich, aber doch zu undifferenziert die nazistische Sprachregelung übernehmen.” He asked that similar patriotic statements in other sections of the diary be replaced and that a speech by Hitler speech included in the Polish edition be cut short. Passages where Peikert longs for a renewal of religious life and references to “die Russen” in the diary and in footnotes added by the Poles were also seen as difficult.¹⁷⁰ In his report Günter Wirth raised similar concerns and indicated that *Union* had requested the permission of the *Ossolineum Publishing House* to edit the offending passages.¹⁷¹

The East German publisher’s request to abridge the diary for their publication was turned down. However, as a compromise, the original Polish publishers agreed to the addition of two new paratexts: a short disclaimer at the end of their introduction and an epilogue by the Mayor of Weimar and former anti-fascist resistor, Luitpold Steidle.¹⁷² The final East German edition of Peikert’s text is identical to the earlier Polish publication with the exception of these supplementary texts which suggested an interpretation for Peikert’s diary in accordance with the official narrative of the expulsions. In lieu of the preferred politically correct synopsis of Peikert’s entries for January 1945, the East German editors of the text distanced themselves from certain statements of the priest in a short note which appeared after the Polish introduction to the text.¹⁷³ A brief description printed on the fly-leaf represented the diary as a narrative of the German people’s liberation from fascism.¹⁷⁴ The epilogue by Steidle is striking for its complete silence on the matter of the evacuations

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 310-2

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 314

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 303

¹⁷³ FB, pp. 20-21

¹⁷⁴ “Paul Peikert ist [...] zum beredten Ankläger faschistischer Zerstörungspolitik und zum Zeugen der Befreiung unseres Volkes vom Nazismus geworden.”

and/or the expulsions. Here we see an attempt to superimpose the official GDR position on the Oder-Neisse border onto a text which has the potential to be read against that position. Steidle affirmed the legitimacy of the current Polish-GDR border with reference to the suffering endured by Poles at the hands of the Nazis. He viewed the diary as “einen Beitrag zu dem, was mich schon seit Kriegsende, [...], seit meinem ersten Besuch in den polnischen Westgebieten, [...] dies nämlich, daß wir gerade angesichts der faschistischen Verbrechen am polnischen Volk die Grenze an Oder und Neiße, wie sie im Sommer 1950 im Staatsvertrag zwischen der DDR und der Volksrepublik Polen festgelegt ist, als Grenze des Friedens und der Freundschaft anerkennen und gegen alle Anschläge verteidigen.”¹⁷⁵ As in the reports on Peikert’s diary submitted prior to the East German publication, in the epilogue the resistance of the *Nationalkomitee* received a level of attention which was incommensurate with its treatment in the text itself. Steidle recalled his resistance as a member of the *Nationalkomitee* during the Siege of Breslau and quoted from a letter he wrote to the military commanders in the Fortress in February 1945 in which he called for an honourable surrender.¹⁷⁶ His acknowledgement of German guilt for “faschistische Verbrechen” in Poland was thus qualified by a reference to German anti-fascist resistance as a legacy of the GDR.

The reception of *Festung Breslau in den Berichten eines Pfarrers* in East and West Germany

1966-74

The first German edition of Peikert’s diary, entitled *Festung Breslau in den Berichten eines Pfarrers. 22. Januar bis 6. Mai 1945*, was finally issued in the Autumn of 1966. In a review in the *Mitteilungsblatt der Arbeitsgemeinschaft ehemaliger Offiziere* on the occasion of the third edition of the diary in 1970, *Union* editor Günther Wirth referred to “das starke Echo auf einen der erschütternden Berichte über die letzten Wochen des zweiten Weltkrieges.”¹⁷⁷ Peikert’s diary proved

¹⁷⁵ FB, p. 309

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 309

¹⁷⁷ *Mitteilungsblatt der Arbeitsgemeinschaft ehemaliger Offiziere* (8), 1970, pp. 14-16

immensely popular with the reading public in the GDR and it was one of *Union's* greatest publication successes.¹⁷⁸ In the years immediately following the first publication, the text was issued a further four times with a total print-run of 57,000 copies.¹⁷⁹ Yet the obvious impact of the diary, the “starkes Echo” of which Wirth wrote, went practically unregistered by the GDR media. With the exception of a short publication announcement in the official newspaper of the CDU block-party, *Neue Zeit*,¹⁸⁰ the text was completely overlooked by GDR newspapers. Reviews of the diary did appear in a number of Church publications in the late 1960s. These were followed by discussions of the text in the *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft*,¹⁸¹ the *Zeitschrift für Militärgeschichte*¹⁸² and the *Mitteilungsblatt der Arbeitsgemeinschaft ehemaliger Offiziere*.

As outlined above, the Churches in the GDR represented one of the few (semi-) public domains where the personal memories of expellees could be articulated in ways which diverged from the official narrative of “Umsiedlung.” The relatively high level of attention Peikert’s diary received in Church publications suggests that the text drew a large readership from expellee circles. In an interview Günther Wirth confirmed that *Festung Breslau* was read avidly by former expellees from Silesia in the GDR.¹⁸³ Hubertus Guske, an expellee from Breslau and former editor of the East German Catholic monthly, *Begegnung*, recalled the tremendous interest sparked by the diary among people originally from Silesia at a time when “die ehemaligen deutschen Ostgebiete, besonders Schlesien, in den Medien der DDR wie eine *terra incognita* [galten].”¹⁸⁴ The intentions of the GDR publishers of Peikert’s text were frequently lost on this reading public. More than a testimony of “Befreiung vom Faschismus” and anti-fascist resistance, or a treatise against West German “revanchism”, for these readers Peikert’s diary was seen to reflect their personal experience of the

¹⁷⁸ See Wirth, 1997/8, p. 73. In an interview Wirth referred to the diary as “ein Publikumsrenner.”

¹⁷⁹ The diary was re-issued in 1967, 1969, 1971 and 1974

¹⁸⁰ *Neue Zeit*, Nr. 207, 4.9.1966, p. 9

¹⁸¹ Review by Günter Gerstmann, *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft*, 4/1968, p. 537

¹⁸² Review by Werner Stang, *Zeitschrift für Militärgeschichte*, 2/1970, p. 242

¹⁸³ Wirth Interview, 10.09.2008

¹⁸⁴ Interview with Hubertus Guske 25.09.2008

expulsions and the loss of *Heimat*. It is this reading which emerges in articles on *Festung Breslau* in Church publications such as *Das evangelische Pfarrerblatt*,¹⁸⁵ *Die Zeichen der Zeit*¹⁸⁶ and *Begegnung*.¹⁸⁷ Here the focus is on the suffering caused by the evacuations which Peikert's text is seen to document.¹⁸⁸ The population of Breslau and Silesia is portrayed as the innocent victim of its fascist leaders. The reviewers make no reference to "die Befreiung" of Germans by the Red Army, to German anti-fascist resistance, or to the role of Peikert's diary in the current political context. The issue of the Oder-Neisse border is not raised. While the East German publishers of *Festung Breslau* sought to portray Peikert as an anti-fascist resistor, the discussions of his diary in Church publications foreground his role as a religious leader. For the reviewer in the *Evangelisches Pfarrerblatt* the diary is "ein würdiges Denkmal kirchlichen Dienstes mitten im Untergang."

By contrast reviews of the diary in the *Zeitschrift für Militärgeschichte*, the *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* and in the *Mitteilungsblatt* reproduce the official reading of the text and the expulsions. In the aforementioned article in the *Mitteilungsblatt* Günther Wirth quotes passages from the diary detailing the evacuations of Germans by their own leaders and concludes that the "Essenz" of Peikert's text lies in its insight into the "Befreiung durch die Sowjetarmee."¹⁸⁹ This aspect of the diary is also highlighted by Werner Stang in the *Zeitschrift für Militärgeschichte*.¹⁹⁰ With reference to the anti-fascist pamphlets Peikert collected Wirth and Stang both represent the diary as a testimony of anti-fascist resistance. Wirth writes that the text is written proof of "[die] Wirkung der Aufklärungsarbeit der Frontbeauftragten – bis hin zu Zivilbevölkerung." All three reviewers point to the anticipated function of *Festung Breslau* as a counter-narrative to West German

¹⁸⁵ *Evangelisches Pfarrerblatt*, June 1967, p. 160

¹⁸⁶ *Die Zeichen der Zeit. Evangelische Monatsschrift für Mitarbeiter der Kirche*, January 1968, p. 38-9

¹⁸⁷ *Begegnung. Monatsschrift deutscher Katholiken*, January 1967, pp. 32-3

¹⁸⁸ In *Die Zeichen der Zeit* the author writes about "[die] Evakuierung Tausender von Frauen und Kindern in grimmig kalten Winter" and describes how "Heimatlose aus den weiter östlich liegenden Gebieten werden weitergetrieben, um in Schnee und Eis auf den Landesstraßen zu verrecken."

¹⁸⁹ Peikert's statement "Wie eine Lawine ergießt sich nun [...] der befreiende Feind über deutsches Land, um der schlimmsten Erniedrigung des deutschen Volkes ein Ende zu machen" is cited as proof of the "Befreiung."

¹⁹⁰ "Er [Peikert] gelangt sogar zu der Erkenntnis, daß der größte Feind des deutschen Volkes das faschistische Regime ist, und begrüßt daher die Befreiung Deutschlands durch die Rote Armee."

representations of the expulsions. Stang emphasises its “politische Aussagekraft.” With its “wahrheitsgetreue Schilderung” Peikert’s text is seen to contradict “die Lügen” of von Ahlfen and Niehoff’s memoirs. For Wirth the diary represents “eine Streitschrift gegen den Neonazismus in der BRD und gegen die in der Verweigerung der Anerkennung der Grenzen Volkspolens und der DDR zum Ausdruck kommenden Position des offiziellen Bonn gegen den Frieden und die europäische Sicherheit.”

Although never published in West Germany, Peikert’s diary was in circulation in the *Bundesrepublik* in the late 1960s. In many cases, copies of *Festung Breslau* reached West German readers through unofficial contacts between expellees in both German states.¹⁹¹ Among the community of former Silesians and other expellees in the *Bundesrepublik* the text gained a cult status.¹⁹² While the East German publishers of the diary had sought to pit it against the existing West German literature on the expulsions, within expellee circles in the *Bundesrepublik* *Festung Breslau* came to be recognised as “ein Standardwerk zur Vertreibung”¹⁹³ which supplemented rather than invalidated the memoirs of von Ahlfen and Niehoff.¹⁹⁴

At the same time Peikert’s text became a reference point for a reevaluation of established narratives of *Vertreibung* at the end of the 1960s in West Germany. In an article in *Die Zeit* in December 1967, the Breslau-born journalist Dietrich Strothmann described a visit to Wrocław. His text reflects a similar position on the expulsions to the travelogues by Günther Anders and Horst Krüger which appeared at around the same time. He referred to the new East German edition of Peikert’s diary and quoted

¹⁹¹ I gained this information from an interview with Hubert Wolff from the *Breslauer Sammlung* in Cologne on the 27.10.2008.

¹⁹² In a conversation with the then *Oberbürgermeister* of Wiesbaden *Union* editor Günther Wirth learned that Peikert’s diary had become “eine Art Kultbuch unter den Schlesiern in der alten Bundesrepublik” at the end of the 1960s. (Wirth, 1997/8, p. 73)

¹⁹³ Interview with Hubert Wolff 27.10.2008

¹⁹⁴ Apart from brief reviews of the Polish version of Peikert’s diary in the *Archiv für Schlesische Kirchengeschichte* (22/1964) and the *Jahrbuch für Schlesische Kirchengeschichte* (52/53, 1974), I have not located any other reviews of Peikert’s text in the newspapers of the *Landsmannschaften* which would document this reception. However, in interviews and correspondence with relevant institutions I have been assured that the diary was very well known among West German expellees.

liberally from it.¹⁹⁵ Peikert's text is seen to document German responsibility for the destruction of Breslau and the flight of Germans from the city: "Es ist eine Chronik der Wahrheit – der Wahrheit über das Verbrechen, das [...] Deutsche an dieser deutschen Stadt verübten." Strothmann points to Hanke's evacuation order in January 1945 and the suffering it brought on German civilians. Yet German suffering at the end of the War is relativised here with reference to the Holocaust. In the first part of his article Strothmann recalls the persecution and forced migration of Breslau's Jewish population under National Socialism as exemplified in the fate of the Jewish children who attended his school. Against the restitution demands voiced in many West German portrayals of the events in the Breslau Fortress, Strothmann underlines the right of Poles to Wrocław deriving from the fact of German War crimes in Poland. He views Peikert's diary as "eine Chronik der Gerechtigkeit" which describes the death of the German Breslau.¹⁹⁶ Strothmann praises the Poles for their re-building of the destroyed city and writes: "Es ist eine Stadt der Zukunft. Sie heißt heute Wrocław, sie heißt so seit 22 Jahren. Es ist eine Stadt in Polen, in einem Land, in dem das Abc mit dem September-Datum beginnt, mit dem 1. September 1939."¹⁹⁷

Postscript and Conclusion

The reception of *Festung Breslau* continued in the 1980s when the diary was cited in prominent literary and historical narratives of the expulsions in both East and West Germany. In the novel *Wir Flüchtlingskinder*,¹⁹⁸ published in the GDR in 1985, Ursula Höntsch-Harendt drew extensively on Peikert's descriptions of the flight of Germans from Silesia.¹⁹⁹ However, the evacuations are not the

¹⁹⁵ Dietrich Strothmann, 'Andere Menschen in einer anderen Stadt' in *Die Zeit*, 1.12.1967, p. 7

¹⁹⁶ "Die deutsche Stadt Breslau ist tot. Paul Peikert schreibt dazu in seinem Tagebuch: 'Das ist das Ende eines Volkes, das Gott und sein Gesetz auslöschen wollte und einen Menschen zum Abgott machte.' Damals verlor Breslau auch seinen Namen."

¹⁹⁷ The tenor of Strothmann's article bears striking similarities to contemporary texts by authors such as Günter Anders and Horst Krüger describing visits to Poland and Breslau in the late 1960s. Strothmann's remark echoes a statement by Anders in *Besuch im Hades* which ends: "Nein, Breslau ist das gewiss nicht, was ich hier gesehen habe. Sondern die Stadt Wrocław. Die hier mit vollem Recht steht. Und der ich für die Zukunft alles Gute wünsche." (Anders, 1969, p. 333)

¹⁹⁸ Ursula Höntsch-Harendt, *Wir Flüchtlingskinder*, Mitteldeutscher Verlag, Halle/Leipzig, 1985

¹⁹⁹ Passages from the diary on the evacuations of Germans from and through Breslau are quoted in *ibid.*,

exclusive focus of the novel. In this text Peikert's testimony reflects just one aspect of a series of events from the first evacuations of Germans to the integration of expellees in East German society exemplified in the fate of the protagonist's family. While Höntsch-Harendt uses the vocabulary of "Um-/Aussiedlung" throughout her text, in a break with the official GDR narrative of this War episode, she broaches the issue of Russian and Polish brutality against Germans in the later phase of the expulsions.²⁰⁰

Quotes from Peikert's diary are sparse in Horst G.W. Gleiss' mammoth project *Breslauer Apokalypse*,²⁰¹ a collage of documents relating to the events of 1945 in Breslau arranged in the form of a chronicle, published in 1986 in West Germany. A clear focus on the *Vertreibung* of Germans by Poles and Russians in Gleiss' selection of and commentaries on the documents, is consistent with his omission of Peikert's descriptions of the evacuations ordered by the German leadership. The only extended quote from Peikert's diary included in *Breslauer Apokalypse*, in which the priest hopes for the renewal of Parish life in Breslau after the War, is introduced by the headline: "Von der Vertreibung ahnte Peikert noch nichts!"²⁰²

The diary has been re-published in recent years in Poland and Germany by *Ossolineum* in Breslau.²⁰³ Via its reception, Peikert's text has continued to serve as the basis for divided public memories of the events of 1945 in Breslau. In Erhard Lucas-Busemann's *So fielen Königsberg und Breslau*,²⁰⁴ the diary is cited in support of the thesis that the expulsions of Germans from the Eastern territories was a logical and irreversible consequence of Nazi crimes in these areas.²⁰⁵ By contrast a review of the diary

pp. 65-67 and pp. 93-4.

²⁰⁰ See for example *ibid.*, pp. 102-3 and pp. 165. For this reason the novel has frequently been seen as a ground-breaking text in the GDR.

²⁰¹ Gleiss, Horst G.W., *Breslauer Apokalypse. Dokumentarchronik vom Todeskampf und Untergang einer deutschen Stadt und Festung am Ende des Zweiten Weltkrieges*, Natura et Patria Verlag, 1986. In its diary structure the collection of diverse documents is reminiscent of Walter Kempowski's *Echolot* project.

²⁰² See *ibid.*, pp. 55-6

²⁰³ The German edition of the diary was re-published in 1993, 1997, 1999 and 2005. The Polish edition was re-issued in 2006 and 2008.

²⁰⁴ Erhard Lucas-Busemann, *So fielen Königsberg und Breslau. Nachdenken über eine Katastrophe ein halbes Jahrhundert danach*, Aufbau, Berlin, 1994

²⁰⁵ See the chapter 'Selbsterstörung und Untergang Breslaus.' (*ibid.*, pp. 63-75). Lucas-Busemann sees a return of the arguments of texts such as von Ahlfen and Niehoff's *So kämpfte Breslau* in some theses raised in the

in the February 1999 edition of *Deutscher Ostdienst*, the official magazine of the *Informationsdienst des Bundes der Vertriebenen*, mentions the evacuations, but highlights the role of the Red Army in the destruction of Breslau and the expulsion of Germans, including Peikert.²⁰⁶ More recently in an article in *Die Zeit* the historian Gregor Thum refers to Peikert's diary in his discussion of German responsibility for the devastation of Breslau and the evacuations of Germans in the final months of the War.²⁰⁷

The publication and reception history of Paul Peikert's *Festung Breslau in den Berichten eines Pfarrers* in East and West Germany demonstrates that widespread claims of a taboo on the issue of the expulsions in both Germanies from the mid-1960s until the 1990s must be qualified and contextualised. At a time when memories of the expulsions were excluded from official discourse, a text which recalled the beginning of this War episode and reminded readers of the lost eastern *Heimat* became a 'hidden' publishing phenomenon in the GDR. Attempts by authorities to graft the official Polish/East German position on the expulsions and the Oder-Neisse border onto this text were largely unsuccessful among the GDR readers drawn to the diary. For a community of expellees in East Germany, Peikert's text articulated their private memories of the expulsions and it offered them the possibility of an identification as victim beyond the official labels "Umsiedler" or "ehemalige Umsiedler." In West Germany *Festung Breslau* was appropriated as a medium of memory by opposing camps in a public debate about the significance of the expulsions at the end of the 1960s. I have shown how the GDR-published text was quickly absorbed into a West German canon of *Vertreibungsliteratur* presided over by expellees and their representative organisations. Yet at the same time Peikert's diary was invoked in the context of a backlash against established West German

1980s *Historikerstreit* and he attempts to contradict them here with reference to Peikert's testimony.

²⁰⁶ 'Ein Tagebuch aus der Festung Breslau' in *Deutscher Ostdienst. Informationsdienst des Bundes der Vertriebenen*, Nr. 7, February 19th, 1999, p. 6. The author criticises the Polish publishers for failing to include later diary entries in which the Priest allegedly reveals the role of Poles and Russians in 'die Vertreibung': "Bedauerlich ist, daß die polnischen Herausgeber sich abermals nicht entschließen konnten, auch die erhalten gebliebenen Aufzeichnungen Peikerts aus der Zeit unter Sowjets und Polen bis zu seiner Vertreibung am 6. Mai 1946 zu publizieren."

²⁰⁷ 'Stalingrad an der Oder' by Gregor Thum in *Die Zeit*, 03.03.2005

narratives of *Flucht und Vertreibung*. It became the basis for arguments against portrayals of “die Vertreibung” as an unqualified German martyrdom, and against calls by expellee organisations for the restoration of lost German territories in the east. This reception of Peikert’s text beyond expellee circles in the Federal Republic of the 1960s reveals an increased convergence of positions on the expulsions, their causes and consequences, in all three memorial contexts examined in this chapter and it shows how the West German reaction against the expellee literature of the 1950s received important impulses from Poland and East Germany. At this time a reading of the expulsions reflected in the framing of Peikert’s text met with an increased awareness among West Germans of the full context of this historical episode and a general endorsement of the Oder-Neisse border in literary and political discourse.

“Jetzt ist die Reihe an uns, zu leiden” - *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz* as a Medium of Holocaust Remembrance in Poland, the GDR and West Germany 1960-1990

Introduction

In the first half of 2009 the extradition of one of the last major living Holocaust perpetrators from the USA to Germany was a major news story in the German media. As a member of the so-called *Trawniki*, auxiliary units recruited by German authorities for their ‘Operation Reinhard’ against the Jewish population of the *Generalgouvernement* in central Poland, the Ukrainian-born John Demjanjuk is charged with the murder of 29,000 Jews. The case has drawn attention to events within this jurisdiction in the period 1939-45.¹ The *Generalgouvernement* was the official designation for an area of Polish territory occupied and administered by German authorities from October 1939, but not absorbed into the *Reich* like other areas of Poland. It encompassed about a quarter of Poland’s pre-War territory and was divided into five districts: Cracow, Radom, Warsaw, Lublin and Galicia.² In 1940 its population of 12 million included 80 per cent Christian Poles and 12.5 per cent Polish Jews.³ The German administration of the region, led by Governor Dr. Hans Frank is recognised to have been particularly brutal. However, while many Poles retained a measure of autonomy and could negotiate a certain *modus vivendi* with the occupying forces, the Jewish population was subjected to crippling sanctions, confinement in ghettos, forced labour and, in the context of the radicalisation of Nazi policy towards Jews after 1942, murder in concentration camps.⁴ In his recent study Andrzej

¹ See the article ‘Fußvölker der Endlösung’ by Stefan Kühl in *Die Zeit*, 23.04.2009 and articles on Demjanjuk’s case in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* on the 15th, 16th and 21st of April 2009.

² Galicia was added only after the outbreak of war with the Soviet Union in 1941.

³ See Młynarczyk, 2006, p. 67. In this chapter for simplicity’s sake I generally refer to Polish Jews as ‘Jews’ and to non-Jewish Poles as ‘Poles.’ I acknowledge that this is problematic given the fact that such a distinction was characteristic of both National Socialist rhetoric, and the later representations of Polish and/or Jewish suffering in Poland and Germany which I examine here. Yet I have found no better alternative to differentiate between the two population groups and their different experiences under the German occupation.

⁴ Młynarczyk (ibid., p. 228) describes the situation of the two categories of victim in the *Generalgouvernement* as follows: “Die christlichen Polen befanden sich in einem dualen Opfer-Besitzer Verhältnis und konnten daraus alle nötigen moralischen Grundprinzipien sowie die mit ihnen verbundenen Verhaltensregeln und Inhaltsbestimmungen solcher Begriffe wie Patriotismus oder Kollaboration ableiten. Die jüdische Bevölkerung war hingegen in einem ‘Dreiecks-Verhältnis’ eingeschlossen, indem sie außer den Nationalsozialisten immer

Młynarczyk has traced the stages of Jewish persecution in the *Generalgouvernement* which culminated in the decimation of the region's Jews during 'Operation Reinhard' in late 1942.⁵ This was the code name for Himmler's plan to annihilate the Jewish population of the *Generalgouvernement*. It got under way in Autumn 1942 when the Jews of the region were transported from their Ghettos to death camps at Treblinka and Lublin.⁶ Within a complex administrative apparatus the Germans involved not only members of the SS and units of German police and Gendarmes in the persecution of the Jews in the *Generalgouvernement*,⁷ but also Christian Poles and even the Jews themselves. The *Trawniki* mentioned above comprised men of various nationalities drawn from prisoner-of-war camps, including Poles, Ukrainians and Belorussians, who often worked as guards at the camps and carried out 'disciplinary' measures, including executions, against the Jewish inmates there.⁸ In the years before 'Operation Reinhard' the lower level Polish administration of the *Generalgouvernement*, including members of the so-called *blaue Polizei*, played an active part in implementing anti-Jewish measures.⁹ Anti-Semitic propaganda and the forced re-settlement of Jews within ghettos also had the effect of further alienating Jews and Poles and encouraging anti-Semitic tendencies among some Poles.¹⁰ Given their own suffering and the real threat of severe punishment for any attempts to help the Jewish community, Poles, for the most part, did not demonstrate any great solidarity with the Jews.¹¹ With the establishment of compulsory

auch die christlichen Polen berücksichtigen mußten, am Rande deren gesellschaftlicher Ordnung sie sich seit jeher bewegten."

⁵ Andrzej Młynarczyk, 2006. Młynarczyk's focus is on the Radom district, but many of his descriptions of Jewish persecution are valid for the whole of the *Generalgouvernement*.

⁶ On the origins and implementation of 'Operation Reinhard' see *ibid.*, pp. 244-85. See also Bogdan Musiał's 'Aktion Reinhard.' *Die Vernichtung der Juden im Generalgouvernement*, Osnabrück, 2004.

⁷ The German *Ordnungspolizei* was divided into units of *Schutzpolizei* who worked in larger towns and cities and *Gendarmes* in the countryside.

⁸ See Młynarczyk, 2006, p. 250

⁹ Alongside the '*blaue Polizei*' Polish mayors, village squires and their assistants were responsible for implementing many of the anti-Jewish measures ordered by their German superiors.

¹⁰ "Die realen Grenzen der Judenviertel verstärkten die langsam wachsenden mentalen Mauern im Rahmen der Dekomposition der staatlichen Einheit, indem sie sehr eindrucksvoll bestätigten, daß das jüdischen Schicksal nicht mehr das polnische war." (*Ibid.*, p. 236)

¹¹ See *ibid.*, pp. 228-43

Judenräte in 1940, Jews themselves were involved in enforcing sanctions against members of their own community.¹²

Despite a plethora of Holocaust studies, Młynarczyk points to a deficit of historical research on the experience of Jews in the *Generalgouvernement*.¹³ While texts by Hilberg, Browning and others provide valuable insights into the overall organisation and perpetrators of the Holocaust in this jurisdiction, he argues that they fail to incorporate the Jewish perspective on these events into their analyses.¹⁴ What Młynarczyk does not consider are the published testimonies of Jewish victims through which the lived experience of Jews in the *Generalgouvernement* has entered and shaped public discourse on the Holocaust since 1945. This chapter treats one such testimony and its mediation in the context of changing patterns of Holocaust remembrance in Poland, East Germany and the Federal Republic over the thirty-year period from 1960 to 1990.¹⁵

Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz is a chronicle of Jewish suffering in the Radom District of the *Generalgouvernement* written from the perspective of a Jewish boy who experienced Jewish persecution at first hand and was killed in Treblinka together with other Jews from his region in the latter phase of 'Operation Reinhard.' The diary begins in March 1940 and it ends eerily in mid-sentence on June 1st 1942, days before Dawid and the Jews of the Bodzentyn Ghetto were brought to a holding camp in the town of Suchedniow, from which they were later transported to Treblinka. Dawid did not contemplate an audience for his diary, but through its publications in Poland, Germany and other countries his text became a testimony of the ordeals suffered by millions of Polish Jews during World War II.

¹² On the *Judenräte* and their function see *ibid.*, pp. 104-5.

¹³ He concludes that "der Kenntnisstand über das Schicksal der jüdischen Gemeinden im deutsch besetzten Polen, dem größten Schauplatz des Genozids, nach wie vor unzureichend ist." (*ibid.*, p. 13)

¹⁴ See *ibid.*, pp. 11-13

¹⁵ I am conscious that the use of the word 'Holocaust' in this chapter is somewhat ahistorical as it became an established designation for the experience of Jewish victims of National Socialism only at the end of the 1970s in West Germany and was completely absent in public reflections on this experience in the Eastern Block. For Giorgio Agamben (2003, pp. 25-8) the etymology and historical usage of the word 'Holocaust' means that it is a highly problematic term to describe Jewish suffering during World War II. I use it here nonetheless as a broadly accepted synonym for the persecution and genocide of European Jews under National Socialism.

In the following reconstruction and analysis of the publications and reception of Dawid's diary in Poland, the GDR and West Germany I aim to illuminate the different positions on the Holocaust, its meaning and status within broader historical narratives of World War II, which were reflected in a discussion surrounding this text in all three memorial contexts in the early 1960s and the 1980s. Scholars have often claimed that the issue of the Holocaust was neglected in the GDR and the Eastern Block as a whole. Dan Diner has suggested that the memory of Jewish suffering had no place within an all-encompassing 'anti-fascist' narrative of World War II.¹⁶ He and others also imply that the question of German guilt for the Holocaust was largely evaded in the GDR.¹⁷ With reference to Adorno's statement on literature "nach Auschwitz" and the responses to this dictum in the *Bundesrepublik*, Eke claims that there was no equivalent intellectual debate on the representation of the Holocaust in East Germany.¹⁸ In the case of West Germany, the early 1960s are often seen as a time when a more critical public engagement with the Holocaust began.¹⁹

In this study I show how representations of Jewish War suffering were available in all three states in the period examined, but were subject to different interpretations and emphases at different times. With reference to Dawid's diary and its reception I ask not simply *if* the Holocaust was remembered in Poland, the GDR and West Germany, but how, by whom, when and for what reasons. I locate the various perspectives on Jewish suffering which were articulated in the discussion of this text in relation to prevailing narratives of the events of World War II in each memorial context. In commentaries on *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz* we find elements of a broader public discourse on the Holocaust, which was preoccupied on one level with the event itself, yet on another

¹⁶ "The anti-fascist interpretation of the national socialist past, [...], opposed remembering the negative radical core of mass extermination – extermination beyond all economic utilization or political oppression was to be ignored. The primacy of antifascism ultimately stripped Auschwitz of its core." (Diner, 1996, p.130)

Norbert Otto Eke (2006, p. 86) argues similarly with reference to the GDR: "Solcherart reduziert auf ideologische, primär politisch eingesetzte Kodes blieb die Shoah in der DDR als historisches Ereignis von gesamt zivilisatorischer Bedeutung dem Grunde nach aus dem kollektiven, kulturellen Gedächtnis ausgeschlossen."

¹⁷ See for example Groehler, 1993, p.62, Timm, 2002, p. 23 and Herf, 1998

¹⁸ See Eke, 2006, p. 85

¹⁹ See for example Kansteiner, 2006

with questions of how it should be represented, the media of its representation and the victims and experiences which were to be prioritised. On the basis of my investigation in this chapter, I draw some preliminary conclusions on the extent to which the particular experiences and perspectives of Polish Jews were consciously reflected in public remembrance of the Holocaust at specific times in all three states.

Studies of Holocaust remembrance in Germany show how a more intense German scrutiny of this event received important impulses from the 'West.' Early Anglo-American Holocaust research and 'Western' cultural products, did, in their German reception, prompt a public discussion of Jewish War suffering and German responsibility.²⁰ Developments in West German discussions of the Holocaust cannot be understood without reference to that State's strong political and cultural allegiances to other Western democracies after 1945. East German reflections on the Holocaust were also influenced by developments in the West, such as the Eichmann and Frankfurt 'Auschwitz' trials in the 1960s. The greater presence of the Holocaust in official GDR commemoration from the mid-1980s has been linked to efforts by Honecker to forge better relations with America at this time.²¹ However, the focus on influences from the West threatens to eclipse the role played by Eastern European discussions and media in structuring the remembrance of the Holocaust in both German states. And I would argue that this influence cannot be reduced to the official pronouncements of Communist regimes on the matter. Adopting the reverse trajectory to many other studies, in this chapter I examine the impact in East and West Germany of the Holocaust testimony of a Polish-

²⁰ Nicolas Berg (2002) makes this point convincingly in an article on the delayed West German reception of Anglo-American Holocaust research by authors such as Hilberg, Reitlinger and Shirer. He links the increasing profile of the Holocaust in West German public discourse from the 1970s to the gradual "Verwestlichung" of the Federal Republic. Wulf Kansteiner (2006, p.124) has highlighted the role of the US mini-series *Holocaust* in raising public consciousness of this event in West Germany in the 1980s, claiming that it "accelerated the development of new collective memories like no other event before or after." See also studies of the East and West German reception of Anne Frank by Rosenfeld (1991), Loewy (1999) and Kirschnick (2009), to which I will refer in detail later.

²¹ See Groehler, 1993, p. 61

Jewish victim which was first published in Poland in cooperation with the *Jewish Historical Institute* in Warsaw, the foremost centre for Holocaust studies in the Eastern Block.

Following a close reading of the diary itself I examine the first Polish and German publications and their reception in the early 1960s. I then discuss the 1980 DEFA film based on the diary and the responses it provoked in both Germanys. Finally, I examine the re-publications of the diary in the mid-1980s and their significant resonance in the GDR and the Federal Republic. Given the main focus of my dissertation on processes of War remembrance in the GDR, the chapter as a whole is especially concerned with the East German context.

Textual Analysis

Dawid is twelve years old when he begins his diary in March 1940. The steadily worsening situation of Jews in his locality is a theme of his writing from the outset. In the first two entries he mentions a recent order forbidding Jews from using public transport and the news that Jews in the nearby city of Kielce are to be evicted from their homes. Yet the theme of Jewish persecution does not dominate in entries for the year 1940. Here Dawid also writes about less sinister events in his life: the weather, a short illness, learning to cycle, and a visit to the forest. In 1941 and 1942 we see how measures taken against the Jewish population of the Radom district and their effects on the Rubinowicz family become the sole focus of Dawid's descriptions. Entries for April 1941 revolve around the news of a planned Ghetto in Kielce and attempts by Dawid's relations and other Jews in the city to flee to the countryside before this happens. Following a raid on the Rubinowicz home by German gendarmes in mid-June of that year, Dawid's parents are taken into custody for a number of days on charges of having surplus grain. From this time onward, Dawid is preoccupied with news of raids and the frightening prospect of further unexpected visits by German police to the family home. On the 1st of November 1941 Dawid refers to the latest order by German authorities that Jews who enter and exit

the Ghetto in Kielce will be shot. Days later he reports that a Jewish man and woman have been shot dead on the road to the nearby town of Bodzentyn by Germans “ganz ohne jeden Grund.”²² With increasing regularity Dawid registers news of further shootings and beatings of Jews in entries for the year 1942. In January 1942, word of their imminent forced resettlement to a new Ghetto in Bodzentyn reaches the Jews of Krajno. In February and March Dawid describes the family’s preparations for their final eviction on the 10th of March. Confined to the Ghetto, the plight of Dawid’s family grows even more severe. Raids, requisitions and arrests now happen on a daily basis. Dawid describes his father’s perilous attempts to get food outside the Ghetto. On the 6th of May he writes of his father’s arrest and transport to a forced labour camp in the town of Skarzysko.²³ In the remaining diary entries Dawid is preoccupied with his father’s predicament. On the 1st of June 1942 we read of his father’s return to Bodzentyn. In the same entry, in the midst of an account of further shootings of Jews by German police in the locality, the diary breaks off.

Dawid narrates the suffering of his family and other Jews from *their* perspective. By this I mean that his point of view is that of a Jewish victim who distinguishes between the particular fate of Jews and the general Polish experience of German occupation in the *Generalgouvernement*. As I will show later, this distinction was often blurred in the reception of the diary in Poland and Germany. Throughout his diary Dawid identifies himself as Jewish and he views the trials of his family in the context of the suffering of a wider community of Jews in the region since the outbreak of World War II. When he hears in November 1941 that any Jew who enters or leaves the Kielce Ghetto will be shot he writes: “Diese Nachricht hat mich sehr traurig gemacht. Nicht nur mich, sondern jeden Israeliten.”²⁴ From 1941, with the worsening situation of the Jews in his locality, Dawid writes increasingly in the first person plural. He does so in reference to his family, but often this “wir”

²² *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz*, Volk und Welt, Berlin (Ost), 1961 (hereafter DR), p. 36

²³ His father was brought to the German HASAG munitions factory where thousands of Jewish forced labourers from the *Generalgouvernement* worked during the War.

²⁴ DR, p. 24

extends to cover the local Jewish population to whom he feels an affiliation. We see this in Dawid's reaction to the announcement in January 1942 that all Jews in the district are to be resettled: "Als ich das zu Hause erzählte, haben wir uns alle sehr aufgeregt. Jetzt bei so einem scharfen Winter wollen sie uns aussiedeln, und wohin? Jetzt ist die Reihe an uns, zu leiden. Wie lange, weiß der liebe Gott."²⁵ While the "wir" of the first sentence refers to Dawid's immediate family, in his following remarks Dawid uses the first person plural in respect of all Jews affected by the expulsion order. Similarly, he uses the pronouns "jeder" and "alle" in references to a collective of Jewish victims to which he and his family belong. By contrast, the Christian Poles in his area, of whom Dawid occasionally writes, are referred to exclusively in the third person. His identification with Jewish victims and relative distance from Poles is especially clear in the entry for the 15th of May 1942. Here Dawid describes a raid on the family's quarters in Bodzentyn. He registers the reactions of his family and other Jewish inhabitants of the house to the raid using the terms "wir", "jeder" and "alle." At the same time he mentions how during the raid, a group of Polish prisoners are driven away by Germans. He refers to these variously as "irgendwelche Zivilisten," "Polen," and "sie."²⁶ Thus Dawid's use of "wir" and "sie" in descriptions of the Jewish and Polish populations of the *Generalgouvernement* reflects a distinction in the narrative perspective between the respective experiences of both groups.

As I described above, German authorities in the *Generalgouvernement* did not act alone in the implementation of measures against the Jewish population, but fostered enmity between Jews and Poles there and involved members of both communities in the persecution of Jews. The complexity of victim and perpetrator identities in this region becomes clear in a number of places in Dawid's diary. We will see how it is a complexity which is often overlooked in the reception of *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz*. As portrayed by Dawid, the Poles of his locality are both victims and perpetrators. Like the Jews, the Polish farmers around the village of Krajno are subject to raids on

²⁵ Ibid., p. 43

²⁶ Ibid., p. 69

their property and requisitions by the German police.²⁷ However, unlike the utterly defenceless Jews, the Poles in the area retain a measure of authority. Dawid describes how certain Poles profit from and play an active part in Jewish suffering. In Dawid's accounts of the situation in Krajno, Poles often fulfil the role of intermediary between the Jews and the German authorities there; they mediate and help to enforce the various German orders against the Jews. The Polish squire of Krajno and his assistant visit the Rubinowicz home regularly to extract unlawful fines. During one such visit they destroy the millstone which was a secret source of income for the family.²⁸ In December 1941 the German authorities recruit Polish policemen and a small number of Jews to requisition items of fur from the local Jewish population.²⁹ In Dawid's description, the Polish caretaker of Krajno appears to take sadistic pleasure in rounding up local Jews, including Dawid, and supervising them as they clear snow from village paths and roads.³⁰ It is also he whom Dawid sees hanging anti-Semitic placards in the village in February 1942.³¹ The involvement of Germans, Poles and a specially appointed Jewish police in the terrorisation of the Jewish population is particularly apparent in the following description of a raid on Dawid's home in Bodzentyn: "In der Wohnung hörte ich, daß *die jüdische Polizei* beim Onkel war, dann kam die Schwester und sagte, daß sie seinen Schrank wegholen wollten, weil er dem [Juden]Rat die Steuer nicht bezahlt hatte [...] Alle haben sich widersetzt, aber es war nichts zu machen, sie haben den Schrank rausgeholt. Als der Schrank aufgeladen war, kam der Onkel raus, er war sehr aufgeregt und hielt das Fuhrwerk an. Gleich kam der Polizist und stieß den Onkel weg, der Onkel gab zurück, und sie fingen an, sich zu schlagen. Alle kamen ran und wollten sie auseinanderbringen, ein furchtbares Geschrei entstand, *die Gendarmerie* sah das, sie kam gleich und fing von weitem an zu schießen, und ich habe das alles gesehen [...] Nach einer halben Stunde vielleicht kam *die polnische Polizei*, und sie mussten 100 Złoty Strafe zahlen."³²

²⁷ See Dawid's reference to one such raid in *ibid.*, pp. 18-9

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 34

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 37-8

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 51-2

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 55-6

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 68-9, my italics

Immediacy is typically cited as one of the defining features of the diary genre. In *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz* we seem to be confronted with an excess of immediacy. Dawid appears to be so close to the events he describes that a level of more distant reflection and introspection is impossible. His diary reads like a breathless register of the events in which his family and a broader community of Jews are embroiled at the current moment. He rarely looks beyond the parameters of the day on which he writes. In each entry he reports what he has seen and heard, with little contemplation of what happens or insight into his own mental state. The narrative perspective of the text is very much that of a child who sees and hears, but often cannot grasp the terrible significance of what he observes. As described by Dawid, the sanctions foisted on the local Jewish population, its forced resettlement in Ghettos and its constant terrorization by German and Polish authorities are a fact of everyday life. The first two entries of the diary which refer to new anti-Jewish measures are typical of the laconic way he represents these matters throughout the diary.³³ In general he records the mere facts of house searches, requisitions, arrests, beatings and murders of Jews with little commentary or awareness of the awful abnormality of this state of affairs.³⁴ Occasionally Dawid refers to his own feelings and those of the Jews around him in naive formulations such as “ich/wir hatte[n] Angst” and “ich/wir war[en] traurig.”³⁵ Yet, for the most part he is focussed on the tangible reactions of the Jews to their persecution, rather than on their psychological state.

Dawid's language, the style and tone of his narrative of Jewish persecution often seem at odds with the subject matter. Yet while there appears to be a disparity between Dawid's language and the lived experience it portrays, I would argue nonetheless that the peripatetic style of his writing conveys a sense of anxiety and reflects the particular circumstances of his family and other Jews in the *Generalgouvernement*. The situation in which they find themselves affords no time for reflection.

³³ Ibid., pp. 9-10

³⁴ His description of the requisition of fur from the Jews in his locality in December 1941 is typical. See *ibid.*, pp. 27-8

³⁵ See *ibid.*, p. 10, p. 33, p. 40 and p. 101

Dawid's family and the Jews of Krajno plunge from one unforeseen crisis to the next. Any basis for a stable and secure existence is successively taken from them. Their days are ordered by the latest sanctions imposed on them, random house searches, fines and requisitions, arrests and shootings, evictions and uncertainties about their immediate future. In Dawid's descriptions he and his family are constantly on the move. His father travels to nearby towns to find food and garner information on the fate of Krajno's Jews. Dawid's mother goes on numerous occasions to the local mayor and the Jewish Council to plea for the release of Jewish prisoners, including Dawid's father after his arrest in May 1942. In March 1942 the Rubinowicz family leaves Krajno for the Bodzentyn Ghetto. On the 15th of October Dawid describes a visit by Krajno Jews to the nearby village of Gorno. They had intended to celebrate a Jewish feast day in Gorno's Synagogue, but were halted by German police on their arrival. Dawid describes the ensuing panic as the Jews scrambled for cover and waited until the coast was clear. The restless chronology we find here is typical for the diary as a whole. We are reminded of a chase scene; verbs of motion dominate. The sentences are long and multi-clausal and Dawid's frequent repetition of the word "als" suggests a frantic succession of events: "Als wir in Gorno ankamen, da hat man uns gesagt, daß die Deutschen im Dorf sind. Nach einer Weile kamen sie und sagten, die älteren sollten mit ihnen zu irgendeiner Arbeit gehen. Mehrere Männer flohen hinter den Zaun und einer auf den Dachboden, als er sah, daß die Deutschen kamen. Als die Deutschen weggingen, sagte ihnen eine Frau, daß die Männer sich versteckt hätten. Als mein Onkel sah, daß sie weg waren, ging er nach Haus zurück. Als er ins Haus kam, merkte ich, daß sie wiederkamen, und da sagte ich dem Onkel, er soll eine andere Mütze aufsetzen und eine andere Jacke anziehen, damit sie ihn nicht erkennen, wo sie ihn doch schon gesehen hatten, als er weggelaufen war. Als die Deutschen zum zweiten Mal kamen, erkannten sie den Onkel nicht und fragten, wo sind die anderen, sie haben sie gesucht, aber keinen gefunden."³⁶

³⁶ Ibid., p. 24

The five copy-books in which Dawid Rubinowicz had kept his diary were first discovered in 1958 by Helena and Artemiusz Wołczyk in the attic of their home in Krajno. Extracts from the diary were subsequently read on local radio. When the Warsaw-based journalist Maria Jarochowska heard about the text she initiated the first publication of *Pamiętnik Dawida Rubinowicza* by the publisher *Książka i Wiedza* in 1960. Months before the release of this first edition a wide Polish readership became familiar with Dawid's text through extracts printed in the prominent journals, *Twórczość*³⁷ and *Polityka*.³⁸ The diary soon gained international attention and in the same year translations were published in West Germany, Czechoslovakia, France and the Netherlands.³⁹ The first GDR edition followed in 1961. In what follows I examine the early publications of the diary in Poland, the Federal Republic and East Germany asking which positions on Jewish suffering under National Socialism were articulated in the mediation and discussion of Dawid's text in all three states in the early 1960s. I place the publications in their respective memorial contexts and show the tensions between prevailing narratives of the Holocaust and other less orthodox memories of this event apparent in the diary's reception. A comparative analysis of the three consecutive publications and their reception in Poland, the *Bundesrepublik* and the GDR highlights and illuminates the interrelationship of Holocaust remembrance in all three contexts. In commentaries on Dawid's diary we find judgements on how the Holocaust should be represented and which victims should be prioritised in public remembrance. As I will show, a hierarchisation of Holocaust victims was often implicit in the comparison Dawid Rubinowicz/Anne Frank, which structured the discussion of *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz* in both East and West Germany.

³⁷ *Twórczość* (1), 1960, pp. 13-46. This was the Polish equivalent of *Neue Deutsche Literatur* in the GDR and the two journals maintained close ties.

³⁸ The extracts in *Polityka* are referenced in a review of the diary by the writer Jarosław Iwaskiewicz, but I have not been able to establish exactly when they first appeared.

³⁹ A Yiddish translation of the diary was also published by *Książka i Wiedza* in 1960. The first English edition appeared as late as 1981.

“Wir leiden zusammen mit Dawidek”⁴⁰ – The publication and reception of *Pamiętnik Dawida Rubinowicza* in Poland

In a recent essay Barbara Breysach has highlighted the prominence of Holocaust testimonies in Poland in the immediate post-War years, arguing that “die Verpflichtung zur Zeugenschaft wurde in Polen sehr früh als zentrales Problemfeld der Erinnerung an die Shoah erkannt, sowohl in historisch-dokumentarischer als auch in literarischer Hinsicht.”⁴¹ From 1944 to 1949 the *Central Jewish Historical Commission* played a leading role in the gathering and publication of documentary and literary treatments of Jewish suffering and death in wartime Poland.⁴² However, its activities in this area waned towards the end of the 1940s after the emigration of many of its members and affiliated authors.⁴³ The 1950s saw the installation of an official Polish memory of World War II which subsumed Jewish suffering into a broader historical narrative of Polish martyrdom and resistance under the German occupation. Within this discourse there was little acknowledgement of anti-Semitism as a primary cause of Jewish persecution. The memorial at Auschwitz-Birkenau constructed from the late 1940s was typical of a dominant pattern of public remembrance of World War II in Poland at this time: “The Polish communist narrative [...] turned this site into a monument to internationalism that commemorated the ‘resistance and martyrdom’ of ‘Poles and citizens of other nationalities.’”⁴⁴ This narrative afforded no place to the memory of the particular fate of Jewish inmates at Auschwitz.⁴⁵ An overwhelming focus on Polish War suffering did not facilitate public

⁴⁰ This quote is taken from the foreword to the first Polish edition of Dawid’s diary by the writer Jarosław Iwaskiewicz, which was retained for the GDR edition of the text. (See *ibid.*, 1961, p. 5)

⁴¹ Breysach, 2003, p. 339. The contrast which she draws here to the situation in post-war Germany must be qualified. I will show below how the specific experience of Jews was integral to public reflections on World War 2 in all zones of occupation in the immediate post-war years.

⁴² Its publications in the late 1940s included works by the writer Michał M. Borwicz, the diary of Gusta Dawidsohn-Draengerowa and the diary of Leon Weliczkie. Both diaries were later published in the GDR in *Im Feuer Vergangen. Tagebücher aus dem Ghetto* (1958) edited by Arnold Zweig. Weliczkie’s testimony played a prominent role in the evidence presented at the trial of Adolf Eichmann in the early 1960s. (See *ibid.*, p. 339)

⁴³ Breysach (*ibid.*, p. 340) suggests that with the formation of the United Polish Workers Party the political climate became intolerable for many remaining Polish Jews.

⁴⁴ Steinlauf, 1997, p. 69. See also Frei, 2005, p. 177

⁴⁵ See also Breysach’s reference to the Auschwitz Memorial in Breysach, 2003, p. 341

examination of the complicity of certain Poles in the Holocaust.⁴⁶ The dominant narrative of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising stressed Polish solidarity with Jewish resistance and equated the suffering and sacrifice of Jews and non-Jewish Poles.⁴⁷

There were certain enclaves where the memory of Jewish suffering was narrated in ways which diverged from the official Polish account. Published literature by authors such as Zofia Nałkowska, Tadeusz Borowski and Czesław Miłosz represented Jewish suffering from the perspective of non-Jewish Polish witnesses and engaged with the issue of Polish guilt.⁴⁸ As a centre for Holocaust research, the *Jewish Historical Institute* in Warsaw was unique in Eastern Europe and it continued to publish literature and documentary studies on this theme well into the 1970s.⁴⁹ In contrast to the museum at Auschwitz-Birkenau, the memorial at Treblinka, where the vast majority of the 800,000 murdered inmates had been Jewish, was a site where Jewish suffering under the German occupation was commemorated as distinct from the general Polish experience.⁵⁰

An examination of the first Polish publication of Dawid Rubinowicz's diary reveals the coexistence of different interpretative frameworks for the Holocaust at different levels in Poland's public sphere in the early 1960s. Conflicting perspectives on Jewish suffering in wartime Poland are expressed in the paratexts which frame the published text. The diary publication had the endorsement of leading cultural authorities in Poland. A foreword to the text repeats the official Polish position on the Holocaust with reference to Dawid's biography. At the same time the *Jewish Historical Institute* (JHI) played an important role in preparing the diary for publication and extensive annotations by

⁴⁶ This subject has only recently been a subject of mainstream public debate in Poland following the publication of Jan T. Gross' book on the Jedwabne Massacre, *Neighbours*, in 2000.

⁴⁷ Steinlauf, 1997, p. 71

⁴⁸ For a detailed discussion of these authors and their relevant texts see Breysach (2003) and Bach (2007). Both authors cite these texts as clear evidence of a critical engagement with the Holocaust in Poland, which they allege was earlier and far more thorough than a contemporary German discussion of this event. However, neither Bach nor Breysach consider the mediation and reception of these texts in Poland, which in many cases overlooked the issues of Jewish suffering and Polish guilt.

⁴⁹ The Institute evolved from the Central Jewish Historical Commission (CJHC) and continues to exist today under the name of the founder of the CJHC, Emanuel Ringelblum.

⁵⁰ See Steinlauf's discussion of the Treblinka Memorial (Steinlauf, 1997, p.73). The Polish memorial at Auschwitz-Birkenau had foregrounded the experience of the non-Jewish inmates there and focussed on its earlier use as a labour camp for Poles. Such a selective interpretation of the past was not feasible for Treblinka.

JHI researcher Adam Rutkowski reflect that organisation's aim to document and publicize facts relating to the specific suffering of Polish Jews and the German perpetrators of Jewish persecution.

Książka i Wiedza replicated the format of the original diary thus underlining its authenticity. The first Polish edition was framed by facsimiles of the covers of the copybooks in which Dawid wrote his diary and further facsimiles of pages from the diary illustrated the text. *Pamiętnik Dawida Rubinowicza* was introduced in a foreword by the writer and then President of the Polish Writers' Union, Jarosław Iwaskiewicz, which, in accordance with the official Polish narrative of World War II, treated Jewish suffering and death as an integral part of the general Polish experience of the German occupation. Dawid's Jewish identity is not mentioned. Iwaskiewicz portrays him as a typical Polish boy, and presents his diary as a testimony to the shared suffering of Poles and Jews during the War. In his description of Dawid's text as "das Spiegelbild einer Wirklichkeit, die Millionen Polen und Juden in jenen schweren Jahren durchgemacht haben,"⁵¹ Iwaskiewicz does refer to Poles and Jews as two distinct victim groups, yet in the foreword as a whole he makes no reference to key differences between the wartime suffering of Jews and Christian Poles, differences which are to the fore in the diary itself.

The notes by Adam Rutkowski embedded in the published text offer a different perspective on Dawid's experience. Rutkowski's sole focus is on the fate of Jews in the *Generalgouvernement* and Dawid's diary entries are the basis for an illumination of their particularly dire situation during World War II.⁵² Rutkowski provides statistics on the anti-Jewish measures Dawid mentions and he names the German authorities responsible for the systematic persecution of Jews, including the Governor of the *Generalgouvernement* Dr. Hans Frank, the commander of Kielce Hans Drechsel and the Police-Chief Eberhardt Schöngardt. At relevant points in the diary narrative Rutkowski details the historical context of Dawid's experiences. The reader learns about compulsory labour for

⁵¹ DR, 1961, p. 5

⁵² Rutkowski was the author of a number of articles on Jewish persecution in the Radom District published in the Bulletin of the *Jewish Historical Institute* in the 1950s. See Młynarczyk, 2006, p. 13

Jews over the age of fourteen, the formation of the Kielce Ghetto, the confiscation of Jewish fur and the order compelling Jews to wear the Star of David. The halving of the family's rations in February 1942 is put in the context of "die am 20. Januar 1942 im Reichsicherheitshauptamt beschlossene Ausrottung der jüdischen Bevölkerung in allen besetzten europäischen Ländern."⁵³ In an extended note at the end of the diary Rutkowski describes how Dawid and other Jews were rounded up in September 1942, transported first to Suchedniow and then moved to Treblinka where they were murdered in gas chambers.⁵⁴ This section is illustrated by photographs and other documents from the archive of the *Jewish Historical Institute*.⁵⁵ While the notes appear to offer a meticulous reconstruction of Jewish suffering and German crimes in the *Generalgouvernement*, the issue of Polish and Jewish collaboration remains a blindspot.

An epilogue to the diary by Maria Jarochovska emphasises Dawid's Jewish identity, pointing out that Dawid suffered and died "einzig und allein, weil er als Jude zur Welt gekommen war."⁵⁶ Yet Jarochovska is vague regarding the identity of the perpetrators. With its personifications and passive constructions, her description of the final journey of Dawid and other Jews from Suchedniow to Treblinka evades this issue: "Das Gebrüll der Eskorte, der Wiederhall der Schläge, das Bellen der Hunde, diese alltägliche Musik der Vernichtung, begleitete die Juden, die auf den Bahnhof Suchedniow getrieben wurden. Dort wurden diese Menschen zusammengepfercht und auf den letzten Weg gebracht, den Weg, von dem es kein Zurück gibt."⁵⁷

Thus while the foreword presents Dawid as a typical Polish victim of the German occupation, the notes and the epilogue direct readers' attention to the specifics of Jewish persecution during the occupation with reference to Dawid's experience. Yet all three commentators are silent on the matter of Polish and Jewish participation in the Holocaust which Dawid's diary documents.

⁵³ DR, p. 58

⁵⁴ Ibid., pp. 117-19

⁵⁵ They include facsimiles of the German orders to transport Jews to Treblinka from various parts of Poland and photographs of Jews on their way to the camp and the remains of victims discovered there.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 121

⁵⁷ DR, p. 126

Pamiętnik Dawida Rubinowicza was a publishing sensation in 1960s Poland. In extensive media coverage the diary became the focus of an intense public discussion of the events of World War II and their remembrance. Writing in the *Express Wieczórny*, Jarosław Iwaskiewicz suggested that Dawid's text had unleashed a wave of public remembrance of the German occupation which Poles had long suppressed: "Mir scheint, daß wir die Erinnerungen an die damalige Zeit ein wenig verdrängt haben, daß wir vielleicht zu sehr vergessen wollten. [...]. Das Echo, das Dawidek's Tagebuch in der ganzen Welt hervorrief, beweist, daß die faschistischen Verbrechen nicht vergessen sind."⁵⁸ As in his foreword to the diary, Iwaskiewicz misrepresented Dawid as a Polish victim and saw his diary as testimony of national Polish martyrdom. He privileged the diary genre as a medium through which Poles could best preserve and remember the events of World War II, and called on all Poles to safeguard diaries of the occupation and take the necessary steps towards their publication: "Ich denke, daß in unserem Land noch viele derartige Aufzeichnungen erhalten geblieben sind [...] Unsere Aufgabe muß es sein, damit diese Arbeiten nicht verlorengehen, sie zu veröffentlichen, den Toten zum Ruhm und ewigen Andenken, den Lebenden als Warnung."⁵⁹ Apparently seconding Iwaskiewicz's appeal, days later the Polish-Jewish journalist and Auschwitz survivor Arnold Mostowicz drew attention to the numerous unpublished diaries by Jewish victims listed by the *Polish Academy of Sciences* and underlined "daß die Publikation derartiger Quellen ein vorrangiges Gewicht für die gesamte Gesellschaft hat."⁶⁰ Where Iwaskiewicz had alleged a general neglect of the events of World War II in Polish discourse, Mostowicz was dismayed at what he saw as an institutional suppression of Jewish memory.⁶¹ In this exchange between the two Polish authors we see how the

⁵⁸ I quote from a translation of the article in the personal papers of Konrad Weiß. The article is undated, but it appeared soon after the first Polish publication of the diary.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Quoted from a translation of the article in the personal papers of Konrad Weiß. The publication and date are not indicated.

⁶¹ With reference to the list of unpublished testimonies compiled by the Polish Academy of Sciences in 1957 he writes: "Das ist nicht nur eine trockene Information, sondern ein heißer Appell (unter anderem an den Literaturbund) über die Herausgabe, über die schnellstmögliche Publizierung solcher Art von Materialien. Es muss unterstrichen werden, dass dieser Appell seit 2 Jahren ohne Echo blieb." (Ibid.)

different War experiences of the internal emigré, Iwaskiewicz,⁶² and the Auschwitz survivor, Mostowicz, shaped their respective positions on the remembrance of Jewish suffering in post-War Poland. While Mostowicz sought through his appeal to overcome a deficit in the Polish remembrance of *Jewish* War suffering, Iwaskiewicz's call to remember through the medium of diaries related to the totality of Polish experience during the years of occupation, but did not discriminate between the memories of Poles and Jews.

Iwaskiewicz's foreword and review of *Pamiętnik Dawida Rubinowicza* set the tone for the Polish reception of the diary in the early 1960s. The media discussion surrounding the publication suggests that the dominance of a narrative of collective Polish suffering and resistance hindered a critical engagement with the particular Polish-Jewish experience at this time. The nuanced depiction of the situation of Polish Jews in the *Generalgouvernement*, which we find in the diary itself and in the accompanying notes by Rutkowski, was not explored in public reflections on Dawid's text. Articles in the Polish media implied that Dawid's experience was representative of the experiences of *all* Poles during the War. The headline of Iwaskiewicz's article in the *Express Wieczórny* describes the text as "ein Zeugnis des Leidens des polnischen Volkes."⁶³ A further article in the *Express Wieczórny* views the suffering of the Rubinowicz family in the context of the suffering of *all* the inhabitants of Krajno and Bodzentyn.⁶⁴ Far from treating the Jewish population as a unique victim group, the authors of this article invoke a collective of Polish victims encompassing both Poles and Jews. Following a description of the transport of Bodzentyn's Jews to Treblinka they remind readers of "eine neue Tragödie" which befell the town months later - the shooting of fifty Polish townspeople by Germans. Both events are referenced here as instances of Polish suffering and death under the occupation. The complexity of victim and perpetrator identities, which becomes apparent in the diary, was not

⁶² Iwaskiewicz remained in Poland during the German occupation and continued to write from the shelter of his country home outside Warsaw.

⁶³ A reference to "das Märtyrertum des polnischen und jüdischen Volkes" in the headline to Mostowicz's article on the diary distinguishes between both victim groups.

⁶⁴ An undated translation of the article by Anna Kornacka and Ludwika Woyciechowska is contained in the personal papers of Konrad Weiß.

explored in commentaries on *Pamiętnik Dawida Rubinowicza*. Media treatments of the text devoted no space to the question of Polish complicity in the persecution of the Jews. On the contrary, the correspondents of the *Express Wieczórny* stressed the solidarity of Christian Poles with Jewish victims.⁶⁵ Thus in accordance with the dominant Polish narrative of World War II, reviewers of the diary tended to affirm a neat dichotomy of “Nazi” perpetrators and “Polish” victims, including Dawid and other Polish Jews.

In the Shadow of Anne Frank – *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz* in West Germany

The first German translation of *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz* was published by the *S. Fischer-Verlag* in 1960. Months beforehand West German readers were alerted to the text in an article by Ludwig Zimmerer in *Die Welt*.⁶⁶ In the headline Dawid’s diary is described as “Polnisches Gegenstück zu Anne Frank” and a comparison of both testimonies, their authors and their respective experiences of Jewish persecution structures the following discussion of *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz*. For Zimmerer, Dawid’s diary represents the more damning testimony. In his observations on the form and content of both diaries he draws attention to the experience of Eastern European Jews during World War II and highlights their especially severe plight. In Anne’s fluid language and her knowledge of the broader political context of Jewish suffering he sees evidence of “die ungeheure Widerstandskraft eines schwachen Mädchens [...], das von einem verbrecherischen System zwar getötet, aber nicht gebrochen werden kann.” Dawid’s less accomplished writing style and his lack of deeper insight into the events he describes are seen to reflect his even more tragic situation as a representative Eastern European Jew: “gerade das hilflose und oft stammelnde Jammern dieses Kindes, das fast mit keinem Satz aus seiner Anonymität hervortritt, dafür aber stellvertretend für das Leiden Hunderttausender gepeinigter und ermordeter polnischer Judenkinde spricht, stellt

⁶⁵ They highlighted for example how local Poles had brought food to the Jews assembled in Suchedniow.

⁶⁶ Ludwig Zimmerer: ‘Das Tagebuch des jungen Dawid Rubinowicz. Polnisches Gegenstück zu Anne Frank – Bericht eines jüdischen Knaben’ in *Die Welt*, 22.02.1960

eine noch schwerere Anklage dar als das Tagebuch Annes." Anne's personality is seen to endure and mature in spite of her situation. By contrast, Dawid and the Jews around him are reduced to mere objects of their persecutors: "Anne verfolgt die politischen Ereignisse, jubelt über deutsche Niederlagen, schöpft Kraft aus ihnen. Dawid und die Gemeinschaft armer Provinzjuden, die ihn umgibt, sind ganz und gar Objekt des Geschehens, sind einem Terror ausgeliefert, den sie nicht begreifen." Zimmerer charts the stages of the persecution of Eastern European Jews with reference to Dawid's text and, in a note on the perpetrators, he acknowledges the involvement of "alle Unternehmen der Besatzungsmacht" including Germans, Poles and some Jews.

Implied in Zimmerer's assertion that *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz* is "eine noch schwerere Anklage als das Tagebuch Annes" is a call to integrate the specific experience of Eastern European Jews into a West German discussion of Jewish suffering and death under National Socialism. The article itself attempts this on a small scale. However, an examination of the publication and reception of the text in 1960s West Germany reveals how Dawid's experience was on the whole marginalised and Anne Frank's place as *the* representative Holocaust victim remained unchallenged.

Das Tagebuch der Anne Frank was first published in by a small West German publisher in 1950⁶⁷ and republished five years later by the *S. Fischer Verlag*. But Anne's story only came to prominence with the first German performances of an American stage adaptation of the diary in 1956⁶⁸ and screenings of a later Hollywood film version of the text in 1959.⁶⁹ These media served as amplifiers of the diary and furthered its popularisation and mass reception in the *Bundesrepublik*. Both the play and the film presented a sanitised account of Anne's experience where the focus was diverted from those parts of the diary where she reflects on Jewish persecution and the tragedy of her fate.⁷⁰ Furthermore,

⁶⁷ *Das Tagebuch der Anne Frank*, Lambert-Schneider Verlag, Heidelberg, 1950

⁶⁸ The adaptation by Francis Goodrich and Albert Hackett premiered on Broadway in October 1955 and was performed for the first time in German theatres exactly one year later.

⁶⁹ The film by director George Stevens was first shown in the USA in 1957.

⁷⁰ In the Goodrich-Hackett play the romance between the young Anne and Peter van Daan is emphasised to a far greater extent than in the diary itself. The play also ends on a rather optimistic note with Otto Frank citing Anne's phrase "In spite of everything, I still believe that people are really good at heart." (See Loewy, 1999, p. 166)

in the German translation of the diary Anne's scathing references to "die Deutschen" were often either removed or manipulated to neutralise the impact of her accusations against the Germans.⁷¹ In the alleged crux of the diary perennially highlighted in media representations of the text – "Trotz allem glaube ich noch an das Gute im Menschen" – Anne was presented as a victim who bore no grudges towards her persecutors.⁷² German audiences were drawn to a testimony which apparently relieved them of guilt for Jewish persecution.⁷³ Thus in the West German publications and reception of *Das Tagebuch der Anne Frank* we see how Anne's diary was often misappropriated and rendered compatible with a prevailing narrative of the Holocaust which acknowledged Jewish suffering under National Socialism, but did not delve into the full extent and consequences of German responsibility for it.⁷⁴

The timing, content and mediation of the first West German publication of Dawid's diary were far less conducive to a broad-based reception of his testimony. The diary first appeared in West Germany at the height of the first wave of Anne Frank's reception there and was registered in marginal West German publications only.⁷⁵ Following the release of the first *Fischer* edition, extracts from Dawid's text were printed in the recently founded radical left-wing journal *Das Argument*⁷⁶ and in the even more obscure Polish government journal, *Polen von Heute*.⁷⁷ I am aware of no other references to the diary in the West German media at this time.⁷⁸ Both the published text and the printed extracts reveal no attempts to frame Dawid's testimony for the new West German reception context such as

⁷¹ Ibid., pp. 160-1. See also Kirschnick, 2009, pp.62-3

⁷² The Fischer edition printed this quote on the front cover of the diary.

⁷³ As Alvin Rosenfeld (1991, p. 271) has written: "Anne Frank has become a ready-at-hand formula for easy forgiveness. Far from this development representing her triumphant homecoming to the country that first expelled and then killed her, it represents the reverse: the triumph of Anne Frank's former countrymen over her. In her name, they have, after all, forgiven themselves."

⁷⁴ Tendencies in the West German reception of *Das Tagebuch der Anne Frank* were criticised by some contemporary West German commentators. See for example Theodor Adorno's reference in his 1959 essay 'Was bedeutet: Aufarbeitung der Vergangenheit?'

⁷⁵ The aforementioned article in the conservative newspaper *Die Welt* represents a notable exception.

⁷⁶ *Das Argument* 19, Juli/August 1961, pp. 64-68

⁷⁷ *Polen von Heute. Wirtschafts- und Kulturprobleme*, April-Juni 1960, pp. 15-20

⁷⁸ The diary is overlooked by the following journals which often treated new Polish publications: *Neue Politische Literatur*, *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht* and *Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte*.

we have seen in the case of Anne Frank's diary. With the exception of the notes by Adam Rutkowski, the Polish paratexts were removed, but nothing was put in their place. Apart from a brief description on the flyleaf of the 1960 edition, no paratexts were added which would have addressed the diary to West German readers by establishing a link between Dawid's story and existing interpretative frameworks for the Holocaust in the Federal Republic at that time.⁷⁹ Rutkowski's notes, with their meticulous documenting of Jewish persecution and German perpetrators in the *Generalgouvernement*, now appeared in an appendix at the end of the diary, not interspersed through Dawid's text, as in the original Polish publication. Thus the first West German edition of *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz* represented a bald Holocaust documentation. To repeat Zimmerer's description, it was "eine schwerere Anklage als das Tagebuch Annes" in more ways than one. Firstly, because Dawid's testimony was not modified to affirm a prevailing West German consensus on the Holocaust through processes of mediation which operated in the case of Anne Frank. Secondly, because Dawid's text and Rutkowski's notes were focused on systematic Jewish persecution and widespread German participation in the Holocaust in Eastern Europe. Anne's narrative was tempered by themes and concerns not directly related to the Holocaust. It could be and was read as literature, even as popular literature, while the style and content of Dawid's diary did not allow for such a reception of his testimony. Anne's diary described the experience of a representative Western European Jew, and this experience could more readily corroborate the prevailing West German narrative of the Holocaust as the work of a minority of fanatical National Socialists and their henchmen. The portrayal of Jewish suffering in Dawid's diary would have highlighted the redundancy of this West-focussed narrative to describe the experience of the vast majority of Holocaust victims in Eastern Europe.

⁷⁹ In a brief reference to the perpetrators of Jewish persecution the fly-leaf names only the SS and thus reflects the dominant West German view on this matter.

The disparities in the West German reception of Anne Frank and Dawid Rubinowicz in the 1960s confirms what has been shown in other case studies. The predominance of *Das Tagebuch des Anne Frank* as a medium of Holocaust remembrance, and the widespread assumption of Anne's representativeness as a Holocaust victim, were both a cause and an effect of the exclusion of the experiences of other Jewish victims from public remembrance.⁸⁰ Testimonies such as Dawid's and documentary studies which detailed Jewish persecution, while exposing a complex web of German responsibility for the Holocaust, were often marginalised in a context where the majority of West Germans still cleaved to an interpretation of this event as the crime of the SS and a few leading Nazis.⁸¹ The 'Auschwitz' proceedings in Frankfurt in the early 1960s initiated a gradual retreat from this position in West Germany, but it would take over two decades for a revised view of the Holocaust to become established.⁸²

***Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz* in the context of East German reflections on the Holocaust and its representation**

The liberation of the so-called "Lubliner-Lager", the Nazi extermination camp at Majdanek, by Soviet forces in July 1944, was the starting point for the first indepth reflections by communists on the Holocaust, its causes and consequences. Throughout the 1930s the German Communist Party

⁸⁰ As Sylke Kirschnick (2009, p. 7) writes: "Diese Stellvertreter Rolle war und ist problematisch, weil sie Anne Frank und dem Tagebuch eine unerfüllbare Funktion zuschrieb. Sie verengte den Blick auf das historische Ereignis und blendete aus, wie unterschiedlich die verfolgten Juden sowie ihre Geschichten waren."

⁸¹ See for example Nicolas Berg's illuminating discussion of the huge West German resistance to early Anglo-American studies of the Holocaust by Reitlinger, Shirer and Hilberg in the late 1950s and 1960s. The barriers to these texts' positive reception at that juncture lay in their exposure of widescale German participation in the Holocaust, their meticulous detailing of Nazi crimes against Jews and their allegations of West German leniency towards many German perpetrators. The perspectives of Reitlinger, Shirer and Hilberg were incompatible with the then dominant West German account of the Holocaust which tended to place responsibility for it on Hitler, the SS and an anonymous totalitarian 'System.' Only in the 1980s did these texts and their theses find broad acceptance in West Germany. Berg shows how this was due to a gradual retreat from earlier German positions on the Holocaust and happened apace with the "Verwestlichung" of West German society. (See 'Lesarten des Judenmords', 2002, pp. 91-139)

⁸² Norbert Frei (2005, p. 180) writes: "In gewisserweise markierte der im Dezember 1963 eröffnete Auschwitz-Prozeß das symbolische Ende jener Phase der Vergangenheitspolitik, in der die politische Agenda in der Bundesrepublik in heute kaum mehr vorstellbarer Weise bestimmt war von der Wahrung der Interessen der Täter." See also Kansteiner, 2006

(KPD) had underestimated the significance of anti-Semitism within German fascism and it had failed to realise the full extent of Jewish persecution under Hitler. In accordance with an economic interpretation of fascism, many of its members had held the view that anti-Semitism was a secondary aspect of the Nazis' principal campaign against the working class. Anti-Jewish propaganda and discrimination were seen as mere ploys devised by fascists to distract Germans from class inequalities under capitalism.⁸³ The first reports from Majdanek detailing the systematic mass extermination of the camp's many Jewish inmates forced many communists to revise their traditional class-based analysis of fascism. Texts by Konstantin Simonov⁸⁴ and the exiled communists Erich Weinert⁸⁵ and Georg Lukács⁸⁶ written soon after the freeing of Majdanek acknowledge the centrality of anti-Semitism within the Nazi ideology in isolation from issues of class. They point to the involvement of all Germans, including socialists and communists, in a chain of Jewish persecution and extermination,⁸⁷ and they urge that these events be remembered to prevent their recurrence.⁸⁸

In the immediate post-War years the call to remember Jewish suffering and death was heeded in the Soviet Zone of Occupation (SBZ) and early GDR. Testimonies of Jewish victims of the Nazis⁸⁹ and literary reflections on the Holocaust⁹⁰ were published and circulated in the public domain alongside autobiographical texts by other non-Jewish inmates of Nazi concentration camps, and political resisters. In his analysis of public discourse on concentration camps in the SBZ and GDR Thomas

⁸³ For details see Hartewig, 2001, p. 37

⁸⁴ The Russian writer Simonov witnessed the liberation of Majdanek and wrote one of the first widely published reports on the camp. It was first published in German as *Ich sah das Vernichtungslager* in the Soviet Zone of Occupation in 1945.

⁸⁵ See his text *Vierzehn von Millionen* (AdK Bestand Weinert: 854), a commentary on fourteen letters to inmates of Majdanek which arrived at the camp after their addressees had been murdered.

⁸⁶ See especially his essay 'Schicksalswende' written in 1944.

⁸⁷ Simonov refers to "die Kette, die ganz Deutschland umspannt" and describes the involvement of different levels of Germany's society in Jewish persecution. (Quoted in Hartewig, 2001, p. 36)

⁸⁸ In *Vierzehn von Millionen* Weinert writes of the letters to murdered Jews and other victims at Majdanek: "Möge der deutsche Leser sie nicht einmal und von Zeit zu Zeit wieder lesen. Sie gehören zu den Dingen, die nie vergessen werden darf!"

⁸⁹ Examples of Jewish testimonies published at this time include: S. Grauman: *Deportiert! Ein Wiener Jude berichtet* (1947); Zvia Lubetkin: *Die letzten Tage des Warschauer Ghettos* (1949) and M. Zarebinska-Broniewska: *Auschwitzer Erzählungen* (1949).

⁹⁰ Examples include Willi Bredel's *Die Prüfung* (1946), Nelly Sachs' *In die Wohnungen des Todes* (1947) and Günther Weisenborn's *Memorial* (1947).

Taterka writes of the period before 1952: "Im Diskurs selbst [...] herrscht unüberhörbar Vielstimmigkeit. Die unterschiedlichsten Lagererfahrungen und Deutungen werden parallel ausgesprochen. Sie können nebeneinander bestehen."⁹¹ The *Vereinigung der Verfolgten des Nazi Regimes* (VVN), was established in all sectors in 1947 to represent the interests of a broad spectrum of victims of fascism, including Jews. The avowed "Überparteilichkeit" of this organisation is reflected in its list of publications in the late 1940s, which includes many testimonies by Jewish victims.⁹²

The perspective of Jews was thus incorporated into an early East German discussion of World War II. Moreover, their particular experience of German fascism was judged to be just as valid as the experience of all other victims of the Nazis. Personal memories of senseless Jewish suffering were publicly articulated, as were the memories of anti-fascist resisters who had suffered for a political cause.⁹³

The nature of this discussion changed with the founding of the SED and the consolidation of its power in East Germany. An initial plurality of perspectives on the War was stifled by a state-sanctioned memory, formed and propagated towards the end of the 1940s. From being widely represented and openly discussed in the immediate post-War years, the issue of the Holocaust was now increasingly marginalised from public debate. The exclusion of the dimension of Jewish suffering from public reflections on World War II in the GDR took place in the context of a series of measures taken against prominent Jews and Jewish organisations across Eastern Europe in the early 1950s.⁹⁴ Within a narrative of the events of World War II cultivated by the SED at this time, the

⁹¹ Taterka, 2000, p. 314

⁹² For a concise history of the publishing activities of the VVN in the Soviet Zone of Occupation and East Germany see Barck, 1997.

⁹³ With reference to the inclusion of the testimony of an anonymous Jewish woman in *Besonders jetzt tue Deine Pflicht!*, a prominent anthology of the last letters of anti-fascist resisters published in 1948, Karin Hartewig claims: "Gleichwohl war es in der Nachkriegszeit noch möglich, den anonymen Opfern [...] eine Stimme zu geben, obwohl ihr Tod sich gegen jeden Versuch sperrte, einen ideologisch verwertbaren, positiven Sinn daraus abzuleiten." (Hartewig, 2001, p. 39)

⁹⁴ For details see Groehler, 1993, pp. 51-2

“martyrdom” of communist resisters took precedence over the assumed “passive” suffering of Jewish victims of the Nazis.⁹⁵ As a basis for the GDR’s legitimacy, this historical narrative implied that communists, and by extension the Communist East German State, had resisted German fascism and had played no part in Jewish suffering and death. In the same way as the memories of Jewish victims were subsumed into a narrative of Polish wartime suffering in Poland, in East Germany they paled within a dominant narrative of anti-fascist resistance.⁹⁶ In a reversion to an earlier economic analysis of fascism which denied the centrality of anti-Semitism within National Socialist ideology, it was asserted that Jewish persecution was a by-product of capitalism. Such an understanding directed attention away from the specific racial dimension of Jewish suffering under Hitler, and from the complex involvement of various levels of German society in the Holocaust.⁹⁷ In a discussion of the causes of the Holocaust the focus thus shifted from individual, autonomous German actors, to a depersonalised capitalist system. At the same time, the lived experience and perspectives of individual Jewish victims were often obscured in conventional accounts of anti-fascist resistance. This change of emphasis was reflected in publication practices and in published literature in the 1950s. A number of testimonies by Jewish concentration camp survivors which had been published after 1945 were denied re-publication and withdrawn from circulation in the GDR after 1949.⁹⁸ In November 1951, the VVN was ordered by the East German *Amt für Literatur- und Verlagswesen* to shift the focus of its publication programme from “KZ-, Greuel- und Leidensliteratur” onto accounts of heroic communist resistance.⁹⁹ Simone Barck views the dissolution of the VVN’s East German

⁹⁵ As Taterka (2000, p. 351) writes: “Die einsinnige Orientierung auf ‘Kampf’ und ‘Widerstand’ [...] führte wie zwangsläufig zur Minderung und schließlich Ausblendung ganzer Gruppen von Erfahrungsbildern, nämlich der Erfahrungen der Parias – und unter diesen wiederum vor allen anderen all der Juden.” See also Danyel, 1993, p. 147. See also Annette Leo’s comment in Kirschnick, 2009, p. 22

⁹⁶ Hartewig (2001, p. 40) writes of “die Unterordnung der Holocaust-Opfer unter einen übermächtig gewordenen Begriff des Widerstands” in 1950s East Germany. See also Fox, 1999, p. 9

⁹⁷ As Timm (1997, p. 23) writes of the dominant interpretative framework for the Holocaust in the GDR: “Die starke Rückführung des Faschismus auf dessen sozialökonomischen Grundlagen [...] verhinderte eine gründlichere Auseinandersetzung mit der Shoah bzw. mit den Wurzeln des Antisemitismus in deutscher und europäischer Geschichte.”

⁹⁸ Examples include Nico Rost’s *Goethe in Dachau* and Rolf Weinstock’s *Rolf, Kopf Hoch!* For an indepth discussion of the latter case see Barck, 1997, pp. 275-80.

⁹⁹ See Barck, 1997, p. 265

branch by GDR authorities in 1953 in the context of the systematic exclusion of the Jewish perspective from public discourse on World War II in the early 1950s.¹⁰⁰ In literary and autobiographical accounts of Jewish anti-fascist resistance published after 1949, the protagonists' identity as communist resisters was typically emphasised over their Jewishness.¹⁰¹ Published in 1958, Bruno Apitz' novel *Nackt unter Wölfen* became the canonical GDR text on the Nazi concentration camps.¹⁰² In the novel's narrative of the rescue of a Jewish boy by a group of communist resisters in Buchenwald, Jewish suffering is merely the pretext for a depiction of communist resistance.¹⁰³ The novel does not dwell on the specific circumstances of Jews in Buchenwald and, in a misrepresentation of historical fact, it portrays the communist inmates there as an organised group of resisters who acted to protect and defend a minority of Jewish prisoners.¹⁰⁴ It was nonetheless presented and read as fact. The exhibitions opened at Buchenwald, Sachsenhausen and Ravensbrück at the end of the 1950s reflected the official GDR position on the Holocaust in the way they treated Jewish suffering within the parameters of an overarching narrative of internationalist communist resistance. By subsuming the camps' Jewish victims under their respective national and/or political identities these memorials avoided a direct engagement with the specific racial element of Jewish suffering and death in the Third Reich.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., pp. 289-91. The *Komitee der Antifaschistischen Widerstandskämpfer*, the organisation founded to replace the VVN, represented for the most part the interests of active communist resisters.

¹⁰¹ This is the case in Stephan Hermlin's *Die Zeit der Gemeinsamkeit* (1949) and in Bruno Apitz' novella *Esther* (1959). In her discussion of Bruno Baum's report *Widerstand in Auschwitz* (1949) Karin Hartewig (2001, pp. 40-1) shows how the Jewish author identifies himself first and foremost as a communist resister and portrays Jewish inmates in Auschwitz as resistance heroes.

¹⁰² As Taterka (2000, p. 318) writes: "*Nackt unter Wölfen* bot nicht einfach ein an sich gleichgültiges Beispiel, sondern stellte als erzählte Wertvorstellung ein exemplarisches Vorbild dafür, was von den Konzentrationslagern zu welchem Ende wie zu sagen sei."

¹⁰³ As Norbert Otto Eke writes with reference to *Nackt unter Wölfen* and other prominent literary representations of the rescue of Jewish victims by German communists published in the GDR in the 1950s and 1960s: "Die Juden [stehen] zwar stellvertretend für Verfolgung und Leiden unter dem Nationalsozialismus, [treten] aber nicht als Opfer an und für sich in Erscheinung." (Eke, 2006, p. 90)

¹⁰⁴ See Bill Niven's discussion of *Nackt unter Wölfen* in Niven, 2007, pp. 189-91. Paul O' Doherty (1997, p. 105) also notes that GDR reviewers of Apitz' text typically ignored the Jewish identity of the rescued child.

¹⁰⁵ For a discussion of the Buchenwald Memorial and its conceptualisation see Taterka, 2000. See also Hartewig's discussion of Buchenwald and Sachsenhausen in Hartewig, 2001, p. 41.

While an interpretation of the Holocaust in accordance with the official GDR discourse of antifascism was dominant in the 1950s and 1960s, it was not monolithic. In certain contexts the theme of Jewish suffering under Hitler could still be represented and publicly discussed in ways which broke with the official anti-fascist narrative. There are many cases where texts which drew attention to the specific Jewish experience in the Third Reich were refused publication; at the same time, other unorthodox literary and documentary treatments of this issue did pass the censor. The latter were often framed by paratexts which attempted to install a reading of the text in accordance with the official GDR narrative of the Holocaust. Yet the fact of their publication ensured that the memories of Jewish victims of the Nazis continued to have a presence, albeit marginal, in the GDR public sphere throughout the 1950s and 1960s.

In the context of the Eichmann and 'Auschwitz' trials in the early 1960s, the Holocaust became a focus of public attention in East Germany. The GDR's own trial *in absentia* of Hans Globke in 1963 was extensively reported in East German newspapers.¹⁰⁶ These years also saw the publication of the first GDR studies on Jewish persecution under National Socialism. To a large extent, the discussion of the Holocaust by the East German media and historiographical work on the theme at this time were characterised by efforts to propagandise against the "imperialist" West Germany where anti-Semitism was allegedly still rife.¹⁰⁷ The merit of studies by historians such as Friedrich Karl Kaul¹⁰⁸ and Siegbert Kahn¹⁰⁹ was doubtlessly compromised by this underlying intention, but they did

¹⁰⁶ As a constitutional lawyer Globke had helped formulate the Nuremberg Laws and other anti-Semitic legislation in the 1930s. After the War he held a position as a key advisor within Adenauer's Interior Ministry and was appointed State Secretary in 1953.

¹⁰⁷ As Fox (1999, p. 109) writes: "The use of the Holocaust to attack the Federal Republic while celebrating the better German state remained a standard element in East German Holocaust discourse until the very end." For Groehler (1993, p. 62) the decade from 1960 was characterised by "[eine] politisch instrumentalisierte Auseinandersetzung um den Holocaust" in the GDR.

¹⁰⁸ *Der Fall Eichmann* (1963)

¹⁰⁹ "Dokumente des Kampfes der revolutionären deutschen Arbeiterbewegung gegen Antisemitismus und Judenverfolgung" in *Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Arbeiterbewegung*, 2. Jg. 1960, Heft 3, pp. 552-64

nevertheless inform and raise public awareness in the GDR about the specific Jewish experience of National Socialism.¹¹⁰

The year 1960 saw the publication in East Germany of an important collection of documents relating to the persecution and annihilation of Jews in wartime Poland. *Faschismus - Getto – Massenmord* was a joint publication of the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw and the East Berlin publishing house *Rütten und Loening*.¹¹¹ Distributed over seven chapters, contemporary documents and photographs traced the successive phases of Jewish persecution on Polish territory, including the formation of ghettos, forced Jewish labour, the confiscation of Jewish property and the systematic murder of Jews in concentration camps. Only one chapter deals with Jewish anti-fascist resistance. Much of the content of *Faschismus - Getto - Massenmord* represented previously unpublished material drawn from the archive of the *Jewish Historical Institute*, including a number of diaries by Jewish victims translated into German for this publication from the original Yiddish and Polish. The collection also contained extracts from the personal and official documents of the perpetrators, including the diary of the infamous governor of the *Generalgouvernement*, Hans Frank. The foreword and introduction to the collected documents emphasise that anti-Semitism is a feature of capitalist societies only and suggest that the problem persists in West Germany.¹¹² However, in terms of the breadth of documentary sources gathered here, and the scholarly attention to detail, this enquiry into the Holocaust was unprecedented in the early 1960s in both Germanys.

¹¹⁰ As Karin Hartewig (2001, p. 42) writes of the East German discussion surrounding the Eichmann and Frankfurt trials: “Die sechziger Jahre können in der DDR als Zeit der Aufklärung gelten, obwohl sie zugleich einen Höhepunkt der politischen und zum Teil demagogischen Kampagnen des kalten Krieges darstellen.” Taking the example of Friedrich Karl Kaul she shows how his studies, although heavily informed by the official GDR stance, provided valuable information on the Holocaust, its victims and perpetrators.

¹¹¹ *Faschismus-Getto-Massenmord. Dokumentation über Ausrottung und Widerstand der Juden in Polen während des zweiten Weltkrieges*, Rütten und Loening, 1960. The editors were Tatiana Berenstein, Artur Eisenbach, Bernhard Mark and Adam Rutkowski. As mentioned above, Rutkowski also wrote the explanatory notes for *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz*.

¹¹² For example in the foreword we read: “In der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik wurde der Imperialismus beseitigt. Damit wurde dem Faschismus, Rassismus und Antisemitismus der Nährboden entzogen. [...] Und in der Bundesrepublik? Die Verderber Deutschlands, die Würger der Völker waren die deutschen Imperialisten. Sie haben in Westdeutschland wieder die Staatsmacht an sich gebracht.” (Ibid., p. 11)

The 1961 East German edition of *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz* must be seen in the context of numerous translations of Polish literature on the Holocaust and Jewish testimonies published in East Germany from the late 1950s onwards.¹¹³ At a time when the victimisation of Jews under National Socialism was typically marginalised and refracted in an official GDR narrative of anti-fascist resistance, this literature articulated the specific War experience of Jews and it explored questions of Polish and German answerability for the Holocaust.¹¹⁴ Moreover, in their reception, these texts gave rise to a public discussion of the Holocaust and its representation which at times transcended the official GDR line.

In 1958 a collection of five Jewish diary testimonies of World War II, all of which had first appeared as separate publications of the Jewish Historical Institute in Poland, was published in the GDR as *Im Feuer vergangen. Tagebücher aus dem Ghetto*, with a foreword by the German-Jewish writer Arnold Zweig. Two of the five diaries give accounts of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising and organised Jewish resistance in wartime Poland.¹¹⁵ The others record the diverse experiences of Jews of different ages and social backgrounds under the German occupation.¹¹⁶ These three diaries focus on Jewish persecution; active Jewish resistance is not a theme. The first diary in the collection by Leon Weliczker is a particularly harrowing description of the diarist's forced labour in a so-called *Todesbrigade* based in Lvov, responsible for destroying the remains of Jews executed by the Nazis in that region. Zweig's foreword to *Im Feuer vergangen* is interesting in the way it invokes the dominant GDR interpretation of the Holocaust, yet at the same time warns against forgetting the specificity of Jewish suffering in official remembrance. Zweig gathers the five diarists' various experiences under the

¹¹³ Examples include the first German translations of literature by Czesław Miłosz and Zofia Nałkowska as well as Jan Sehn's *Konzentrationslager Auschwitz-Birkenau* (1957) and Bernhard Mark's *Der Aufstand im Warschauer Ghetto* (1957). For a discussion of Polish Holocaust literature published in the GDR see Bach, 2007.

¹¹⁴ As Hartewig writes with reference to Polish literature on the Holocaust published in 1950s East Germany: "Nahezu ausschließlich solchen Übersetzungen kam in den fünfziger Jahren die Aufgabe zu, die Vernichtung der europäischen Juden im kollektiven Gedächtnis der DDR wachzuhalten." (2001, p. 42)

¹¹⁵ Dorka Goldkorn: *Erinnerung an den Aufstand im Warschauer Ghetto* and Gusta Dawidsohn-Draengerowa: *Tagebuch der Justyna*

¹¹⁶ Leon Weliczker: *Die Todesbrigade*, Janina Heschel: *Mit den Augen eines zwölfjährigen Mädchens* and Noëmi Szac-Wajnkranc: *Im Feuer vergangen*

homogenising rubric of active anti-fascist resistance. At the beginning of the foreword he writes: “So also halten wir in Händen Zeugnisse des Widerstands jüdisch-polnischer Jugend gegen die unwahrscheinliche, bis zu ihrem Ende nicht geglaubte fürchterliche Unterwelt.”¹¹⁷ His statements on the root cause of anti-Semitism reflect the economic interpretation of fascism dominant in the GDR.¹¹⁸ However, at the end of the foreword he distances himself from the official GDR narrative of Jewish War suffering. Zweig recalls his participation in the recent opening ceremony of the Buchenwald Memorial. In a guarded criticism of the Memorial’s omission of the dimension of Jewish suffering he suggests that this text can compensate for that lack: “Unter den 21 Fahnen der Völker, welche sich auf dem Ettersberg zusammenfanden, um das unauslöschliche Gedenken der Helden und Märtyrer mit dem Kampf gegen die Wiederkehr der Barbarei zu verbinden, fehlte die Fahne mit dem uralten Emblem des Dawidsterns, welches die jüdischen Opfer des faschistischen Terrors vertreten hätte. Hier, in diesem Buche, ist sie neben der roten gehißt.”¹¹⁹ The yellow Star of David printed on the front cover of *Im Feuer vergangen* explicitly marks the diaries as testimonies of Jewish suffering and resistance, and is thus consistent with Zweig’s plea to include, yet differentiate, the memories of Jewish victims within a contemporary East German discussion of World War II.

In his response to the publication in *Neue deutsche Literatur*¹²⁰ Viktor Klemperer reflected on the aesthetics of Holocaust representation. In a comparison with Dante’s *Inferno* in his foreword, Zweig had valorised the diaries of *Im Feuer vergangen* as literature.¹²¹ This comparison was sharply criticised by Klemperer in a review where he insisted on a strict separation of literature and diary testimonies of World War II, of the intentions which underlie them, their effects and the criteria for their

¹¹⁷ *Im Feuer vergangen*, p. 5

¹¹⁸ This is clear in his explanation of the participation of non-Jewish Ukrainians in the persecution of Jews in East Galicia: “Diese Menschen, Ukrainer, wurden von der polnischen wie von der deutschen Oberschicht aufs härteste ausgebeutet [...] immer unter Mithilfe von Juden als Werkzeugen aller öffentlichen Einrichtungen. Kein Wunder, daß diese ‘Kleinrussen’ sich zunächst einmal an den Juden rächten, als die deutsche Okkupation sie dazu anregte und dafür mit Brotkarten belohnte. Ohne echte sozialistische völkerverbindende Gesinnung gestaltet sich eben überall auf der Erde das Zusammenleben von Menschen verschiedener Abkunft schwierig.” (Ibid., p. 8)

¹¹⁹ Ibid., p. 9

¹²⁰ ‘Inferno und Nazihölle. Bemerkungen zu den Tagebüchern aus dem Ghetto’ in *NDL* 9/10, 1959, pp. 245-52

¹²¹ Ibid., p. 5

evaluation. For the German-Jewish writer Klemperer, a reading of the diaries of Holocaust victims as literature, which Zweig undertook, ran the risk of demeaning their lived experience and deriving aesthetic pleasure from textual reflections of their suffering: “der Vergleich der Dantehölle mit der nazistischen ist sozusagen doppelt sündhaft: er sündigt menschlich, indem er die Opfer des Faschismus zum bloßen Literaturthema macht; er sündigt ästhetisch, indem er die Möglichkeit einer Kunstwerkes annimmt, das der ethischen Grundlage entbehrt.”¹²² Throughout his commentary on the five testimonies in *Im Feuer vergangen*, Klemperer posited the diary as the only legitimate text form to mediate the experience of Jewish victims of the Nazis. He viewed all attempts to aestheticise this experience and to apply literary evaluations to such texts with suspicion as their authenticity and function, as testimony were thus compromised. For Klemperer, the diary of Leon Weliczker represented the ideal non-aesthetic diary, while in some other diaries in *Im Feuer vergangen* he saw signs of literarisation which weakened the force of their testimony.¹²³ In this essay we see Klemperer adopting a position with regard to the representation of the Holocaust even more radical than that of contemporary West German proponents of a documentary literature on the events of World War II. The publication and reception of *Das Tagebuch der Anne Frank* in East Germany over the ten-year period from 1956 show how the marginalisation of Jewish victims of the Nazis within a prevailing East German narrative of anti-fascist resistance was neither universal, nor consistent in these years.¹²⁴ In 1956, a year before the first East German publication of the diary by the *Union-Verlag*, GDR citizens became familiar with Anne’s story through performances of the American stage version of the text in theatres in Dresden, Leipzig and Berlin.¹²⁵ The theatre programmes typically interpreted

¹²² Ibid., p. 247

¹²³ In a passage on the diary of Noëmi Szac-Waynkranc he regretted “der literarische Schmuck ihres geretteten Tagebuches” and argued that “die Ausbreitung des absolut Unmenschlichen kann und darf nur den einen Zweck haben, die Leser von der realen Wirklichkeit all dieser Gräßlichkeiten zu überzeugen. Niemals darf er auf den sich immer wieder vordrängenden Gedanken kommen, man setzt ihm ein Phantasiebild, vielleicht eine hysterische Übertreibung vor.” (Ibid., p. 249)

¹²⁴ For an in-depth account of Anne Frank’s reception in the GDR see Kirschnick’s *Anne Frank und die DDR*, Christoph Links Verlag, 2009

¹²⁵ The East German performances in 1956 were timed to coincide with performances in West German theatres.

Anne's experience in line with the dominant GDR account of the Holocaust and pointed to continued anti-Semitism in the "imperialist" *Bundesrepublik*.¹²⁶ By contrast, reviews of the play were less obviously shaped by the official view; they tended to emphasise the Jewish identity of the protagonists and reflected on the issue of German guilt for their deaths. Ideologically motivated criticisms of West Germany were few.¹²⁷ Until 1960, GDR editions of the diary had a foreword by Probst Heinrich Grüber which alerted readers to the shared responsibility of all Germans for the Holocaust.¹²⁸ Yet reviews of the diary in the GDR press tended to reflect the dominant East German interpretation of the Holocaust.¹²⁹ The 1959 DEFA documentary film *Ein Tagebuch für Anne Frank* was less an exploration of Anne's experience than a propaganda exercise to expose representatives of big industry in West Germany alleged to have been responsible for her death.¹³⁰ However, in spite of attempts to instrumentalise Anne's story, her testimony and its stage adaptation in the GDR prompted reflections on the Holocaust in certain contexts which ran contrary to the official view.¹³¹ The first GDR edition of Dawid's diary was published by *Volk und Welt* in 1961 with a substantial print-run of 10,000 copies. The format of the earlier Polish version and the Polish paratexts, with their conflicting perspectives on Polish and/or Jewish suffering, were retained. We have seen how in Poland the published diary prompted reflections on Polish martyrdom which neglected the specific experience of Jews and the issue of Polish complicity in the Holocaust. By contrast in East Germany

¹²⁶ See Kirschnick, 2009, pp. 51-2. The programme of the first Dresden performance in 1956 interprets Jewish persecution as "eine Verschleierung des Klassenkampfes." The programme of the 1958 *Deutsches Theater* performance in Berlin includes a photo of a recently vandalised Jewish graveyard in Bavaria and a facsimile of the last letter of a Jewish resistance fighter.

¹²⁷ See for example the review by Henryk Keisch in *Neues Deutschland* (14th October 1956) and the review in the FDJ newspaper *Junge Welt* (19th October 1956) cited by Kirschnick, 2009, pp. 44-5

¹²⁸ Grüber writes with reference to Anne's diary: "Wir hoffen, dass es uns die alte Schuld wieder aufs neue in das Gewissen eingebrannt hat. [...] Das wir noch am Leben sind, ist ein Beweis dafür, dass wir nicht ausreichend die Wahrheit bezeugt und uns nicht stark genug für die Gequälten und Verfolgten eingesetzt haben." (Quoted in Kirschnick, 2009, p. 77). Probst Grüber's foreword was removed from later editions of the diary when he fell out of favour with GDR authorities.

¹²⁹ An exception is Arnold Zweig's review of the diary in *Neue Zeit* (21.3. 1958). See Kirschnick, 2009, pp.81-2 for details.

¹³⁰ See the chapter on the DEFA-film in Kirschnick, 2009, pp. 83-98

¹³¹ In her treatment of the 'private' reception of the diary by individual readers Kirschnick shows disparities between public/official and private/individual forms of Holocaust remembrance in East Germany. In many cases the text was taught by individual teachers and mediated in smaller theatre productions in ways which challenged the official GDR account of the Holocaust.

the diary was positioned and received as a testimony of *Jewish*, not Polish suffering. However, the limited scope of the text's East German reception is consistent with an overall marginalisation of the suffering of Polish Jews in public discourse on World War II in the GDR at this time.

In her report¹³² submitted to the *Ministerium für Kultur* with the application to publish Dawid's diary, *Volk und Welt* editor Jutta Jahnke emphasised Dawid's Jewish identity and drew a contrast between his diary and that of Anne Frank. For Jahnke, differences in the style and content of both diaries reflected the different experiences of Eastern European and assimilated Jews under National Socialism. Dawid's faltering language and his ignorance regarding the broader political context of Jewish persecution were a sign of the complete victimisation of impoverished Eastern European Jews: "der tägliche Existenzkampf, die Furcht vor den Häschern, [...] Dawids soziale Lage, das unmittelbare Ausgeliefertsein an die Unterdrücker [diktieren] den Aufzeichnungen Dawids eine andere Sprache als dem Tagebuch der Anne Frank."¹³³ A class-based reading of Jewish suffering operates in Jahnke's report, not only in references to the economic motives behind Jewish persecution, but also in the portrayal of two categories of Jewish victim. The comparison Anne Frank/Dawid Rubinowicz becomes the basis for an implied hierarchisation of Holocaust victims in which Dawid's experience as a 'working-class' Jew is privileged over that of the 'bourgeois' Anne. Without going as far as presenting it as anti-fascist resistance, Jahnke describes the suffering of Dawid and other Polish Jews as an active daily confrontation with their persecutors. By contrast, Anne's experience is more negatively connoted with passive suffering and apathy: "Die Welt des Dawid Rubinowicz ist härter, bitterer, ärmer, umbarmherziger. Seine Aufzeichnungen entstehen nicht in einem engen Versteck, unter der relativ sicheren Obhut der Familie und Freunde. Er und seine Familie sind ausgeliefert: dem Dorfschulzen, den Gendarmen, den Deutschen: sie leben Tag für Tag in Angst vor Verfolgungen, werden schickaniert, verleumdet, wegen nicht begangener Vergehen

¹³² BArch: DR1/1238

¹³³ *Ibid.*, p. 7. Here Jahnke's report bears striking resemblance to the aforementioned article on the diary by Ludwig Zimmerer in *Die Welt*.

erpresst, in Zwangsarbeit getrieben und schliesslich ins Ghetto gesperrt.”¹³⁴ We will see how the same positive evaluation of Dawid’s text and his experience over that of Anne Frank informs the subsequent GDR reception of *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz*.

In stark contrast to the reception of the text in Poland, the response to *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz* in the East German media was very muted. In my search for reception sources in the GDR I found just two published reviews of the text from the early 1960s and an essay by Christa Wolf written in late 1964. In spite of attempts in these commentaries to legitimise Dawid’s diary over that of Anne Frank and thus prioritise his experience for remembrance, as in West Germany the latter diary maintained a higher profile in the GDR.¹³⁵ On the one hand the negligible impact of Dawid’s diary would appear to confirm claims of an overall marginalisation of the Holocaust in the GDR of the 1960s. On the other hand the contributions discussed below write against such a marginalisation and reveal how a more critical engagement with the Holocaust and its remembrance was possible in certain marginal GDR contexts.

Echoing Jahnke’s assessment, in a short review of the diary in the *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* historian Klaus Drobisch suggested that Anne Frank’s diary was “zur Seite gestellt” by this new publication.¹³⁶ Drobisch stressed Dawid’s Jewish identity and placed his experience in the context of “ein ungeheuerliches Verbrechen: das millionenfache Mord an der jüdischen Bevölkerung.” He went on to outline “die Etappen des Völkermordes” described in the diary. While he brings the issue of Jewish suffering to the fore, in his contention that it was the result of “faschistische Gesetze,” Drobisch repeats the official East German line on the causes of the Holocaust.

¹³⁴ Ibid., p.6

¹³⁵ As in West Germany the broader reception of *Das Tagebuch der Anne Frank* was facilitated by the diffusion of her story through various media adaptations. In the GDR context these included the performances of the Goodrich/Hackett stage version of the diary from 1956 and the 1959 DEFA film, *Ein Tagebuch für Anne Frank*.

¹³⁶ ‘Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz’ in *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* (7), 1962, p. 1741. Drobisch was a leading East German scholar of the Holocaust and later worked on the important studies: *Kennzeichen J.* (1966, with Rudi Goguel) and *Juden unterm Hakenkreuz* (1977).

Dawid's diary was also discussed in an article on "Literatur zum jüdischen Schicksal in jüngster Vergangenheit" by Renate Trautmann in the Protestant journal *Die Christenlehre*.¹³⁷ In her survey of Holocaust literature Trautmann included a broad spectrum of genres and authors in both Germanys. Her unbiased discussion of relevant West German texts was rare in the GDR. It reveals how the limits of official discourse on the Holocaust were often transcended within the context of the East German Churches at this time. A concept of German guilt for the persecution and murder of Jews which informs Trautmann's text also set her discussion apart from prevailing GDR representations of the Holocaust in the early 1960s. For Trautmann this guilt extended to East German readers and to German Christians who turned a blind eye to Jewish suffering. In the opening paragraph she wrote of "eine Last, die uns, Angehörigen dieses Volkes, in dem das alles geschah, geradezu untragbar scheint."¹³⁸ Against contemporary West and East German accounts of the abstract causes of Jewish persecution she posited a personalised form of guilt which had consequences for all Germans in the present: "Die Erklärungen der Katastrophe in unserem Jahrhundert aus gruppenpsychologischen Elementen und geschichtlicher Entwicklung entschuldigen nicht das Geschehen, dürfen es nicht entschuldigen. Denn die Menschen waren da, die hätten handeln können, aber sie versagten."¹³⁹ Trautmann called for a more intensive personal remembrance of Jewish suffering and German complicity which would go beyond "allgemeine Schuldbekennnisse." She emphasised the continued need for all Germans "[sich] dieser Vergangenheit wirklich zu stellen", and viewed the literary and documentary treatments of the Holocaust which she treated in her essay as the best possible means to this end: "Solches Gedenken und solches Sichstellen geschieht, wenn wir bereit sind, uns zu informieren, die authentischen Berichte von dem, was jüdische Menschen Grauensvolles erlitten, zu hören, ohne uns voll Grauen abzuwenden, in die innere Problematik jüdischen Schicksals, [...] mit

¹³⁷ 'Feuer und Sterne. Literatur zum jüdischen Schicksal in jüngster Vergangenheit' in *Die Christenlehre* (8), 1963, pp. 226-54

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 226

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 254

hineinzugehen, und schließlich nach den wissenschaftlichen Versuchen zu folgen, die nach den inneren Ursachen des Judenhasses fragen.”¹⁴⁰ Trautmann privileged the diary form above all others as “unmittelbarstes Zeugnis jener zwölf Jahre” and “prototypisches Dokument für das Schicksal von Millionen.” Where historical overviews failed to further an adequate understanding of the Holocaust she argued that “die nüchternen Aufzeichnungen einzelner bringen es uns erschütternd näher.”¹⁴¹ In Trautmann’s view the simplicity of Dawid’s language and his naive perception of the horrific events he witnesses made them all the more real for readers of the diary.¹⁴²

In her discussion of *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz* in the 1964 essay *Tagebuch – Arbeitsmittel und Gedächtnis*,¹⁴³ Christa Wolf reflected on the Holocaust, its representation and remembrance in East and West Germany. Representing a position equivalent to that of Klemperer in *Feuertod und Nazihölle* she argued against the literarisation of Holocaust experience and suggested that the diary genre was the only legitimate form to narrate the events in which Dawid was embroiled: “Das Schicksal des Dawid Rubinowicz könnte kaum anders als in der subjektiven und zugleich streng dokumentarischen Form seines Tagebuches überliefert sein. Die schauerlichen Tatsachen spotten jeder Überhöhung durch Phantasie. Dokumente aus den Archiven der Mörder und ihrer Beamten, Tagebücher der Opfer stehen sich gegenüber – beredter als ein Roman, ein Gedicht es sein könnten. Das Tagebuch, ‘privat’ seinem Wesen nach, oft heimlich geschrieben, an keinen Leser denkend, nicht einmal an ihn glaubend, übernimmt für eine heillose Epoche und ihre verheerendsten Untaten das Amt des unbestechlichen, gerechten und wahrhaftigen Zeugen.”¹⁴⁴ Wolf’s reflections on *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz* and its reception were the starting point for a critical assessment of ‘Western’ Holocaust remembrance. Her observations represented a highly sophisticated form of the accusations against the ‘imperialist’ West typical of many public statements on the Holocaust in East

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 227

¹⁴¹ Ibid., p. 227

¹⁴² “Er beschreibt alles, er deutet nicht. Gerade dadurch aber bekommen die Ereignisse [...] ihren eigenen Charakter.” (Ibid., p. 235)

¹⁴³ ‘Tagebuch Arbeitsmittel und Gedächtnis’ in *Lesen und Schreiben*, Aufbau, 1972, pp. 12-27

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 16

Germany at that time. While other commentators compared the diaries and experiences of Dawid Rubinowicz and Anne Frank, in this essay Wolf focussed more on the unequal reception of both texts regretting that “der Name dieses Jungen neben dem Namen Anne Frank [unbekannt geliebt ist].”¹⁴⁵ The far greater resonance of *Das Tagebuch der Anne Frank* in the West was a sign of Western Europe’s instrumentalisation of Holocaust memory to the exclusion of the experience of Eastern European Jews, such as Dawid Rubinowicz: “Sollte Westeuropa weniger aufnahmebereit sein für die Todesgeschichte eines armen Bauernjungen aus dem weltabgelegenen polnischen Dorf? Weniger reizbar durch Leid dieser Art: entfernt genug, um als ‘fremd’ gelten zu können, und wenig geeignet, etwas wie eine kollektive Selbstreinigungsepidemie auszulösen?”¹⁴⁶ Wolf did not refer explicitly to the GDR reception of Dawid’s diary, but she implied a far more positive evaluation of East Germany’s process of coming to terms with the Nazi past. In the same way Anne Frank and her reception were connoted with flawed ‘Western’ forms of Holocaust remembrance, in the essay a link was established between *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz* and the GDR. As with other East German commentators on Dawid’s text Wolf privileged his Holocaust testimony over that of Anne Frank. Indeed the prominence of Dawid’s diary in her essay represents the inverse of the overprominence of *Das Tagebuch der Anne Frank* which she bemoaned in Western Europe. Following her discussion of *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz* Wolf went on in the same essay to discuss the *Brigadetagebuch* as a new East German literary genre. In the connection between both diary forms - Holocaust testimony and East German literature of the everyday - which Wolf drew in an allusion to Hannah Arendt’s statement on “die Banalität des Bösen” her position on the GDR’s approach to the Holocaust becomes clear: “Von der ‘Banalität des Bösen’ ist im Zusammenhang mit Eichmann die Rede. Doch bringt nicht dieses belastete Wort, wenn wir ihm den herabmindernden Unterton

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 15

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 15. It may be that Wolf’s critique of the West German reception of both diaries here is also a disguised critique of the GDR reception. Yet given the overall argumentation of the essay and the relatively orthodox phase of Wolf’s literary career in which it was written this seems unlikely.

nehmen, das Brigadetagebuch auf überraschende und - endlich! - hoffnungsvolle Weise in Kontakt mit den Aufzeichnungen des Dawid Rubinowicz? Die Banalität des Guten; das Gute als Banales - oder sagen wir jetzt: als Gewöhnliches, Durchschnittliches, Selbstverständliches -, das allein ist wirksame und dauerhafte Garantie gegen Treblinka.”¹⁴⁷

The republications and reception of *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz* 1980-90

In a recent essay Wulf Kansteiner identifies the 1980s as “the climax of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*” in the *Bundesrepublik* and traces developments in the discussion of Jewish suffering under National Socialism at different levels of post-War West German society which culminated in a memory boom in this decade when “historians, politicians, teachers, and at least some sections of the general public finally concentrated on the Holocaust and competed with one another about ways to acknowledge and contain its legacy.”¹⁴⁸ Kansteiner highlights the unprecedented response to the American mini-series *Holocaust*¹⁴⁹ and the political focus on Holocaust commemoration under the chancellorship of Helmut Kohl¹⁵⁰ as indicators of the increased profile of this aspect of the Nazi past after 1980. In the GDR this was also a time when the Holocaust became a focal point of public and political interest. As Groehler writes: “Das jüdische Thema wurde [...] erst in den letzten Lebensjahren der DDR richtig entdeckt.”¹⁵¹ The 1970s had seen the first publications of original Holocaust research by East German historians such as Kurt Pätzold and Klaus Drobisch.¹⁵² In the following decade there was a significant increase in the quantity of published literature on Jewish themes, in particular on the

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 20

¹⁴⁸ Kansteiner, 2006, p. 124

¹⁴⁹ The series was first broadcast in January 1979 in West Germany. See Jürgen Wilke’s internet article ‘Die Fernsehserie *Holocaust* als Medienereignis’ (2004) (<http://zeitgeschichte-online.de/md=FSHolocaust-Wilke>>)

¹⁵⁰ Kansteiner refers in particular to the centralised commemorative institutions founded or initiated under the Kohl Government including the Museum of German history in Berlin, the Museum of the Federal Republic in Bonn and the Holocaust Memorial.

¹⁵¹ Groehler, 1993, p. 61

¹⁵² Examples include Pätzold’s *Faschismus, Rassenwahn, Judenverfolgung. Eine Studie zur politischen Strategie und Taktik des faschistischen Imperialismus 1933-35* (1975) and Drobisch’s *Juden unterm Hakenkreuz* (1977)

Holocaust.¹⁵³ While in previous years the anniversary of “Kristallnacht” on the 9th of November had been marked solely by members of the GDR’s small Jewish congregations, in the 1980s political leaders and other state dignitaries presided at more formal commemoration ceremonies. In events surrounding the fortieth anniversary of “die Befreiung” in 1985 Jewish victims were remembered alongside communists and anti-fascist resisters.¹⁵⁴ There was an increased interest in and support for Jewish heritage and the history of German Jews, evidenced in East Berlin by the reconstruction, begun in 1985, of the Synagogue in the Oranienburgerstrasse, the foundation of the *Centrum Judaicum* and the huge success of the *Jüdische Kulturtage* in 1987. While the SED narrative of the Holocaust remained static and dominant, it was increasingly supplemented by other approaches to the event from writers, film-makers, historians, the Churches and intellectuals.¹⁵⁵ Official statements continued to assert East Germany’s triumph over the alleged roots of anti-Semitism - fascism and imperialism. Yet in other contexts anti-Semitic tendencies among young East Germans were a cause of great concern and provided the context of a more intensive examination of the Holocaust.¹⁵⁶

After its initial publication in 1961 over twenty years would pass before Dawid’s diary was re-issued as a book for younger readers in the GDR.¹⁵⁷ Before that the diary was once again brought to public attention in a children’s documentary film produced at the DEFA studios in Babelsberg and distributed in East and West Germany. In 1988 the diary was republished by the West German

¹⁵³ Hartewig (2001, p. 44) speaks of “eine vorsichtige Annäherung der Geschichtsschreibung an den Holocaust seit den achtziger Jahren” evidenced by texts such as Pätzold’s *Von der Vertreibung zum Genozid. Zu den Ursachen, Triebkräften und Bedingungen der antijüdischen Politik* (1980), Pätzold and Runge’s ‘Kristallnacht.’ *Zum Pogrom 1938* (1988) and Rudolf Hirsch and Rosemarie Schuder’s *Der Gelbe Fleck. Wurzeln und Wirkungen des Judenhasses in der deutschen Geschichte* (1989). In 1986 the FDJ Newspaper *Junge Welt* printed *Das Tagebuch von Anne Frank* in serialised form. For details of other relevant texts see Eke, 2006, p. 96 and O’ Doherty, 1997, pp. 207-8

¹⁵⁴ Eke (2006, p. 93) suggests that the increased attention paid by the SED to Jewish victims was not entirely altruistic, but motivated to a large extent by the desire for improved political relations with the United States. See also Groehler, 1993, p. 61

¹⁵⁵ See Fox, 1999, p. 135

¹⁵⁶ Events such as the vandalism of Jewish graveyards and a neo-Nazi attack on a concert-goer in East Berlin were discussed primarily in Church and oppositional circles. See for example the article by the film director and civil rights activist Konrad Weiß published in 1988 in the underground journal *Kontext*: ‘Die neue alte Gefahr. Junge Faschisten in der DDR’, <http://www.bln.de/k.weiss/index.html>

¹⁵⁷ *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz*, Kinderbuchverlag, Ost-Berlin, 1985. The same pattern emerges in the publication and reception histories of other Holocaust testimonies. After 1963, the *Diary of Anne Frank* was not re-published in the GDR until the mid-1980s.

children's literature specialist *Beltz und Gelberg*. The impetus for the film and the subsequent republications of the diary came from representatives of a younger generation of GDR artists and intellectuals who rejected the official East German interpretation of the Holocaust and worked against the marginalisation of Jewish victims in public remembrance.¹⁵⁸ In retrieving Dawid's diary from obscurity they sought not merely to inform young audiences about the Holocaust, but also to encourage a compassionate identification with a representative Jewish victim. They thus hoped to combat resurgent anti-Semitism in both German states. In the following sections I treat the agents and motives behind the film, *Dawids Tagebuch*, and the new editions of the diary published in the GDR and the *Bundesrepublik* in the 1980s. In terms of its scale and focus, the reception of Dawid's text in the 1980s was very different from what it had been two decades earlier. In the following pages I highlight changes in the response to the diary and attempt to explain them in the context of Holocaust remembrance in East and West Germany at this time.

***Dawids Tagebuch* – the DEFA documentary film of *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz*, and its reception**

In 1980 Helmut Kohl, then leader of the CDU in West Germany, criticised GDR authorities for their refusal to broadcast *Holocaust* on East German television and contended that the issue of the Holocaust had been continually evaded by the GDR media. In an article in the GDR journal *Film und Fernsehen*¹⁵⁹ Dieter Wolf responded to Kohl's remarks by pointing to the many DEFA films on the subject. At the same time he admitted that there was a lack of GDR-produced children's films on the theme of Jewish suffering and death under fascism¹⁶⁰ and ended his article with an appeal to East German film-makers to redress this imbalance: "Es geht vor allem um eine aktive, kämpferische

¹⁵⁸ The main instigators of the film and the republications of Dawid's diary, the film-maker Konrad Weiß and the writer Walther Petri, were both brought up in 1950s East Germany. Eke (2006, p. 96) has emphasised the contribution of many GDR authors of this generation towards a new consciousness and understanding of the Holocaust in texts published in the 1980s.

¹⁵⁹ 'Die Lebendigkeit eines großen Themas' in *Film und Fernsehen*, 5/1980, pp. 4-9

¹⁶⁰ "Acht Filme in mehr als zwanzig Jahre sind eben nicht viel." (Ibid., p. 9)

Lebenshaltung der neuen Generation, die über den weiteren Gang der Geschichte mitbestimmt.”¹⁶¹ *Dawids Tagebuch* was made in the context of this German-German debate and it represents an attempt to compensate for the shortfall highlighted by Wolf and simultaneously silence West German detractors.

As early as the mid-1970s the children’s writer Walther Petri¹⁶² had approached DEFA-director Konrad Weiß with a proposal for a children’s documentary film based on *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz*. The film, *Dawids Tagebuch*, was eventually made in 1980 and released a year later. Frank Stern has shown how throughout the history of the GDR the DEFA film studios in Babelsberg produced several films on the theme of the Holocaust which diverged from the treatment of this issue in official East German parlance. With particular reference to the work of directors Konrad Wolf and Frank Beyer he claims that the aesthetics, structure and content of many such films “[enthalt] offene und subversive Elemente, die man nicht auf vom Staat erwartete normierte Haltungen gegenüber Juden oder einen verordneten Antifaschismus reduzieren kann.”¹⁶³ The DEFA film adaptation of the diary of Anne Frank represents a notable exception to this. In Joachim Hellwig’s 1959 documentary, *Ein Tagebuch für Anne Frank*, Frank’s diary serves as a mere springboard for accusations against West German big business alleged to have played an active role in her murder and Anne is portrayed throughout the film as “ein Opfer des Imperialismus.” Aware of this precedent, with their planned film Petri and Weiß strove to avoid the political instrumentalisation of Dawid’s experience.

Both Weiß and Petri were critical of a blind-spot regarding the Holocaust in the East German school curriculum and in the private sphere, which meant that GDR children were largely unaware of the specifics of Jewish persecution during the Third Reich and the question of German responsibility for

¹⁶¹ Ibid., p. 9

¹⁶² A poem by Petri on the diary, ‘Das Tagebuch’, had appeared in his earlier collection of poems, *Das Geschmiede des Harlekins*, Aufbau, 1973, p. 95.

¹⁶³ Stern, 2002, p. 145. Among other DEFA films the article treats Wolf’s *Sterne* (1959), *Professor Mamlock* (1961) and *Ich war Neunzehn* (1968) as well as Beyer’s films of Bruno Apitz’ *Nackt unter Wölfen* (1963) and Jurek Becker’s *Jakob der Lügner* (1974).

it. Speaking of the situation which pertained in East Germany in the 1970s and 1980s Weiß wrote in 1989 that “in der Familiengeschichte bleiben allzu oft jene zwölf Jahre ein weißer Fleck.”¹⁶⁴ With history textbooks focussed on dry facts and figures he claimed that GDR children gained little insight into “das persönliche Erinnern, der Alltag, der gewöhnliche Faschismus.”¹⁶⁵ The way in which this episode of German history was taught was seen to hinder a compassionate understanding of the victims of the Holocaust: “Ich fürchte, viele Lehrer vermitteln das Wissen über jene Geschehnisse kalt und dogmatisch verklemmt, ohne jede Souveränität und innere Anteilnahme, die dem Schüler die tiefere Aneignung doch erst möglich macht. Die Zeit des Nationalsozialismus bleibt dann für die Zwölf und Vierzehnjährigen so fern, so bedeutungslos für das eigene Leben wie der Dreißigjährige Krieg.”¹⁶⁶ In Weiß’ view this lack of knowledge and empathy regarding the Jewish victims of the Nazis had devastating consequences in the present. In the same essay he recalled his crisis of faith in “die allseitige antifaschistische Erziehung” after hearing reports of anti-Semitic statements by children in his daughter’s school in the late 1970s.¹⁶⁷ Against this background the planned film sought to address what Weiß and Petri perceived as a gaping deficit in East Germany’s public and private remembrance of Jewish suffering under National Socialism. Through Dawid’s story they hoped to inform GDR children about the Jewish victims in the Third Reich, to give them insights into Jewish culture and religion and to raise their awareness of anti-Semitism in the past and present. The release of *Dawid’s Tagebuch* in 1981 was the culmination of protracted negotiations between the film’s makers and the GDR *Ministerium für Kultur*. On the one hand Weiß and Petri’s film confirms that there was an increased awareness and interest in the Holocaust and Jewish themes in certain GDR circles in the 1980s. However, the difficulties DEFA encountered in the making of *Dawids*

¹⁶⁴ ‘Dawids Tagebuch – ein antifaschistischer Film aus der DDR und seine Rezeption’ in *Pädagogik und Schule in Ost und West*, 3/1989, p. 167

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 167

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 168

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 167

Tagebuch and the barriers to the film's reception raised by GDR authorities also point to the persistence of an established official interpretative framework for the Holocaust.

The proposed film did not find favour with authorities in the *Ministerium für Kultur*. Given its focus on a Jewish victim of the Nazis there were concerns that it would encourage pro-Jewish sympathies at a time when the SED still maintained an anti-Israeli stance. In behind-the-scenes discussions with the film-makers, representatives of the *Ministerium* and an external advisor from the *Institute for Marxism-Leninism* attempted to mould the film, and by extension, Dawid's biography, in accordance with official GDR narratives of fascism, Polish War suffering and resistance. Against the express wishes of Weiß and Petri they demanded that the planned focus of *Dawids Tagebuch* on Jewish suffering be diluted. Dawid's experience was to be viewed in the context of the general Polish experience of Nazi occupation. His Polish identity was to be emphasised over his Jewish background.¹⁶⁸ In her memorandum to the *Ministerium* the film's producer at DEFA, Evelyn Wittmann, played to the gallery when she represented Dawid's fate as "Spiegelbild einer Wirklichkeit, die die gesamte polnische Bevölkerung, die Millionen Polen und Juden durchgemacht haben."¹⁶⁹ She assured her addressees of the film's "Einbeziehung des Schicksals der anderen polnischen Kinder" and confirmed the dedication to appear in the opening credits: "Allen vom deutschen Faschismus ermordeten polnischen Kindern." Wittmann also highlighted the film-makers' intention to show "die ökonomischen Wurzeln des deutschen Faschismus" in its reference to Dawid's father's forced labour. The minutes of a discussion of the film in June 1980 revolve around the theme of anti-fascist resistance.¹⁷⁰ Resistance is not a concept which arises in Dawid's diary. Yet the external advisor from the Institute for Marxism-Leninism, Dr. Reinhold Jeske, insisted that the

¹⁶⁸ In a recent article Weiß recalls how the original film script submitted to the *Ministerium für Kultur* was returned to him with the 'problematic' words "Jude" and "jüdisch" underlined in red. See Weiß, Konrad: 'Antisemitismus und Israelfeindschaft in der DDR. Nicht nur ein historisches Thema' (http://www.compass-infodienst.de/Konrad_Weiss_Antisemitismus_und_Israelfeindschaft_in_der_DDR.1452.0.html)

¹⁶⁹ Wittmann's memo 'Gruppeneinschätzung zum Film *Dawids Tagebuch*' is contained in the film's file at the *Bundesarchiv* - BArch: DR118/4321

¹⁷⁰ See 'Notiz zu einem Gespräch über das Szenarium *Tagebuch*' in BArch: DR118/4321

film show “der unmittelbar militante Widerstand gegen den Faschismus” and “der aktive Einfluß der Marxisten.” In the minutes, Weiß’ proposed ending of the film with a scene at the Treblinka Memorial is presented as problematic. With a long take at this location of mass Jewish extermination Weiß wished to give expression to “eine unauflösbare Trauer” for the deaths of Dawid and other murdered Jews there.¹⁷¹ Against this the *Ministerium* argued for an ending which would leave no doubt as to the “Überwindbarkeit des Faschismus [...] trotz und neben allem Leid.”¹⁷² In its counter-proposal the film’s final take would show not Treblinka, but another less obviously pessimistic site of Polish-Jewish memory: the reconstructed centre of Warsaw, the scene of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising.

Despite the interventions of the *Ministerium für Kultur* in the conception and making of *Dawids Tagebuch*, in the final version of the film the original aims of its author and director are realised to a large extent. The emphasis is firmly on the persecution of Jews in wartime Poland and on Jewish loss. Elements of an official East German interpretation of these events are present, but they do not dominate in the overall narrative. In the first part of the film, which represents Dawid as a typical Polish child-victim of the German occupation and alludes to Polish anti-fascist resistance, the wishes of the *Ministerium* appear to be fulfilled. Yet, as I will show, this introduction contrasts sharply with the remaining two parts of the film.¹⁷³

The film opens with the only existing photograph of Dawid, a group portrait taken during a school trip in 1937 where he stands surrounded by his teachers and classmates. As the camera’s focus shifts between close-ups of Dawid and a view of the entire group the film’s narrator speaks about Dawid as one of many Polish children who suffered under the German occupation. His Jewish identity is mentioned only in passing. Further archive photos of Polish and Jewish children follow as the

¹⁷¹ Weiß Interview 24.10.2007

¹⁷² As Footnote 171 above

¹⁷³ Thomas Fox (1999, p. 133) misses the point of the film when he suggests, with reference to part one, that it represented Dawid’s experience as an instance of Jewish anti-fascist resistance: “The film’s narrative culminates with the assertion that ‘children were the youngest resistance fighters’, an indication that Dawid’s defiant detailing of events could now be incorporated into an expanding East German lexicon of resistance.”

narrator continues to refer to the suffering of Polish children during the War. At this stage of the film the narrative does not distinguish between the experiences of *all* Polish children and the particular circumstances of Jewish children. This sequence of photos is then followed by contemporary interviews with two witnesses who knew Dawid: his former classmate Tadeusz and his teacher. In the first interview Dawid's classmate speaks little of Dawid and focuses more on his own participation in the local Polish resistance during the War. In the second interview Dawid's teacher talks mainly about how she continued to teach Dawid in secret after he was forbidden from attending school. Both interviews may be seen as a response to demands by the film's external advisors to treat the issue of Polish anti-fascist resistance. Only at the very end of the first part of the film, in a scene in the derelict Jewish graveyard on the edge of Dawid's village, does the narrator allude to the specific hardships suffered by Polish Jews during World War II. As the camera moves through the graveyard, stopping at a number of gravestones with Hebrew inscriptions, the narrator speaks of "[der] Tod, der besonders zu den Juden kam."

In the second and longest part of the film, designated 'Tagebuch' in the script, we see a shift from the general to the particular in the film's narrative. Dawid's voice dominates here and this section reflects his perspective on the persecution of Jews in the *Generalgouvernement*. The omniscient narrator of part one falls silent as selected passages from Dawid's diary are read out in the voice of a young boy. At the same time the camera moves slowly through a desolate landscape in and around Dawid's village, as though tracing his own journeys. Although these scenes were filmed in 1980 they betray no signs of the modern world. Shots of Krajno show a ghost-village with little indication of human life. These images are occasionally interrupted by archive photos and film footage which record Jewish persecution in Poland.¹⁷⁴ When the diary entries refer to various measures taken against Jews the camera illustrates this through these documents. We see children wearing the Star of David,

¹⁷⁴ Weiß and Petri sought and received the documentary material for this part of the film from the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw.

photographs of German soldiers shooting Jews, scenes from the Warsaw Ghetto, a store for fur confiscated from Jews and copies of relevant orders against the Jewish population in Poland. Towards the end of part two, when Dawid refers to the forced resettlement of his family, the narrator begins to speak again, placing the Rubinowcz family's ordeal in the context of "die Endlösung" and "die Vernichtung" of the Jews. The attempt to meet the Ministry's demand to show "die ökonomischen Wurzeln des Faschismus" with reference to Dawid's father's work in the German munitions factory Hasag seems half-hearted. Following an excerpt from the diary where Dawid speaks about his father's forced labour the narrator refers briefly to the plans of German fascists to enslave "die slavischen Völker." After the final diary entry is read the narrator recalls the fate of Dawid, his family and other Jews in the region – their brief stay in Suchedniow, their transport to Treblinka on the Jewish Festival *Yom Kippur* and their subsequent murder there. Film footage of Jews entering and exiting trains on their way to concentration camps illustrates his commentary. Yet the narrator's closing comment clashes with the bleak statements which precede it and reflects the Ministry's desire for clarity on "die Überwindbarkeit des Faschismus": "Wenige Stunden nach der Ankunft in Treblinka fand Dawid den Tod. Den späteren bewaffneten Aufstand und die Befreiung Treblinkas durch polnischen und sowjetischen Soldaten hat er nicht mehr erlebt."

Against the wishes of the Ministry for a final film sequence in central Warsaw Weiß and Petri kept to their original plan and set the end of the film at the Treblinka Memorial. The camera first shows the main memorial and then begins to move slowly through a vast field of boulders surrounding it which represent the towns and villages from where the Jews murdered in Treblinka came. It finally stops and lingers at the stone engraved with the name of Dawid's last home-place, Bodzentyn. The boulders summon up images of the Jewish graveyard shown in the first part of the film. The scene at Treblinka is accompanied by a rousing kaddish.¹⁷⁵ As in the second part of the film the narrator's commentary is minimal. Although he does not use the word "Juden" in the closing remarks of the

¹⁷⁵ Jewish mourning song

film I would argue that it is clear from the arrangement of this scene that it is Jewish victims who are commemorated here: “Das Mahnmal aus Abertausenden erinnernden Steinen, auf denen die Namen der Orte verzeichnet sind, aus denen sie kamen in Sammeltransporten, vertrieben aus Dörfern und kleinen Gemeinden. So steht jeder Stein hier für viele andere noch, für jeden polnischen Ort, für Dörfer und Städte, für Warschau, für alle Länder Europas.”

The reception of *Dawids Tagebuch* was thwarted in various ways by cultural authorities in the GDR wary of its Jewish theme. Were it not for the intercession of a number of prominent figures in East German public life, including Petri and the then head of the Jewish congregation in East Berlin, Peter Kirchner, Weiß believes that the film would not have been passed at all.¹⁷⁶ The film-makers had produced *Dawids Tagebuch* for GDR television. However, prior to its release the *Ministerium für Kultur* insisted that it be shown solely in cinemas and only by special request. In this way the reception of the film and its pedagogical effect on East German children were hampered from the outset. *Dawids Tagebuch* was broadcast only once on GDR children’s television in 1982. In an article in the late 1980s in the West German journal *Pädagogik und Schule in Ost und West* Weiß expressed his disappointment at the film’s lack of exposure in the GDR.¹⁷⁷ Here he bemoaned the fact that the film was “zu wenig genutzt” by schools, the pioneer organisation and the FDJ and claimed that it was “nur selten [...] bei der Vorbereitung zur Jugendweihe eingesetzt.” He pointed to a general dismissal of *Dawids Tagebuch* by other official GDR institutions: “Er ist nicht durch das Ministerium für Volksbildung empfohlen, und auch das Kino-Informations-Bulletin für Lehrer *Film-Schule-Freizeit* weist ihn nicht aus.” On the positive side he emphasised that the film had been “rege genutzt” by Evangelical and Catholic Church groups in East Germany and registered over one hundred screenings of *Dawids Tagebuch* in these circles throughout the 1980s.¹⁷⁸ Weiß was often invited to

¹⁷⁶ Weiß interview 24.10.2007

¹⁷⁷ ‘Dawids Tagebuch – ein antifaschistischer Film aus der DDR und seine Rezeption’ in *Pädagogik und Schule in Ost und West*, 3/1989, pp. 165-71

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 169

these events, and in the same article he recalled the lively discussions they usually provoked. The questions of the young viewers tended to revolve around the issues of Judaism, Jewish persecution under Hitler and German guilt for the Holocaust. Thus in spite of official resistance to the film, the pedagogical intentions of its makers were realised in the semi-public sphere of the East German Churches.¹⁷⁹

There was little discussion of the film in the GDR media. Following a screening at the Gera children's film festival in 1981 the film was mentioned briefly in an overview of the festival in the journal *Film und Fernsehen*.¹⁸⁰ A much longer piece by Konrad Weiß appeared in the *Weltbühne* in 1980.¹⁸¹ Here Weiß used the imminent release of the film as a pretext to inform GDR readers about the Holocaust through the example of Dawid Rubinowicz. He focuses exclusively on Jewish suffering in wartime Poland. Dawid's murder at Treblinka is put in the context of the mass extermination of Jews which took place there. Weiß describes how Jews were transported by train to the camp from all over Europe and tricked into believing it was a temporary stop. Quotes from the testimonies of Auschwitz and Treblinka survivors given at the Nürnberg and Eichmann trials are woven into his account. With reference to Dawid's experience Weiß gives details of how Jewish children were banned from attending schools in Poland and he describes the formation of the Jewish Ghetto at Bodzentyn and the awful conditions there. His discussion of German guilt is striking in the way it departs from official GDR pronouncements on evils committed by "die Faschisten." While he refers on one occasion to "der Mechanismus faschistischer Gewalt" at all other times he portrays the perpetrators of the Holocaust as ordinary Germans, using the terms "Deutsche", "deutsche Väter" and "deutsche Männer." Furthermore Weiß implies that he and other GDR citizens share in an inherited burden of German guilt which compels them to remember the crimes committed against Jews in order that

¹⁷⁹Konrad Weiß' private archive contains details of screenings by the *Luther-Gemeinde Berlin-Pankow* (26.3.1985) and during the *Ökumenischer Jugenddienst Tagung* in Hirschluch (25.5.1985).

¹⁸⁰ 'Von Leben und Tod, von Spaß und Trauer' in *Film und Fernsehen*, 7/1981, pp. 13-18

¹⁸¹ Konrad Weiß, 'Dawids Tagebuch' in *Die Weltbühne*, 48/1980

they may not be repeated: “Wir, die geboren wurden, als deutsche Väter hier Kinder erschossen, erwürgten, erschlugen, vergasten; die geboren wurden, als deutsche Männer hier eine gebärende Frau umstanden, um dann das Geborene vor den Augen der Mutter zu töten; die geboren wurden als einer Zehnjährigen das Schwesterchen aus den Armen gerissen und lebend in den Ofen geworfen wurde, wir können an diesem Ort nur schweigen. Und müssen bemüht sein, das Zeugnis derer, die ihr Erleben nicht überlebt haben, zu bewahren und als Mahnung: Nie wieder! an unsere Kinder weiterzugeben.”

Weiß and Petri’s film was also distributed and received in West Germany. From 1983 *Dawids Tagebuch* was listed and recommended by the Munich-based *Institut für Film und Bild in Wissenschaft und Unterricht* (IWU) as a film through which knowledge of the Holocaust could be effectively imparted to West German secondary school students in the subjects German, history and religion. A note of recommendation to teachers by the IWU claims that “der Dokumentarfilm [ermöglicht] die Begegnung mit einer authentischen Identifikationsfigur und erleichtert den Zugang zum Gesamtkomplex der Judenverfolgung im Dritten Reich.”¹⁸² Thus while East German authorities actively hindered the film’s uptake in schools, in the *Bundesrepublik* it received official support for use in this context. Outside of schools the film was also frequently shown by Catholic and Protestant Church groups in West Germany. As in the GDR, here the Churches represented a sphere in which an active engagement with the Holocaust and anti-Semitism was fostered in the 1980s.¹⁸³

¹⁸² See the *Filmbegleitblatt* (323422) issued by the *Institut für Film und Bild in Wissenschaft und Unterricht*, Munich, 1983

¹⁸³ Konrad Weiß has kept details of screenings he attended during the *Regionaler Kirchentag* in Halberstadt in September 1986, during a film week organised by the Protestant Church in Bremen in March 1989 and at the symposium ‘Aspekte jüdischen Lebens und jüdischer Kultur in der DDR’ in Munich in April 1989.

The republications and reception of *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz* in East and West Germany 1985-90

In his examination of published Holocaust literature for children and young readers in East and West Germany after 1945 Rüdiger Steinlein concludes that the moral-pedagogical intention underlying much of this literature worked against an authentic representation of Jewish persecution and German complicity.¹⁸⁴ He suggests that in both Germanys the need to provide children with positive German role models and faith in the triumph of good over evil meant that the full extent and horror of the Holocaust were not reflected in texts for children about this event. In the case of the GDR he argues that the plots of children's books on Jewish War suffering replicated the prevailing emplotment of the Holocaust within a broader public narrative of anti-fascist resistance.¹⁸⁵ In West Germany a predominance of stories of friendship and solidarity between Jewish and German characters obscured the true scale of German involvement in the Holocaust.¹⁸⁶ In Steinlein's view German children's literature on the Holocaust has only recently moved away from these earlier narrative models to portray the bleak reality of Jewish extermination: "Die Darstellung des finalen Vernichtungsaktes bzw. seines engsten Umfeldes in den Todeslagern wird erst sehr spät zu einem möglichen Sujet: Auschwitz, Treblinka, Majdanek sind die längste Zeit gerade *kein* Gegenstand kinder- und jugendliterarischer 'Inspiration.'¹⁸⁷ The republications of *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz* as a book for young readers in East and West Germany represent a notable exception to most children's literature on the theme of Jewish suffering published in the 1980s. They reveal

¹⁸⁴ See Steinlein, 1997. He makes this point most succinctly on p. 76.

¹⁸⁵ "Bei näherer Betrachtung erweist sich die für die KJL der DDR charakteristische Verquickung von antifaschistischem Widerstand und Holocaustthematik – genauer: die Unterordnung der letzteren unter der ersteren – als das grundlegend ideologisch-legitimatorische Emplotmentmodell dieser Literatur [...] Und in den kinder- und jugendliterarischen Texten aus der DDR, die Judenverfolgung und Holocaust thematisieren bzw. narrativ vergegenwärtigen, geht es um die Stärkung antifaschistischer Einstellungen eben auch am abschreckenden Beispielfall nationalsozialistisch-antisemitischer Barbarei." (Ibid., p. 79).

¹⁸⁶ "In der alten BRD entwickelt sich – in Übereinstimmung mit der offiziellen Betroffenheitskultur und deren Ritualen eines allgemein exkulpierten Schuldeingeständnisses – eine kinderliterarische Emplotmentstrategie, die auf der Rettung der Opfer durch Kinderfreundschaften und deutsche Helferpersonen beruht, die sich schützend um die verfolgten jüdischen Mitbürger stellen." (Ibid., p. 74)

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 78, Steinlein's italics.

attempts to impart knowledge of the Jewish experience of National Socialism beyond the paradigmatic plots of children's Holocaust literature which Steinlein has identified for the GDR and West Germany at this time.

In the early 1960s *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz* had been overlooked by the prominent East German literary journal, *Neue Deutsche Literatur*, and this despite the fact that extracts from the text had first appeared in NDL's Polish counterpart, *Twórczość*. However, a year after the release of the film *Dawids Tagebuch* an article on the diary by Walther Petri was published in NDL.¹⁸⁸ In this piece Petri regretted that Dawid's testimony "im Gegensatz zum Tagebuch der Anne Frank, hier kaum bekannt und gewürdigt worden [ist]." The negligible impact of the diary was for Petri symptomatic of a failure to reflect adequately on Jewish persecution under National Socialism in the GDR. With particular reference to his generation,¹⁸⁹ brought up in the early GDR, he wrote that "wir, noch wenn wir von Auschwitz sprechen, das Ausmaß des Grauens vermindern." His article attempts to deconstruct key aspects of the official East German narrative of the Holocaust in which this generation was instructed. He first tackles a concept of *Opfer* seen to exclude the experience of Jewish victims such as Dawid, who died for no cause: "Eines der ersten Wörter, das ich erfuhr, hieß OPFER. Erst viele Jahre später zögerte ich, es auch weiterhin zu gebrauchen, weil das Mythische darin und die Aura, derentwegen es ausgesprochen wurde, dem grauenvoll sinnlosen Mord einen schönen und heiligen Sinn zufügt." He then criticises the superficial historical analysis which suggests that the causes of the Holocaust are limited to "politökonomische Prozesse." He calls for a greater consciousness of the complex motivations behind the Holocaust and points to the complicity of "ein ganzes Volk" in the persecution of the Jews.¹⁹⁰ In his article Petri attempted to retrieve Dawid's story

¹⁸⁸ Walther Petri, 'Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz' in *NDL* (7), 1982, pp. 111-3

¹⁸⁹ Petri was born in 1940.

¹⁹⁰ "Die Verbrechen von damals glauben wir genau zu kennen, viel weniger bewußt ist uns aber das abgründig verborgene Geflecht ihrer inneren Voraussetzungen: die tief verwurzelten Gebrechen, die am Ende dazu führten, daß Menschen Millionen Menschen vernichteten." Petri then goes on to describe how "[die] verängstigte Bereitschaft zur Selbstaufgabe" led the German majority to tolerate if not actively participate in Jewish persecution.

and integrate it into public discourse on the Holocaust in East Germany. Against the tendency of official GDR pronouncements he deliberately avoided representing Dawid as a typical anti-fascist resistor or investing his experience with some positive meaning: "Daß Dawid's Tagebuch Teil des Widerstands ist, drängt sich beim Lesen nicht auf. Anders konnte das polnisch-jüdische Kind die Lebensfrist [...] nicht ertragen. Und doch sollen wir nicht leichtfertig glauben, daß Dawid schreibend einen Halt fand. Das, wovon der Junge spricht, ist durch nichts kompensierbar. Das atemlos wiederkehrende Grundwort des Tagebuches, Angst, steht für die Unmöglichkeit, daß ein Mensch mit ihr fertig werden kann."

It was Petri who initiated the republication of *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz* in the East Berlin *Kinderbuchverlag* in 1985 with a print-run of 20,000 copies, double that of the 1961 edition. The text was aimed at readers of twelve years of age and older and had a clear pedagogical intention. Through its insight into the experience of a Jewish victim their own age it was hoped that the diary would inform children about the events of the Holocaust in Poland, and the stages of Jewish persecution which had led to Dawid's death. The authors of the publisher's report submitted to the *Ministerium für Kultur* anticipated "eine starke Wirkung" and wrote "für den aufmerksamen Leser aus unserer Republik, der ja auf jeden Fall zumindest einige Grundkenntnisse über den Faschismus hat, entsteht ein erschütterndes Bild vom Ablauf dieser genau geplanten und systematisch durchgeführten Vernichtungsaktion; einer Aktion, deren Auswirkungen Dawid täglich am eigenen Leibe verspürte."¹⁹¹

In the light of the diary's new intended readership the previous Polish paratexts, including the notes by Adam Rutkowski, were removed and replaced with an epilogue by Petri. In contrast to the formality of Rutkowski's notes, this epilogue is a lyrical and highly personal reflection on Dawid's experience.¹⁹² In a language and format appropriate to younger readers Petri recounts Dawid's

¹⁹¹ BArch DR1/2302, pp. 234-5

¹⁹² 'sehenmüssen, schreibenmüssen' in *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz*, Der Kinderbuchverlag, 1985, pp. 78-84

biography and describes his suffering. He emphasises that his experience was neither unique nor random, but representative of the suffering of millions of Polish Jews: “Keiner der Schrecken, von denen Dawid berichtet, hat sich allein oder zufällig an seinem Ort ereignet.”¹⁹³ With reference to the diary he details various measures against Jews in the *Generalgouvernement* including their exclusion from schools, requisitions, shootings, forced labour, their ghettoisation and their final journey to Treblinka. What is striking about the epilogue is its distance from official East German statements on the Holocaust. Petri recollects Dawid’s experience in a register which has little in common with the ideological interpretation of Jewish suffering within a master narrative of World War II cultivated by the SED. Tracing the contours of Dawid’s “leises erschütterndes Selbstgespräch”¹⁹⁴ the epilogue strives to preserve a personalised memory of Jewish suffering. There are no references to “Faschisten/Faschismus,”¹⁹⁵ “Imperialismus/Kapitalismus” or critical asides regarding West Germany. In one passage Petri describes Dawid’s diary writing as a form of “Widerstand.”¹⁹⁶ Yet the kind of quiet resistance he values here falls outside the ambit of the heroic anti-fascist resistance so often discussed in the context of East German accounts of Jewish War suffering. Here Petri may be seen to engage critically with an official rhetoric of “antifaschistischer Widerstand” which had long prevented a more thorough East German examination of Jewish suffering. Thus the epilogue represents an attempt to convey the Holocaust to young readers in a way which digresses from conventionalised interpretations of this event in the GDR.

We have seen how the first GDR edition of Dawid’s diary was completely ignored by most East German newspapers and journals. The second 1985 edition received far greater media attention in a wide range of publications including the *Berliner Zeitung*,¹⁹⁷ *Neues Deutschland*,¹⁹⁸ *Neue Zeit*¹⁹⁹ and

¹⁹³ Ibid., p. 81

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 80

¹⁹⁵ In references to the perpetrators of Jewish persecution Petri speaks variously of “die Nazis,” “die Deutschen,” “die SS” and “Hitlers Beamten.”

¹⁹⁶ See *ibid.*, p. 83

¹⁹⁷ See *BZ*, Nr. 49, 27.02.1985, p. 7

¹⁹⁸ *Neues Deutschland*, 22.2.1985, p. 4 and again on the 7/8.6.1986, p. 14

¹⁹⁹ *Neue Zeit*, 22.4.1985, p.4

the *Nachrichtenblatt des Verbandes der Jüdischen Gemeinden in der DDR*.²⁰⁰ The later reception of the diary confirms that the theme of the Holocaust had become significantly more prominent in public discussion in 1980s East Germany. The conscious remembrance of the Jewish experience of National Socialism, which had previously been confined to Church and underground circles, now gained a stronger foothold within mainstream discourse on World War II. *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz* was one of a number of *Kinderbuchverlag* publications timed to coincide with the fortieth anniversary of “die Befreiung.” This in itself testifies to the increased awareness and integration of the memories of Jewish victims into a discussion of the events of World War II at this time. Contributions on the diary in the GDR press inform readers in great detail about the fate of Polish Jews with reference to Dawid’s text. However, the subject of the perpetrators of Jewish persecution is not explored in any depth. The commentator in *Neues Deutschland* mentions merely that the diary is “ein authentisches Zeugnis faschistischer Verbrechen.”²⁰¹ The CDU newspaper, *Neue Zeit*, printed an interview with Walther Petri in which he spoke about the diary as a means by which East Germans could engage with the Holocaust on a deeper, more personal level, an approach which he suggested had not been facilitated by the schematic official remembrance of this event in the GDR.²⁰² Significantly, he used the term “Bewältigung” in reference to a personalised form of Holocaust remembrance which had been lacking in East German discussions of Jewish suffering.²⁰³ Through its insight into the personal fate of a Jewish victim Dawid’s diary was seen to facilitate this painful process: “Bewältigung heißt für mich, sich den Dingen nähern, stellen. [...] Bewältigung muß zu einer ‘Verschmerzlichung’ von Geschichte führen.” As in the aforementioned article in *NDL*, Petri’s open criticism of conventional GDR modes of remembering Jewish suffering and his

²⁰⁰ *Nachrichtenblatt des Verbandes der Jüdischen Gemeinde in der DDR*, December, 1986

²⁰¹ *Neues Deutschland*, 7/8.6.1985, p. 14

²⁰² ‘Verschmerzlichung von Geschichte. Begegnung mit dem Leipziger Autor Walther Petri’ in *Neue Zeit*, 22.4.1985, p. 4

²⁰³ On the rare occasions it arose in GDR discussions, the term “Vergangenheitsbewältigung” was typically used pejoratively to denote West Germany’s flawed response to the Nazi past, in contrast to East Germany’s thorough rooting out of fascism. See for example the article: ‘Unbewältigte Vergangenheit’ in *NDL* (11), 1, 1963.

contention of an East German “unbewältigte Vergangenheit” voiced in the pages of important national media marks a significant turn in the discourse on the Holocaust in 1980s East Germany. In this instance the later reception of *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz* shows how the official GDR narrative of the Holocaust was challenged in the 1980s, not only on the margins of GDR society, but increasingly also in more mainstream publications.²⁰⁴

In 1988 the diary was again published in West Germany by the children’s literature publisher, *Beltz und Gelberg*.²⁰⁵ The format of the *Kinderbuchverlag* edition and Petri’s epilogue were retained. As in the GDR, this republication was subject to much more extensive media coverage than the first 1960 West German edition. Reviews appeared in *Die Zeit*,²⁰⁶ *Frankfurter Rundschau*,²⁰⁷ *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*²⁰⁸ and *Der Tagespiegel*,²⁰⁹ in regional newspapers,²¹⁰ as well as in more specialist publications on children’s literature.²¹¹ Their authors underlined the educational function of Dawid’s testimony and urged that it be used in schools and other settings to inform children about the Holocaust. The commentator of the *Frankfurter Rundschau* saw it as “ein unerlässlicher Beitrag zu demokratischer Erziehung” which could counteract “ein ahistorischer Verdrängungsprozeß, [der] die Greuel von Auschwitz zur Auschwitzlüge modelt.”²¹² In the absence of hard statistics it is difficult to quantify the extent to which this potential of the diary was realised. However, the fact that the text was awarded two prestigious West German children’s literature prizes in the late 1980s would suggest that it had a far greater impact than the 1960 edition. The award of the *Akademie deutscher Kinder-*

²⁰⁴ This is not to say that the status of the official GDR account of the Holocaust was entirely eroded in the 1980s. It remained dominant and continued to be asserted in public discussion of Jewish War suffering, particularly in the context of ceremonies to mark the anniversary of the 9th of November 1938. However, at the same time, alternative positions on the Holocaust and its remembrance gained momentum in this decade. Kirschnick’s discussion of the Anne Frank Exhibition held in East Berlin in 1989 reveals the coexistence of an official interpretation of the Holocaust with conflicting conceptions of this event. See Kirschnick, 2009, pp. 171-80

²⁰⁵ *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz*, Beltz und Gelberg, Weinheim, 1988

²⁰⁶ Konrad Weiß, ‘Wir und unsere Friedenskinder’ in *Die Zeit*, 19.12.1986

²⁰⁷ See articles on the diary on the 21.03.1987 and on the 27.08.1988

²⁰⁸ See article on the 1.08.1986

²⁰⁹ ‘Das Grauen im Schulheft festgehalten’ on the 30.10.1988

²¹⁰ See for example ‘Dawids Tagebuch’ in the *Schwäbische Zeitung*, 8.10.1988

²¹¹ Examples include *Eselsohr. Informationsdienst für Kinder- und Jugendmedien* (9/1988), *Sozialmagazin* (6/1988) and *Bulletin Jugend und Literatur* (8/1988).

²¹² *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 21.03.1987

*und Jugendliteratur*²¹³ and the important *Luchs* prize²¹⁴ show how the Holocaust had become a legitimate and desirable subject of children's literature in 1980s West Germany.²¹⁵ The media response to Dawid's diary suggests that, where it had previously been marginalised, his particular Holocaust experience was now increasingly prioritised for public remembrance in the Federal Republic. Dawid's diary never achieved the status of *Das Tagebuch der Anne Frank* in West Germany, but the later reviews of his text position it as an equally important testimony of Jewish War suffering.²¹⁶

To a large extent the articles on the diary in the West German press are descriptive. They inform readers about the content of the diary and place Dawid's experience in the context of the persecution and annihilation of Jews in occupied Poland. Many reviewers list meticulously the various measures taken against Dawid's family and other Jews in the *Generalgouvernement*. Yet as we have seen in the later East German reception of the diary, West German reviewers devote a lot of attention to the details of Jewish suffering, but they are far less informative regarding the perpetrators of Jewish persecution. Only two articles refer directly to those responsible for Dawid's suffering using the terms "Hitlers Beamte",²¹⁷ "die Faschisten" and "die Nazi-Schergen."²¹⁸ All other commentators completely avoid the issue of responsibility, using passive constructions in their descriptions of the ordeals of Polish Jews. On the one hand these articles testify to a much greater awareness of, and interest in, the particulars of Jewish suffering under National Socialism in 1980s West Germany, yet on the other hand they show how an undifferentiated view of the perpetrators often persisted in media representations of the Holocaust.

²¹³ Dawid's diary was selected as 'Buch des Monats' in September 1988.

²¹⁴ The diary was awarded the *Luchs-Preis* by the newspaper *Die Zeit* in 1989.

²¹⁵ The reviewer of the diary in *Eselsohr* (September 1988) alerts readers to the fact that only 16 children's books on the Holocaust were published in West Germany in the period 1945-1980, but that since 1980 over 40 titles on this theme have appeared.

²¹⁶ See for example the discussions of the diary in the *Frankfurter Rundschau* (21.03.1987 and 27.8.1988) and in *Eselsohr* (September 1988)

²¹⁷ *Frankfurter Rundschau* 21.03.1987

²¹⁸ The latter two descriptions appeared in the article in *Eselsohr* (September 1988).

Conclusion

In the years after 1945 testimonies by victims of the Holocaust played an important role in shaping the public and private remembrance of this event in Germany and Poland. While histories of Jewish persecution under Hitler often focussed on its organisation and perpetrators, these testimonies ensured that this knowledge was supplemented by the experience and perspective of individual Jewish victims. Above all other forms of witness, diaries have often been privileged as the ideal media to convey the Jewish experience of National Socialism, and it is no coincidence that some of the most prominent published Holocaust testimonies have been diaries. This view of the diary and its function as authentic witness was articulated time and again in the discussion of *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz* in Poland, the GDR and West Germany. However, in spite of the claims to truth and immediacy typically made for published Holocaust diaries, this case study has shown how the integration of their narratives into public remembrance of this event is never automatic or immediate. The reception of *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz* since its first publication in 1960 has been the result of a complex interplay of three factors: the diary's content, the changing memorial contexts of its publication, and its mediation within these contexts.

The high profile of Dawid's text in early 1960s Poland was achieved at the cost of the misrepresentation of its content to comply with the prevailing Polish remembrance of World War II at that time. The publishing sensation was the result of a selective interpretation of his testimony by the media and cultural authorities which positioned Dawid as a typical *Polish* victim of the German occupation and thus affirmed a dominant public narrative of national Polish martyrdom in the years between 1939 and 1945. Attempts on the part of the *Jewish Historical Institute* to raise awareness regarding the specific plight of Jews in occupied Poland via this diary were largely unsuccessful in a context where public consensus did not distinguish between the wartime experiences of Christian

Poles and Polish Jews. This retrospective levelling of victim identities hindered an exploration of the complicity of certain Poles in the Holocaust documented by Dawid's diary.

The insignificant West German reception of *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz* in the early 1960s suggests that the Cold War divide facilitated an institutional neglect of the experience of Eastern European Jews at this time in the *Bundesrepublik*. It shows a general lack of acceptance for documents and original research on the Holocaust originating in the Eastern Block. Dawid's testimony was ignored by West German contemporary historians and little effort was made to mediate it to a West German audience. As a text which cast light on the magnitude of Jewish persecution in occupied Poland, the diary conflicted with strong tendencies in West German discourse to limit guilt for the Holocaust to a small minority of Germans. The far greater presence of the diary of Anne Frank in the Federal Republic can be explained in part by the fact that her narrative was more compatible with the received view of the Holocaust in the *Bundesrepublik*. Unlike Dawid's diary, it was not a relentless exposure of Jewish persecution, and it was subject to media adaptations and modifications which aided its popularisation in West Germany from the mid-1950s. In East Germany the first 1961 edition of the diary also went practically unnoticed by the media. This would seem to confirm a marginalisation of the Holocaust in official discourse. Dawid's story was incompatible with the narratives of Jewish anti-fascist resistance propagated at this time in the GDR. Yet if we view this publication in the context of numerous German translations of Polish Holocaust literature published in East Germany from the mid-1950s we can nonetheless argue that the experience of Eastern European Jews, such as Dawid, was present to a greater extent in the GDR than in the Federal Republic in the 1950s and 1960s. Here as in West Germany the Cold War divide had a bearing on which Holocaust texts were available and how they were received. East German commentators on *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz* attempted to appropriate and prioritise Dawid's experience for public remembrance of Jewish persecution with limited success. While

articles on the diary by Christa Wolf and Klaus Drobisch did not stray far from the official interpretation of the Holocaust and its causes, Renate Traumann's discussion in *Die Christenlehre* shows how more critical reflection on German guilt for Jewish suffering was possible in the sphere of the East German Churches.

The film *Dawids Tagebuch* and subsequent republications of the diary testify to an increased public interest in and knowledge of the Holocaust in 1980s East and West Germany. In an analysis of the delayed resonance of the diary, twenty years after its first publication, it is difficult to separate cause and effect. The film and text now stimulated reflection on the experience of Eastern European Jews under National Socialism, but they could only do so in the context of an expanded and more open public discussion of the Holocaust in both German states. In the GDR they were media through which representatives of alternative and oppositional circles articulated positions on Jewish War suffering contrary to the established official account. Petri and Weiß' attempts to remember Jewish victims and German guilt through the medium of Dawid's text recalled the discussion of Jewish suffering among German communists in the immediate post-War period. Assumptions of a divided memory of the Holocaust in the GDR and the Federal Republic are challenged by the later publications and reception of *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz*. In contrast to the situation in the 1960s this case study reveals a striking proximity of positions on Jewish War suffering in 1980s East and West Germany. The reflections of Petri and Weiß on Dawid's experience had more in common with contemporary West German discussions of the Holocaust than with the official GDR narrative of this event. Moreover, the significant West German reception of both the DEFA film and the diary itself draws attention to a dialogue between East and West on the meaning of the Holocaust at this time. While the first edition of the diary had commanded little attention in the *Bundesrepublik*, now Dawid's text and East German responses to it finally entered and shaped West German discourse on the Holocaust.

The German reception of *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz* extended beyond reunification. There have been several republications of the diary since 1990.²¹⁹ It is by now an established text within an expanding canon of children's literature in German on the theme of the Holocaust. Extracts from the diary were included in the children's anthology of Holocaust literature *Verachtet, Verstoßen, Vernichtet*²²⁰ and a teacher's guide to accompany *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz* was published in 1997.²²¹ The DEFA film continues to be screened on rare occasions. The latest phase in the diary's reception is consistent with the sustained emphasis on the Holocaust in German discussions of National Socialism and World War II. Yet although it has attained a higher profile in recent years, Dawid's diary has never approached the status of *Das Tagebuch der Anne Frank* in Germany. Anne continues to be seen as *the* representative Holocaust child victim and the place of her text in a canon of Holocaust literature is unchallenged. The relative obscurity of Dawid's diary and the film *Dawids Tagebuch* today may be due in some part to unspoken reservations against media of memory tainted by association with East German Holocaust remembrance. Yet I would also suggest that the positioning of the diary as a children's book is a factor in the current limited reception of this text which outweighs the processes of marginalisation, hierarchisation and exclusion which operated in German Holocaust remembrance in the 1960s.

²¹⁹ Beltz und Gelberg has published new editions of the diary in 1990, 1993, 1996, 1997, 2001 and 2006.

²²⁰ *Verachtet, Verstoßen, Vernichtet. Kinder- und Jugendjahre unterm Hakenkreuz*, Harald Roth (ed.), Arena Verlag, Würzburg, 1995

²²¹ Hannelore Daubert and Helge Fuchs: *Lehrerbegleitheft zum Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz*, Beltz und Gelberg, 1997

Conclusion

The Mediation of Immediacy

In a critical response to the perennial claim that diaries of World War II present later readers with 'immediate' and 'authentic' testimonies of the events of that War, this study has highlighted rather how published War diaries may offer us a vantage point on the collective remembrance of these events in post-War Germany. The same processes of selection, emphasis, marginalisation and exclusion, which are a feature of the operations of collective remembrance, are apparent in the publication and mediation of the diaries examined in my three case studies. All three diarists committed their memories of World War II to paper in the form of diaries which reflected their particular perspectives on the events they described - Stalingrad, German evacuations from Silesia, and Jewish persecution in the *Generalgouvernement* - at the time of writing. Yet the publication of these texts alone did not ensure that their wartime narratives and perspectives were seamlessly assimilated into a public discussion of World War II in Germany after 1945. This study has shown how the memories and positions manifest in the diaries of Weinert, Peikert and Rubinowicz were only partially and fitfully integrated into a public memory discourse current at the time of their successive publications. The meaning of these texts and the events they describe was negotiated and renegotiated in accordance with shifting memory constellations in different contexts of remembrance in Poland, the GDR and West Germany.

We have seen how the diaries I examine were often projection screens for retrospective politicised interpretations of World War II in all three states. In the GDR, an official interpretative framework for the events of World War II was superimposed onto the diary narratives by means of framing paratexts, editorial interventions and journal reviews. In this way, these testimonies became media or vehicles of a particular memory consensus, which they did not wholly confirm. Such a discrepancy

between text and interpretation is clear in the East German reception of Erich Weinert's *Memento Stalingrad* through the prism of a master-narrative of heroic anti-fascist resistance, where Weinert's linking of the question of German resistance to the question of German guilt in his diary was completely overlooked. It is evidenced in the attempts to represent Paul Peikert's experience as anti-fascist resistance. We see it in the Polish reception of *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz* as a "Zeugnis des Leidens des Polnischen Volkes"¹ in the early 1960s. This examination of published War diaries reveals assertions of their authenticity and immediacy to have been doubly spurious - such assertions neglected the fact that these diaries were themselves constructed narratives, and they also belied the subsequent filtering and reconstruction of their narratives through processes of publication and reception.

Collective Memories

This study has emphasised the diversity of collective memory in Poland, the GDR and West Germany, and shown that the attempts by various agencies and interests to graft an official interpretation of the events of World War II onto the diaries of my case studies were not always successful. I have shown how official or dominant memory narratives were challenged, supplemented and moderated by different readers acting in different reception contexts. Aspects of the diary narratives which were bracketed out of an official reading *were* reflected in other responses to the same texts. While Weinert's conception of the *kollektive Mitschuld* of Germans in *Memento Stalingrad* was generally ignored in paratexts and guiding commentaries on the text in the GDR media, certain East German reviewers and individual readers were struck by precisely this aspect of the diary. In the late 1950s the diary was used in East Germany to confirm the communist affiliations of the *Nationalkomitee 'Freies Deutschland'*. At the same time a West German reviewer cited Weinert's text as proof of the ideological diversity of the *Nationalkomitee*, and attempted to claim

¹ The headline of an article on Rubinowicz's diary by Jarosław Iwaskiewicz in the *Express Wieczórny* in 1960.

this organisation for a West German resistance heritage. The divided reception of Paul Peikert's diary illustrates the coexistence of mutually exclusive interpretations of the expulsions of Germans from the east in both the GDR and West Germany in the late 1960s and 1970s. Peikert's text was plundered in support of opposing historical narratives of this War episode. The diary was published in East Germany to corroborate an official account of German expulsions which deflected attention from Polish violence against Germans and underlined the legitimacy of the Oder-Neisse border. Yet many of the GDR readers drawn to the text read it as confirmation of the unwarranted suffering of German expellees, on which claims for the restitution of the lost eastern territories could be based. Similarly in West Germany, the text was recognised by expellee organisations as "ein Standardwerk zur Vertreibung."² Yet it also fuelled West German interpretations of this War episode which reacted against the narratives of German suffering propagated by many expellees, acknowledging German War crimes as a context of the expulsions, and revoking claims to former German territories in Poland. The first Polish publication of *Pamiętnik Dawida Rubinowicza* in the early 1960s was informed by conflicting impulses – the need to invoke national Polish martyrdom, and the need to emphasise the specificity of Jewish suffering in wartime Poland. The former impulse prevailed in the early Polish reception of Dawid's text. The reception of *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz* in the GDR illustrates attempts to remember the Holocaust in the contexts of the Churches and alternative circles, which engaged critically with an ossified official interpretation of Jewish suffering and resistance.

In my introduction I posited that the published diary is situated at the intersection of 'personal' and public 'collective' remembrance. My investigations have challenged the notion that it is possible to clearly demarcate two spheres of collective memory which have been variously described as communicative/cultural,³ vernacular/official,⁴ and personal/public. A division of collective memory

² Interview with Hubert Wolff 27.10.2008

³ A distinction proposed by Jan and Aleida Assmann.

⁴ These terms are used by John Bodnar.

into two realms, suggested by a number of scholars, does not give due cognisance to the ways in which 'official,' 'public' and 'personal' registers of remembrance continually interact and determine each other in any society. The published War diaries I have examined represent hybrid texts where various levels of hindsight and approaches to the past come into contact and commingle. These 'personal' accounts of eye-witnesses to key War events were qualified by elements of a public memory discourse contemporary to their publications and vice versa. The reception of these diaries has also revealed different degrees of consensus with and appropriation of available representations of the past by different groups and individuals. In East Germany 'official' memory was not merely opposed or subverted by 'vernacular' memory; it was also assimilated and refracted to varying degrees by GDR readers in different contexts. For this reason it is problematic to affix the labels 'official,' 'personal,' or 'non-orthodox' to a given position or material representation of the past, without exploring its often complex origins and multiple influences. In my three main chapters it becomes apparent that none of the diaries I write about can be clearly assigned to either 'official' or 'personal/communicative' memory. Given its canonical status in 1950s East Germany, Erich Weinert's *Memento Stalingrad* may seem to fulfil the criteria of the Assmanns' 'cultural' text. Yet I have shown how aspects of Weinert's wartime narrative undermined the official GDR position on anti-fascist resistance, and how this was noted by individual readers of his text. An examination of *Festung Breslau in den Berichten eines Pfarrers* in conjunction with its various paratexts reveals the diverse and sometimes contradictory positions on German expulsions which were reflected in the published text. Different readers referred to different aspects of Peikert's diary to substantiate conflicting memories of the expulsions. In the later reception of *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz*, Walther Petri's description of Dawid's experience as "Widerstand" engaged critically with the established official remembrance of anti-fascist resistance, which had long prevented a more thorough examination of Jewish suffering in East Germany. Here he expanded the meaning of

Widerstand to include, rather than exclude or marginalise, Jewish suffering. The film *Dawids Tagebuch* combined elements of the official GDR interpretation of the Holocaust and other positions, which also undermined and expanded this interpretation. As illustrated by these examples, a 'cultural' text may only ever be a provisional designation; it is a product of a particular reception of a specific representation of the past, which is by no means universally valid.

Chronologies of Remembrance

This study has both substantiated and qualified accepted periodisations of the remembrance of World War II in Poland, the GDR and West Germany. It may seem presumptive to draw conclusions about developments in collective memory on the basis of the publication and reception of three War diaries, but I would argue that these examples have offered insights into the state of War remembrance at different times in all three memorial contexts. What emerges in each case study is that periodisations which fail to take account of memories articulated outside dominant or elite discourses often do not tell the full story of how collective memory proceeded in post-War Poland and Germany. Thus Norbert Frei's claim of "eine weitgehende Erstarrung"⁵ of collective memory in the GDR from the 1950s to the mid-1980s may well seem plausible, if we limit our attention to the narratives of key World War II events propagated by the SED in this period, yet it seems a gross oversimplification when we take account of coexisting, but less prominent memories of the same events, cultivated in other East German contexts. The attempted instrumentalisation of Weinert's *Memento Stalingrad* in support of an official and politically expedient East German remembrance of the Battle in the 1950s, confirms a dominant tendency in the public representation of this event in the early GDR. Yet the fact that Weinert's diary itself undermined the very myth of the Battle it was supposed to install, should be considered. In this way an earlier, more critical Communist evaluation of German resistance and German guilt prompted by Stalingrad, did find indirect expression and some

⁵ Frei, 1995, p. 127

resonance in 1950s East Germany. The chapter on the diary of Paul Peikert has shown how, at a time when the subject was generally evaded and couched in euphemisms in official parlance, memories of German suffering during the expulsions from the east at the end of the War were articulated by former expellees in East Germany. And against the widespread assumption that the issue of the Holocaust was first broached in the GDR in the 1980s, my chapter on the diary of Dawid Rubinowicz would suggest that there were genuine, though isolated attempts to engage with the specificity of Jewish persecution and with the issue of German guilt for the Holocaust well before this decade. In my analyses of collective memory processes in East Germany I hope to have illustrated Jürgen Danyel's assertion that "die Zäsur des Jahres 1949 nicht absolut ist, vielmehr handelt es sich bei den genannten Entwicklungen um einen längerfristigen Übergang mit deutlichen Phasenverschiebungen in verschiedenen gesellschaftlichen Bereichen."⁶ These case studies have shown how elements of an earlier German discussion of fascism and World War II resurfaced in various East German contexts, and continued to influence public perceptions of the Nazi past at different times beyond the landmark date of 1949.

While the primary focus of this study has been on East Germany, the preceding chapters have also discussed the remembrance of World War II in West Germany and Poland. The publication and reception of *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz* in the Federal Republic supports the view that the Holocaust gained importance in West German discussions of World War II in the 1960s, but it also points to the prioritisation of certain Jewish victims in public remembrance, as evidenced by the unequal reception of the diaries of Dawid Rubinowicz and Anne Frank. The reception of Peikert's diary in the Federal Republic confirms the emergence of a new West German consensus on the significance of the expulsions and the gradual marginalisation of the memories of the *Landsmannschaften* towards the end of the 1960s. The publication and reception of *Kronika Dni Oblężenia* in post-War Poland challenge claims of a taboo on the issue of the expulsions,

⁶ Danyel, 1995, p. 31

demonstrating rather how the Polish treatment of this War episode was selective. It typically focused on the period of the evacuations of Germans from Silesia in order to legitimise the Polish claim on former German territory. The Polish publications of Dawid Rubinowicz's diary show how, in the context of a dominant discourse of national Polish suffering, the particulars of Jewish persecution and death under the German occupation were largely neglected.

Resistance/Expulsions/Holocaust

While each of my three main chapters is focussed on a distinct episode of World War II and its remembrance in both Germanys and Poland, I have tried to highlight the ways in which the memories of each of these episodes often influenced, favoured or hindered the remembrance of the other two at different times in post-War German and Polish history. This study has shown how representations of a given War event did not merely engage with existing positions on that particular event; they often also implied judgements about the meaning and relevance of other aspects of World War II. Thus the memories of anti-fascist resistance, which were reflected in the East German reception of Weinert's *Memento Stalingrad* in the 1950s, reflected tacit assumptions about the significance of the Holocaust. In the transmission of a narrative of heroic active resistance by German communists via this text, an opportunity for a broad public engagement with German guilt for crimes in Eastern Europe, a guilt to which Weinert continually points in his diary, was foregone in the GDR. This was consistent with the marginalisation of the Holocaust and memories of other German crimes in Eastern Europe in official discourse. An overarching official narrative of anti-fascist resistance also coloured the reception of the Peikert and Rubinowicz diaries in East Germany, despite the fact that these texts both focussed on other aspects of World War II. In the presentation of *Festung Breslau in den Berichten eines Pfarrers* to GDR readers, the anti-fascist resistance of German communists in and around Breslau was underlined, and Peikert himself was portrayed as a

political resistor. Such a reading drew attention from the true subject matter of the diary - the evacuations of Germans from the east instigated by Nazi administrators, and German guilt as a key context for this exodus - which would have relativised the achievements of communist resistors and claims of "Befreiung" by the Red Army. It has often been claimed that a focus on anti-fascist resistance prevented an adequate public discussion of Jewish War suffering in the GDR. In the publication and reception of *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz* in East Germany we see how Dawid's experience was sometimes interpreted through the prism of anti-fascist resistance. Attempts in the 1960s to assign this text a higher value than the diary of Anne Frank contrasted Dawid's 'active' suffering and daily confrontation with his persecutors with the relative passivity of the 'bourgeois' Franks. The making of the film, *Dawid's Tagebuch*, bears witness to attempts on the part of GDR officials to superimpose a narrative of anti-fascist resistance onto the diary narrative with limited success. Given this previous interpretative framework for the diary, one can understand why, in his attempt to reclaim Dawid's text for Holocaust remembrance in the 1980s, Walter Petri took explicit aim at a dominant East German narrative of anti-fascist resistance. Thus an increased focus on the Holocaust in East German discourse in the 1980s was accompanied by an erosion of the GDR's central myth. In the reception of *Festung Breslau in den Berichten eines Pfarrers* by expellees in both German states a prevailing interpretation of Peikert's text as a testimony of German suffering precluded a discussion of the German crimes in Eastern Europe, which had preceded the expulsions. Yet at the same time, other West German commentators drew a link between the expulsions and the Holocaust. The interrelationship of both episodes was made explicit in Dietrich Strothmann's 1967 review of Peikert's diary in *Die Zeit*.⁷ In 1960s Poland we have seen how a dominant narrative of national Polish martyrdom hindered a more thorough public discussion of the expulsions of Germans from the east and the suffering of Polish Jews during the War. The early Polish reception of

⁷ Dietrich Strothmann, 'Andere Menschen in einer anderen Stadt' in *Die Zeit*, 1.12.1967, p. 7

Pamiętnik Dawida Rubinowicza shows how Jewish and Polish experiences were to a large extent homogenised and the issue of Polish participation in the Holocaust skirted, in order to corroborate this narrative. Peikert's diary was presented as evidence of German crimes in wartime Poland, which deflected from the Polish involvement in German expulsions. Similar to the theme of anti-fascist resistance in the GDR, Polish suffering was often the yardstick against which all War experience was measured in 1960s Poland.

The Interrelationship of War Remembrance in Poland, the GDR and West Germany

By incorporating Polish, East German and West German perspectives on specific episodes of World War II, this study has persistently highlighted the interrelationship of positions on resistance, the expulsions and the Holocaust articulated in the three national contexts. The complex publication and reception history of my chosen diaries has revealed aspects of this interrelationship at different times in post-War German and Polish history. For the primary focus of my investigations, the GDR, I have argued that memories of the War were formed and developed in dialogue with both internal and external factors. In chapter one, we saw how prevailing East German narratives of Stalingrad in the 1950s reacted against contemporary West German depictions of the Battle. Weinert's *Memento Stalingrad* was invested with a "politische Mission" to counteract an allegedly bellicose myth of the Battle dominant in the Federal Republic. The narratives of anti-fascist resistance by the *Gruppe Ulbricht* and the *Nationalkomitee 'Freies Deutschland'/Bund Deutscher Offiziere* propagated via this text in the GDR, also sought to undermine contemporary West German representations of German resistance, which gave little credit to these groups. The East German publications and reception of Paul Peikert's diary indicate the extent to which official Polish and GDR remembrance of the expulsions converged. Yet they also show how the less vocalised memories of expellees in the GDR had far more in common with those of their West German counterparts. Chapter three alerts us to

the role of Polish-Jewish testimonies, such as *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz*, as a stimulus to East German remembrance of the Holocaust. It shows furthermore how a discussion of Jewish suffering in the GDR often took its cue from real or perceived developments in the West German debate on the Holocaust.

The preceding chapters have all contributed to an understanding of the significant, but oft neglected history of how processes of collective remembrance of World War II in West Germany were influenced by parallel memory discourses in Eastern Europe. The common notion of a West German *Abgrenzung* or sharp dissociation from positions held in East Germany and other Eastern European states does not fully capture the nature of a complex dialogue on the meaning of specific War events conducted between West Germany and her eastern neighbours. The delayed West German recognition of Communist resistance and the *Nationalkomitee*, explored in chapter one, may well be attributed to a conscious distancing from the East German focus on these resisters. Yet the other two chapters have shown how elements of Polish and East German discussions of World War II entered and shaped memory discourse in the Federal Republic. Thus we can view Paul Peikert's diary as one of a number of texts which contributed to a broad West German retreat from the arguments of expellee organisations and to a greater consciousness of the full historical context of German expulsions in the late 1960s. At the same time, this very text was used to reinforce the positions of the *Landsmannschaften* on this event. Through the West German distribution and reception of *Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz* and the DEFA film, *Dawids Tagebuch*, Polish and East German representations of Jewish suffering stimulated West German discussions of the Holocaust in the 1960s and 1980s. The case studies I have examined urge us to give due consideration to the traces Eastern European perspectives on Stalingrad, the expulsions, and the Holocaust left on West German discussions of these episodes, in order to have a fuller picture of the historical development of German War remembrance up to and including the present.

Appendix: Published War Diaries in Post-War Germany 1945-

2008

The following table lists publications of diaries of the Nazi period and World War II in post-War Germany, noting the date and place of their publication, the original publisher, and, where relevant, any subsequent re-publications. In some cases I have included edited diary anthologies and texts where a given diary was supplemented by other material by the same author, such as letters. While they bear the word "Tagebuch" in their titles, I have chosen to omit chronicles of the War which assemble a variety of sources and/or images in the form of a diary, such as Walter Kempowski's "kollektives Tagebuch", *Echolot*, and a number of texts recounting the events of the War in particular places, published in the late 1940s. I have striven to be as comprehensive and as accurate as possible in this appendix. However, I acknowledge that there may still remain some omissions and minor errors in the information presented here.

1945-1949

Author	Title	Soviet zone of occupation/GDR	Western Zones of Occupation/FRG	Republications
Ballhorn, Franz	<i>Die Kelter Gottes. Tagebuch eines jungen Christen 1940-1945</i>		Quell, Münster, 1946	1947, 1980
Butcher, Harry C.	<i>Drei Jahre mit Eisenhower. Das persönliche Tagebuch von Kapitän zur See Harry C. Butcher, USNR, Marine-Adjutant von General Eisenhower 1942-1945</i>		Alfred Scherz Verlag, Bern/Munich, 1946	
Ciano, Galeazzo Graf	<i>Tagebücher 1939-1943</i>		Alfred Scherz Verlag, Bern/Munich, 1946	1947
Fechner, Max	<i>Wie konnte es geschehen? Aus den Tagebüchern und Bekenntnissen eines Kriegsverbrechers</i>	Dietz, Berlin, 1946		
Groß, Karl-Adolf	<i>Zweitausend Tage Dachau. Erlebnisse eines Christenmenschen unter Herrenmenschen und Herdenmenschen. Berichte und Tagebücher des Häftlings Nr. 16921</i> <i>Fünf Minuten vor Zwölf. Des ersten Jahrtausends letzte Tage unter Herrenmenschen und Herdenmenschen. Dachauer Tagebücher des Häftlings 16921</i>		Neubau-Verlag, Munich, 1946	

Author	Title	Soviet zone of occupation/GDR	Western Zones of Occupation/FRG	Republications
Menzel, Matthias	<i>Die Stadt ohne Tod. Berliner Tagebuch 1943-45</i>		Carl Habel, Berlin 1946	
Andreas-Friedrich, Ruth,	<i>Der Schattenmann. Tagebuchaufzeichnungen 1938-1945¹</i>		Suhrkamp, Berlin, 1947	1962, 1983, 1985, 1986, 1989, 1994
Barth, Emil	<i>Lemuria. Aufzeichnungen und Meditationen aus den Jahren 1943 bis 1945</i>		Claasen und Goverts, Hamburg, 1947	1997
Drews, Wolfgang	<i>Die klirrende Kette, Nachträgliches Tagebuch eines Journalisten</i>		Kepler, Baden-Baden, 1947	
Haecker, Theodor	<i>Tag- und Nachtbücher 1939-1945</i>		Kösel Verlag, Munich, 1947	1948, 1975, 1989
Hubalek, Claus	<i>Unsere Jungen Jahren. Tagebuch eines Zwanzigjährigen</i>	Volk und Welt, Berlin, 1947		
Lutz, Hans,	<i>Metanoete. Aus dem Tagebuch eines evangelischen Geistlichen 1943-1945</i>		Schnell, Warendorf, 1947	

¹ See below for publications in East Germany.

Author	Title	Soviet zone of occupation/GDR	Western Zones of Occupation/FRG	Replications
Nies, Erich	<i>Politisches Tagebuch 1935-45. Historisches Tagebuch eines deutschen Sozialisten</i>		Ebner, Ulm, 1947	
Reck Maleczewen, P. Friedrich	<i>Tagebuch eines Verzweifelten. Zeugnis einer inneren Emigration²</i>		Bürger Verlag, Stuttgart, 1947	1966, 1971, 1994, 2009
Schiefer, Jack	<i>Tagebuch eines Wehrwürdigen</i>		Grenzland Verlag, Aachen, 1947	
Schmid, Carlo	<i>Römisches Tagebuch</i>		Wunderlich, Tübingen, 1947	1948
Goebbels, Joseph	<i>Tagebücher aus den Jahren 1942-43</i>		Atlantis, Zurich, 1948	
Günther, Joachim	<i>Das letzte Jahr. Mein Tagebuch 1944/45</i>		Claassen & Goverts, Hamburg, 1948	
Nebel, Gerhard	<i>Bei den nördlichen Hesperiden. Tagebuch aus dem Jahr 1942</i>		Marées Verlag, Wuppertal, 1948	
Rost, Nico	<i>Goethe in Dachau: Literatur und Wirklichkeit³</i>	Volk und Welt, Berlin, 1948		

² See below for publications in East Germany.

Author	Title	Soviet zone of occupation/GDR	Western Zones of Occupation/FRG	Republications
Stresau, Hermann	<i>Von Jahr zu Jahr. Tagebuch</i>		Minerva Verlag, Berlin, 1948	
Bauer, Robert	<i>Heilbronner Tagebuchblätter</i>		Selbstverlag, Heilbronn, 1949	
Behl, Karl-Friedrich Wilhelm	<i>Zwiesgespräche mit Gerhart Hauptmann. Tagebuchblätter</i>		Desch, Munich, 1949	
Görres, Ida-Friederike	<i>Nocturnen. Tagebuch und Aufzeichnungen</i>		Josef Knecht Verlag, Frankfurt, 1949	
Jensen, Gretha von	<i>Die Palette. Tagebücher und Briefe</i>		Hans Dulk Verlag, Hamburg, 1949	
Jünger, Ernst	<i>Strahlungen</i>		Heliopolis, Tübingen, 1949	1950, 1955, 1958, 1963, 1964, 1965, 1980, 1988, 1995
Koller, Karl	<i>Der Letzte Monat. Die Tagebuchaufzeichnungen des ehemaligen Chefs des Generalstabes der deutschen Luftwaffe vom 14. April bis zum 27. Mai 1945</i>		Wollgemuth, Mannheim, 1949	1985, 1995

³ See below for publications in West Germany.

Author	Title	Soviet zone of occupation/GDR	Western Zones of Occupation/FRG	Republications
Nansen, Odd	<i>Von Tag zu Tag. Ein Tagebuch</i>		Hans Dulk Verlag, Hamburg, 1949	
Nebel, Gerhard	<i>Auf ausonischer Erde. Italienisches Tagebuch 1943/44</i>		Marées Verlag, Wuppertal, 1949	
Nendel, Fritz,	<i>Spreu im Wind. Tagebuch eines Verschollenen</i>		Verlag der europäischen Bücherei, Bonn, 1949	2006, 2009
Rost, Nico	<i>Goethe in Dachau: Literatur und Wirklichkeit</i>		Weismann, Munich, 1949	1981, 1983, 1999, 2001

1950-1960

AUTHOR	TITLE	EAST GERMANY	WEST GERMANY	REPLICATIONS
Einsiedel, Heinrich, Graf von	<i>Tagebuch der Versuchung</i>		Pontes Verlag, Stuttgart, 1950	1985
Frank, Anne	<i>Das Tagebuch der Anne Frank</i> ⁴		Lambert-Schneider, Heidelberg, 1950	1955, 1956, 1957, 1958, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1976, 1977, 1978, 1979, 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983, 1985, 1987, 1988, 1990, 1991, 2001, 2002, 2006
Hartlaub, Felix	<i>Von unten gesehen. Impressionen und Aufzeichnungen des Obergefreiten</i>		Stuttgart, 1950	
Brandenstein, Kurt	<i>Löschkommando Alex: Ein Tatsachenbericht</i>	Das neue Berlin, Berlin, 1951		
Hohoff, Curt	<i>Woina. Woina. Russisches Tagebuch</i>		Diederichs, Düsseldorf, 1951	1952, 1983
Weinert, Erich	<i>Memento Stalingrad. Ein Frontnotizbuch</i>	Volk und Welt, Berlin, 1951		1953, 1955, 1957, 1960, 1961

⁴ See below for publications in East Germany.

AUTHOR	TITLE	EAST GERMANY	WEST GERMANY	REPUBLICATIONS
Kersten, Felix	<i>Totenkopf und Treue. Heinrich Himmler ohne Uniform. Aus den Tagebuchblättern des finnischen Medizinalrats Felix Kersten</i>		Robert Mulich Verlag, Hamburg, 1952	
Brehm, Werner	<i>Mein Kriegstagebuch: 1939-1945. Mit der 7. Panzer-Division 5 Jahre in West und Ost</i>		Selbstverlag, Kassel, 1953	
Pesce, Giovanni	<i>Soldaten ohne Uniform. Tagebuch eines Partisanen</i>	Dietz, Berlin, 1954		
Normann, Käthe, von	<i>Ein Tagebuch aus Pommern: Aufzeichnungen 1945-1946</i>		Bundesministerium für Vertriebene, Flüchtlinge und Kriegsgeschädigte, Munich, 1955	1962, 1977, 1980, 1984, 1987
Hartung, Hugo	<i>Schlesien 1944/45. Aufzeichnungen und Tagebücher,</i>		Bergstadt Verlag, Munich, 1956	
Klepper, Jochen	<i>Unter dem Schatten deiner Flügel. Aus den Tagebüchern der Jahre 1932-1942⁵</i>		Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, Stuttgart, 1956	1957, 1958, 1959, 1960, 1964, 1971, 1976, 1083, 2002
Matthies, Kurt	<i>Ich hörte die Lerche singen. Ein Tagebuch aus dem Osten 1941/45</i>		Kösel Verlag, Munich, 1956	

⁵ See below for East German publication.

AUTHOR	TITLE	EAST GERMANY	WEST GERMANY	REPLICATIONS
Bryant, Arthur	<i>Kriegswende 1939-1943. Aus den Kriegstagebüchern des Feldmarschalls Lord Alanbrooke, Chef des Empire-Generalstabs</i>		Droste Verlag, Düsseldorf, 1957	
Frank, Anne	<i>Das Tagebuch der Anne Frank</i>	Union Verlag, Berlin, 1957		1959, 1960, 1961, 1980, 1990
Jakimow, Erasmus von	<i>Gefahr und Schau. Tagebuchblätter eines jungen Malers aus dem Zweiten Weltkrieg</i>		F. Bruckmann Verlag, Munich, 1957	
Schell Margarete	<i>Ein Tagebuch aus Prag 1945-1946</i>		Bundesministerium für Vertriebene, Flüchtlinge und Kriegsgeschädigte, Munich, 1957	
Herder, Charlotte	<i>Wieder Krieg. Tagebuchblätter aus dem Zweiten Weltkrieg und der ersten Nachkriegszeit</i>		Herder-Druck, Freiburg i. Br., 1958	
Klepper, Jochen	<i>Überwindung. Tagebücher und Aufzeichnungen aus dem Kriege</i>		Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, Stuttgart, 1958	1959
Zweig, Arnold (ed)	<i>Im Feuer Vergangen. Tagebücher aus dem Ghetto⁶</i>	Rütten und Loening, 1958		1959, 1960, 1960, 1961, 1962

⁶ See below for publication in West Germany

AUTHOR	TITLE	EAST GERMANY	WEST GERMANY	REPLICATIONS
Anonyma	<i>Eine Frau in Berlin. Aufzeichnungen 20. April – 22. Juni 1945</i>		Helmut Kossodo Verlag, Geneva, 1959	2003, 2004, 2005, 2008

1960-1970

AUTHOR	TITLE	EAST GERMANY	WEST GERMANY	REPLICATIONS
Bryant, Arthur	<i>Sieg im Westen 1943-1946. Aus den Kriegstagebüchern des Feldmarschalls Lord Alanbrooke, Chef des Empire-Generalstabs</i>		Droste Verlag, Düsseldorf, 1960	
Rubinowicz, Dawid	<i>Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz⁷</i>		S. Fischer Verlag, Frankfurt, 1960	1988, 1990, 1993, 1996, 1997, 2001, 2006
Bähr, Hans Walter (ed)	<i>Die Stimme des Menschen. Briefe und Aufzeichnungen aus der ganzen Welt 1939-1945</i>		Dressler Verlag, Berlin, 1961	
Kästner, Erich	<i>Notabene '45. Ein Tagebuch</i>		Piper Verlag, Munich, 1961	1963, 1965, 1968, 1980, 1983, 1986, 1987, 1989, 1993, 1996
Lehndorff, Hans, Graf von	<i>Ostpreussisches Tagebuch. Aufzeichnungen eines Arztes aus den Jahren, 1945-1947</i>		Biederstein Verlag, Munich, 1961	1962, 1963, 1964, 1965, 1966, 1967, 1970, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1978, 1979, 1980, 1983, 1985,

⁷ See below for publication in East Germany.

AUTHOR	TITLE	EAST GERMANY	WEST GERMANY	REPLICATIONS
Rubinowicz, Dawid	<i>Das Tagebuch des Dawid Rubinowicz</i>	Volk und Welt, Berlin, 1961		1990, 1996
Storm, Ruth	<i>Ich schrieb es auf. Das letzte Schreiberhauer Jahr</i>		Bergstadtverlag Korn, Freiburg i. Br., 1961	1985
Andreas- Friedrich, Ruth	<i>Schauplatz Berlin. Ein deutsches Tagebuch</i>		Rheinsberg Verlag Lentz, Munich, 1962	1983
Kardorff, Ursula von	<i>Berliner Aufzeichnungen aus den Jahren 1942 bis 1945</i>		Biederstein, Munich, 1962	1964, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1989, 1995
Boor, Lisa de	<i>Tagebuchblätter aus den Jahren 1938- 1945</i>		Biederstein Verlag, Munich, 1963	1964, 1965, 1970, 1976, 1992, 1994, 1997
Studnitz, Hans Georg	<i>Als Berlin brannte. Diarium der Jahre 1943-1945</i>		Kohlhammer Verlag, Stuttgart, 1963	
Zweig, Arnold (ed)	<i>Im Feuer Vergangen. Tagebücher aus dem Ghetto</i>		Ch Kaiser Verlag, Munich, 1963	
Behrens, Erwin	<i>Tagebuch aus Moskau</i>		Christian Wegner Verlag, Hamburg, 1964	
Halder, Franz	<i>Generaloberst Halder: Kriegstagebuch. Tägliche</i>		W. Kohlhammer Verlag, Stuttgart, 1964	

AUTHOR	TITLE	EAST GERMANY	WEST GERMANY	REPUBLICATIONS
Marx, Julius	<i>Aufzeichnungen des Chefs des Generalstabes des Heeres 1939-1942</i> <i>Kriegstagebuch eines Juden</i>		Ner-tamid Verlag, Frankfurt, 1964	
Pless-Damm, Ursula	<i>Weg ins Ungewisse. Tagebuchblätter aus Pommern und Polen</i>		Carl Schünemann Verlag, Bremen, 1964	
Gerstenberg, Emilie Karoline	<i>Die Schlussphase der russischen Eroberung Berlins: 1945. Ein Wetsender Tagebuch</i>		Post, Munich, 1965	
Granzow, Klaus	<i>Tagebuch eines Hitlerjungen. 1943 - 1945</i>		Carl Schünemann Verlag, Bremen, 1965	1974, 1986
Höcker, Karla	<i>Die letzten und die ersten Tage. Berliner Aufzeichnungen 1945</i>		Hessling, Berlin, 1966	
Peikert, Paul	<i>Festung Breslau in den Berichten eines Pfarrers</i>	Union, Berlin, 1966		1968, 1971, 1974
Hausenstein, Wilhelm	<i>Licht unter dem Horizont, Tagebücher von 1942-1946</i>		F. Bruckmann Verlag, Munich, 1967	
Klepper, Jochen	<i>Unter dem Schatten deiner Flügel. Aus den Tagebüchern der Jahre 1932-1942</i>	Union, Berlin, 1967		1970, 1972

AUTHOR	TITLE	EAST GERMANY	WEST GERMANY	REPUBLICATIONS
Rolnikaitė, Maria	<i>Mein Tagebuch</i>	Union, Berlin, 1967		
Boveri, Margrit	<i>Tage des Überlebens. Berlin 1945</i>		Piper Verlag, Munich, 1968	1970, 1977, 1985, 1996, 2004
Morton-Blum, John (ed)	<i>Deutschland ein Ackerland: Morgenthau und die amerikanische Kriegspolitik 1941-1945. Aus den Morgenthau-Tagebüchern</i>		Droste, Düsseldorf, 1968	
Paquin, Grete	<i>Wie hinter einem Vorhang. Ein Göttinger Tagebuch von 1938 bis 1947 für meine Kinder geschrieben</i>		Friedrich Bahn Verlag, Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1968	
Grosche, Robert	<i>Kölner Tagebuch 1944-1946</i>		Jakob Hegner Verlag, Cologne, 1969	1992

AUTHOR	TITLE	EAST GERMANY	WEST GERMANY	REPUBLICATIONS
Eltz, Erwin Karl Graf zu	<i>Mit den Kosaken. Kriegstagebuch 1943-1945</i>		Donauerschingen, Privatdruck, 1970	
Alvensleben, Udo von	<i>Lauter Abschiede. Tagebuch im Kriege</i>		Propyläen-Verlag, Berlin, 1971	1979
Guareschi, Giovannino	<i>Nicht umzubringen: Heimliches Tagebuch</i>		Raith, Starnberg, 1971	
Andreas- Friedrich, Ruth	<i>Der Schattenmann. Tagebuchszeichnungen 1938-1945</i>	Union, Berlin, 1972		1977
Kropatscheck, Walter	<i>Nächte und Tage auf Helgoland: Aufzeichnungen des Inselarztes</i>		Neske. Pfüllingen, 1972	
Skrijabina, Elena A.	<i>Leningrader Tagebuch: Aufzeichnungen aus den Kriegsjahren 1941-1945</i>		Biederstein, Munich, 1972	
Stahl, P. W.	<i>Kampfflieger zwischen Eismeer und Sahara: in meinem Fall Ju 88</i>		Motorbuch-Verlag Stuttgart, 1972	
Sachße, Friedrich	<i>Roter Mohn: Tagebuch, Feldpostbriefe, Verse eines gefallenen Batteriechefs, 1939-1941</i>		Schild, Munich, 1973	

AUTHOR	TITLE	EAST GERMANY	WEST GERMANY	REPLICATIONS
Schwede, Alfred Otto	<i>Lappländisches Tagebuch</i>	Evangelisches Verlagsanstalt, 1973		1975, 1983
Bogner, Irene	<i>Feldpost Nr. L52621 LGPA München L 35904 LGPA Wiesbaden</i>		Verlag UNI-Druck, Munich, 1974	
Grisebach, Hanna	<i>Potsdamer Tagebuch</i>		Schneider, Heidelberg, 1974	
Gute, Herbert	<i>Partisanen ohne Gewehre: ein Tagebuch aus der Erinnerung</i>	Militärverlag der DDR, Berlin, 1974		
Kroeger, Jürgen E.	<i>Eine baltische Illusion: Tagebuch eines Deutsch-Balten aus den Jahren 1939- 1944</i>		Nordland Druck, Lüneburg, 1974	
Pentzien, Arno	<i>Kriegstagebuch 2. (mot) A. R. 18 vom 7. Juni 1941 bis Kriegsende 1945</i>		Selbstverlag, Hamburg, 1974	
Croy, Otto	<i>Wien 1945: ein Tagebuch in Wort und Bild</i>		Edition Roetzer, Eisenstadt, 1975	
Engel, Gerhard	<i>Heeresadjutant bei Hitler: 1938-1943. Aufzeichnungen des Majors Engel</i>		Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, Stuttgart, 1975	
Hauser, Martin	<i>Auf dem Heimweg. Aus den Tagebüchern eines deutschen Juden</i>		Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, Bonn, 1975	1976

AUTHOR	TITLE	EAST GERMANY	WEST GERMANY	REPUBLICATIONS
Kuby, Erich	<i>Mein Krieg. Aufzeichnungen aus 2129 Tagen</i>		Nymphenburger Verlagsbuchhandlung, Munich, 1975	1977, 1989, 1999
Polewoj, Boris N.	<i>Berlin 896km. Aufzeichnungen eines Frontkorrespondenten</i>	Volk und Welt, Berlin, 1975		
Präg, Werner and Jacobmeyer, Wolfgang (eds)	<i>Das Dienstagebuch des deutschen Generalgouverneurs in Polen 1939-1945</i>		Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, Stuttgart, 1975	
Riehl, Hans	<i>Als Deutschland in Scherben fiel: Tagebuch des Untergangs</i>		Schulz, Kempfenhausen, 1975	
Tausk, Walter	<i>Breslauer Tagebuch: 1933-1940⁸</i>	Rütten und Loening, Berlin, 1975		1977, 1984, 1988, 1995
Vordtriede, Werner	<i>Das verlassene Haus. Tagebuch aus dem amerikanischen Exil 1938-1947</i>		Carl Hanser Verlag, Munich, 1975	
Scholz, Franz	<i>Görlitzer Tagebuch: 1945/46</i>		Naumann, Würzburg, 1976	1984, 1990, 1993, 2005
Bauer, Josef Martin	<i>Die Kraniche der Nogaia: Ukrainisches Tagebuch</i>		Herbig, Berlin, 1977	

⁸ See below for West German publications.

AUTHOR	TITLE	EAST GERMANY	WEST GERMANY	REPLICATIONS
Goebbels, Joseph	<i>Tagebücher 1924-1945</i>		Hoffmann und Campe, Hamburg, 1977	1978, 1992, 1999, 2003, 2008
Bohdan, Arct	<i>Kamikaze: ein Todesflieger führte Tagebuch</i>	Militärverlag der DDR, Berlin, 1978		1979, 1986
Kempken, Gertraud,	<i>Tagebuch einer Gefangenschaft und Freundschaft</i>		Europäischer Verlag, Vienna, 1978	
Konev, Iwan Stepanowitsch	<i>Aufzeichnungen eines Frontoberbefehlshabers 1943/44</i>	Militärverlag der DDR, Berlin, 1978		1983
Müller, Horst	<i>Eingeschlossen in Lorient: Kriegstagebuch eines Steuermannsgefreiten</i>		Moorberg, Hannover, 1978	
Nagy, Lajos	<i>Kellertagebuch</i>	Volk und Welt, Berlin, 1978		
Roubiczek, Paul	<i>Über den Abgrund: Aufzeichnungen 1939/40</i>		Molden, Munich, 1978	
Visnevskij, Aleksandr	<i>Tagebuch eines Feldchirurgen</i>	Militärverlag der DDR, Berlin, 1978		1979, 1981, 1988
Fröhlich, Roswitha	<i>Ich konnte einfach nichts sagen. Tagebuch einer Kriegsgefangenen</i>		Rowohlt, Reinbeck, 1979	

AUTHOR	TITLE	EAST GERMANY	WEST GERMANY	REPUBLICATIONS
Jering, Karl	<i>Überleben und Neubeginn: Aufzeichnungen eines Deutschen aus den Jahren 1945/46</i>		Olzog, Munich, 1979	
Lange, Horst	<i>Tagebücher aus dem zweiten Weltkrieg</i>		v. Hase und Koehler Verlag, Mainz, 1979	
Lévy-Hass, Hanna	<i>Vielleicht war alles nur der Anfang. Tagebuch aus dem KZ Bergen-Belsen 1944-1945</i>		Rotbuch, Berlin, 1979	2009
Simonow, Konstantin	<i>Kriegstagebücher⁹</i>	Volk und Welt, Berlin, 1977		1979, 1981, 1982, 1985, 1989
Simonow, Konstantin	<i>Kriegstagebücher</i>		Kindler, Munich, 1979	1982
Tausk, Walter	<i>Breslauer Tagebuch: 1933-1940</i>		Röderberg, Frankfurt, 1977	

⁹ See below for West German publications.

AUTHOR	TITLE	EAST GERMANY	WEST GERMANY	REPLICATIONS
Frank, Hans	<i>Deutsche Politik in Polen: 1939-1945. Aus dem Diensttagebuch von Hans Frank, Generalgouverneur in Polen</i>		Leske und Buderich, Opladen, 1980	
Goebbels, Joseph	<i>Tagebücher 1945: Die letzten Aufzeichnungen</i>		Lübbe, Bergisch-Gladbach, 1980	
Güth, Rolf	<i>Zerstörer Z 34: ein Kriegstagebuch vom Alltag des Seekrieges 1943 bis 1945</i>		Koehler, Herford, 1980	
Haape, Heinrich	<i>Endstation Moskau: 1941/1942. Tagebuch eines Frontarztes</i>		Motorbuch-Verlag, Stuttgart, 1980	
Mellin, Maranja	'Heute waren wir wieder sammeln. Tagebuch'		<i>Courage</i> , Sonderheft 3, 1980, pp. 12-17	
Subbotin, Vasilij E	<i>Wir stürmten den Reichstag. Aufzeichnungen eines Frontkorrespondenten</i>	Militärverlag der DDR, Berlin, 1980		
Dohmen, Karin	<i>Märkisches Tagebuch</i>		Fischer, Frankfurt, 1981	
Drake, Heinrich	<i>Aufzeichnungen aus den letzten Tagen des Dritten Reiches</i>		Lippische Landesbibliothek, Detmold, 1981	

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Pemmler, Georg	<i>Der Flug zum Don: Aus dem geheimen Kriegstagebuch eines Aufklärungsflegers</i>		Druffel, Leoni am Starnberger See, 1981	
Rasenack, Friedrich Wilhelm	<i>Panzerschiff Admiral Graf Spee: Tagebuchaufzeichnungen</i>		Heyne, Munich, 1981	
Reck Maleczewen, P. Friedrich	<i>Tagebuch eines Verzweifelten. Zeugnis einer inneren Emigration</i>	Dietz, 1981		
Spengler, Irmgard	<i>Tagebuchblätter. So erlebte ich den Zweiten Weltkrieg! In der Zeit des Erlebens geschrieben</i>		Kierdorf, Remscheid, 1981	
Wall, Heinz von der	<i>Noch schmetterten Siegesfanfaren: eine Jugend in Süddolderburg. Tagebuchaufzeichnungen 1939-1941</i>		Janssen, Cloppenburg, 1981	
Eysenbach, Philipp	<i>Mein Kriegstagebuch</i>		Hess, Eberstadt, 1982	
Feuersenger, Marianne	<i>Mein Kriegstagebuch. Zwischen Führerhauptquartier und Berliner Wirklichkeit</i>		Herderbücherei, Berlin, 1982	

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Mann, Thomas	<i>Tagebücher 1940-1943</i>		S. Fischer Verlag, Frankfurt am Main, 1982	
Meckel, Annemarie	<i>Das Bild der Gefangenen. Tagebuchauszüge 1944-1947</i>		Schillinger Verlag, Freiburg i. Br., 1982	
Meier-Wecker, Hans	<i>Aufzeichnungen eines Generalstabsoffiziers 1939-1942</i>		Rombach, Freiburg i. Br., 1982	
Schütze, Rudolf	<i>Wetterflieger in der Arktis: 1940-1944. Aus dem Tagebuch von Rudolf Schütze</i>		Motorbuch-Verlag, Stuttgart, 1982	
Voss, Paul-Hans	<i>Freigegeben: Tagebuchaufzeichnungen eines Funkers von Juni 1941 bis November 1942 an der Ostfront</i>		Brinkhaus, Rossdorf, 1982	
Frey, Karl	<i>Die unsichtbare Hand: Erlebnisse in den letzten Kriegstagen an der Ostfront und auf einem abenteuerlichen Fußmarsch zur Heimat</i>		Verlag der St. Johannis Druckerei, Lahr-Dinglingen, 1983	1989
Laqueur, Renata	<i>Bergen-Belsen Tagebuch 1944/45</i>		Fackelträger Verlag, Hannover, 1983	
Rudel, Hans-Ulrich	<i>Mein Kriegstagebuch: Aufzeichnungen eines Stukafliegers</i>		Limes, Wiesbaden, 1983	

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Schmitz, Emil-Heinz	<i>Die andere Wahrheit: ein authentischer Tagebuchbericht aus fast schon vergangener Zeit</i>		Fischer, Frankfurt, 1983	
Seidel, Erna	<i>Reichenbach: Tagebuchaufzeichnungen vom Kriegsende Dezember 1944 bis April 1946</i>		Ludwig, Warendorf, 1983	
Wolf, Lore	<i>Ich habe das Leben lieb. Tagebuchblätter aus dem Zuchthaus Ziegenhain 1943-1945</i>		Weltkreisverlag, Dortmund, 1983	
Ziesen, Kurt	<i>Dreieinhalb Jahre bei der Sturmartillerie: Kriegstagebuch und Erinnerungen</i>		Selbstverlag, Lüdenscheid, 1983	
Baratz, Barbara	<i>Flucht vor dem Schicksal: Holocausterinnerungen aus der Ukraine 1941-1944</i>		Darmstätter Blätter, Darmstadt, 1984	
Breloer, Heinrich (ed)	<i>Mein Tagebuch. Geschichten vom Überleben 1939-1947</i>		Verlagsgesellschaft Schulfernsehen, Cologne, 1984	
Dimt, Peter	<i>Flammender Kaukasus: Tagebuch eines Artilleristen vom Sommerfeldzug 1942</i>		Vowinkel, Berg am See, 1984	
Granzow, Klaus	<i>Letzte Tage in Pommern – Tagebücher, Erinnerungen und Dokumente der Vertreibung</i>		Langen-Müller, Vienna, 1984	2002

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Langner, Ilse	<i>Flucht ohne Ziel: Tagebuch Roman Frühjahr 1945</i>		Bergstadtverlag Korn, Würzburg, 1984	
Pape, Rainer	<i>'Bis fünf nach zwölf': Herforder Kriegstagebuch 1944/45</i>		Busse, Herford, 1948	
Pickl, Friedrich	<i>Stalingrad: Tagebuch 1942/43. 1. Grenadierregiment (mot) 29 Friedrich Pickl</i>		Selbstverlag, Braunschweig, 1984	
Bauer, Fritz	<i>Würzburg im Feuerofen, Tagebuchaufzeichnungen und Erinnerungen an die Zerstörung Würzburgs</i>		Echter Verlag, Würzburg, 1985	
Hirschfeld, Wolfgang	<i>Feindfahrten: das Logbuch eines U-Bootfunkers</i>		Heyne, Munich, 1985	
Pettenberg, Heinz	<i>Starke Verbände im Anflug auf Köln. Eine Kriegschronik in Tagebuchnotizen 1939-1945</i>		Bachem Verlag, Cologne, 1985	
Czerniakow, Adam	<i>Im Warschauer Getto. Das Tagebuch des Adam Czerniakow 1939-1945</i>		C.H. Beck, Munich, 1986	
Hebestreit, Wilhelm	<i>Russisches Tagebuch</i>		Verlag Herder, Freiburg i. Br., 1986	

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Morrow Lindenbergh, Anne	<i>Welt ohne Frieden. Tagebücher 1940-1944</i>		Piper Verlag, Munich, 1986	
Sollbach, Gerhard E. (ed)	<i>Aus schwerer Zeit. Tagebuch des Hagener Bürgers Bernhard Petersen 1943 - 1949</i>		Lesezeichen Verlag Dirk Hobein, 1986	
Görtz, Adolf	<i>Stichwort Front. Tagebuch eines jungen Deutschen 1938-42</i>	Mitteldeutscher Verlag, Halle, 1987		1989
Colville, John	<i>Downing-Street-Tagebücher 1939-1945</i>		Siedler Verlag, Berlin, 1988	1991
Hassel, Ulrich von	<i>Die Hassel-Tagebücher 1938-1944. Aufzeichnungen vom anderen Deutschland,</i>		Siedler Verlag, Berlin, 1988	1989, 1991
Cwojdrak, Günther	Kontrapunkt, Tagebuch 1943-1945. Neubetrachtet 1986	Aufbau Verlag, Berlin, 1989		
Czech, Danuta	<i>Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz-Birkenau 1939-1945</i>		Rowohlt, Reinbeck, 1989	1990
Cibulka, Hans	<i>Nachtwache: Tagebuch aus dem Kriege.</i>	Mitteldeutscher		

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Rossegger, Hannes	<i>Tagebuch eines Sanitäters 1942-1945</i>	Resch Verlag, Innsbruck, 1990	
Laqueur, Renata	<i>Schreiben im KZ. Tagebücher 1940-1945</i>	Donat, Bremen, 1991	1992
Origo, Iris	<i>Toskanisches Tagebuch 1943-1944. Kriegsjahre in Val d'Orcia</i>	C. H. Beck Verlag, Munich, 1991	
Reich, Erika	<i>Das Ende mit Schrecken. Tagebuchaufzeichnungen von unserer Flucht aus Ostpreussen aufgeschrieben 1948</i>	Selbstverlag, 1991	
Shirer, William L.	<i>Berliner Tagebuch. Das Ende. 1944-1945</i>	Gustav Kiepenhauer Verlag, Leipzig, 1991	1994, 1995, 1999
Muehlon, Wilhelm	<i>Tagebuch der Kriegsjahre 1940-1944</i>	Gideon Spicker Verlag, Dornach, 1992	
Zur Nieden, Susanne and Hammer, Ingrid (eds)	<i>Sehr selten habe ich geweint. Briefe und Tagebücher aus dem zweiten Weltkrieg von Menschen aus Berlin</i>	Schweizer Verlagshaus, Zürich, 1992	

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Spitta, Theodor	<i>Neuanfang auf Trümmern. Die Tagebücher des Bremer Bürgermeisters Theodor Spitta 1945-1947</i>	R. Oldenbourg Verlag, Munich, 1992	
Brigitte E.	‘Tagebuch Brigitte E. Kriegspfad Berlin 1945’	in <i>Drucksache</i> (6), 1993/94, pp. 201-16	
Shek, Alisah	‘Ein Theresienstädter Tagebuch. 18. Oktober 1944 – 19. Mai 1945’	in <i>Theresienstädter Studien und Dokumente</i> , Nadace Terezinska iniciativa, Prague, 1994	
Hedinger, Annemarie	‘Vertrieben. Aufzeichnungen aus den Jahren 1945-46’	in <i>Eckart-Schriften</i> Heft 133 (1995)	
Kessler, Erich	‘Ein Theresienstädter Tagebuch. Der Theresienstädter 20. April 1945 und die Tage danach’	in <i>Theresienstädter Studien und Dokumente</i> , Nadace Terezinska iniciativa, Prague, 1995	
Kirstein, Emma	<i>Aus schwerer Zeit. Tagebuch – Ostpreußen 1945</i>	Selbstverlag der Kulturstiftung der deutschen Vertriebenen, Bonn, 1995	
Klemperer, Viktor	‘ <i>Ich will Zeugnis ablegen bis zum letzten</i> ’: <i>Tagebücher 1933-1945</i>	Aufbau, Berlin, 1995	1996, 2007
Malthe-Bruun, Kim	<i>Kim: Die Tagebuchaufzeichnungen und Briefe des Kim Malthe-Bruun</i>	Carl Hanser Verlag, Munich, 1995	2001

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Pross, Marianne (ed)	<i>'Die Einschlage kommen naher.'</i> <i>Aus den Tagebuchern 1943-1945 von Friedrich Adolf Katz, 1945-1947 Oberburgermeister der Stadt Pforzheim</i>	Selbstverlag, Pforzheim, 1995	
Roland, Jonas and Klaube, Frank (eds)	<i>Bis funf Minuten nach Zwolf. Letzte Kriegstage in Kassel in Tagebuchern und anderen zeitgenossischen Quellen</i>	Verlag fur Kunst und Literatur, Marburg, 1995	
Kasack, Hermann	<i>Dreizehn Wochen. Tage- und Nachtblatter. Aufzeichnungen aus dem Jahre 1945 uber das Kriegsende in Potsdam,</i>	Edition Hentrich, Berlin, 1996	
Martin, A. and Schoppmann, C. (eds)	<i>"Ich furchte die Menschen mehr als die Bomben." Aus den Tagebuchern von drei Berliner Frauen 1938-46</i>	Metropol, Berlin, 1996	
Wassiltschikow, Marie	<i>Die Berliner Tagebucher der Marie 'Missie' Wassiltschikow 1940-1945</i>	Goldmann, Munich, 1996	
Kupfer-Koberwitz, Edgar	<i>Dachauer Tagebucher. Die Aufzeichnungen des Haftlings 24814</i>	Kindler Verlag, Munich, 1997	
Breloer, Heinrich (ed)	<i>Geheime Welten. Deutsche Tagebucher aus den Jahren 1939 bis 1947</i>	Eichborn, Berlin, 1999	

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Buff, Wolfgang	<i>Vor Leningrad. Kriegstagebuch Ost vom 29. September 1941 – 1. September 1942</i>	Volksbund Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge, Kassel, 2000	
Dimitroff, Georgi	<i>Tagebücher 1933-1943</i>	Aufbau, Berlin, 2000	
Dollinger Hans (ed)	<i>Kain, wo ist Dein Bruder? Was der Mensch im Zweiten Weltkrieg erleiden mußte. Dokumentiert in Tagebüchern und Briefen</i>	Komet Verlag, Cologne, 2004	
Goebbels, Joseph	<i>Die Tagebücher</i>	Saur, Munich, 2004/2005	
Bopp, Gerhard	<i>Kriegstagebuch: Aufzeichnungen während des II. Weltkrieges 1940-1943</i>	Timon Verlag, Hamburg, 2005	
Vladimir Gelfand	<i>Deutschlandtagebuch 1945-1946</i>	Aufbau, Berlin, 2005	
Mauss, Wilhelm	<i>Als Sanitätsoffizier im II. Weltkrieg: das Kriegstagebuch des Dr. Wilhelm Mauss 1. September 1939 – 25. Februar 1947</i>	Köster, Berlin, 2008	

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