Accommodating the Nation:

Hospitality and Citizenship in Nineteenth-Century German Literature

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Abstract

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This dissertation investigates the ways nineteenth-century German literature imagines nationality by examining metaphors and structures of hospitality. This examination is twofold: it takes as its subject hospitality narratives and narrative hospitality. By hospitality narratives, I mean the semantic aspect of texts that figure the hospitable gathering as a metaphor for the national community. By narrative hospitality, I mean that the literary texts perform hospitality on the textual level by taking on the characteristics of hosts, guests, and the spaces they assemble. The first three chapters examine how entertainment, taste, and ritual both unite and estrange members of a national community in Goethe's *Unterhaltungen deutscher Ausgewanderten*, E.T.A. Hoffmann's "Der unheimliche Gast," Clemens Brentano's *Die mehreren Wehmüller*, Achim von Arnim's *Isabella von Ägypten*, Heinrich Heine's *Deutschland: Ein Wintermärchen*, and Adalbert Stifter's "Der Kuß von Sentze." The fourth and fifth chapters argue that the figures of the

hostess, the host, and the guest in Louise von François's "Der Posten der Frau," Eugenie Marlitt's *Im Hause des Kommerzienrates,* Theodor Storm's *Der Schimmelreiter*, and Theodor Fontane's *Der Stechlin* function as providers, recipients, and transmitters of narratives that potentially unite the members of an internally fragmented nation. Taken together, the texts function as sites where the idea of the German national community is both enacted and critiqued; they furnish a space where nationality as a category of belonging is at once welcomed and challenged.

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For Dr. F. and her new assistant

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Introduction

Images of Hospitality, Imaginations of Germany

In *Imagined Communities* Benedict Anderson argues that the collective consumption of literary texts shaped national identity in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The novel in particular, he claims, gathered millions of readers into a community at the moment they consumed the same text.[1] The nation, according to his definition, is an imagined community because "the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (Anderson 6). Anderson's first example of a novel that fosters this sense of communion is José Rizal's *Noli Me Tangere* (1887). The text begins with the sudden announcement of a dinner party and the conversations it sparks far beyond its walls. News of the gathering reaches the ears of "parasites, spongers, and freeloaders" scattered throughout the city, and while only some of these unexpected guests search for boot polish, collar buttons, and neckties, all of them ponder how to greet their host "with just the right amount of familiarity to make him believe in a past friendship" (Rizal 5). This moment of potential communion is crucial for Anderson's reading of Rizal's novel. He argues that the image of a dinner party being discussed by hundreds of unnamed, geographically separated strangers immediately invokes the imagined national community. In other words, by allowing readers to experience the interior time of the text as simultaneous to the exterior time of their everyday lives, the novel creates a collective temporal experience that confirms the "solidity of a single community" consisting of the characters, the author, and the reader (Anderson 27).

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[1] For a discussion of his other prominent example, the newspaper, see *Imagined Communities* (33-36).

Although Anderson quotes Rizal's novel to support his claims about shared temporality, he ignores the significance of the hospitality scene as such. Beyond cultivating a sense of shared time, the dinner party evokes a shared space where common emotional and intellectual values are negotiated. The image of hospitality in literary texts like Rizal's, as I will argue in this dissertation, invites other readings of how the national community is imagined. Indeed, the complex relationship between host and guest in *Noli Me Tangere* complicates Anderson's claim that the dinner party necessarily invokes the imagined national community. The text does not portray a simple communion of intimates, but rather a gathering of undesirable guests preoccupied with how to convince their host of a bond that does not exist. If the novel truly confirms "the solidity of a single community," why does it figure the characters invited to join such a community—and, by extension, its readers—as foreign, even parasitic? Crossing the host's threshold and becoming a member, it seems, endangers a home designated as a shared national space. More importantly, the guests' anxiety over being recognized by their host disrupts a simple invocation of the imagined community. By scrambling to find the proper clothes that will transform them into proper guests, they "fashion" the illusion that they belong in the host's home—that they share an enduring bond with him and each other. Becoming a national member, in short, amounts to a performance. Hospitality in Rizal's novel thus problematizes the act of imagining oneself as part of the national community. The problem of greeting the host and fashioning the appearance of longstanding friendship underlies such an act, both for the guests in the text and for the readers invited to enter it. The novel not only encourages readers to forge bonds of national intimacy, but also emphasizes the difficulty of creating the illusion that such bonds are self-evident and historically grounded—that the host's

guests are, and have always been, welcome in his home. Curiously, Anderson's reading ignores these complexities. "Extensive comment," he writes, "is surely unnecessary" (27).

Taking Germany as its case study, this dissertation argues that extensive commentary on images of hospitality is absolutely necessary for better understanding the relationship between literature and national identity. I focus on gatherings like the dinner party cited by Anderson in a range of texts including canonical works like Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Unterhaltungen deutscher Ausgewanderten* (1795/96), Heinrich Heine's *Deutschland: Ein Wintermärchen* (1844), and Theodor Fontane's *Der Stechlin* (1898), as well as less prominent ones like E.T.A. Hoffmann's "Der unheimliche Gast" (1820), Adalbert Stifter's "Der Kuß von Sentze" (1867), and Eugenie Marlitt's *Im Hause des Kommerzienrates* (1876). In their depictions of hospitality, these texts consistently display the problem of fashioning the appearance of an intimate, enduring national community in the long nineteenth century. It was during this period between the French Revolution and World War I that political membership in German-speaking Europe transformed, with municipal, communal, and state definitions of belonging giving way to national citizenship. The following chapters examine how literary texts written during this period reflect on changing definitions of German citizenship, investigating the extent to which images of hospitality encourage (and discourage) the imagination of a national community. Central to the dissertation is the observation that the fiction in question construes hospitality as an unstable moment in which a tension between gathering and scattering, integration and disintegration, inclusion and exclusion remains unresolved. Like Anderson's example, the hospitality scenes in the literary works I discuss gesture toward a national communion of characters, authors, and readers, while at the same time staging this communion as an anxious performance of belonging.

In focusing on the unstable moment of hospitality, the dissertation explores the relationship between literature and German national identity on two levels. It foregrounds, on one level, hospitality narratives—stories in which the depicted guest-host exchange articulates some aspect of German self-definition. To give a concrete example that recurs throughout the dissertation: the house and the state often stand in a relationship of micro- and macrocosm, so that crossing the host's threshold also enacts the crossing of Germany's borders, be they external or internal. On another level, the dissertation examines "narrative hospitality," a term used by Paul Ricoeur to describe an ethical mode of memory exchange. Central to the construction of personal and national identity, he asserts, is the reciprocal act of narration, whereby memory is collaboratively recollected, articulated, and reinterpreted in "stories revolving around others and around ourselves" (6). This ethical, hospitable model of memory exchange precludes a rigid notion of collective identity based on the univocal transmission of national founding events, advocating instead the subjection of tradition to a never-ending, critical process of collaborative reinterpretation (6-8). While Ricoeur's notion of narrative hospitality informs my understanding of the relationship between storytelling and national identity, I use the term broadly, exploring it in more literary terms.[2] The texts I discuss, for example, enact the guest-host exchange both in the fictional world, in the relationship between narrators and narratees, and in the dynamic

[2] Ricoeur's ideas concerning memory exchange shape my readings of narrative hospitality most clearly in chapter five, when I discuss the provision, consumption, and transmission of regional and national histories in Theodor Storm's *Der Schimmelreiter* and Theodor Fontane's *Der Stechlin*.

between text and reader.[3] Narratives, in this sense, provide a space for the interaction between intimates and strangers; they are served up to readers and listeners for their enjoyment; they travel from house to house, disseminating stories on their way; they call communities into being and draw attention to their fault lines. Moreover, narrative hospitality is enacted on a formal, structural level: individual stories are incorporated into larger narrative collections, "foreign" intertexts integrated into the "native" literary corpus.[4]

By investigating images of hospitality and imaginations of Germany, this dissertation contributes to two critical conversations. The first is a broad one including Anderson and those critics responding to him. Jean-Luc Nancy, for instance, juxtaposes myth with literature in *The Inoperative Community*. Here he decries myth as a totalizing form of narrative that simultaneously recounts the community's origins and calls it into being. "Myth," he writes, "is of and from the origin, it relates back to a mythic foundation, and through this relation it founds itself (a consciousness, a people, a narrative)" (45). Literature, for Nancy, interrupts myth's

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[3] Many of the narrators in the texts I examine privilege what Gérard Genette calls the function of communication. Describing the narrating situation as an interaction between storyteller and recipient, he claims this function "concerns the narrator's orientation toward the narratee—his care in establishing or maintaining with the narratee a contact" (255). This concern demonstrated toward the narratee is often figured as a hospitable gesture in the literary texts in question.

[4] In her discussion of hospitality in the *Odyssey* and the Biblical narratives of Abraham and Lot, Judith Still makes a similar argument, that intertextuality can be read as form of textual hospitality. She asks, "What is it to be a reader, […] to be formed as a reader by a text—to be host and guest with respect to a text? Letting it welcome you in and give you sustenance, warmth and shelter—and welcoming it reciprocally, without prejudice, into your heart" (51).

power to ground an exclusive community. It inscribes a different form of membership based on "being-in-common, being for others and through others. It […] is not to commune, which is to accede to another total body where everyone melts together" (66). I do not wish to downplay the intricacies of Nancy's argument, but the point here is that he challenges Anderson's insistence on the cohesiveness of the imagined community.[5] While I agree with Nancy's claim that different narrative modes figure communities as more or less exclusive, I do not share his view that literature necessarily disrupts myth's power to inaugurate a closed, repressive society.

Closer to my view is Homi K. Bhabha's idea of the nation as an incomplete story. He construes the nation as a fragile narrative space, "where meanings are partial […] and history may be half-made because it is in the process of being made; and the image of cultural authority may be ambivalent because it is caught, uncertainly, in the act of 'composing' its powerful image" (3). As an unfinished text, the nation is open to marginal narratives that destabilize fixed boundaries and "disturb those ideological maneuvers through which 'imagined communities' are given essentialist identities" (300). This dissertation also construes the nation as an incomplete, ambivalent narrative. But it complicates Bhabha's claims by asking what happens when we examine the narrative construction of Germany, a nation famous for its lack of a center. While Bhabha looks to minority discourses from the periphery, I focus on a different margin: the space between private and public that is the hospitable moment—the meeting of guest and host, the confrontation between familiar and strange. By examining this margin and how it figures

[5] While Nancy views literature as a corrective to myth, he also acknowledges the overlap between the two forms of narrative: "Not only is literature the beneficiary (or the echo) of myth," he writes, "literature has itself in a sense been thought and no doubt should be thought as myth—as the myth of the myth of a mythless society" (63).

Germany as an ambivalent national community under construction, the dissertation adds a further piece to another incomplete story, namely, the larger critical account of how national belonging is narrated in literary texts.

Any discussion of hospitality and nationalism is sure to illicit questions about Jacques Derrida, the critic most often cited in the second scholarly conversation to which this dissertation contributes. Dispersed throughout several texts, Derrida's most resonant ideas about hospitality and its ethical implications center on the distinction between conditional and unconditional hospitality.[6] The latter, he asserts, implies that "the other, the newcomer, the guest" need not give anything back or even identify himself or herself, even if this other "deprives you of your mastery of your home […]. It is terrible to accept this, but that is the condition of unconditional hospitality: that you give up the mastery of your space, your home, your nation" ("Responsibility" 70). Here is not the place to rehearse the complexities of Derrida's thought.[7] What most interests me is how his alignment of the home with the nation has provoked so little discussion in the small body of scholarship on hospitality in German Studies.[8] Instead, critics

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[6] See, for example, *On Hospitality* (75-83), *Adieu to Emmanuel Levinas* (15-27, 35-80, 85-112), "Hospitality, Justice and Responsibility: A Dialogue with Jacques Derrida." (68-70).

[7] For the most comprehensive account of hospitality in Derrida's thought, see Judith Still's recent book. Richard Kearney's discussion of hospitality and deconstruction is also insightful (68-72), as is Mark W. Westmoreland's article on Derrida's characterization of hospitality as an interruption of the self.

[8] Discussions of the topic range from philosophical inquiries like Hans-Dieter Bahr's *Die Sprache des Gastes: Eine Metaethik* to historical accounts like Hans Conrad Pohlmeyer's *Von der Gastfreundschaft zum Gasthaus: Studien zur Gastlichkeit im Mittelalter*.

often draw on Derrida's understanding of hospitality to discuss other categories of identity and alterity. Renate Bürner-Kotzam, for example, concentrates on the various "Vermittlerrollen des Gastes [Übersetzer, Boten und Grenzgänger, Detektiv und Therapeuten] bei der Erforschung des befremdenden Vertrauten," explaining how the guest uncovers "Spuren der unterschiedlichen Widersprüche und Wünsche in den tabuisierten Geschichten seiner Gastfreunde" (9).[9] Most of the contributions included in two recent edited volumes focusing on hospitality in the German context also ignore questions of national identity. The first collection investigates how "Gastlichkeit insgesamt zum Schwellenphänomen wird" (Parr, Friedrich 9), the second how "der Gast immer einen Einbruch markiert, der eine Veränderung bewirkt" (Fountoulakis, Previsic 16).[10] Given Derrida's interest in the national implications of hospitality, it is surprising that his ideas have not inspired a more focused investigation of the topic from the perspective of German citizenship. By pursuing precisely such an investigation, I seek to combine the conversation between Anderson, Nancy, and Bhabha with those in German Studies influenced by Derrida.

In contrast to the works cited above, my investigations focus on a specific configuration of hospitality and citizenship in nineteenth-century German literature. The dissertation's title, "Accommodating the Nation," lays out the key terms of my analysis. The choice to emphasize acts of accommodation indicates not only my interest in how literary depictions of hospitality

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[9] Bürner-Kotzam's study differs from mine in that she limits her discussion to private hospitality in Bourgeois Realist texts, focusing thereby how the parasitic guest disrupts familial and social configurations.

[10] This is not to suggest that the individual contributions in these anthologies completely ignore political aspects on hospitality in literature. Boris Previsic's essay, for example, examines the rhetoric of hospitality surrounding contemporary Europe's borders (113-136).

can be read as invocations of the German national community; the word's multiple definitions also register the complexity of the problem. Most obviously, to accommodate means to provide housing, food, and drink to one's guests, and the texts examined here are replete with such moments. But the works in question also enact another kind of accommodation by offering space to gatherings that stage the national community. Just as the host in the text provides a space for a community of strangers, so the text *as* a host provides a space for a reader, indeed, a community of readers. Other definitions of accommodation suggest the dissertation's overall argument. The term can also mean to assist, and the literary texts, following Anderson's argument, certainly help readers to imagine themselves not as strangers, but as a national collective of intimates. However, while the texts welcome the nation, they also depict a difficult adjustment to the very idea. Accommodation, in this sense, constitutes a reconciliation of conflicting understandings of membership. Interestingly, as we shall see, the nation proves to be much like an unwelcome guest—a disruptive presence in communities whose members define themselves in other terms. Negotiating this disruptive moment calls for a complicated accommodation on the part of both characters and readers, a refashioning of the community in the image of the nation. Simultaneously implying assistance and adaption, images of hospitality in nineteenth-century German literature both highlight the kind of communal cohesion insisted upon by Anderson and emphasize the inconsistencies of narrating the nation pointed out by Nancy and Bhabha.

But how could a German nation be accommodated when it did not formally exist until 1871? My use of the terms "Germany" and "nation" may seem anachronistic. The simplest response to this objection is that the authors I engage use both terms long before unification occurred. In *Xenien*, Goethe's and Schiller's collection of distiches from 1797, they already ask, "Deutschland? aber wo liegt es? Ich weiß das Land nicht zu finden, Wo das gelehrte beginnt,

hört das politische auf" (Schiller 589). Later in the collection, they speak of "Deutscher Nationalcharakter," urging Germans to prioritize education over patriotism: "Zur Nation euch zu bilden, ihr hoffet es, Deutsche, vergebens; / Bildet, ihr könnt es, dafür freier zu Menschen euch aus!" (589). Their politics aside, Goethe and Schiller use the terms "Deutschland" and "Nation" to identify a geographical entity defined as a mental, cultural space, not as a unified political state. Besides, when one looks at more recent definitions of the nation, Germany qualified as one in many respects long before 1871. Consider Anthony D. Smith's definition of a nation as a "named human population sharing an historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members" (14). Clearly, only some aspects of Smith's definition apply to pre-unification Germany: the name "Deutschland" was used to describe a loosely delineated part of Europe whose members shared certain myths and historical memories, as well as a mass public culture. But post-unification Germany also fails to meet all of Smith's criteria. With Alsace-Lorraine, parts of Denmark, and Polish-speaking territories like Poznanian inside its borders, Imperial Germany was home to members who shared neither the same cultural aspects of citizenship nor the same legal rights and duties it was supposed to confer.

The terms in the second part of the dissertation's title—hospitality and citizenship—also require brief explanation. As mentioned earlier, I focus on literary works in which hospitality narratives and narrative hospitality play a central role—that is, narratives in which the guest-host exchange is acted out on the plot level, as well as narratives that enact a parallel interaction in the dynamic between text and reader. My investigations use the term inclusively, analyzing private and public forms of hospitality (the family home and the village tavern, for example), gatherings of family members, friends, strangers, and combinations of all three groups. During the

interactions among such groups, hospitality emerges as a set of practices that distinguish members from non-members. As modes of discrimination, of course, the practices and rituals of hospitality do not solely determine belonging but also simultaneously identify outsiders. Especially in the German context, with its legacy of anti-Semitism and the Holocaust, acts of inclusion should also be acknowledged as acts of exclusion, a dynamic that recalls the complexities surrounding the term "citizenship." Such complexities are registered in its different designations in German, French, and English. In his influential comparative study of French and German citizenship, Rogers Brubaker registers this complexity, noting that nationality and citizenship in English and French are rough synonyms (50). But in German, he points out, "formal state membership, participatory citizenship, and ethnocultural nation-membership are distinct terms: *Staatsangehörigkeit*, *Staatsbürgerschaft*, and *Nationalität* or *Volkszugehörigkeit* respectively" (50). In planning the dissertation, I initially sought to retain some of these distinctions, opting for the more accurate—if more awkward—terms state membership and state belonging. My decision to use citizenship arose, to a certain extent, out of convenience, as the term is more familiar to an English-speaking audience. Beyond balancing readability with precision, I wish, above all, to preserve the semantic richness of the German in order to acknowledge, as Brubaker puts it, "the independent and sometimes antagonistic course of state-building, nationalism, and democracy in Germany" (50).

It is precisely these competing definitions of political membership that make German-speaking Europe an interesting test case for an analysis of the relationship between hospitality, literature, and citizenship. As one scholar of European citizenship notes, Germany constitutes a unique case, having received the most attention in studies of national citizenship policies

(Howard 41).[11] This interest is reflected in several recent works by historians seeking to identify the parameters of membership in German-speaking Europe. Brubaker's central claim, for instance, that a continuous, increasing focus on ethnic exclusivity distinguished Germany from its Western neighbors has since been challenged and complicated by scholars who argue that German citizenship policies followed larger European patterns, and that ethnicity was only one of many factors that shaped definitions of national membership.[12] While I do not wish to overstate its uniqueness in this regard, Germany nevertheless offers a strong test case for examining literature's role in imagining citizenship for more well known reasons: its long history of political fragmentation, its ever-shifting external and internal borders, and its belated achievement of nationhood. Most crucial to this dissertation is how Germany's long, crooked path to unification and national citizenship has left traces in the literary texts in question, traces that consistently manifest themselves in images of hospitality.

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[11] Howard points out that a "search of the EBSCO online database of academic journals for the terms 'citizenship OR nationality' and 'law' and the country name showed that Germany has been the subject of more than twice as many publications as the next closest country, France, and more than four times as many as the next closest country" (59).

[12] While Andreas K. Fahrmeir argues it was not until the 1913 Citizenship Act that descent became significant for the legal concept of nationality, Dieter Gosewinkel shows how the principle of *ius sanguinis* changed in the years between the 1842 Prussian subject law, the 1913 legislation, and the 1935 Nuremberg Laws. Most recently, Eli Nathans acknowledges ethnicity's role in defining citizenship, but broadens the scope by investigating how economics and gender have been invoked to distinguished Germans from non-Germans since 1800.

Given the murderous exclusions of the Holocaust, the notion of *Gastarbeit* in the post-war period, and more recent controversies surrounding German naturalization policies, one might ask why the long nineteenth century is suited to an analysis of hospitality, literature, and citizenship. The years 1794 and 1913 bookend my study because it was between these years that a series of legal milestones defining citizenship as state, and later, national membership were set. Enacted in 1794, the first such milestone, *Das allgemeine Landrecht für die Preußischen Staaten*, laid the foundation for later definitions of citizenship by unifying Prussian law. More specifically, it transformed the estates ("*Stände*") "from autonomous urban and provincial bodies into state-wide, state-constituted, state-regulated corporations," paving the way "for a more general state-membership" (Brubaker 60). Put more simply, membership was defined by the state and no longer by individual provinces or municipalities. Throughout the nineteenth century, further laws placed the authority of conferring membership more firmly in the hands of the state, but it was not until 1913, more than 40 years after unification, that citizenship was legally defined in national terms.[13] For the first time, *Das Reichs- und Staatsanghörigkeitsgesetz* made German Reich citizenship independent of membership to individual states like Prussia or Bavaria. Germany's unification in 1871, in other words, did not necessarily bring about national citizenship, or, as one critic points out: "even after the legal and political harmonization during the first decades of the German Empire it did not follow automatically that states would give up their right to define citizenship" (Palmowski 549).

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[13] For example, scholars of German citizenship often emphasize *Das Gesetz über die Erwerbung und den Verlust der Eigenschaft als preußischer Untertan* of 1842 as a forerunner of nationality. See Brubaker (63-71) and Gosewinkel (78-96). Chapter three's discussion of Heine's *Wintermärchen* examines the law's consequences, in particular how it restricted membership.

Ultimately, 1913 marks the end of the dissertation's period of inquiry for two reasons: not only because this year saw the establishment of a national citizenship, but also because the 1913 law, with the exception of the Third Reich's racial policies, served as the basis for determining citizenship until the turn of the twenty-first century, when new legislation—the *Staatsangehörigkeitsgesetz* of 2000—went into effect.[14] The dissertation thus argues that nineteenth-century imaginations of national belonging both shape and continue to shape understandings of German citizenship. One of this study's key contributions is to highlight the importance of literature as a forum in which such questions of belonging were debated and negotiated. As ciphers for a national community struggling to define itself, literary manifestations of hospitality in this period bear historical significance and warrant closer critical attention.

The dissertation consists of five chapters, each of which juxtaposes two literary texts that share a common preoccupation with one particular aspect of German national identity. I have selected, with the exception of one epic poem, prose texts of varying lengths—tales, novellas, and novels—replete with images of hospitality to demonstrate the complex ways German nineteenth-century literature imagines the national community. The texts in question were also selected because they were published with a wide audience of journal readers in mind. That is, they were intended for consumption by a wide readership whose members could imagine themselves as belonging to the same national community.[15] The texts thus perform hospitality,

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[14] See also Palmowski (560-61) and Howard (42-46).

[15] Like Culler, I do not wish to oversimplify Anderson's larger arguments about the novel. I am, in other words, not claiming that readers necessarily imagined themselves as members of the national community simply by consuming such texts. I agree with Culler that the "distinction

"inviting" readers to participate in the discourse of nationhood; they confer the status of the invited guest, a role that is not given but rather needs to be assumed by readers. Being deservedly "invited" into this textual national community entails the repeated performance of implicit rules and rituals embedded in the narratives, practices that discriminate members from non-members.

The two literary texts at the core of each chapter were written at roughly the same time, and, in this sense, "speak" to each other about one particular theme of hospitality. My choice of this dialogic structuring has two reasons. First, as a question of method, it provides a larger sample of texts to support my claims. Second, in the spirit of a project foregrounding hospitable exchanges, I wish to place texts in conversation in the hope of yielding, through their comparison, conclusions unlikely to emerge were they treated alone. The chapters proceed chronologically, and each textual pair addresses a theme of hospitality tied to specific historical events—often political and military crises—that shaped German national identity. The texts featured in chapters one and two, for instance, foreground entertainment and taste as modes of inclusion and exclusion. Set against the backdrop of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, they address the consequences these conflicts had for communal cohesion and definitions of belonging. Taking hospitality rituals as its focus, chapter three examines two texts that reflect on shifting borders and changing notions of membership in the years between 1815 and 1866, when German-speaking Europe was organized into the loose coalition of states known as *Der deutsche Bund*. While the first three chapters thematically concentrate on hospitable acts, chapters four and five turn their attention to the actors of hospitality: the hostess, the host, and the guest. In doing so, the final two chapters examine literature's role in the run-up to national unification in

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between the novel as a condition of possibility of imagining the nation and the novel as a force in shaping or legitimating the nation needs to be maintained" (37).

1871, as well as its implication in the articulation of a coherent national identity for a Germany still internally divided by competing regional, religious, and ethnic allegiances.

Chapter one introduces the relation between images of hospitality and imaginations of the national community by examining Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Unterhaltungen deutscher Ausgewanderten* (1795/96) and E.T.A Hoffmann's "Der unheimliche Gast" (1820), two frame narratives that respond to the French invasion and occupation of Germany. Both works address the problem of narrating the collective trauma of the wars with France in ways that foster a sense of cohesion, not only among the members of the communities depicted in the texts, but also the national community for which they stand. Entertainment, this chapter argues, functions as a form of narrative hospitality that sustains communal bonds damaged by the French incursion. In Goethe's novella cycle, the community's members turn to narrative hospitality after fleeing from the Revolutionary Army to a rural estate where they entertain themselves with stories to pass the time. But the entertainment, it turns out, both promises to sustain the group and threatens to drive it apart, a tension reflected in the fraught relationship between the hostess and her guests, and in ruptures of the cycle's frame. Hoffmann's tale "Der unheimliche Gast" features a similar narrative situation, whereby an aristocratic family gathers to tell stories in the last years of the Napoleonic Wars. Here entertainment functions differently than it does in Goethe's cycle: the community is not immediately threatened by the French and is thus able to vicariously recount the historical trauma of the wars. This act of retelling may sustain communal bonds, on the one hand, but it also reenacts the trauma of the wars, on the other. The arrival of the titular guest—and its repeated narration—signals the return of unpleasant memories bound up with arrival of another unexpected guest: Napoleon. By examining narrative entertainment's role in sustaining the national community, this chapter sets the tone for the rest of the dissertation, arguing that

images of hospitality convey a complex accommodation of the nation instead of an obvious sense of communion between members.

Chapter two extends my discussions of hospitality and national identity in the Romantic period by investigating how the forms of discrimination practiced in *Die deutsche Tischgesellschaft* manifest themselves in works written by two of its members: Clemens Brentano's *Die mehreren Wehmüller und ungarischen Nationalgesichter* (1817) and Achim von Arnim's *Isabella von Ägypten* (1812). Put simply, the texts in question respond to perceived threats to German cultural and ethnic identity, in particular the assimilation of Jews. The Table Society's members sought to counter such threats symbolically by prohibiting Jews—as well as Philistines and women—from joining the club. A Christians-only, aesthetically minded, male-dominated table was to be the stage on which an ideal Germany could be acted out. The rules governing inclusions and exclusions surface notably in Brentano's table speech "Der Philister vor, in und nach der Geschichte," and later his novella in *Wehmüller*. For Brentano, the Philistine is unfit for membership in the Table Society—and by extension, Germany—because he seeks to replace genuine aesthetic expressions of national identity with works of cosmopolitan conformity. *Wehmüller* addresses similar concerns in its depiction of a Philistine artist's entrance into a community that reenacts, in many ways, the gatherings of the Table Society. While Brentano's texts set their sights on the Philistine, Arnim's table speech "Die Kennzeichen des Judenthums" proposes measures to ensure the visibility of Jews in an increasingly assimilated society. Diet, Arnim asserts, proves essential in distinguishing Jews from gentile Germans. This code of food emerges as an important category of identity in his novella *Isabella*, whose culinary imagery and metaphors reflect the differing degrees to which minority groups like Gypsies and Jews can be integrated into European society. In reading Brentano's *Wehmüller* and Arnim's

Isabella through the lens of their speeches, this chapter offers an account of sociability that reimagines Romantic literature's role in staging a coherent nation.

Chapter three shifts to the mid-nineteenth century, examining two texts that reflect on changing imaginations of Germany in the decades between Napoleon's defeat and the Austro-Prussian War of 1866: Heinrich Heine's *Deutschland: Ein Wintermärchen* (1844) and Adalbert Stifter's "Der Kuß von Sentze" (1867). Heine's poem and Stifter's novella address the problem of drawing German-speaking Europe's borders and defining its members in their depictions of hospitality rituals—in particular the rites performed during the guest's arrival at the host's threshold, and those accompanying his incorporation into the national family. Throughout his homecoming, the protagonist of the *Wintermärchen* is greeted at Germany's external and internal borders by a hostile state seeking to impose its increasingly narrow, exclusive vision of citizenship. In the course of his visit, Heine's guest must negotiate a difficult process of re-incorporation into the national family, a process he critiques through culinary images and the metaphor of indigestion. Similarly, the guest in Stifter's "Kuß" witnesses the instability of German-speaking Europe's borders during his travels throughout a homeland wracked by the revolutions of 1848. In its depiction of the Sentze family's internal conflicts, the novella evokes the antagonism between Prussia and Austria, and Stifter's protagonist experiences this tension and its resolution at the host's threshold and during the titular ritual kiss that reconciles the estranged members of the family and the nation. Drawing on anthropologist Arnold van Gennep's *Rites of Passage*, this chapter argues that the very rituals of hospitality that foster group cohesion simultaneously exacerbate divisions between members. Throughout the guest's passage, the "rites" of hospitality also turn out to be wrongs. In their depiction of two different models of incorporation, Heine's poem and Stifter's novella portray a state struggling to achieve

unity in the years between the Congress of Vienna and the Austro-Prussian War—that is, when Prussia initially acquired new members to integrate and ultimately excluded Austria, its cultural and linguistic relative, from its vision of the German national family.

Chapter four explores intersections of gender and nationhood in two lesser-known female-authored texts written in the years preceding and those following Germany's unification: Louise von François's historical novella "Der Posten der Frau" (1857) and Eugenie Marlitt's domestic novel *Im Hause des Kommerzienrates* (1876).[16] Both texts interrogate women's private and public roles in the span of 20 years, asking how they contribute to the founding of the German nation, not only as wives, mother's, and daughters, but also as hostesses. Central to the chapter's claims are the ways François's tale and Marlitt's novel expand the role of nurturer from the private to the public sphere. In "Der Posten," the heroine resists the temptation to abandon her husband and home, ultimately learning that the woman's post, as the title proclaims, defines her as a wife and mother. But the text also presents François's protagonist as a hostess, a public figure who nurtures a community shaken by the Seven Years War through her charity work. Metaphorically, she also fosters the community by hosting Frederick the Great, a figure around which all Germans, the tale suggests, can rally. In other words, François's hostess provides her

[16] Perhaps my choice of two lesser-known texts written by female authors often associated with trivial literature requires brief explanation. Most importantly, the inclusion of women's voices in a project centered on imaginations of the home and the homeland seems paramount. Any discussion of imagines of hospitality would be incomplete were it to elide the role of the hostess. Further, while François's tale and Marlitt's novel may be largely unfamiliar today, they were, in their very popularity at the time of their publication, cultural forces that shaped contemporary understandings of women's roles in constructing a national community.

community both with literal sustenance in a time of fragmentation, as well as political cohesion in the form of a national founding narrative. Similarly, Marlitt's novel depicts symbolic spaces in which the hostess engages the public: the parlor, the hearth, and the text. In their roles as family representatives in the parlor, dispensers of charity from the hearth, and providers of narrative hospitality in their texts, Marlitt's hostess figures do not remain exclusively confined to the domestic sphere, and actively contribute thereby to Germany's founding in the *Gründerzeit*. This refusal complicates the novel's conservative ending, which seems to permanently remove its female protagonist from the public sphere with the announcement of her marriage. However, as this chapter argues, the founding of a family is not the only way women participate in the founding of Germany. As hostesses, they furnish spaces in which the national community is imagined, narrated, and critiqued.

Chapter five concludes the dissertation by investigating post-unification images of hospitality in Theodor Storm's *Der Schimmelreiter* (1888) and Theodor Fontane's *Der Stechlin* (1898), two texts that ruminate on literature's role in consolidating the German national community during the closing years of the nineteenth century. The problem of narrating a coherent national history for a Germany divided by regional, religious, and ethnic loyalties proves central to Storm's novella and Fontane's novel, both of which align the construction and transmission of national history with the provision and reception of hospitality. Narrative hospitality, then, promises to gather a community whose members still define themselves in regional terms, with the host acting as the historian serving up national tales, and the guest as the recipient and disseminator of such histories. As the primary host-historian in *Der Schimmelreiter*, Storm's schoolmaster asserts his version of a local narrative—that of the title character—and administers it to a community of listeners. As the novella's primary guest-

narratee, the traveler plays a pivotal role by receiving the schoolmaster's story and, in publishing it, transmits it to a wider audience. The guest, in this sense, takes a narrative from Germany's fringe—the North Frisian tale of Hauke Haien—and brings it to national readership. In *Der Stechlin*, Fontane's most important host-historian, Dubslav von Stechlin, provides a space in which individual, regional, and national histories are gathered, retold, and disseminated. At the protagonist's rural Brandenburg estate and in local establishments like the village tavern, national tales fail to gain traction, with founding narratives of Prussia's role in forging Germany being stubbornly re-cast as regional lore. Narrative hospitality in *Der Stechlin* thus emerges as a critical gesture. Instead of fusing disparate voices into a unified national narrative, the novel insists on a polyphonic version of German history that invites readers to critically revisit the nation's past.

Chapter One

Entertaining National Traumas in Goethe's *Unterhaltungen deutscher Ausgewanderten* and E.T.A. Hoffmann's "Der unheimliche Gast"

When Friedrich Schiller announced he was founding a new journal on December 10, 1794, he figured the publication of literature as a hospitable act with political consequences. He described the mission of this journal, *Die Horen*, as follows: "Zu einer Zeit, wo das nahe Geräusch des Kriegs das Vaterland ängstiget, wo der Kampf politischer Meinungen und Interessen diesen Krieg beinahe in jedem Zirkel erneuert, […] möchte es eben so gewagt als verdienstlich sein, den so zerstreuten Leser zu einer Unterhaltung von ganz entgegengesetzter Art einzuladen" (1001). According to Schiller, readers have become distracted by a twofold conflict: a literal war and a discursive one. Not only has the French Revolutionary Army invaded German territory, but a battle of public opinion has also fragmented the fatherland. The noise of war with France is echoed by the clash of opinions about it in German social circles. Here it is significant that the military conflict threatens to repeat itself on the level of sociability and that Schiller figures *Die Horen* as a dispenser of hospitality. But what does it mean that the journal extends an invitation to enjoy "entertainment of entirely different sort"? Schiller's phrasing warrants attention because it hints at a semantic tension. *Die Horen* extends its invitation to the "distracted" ("zerstreuten") reader. While "zerstreut" refers, of course, to the distractions of wartime, it also recalls "Zerstreuung"—entertainment that diverts the mind's attention. Connoting dispersal, "Zerstreuung" also invokes the social divisions engulfing the fatherland. The community of distracted readers, Schiller fears, could further disintegrate. As a positive alternative the journal promises "Unterhaltung" to a social body undergoing a trauma from inside and without. The word's semantic richness hints at such an alternative. Entertainment, as textual

hospitality, metaphorically holds the fragmented community together, sustaining it at a time of crisis. The invitation to "Unterhaltung" connotes the offering of a hospitable space where a readership dispersed and divided by war can gather.

Schiller's alignment of literature with hospitality anticipates how texts of the period—in particular frame novellas—reflect on art's role in gathering a scattered German national community. This chapter investigates two such examples, one written at the outset of the wars with France, the other in the years following Napoleon's defeat: Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Unterhaltungen deutscher Ausgewanderten* (1795) and E.T.A. Hoffmann's "Der unheimliche Gast" (1820). Goethe's novella cycle takes place in 1793 (the second year of the Revolutionary Wars) and recounts the flight of a German aristocratic family from the French-occupied left bank of the Rhine to an estate on its right bank. Here the characters in the frame narrative exchange stories after heated political discussions incite internal divisions. Hoffmann's novella stages a similar narrative situation: an aristocratic family gathers to tell stories in 1815 (the Wars' last year), when Napoleon's return from Elba roughly coincides with the arrival of the titular uncanny guest, who tries to mesmerize and seduce the female protagonist. What unites these texts is hospitality's potential to gather—through entertainment—a scattered community. Both are hospitality narratives in that they foreground sociable gatherings on the plot level. They also evince narrative hospitality in their preoccupation with the relationship between the entertainment provided during such gatherings and the collective trauma of the French invasion. Each text construes the family in the frame narrative as a microcosm of an imagined national community threatened by foreign invaders. While Goethe's *Unterhaltungen* provide a basic model—the cycle was published in *Die Horen* and critics often discuss it in conjunction with

Schiller's concept of aesthetic education[17]—Hoffmann's "Gast" functions as a meta-commentary on how frame novellas of the period imagine literature's role in sustaining a traumatized national community. In different ways, both texts address Schiller's juxtaposition of "Unterhaltung" with "Zerstreuung" by asking to what extent entertainment, as a form of narrative hospitality, nourishes the bonds between members of a fragmented Germany.

Before venturing an answer to this question, I wish to elaborate on and explain my two key terms: "Unterhaltung" and "Zerstreuung." "Entertainment," as I use it, retains its various meanings because they register different aspects—literal and figurative—of the hospitality interaction as it is staged in the texts of Goethe and Hoffmann. To entertain not only means to have guests, to amuse, feed, and converse with them, but also to nourish, sustain, and maintain the social and political bonds between them. Most importantly, narrative functions as the primary form of entertainment that promises to sustain the community. This understanding of "Unterhaltung" is supported by the texts themselves because they both liken storytelling to the provision of nourishment.[18] By "Zerstreuung" I not only mean pleasant diversions and distractions meant to pass the time, but also divisions, dispersals, and communal traumas. Given the prominence of war in the *Unterhaltungen* and "Gast," definitions of "Zerstreuung" that imply the community's destruction and fragmentation prove essential. Indeed, this image of the injured social body is helpful for examining the texts of Goethe and Hoffmann because both describe the wars with France as events that damage communal tissues. Faced with such traumas, the

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[17] See, for example, Brown (5-6), Müller (98-99), Valk (192-94; 210), and Zumbusch (28-30).

[18] One figure in Goethe's cycle, for instance, speaks of enjoying the "Früchte einer freundschaflichen Unterhaltung" (1010), whereas the narrators in Hoffmann's tale compare stories to courses composed of spices and other ingredients (735, 769).

protagonists of the *Unterhaltungen* and "Gast" look to entertainment to repair communal bonds.[19] In this sense, "Unterhaltung" recalls Freud's notion of working-through.[20] Entertainment, as narrative hospitality, provides communal sustenance, a positive way to come to terms with the psychic and political damage inflicted by the wars. As the wordplay in the chapter's title indicates, entertainment does not constitute a mere distraction from national traumas, but rather a way for the community to confront them productively. By facilitating a kind of talking cure, "Unterhaltung" promises to help them work through the wars.

Working Through the War: Goethe's *Unterhaltungen deutscher Ausgewanderten*

Goethe's *Unterhaltungen* is a trauma narrative that draws on a previous model, Giovanni Boccaccio's *The Decameron*.[21] Both cycles begin with a collective trauma and the subsequent breakdown of social structures. They also feature communities that turn to entertainment to cope with the crisis. The literal hospitality they enjoy—food, drink, and repose—sustains their bodies, while narrative hospitality—the stories they exchange—maintains group cohesion. But Goethe alters this pattern to address the anxieties of his day. Whereas Boccaccio's protagonists flee a

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[19] LaCapra (4) stresses that psychoanalytic concepts like trauma also apply to collective experience. See also Erikson's (185-88) discussion of trauma's twofold role in damaging and creating community, and Neal's (21-22) reflections on its effect on the national psyche.

[20] See Freud (135-36) for his definition of "Durcharbeiten."

[21] Gailus (79) also describes the cycle as a trauma narrative, but his reading differs from mine because it draws heavily on systems theory to explain the genre of the novella as it developed in Germany. He reads Goethe's rewriting of Boccaccio's pestilence as a "media plague that spreads rapidly over geographically and politically distinct areas and at least potentially affects whoever comes in contact with it" (87).

medieval Florence wracked by the Black Death, Goethe's protagonists flee the French invasion of German territory in the early 1790s. The two cycles also differ in their starting points. While Boccaccio's text describes the plague-stricken bodies of the Florentines, Goethe's begins by characterizing an attack on a political body. Here is the opening line: "In jenen unglücklichen Tagen, welche für Deutschland, für Europa, ja für die übrige Welt die traurigsten Folgen hatten, als das Heer der Franken durch eine übelverwahrte Lücke in unser Vaterland einbrach, verließ eine edle Familie ihre Besitzungen in jenen Gegenden und entfloh über den Rhein" (Goethe 995). Our noble family seeks refuge from a massive disruption to the prevailing social order, and this incursion into the fatherland, as it is described, recalls "Zerstreuung" in the sense of trauma.[22] The social body has been wounded: the French Army has penetrated a neglected gap in Germany's borders. Goethe's cycle thus begins by announcing one of its primary conflicts. A community figured in political terms ("our fatherland") undergoes a trauma from without, and the group that functions as its stand-in ("a noble family") will attempt to cope with this breach through literal and narrative hospitality. To return to Schiller's imagery, entertainment promises relief from the distracting clamor of war and the divisions it provokes.

Like *The Decameron*, Goethe's *Unterhaltungen* shifts its focus from an external political trauma to internal social relations. In both texts, hosts and hostesses seek to maintain group cohesion. Boccaccio's community shares this task, with each member leading the group for a day. In Goethe's community, one figure, the widowed Baroness von C., hosts a displaced household consisting of her children, nephew, the family tutor, servants, and guests. In addition to relocating her family and securing their basic needs, the baroness faces a greater challenge as

[22] See Gailius, whose reading of the opening line emphasizes systemic traumas "in which the operations of a system turn against it and threaten to disrupt it from within" (76).

hostess: maintaining fragile communal bonds. This internal instability is echoed on the political level by references to the Siege of Mainz—run by a pro-French, Republican government, the city was attacked by the Prussian-led Allies. While the group's conversations about the war are initially restrained, tempers flare when the blockade of Mainz turns into a siege: the city's remaining German Jacobins become "ein Gegenstand des allgemeinen Gesprächs und jeder erwartete ihre Bestrafung oder Befreiung je nachdem er ihre Handlungen entweder schalt oder billigte" (1001). This military conflict between Germans marks a turning point in the community's conversations. Here is the moment when talk about the war begins to divide its members, most clearly in the argument between Karl and the privy councilor, a family friend of the baroness. A supporter of the revolution, Karl sides with the German Jacobins, while the conservative privy councilor remains loyal to the old regime. When their conversations escalate, the privy councilor announces his departure. Here he summarizes how Goethe's cycle links the external conflict with France to the internal conflict among Germans: "Es tut mir leid, daß ich zum zweitenmal, und zwar durch einen Landsmann vertrieben werde; aber ich sehe wohl, daß von diesem weniger Schonung als von den Neufranken zu erwarten ist" (1004). A refugee twice over, the privy councilor insists that some of his countrymen pose a greater threat than the French. In this regard, the *Unterhaltungen* re-stage the problem described by Schiller in the *Horen* announcement: the war with France threatens to repeat itself among Germans, in particular at the level of discourse.

Considering how the cycle describes the group's conversations, discourse threatens to compound the dangers of the French invasion and the internal strife it incites. As discussions about the war grow more heated, the community's fault lines become exposed: "Durch mehreres Hin- und Widerreden ward das Gespräch immer heftiger und es kam von beiden Seiten alles zur

Sprache, was im Laufe dieser Jahre so manche gute Gesellschaft entzweit hatte. Vergebends suchte die Baronesse, so nicht einen Frieden, doch wenigstens einen Stillstand zuwege zu bringen" (1003). Noteworthy is how military imagery is used to describe social interactions. Once civil and measured, the group's conversations become combative. As the baroness listens to a volley of opinions about politics, revolution, and war, she attempts to broker not a peace deal but merely a ceasefire. This war of words reopens old wounds, bringing everything to the surface that has, in the years since the Revolution's outbreak in 1789, divided "many a good society." Society can refer both to the wider political community of the German states and to sociable circles like the one gathered around the baroness. Society and sociability, in short, are juxtaposed in the *Unterhaltungen*, with the conversations mentioned in the title playing an ambiguous role. As much as the sociable world inhabited by the German emigrants promises refuge from the social upheavals caused by the war, its primary mode of interaction threatens to repeat the very ills from which the company fled. As Schiller notes in the *Horen* announcement, that world of polite, sociable conversation can become yet another battlefield on which the community is torn apart. The wrong kind of conversation, it seems, leads to distraction, to "Zerstreuung" in the sense of mental and social dispersal.

Conversation, in this negative form, threatens to reintroduce the trauma of war into the supposedly safe space of the estate to which the group has flown. And yet this space does not remain untouched by military conflict. We learn that the "thunder of cannons" disturbs the pleasures of sociability associated with the estate (1000), and that nearby a fire caused by the fighting creates "scenes of misery and devastation" (1080). Less obviously, the cycle also figures news of a seemingly omnipresent war as a trauma in its own right.[23] The frame narrator

[23] See Gailus (87-90) for a discussion of news as a disruptive form of communication.

comments that the "vielen zuströmenden Neuigkeiten des Tages" make political discussion inevitable, a sad fact that disturbs the "augenblickliche Zufriedenheit der Gesellschaft" (1000). Here the narrator negatively characterizes the news as an influx of information that overwhelms society. The community, he suggests, becomes the object of the news, whereby stories about the war are not so much consumed but inflicted on readers and listeners. The news, like a trauma, strikes a community as violently as the disruptive events it reports. The baroness expresses a similar perspective on the divisive potential of news. After she declares the discussions of war taboo and urges the community to find a more harmonious mode of interaction, she implores her listeners, "Laßt uns auch diese Nachrichten nicht mit Heftigkeit in die Gesellschaft bringen, laßt uns dasjenige nicht durch öftere Wiederholung tiefer in die Seele prägen, was uns in der Stille schon Schmerzen genug erregt" (1008). The baroness suggests that the news of the war further traumatizes the community. By passionately, violently introducing the topic into the realm of sociability and repeatedly discussing it, the group risks re-experiencing the pain they have already suffered in silence. Remaining silent may be unpleasant, she implies, but repeating the news of the traumatic events can only further damage the community.

The stories the community decides to exchange ("Unterhaltung") constitute a positive alternative to the distracting potential of the news ("Zerstreuung"). The family tutor, the Abbé, promotes this decision and echoes the narrator and the baroness when he describes the effects of the news on society. He laments that readers and listeners are batted around, that "eine Folge von Neuigkeiten" rips them back and forth "von einem Gegenstande zum andern," a process he decries as perpetual "Zerstreuung" (1012). If Freud's notion of working-through approximates "Unterhaltung" in Goethe's cycle, his idea of acting-out can help to explain "Zerstreuung" as a

compulsion that merely repeats—on the discursive level—the trauma of the war.[24] As an alternative to this repetitive, unproductive re-enactment of the conflict, the Abbé offers his listeners a collection of tales that promises to sustain communal bonds. Answering the baroness's question, whether his stories will be conducive to and appropriate for the group's entertainment, the Abbé juxtaposes two narrative modes. Instead of recounting individual "Weltbegebenheiten" like the war, he decides for "Privatgeschichten" that have "einen reineren schönern Reiz […] als den Reiz der Neuheit" (1013). While it is tempting to dismiss the Abbé's collection of private stories as escapist, his explanation of what the individual tales have in common reveals a clear engagement with the disruptive "world events" he claims to sidestep. All his stories, he explains, "behandeln die Empfindungen, wodurch Männer und Frauen verbunden oder entzweiet, glücklich oder unglücklich gemacht, öfters aber verwirrt als aufgeklärt werden" (1014). On the surface, the collection of love stories addresses the emotional fluctuations of men and women negotiating the extremes of intimacy, satisfaction, and understanding. Yet such tales, as we will see, indirectly "treat" ("behandeln") the very fluctuations between unity and disunity that are experienced as trauma in the frame narrative.[25] The Abbé's "Unterhaltung" promises to help the community hold together in the face of "Zerstreuung." By indirectly addressing traumatic events, his stories enable them to talk about them in a palliative manner.

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[24] Gailus (86) also invokes Freud's notion of working through as part of his discussion of communication's role in epic, drama, and the novella.

[25] See Zumbusch (33-34), who similarly emphasizes that the crisis in the cycle is not only the impetus but also the subject of narration. The focus of her argument, however, is how narrative functions as an inoculation against the crisis of the war.

Two embedded stories in particular illustrate how entertainment helps the community work through the war: the first and last tales to be related, namely, the story of the singer Antonelli and "Das Märchen." The Antonelli narrative fits the Abbé's definition because it recounts the turbulent feelings that unite and divide men and women. Part love story, part ghost story, the tale concerns a popular female singer in Naples who befriends a young merchant and then rejects his increasingly aggressive romantic advances. He begins stalking her, and after she refuses to visit him on his deathbed, his ghost haunts her with groans, screams, gunshots, and handclapping. The Abbé—he claims to have known Antonelli—describes this haunting in terms reminiscent of the frame community's situation. He focuses on how the sociable circles Antonelli frequents are disturbed by the spirit's acoustic incursions (1025). The clamor produced by this poltergeist and its effects on sociability recall the frame narrative's precarious social dynamic: the intermittent gunshots fired by the ghost invoke the cannon shots between the French and the Germans; his disturbing vocalizations call to mind the volley of words between Karl and the privy councilor; and the deterioration of Antonelli's body caused by the haunting recalls the disintegration of the social body caused by external and internal traumas. Further, the ghost represents a haunting, the impossibility of finding solace, even in hospitality: such "ghosts"—taboo topics like the war—unexpectedly resurface and prove inescapable. The tale's conclusion, however, points to the reestablishment of social harmony. The Abbé reports how the singer's sociable circles ultimately become accustomed to the spirit's intrusions. Even the gunshots fall "ohne die Gesellschaft zu erschrecken, oder sie in ihrem Gespräch zu unterbrechen" (1052). More than a romantic ghost story, the embedded tale enacts the very process the Abbé's community of listeners is encouraged to undergo. The noisy distractions of war (and the news surrounding it) need not terrorize and divide the group. Similar to how it

functions in the Antonelli narrative, entertainment can provide a buffer against such noise and thus help the community to hold together.

The cycle's last tale, "Das Märchen," also reenacts the frame community's plight.[26] This arcane, almost impenetrable story resists summarization almost more that it resists interpretation. Put simply, Goethe's "Märchen" depicts a society seeking to bridge divisions. It begins with its fantastic characters' struggle to cross a river and ends with one of them sacrificing herself so that a bridge is built and harmony is restored. The tale's details interest me less than the ways it illustrates how the cycle's conception of entertainment manifests itself in the relationship between the frame and the embedded stories. One figure in the "Märchen," the man with the lamp, proves essential in this regard. He helps explain narrative's social role, both in the tale and the cycle at large. Early in the tale, another character asks what could be more exquisite than gold. Another figure answers "light," after which the man with the lamp asserts that "das Gespräch" is even more pleasant (1087). Seen metaphorically, the comparison of these three entities suggests how the tale exalts the Abbé's entertainment—his narrative hospitality—over everything else. Gold pales in comparison to light, and positive forms of "conversation" like the group's stories trump both. At the tale's conclusion, the man with the lamp more directly articulates the cycle's vision of "Unterhaltung" as a means to bridge social divisions. Shortly before the bridge is erected, he describes the congregation of the story's figures: "Wir sind zur glücklichen Stunde beisammen, jeder verrichte sein Amt, jeder tue seine Pflicht und ein allgemeines Glück wird die einzelnen Schmerzen in sich auflösen, wie ein allgemeines Unglück einzelne Freuden verzehrt" (1104). This announcement invokes the cycle's main conflict and

[26] On the social and pedagogical function of the "Märchen," see Brown (27-29), who argues that the tale universalizes the frame's problem of establishing and maintaining social harmony.

how it can be overcome. “Ein allgemeines Unglück” like the war with France destroys individual joys, just as “ein allgemeines Glück” like the community’s narrative project can alleviate individual forms of suffering. This relationship between trauma and entertainment is predicated, however, on collective efforts. “Pflicht” in Goethe’s cycle thus emerges as an aesthetic category, whereby individuals contribute to a collective narrative to sustain communal bonds.

This collective effort to entertain also plays out on the structural level of the *Unterhaltungen*. The dynamic of integration and disintegration that figures so prominently in the world of the frame community, in other words, manifests itself in the interplay between different textual levels. In this regard, the metaphor of hospitality remains central to understanding the parallel between communal and textual composition. The metaphor becomes prominent when the baroness complains about the sudden departure of the privy councilor and his wife, an old friend and source of comfort for the baroness. She imagines her friend in the coach crying because of the “verletzte Gastfreundschaft” she and her husband suffered in the baroness’s home (1006). As we have seen, the *Unterhaltungen* construe communal fragmentation as an injury, a “Verletztung” to the social body. Hospitality, as the possibility of binding disparate members, has been injured during the dispute between Karl and the privy councilor. The tissues of the community, like the tissues of the fatherland mentioned at the cycle’s outset, have been ruptured. Yet the metaphor is extended from ruptured tissue to ruptured texts. Before the baroness announces a ban on all political discussions (the ban then incites the first round of storytelling), she picks up an object associated with textual integration: a “Stickrahmen” (1005). The embroidery hoop, a frame in which threads are incorporated into a textile, recalls Goethe’s cycle

itself, a frame in which texts are interwoven.[27] The embroidered cloth held together by the hoop hints at the possibility of combining narrative threads into a communal text held together by the frame. Hospitality is therefore imagined as a dynamic of textual integration and disintegration. "Texts" like Karl's fiery political speeches damage the fabric of the community, but the stories the group shares after the baroness's ban combine to create an ornamented textile that binds them together.

The question of textual hospitality speaks to entertainment's potential to sustain the community in Goethe's cycle. As the figure that holds the embroidery hoop and hosts the frame community, the baroness identifies an uneasy relationship between the embedded tales and the larger text into which they are woven. On the second day of storytelling, she explains her narrative preferences to the Abbé, criticizing "Erzählungen […], bei welchen, nach Weise der Tausend und Einen Nacht, Eine Begebenheit in die andere eingeschachtelt, Ein Interesse durch das andre *verdrängt* wird" (1037, emphasis added). Curiously, the baroness critiques the narrative structure not only of *1001 Nights*, but also of the *Unterhaltungen* itself. Both cycles, after all, constitute narratives that embed one event into another and displace one point of interest with another. Are these not the very conditions of entertainment she argued for by instituting the ban on political speech? Other interests—namely, the embedded tales—are to displace discussions of the war. Yet the baroness's critique makes more sense given her reference to *1001 Nights*, which, like Goethe's cycle, plays on the tension between closure and non-closure. Because her life depends on her listener's suspense, Scheherazade refuses to close her narratives. Instead, she opens up a new narrative each night that is left unresolved so that she may continue

[27] It thus follows that all of the embedded tales except two are retellings. In other words, Goethe's cycle largely elaborates on (ornaments) an existent textual surface.

the cycle. The *Unterhaltungen* operate similarly. As much as the baroness would like to banish traumatic political speech, her comments also indicate that repressing it will not secure social cohesion.[28] Embedding trauma into entertainment simply promises its return in another form. While Goethe's baroness critiques this form of narrative concatenation—one based on the suspense derived from non-closure—she also advocates closed tales that do not simply displace events like the war but rather allow the community to process the conflict in productive ways. The tales she endorses do precisely that and can be stitched into the communal text.

This tension between closure and non-closure also raises questions about the cycle's open-ended frame.[29] What does this opening suggest about its textual hospitality and vision of entertainment's capacity to unite the community? Does the community remain intact through narrative hospitality? Does ending the cycle with the fantastic "Märchen" constitute an escape from the reality of war?[30] The image of the "Stickrahmen" can provide compelling answers to these questions. If the frame, like the hoop that holds together the baroness's embroidery, is left open, the textual body of the community, like the textile, becomes unbound. Given the cycle's

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[28] My reading diverges from Müller (97-99), who argues that the war can only be halted through the systematic repression that is the baroness's ban.

[29] Brown (9), for example, points out that the problem of the frame remains unresolved—that we never learn if the community returns home and reestablishes the harmony it enjoyed before the invasion. Müller (99) stresses that sociability is restored with the repression of the war and how a utopian space may be created through the telling of the "Märchen," but that such a space remains external to the frame's events.

[30] See Zumbusch (36-37) for a discussion of how the placement of the "Märchen" at the cycle's end illuminates Goethe's view of art's role in times of political crisis.

language of "Zerstreuung" and trauma, the open frame could represent an open wound, a rupture caught in a perpetual state of closing and opening. Seen from this perspective, the reestablished harmony depicted at the conclusion of the "Märchen" appears in a more ambiguous light. Whereas the bridge in the "Märchen" could allude to art's role as a bridge between current fragmentation and future harmony, the cycle's narrative structure discourages such easy alignments. While the bridge in the tale metaphorically reconnects frayed social tissues, the cycle's open-ended frame suggests a bridge to nowhere, a dangling thread, so to speak. However, to stay with the metaphor, the embroidery hoop is supposed to be removed when the stitching is complete—when the bounded text/textile is ready to be exchanged for new material. Not only an open wound, the open frame indicates completion and closure. While it seems the cycle has repressed the realities of war in favor of a fanciful escape at its conclusion, the open frame also suggests that entertainment has helped the community to work through the war.[31] Just as the embroiderer is ready to move on, so too are the narrators of the *Unterhaltungen.* Paradoxically, the lack of structural closure points to the psychological and social closure brought about by narrative hospitality and evinced in the cycle's textual hospitality.

Yet the embroidery hoop is not the only textual metaphor the cycle employs to reflect on the interplay between trauma and entertainment. This second metaphor is the writing desk and comes to the fore when two such desks are destroyed in the frame narrative.[32] After the second

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[31] Brown (20) comes to a similar conclusion, asserting that Goethe's cycle does not propose escapism from the real world.

[32] Here I disagree with Brown's (14) characterization of the desk's cracking as "a curious fact" that is "not an event of serious human interest." While Valk (212-14) sees in the desk a

embedded tale is concluded, a sudden "Knall" startles the storytellers (1030). They discover that the top of a desk in the room has mysteriously split. Following several speculations, they learn a fire has broken out on a nearby estate belonging to the baroness's sister. Her nephew Friedrich spins a story out of his explanation of this disaster: "ich [will] euch meine Mutmaßung erzählen," he tells his listeners (1031). Here he begins what becomes a collective narrative. The desktop cracked because "sein Zwillungsbruder" perished in the fire; both desks, Friedrich recounts, were crafted "zu Einer Zeit aus einem Holze […] von einem Meister" (1031). The group builds on Friedrich's observations and then continues its narrative of the twin desks immediately before the frame ends and the "Märchen" begins. Friedrich returns from his aunt's estate and explains that the second desk did, in fact, go up in flames at the moment when the first one cracked (1080). This event and its narration deserve special attention not only because it provides an example of how the community converts a traumatic event—the aunt's house catches fire during a military skirmish—into an entertaining narrative. It also comments on how the cycle reflects on the act of capturing such events in writing. The choice of two desks—sites of writing—suggests that authoring texts like the *Unterhaltungen* is an ambivalent task. Doubling the desk indicates contrary tendencies within such a task, while cracking the surface of the first and incinerating the second further hints at the cycle's complex understanding of narrating communal traumas. The imagery of the two "wounded" desks designates the narration of the wars as two parallel practices. Two missions for writing—and the spaces where they are carried out—are invoked. These two missions, despite the contrary effects they produce, are bound up together. When one

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poetological emblem, his reading differs from mine in that it emphasizes art's strict separation from politics.

form of writing (direct engagements with political events) is endangered, the other (indirect, entertaining engagements) is also wounded.

But how, more specifically, is the desk emblematic of the relationship between trauma and entertainment? First, its own wounding parallels that of the frame community. The crack calls to mind how the French crack open the fatherland's borders. Just as a geographical, cultural entity like Germany suffers a blow, so too does the surface upon which this attack is written about. Further, the crack recalls the internal divisions among the cycle's protagonists. Here it is no coincidence that acoustics play an important role. The noise that alerts the community to the desk's division echoes the noise of political opinions that threaten to divide the group's members. Finally, the crack signals a blow to the baroness's family. Her daughter Luise automatically fears for her fiancé—he has enlisted in the Allied army against the French—upon hearing the desk split (1030). Such damage to the community and the family is underscored during the storytellers' discussions of the two desks, in particular when they claim to find "eine Sympathie zwischen Hölzern die auf Einem Stamm erzeugt worden" (1032). The cycle thus adds another metaphor of communal trauma to its repertoire. Not only the textile/textual community represented by the "Stickrahmen," the group can also be seen as a part of the same "Stamm," an organic whole whose division is announced by the sudden, powerful "Knall" of the desk. Belonging to the same "Stamm" also carries the political connotation of membership in the same "Volkstamm." Like the pieces of wood used to make the desk, the community's members, the cycle suggests, share a common origin and thus a sense of "sympathy" that binds them. Ultimately, this is anything but a minor event in the cycle. On the contrary, it signals how a communal trauma like the war penetrates different layers of consciousness, beginning on the state level, proceeding to the communal and family spheres, and ending with an individual

psyche like Luise's. The repetition of violent, interruptive sounds throughout the cycle suggests a reverberation of trauma, an omnipresent din that consistently shakes communal cohesion. More than an atmospheric effect, the "Knall" signals a ripple effect of trauma in the *Unterhaltungen* that disturbs every layer of communality.

The group's narration of the cracked desk also follows the same trajectory as the cycle at large. The story of the desk begins with an inappropriate response to a violent disruption. Karl, the same figure whose comments exacerbated social divisions earlier, does something similar when he jokingly attributes the crack to a haunting noise produced by a dying lover (1030). He refers, of course, to the spooky events of the Antonelli narrative, but his comments, once again, "injure hospitality" by upsetting Luise—she turns pale and trembles at the thought of her fiancé's death (1030). Here Friedrich assumes a role reminiscent of the Abbé's by reshaping the story into something palliative. The group's speculations about the affinities between the two desks arise from Friedrich's urge to comfort Luise, and by the frame's end, he accomplishes an effect similar to what the "Märchen" achieves for the cycle. When Friedrich returns from the burnt-down estate, he makes a narrative manoeuver that recurs throughout the *Unterhaltungen*: instead of delivering a "genaue Erzählung des Brandes," he reassures Luise that the desks did, in fact, perish at the same time (1080). Her reaction to his reworking of the terrible events? She likes "diese beiden Vorfälle zu verknüpfen," because she has in the meantime received news of the "Wohlbefinden ihres Bräutigams" (1080). The pleasure Luise takes in connecting the two events recalls the dynamic between entertainment and trauma in Goethe's cycle. Instead of simply relating traumatic events—"a precise narration of the fire"—Friedrich offers a story that comforts and fosters unity. Luise can then experience the negative effects of the war, albeit in a constructive way. Entertainment is thus juxtaposed with the mere reporting of events—

"Nachrichten" that will "distract" the community by leading them to reenact the divisions of the war on the level of sociability. The writing desks therefore emerge as an important metaphor, both for the problems of communal fragmentation and the resolution promised by narrative hospitality. As a written account of entertainment's role in narrating the French invasion in ways that foster group cohesion, the cycle reflects on literature's political consequences. Like the community depicted in the *Unterhaltungen*, readers enjoy amusing stories not only to pass the time, but also to work through the war and the different types of "Zerstreuung" it provokes.

Ultimately, the cycle's two primary textual metaphors—the hoop and the desk—shed light on how literature provides a hospitable space for a fragmented German readership. As metaphors for the dynamic of closure and non-closure that plays such an important role (both thematically and structurally) in the *Unterhaltungen*, the hoop and the desk recall Schiller's rhetoric of hospitality in the *Horen* announcement. As we saw, he juxtaposes the literal battlefield with a discursive one that is fought out in sociable circles like the baroness's: "der Kampf politischer Meinungen und Interessen [erneuert] diesen Krieg beinahe in jedem Zirkel" (Schiller 1001). Just as the cycle's frame, the baroness's hoop, and the family's desks undergo a process of opening and closure, so too do the social circles Schiller describes. Made up of "zerstreute Leser," these circles of sociability are not simply closed spaces into which only selected members can enter; they also constitute individual circles that the war has separated from other communities of readers. Such readers, then, are not only distracted by the trauma of the invasion but are also confined to their own circles, cut off from other members of the fatherland. The invitation to enjoy entertainment like that proffered by Goethe's cycle opens a broader space for German readers, a wider circle that can accommodate members separated by geography and divided by ideology. Given its source material, of course, the *Unterhaltungen* do

not exemplify a crude form of literary nation building. Drawing from the Middle Eastern and Latin traditions of *1001 Nights* and *The Decameron*, just to name the two most obvious examples, the cycle is cosmopolitan in its literary inclusiveness. Nonetheless, it thematically displays and structurally enacts literature's capacity to gather a community of readers addressed as members of "our fatherland" (Goethe 995), a Germany sustained by "Unterhaltung" in the face of "Zerstreuung."

Traumatic Visitations: E.T.A. Hoffmann's "Der unheimliche Gast"

Published almost 25 years after Goethe's *Unterhaltungen*, E.T.A. Hoffmann's "Der unheimliche Gast" also depicts a community whose unity is bound up with hospitality. On the plot level, Hoffmann's tale repeats the conflict found in the *Unterhaltungen*. Set during the last years of the Napoleonic Wars, "Gast" recounts how a social circle gathered around an aristocratic family copes with the conflict through collective storytelling. Entertainment, in the forms of "Unterhaltung" and "Zerstreuung," both holds the group together and threatens to drive it apart. Hoffmann's tale also repeats the formal structure of Goethe's cycle. The frame community not only exchanges stories; the interaction between narrative levels also reflects communal dynamics. In its rewriting of Goethe's cycle, however, "Gast" complicates the relationship between the frame and the embedded tales. Whereas the community in the *Unterhaltungen* shares its stories over the course of a few days, Hoffmann's tale distributes its embedded stories over a wider time span and divides them into two rounds separated by several months.[33] Further, "Gast" does not feature an open frame. It closes with a repetition of the opening scene, the quaint gathering in the colonel's home with which the frame begins (768-69). Finally, the tale differs from Goethe's cycle because it itself is an embedded tale interpolated into

[33] For a more detailed discussion of the tale's narrative structure, see Trautwein (171-73).

a larger novella cycle, *Die Serapionsbrüder*. I will discuss the consequences of this incorporation of "Gast" in more detail later, but for now I simply wish to emphasize that Hoffmann's tale complicates the relationship between entertainment and community found in the *Unterhaltungen*. By staging itself as a cycle within a cycle, "Gast" adds a further layer of communal and textual tissue affected by the wars with France. In doing so, the tale revisits Goethe's cycle and rewrites its understanding of entertainment's role in narrating the French invasion in ways that foster a sense of national community.

"Gast" follows the paradigm set by the *Unterhaltungen* by emphasizing how war threatens the frame community and how that community relies on storytelling to maintain itself. More specifically, "Gast" repeats the political and military context of the *Unterhaltungen*, albeit with important differences. Whereas Goethe's cycle is set during the first years of the Revolutionary Wars, Hoffmann's tale refers to battles that occurred in the last years of the Wars of Liberation. The first such reference occurs in the first embedded tale, when Wellington's campaign against the French in Spain culminates in 1813 (725). The next two allusions are to Napoleon's escape from Elba (752) and the capitulation of Paris in 1815 (753). By focusing on the war's concluding years, Hoffmann's tale departs from Goethe's cycle: instead of portraying the initial breaches of the fatherland's borders, "Gast" traces a longer time span in which the German states are occupied, liberated, and then help to bring about Napoleon's ultimate defeat at Waterloo. The tale depicts, in other words, a different perspective on the wars. While Goethe's protagonists tell their stories in the course of a few days at the outset of the conflict with France, Hoffmann's figures have experienced over two decades of upheaval and gather over the course of several months, during which peace is interrupted and then reestablished. The community in "Gast" is thus steeped in wartime memories and reflects on traumatic events—unlike the

protagonists of the *Unterhaltungen*, who remain trapped in the present of the conflict. In short, while immediacy characterizes Goethe's cycle, retrospection typifies Hoffmann's tale.

The communities in the two texts also gather for different reasons, with hospitality playing divergent roles. Goethe's cycle depicts the plight of German war refugees who congregate out of desperation. By contrast, the gatherings of Hoffmann's protagonists are anything but urgent. The narrator explains that the group meets every Thursday in the colonel's home and describes them as "ein einheimischer Kreis […], der die größere Gesellschaft gern vermissen ließ" (722). Hospitality in "Gast" is a matter of routine and comfort, not exception and necessity, as was the case in the *Unterhaltungen*. And while Goethe's community cannot escape the concerns of "greater society," Hoffmann's circle apparently has little trouble forgetting them, opting instead for apparently harmless entertainment in the form of amusing ghost stories. Dagobert, a family friend, sets the scene for his listeners: "es ist nun einmal ausgemacht, daß Herbst, Sturmwind, Kaminfeuer und Punsch ganz eigentlich zusammen gehören, um die heimlichsten Schauer in unserm Innern aufzuregen" (723). Dagobert announces the primary reason for the community's formation: sociability for its own sake.[34] The group congregates not because of an external threat like the French invasion, but rather to enjoy an evening during which a combination of atmospheric effects (stormy autumn weather, a fire in the hearth, and hot punch) titillates each listener. Gone is the terror associated with the invasion described in the *Unterhaltungen*: the only terror one expects at the beginning of "Gast" is the giddy thrill of sharing ghost stories. The trauma of war that incites communality in Goethe's cycle has been revised into a *Biedermeier* idyll. Thundering canons and flaring tempers in the earlier text give way to steaming punch and a crackling fire in the later one.

[34] On the impetus of sociability in Hoffmann, see Pikulik (21-22).

Yet entertainment in "Gast" is not as benign as it seems. In fact, the mere idea of telling ghost stories divides the group. Dagobert provokes this disagreement by claiming that "Sturmwind- Kamin- und Punschschauer" are nothing more than "der erste Anfall jenes unbegreiflichen geheimnisvollen Zustandes, der tief in der menschlichen Natur begründet ist […]—die Gespensterfurcht" (723-24).[35] Dagobert's hostess, the colonel's wife, disagrees with the idea that such a fear of spirits is rooted in human nature, claiming instead that it results from the "Ammenmärchen und tollen Spukgeschichten" heaped upon children by their caretakers (724). Hoffmann's tale thus posits two understandings of how ghost stories affect their listeners. Dagobert construes the terror such narratives provoke as an attack, an "Anfall" within the psyche. The colonel's wife, by contrast, insists that a fear of spirits has an external cause: it is a vestige from the spooky stories we hear as children.[36] This debate is significant, not only because it occasions the narration of the embedded tales in "Gast," but also because it hints at the tale's understanding of entertainment's role in shaping communality. Indeed, the language of trauma—physical and mental "Zerstreuung"—permeates their discussion about the nature of ghost stories: reccurring terrors from the past, attacks within and on the mind, the compulsion to narrate experiences. In this sense, the reasons why the community forms in "Gast" only appear banal. No obvious external event forces members to bind together, but the question of how to cope with haunting memories through entertainment nonetheless underlies hospitality in the text.

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[35] On the relationship between "Naturphilosophie" and the supernatural in "Gast," see Werner (116-17).

[36] Lemmler (106) situates the hostess's objections in the ideology of enlightenment pedagogues who advocated shielding bourgeois children from the superstitious tales told by servants.

The group's discussion of ghost stories also yields two metaphors for narrative entertainment's effect on communality. First, it makes sense that the figure of the ghost is so prominent in "Gast." The spirits and other uncanny elements hinted at in its title represent the return of repressed memories, traumas that have not been worked through. Even hinting at such memories in the form of stories, it seems, disturbs some listeners. Nevertheless, when traumas are repressed or forgotten, they inevitably find their way to the surface as "uncanny guests" that return to haunt the community. Ghost stories, then, provide an appropriate channel for coming to terms with the past by allowing listeners to mention unmentionable events and relive them as bonding agents. As we shall see in the embedded tales and their effects on communality in the frame, Hoffmann's tale reflects on entertainment's power to hold together a family and a nation threatened by the distractions and divisions caused by the "ghosts" of the French invasion. Dagobert's claims about spooky stories hint at the second metaphor for narrative's role in creating communal bonds. He argues that ghost stories would not so deeply and permanently resonate within our minds, "wenn nicht die wiedertönenden Saiten in unserm eigenen Innern lägen" (724). The metaphor of striking repetitive chords proves essential, especially because the group's ghost stories center on terrifying, inexplicable sounds that return again and again. Moreover, Dagobert's reflections allude to sympathetic resonance, a musical phenomenon with which Hoffmann, as a composer, would have most likely been familiar. The sounds originating from unpleasant events, those terrifying "bumps in the night," do not only unsettle the group, but rather set their collective strings into sympathetic resonance and thereby reaffirm the bonds that begin to dissipate once the real threat is gone. Retelling the story of such threats "resonates" with the community, in that they provide an essential common memory that creates harmony.

The contents of the three narratives in the first round of storytelling show a different conception of narrating the war than that of the *Unterhaltungen*. Taken together, all three stories feature encounters with the kinds of mysterious noises described by Dagobert in the frame. First, Moritz, a cavalry officer and love interest of the colonel's daughter, recounts how a "schneidender Jammerlaut" woke him from a deep sleep during a campaign against the French in Spain (725-26). Next, Dagobert tells a tale about his stay at an inn haunted by a "grauenvollen Klang" (729-31). Lastly, Moritz relates the story of Bogislav, a Russian officer he met during his last military campaign against the French (732-34). After Bogislav's fiancée is seduced by a Sicilian count, he murders his rival and must flee, but a "tiefes Todesächzen"—the voice of the dead count, he believes—proves inescapable (734). On the surface, each embedded tale confirms Dagobert's earlier observation that "die geheimnisvolle Geisterwelt, die uns umgibt, […] oft in seltsamen Klängen, ja in wunderbaren Visionen sich uns offenbart" (724). All three stories show how hauntings function in "Gast": an inscrutable spirit world reveals itself indirectly through acoustic and visual disruptions in the minds of their protagonists.

However, the military backdrop of the first and third tales alludes to another form of distraction. Moritz's stories refer to a pervasive war—one in which Germans have participated—that has up to this point remained unmentioned in the frame. By offering haunting war stories as entertainment, Hoffmann's storytellers invert the pattern set by Goethe's cycle. Whereas the frame community in the *Unterhaltung* looks to narrative as an alternative to discussing the war directly, storytelling in "Gast" draws attention to the conflict and its consequences. The tale connects the world of spirits with the world of war, both of which remain incomprehensible to most people. Access to this other world is gained not only by those directly involved in the fighting, i.e., soldiers, but also by those who hear stories about it. Once the battlefield is narrated,

it is no longer far away, but rather right in front of the fireplace.[37] Entertainment in Hoffmann's tale does not attempt to purge the war from the frame, but rather reintroduces the conflict into a community whose members had remained silent about it. The "Zerstreuung" shared by the group thus takes on several meanings. The ghost stories discussed in the frame only seem to be distracting tales that have nothing to do the with reality of the war, but such tales, it turns out, confront listeners with such events, allowing them to experience the bond in the face of a threat. Further, the group's "Zerstreuung," the fragmented stories that seem disconnected and unrelated, are unified through their communal narration into one larger story. In this way, Hoffmann's text recalls the frame community itself. Like the social circle it describes, "Gast" seems to set aside unpleasant topics like the war by isolating them in its embedded tales but simultaneously incorporates them into the textual larger whole, allowing them to resonate outward. Despite its negative connotations, "Zerstreuung" does not merely distract or threaten to disperse the community, but also, to use the musical metaphor of sympathetic resonance, reharmonizes it. The shared experience of telling uncanny tales—stories that simultaneously isolate and reintroduce the trauma of the war—binds the frame community. Put differently, the pleasure of vicarious anxiety, the titillation of potential hauntings serves as a social bond.

Listener reactions to the first three stories give further insight into entertainment's effects on the community. In particular, the colonel's wife echoes Goethe's baroness in her attempts to steer the conversation away from divisive topics. As Dagobert prepares to tell his tale of the haunted inn, she intervenes, imploring her guests, "ich dächte, wir schwiegen von dem fatalen

[37] For other interpretations that stress war as a haunting narrative invasion, see Treibel (158) and Lemmler (107).

unheimlichen Zeuge" (729).[38] Granted, the hostess simply wishes to maintain a pleasant atmosphere that could be disturbed by too many spooky stories. But her suggestion also indicates that a taboo has been broken: uncanny subject matter is better left unmentioned, she insists. Dagobert tells his story anyway, and afterwards her calls to change the subject intensify: "immer ärger wird es mit unserm Gespräch, wir verlieren uns in Dinge, an die nur zu denken mir unerträglich ist" (732). Entertainment has become even more aggravating, even more eerie for the hostess. She describes hauntings as something she cannot bear to think about, as recurrences to be banished from consciousness. At this point, she urges Moritz to relate "etwas Lustiges, Tolles," so that the narration of "unheimlichen Spukgeschichten" can finally come to an end (732). Her request suggests that the frame has been violated by uncanny elements and can only be reconstituted with amusing, non-offensive entertainment. Moritz, however, insists on recounting one last terrifying event, Bogislav's story. Her reaction? "So entladen Sie sich […] alles Schauerlichen, von dem Sie nun einmal befangen" (732).

The hostess's strategy seems to have shifted from absolute resistance to conditional acquiescence. Once taboo, haunting narratives may be told, provided that they unburden the storyteller—and by extension, the community of listeners—from a preoccupation with the ghosts of the past. After hearing one last distracting story of trauma, the group can reinstitute its program of forgetting and repressing. However, the hostess's objections also suggest a different reading of narrative's function. Her protests signal how the bonds created for the listeners based on their shared titillation hang together with the therapeutic release of the individual storyteller.

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[38] The baroness's diction certainly recalls the Freudian uncanny, whereby the home becomes unhomely. This notion, "Gast" implies, can be expanded from the family home to the national homeland.

Moritz may unburden himself by telling an uncanny tale, but by sharing such a tale he keeps his listeners in suspense, thereby prolonging the pleasurable anxiety that entertains, that is, holds the group together. It thus follows that precisely at the moment Moritz is about to reveal the mystery at the core of Bogislav's story, a door bursts open and the titular uncanny guest enters the formerly closed circle of frame community. This interruption not only punctures the narrative tissue of the text; given the guest's sinister plans to divide the family—he seduces Angelika and has Moritz and the colonel sent off to war—his entrance also signals a social rupture, one whose collective retelling eventually serves to reinforce the very communal bonds he seeks to sever.

Narrated several months later, the second round of stories follows a different pattern than the first. Whereas the first round begins by stressing coherence and ends with the violent interruption of the uncanny guest, the second follows a different trajectory by beginning with disruption and ending with resolution. The colonel's family gathers after learning of the uncanny guest's sudden death, and they explain in a series of narratives the mysteries the tale has thus far left unresolved. First, Moritz tells the group how he was injured during his return from Waterloo and held hostage in a French castle by a cavalryman in cahoots with the uncanny guest (760-63). Second, Dagobert recounts his search for and reunification with Moritz, who was rescued from his captor by Bogislav (763-64). Finally, Dagobert narrates how he, Moritz, and Bogislav encountered the uncanny guest's other accomplice—Marguerite, the family's French servant—who reveals his plot to seduce Angelika through mesmerism (764-65). This second round of tales gives closure in several ways. Most obviously, it explains the mystery of how the repulsive villain gains the steadfast Angelika's favor and dispenses with his romantic rival Moritz. By mesmerizing Angelika and orchestrating Moritz's imprisonment, the guest nearly achieves his wicked ends. Less obviously, the family's experience of closure is anticipated by specific

imagery in the embedded stories. Thematically, Moritz's story focuses on ruptures. He suffers, tellingly, a head injury that lands him in the "Gewalt des Feindes" (760). This literal wound parallels the figurative wounds inflicted upon his psyche, his community, and his country. Moritz begins the second round of entertainment, in other words, by emphasizing divisions. His capture suggests something similar. He is severed from a community in the process of being further divided by the uncanny guest's machinations. But the trajectory of the embedded stories moves toward resolution, suggesting that Moritz's head wound can be healed and the community can be reunited. A movement from capture to liberation occurs, a shift from a preoccupation with traumatic events to a release from the anxieties they provoke. Entertainment's power to unite, the tale's ending insists, trumps its potential to divide.

However, while the frame's conclusion insists on closure, it keeps certain ambiguities in play.[39] Once Dagobert concludes the final embedded story, the colonel's wife pleads, "O für immer, […] nichts mehr von dem finstern unbekannten Reich, wo das Grauen wohnt und das Entsetzen! – Dank der ewigen Macht des Himmels […], die uns befreit hat von dem unheimlichen Gast" (768). Here the hostess repeats much of the same language she used during the first round of stories. Never again are such hellish tales to be repeated now that the community has been liberated from the uncanny guest. Perhaps unsurprisingly, her exclamation immediately precedes the news that he will be buried a few days later (768). In this sense, the "Beerdigung des Grafen" parallels the burial of the divisive narratives about him. Yet the protagonists of "Gast" do not repress the memory of the uncanny guest's intrusion. The closing

[39] Treibel (169) also stresses how the guest remains a disturbance at the tale's conclusion, describing him as an uncanny "Wiedergänger" who becomes part of the home in the form of "des un-heimlichen, heimsuchenden Kriegstreibers."

scene repeats the tale's opening, whereby the group gathers on a stormy autumn evening to drink punch and tell stories by the fire. Curiously, it is now the colonel's wife who seems unable to forget. "Wißt ihr wohl noch," she asks the others, "erinnert ihr euch noch?" (768). Here the figure that sought to suppress unpleasant, disruptive narratives reintroduces the memories of the guest. Further, despite the colonel's ban on ghost stories, Moritz and Angelika reminisce, "wie […] der unheimliche Gast, von den gespenstischen Unkenstimmen verkündigt, alles Entsetzen über sie gebracht" (768-69).

Such repetitions of the guest's story indicate the community has undergone a change since the first round of embedded tales. Despite the appearance of resolution—the villain is dead, Moritz and Angelika are married, domestic harmony is restored, Germany is liberated—the memory of the uncanny guest's intrusion remains as a bonding agent. Significantly, this memory has positive consequences for group cohesion. The guest returns from the grave as a narrative that is compulsively retold, one that allows the community to channel its anxieties in a productive way. This idea of venting tensions provoked by traumatic events through collective retelling is concretized in a specific object mentioned in the opening and closing sections of the frame: the family teapot. In his descriptions of the noises the teapot generates, Dagobert hints at narrative's function as the tale comes to its end: "selbst das Pfeifen and Zirpen und Zischen der Teemaschine klingt gar nicht im Mindesten nicht mehr graulich, sondern […] ungefähr so, als besänne sich das darin verschlossene artige Hausgeistlein auf ein hübsches Wiegenlied" (769). While Dagobert alludes to Angelika's pregnancy by describing how a little domestic spirit in the pot recalls a lullaby, the image of the tamed ghost contained in an object associated with the family's hospitality suggests something more. Whereas the sounds emitted by the boiling teapot had sounded "graulich," they now evoke more positive feelings for the community as the shared

stories over cups of tea. Just as the pot contains violently boiling water and allows the steam to be vented, so too does entertainment allow the group to contain and vent violent, divisive experiences like the war. Framed by this emblem of narrative hospitality, one around which the community ritually gathers, "Gast" figures the retelling (and reliving) of disruptive, distracting stories as a way to strengthen social bonds. The multiple references to acoustic elements, moreover, signals the achievement of sympathetic resonance, whereby the sounds that play such an important role in the group's entertainment help to revive national collective sentiment. Stories like the "Uncanny Guest" become a new bond that brings the community together by making individual psyches resound in shared sympathy.

But what role does the title figure play in shaping communal dynamics? Wedged between the first and second rounds of embedded tales, the uncanny guest's arrival marks the most important moment of "Zerstreuung" in "Gast." The last story in the first round is interrupted when Moritz describes the violent slamming of a door: "Nun geschah ein gewaltiger Schlag," he reports (734). Moreover, not only the door in the embedded tale bursts open; the same occurs in the frame narrative and in the *Serapionsbrüder*, the cycle into which "Gast" is incorporated. The uncanny guest's entrance into the frame community is repeated, echoed by slamming doors on all three narrative levels. It is tempting to dismiss this "violent blow" as a narrative gag.[40] One of the characters in the *Serapionsbrüder* does just that when he and the other listeners learn it is only a late arrival, a fellow member, who accidently slams the door while "Der unheimliche Gast" is being read out loud to the group. He protests, "ist es recht, ehrbare Leute foppen zu wollen mit schnöder Geisterspielerei?" (735). But the staging of the uncanny guest's arrival is no

[40] I agree with Pikulik's (163) assessment that the slamming door is no mere gag but rather a signal of the crossover, the bond between several spheres in the tale.

mere gag; the "violent blow" is both a trauma to the social and textual bodies represented in and by "Gast" and an acoustic incursion that strikes the strings of the collective psyche. Similar to the "Knall" in the *Unterhaltungen*, this "Schlag" disrupts the community in the form of a visitation. Here the German word "Heimsuchung" aptly characterizes the multifaceted trauma that occurs between the first and second rounds of storytelling. Literally a visit, "a home sought out," the guest's arrival is also the first in a series of hauntings—reoccurring visits from which the community is never entirely liberated. A wound coursing through every layer of narrative tissue, the guest's arrival marks a turning point in Hoffmann's tale. From this moment onward, the community experiences several forms of "Zerstreuung" triggered by the guest's visitations. The sound marking his arrival resonates with them, continues to preoccupy them in several ways.

One of those ways this occurs is on the level of the individual psyche. A devious mesmerist, the uncanny guest uses his powers to trespass into his victims' minds. As Moritz describes it, "Gewiß ist es, daß er darauf ausging, durch allerlei geheime Künste auf das innere Gemüt psychisch zu wirken" (767). For example, the guest visits Angelika as she sleeps, attempting to implant unconsciously the conviction that she loves him and not Moritz. The protagonists also discover that the guest has enlisted the family servant to whisper his name to the sleeping Angelika, and that he even comes into her room and mesmerizes her with his gaze (767). Even before this plot is revealed, Angelika complains that the guest has invaded her dreams. She recalls a night in which he terrorizes her: "jene entsetzlichen Augen, die mein Innerstes erfaßten, es waren die Augen des Grafen, *seine* gespenstische Hand umwob mich" (747). The mesmerist's horrid gaze and ghostly hands take possession of Angelika's innermost space, leaving behind a traumatic nightmare she repeatedly narrates throughout the text. Moritz suffers similar mental incursions. Describing the guest's entrance into the family home, he says,

"[e]s ist, als träte aus dem tiefsten Hintergrunde eine Erinnerung—fast möcht' ich sagen—ein Traum hervor, der mir diesen Grafen darstellt unter grauenvollen Umständen!" (740-41). Moritz likens the guest to a memory (or a dream) that resurfaces out of a submerged past shaped by "horrid conditions." Hoffmann's tale thus construes the guest's arrival as a mental disruption, as a return of the repressed. Psychic visitations, like the villain's literal entrance, violently throw open the mind's doors and threaten to overwhelm it with distressing memories.

But "Zerstreuung" in "Gast" also extends into the social realms of the family and the nation. Moritz hints at this extension when he describes the effects of mesmerism on his own mental state: "Mein eignes Ich schien mir entfremdet, eine fremde Macht gebot über mein Sein" (762). Under the command of a foreign power, the individual ego becomes alienated from itself, and this division repeats itself on the communal level in Hoffmann's tale. As the embodiment of such a foreign power, the guest exerts his disruptive influence on the family, a disruption that also plays out on the national level. A case in point: the tale's father figure falls under the guest's control. After introducing the count to his family, the colonel explains how their relationship grew out of a debt: "der Graf [half] den Obristen auf die uneigennützigste Weise aus einer Verlegenheit, die was Geld und Gut, ja was den guten Ruf und die Ehre betrifft" (742). Compromised by unexplained financial and social difficulties, the colonel emerges not as a strong father figure in the tale, but rather as a weak patriarch who exposes his family to the machinations of an outsider bent on alienating its members from each other. He does so by opening his door to the guest, who desires above all to marry Angelika and, by extension, to install himself as the future patriarch. Given the tale's historical backdrop of war and foreign occupation under the French, a parallel is thus suggested between the father and the fatherland.

Like the colonel, Germany during the Napoleonic Wars finds itself in a weakened position, one vulnerable to a foreign power seeking to gain control over its members.

Similarly, the guest divides the family and the nation by forging new alliances. While Moritz's engagement to Angelika initially inspires a sense of unity—"alle [schlossen] sich um das selige Paar" (749)—this harmony proves short lived. In the same night the family celebrates the engagement, they receive news that Napoleon has returned, that the war has begun anew (752). The colonel and Moritz depart for Waterloo, leaving Angelika and her mother at the family's rural estate. The guest uses this opportunity to realize his plan: not only to win Angelika for himself, but also to pair Moritz off with his co-conspirator, Marguerite. To this end, he enlists the French cavalryman holding Moritz hostage to mesmerize his prisoner with a portrait of Marguerite, with the result that Moritz forgets Angelika and succumbs to the allure of the image (762). Of course, with the guest's death the spell is broken, and the protagonists ultimately marry. Nonetheless, his desire to undo old alliances and forge new ones points to the tale's political subtext. Given the clear assignation of nationality to the figures to be coupled, "Gast" comments on the problem of national unity during the Napoleonic Wars.[41] It is no coincidence that the union of the two German protagonists is jeopardized at the moment of Napoleon's return: Moritz and Angelika's engagement is immediately followed by the renewed outbreak of war, an event that nearly sunders their bond. In place of a German-German union, the guest's potential marriage to Angelika would create an alliance that further weakens the fatherland. Moritz's pairing with the Frenchwoman Marguerite promises a similar consequence. An insider not only becomes estranged from his community but is also paired off with an outsider. Put

[41] For more detailed discussions on the relationship between marriage and national affiliation, see McGlathery (118-19) and Treibel (160-61).

differently, the "selige Paar" introduced earlier in the tale is almost divided and replaced with two unholy alliances between members of the German national community and Romanic outsiders aiding the French cause. The guest's strategy, it seems, is to infiltrate the very psyche of the protagonists. Yet the dissolution of existing bonds between Germans also suggests that such bonds are anything but given. In other words, the familial and national "Zerstreuung" instigated by the guest does not merely endanger those affiliations, but rather highlights how they need to be propped up again. In this sense, "Zerstreuung" not only divides the community but also shores up the bonds between its members. Hoffmann's insiders gain a stronger sense of self when confronted by an outside threat, and the story of this threat serves as antidote to the psychological infiltration perpetuated by the foreign guest.[42]

Significantly, "Gast" casts its mysterious villain as a stand-in for Napoleon—as a stranger many Germans at this time saw as the most unwelcome guest in their homeland.[43] The uncanny guest's biography hints at such a link. As a Sicilian with French allegiances (he also speaks the language), he recalls Bonaparte's roots in Corsica, an island geographically and culturally situated between France and Italy. Further, Napoleon's installation of his brother Charles as the King of Sicily in 1806 also strengthens the tale's association between the guest and Bonaparte (Treibel 168). More interesting is how "Gast" elaborates on Hoffmann's previous comparisons of his literary villains with Napoleon. For example, in "Der Magnetiseur"—a tale partly written during the French occupation of Dresden—the wicked mesmerist Alban is likened

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[42] McGlathery (117) makes a similar claim, arguing that the couple is brought closer together by the guest's efforts to separate them. Treibel (169) also asserts that the guest's ability to render the home uncanny suggests that the stability of such a home is bound up with external threats.

[43] See Safranksi (292-95; 304-08) for more on imaginations of Napoleon in Hoffmann's fiction.

to the power-hungry Napoleon (Segebrecht 734). More explicit is Hoffmann's "Vision auf dem Schachtfelde bei Dresden" (1813), a phantasmagoric short prose piece whose narrator dreams that Napoleon—in the form of a giant, menacing spirit—rises up from the corpses that litter the battlefield.[44] These two examples not only anticipate how "Gast" reimagines Bonaparte, but also how the tale lingers on his presence in the German social consciousness after Waterloo. While the mesmerist's negative influence in "Der Magnetiseur" is limited to the family sphere, it is expanded in "Gast" to include the national community. And whereas the ghostly figure of Napoleon in "Vision" is ultimately banished from the narrator's consciousness, his return, as it is invoked by the uncanny guest in the later tale, repeats itself in the minds of the tale's protagonists—even after his body is buried, the war has ended, and the community has supposedly shored itself up with the marriage of Moritz and Angelika. By re-invoking Bonaparte, "Gast" suggests that the memories associated with him return to "visit" the members of the familial and national communities. Years after his defeat and exile, Germany is still preoccupied with its occupation under Napoleon, and this preoccupation helps forge national bonds.

But how exactly does the guest re-inflict the memory of Napoleon and the war? As we have seen, the violent blow signaled by his arrival ruptures different layers—be they psychic, familial, national, or narrative. His breach of the tale's narrative tissue proves particularly crucial to understanding how the guest and the story about him both threaten to disperse the group and reharmonize its members. In addition to the slamming doors that herald his incursion into the community, another acoustic element re-invokes memories of the war: his voice. Describing the lasting effects of the guest's nightly visitations, Angelika, for instance, explains, "Eine

[44] For the relationship between Napoleon and magnetism in "Vision," see Safranski (308).

Geisterstimme sagt es mir unaufhörlich, daß ich mich ihm als Gattin anschließen muß" (755). While the mesmerist's gaze and hands certainly contribute to Angelika's submission to his will, his voice also influences her choice of a marriage partner. An incessant sound in her mind, the guest's words reverberate, constantly reminding her of his presence and his desire to maintain that presence for the rest of her life as her husband. Voices in "Gast" are also characterized in terms of national affiliations. "Der fremde scharfe Akzent" with which the guest speaks indicates that language functions as a means of reintroducing traumatic memories in Hoffmann's tale (738). Marked by its foreignness and sharpness, the guest's voice allows him to estrange the community's members, to cut the bonds between them. Moreover, the two French characters in cahoots with the guest use their voices to divide the German protagonists: Marguerite whispers into Angelika's ear as she sleeps; the French cavalryman does the same with his hostage Moritz. In this sense, the outsider's voice and language function as a kind of distortion that threatens to divide the community. Seen acoustically, such voices put the German national soundboard out of tune, making them "unsympathetic" to the other strings that belong to the same instrument.

Foreign voices also disrupt the family and the nation by implanting foreign narratives. When the guest arrives in the colonel's home, he not only interrupts the formerly closed circle's round of storytelling with his dramatic entrance, but also inserts his own voice into a narrative community to which he does not belong: "Der Graf nahm nun das Wort und erzählte auf anziehende Weise von diesem, jenem, was sich in kurzer Zeit begeben" (739-40). From the moment of his arrival, the guest is associated with storytelling. Metaphorically, he takes over the role as the group's narrator and begins to captivate its members with his stories. The "alluring way" he tells his tales recalls how he gained control over the father and anticipates how he will mesmerize Angelika. This ability to infiltrate the community through the power of narrative is

underscored later when we learn that the guest has become “beinahe unentbehrlich” in the colonel’s home (741). Initially repelled by this eerie stranger, the group begins to view the guest and its relationship to him in an entirely different manner. They agree, “daß der Vorwurf des unheimlichen Wesens auf die zurückfalle, die ihm diesen Vorwurf gemacht” (741). Whereas the family once saw the guest as a repulsive, uncanny outsider, they now accuse themselves, in a strange reversal, of possessing those very same negative qualities. The familiar and homely in Hoffmann’s tale has been rendered unfamiliar and unhomely by the guest’s arrival. Why the change? During his visits, he captivates the community of listeners with his stories: “Seine Erzählungen rissen in lebendigem Feuer unwiderstehlich hin” (741). The effect of his narratives on the group is described in terms of tearing and burning. Here the verb “hinreißen” takes on a double meaning, pointing to the seductive effects of his voice, on the one hand, and to its divisive effects, on the other. The guest’s stories enrapture the community and threaten to tear it apart. He can thus be read as the embodiment of traumatic war narratives, as a walking, talking tale that revisits the group over and over again

Seen from this perspective, the guest’s arrival not only marks an incursion into the narrative; it is a narrative incursion, a tale that returns to haunt the stories the community tells itself. In its characterization of the guest and the ways he mesmerizes his victims, Hoffmann’s tale reflects on narrative’s communal function. More specifically, it does so by comparing the guest to a text, a traveling story that visits its audience. While his voice recalls how narrative can captivate its listeners, his physical appearance evokes a printed text that terrifies and attracts its readers. When the guest arrives, he is dressed in completely black and his face is described as pale (“bleichen Antlitzes”) (736). While these attributes can certainly be read as gothic details,

the black-and-white color scheme also recalls the black and white of the printed page.[45] It is as if a text has entered the group, a point underscored by the title of Hoffmann's tale. "Der unheimliche Gast" not only designates the villain, but also the way texts like it circulate and captivate readers—how such texts constitute a form of "Heimsuchung" by visiting, returning, and haunting their recipients. Angelika's nightmares about the guest support such a reading. She recounts how "eine schneeweiße Hand wurde sichtbar, die Kreise um [sie] her beschrieb" (745). By focusing on the hand, the body part associated with writing, Angelika hints at how texts enrapture readers. It is also no coincidence that she uses the verb "beschreiben" in her account of the guest's incursion into her dreams; an allusion to the act of writing, "be*schreiben*" links him with the creation and narration of texts. Angelika's nightmare contains further textual imagery. "Und immer enger und enger wurden die Kreise und umspannen mich mit Feuerfäden, daß ich zuletzt in dem dichten Gespinst mich nicht regen und bewegen konnte" (745). As threads that combine to form a web in which Angelika remains trapped, the guest's stories (and the stories about him) become interwoven into a text that has a similar effect on the community. He is at once a "Gespenst," a "Gespinst," and a "Hirngespinst"—that is, a ghost, a web, a text, a fantasy that pays recurrent visits to the group as it shares and retells his story.

Yet the guest-text does not only visit the colonel's social circle. As we saw with the three doors slamming on three different narrative levels, the guest's story traffics between the frame community, the embedded stories they exchange, and the world of *Die Serapionsbrüder*, the

[45] See Trautwein for more on how Hoffmann's tale represents and deviates from the Gothic tradition (160; 173; 179).

cycle into which "Gast" is incorporated.[46] The discussion that initiates the gathering of the Serapion Brethren—the club after which the cycle is named—already anticipates this passage of the guest-text through different fictional worlds. One of the group's members, Theodor, laments at the beginning of the cycle's frame story, "nicht wegzuleugnen […] ist die bittre Überzeugung, daß nimmer—nimmer wiederkehrt, was einmal da gewesen. […] Nur Schattenbilder des in tiefe Nacht versunkenen Lebens bleiben zurück, und walten in unsrem Innern, […] wie spukhafte Träume" (13). On the one hand, Theodor bemoans the 12-year separation of his brethren—that the relationship between the group's members has irrevocably changed, leaving behind only indistinct memories and haunting dreams. On the other hand, his comments indicate more than the recognition of time's passage per se or mere nostalgia for a level of conviviality that no longer appears possible. His concerns also anticipate the narrative situation in "Gast." In fact, Dagobert echoes Theodor when he argues, "[n]icht wegzuleugnen ist die geheimnisvolle Geisterwelt, die uns umgibt, und die oft in seltsamen Klängen, ja in wunderbaren Visionen sich uns offenbart" (724). Down to its phrasing, the tale repeats the community's concerns in the cycle. In both texts, the group senses a nagging, indistinct memory that disrupts social cohesion. Even before the members of the Serapion Brethren read "Der unheimliche Gast," they seem preoccupied with the return of unpleasant memories. Theodor voices this preoccupation when he asks, "wen von uns hat indessen nicht der wilde Strudel der Zeit von Ereignis zu Ereignis […]

[46] Trautwein (161; 177-78) also stresses how the guest trespasses between narrative levels and into the world of the reader. His reading distinguishes the tale from the Gothic tradition, whereby the temporal and spatial distance between the fictional world and the reader's world is maintained.

fortgerissen? Konnte denn alles Schrecken […] der Zeit an uns vorübergehen ohne uns gewaltig zu erfassen, ohne tief in unser Inneres hinein seine blutige Spur einzugraben?" (15).

Here Theodor employs the language of trauma. Since their last meeting, the violent passage of time has torn at the community's members, leaving behind wounds in their collective psyche. Given the number of years that have passed, Theodor's words also allude to the national trauma caused by the Napoleonic Wars and the French occupation.[47] If the group meets again for the first time in 1819—the year *Die Serapionsbrüder* was published—then they saw each other for the last time in 1807, the year following Prussian's humiliating defeat at the battles of Jena and Auerstedt. Despite the appearance that they have congregated solely for the sake of sociability, the community's members, just like the storytellers they narrate in "Gast," do not simply constitute a *Biedermeier* idyll. On the contrary, they are haunted by events that have carved "bloody traces" into the social psyche. As a textual visitation, "Gast" reintroduces memories of the war into the community of storytellers in the cycle, just as the literal guest does in the tale itself. As "Zerstreuung," the guest-text traffics between narrative levels, transgressing several diegetic thresholds at once. It thus follows that Dagobert describes the incursion of ghostly memories as a "horrid visit" ["eines grauenhaften Besuchs"] (724). The reading of "Der unheimliche Gast" functions as precisely such a visit, whereby the text re-inflicts the disunity caused by the war and the occupation. The "uncanny guest" who embodies the traumatic memories and the text that bears his name circulate in the form of "Zerstreuung"—as an entertaining distraction that terrifies and titillates. The guest-text's passage from social circle to another does not, therefore, simply undermine group cohesion. On the contrary, his arrival and

[47] Pikulik (21-22) also registers how Theodor's rhetoric alludes to the turbulent times of the Wars of Liberation.

the acoustic signals accompanying it occasion the vicarious retelling of historical traumas, an act that also binds the community by allowing its individual members to resonate with one another sympathetically. Such texts function as placeholders for the eventuality that the trauma could repeat itself in the real world. Story and reality, to put it differently, are part of the same continuum, whereby reality can replace story and story can repeat reality. Texts such as "Gast" are like the ghosts they narrate; they haunt the members of the audience, who also form a communal bond by sharing in the anxiety of this potential return.[48]

In the conversation that follows the reading of "Gast," the Serapion Brethren hint at the titillating eventuality of such a return. Cyprian, one the club's members, reveals that an event transpired in the neighborhood that recalls the tale's plot: "In einen stillen gemütlichen Familienkreis trat, als eben allerlei Gespenstergeschichten aufgetischt wurden, plötzlich ein Fremder" (770). Yet another cozy social circle, yet another round of ghost stories, yet another sudden incursion by a foreigner. The guest and his story, Cyprian's comment suggests, are omnipresent; not only the characters in the Brethren's stories, not only its members, but also the surrounding community appears haunted by such visitations. Cyprian continues, noting that "Dieser Fremde" disturbs "nicht nur den frohen Abend, sondern dann das Glück, die Ruhe der ganzen Familie auf lange Zeit" (770). Hoffmann's text thus figures the uncanny guest as spatially and temporally pervasive. He seems to lurk in multiple homes at multiple times, unsettling the community not only during the time in which its members read about him, but also long after his story is over. Considering that "Gast" links the family with the nation, the guest's

[48] Here my reading diverges from Trautwein's (183), which argues that the ambivalent role of tales like "Gast" signals the ideological disorientation of the German bourgeoisie after the Wars of Liberation.

ability to disturb the peace for an extended time suggests that stories like his have consequences for the community of German readers addressed by such texts. This community, in other words, is figured as yet another social circle into which the guest (and the memories of the war he embodies) could trespass. The potential repetition of such incursions certainly keeps the community on edge, but the entertainment, the "Zerstreuung" that results from retelling national traumas need not, as Schiller feared, distract and disperse the fatherland's readership. The repetition, the echoing, the reverberation of such events in narrative form can also help bind the group as a national reading community that shares the vicarious fear of trauma's real return.[49]

Conclusion

A comparison of Goethe's *Unterhaltungen* and Hoffmann's "Gast" yields insights into how literary texts of the period narrate the French invasion in ways that encourage the imagination of a national community. Both texts do so by emphasizing hospitality on the levels of plot and structure. Goethe's cycle and Hoffmann's tale construe the hospitable gathering as a space in which their protagonists can cope with the social divisions provoked by the war. The entertainment they enjoy consists not only of food, drink, and repose, but also of collective storytelling, an act that promises to hold them together in the face of events that threaten to tear them apart. Hospitality also emerges as a narrative, textual, and musical metaphor, whereby the provision, incorporation, dissemination, and reverberation of stories mirror the guest-host interaction. This notion of narrative hospitality also extends to the relationship between text and reader. Like Schiller's *Horen* announcement, Goethe's cycle and Hoffmann's tale suggest that literature itself can function as a hospitable act with political consequences. Just as the embedded

[49] See Safranski (405) for a broader discussion of sociability's role in binding the community in frame narratives of the Romantic period.

stories sustain the frame communities of such texts, the *Unterhaltungen* and "Gast" sustain the German reading community that looks to them for entertainment in times of crisis.

Entertainment, however, functions differently in Goethe and Hoffmann's texts. Ultimately, the two works provide historically divergent answers to the problem of narrating the wars with France. Published at the conflict's outset, the *Unterhaltungen* depict a community whose entertainment helps them work through a national trauma that distracts and divides its members. The cycle's embedded tales indirectly treat the war's consequences, and its textual metaphors of the embroidery hoop and the writing desk address the communal dynamics of integration and disintegration. The entertainment essential to the group's hospitality is therefore not a means to ignore unpleasant realities, but rather offers an outlet to process political events whose direct discussion would sever communal bonds. Entertainment in Hoffmann's tale operates differently. Published five years after Napoleon's defeat, "Gast" depicts how two decades of war have influenced the German national psyche. This accumulated damage manifests itself in the tale's complex narrative layering. Incorporated into a larger cycle, "Gast" exhibits a sophisticated reflection on literature's power to represent and shape communal dynamics. Its textual metaphor, the uncanny guest, shows how stories traffic between the imagination and reality. As the embodiment of the war, the guest seems to be an interruption, an unwelcome "text" that distracts and divides the communities he trespasses upon. Yet as a traveling story that allows not only Hoffmann's protagonists but also those Germans who read about him to vicariously experience a national trauma, the guest also fosters communal bonds. The blow, the "Schlag" caused by the doors he throws open, allows the strings of the German soul to vibrate. By reliving the story of his incursion into a social circle that resembles their own,

readers are invited to imagine themselves as part of an expanded circle, a national community whose members share the titillating fear of another foreign invasion.

While the *Unterhaltungen* and "Gast" perform acts of hospitality by expanding the reader's social circle into an imagined community, they do not simply exemplify literature's capacity to foster an inclusive vision of German national identity. The narrative hospitality they offer is certainly inclusive in that it gathers, as Anderson argues, members who would otherwise remain strangers. But literature's potential to open the circle, to invite more and more strangers to imagine themselves as intimates, is underwritten by its potential to close the circle, to exclude those deemed unwelcome for membership. We now turn to chapter two, which examines narrative inhospitality, that is, literature's role in discriminating between those who belong to the imagined German national community and those who do not.

Chapter Two

Discriminating Tastes: *Die deutsche Tischgesellschaft*, Brentano's *Die mehreren Wehmüller* and Arnim's *Isabella von Ägypten*

Goethe's *Unterhaltungen deutscher Ausgewanderten* and Hoffmann's "Der unheimliche Gast" exemplify how literature, as a form of hospitality, can sustain and reinforce communal bonds tested by external threats like the wars with France. The two texts at the core of this chapter, Clemens Brentano's *Die mehreren Wehmüller und ungarischen Nationalgesichter* (1817) and Achim von Arnim's *Isabella von Ägypten* (1812), also promise hospitality to a community in crisis, but they shift the focus from the external threat of the French invasion to perceived internal threats like Jewish assimilation. The two novellas, in other words, seek to shore up communal bonds by discriminating against groups deemed un-German by Brentano and Arnim, whose texts imagine Germany as an exclusive club. Both authors practiced this idea of the nation as a closed society when they became members of *Die deutsche Tischgesellschaft*, the patriotic dining club Arnim founded in 1811. The Table Society is perhaps best known for its exclusions. Its membership rules dictated that only men of Christian birth were welcome; women, Jews, and Philistines were not. Scholars have noted how the Table Society's inhospitality deviated from early Romantic sociability, but what has gone unexplored is the role of dining itself in the club's program of discrimination.[50] This chapter argues that the space around which the Table Society's members gathered is essential to understanding Brentano and Arnim's particular vision of Germany. The table in *Wehmüller* and *Isabella* emerges as a symbolic communal space where national belonging is acted out, and the rules governing inclusions and exclusions at table shed light on distinctions made between Germans and non-

[50] See, for example, Dann (122), Oesterle (71), and Nienhaus (42-43).

Germans. Central to the following discussion are the questions of who is allowed at the national table and what practices and prohibitions secure a place in this circle.

As indicated by the chapter's title, taste proves essential to understanding the rules of national membership articulated in the Table Society, *Wehmüller*, and *Isabella*. Given the centrality of hospitality in the club and the literary texts, it follows that the shared tasting of food as well as the shared pleasure of narrative play a role in gathering community. In this sense, the Society and the novellas invoke the ancient symposium in their depiction of gatherings at table that center on the collective consumption of food, drink, and stories. Like the classical symposia, the gatherings in the Table Society, *Wehmüller*, and *Isabella* evince a form of sociability that reinforces the communal identity, and taste, in its literal and figurative meanings, proves central to regulating membership. This potential to restrict entrance into the club recalls Pierre Bourdieu's notion of taste as an expression of self-definition and discrimination. He argues that taste not only classifies, but also "classifies the classifier"—that social subjects "distinguish themselves by the distinctions they make, between the beautiful and the ugly, the distinguished and the vulgar, in which their position in the objective classification is expressed or betrayed" (6). While Bourdieu's claims center on how aesthetic taste generates distinctions between socio-economic classes, they also prove helpful for examining the rules of national membership in the Table Society, *Wehmüller*, and *Isabella*. As we'll see, multiple meanings of taste intersect in the club and in the literary texts. Here taste means both aesthetic judgments and dietary preferences, and what brings these two modes of distinction together is their power as metaphors of national self-definition. The decisions concerning what belongs in the corpus of authentic German art are bound up with the decisions concerning what belongs in the German social body. Taste determines who merits a place at the national table, where the correct manners—in the

behavioral and aesthetic senses—are cultivated and displayed. Taste, in short, promises to refine the German national community.

In its examination of discriminating tastes in the Table Society, *Wehmüller*, and *Isabella*, this chapter traces how the speeches Brentano and Arnim delivered to the club left traces in their literary texts. It begins with the club's membership rules and then investigates how the reasons for excluding Philistines and Jews resurface in *Wehmüller* and *Isabella*. Two notions of discriminatory taste are evoked in the statutes, the one banning the Philistines on aesthetic grounds, the other targeting Jews on the basis of diet. In Brentano's table speech "Der Philister vor, in und nach der Geschichte" (1811), he decries the Philistines' tastelessness not only as a social misstep but also as an attack on art's role in articulating a distinct national identity. The Philistine, he claims, replaces genuine aesthetic expressions of Germanness with works of cosmopolitan conformity. Published six years after "Philister," Brentano's *Wehmüller* addresses similar concerns. In its account of the trials of its eponymous itinerant painter—he becomes stranded in a quarantined village before he can sell his prefabricated portraits—the novella depicts a Philistine artist's entrance into a community reminiscent of the Table Society. What unfolds is not only a conflict between two modes of portraying collective identity, but also a reimagining of Romantic sociability's role in staging a coherent nation at table. While Brentano's speech and novella target the tasteless Philistine, Arnim's texts set their sights on the dietary tastes of the Jews. In his table speech "Ueber die Kennzeichen des Judenthums" (1811), Arnim construes diet as a set of signs that distinguishes Jews from Germans, and by identifying these culinary codes, Arnim seeks to reverse the process of Jewish assimilation. Similar issues manifest themselves in *Isabella*, a fantastic tale of a gypsy princess who ultimately leads her people back to their Egyptian homeland. A tale of mistaken identities, Arnim's novella also

looks to diet as a cultural category that promises to anchor collective identity. Ethnic groups like Gypsies and Jews, *Isabella* suggests, can be distinguished by what they eat, but the table may not be the most stable surface upon which to perform a coherent national identity.

Brentano, the Philistines, and the Bo(u)nds of Taste

In addition to relating a satirical history of the religious and cultural figure of the Philistine, Brentano's table speech "Der Philister vor, in und nach der Geschichte" elaborates on the membership statutes of the Table Society.[51] Put simply, Philistines are unwelcome in the club because they lack "Angemessenheit" (*Texte* 5).[52] As a form of membership conditioned by taste, belonging in the Table Society is both exclusive and inclusive. The rules governing membership are thus constituted both as prohibitions and prescriptions. And what the Philistines lack, the members of the Table Society possess in the form of common practices.[53] During the club's second meeting, for instance, Brentano presented a list of suggestions concerning markers of taste that would distinguish insiders from outsiders. His "Vorschläge zur äußeren Verzierung der

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[51] On satire and its role in fostering community in the Table Society, see Nienhaus (182-82; 190) and Oesterle (58-62).

[52] Dembeck (258-60) argues that Fichte's transcendental philosophy is key to understanding the club's exclusions. The Philistines, he claims, are unwelcome in a group that champions the values of romantic, self-reflexive sympoesy because they prove incapable of transcendental reflection.

[53] Sackett (71-76) also emphasizes taste in his reading of "Philister" as an expression of the club's social and aesthetic ideal, arguing against the simple dichotomy of poet vs. bourgeois. He claims that the speech does not separate the romantic poet and his cohorts from the bourgeois world but rather grants them a privileged position within it.

deutschen christlichen Tischgesellschaft" includes objects and practices that convey the group's shared ethos. In making such suggestions, Brentano asserts, he articulates the views of a society, "welche nach seiner Meinung als deutsche, und christliche und also keine Gesetzlose, auch als keine kunstlose erscheinen kann" (*Texte* 15). As representatives of a nation rooted in Germanness and Christianity, Brentano and his companions form a society that also defines itself through a code of rules and taste—a society that is neither "gesetzlos" nor "kunstlos." Such a code draws on a set of "äußerlichen Zeichen" that promise to distinguish German identity (14). As markers of taste, these signs create a bond between members, while at the same time delineating those boundaries meant to keep the tasteless Philistines out of the Table Society. Taste, in short, creates bonds and bounds.

More specifically, Brentano sees tableware and storytelling as practices that create such bonds. He implores the club's members to purchase a "kunstreiches Trinckgeschirr altdeutscher Art von edlem Metall" and individualized wine glasses, each engraved with a different "deutscher christlicher Kernspruch" (15). As a marker of group unity, the wine vessel, much like it did in the classical symposium, forges communal bonds, with each member sipping from the same source. Further, the raising of the personalized goblets during toasts constitutes another ritual that inspires a sense of community. As Brentano puts it, the glasses serve as an "Evangelium ihrer deutschen und christlichen Gesinnung" (15). Moreover, Brentano suggested another form of community that fulfills a purpose similar to that of the paraphernalia and rituals surrounding the group's wine consumption. Collective storytelling was to promote feelings of patriotism and unity. Each member, Brentano insists, should show his "Vaterländische Treue und Tapferkeit" by telling an "ehrbaren Schwanck" at table, and the best stories would be recorded in a "großes Buch […] zu eigner und der Nachwelt Ergötzung" (15-16). As practitioners of a form

of sympoesy, the club's storytellers take part in a symbolic gesture of political unity, whereby the disparate voices of the fatherland are collected and unified in Brentano's great book of stories. Such a collection, or as Brentano describes it, "ein Schatz der Erinnerung unsrer Geselligkeit" (22), designates sociability as a patriotic and aesthetic undertaking. Brentano's emphasis on tableware and narrative as ways to forge communal bonds recalls Bourdieu's arguments concerning taste. The aesthetic choices made by the club's members—their choice of tableware and shared stories—distinguish them as insiders.

Bourdieu's broader insight that taste differentiates social groups not only rings true in Brentano's list of practices for the Table Society, but also throughout his table speech "Der Philister." Here he consistently skewers the Philistines' aesthetic choices. Their literary preferences, for example, are suspect—they choose Voltaire over Shakespeare, Wieland over Goethe, Ramler over Klopstock (65)—as are their tastes in music, painting, and architecture. They can only appreciate "platte, tändelnde, oder Bocksteife Musik […]; schlechte Gemälde, zusammen gewürfelte Allegorien," and a "Tempelchen im griechischen Gartengeschmack" exemplifies their "Bauideale" (72). Brentano thus distinguishes, to paraphrase Bourdieu, the Philistines by the distinctions they make—or more precisely, by their failure to make the correct distinctions. The right aesthetic choices are, in turn, ascribed to the members of the satire's audience, a community of taste that prefers Shakespeare, Goethe, and Klopstock over the Philistine's inferior scribblers, Beethoven over his trivial, stiff music, and the grandeur of Gothic architecture over his little Greek garden temple. Because the Philistine displays such questionable tastes, Brentano vilifies him as the enemy of artistic creation as such, first by proclaiming that "Alle Künste leiden mehr oder weniger unter dem Druck der Philisterei" (69), and second by decrying him as the "ausgebohrne Feind aller Idee, aller Begeisterung, alles

Genies und aller freien göttlichen Schöpfung" (44). The Philistine, for Brentano, has devilishly bad taste. He further underscores this hallmark of Philistinism by playing on the dual meaning of taste. One of the signs marking the Philistine is his inability to consume culture properly: "kein Philister kann etwas verdauen; was er geistig zu sich nimmt, liegt in ihm, wie Ballast" (61). When the Philistine consumes intellectual products like literature or music, he fails to "digest" them, to incorporate them into his being. Here the etymological roots of the verb digest underscore the Philistine's inability to distinguish. Derived from the Latin "digere," digestion not only refers to the assimilation of food into the body, but also more broadly to a process of division, separation, and arrangement. Unable to perform nuanced aesthetic divisions, separations, and arrangements, the Philistine evinces a poor palate and belly full of undigested cultural ballast.

The Philistine's tastelessness, according to Brentano's speech, also has political consequences because it poses a threat to German national identity. The Philistines' disparagement of German culture, he asserts, constitutes their highest betrayal of the fatherland. For example, they construe German poetry as the mechanical application of skill (65); they infiltrate and undermine the world of German theater (67-72); and they detest old folk festivals and sagas (72). In place of a distinct *Volk* culture, the Philistine desires to construct a bland, regimented world where individuality disappears, where national differences give way to cosmopolitan conformity. They happily confess their plan to destroy "alles, was ihr Vaterland zu einem bestimmten individuellen Lande macht" and to annihilate "alte Sitten und Herrkömmlichkeiten" (72). This attack on individual expressions of national culture is embodied by the image of the uniform—an image that will return in my discussion of Brentano's novella *Wehmüller*. The Philistine insists, "daß die Menschen ihren eigenen Rock lieben, und geben

ihnen deswegen alle einerlei Röcke" (73). In the Philistine's utopia, therefore, cultures are rendered virtually interchangeable; all peoples, like the monotonous frock they receive, are cut from the same cloth. While satirical elements in "Philister" are hard to overlook, Brentano nonetheless articulates a serious concern about the cultural threat of Philistine cosmopolitanism. Surrounded by a German society he sees as increasingly tainted by Philistine values, Brentano and the *Tischgesellschaft* he addresses perceive a threat to their project of grounding national identity in poetic traditions. A distinctly German identity, the core of their patriotic sentiments, could be smothered under the uniformity of Philistine cosmopolitanism.

In addition to the image of the uniform, the speech also employs the metaphor of infection to decry the Philistines' lack of taste. The section devoted to cataloguing their inability to make the right aesthetic choices is entitled "Philistersymptome" (65), and by comparing his enemies to a disease, Brentano reinforces what he sees as the contrast between the lifeless Philistine and the exuberant poet. He describes the Philistines as a "Contagium, als lächerliche Allegorien einer Art gelben Fiebers, dessen Patienten bei vollkommener Gesundheit mausetodt sind" (43-44). Having succumbed to an allegorical contagion, he insists, the Philistine is rendered a mindless zombie. He may physically survive, but mentally he may as well be dead. Lacking any intellectual, emotional, or spiritual pulse, he is but a "scheinlebendiger Kerl" unaware of his own death (44). But the metaphor of disease is more than a juxtaposition of the life-giving, affirmative qualities of poetry with the life-sapping, negative qualities of Philistinism; by diagnosing Philistinism as a plague, Brentano also reasserts the importance of discrimination—the Philistine's inability to make distinctions. Put differently: just as the plague does not distinguish between its victims—it infects regardless of age, status, nationality—the Philistine refuses to recognize those differences that render a specific culture unique. Like the

plague, Philistinism is a great leveler that ignores distinctions, and the infectiousness of the Philistine plague, for Brentano, threatens to taint German national culture by eradicating its distinctive traditions.

A Distinguished Painter with Indistinguishable Subjects: Wehmüller as Philistine Artist

Although Brentano delivered "Philister" to the Table Society six years before he published *Die mehreren Wehmüller und ungarischen Nationalgesichter*, the speech left clear traces in the novella. First, as the story of a painter who markets his mass-produced, prefabricated portraits of Hungarian soldiers as "National Faces," the novella satirizes a Philistine artist's efforts to render the individuals of a culture as more or less interchangeable. Alluding to the second half of the novella's bizarre title, Brentano's narrator explains, "Was übrigens diese 39 Nationalgesichter betrifft […]: Sie waren nichts mehr, nichts weniger als 39 Portraits von Ungaren, welche Herr Wehmüller gemalt hatte, ehe er sie gesehen" (*Wehmüller* 254). The title's first half refers to the novella's primary conflict, the identity crisis that ensues when "Der bekannte Künstler" (254) learns he has suffered the same fate as the subjects of his paintings: Wehmüller discovers he has not one, but two *Doppelgänger*! As but one of "Several Wehmüllers," the once distinguished artist has become as indistinguishable as his Hungarian National Faces. Second, the novella depicts a form of sociability similar to that practiced in the Table Society. Denied passage across the sanitary cordon—the text's first sentence announces an outbreak of plague—because he cannot identify himself as the "real" Wehmüller, he is forced to wait in the village tavern until the border is reopened.[54] Here he witnesses not only how the

[54] While he primary emphasizes *Wehmüller*'s status as the comic counterpart to Brentano's more serious *Kasperl*, Dickens also perceptively hints at the importance of the novella's main setting

novella's other figures gather at table to tell stories—their movement is also impeded by the cordon—but also how their interactive practice of storytelling and criticism elaborates on those same issues raised in Brentano's satire. In other words, the sociability enacted in the tavern reflects on how Philistine tastelessness threatens to efface those differences that allow for the expression of distinct collective identities. In effect, the collection of embedded stories told by characters representing various nationalities and ethnicities constitute an alternative set of "portraits" to Wehmüller's monotonous National Faces.

Brentano's novella endows Franz Wehmüller with many of the Philistine traits outlined in his table speech. One scene in particular—his initial exclusion from the tavern—marks him as an object of mockery, thereby repeating specific images from "Philister." When Wehmüller pleads for admission, the community gathered inside the tavern erupts in laughter and screams in astonishment (263). Having heard rumors of Wehmüller's Doppelgänger wandering the countryside, the tavern's patrons try to ascertain the mysterious (and potentially dangerous) stranger's identity. Is he a "vampire" or "die Leiche des ersten an der Pest verstorbenen Wehmüllers," as the Croatian nobleman suggests? Could he, as the Italian fireworks artist Baciochi worries, infect the other patrons because he has returned from contaminated territory? (263). As they deliberate, the Gypsy violinist Michaly begins playing a "Schariwari," a boisterous song that sends the other guests into a dancing frenzy (264). The community's reaction to Wehmüller thus invokes specific passages in "Philister." First, by identifying him as a vampiric, zombie-like carrier of plague, it marks him as the embodiment of those values disparaged in the speech: he is parasitic, lifeless, and sick. Second, although the community

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for the problem of national identity in *Wehmüller*. He observes how the tavern is located at the crossroads of Europe (14).

perceives him as a potential threat, his appearance occasions more merriment than dread. While he certainly provokes a "Geschrei des Verwunderns" (263) and paranoid theories about his identity, he becomes little more than the butt of one big joke, an object of communal mockery. Here Michaly's choice of musical genre proves telling. As a form of "Katzenmusik"—the "caterwauling of ridiculing […] chants" often accompanied by the "throwing of stones, rotten fruit or excrement"—the "Schariwari" is a shaming ritual directed at an individual's transgression of community morals (Brophy 138-39). It seems Wehmüller has, even before crossing the tavern's threshold, earned the community's scorn.

To be sure, Wehmüller's admission into the community could spell its literal demise. On the most basic level, the exclusion of a spooky Doppelgänger or an infected intruder hardly requires explanation. However, seen in the context of Brentano's "Philister," Wehmüller's humiliation is metaphorical. His transgression is also an aesthetic one. As one character puts it, Wehmüller suffers divine retribution because his art eschews differences in favor of uniformity: the appearance of Wehmüller's double, "sey nur wohl eine Strafe Gottes für den ächten Wehmüller, weil dieser alle Ungarn über einen Leisten male, so gäbe es jetzt auch mehrere Wehmüller über einen Leisten" (258). The association of Wehmüller's method of portraiture with a last—a shoemaker's template—underlines his failure to acknowledge individual distinctions.[55] Instead of registering the unique features of the human face, Wehmüller relies on a standardized pattern that allows him to manufacture his portraits at a breakneck pace (254). By labeling the portraits "ungarische Nationalgesichter," the novella further highlights how they are not custom-made for the individual buyer, but rather mass-produced for "faceless" clients.

[55] While Böhler (155) also interprets the template as an emblem of aesthetic and economic standardization, he does not link it to national distinctions.

Further, his National Faces recall Lavater's *Physiognomische Fragmente*, which features two sections dedicated to the classification and illustration of "Vermischte Nationalgesichter" (Lavater 310-20). By linking "Nationalphysiognomien" with "Nationalcharakter," Lavater advocates a method of portraiture that dispenses with the artist's need to consider the subject's individual traits. Just as measurement figures prominently in Lavater's physiognomic sketches, it informs Wehmüller's method of portraiture. Similar to the instruments Lavater uses to measure the forehead, the devices contained within Wehmüller's mechanical walking stick signify a reductive approach to portraying the human face. Like a Swiss Army knife, the stick contains several tools: a painter's stick (to support the hand holding the brush), a measuring stick, a level, a ruling pen, a barometer, a thermometer, and "das Brauchbarste von allem," a foot file! (*Wehmüller* 255). While such tools could help Wehmüller paint precise, individualized portraits, they reveal his fondness for measurement as such. For him portraiture is but the reduction of identity to abstract figures. By viewing the foot file in conjunction with Wehmüller's other devices, its supreme utility becomes clear. As a tool to remove the skin's imperfections, the file encapsulates Wehmüller's method of leveling differences; like the foot file, his portraits scrape away the individual face's irregularities to produce a smooth, uniform surface.

Wehmüller's relationship to his audience also designates him as a Philistine artist. Take his sales pitch, for example. Standing in the marketplace, he has it announced that "der bekannte Künstler, Herr Wehmüller […] lade diejenigen unter einem hochedlen Publikum, welche ihr Portrait wünschen, unterthänigst ein, sich dasselbe, Stück zu Stück zu 1 Ducaten in Gold selbst auszusuchen" (254). Profit, above all, is the driving force behind the portraits, with the

interaction between artist and recipient reduced to an economic transaction.[56] As inferred by the adverb "unterthänigst," Wehmüller provides a service to his customers, who undiscerningly snatch up his wares. Moreover, the narrator's comparison of the portraits to perhaps the most transient commodity sheds further light on the mercenary nature of Wehmüller's art. Because each client personally selects his "Bildniß fertig nach bestimmtem Preis, wie einen Weck auf dem Laden," Wehmüller receives no complaints about "Unähnlichkeit oder langes Sitzen" (254). Spared from all criticism, his National Faces are, so to speak, as mindlessly scarfed down as the breadrolls to which they are compared. This analogy proves apt in another way: if the customer is not impulsive enough to buy the painting immediately, it runs the risk of going stale—of revealing itself as a dry, tasteless commodity. And like the roll, the paintings pander to his clients' most basic tastes, providing little more than cheap filler. Finally, both the profession of Wehmüller's clients and his price schedule reveal that his art, as the table speech insists, suffers "unter dem Druck der Philisterei" (69). Having already painted the Hungarian soldiers' faces, he has each client select the portrait that best approximates his likeness. For no extra charge, he then adds personal traits like scars and moustaches, but demands an extra fee for completing the uniform (254). Significantly, Wehmüller only portrays soldiers, a segment of society that values the unit over the individual; and by attaching a higher economic worth to the uniform, he values a feature that should matter little to the portraitist. Instead of emphasizing the individuality of the face, he sees more to gain from stressing the regularity imposed by the uniform.

Wehmüller's collection of National Faces contains a political subtext. They allude, as one critic has argued, to the redrawing of the German states' borders following the Congress of

[56] On the relationship between Philistinism and the commercialization of art, see Böhler (154-57) and Nienhaus (197).

Vienna, with the number of Wehmüller's paintings corresponding to the number of states in the newly created German Confederation, a jumble of fragmented political entities whose differences are as superficial as the distinctions between the painted Hungarians' mustaches and uniforms (Frühwald 155). Brentano's novella thus recalls his attack on the Philistines' impoverished understanding of collective identity. He critiques their artificial definitions of nationhood in the table speech, claiming that "Ihr höchster Plan, ein Land zu beglücken ist, es in ein rein gewürfeltes Damenbrett zu verwandeln, es ist so leichter ins Kleine zu reduzieren" (*Texte* 73). Like the arbitrarily drawn checkerboard of the German Confederation, Wehmüller's portraits embody the Philistine impulse to impose artificial distinctions, ignoring thereby the natural, organic contours of a people's identity. Moreover, Brentano's alignment of the Philistine with a contagion and the questions raised in the tavern as to whether Wehmüller is a transmitter of plague point to Philistinism as a disfigurement of national identity, as a pox on the "face" of the Fatherland. At one point in the satire, Brentano refers to Philistinism as a form of "Blatterkrankheit" (60). Given Wehmüller's philosophy of portraiture, the image of small pox proves fitting: both the paintings and the pox disfigure a key marker of identity; they both distort the human face.[57] While conferring an abstract national identity, in other words, the paintings at the same time obscure individual identity. The novella thus registers a contradiction in nationalist thought, whereby designations like "German" or "Hungarian" simultaneously bolster and undercut identity. Read through the lens of the speech, Wehmüller's paintings ultimately question art as a national category.

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[57] In this sense, the National Faces recall the dynamic Paul de Man (627) refers to in his notion of *Prosopopeia*: just as the trope of autobiography represents the simultaneous giving and taking of faces, so too do Wehmüller's portraits simultaneously face and deface, figure and disfigure.

In "Aus einem geplünderten Postfelleisen," a short prose piece published in the same year as *Wehmüller*, Brentano comments further on the problem of conferring designations of national identity. In what can be considered a reference to Wehmüller's National Faces and the hodgepodge of states created at the Congress of Vienna, "Postfelleisen" laments a lack of genuine, familial community among Germans:

> das Gefühl eine Gemeinde, eine Familie zu sein, ist erloschen. Alles ist wie eine große, nur auf Rechnungstabellen zusammenhängende, lieblose Masse zusammengegossen. Es ist, als ob man Wein, Bier, Wasser, Milch, Branntwein, Essig, Dinte und Spülicht zusammengösse und es eine Nationalsuppe nennte, die Köche aber essen nicht mit. (1144)

By comparing the German Confederation to a National Soup made up of disparate ingredients arbitrarily thrown together, Brentano once again frames collective identity as a question of taste. First, the culinary metaphor makes it clear that such a political concoction, in its disgusting combination of elements, fails to satisfy calls for a "natural," meaningful unification of German lands—a unification, Brentano seems to suggest, that cannot be achieved through the kind of abstract, bloodless Philistine calculation referenced by the image of "Rechnungstabellen." Second, one of the National Soup's ingredients stands out in particular: ink. Apart from the dishwater, ink is the only non-beverage in Brentano's list of unappetizing components; yet it does allude to another form of ingestion, namely the consumption of aesthetic products like literature. Ink that has been spilled in the creation of Philistine art à la Wehmüller thus contributes to a tasteless (or perhaps more precisely, distasteful) expression of national identity. Here the Table Society's project of rehabilitating taste in the interest of forging a distinct definition of Germanness emerges as an intervention, whereby the cooks who slap together an

unpalatable definition of national identity are to be replaced by Brentano and his fellow arbiters of taste. Instead of dishing up a muddled National Soup or abstract National Faces, they seek to serve up an alternative that honors distinctions, a more tasteful option that reconciles the particularity of the individual with the universality of the nation. In its depictions of Romantic sociability, *Wehmüller* documents this difficult negotiation and how Brentano's estimation of collaborative aesthetic expressions of national identity evolved in the years between his delivery of "Der Philister" to the Table Society and his composition of the novella.[58]

Reimagining Romantic Sociability in *Die mehreren Wehmüller*

Besides satirizing Wehmüller's Philistinism, Brentano's novella also recalls the social context in which he delivered "Der Philister." Indeed, *Wehmülller*'s frame narrative features a community that resembles the Table Society: as the tavern's patrons wait for the sanitary cordon to be lifted, they gather around the table, drink wine, and exchange stories (*Wehmüller* 267). Admittedly, the sociability practiced in the tavern differs from the Table Society in important ways: as a more or less spontaneous gathering of men and women representing various nationalities, ethnicities, and social classes, the congregation in *Wehmüller* is anything but a highly organized club whose membership is limited to men of a relatively narrow social stratum. Yet the colorful gathering in the tavern is not a completely random assembly: each "member" belongs in some way to "dem mitteleuropäischen Vielvölkerstaat Österreich-Ungarn" (Mecklenburg 5). Wehmüller and the court tutor Lindpeindler, for example, are Viennese; Baciochi the Venetian and the Croatian nobleman come from territories incorporated into Austria

[58] In his reading of "Postfelleisen," Puschner (433) also registers this shift from Brentano's earlier sentiments of literature's place in fostering a national community to one of resignation.

in 1815; Wastl the carpet merchant hails from Tyrol; Michaly, the innkeeper Frau Tschermack, and the chambermaid Nanny are Hungarian; the nameless Savoyard boy begs his way through Habsburg territory; and Devillier has transplanted himself from France to Hungary after inheriting an estate there. As a microcosm of the Austrian Empire, this colorful collective approximates a Romantic table society that boasts a multinational roster, on the one hand, and represents a conservative "katholisches, alteuropäisches 'Reich der Mitte,'" on the other (Mecklenburg 58).[59] Finally, Brentano's notions of decorum and taste resurface not only in the scenes at table in the frame, but also figure prominently in the embedded tales themselves. Just as he hoped that sociable storytelling would forge a bond (both aesthetic and political) between the Table Society's members, he links narrative exchange to the articulation of a collective identity in the community gathered in the tavern. In this sense, the purpose of sociability in both the Table Society and in *Wehmüller* is to combat the blurring of distinctions embodied by Philistinism. Whereas the Philistines in Brentano's satire seek to replace the organic cultural differences between nations with cosmopolitan abstraction, Wehmüller's Philistine philosophy of portraiture metaphorically threatens to blur the distinctions between the various sub-groups represented by the tavern's patrons.

The anxiety surrounding the Philistine's lack of discernment manifests itself in *Wehmüller*'s embedded tales in both content and form. Indeed, the problem of distinction shapes the conflicts of all three narratives. As the first narrator, the Croatian nobleman tells his table companions the story of the mysterious tomcat Mores, who, it turns out, is no cat at all, but rather

[59] While Mecklenburg (55-56; 58) also argues that the gathering in the tavern reenacts the gatherings of the Table Society, he focuses on the demonization and exclusion of the figure of the Turk.

a shape-shifting Turkish poacher who presides as a warlock over a feline coven made up of local women. Secondly, Devillier follows up this story with a similar tale of mistaken identity: after stumbling upon his own coven of cats—hundreds of them stand as if rooted into an oyster bed in Normandy—he and a comrade suspect they have wandered into a witch's sabbath, only later to discover the animals' paws have become ensnared by the mollusks they intended to consume. Thirdly, Baciochi's tale centers on the uncanny figure of the Spectral Hunter, who, we learn, is no legendary spook, but rather Devillier, who, as the ringleader of a band of smugglers, disguises himself as the Hunter in order to rendezvous with his lover, the Gypsy maiden Mitidika. Of course, these examples primarily highlight the blurring of individual identities, but the stories also interrogate national distinctions by portraying borders not as fixed demarcations between groups, but rather as fluid boundaries that confuse as much as they define.[60] Situated on the Croatian-Turkish border, the first tale may focus on the nobleman's encounter with Mores, but it ends with an international dispute, an accusation of "Gränzverletzung" leveled against the Croat for illegally entering Turkish territory (273). Baciochi's tale also thematizes the violation of state boundaries: first, it begins with a fireworks display celebrating the coronation of Napoleon, a ruler responsible for the redrawing of Europe's borders; second, it takes place on the Austrian frontier, where Baciochi and his companions discover how Devillier's ring of smugglers exploits a vulnerable border with Italy. Hence, just as the physical appearances of Mores, the oyster-eating cats, and the Spectral Hunter lead to a misreading of identity, political borders, the tales infer, blur the lines between nations instead of sharpening them.

[60] For interpretations that stress the instability of borders, see Birrell (76-79) and Knauer (102-06).

The embedded stories also address distinctions on the formal level. As critics have observed, each tale exemplifies a specific genre that embodies the national traits of the individual storytellers.[61] While the Croatian, for instance, narrates a saga that reflects a "backwoods mentality of credulity and garrulousness," Devillier relates an anecdote that reflects the rational "spirit of the Enlightenment" (Birrell 80). Although Birrell claims that Baciochi's tale differs from its two predecessors because it lacks any "nationalistic stylization" (86), it does evince a link to a particularly "Italian" genre. While the novella omits a national designation from its description of the story as having an "eigenthumlichen theatralischen Charakter," Baciochi's "Erzählung vom wilden Jäger," with its manneristic qualities and formal ruptures—it is the one embedded tale that bleeds over into the frame narrative—can be classified as a *capriccio* (Schaub 280). Genre emerges, therefore, as a system of classification that promises to uphold national distinctions. By rooting such differences in the aesthetic category of genre, the novella repeats Brentano's call to his fellow Table Society members to prove their patriotism by recounting "Schwänke" (*Texte* 15). Considered by Brentano as a specifically German form, the "Schwank" functions much like his Germanic wine vessel, his "Trinckgeschirr altdeutscher Art von edlem Metall" (15). Both the "Schwank" and the vessel appeal to historical traditions, with the former reinvoking a narrative mode that enjoyed popularity in late-medieval and early-modern Germany, and the latter conjuring up a nebulous "old German" culture that proves as durable as the precious metal from which it is constructed. Further, both "Schwank" and "Trinckgeschirr" constitute elements of a habitus cultivated by the Table Society. They are practices that define membership on the sociable and national levels. *Wehmüller* addresses genre's capacity to help

[61] See Frühwald (156) and Mecklenburg (57-58), who also claim that the stories and the reactions to them embody specific national characteristics.

generate national classifications in a specific passage, when Lindpeindler attributes "eine höhere poetische Wahrheit" to the Croatian's tale because it mirrors, in its form, the characteristics of the political entity it depicts: "sie [die Geschichte] sey durchaus für den Ort, auf welchem sie spiele, scharf bezeichnend" (*Wehmüller* 274).

Yet the question remains as to whether the embedded tales sharply depict the nations from which their narrators hail. Do they, unlike Wehmüller's National Faces, dispense with stereotypes and convey a higher truth as Lindpeindler asserts? Or do they blur the contours of national identity like the Philistine artist's reductive portraits? The stories' presentation and reception differentiate them from Wehmüller's portraits. In the course of the novella, the tavern's patrons create a patchwork of stories, thereby forming a collective narrative that allows them to belong to a greater whole without relinquishing their regional and individual identities. In other words, the community crafts a "portrait" of Austria that, unlike Wehmüller's National Faces, includes multiple voices and perspectives. The three embedded tales recounted by the Croatian nobleman, the Frenchman Devillier, and the Italian Baciochi constitute a richer, more nuanced "National Face," one augmented by Michaly's story of the tragic slaughter of the Gypsies (276-77)[62] and the narratives promised by the Tyrolean and the Savoyard boy at the novella's conclusion (311). Moreover, the "framing" of the community's combined narrative and Wehmüller's paintings reinforces their common purpose of "portraying" national identity, albeit in two different ways. Wehmüller, in fact, does not frame his National Faces, but rolls them together and transports them in a tin cylinder. Although he does so "ohne große Gefahr des Verwischens" (254), his method of "rolling all Hungarians into one," so to speak, runs the risk of

[62] On the novella's figuration of the Gypsy, see Böhler (165-66), Dembeck (266; 272), Dickens (15), Knauer (128-39) and Tesch (690-91).

metaphorically smearing their individual features, of obliterating differences and creating a monolithic entity. Conversely, linked by the narrative frame of the novella, the embedded tales, like a gallery of paintings, remain in dialogue with each other, creating a collective identity while at the same time maintaining autonomy and distinction.

Furthermore, whereas Wehmüller's clients passively consume his paintings, the society in the tavern actively reflects on the aesthetic quality of the tales they exchange. No undiscerning audience, the patrons receive the three narrative portraits in distinct ways: the Croat's tale, we are told, "wirkte auf die verschiedenste Weise in der Gesellschaft" (274). Such lively reactions contrast with the reception of Wehmüller's art, which, with its uncomplicated relationship to its passive audience, is little more than an aesthetic dead end. It simply serves its immediate purpose without eliciting critical thought or bringing forth anything new. Conversely, the collection of tales recounted in the tavern evinces a dynamic relationship between artist and recipient, whereby the audience in the tavern enthusiastically critiques, reenacts, and elaborates upon the embedded stories. In addition to staging narration as a sociable, interactive endeavor, the novella endows the tales with a vitality that contrasts with the lifelessness of Wehmüller's portraits. More specifically, the transitions between tales reveal an interlocking chain of associations, with one story provoking and anticipating the next: Devillier relates his anecdote of hunting down the oyster-eating cats in direct response to the Croat's tale of Mores and his feline coven (277); Baciochi's story of the Spectral Hunter unfolds after the group reacts to Devillier's story by discussing "allerlei Jagdgespenster" (289); and Devillier and then Michaly interrupt Baciochi's tale, filling in essential gaps in his account (298-300, 301-302). In this sense, the two comestibles associated with the portraits and the tales reflect two different modes of reception. While the National Faces, like the bread roles to which they are likened, are little more than filler, the

embedded tales, like the rounds of wine that accompany them, are intoxicating catalysts that inspire further creations.

As much as the novella brands Wehmüller as a Philistine artist, it does not exclude him from its model of sociability. Despite the "Unangemessenheit" of his portraits, he is included in the community of storytellers, both in the tavern and at the idyllic country estate where the novella reaches its jubilant climax. Admittedly, Wehmüller's lack of participation in the group's narrative project in the tavern highlights the tensions between his portraits and the patron's tales: as they swap stories and critical observations, he silently continues painting, putting the finishing touches on one of his National Faces. It seems that two models of depicting national identity remain irreconcilable. While the tavern's narrators attempt to negotiate various degrees of distinction in their stories, Wehmüller ignores such distinctions as he creates yet another "faceless" Hungarian. Yet his Philistine methods are upgraded by the novella's conclusion, which not only celebrates the reestablishment of proper distinctions in his portraits, but also in the lives of Brentano's protagonists. Just as the confusions of identity surrounding Wehmüller's doubles are resolved, so too are the confusions of individual and national identity surrounding his Hungarian subjects. After Wehmüller discovers that his wife Tonerl and his rival Froschauer have impersonated him, he eventually forgives Froschauer, and the two portraitists form a partnership. Although it is tempting to interpret Wehmüller's and Froschauer's joint venture as the novella's endorsement of a questionable Philistine aesthetic, their combined efforts promise to bring about more nuanced national faces that balance preserving individuality and positing a collective identity. How can this be? During the narrator's description of Wehmüller's methods, we learn that Froschauer is of the "entgegengesetzten Schule"—that he paints the soldiers' uniforms first and then charges extra for their faces (255). In contrast to Wehmüller, Froschauer

values the uniqueness of the human face, and his price structure demonstrates a respect for his subjects' individuality instead of reverence of their uniformity. With the help of Froschauer's balancing influence, in short, Wehmüller's portraits have gained a level of distinction. The Philistine artist, the novella's ending suggests, has been reformed.

Wehmüller's rehabilitation coincides with the rehabilitation of distinction as such. The portion of Brentano's novella in which this transition occurs thus deserves careful consideration. In the span of a few pages, between the end of the last embedded tale and the community's relocation to the estate, not only do the blurry contours of Wehmüller's identity regain their definition; the false distinction that is the sanitary cordon has also been corrected: "nur durch ein Mißverständnis sey das Dorf, in dem sie vierzehn Tage blokirt waren, in den Kordon eingeschlossen worden" (307). Further, the confusions surrounding the novella's other figures are resolved, with Devillier learning that Tonerl's male traveling companion is actually Mitidika, his long lost love, dressed in drag. As a celebration of restored distinctions, the gathering at the estate provides a counter-image to the National Soup decried by Brentano. When the tavern's patrons arrive, they are led into a "geräumige Weinlaube," where they enjoy a good breakfast, retell their various adventures, and agree to the noble's request that they help with the vintage (310). Unlike the haphazardly prepared National Soup, the "Weinlese" undertaken by the community's members alludes to a process of careful selection, a process of distinction meant to achieve the most tasteful result. Yet a further difference points to the conservatism of the sociability practiced at the estate: whereas the National Soup consists of disparate ingredients, the wine that symbolizes the national community at the novella's end consists of only one component. The individual grapes may feature differences comparable to those between Austrians, Hungarians, and Croatians, but they are all grapes nonetheless. Such a comparison

may seem reductive, but if one views this collective of central Europeans in the context of the Table Society's political project, it emerges as a kind of wish fulfillment, an ideal of sociability that reconciles the conflicts detailed by Brentano his table speeches. In the idyllic, aristocratic, nostalgic setting of the estate, a community forms in which the reformed Philistine is welcome and narratives like *Wehmüller* function as the basis for distinguishing the faces of those who belong at the national table from those who do not.

Arnim, the Jews, and the Code of Food

In the image of the community's hospitality at the estate, Brentano's novella presents an alternative to the Philistine homogeneity. The gathering represents the ideal of unity in difference, whereby members retain individual distinctions while coalescing in a group bound by the practice of collective storytelling. While *Wehmüller* puts on display the strategies of inclusion anticipated in "Der Philister," the texts of Brentano's friend and fellow member of the Table Society, Achim von Arnim, reflect on what he deems the necessary exclusions.[63] And just as taste functions as a mechanism of distinction in Brentano's texts, it figures prominently in Arnim's vision of an exclusive national table. More specifically, taste for Arnim is rooted in the social and cultural category of diet. The idea that what one eats determines where one belongs was central to the Table Society's definition of themselves as a club and, by extension, of their imagination of the German nation. One of the Society's members, Georg Philipp Ludolph Beckedorff, expresses this notion in a table speech in which he lamented Jewish integration. Beckedorff reassured his companions that even if Jews could not be excluded from the spheres of government, science, and art, they could be banned from the club's table. "Nein," he

[63] For more detailed discussions of Arnim's ambivalent relationship to Judaism, see Härtl (1160-67), Henckmann (56-69), and Oesterle (65-73; 79-85).

proclaimed, “kein Beschnittener nahet diesem Tische, und zum ewigen Schrecken für sie, uns aber zur Erinnerung unsrer Gesinnung stehe künftig immer auf diesem Tische ein großer Schinken (*Texte* 153-54). While admitting the Table Society cannot reverse Jewish assimilation, Beckedorff maintains the club can symbolically withstand Jewish-gentile mixing, and food would stem the tide. To this end, Beckedorff extols the power of pork: dietary restrictions would repel Jews from encroaching on a table that stands for a Germany untainted by assimilation. Ham, in other words, is a talisman, a charm that defines membership. First, it would remind the club’s members of their shared “Gesinnung”: regardless of individual differences, gentile Germans are united by their freedom to eat pork. Second, ham would outwardly define membership by frightening off Jews, whose dietary restrictions marked them as culinary, and hence, social outsiders.

The Table Society’s ham recalls the anthropologist Mary Douglas’s notion of food as a code. In her essay “Deciphering a Meal,” she writes, “[i]f food is treated as a code the messages it encodes will be found in the pattern of social relations being expressed. The message is about different degrees of hierarchy, inclusion and exclusion, boundaries and transactions across the boundaries” (61). As a social practice, she argues, the sharing of food says something about how communities define themselves. By viewing food as a code, Douglas endorses and elaborates upon that old adage: for her you are not only what you eat, but your status as an insider or outsider is also determined by how, when, and with whom you eat. The club’s ham reflects this process of encoding: those allowed to partake in its consumption ultimately belong not only to the Table Society, but display the code of Germanness as such. Yet Douglas recognizes a further aspect of diet; she sees a correspondence between biological and social processes, that is, between ingestion and assimilation: “it would seem that whenever a people are aware of

encroachment and danger, dietary rules controlling what goes into the body would serve as a vivid analogy of the corpus of their cultural categories at risk" (79). As in Beckedorff's speech, diet not only forges a common identity, but also expresses a fear that outsiders endanger an already fragile community. Seen from this perspective, the code of food in the Table Society promises to preserve a German identity threatened by Jewish assimilation. For Beckedorff, Arnim, and their cohorts, the mouth becomes a symbolic barrier that seals off the German social body. As a metaphorical border that marks where several aspects of social identity intersect—be they dietary, cultural, or linguistic—the mouth, for the Table Society, represents a bulwark against integration, against the incorporation of unwelcome groups like the Jews.

Arnim's table speech "Ueber die Kennzeichen des Judenthums" aims to establish a set of codes that distinguish Jews from Germans. Conceptualized as an amendment to the group's membership laws, it seeks to restore those "Kennzeichen" lost in the process of assimilation.[64] For example, Arnim nostalgically recalls how fifteenth-century rulers required Jews to wear colored hats (*Texte* 111) and laments the increasing number of Jewish men who no longer wear beards (113). But food also figures prominently in a speech delivered to a dining club whose table was viewed as a last bastion of Germanness. In other words, Arnim argues that diet codes Jewish difference, and he serves up a banquet of nasty culinary stereotypes to shore up such distinctions. For example, he accuses Jews of gluttony. He also invokes the stereotype of a particular Jewish stench and explains it with an anecdote in which the Jew's excessive

[64] Erdle (150-53) argues that Arnim's text is a reaction to a perceived crisis of signs. (150). To rehabilitate such codes, she claims, the speech presents numerous ways of marking Jewish difference, with its discussion oscillating between the externals signs of clothing and internal ones hidden within the body.

consumption of leeks and garlic reveals itself as the cause (126). Finally, he imagines the horrors that would ensue should the Jews infiltrate the Table Society: instead of butchering pheasants, they would slaughter Christian children in order to harvest their blood to make unleavened bread; and instead of digging into bowls of porridge, they would use their utensils to hack up sacramental wafers (108). Gluttony, blood libel, and host desecration: by citing stereotypes in circulation since the Middle Ages, Arnim imagines diet as a code of long-standing differences, as an enduring set of signs.

Arnim's speech belongs to a larger discussion of Jewish assimilation in early nineteenth-century Germany. In this sense, social codes that had distinguished Jews were no longer firmly set. The observance of Kosher, for instance, had become more relaxed. As one historian notes, by 1814 half of Berlin's Jewish community no longer bought Kosher meat, and many Jewish families no longer separated cookware used to prepare meat and dairy (Kaplan 198, 204). Further, as Jacob Katz points out, keeping kosher potentially prevented Jews from fulfilling the obligations of citizenship: their ability to serve in the army was compromised if they refused to desecrate the Sabbath or violate dietary laws (61).[65] Arnim's speech seizes upon diet as part of its larger program of skepticism towards Jewish integration; conceived of as an ideal German

[65] To emphasize his point Katz cites Johann David Michael, a late eighteenth-century German Orientalist and contemporary of Christian Wilhelm von Dohm, who viewed diet as an obstacle to Jewish assimilation. Michaelis argued that by following the dietary laws of the Old Testament, Jews would not be able to share meals with gentiles and thus never be integrated (qtd. in Katz 91). It should, of course, be noted that Michaelis, unlike Arnim, emphasizes dietary changes as a part of a positive path to assimilation.

state in miniature, the Table Society envisioned itself as a culinary community to which Jews simply did not belong.

Yet Arnim's speech also registers diet as an ambivalent category of identity. Kosher is a case in point. While such laws should distinguish Jews, Arnim recognizes not only their failure to provide stable signs of difference, but also how such slippages enable Jews to infiltrate gentile society. Indeed, he complains how the strategic interpretation of dietary laws potentially blurs the boundary between Germans and Jews (*Texte* 108). Arnim disparages what he sees as dietary hypocrisies, asking what Jew would avoid pork were he hungry (109); claiming that the Jews await the Messiah primarily because His coming marks the day when they are, once again, allowed to eat pork (112); and asserting that they interpret a dream about pigs as a sign of good luck (112). Finally, a specific culinary image in the speech's anecdote of Katz, a medieval Jew who sneaks into a Christians-only tournament, further renders food as an ambivalent signifier. In addition to shaving his beard, donning a blond wig, and wearing new clothes, Katz conspicuously carries a sausage filled with bread (116). Yet parading this sign of his non-Jewishness backfires: instead of enabling him to pass as a gentile, the bread-filled sausage alerts the Christians to his deception. Katz's counterfeit sausage alludes to the instability of food when read as a code of collective identity. It does not reliably signify; instead, it encodes a highly ambiguous message, whereby a gap remains between surface and interior, signifier and signified, sausage casing and sausage filling.

Culinary Stereotypes in *Isabella von Ägypten*

At first glance, Arnim's novella *Isabella von Ägypten* seems irrelevant to the discussions of diet and discrimination in "Kennzeichen."[66] What, after all, could the fantastic tale of a Gypsy princess who leads her people back to their Egyptian homeland have to do with a speech delivered to an anti-Jewish dining club? Yet *Isabella* addresses similar concerns.[67] First, both texts address the identifiability of stateless, marginalized groups. And while *Isabella* primarily focuses on Gypsies, it indirectly addresses Jewish emancipation. Significantly, Arnim reconceptualized the frame narrative into which *Isabella* is embedded. The original frame recounts the story of a Jew's complicated relationship with his gentile neighbors and includes a section called "Gespräch über die Einbürgerung der Juden" (Arnim, *Erzählungen* 554-61). But Arnim swapped this frame for one in which the narrator listens to and writes down the tales of an old Gypsy, tales that become *Isabella* and the three other embedded stories of Arnim's cycle. Further, the novella itself consistently conflates Gypsies with Jews. When, for example, the narrator describes discrimination against Gypsies, he insists their persecution is exacerbated by the fact that Jews impersonate them in order to be tolerated by the Christian locals (624). Perhaps most importantly, the novella's eponymous gypsy protagonist, who is idealized as innocent,

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[66] Earlier interpretations of the novella focus on its aesthetic merits and its blending of history and legend. See, for example, Neumann (297; 309-13), Schürer (207), and Völker (131). More recent interpretations focus on political aspects like the novella's construction of identity. See Seyhan (128-33) for a more positive appraisal of *Isabella*'s depiction of otherness and Friedrichmeyer (62) for a more critical take on its treatments of gender and ethnicity.

[67] While Friedrichsmeyer (59) does not focus on the relationship between the Table Society and the novella, she does read *Isabella* in the context of romantic nationalism, arguing that the Gypsies serve as a distorted mirror for an ideal German nation.

loyal, and natural, is doubled in the form of a Golem that, according to the narrator, embodies the Jewish traits of pride, lust, and greed (688-89). Ultimately, the similarity between the two figures is so convincing that Isabella's lover and closest confidants cannot distinguish between them. By conflating the noble Gypsy with the ignoble Jew, the novella stages a confusing play of shifting identities. Like "Kennzeichen," it points to the instability of the very signs that are supposed to confirm group identity.

Given Arnim's concerns in "Kennzeichen," his conflation of Jews with Gypsies is perplexing. More than a fantastic Romantic tale, *Isabella* contains a political message that emerges in numerous addresses to the reader. In the novella's final pages, Arnim's narrator repeatedly speaks to his German readers, figuring them as the decedents of Isabella's love interest, Holy Roman Emperor Charles V. More precisely, he addresses them as the unfortunate heirs of Charles's failures and thereby explains Germany's current, that is, early-nineteenth century, lack of unity:

> *wir* aber, deren Voreltern durch sein [Karls] politisches Glaubenswesen, so viel erlitten, […] und endlich selbst noch an der Trennung Deutschlands untergingen, welche er aus Mangel frommer Einheit und Begeisterung […] hervorbrachte, *wir* fühlen uns durch das erzählte Mißgeschick seiner ersten Liebe […] mit seiner Natur versöhnt." (738, emphasis added)

The "we" invoked in this passage suggests a comparison between the German disunity occasioned by the Catholic Emperor's clamp-down on Protestantism in the sixteenth century and the German disunity stemming from the Napoleonic Wars in the nineteenth century. These appeals to a "we" also indicate a complex process of identification; Arnim's German readers are, by identifying with specific characters, supposed to reflect on their own political situation.

Unlike Charles, they will, after learning from his mistakes, recognize the pure, natural, poetic love embodied by the Gypsy and rediscover their homeland. Yet if Arnim's German readership is to identify with Isabella and, like her, reunify their fragmented nation, why does he render her identity so slippery by blurring distinctions between Gypsies and Jews? Why does he prod his audience to identify with a figure who can scarcely be identified?

Although visual codes like clothing and physical appearance often fail to reliably signify identity in *Isabella*, culinary stereotypes seem to confirm it. In its depiction of the two characters figured as Jews, the novella repeats Arnim's observations about diet in "Kennzeichen."[68] Just as he brands the Jews as gluttonous in the speech, he portrays Judaism's representatives as greedy eaters in the novella. The Golem is particularly ravenous at table, taking the best pieces for herself and flinging about steaming bones—she must have devoured the meat quickly enough for them to still be hot! (730). Cornelius, the animated mandrake root, also recalls the characteristics outlined in Arnim's speech. After Isabella plucks him from the ground—he emerges in infant form—she has Cornelius nurse on a cat, whose natural offspring must forgo their mother's milk because of his insatiable appetite (645). Once weaned, Cornelius turns to solid fare, other roots he greedily devours (646). Lastly, he drinks so much wine that he fears he has become deathly ill and endures horrible hallucinations (678, 680). While Cornelius's diet may not immediately call to mind the culinary stereotypes listed in "Kennzeichen," the novella slyly repeats them. Beyond the more obvious charges of gluttony, the novella attributes to Cornelius—albeit in a distorted manner—those same culinary stereotypes handed down from the Middle Ages. His consumption of other roots recalls the accusations of cannibalism—the Jew's use of human blood in preparing

[68] For more details on how the novella figures the Golem and Cornelius as representatives of Judaism, see Breger (286-93).

unleavened bread. And by drinking the cat's milk, he also recreates an image cited by Arnim in "Kennzeichen": the "Judensau," a hideous mural in Frankfurt depicting several Jews nursing on a sow (*Texte* 111-12).[69]

Isabella invokes a different set of culinary stereotypes to characterize its Gypsies. In the novella's opening sequence, its heroine's diet comes to the fore when Braka, Isabella's foster mother, asks if she has found enough food and drink. Isabella tells Braka about the apples she has fished out of a stream and the bread left behind by her father (*Erzählungen* 622). Arnim's choice of these two items reflects the Gypsies' precarious social position. The fallen apples designate them as scavengers living outside the system of culinary production and consumption; as nomads, in other words, they do not partake in the communal endeavor of agriculture. The loaf of bread, a result of farming, harvesting, milling, and baking, indicates the efforts of a community from which they are excluded. Shortly thereafter, the narrator reinforces the relationship between the Gypsies' diet and their exclusion in a passage explaining the historical origins of their persecution. Driven from one state to another, they are forced "ihre ärmliche Nahrung zu stehlen oder mit jachtfreien Tieren […] fürlieb zu nehmen. Da fühlten sie erst recht innerlich die Strafe, daß sie die heilige Mutter Gottes mit dem Jesuskinde und dem alten Joseph verstoßen" (624). Again, the necessity of theft and the reliance on animals unfit for hunting mark the Gypsies as culinary outsiders. Moreover, the theft of food in the novella plays a decisive role in the Gypsies' plight: Isabella's father Michael, the last leader of their people, is executed because his cohort steals two chickens (625). Although Michael was unaware of the crime, he is hanged alongside the thief, leaving Isabella as the last heir of his noble lineage. Granted, food is

[69] In addition to alluding to the "Judensau," the passage could also be read as a parody of the image of Romulus and Remus nursing on a she-wolf.

but one of many criteria by which the Gypsies are distinguished; but this particular form of discrimination is unique. As the narrator makes clear, it is at precisely the moment the Gypsies reflect upon their miserable diet that they fully understand why they are cursed (624). As punishment for their ancestors' inhospitality toward the Holy Family as it fled into Egypt, the Gypsies face a similar fate; denied proper sustenance, they too are treated as unwelcome guests by their European hosts.

Diet promises, therefore, to rehabilitate the "Kennzeichen" scrutinized in Arnim's speech. Given what and how they eat, Jews and Gypsies can apparently be distinguished: whereas the Gypsies' diet of scraps and leftovers designates them as sympathetic pariahs, overindulgence and excess mark the Jews as threats to the social body. In short, the code of food seems to represent a triumph for discrimination; diet, we are tempted to think, is a more or less stable category. Yet one striking overlap between "Kennzeichen" and *Isabella* complicates this notion. Toward the speech's end, Arnim cites a Rabbi's observation on Jewish persecution: "allen Juden wird wie allen Mäusen der Krieg gemacht, wenn eine den Käse angefressen hat, gleich heists, die Mäuse haben es gethan" (*Texte* 128). Compare this citation with the words of Isabella's father in the moments proceeding his execution: reflecting on the injustices heaped upon the Gypsies, he laments, "Uns geht es wie den Mäusen, hat eine Mause den Käse angenagt, so sagt man: 'die Mäuse sinds gewesen'" (*Erzzählungen* 625). Read in isolation, these two passages explain the logic of the stereotype: one mouse's crime supposedly warrants the condemnation of an entire group, with the individual's conduct becoming the standard for judging the collective. Read in tandem, however, the two passages expose the stereotype's contradictory logic. By subjecting two groups to the same stereotype, Arnim demonstrates how overgeneralization undermines the stereotype's desired effect. With its ultimate goal being

discrimination, the stereotype turns out to be rather indiscriminate. The repetition of the mouse analogy hints at a symbolic substitution of groups, whereby the Gypsies can stand in for Jews and vice versa.[70]

An examination of one of *Isabella*'s sources sheds further light on the stereotype's function in the novella. Like Arnim after him, H. M. G. Grellmann addresses the Gypsy's identifiability in his *Historischer Versuch über die Zigeuner* (1787); and like Arnim, he also discusses how dominant society tries to apply the same stereotypes to both Gypsies and Jews. Grellmann notes, for instance, the statelessness of both groups and their work as traveling peddlers (180). To be sure, these similarities play a rather minor role in Grellmann's ethnological study of the Gypsies. In his description of their diet, however, Grellmann focuses on a culinary stereotype attributed to Jew and Gypsy alike: cannibalism. Curiously, in the chapter devoted to describing the "Speise und Trank der Zigeuner," Grellmann speeds through their dining habits and dietary preferences in six pages and then dwells on accusations of cannibalism in the section's remaining 13 pages. Here he details a case of "Menschenfresserey" in Hungary that ended in the execution of numerous Gypsies in 1782. While Grellmann certainly lingers on this scandal, toying with the possibility of cannibalism being part of Gypsy culinary culture, he decisively rejects such claims by mentioning similar accusations leveled against the Jews:

> die Wahrheit jener Beschuldigung [wird] durch den Umstand äußerst verdächtig, daß bereits lange zuvor […] die Juden damit verschrieen wurden. Höchstwahrscheinlich also ist es, daß man, wie in mehreren Dingen, so auch hier,

[70] For more on parallels between Gypsies and Jews in the novella, see Breger (272-76; 91-98) and Vortriede (326-28).

> den guten Willen gehabt hat, das Böse, was vorhin blos gegen die Juden erträumt worden war, nach und nach auch von Zigeunern zu erzählen. (54)

Like the mouse-cheese analogies in Arnim's texts, Grellmann's study points to the stereotype's faulty logic, but differs from "Kennzeichen" and *Isabella* in that it is explicitly skeptical of such overgeneralizations. In other words, Arnim's texts seem not to share Grellmann's suspicion of culinary stereotypes. Moreover, Grellmann's focus on the culinary—his invocation of cannibalism as a dietary practice ascribed to a particular ethic group—proves an apt example for discussing the inherent fragility of the stereotype, which effectively undermines its own truth value by "cannibalizing" the characteristics of one people and transferring them to another.

Isabella also renders culinary codes as highly ambivalent by blurring the line between body and food. Cornelius's body, for instance, is likened to food. As a mandrake root with hair and facial features made of other plants like rose hips and millet, he is literally edible. One passage in particular underlines his status as potential food. Braka tells the story of another mandrake-man gobbled up by a pig (*Erzählungen* 648-49). Offended, Cornelius forbids his companions from using him as swine fodder, but Braka insists "daß er sich um die Welt und was darin fresse, gefressen werde […] gar nicht zu bekümmern habe" (649). Arnim's novella thus inverts the claims of his speech. His accusation of Jews violating kosher by consuming pork manifests itself in the possibility of Cornelius being consumed by a pig. And that he should disregard "what eats, and what gets eaten" alludes on a more general level to diet's failure to encode the individual's body as part of a particular ethnic group. As Judaism's other representative, the Golem is described as indistinguishable from real humans, in particular when the narrator compares her to a picture of fruit, a visual trick so convincing that it fools the birds into nibbling on the image (689). Just as the birds attempt to feast on this representation of food,

Arnim's other figures feast their eyes on the representation of a human body that is the Golem: one member of Charles's court, as well as the Jew who fashions the Golem both, "nibble" on her image (689). This metaphor of the painted fruit exemplifies one of the novella's key themes, namely the gap between signifier and signified. Similar to the bread-filled sausage in Arnim's speech, the Golem's body, like the fruit image, is but an empty sign and thus problematizes Arnim's endeavor to restore Jewish "Kennzeichen." Yet the of image of the painted food proves significant for another reason in that it refers to the ancient Greek artist Zeuxis, who supposedly painted grapes so realistic that they were nibbled on by the birds. Beyond the semiotic implications of food as a code, the reference to Zeuxis's grapes points to the relationship between art, imitation, and assimilation. And as the following section emphasizes, works of art such as *Isabella* function like Zeuxis's grapes in that codes of inclusion and exclusion rooted in diet become linked with questions of aesthetics and its role it defining membership at table. Narratives of collective identity, in other words, are dished up to encourage a sense of national communion among German readers.

Dishing up National Narratives in *Isabella von Ägypten*

Those characters coded as Jewish are not the only figures whose bodies are construed as food in *Isabella*. Arnim's Gypsy heroine is also "dished up" in the novella's frame, when the narrator compares the stories he recites to meals served up to his listeners. Indeed, as the narrator and his friends journey by boat down the Rhine, the narrator finishes recounting *Isabella* and prefaces his next story, proclaiming, "[d]a unsre Jacht noch zwei Stunden heimzuschwimmen hatte, so gab ich dem Wunsche gern nach, […] diese Zwillingsschwester meiner ersten Erzählung *aufzutischen*" (744, emphasis added). Significantly, the type of dish he associates with *Isabella*—both text and character—contrasts with the foodstuffs he associates with Cornelius

and the Golem. While he likens the former to pig food and the latter to an image of fruit, he compares Isabella to something more enticing: "Es reizt zum Mitgenuß am Leben, / Laßt Früchte bringen, wollet ihr mich hören, / Vor allem laßt euch reife Trauben geben, / Der Weinstock ist ein Fremdling voller Ehren, / Gleich Isabella, die will ich erheben" (620). To be sure, this comparison of Isabella with the vine—and the wine it yields—highlights both her status as a foreign transplant to Northern Europe and marks her as a source of poetic inspiration.[71] Yet it also grants her a role similar to that of sacramental wine. By consuming her story, both the listeners in the frame narrative and Arnim's German readership partake in an act of communion. *Isabella*, as part of a national "Abendmahl," thus seeks to forge a bond between the disparate members of its audience, just as its protagonist seeks to reunite her people and lead them back to their lost homeland. The narrative dished up to readers becomes a substitute for the food dished up at table.

As we have seen, dining as a social practice was central to narrating national identity in the Table Society. Here Beckedorff's speech proves illuminating because of his emphasis on the table itself. He considers the club's name as the best expression of its ethos: by calling itself a "Deutsche, christliche Tischgesellschaft," the Society combines three cultural categories, the first national, the second religious, and the third culinary. Beckedorff appeals to Tacitus's observations on the ancient Germans, claiming "daß [sie] zu keiner Zeit ihr Gemüth so offen für einfache und so erwärmt für große Gedanken gewesen sey, als bey Tische" (*Texte* 152-53). The table functions, therefore, as a privileged site of Germanness, as a sacred platform upon which the German mind can truly unfold. As a space of communion, the table promises to help Germans overcome internal fragmentation by providing a forum where they can gather and

[71] On the image of the grapes and the vine, see Bonfiglio (30-31).

experience a sense of unity (153). Given Beckedorff's rhetoric, it comes then as little surprise that critics emphasize the role of communion in the Society's self-understanding. As Stefan Nienhaus puts it in his study of the Table Society, the club's rules and rituals highlight its self-image as an "Eßgesellschaft, die durch das 'friedlich' gemeinsame Mahl, in der Form einer säkularisierten Kommunion, sich zu einer Gemeinschaft konstituiert" (61). Such a conception of community amounts to a political gesture, one that rehearses an ideal of German unity threatened by French occupation and internal strife between various principalities and states. Susanna Moßmann assumes a similar position, asserting that sociability provided the Society's members with an alternative political space, a "Probebühne für die nationale Gesellschaft" (142). What was impossible in the domain of "Gesellschaft" could be played out in the sphere of "Geselligkeit," and the table, to repeat Moßmann's metaphor, was the stage upon which narratives of gathering a national community—tales like *Isabella*—could be presented.

A careful reading of dining scenes in *Isabella*, however, problematizes this image of communion. The novella stages meals as performances, whereby identity is played out in front of an audience of fellow diners. When Isabella seeks refuge in Charles's palace after being turned away by her companions, she ends up at the table of Charles's tutor, Adrian. What follows is a strange conversation, whereby Isabella must reciprocate Adrian's hospitality by telling him portions of her life story. While he dishes up roast chicken, fruit, and wine, she dishes up a personal narrative revealing her origins. Having eaten nothing during her two-day flight, however, Isabella forgoes storytelling in favor of gorging herself, leaving Adrian to ask a series of questions: "Du bist ein wunderliches Mädchen, […] wann bist du geboren? ich möchte deine Zeichen erforschen" (*Erzählungen* 703). Her answer: "Ach, würdiger Herr, […] ich weiß es mir nicht mehr recht zu erinnern, ich muß zu der Zeit noch sehr dumm gewesen sein" (703).

Unwilling to divulge her birthdate, Isabella withholds information pivotal to constructing her biography, which, after all, is what her astrological "signs" would help to reveal. When Adrian then inquires about her family history, she proves equally evasive: "wie hieß aber dein Vater?" he asks; "Ach, mein armer Vater," she responds, "wenn der das gewusst hätte!" (703). By claiming her father was ignorant of his own name, Isabella once again obstructs Adrian's efforts to elicit her life story, to study those "signs" that would unlock the secret of her identity. Yet this allusion to serving up signs at table is not an isolated incident; it is echoed when Cornelius destroys the "Zeichenbücher" Isabella inherits from her father, an act mentioned in the same sentence as Cornelius's bad table manners. Braka complains to Isabella, "während er […] Deine Zeichenbücher zu Papierknallen zerriß, [schüttete er] Suppe auf Deine Kleider" (671). The table thus emerges as a problematic locus of self-narration. Just as the links to her past remain obscured at Adrian's table, so too is she severed from her family legacy when Cornelius shreds the sole trace of her father while sloppily devouring his soup. Here the act of spillage makes sense: whereas a coherent life story is dished up in a contained form, the signs of Isabella's past are recklessly spattered about.

Not only Isabella narrates her life story at table. When Charles asks Cornelius to recount parts of his biography in exchange for the meal served at his hospitable table, Cornelius serves up a banquet of lies, bragging, for example, about a duel he never fought with two knights, a conflict, he claims, he barely survived (667). Curiously, his bogus life story garners belief and praise: everyone could swear his stories are true, and they heap praise upon them like "Zuckerwerk" (667). Clearly, Cornelius is a sweet talker, but he also transforms the table into a theatrical space by performing the role of a brave aristocrat, and this element of role-playing comes to the fore when he dramatically rips open his vest to show the scars he supposedly

received during the duel. His rooty skin, of course, bears no real scars, but its texture fools everyone at table: they believe his skin is, in fact, "vernarbt" (667). This emphasis on dissimulation recalls the tensions described in "Kennzeichen." Cornelius destabilizes the very signs that should codify his identity. By referring to a duel, the novella also recalls Arnim's conflict with Moritz Itzig, a Berlin Jew who, after a series of social slights, demanded satisfaction from Arnim. Deriding Itzig as socially unworthy of satisfaction, Arnim did not duel with him. As a caricature of Itzig as the Jew who seeks to infiltrate the social space of the aristocratic world by participating in a duel, the mandrake-man succeeds in manipulating signs, thereby gaining access to Karl's table, where he convinces everyone that he is, in fact, a human aristocrat. Dissimulation allows for Cornelius's assimilation.

The largest meal in the novella, the parish fair feast, most radically undermines the notion of the table as site upon which to narrate identity. First, the fairgoers consume so much food that they risk choking: as a solution, they construct a "Schleuseneinrichtung mit Wein und Bier" (675). In this celebration of gluttony, bodies disregard limits and become fluid, distorted, open.[72] Second, class distinctions are up-ended, with beggars assuming the roles of kings by literally refashioning themselves, that is, changing identities as they change costumes. This theatricality should not be ignored, especially since the fair's centerpiece is, well, a theater. Curiously, the culinary aspect of the fair also colors this performance, which becomes a kind of raucous dinner theater: the spectators gorge themselves as the action unfolds on stage; the troupe's clown parades a large sausage; and the stage itself is built on top of what are presumably beer or wine casks. Fittingly, the play performed on top of this rickety stage centers on mistaken identity; it

[72] On the role of the grotesque in the fair scene in particular and the novella in general, see Lokke (24-29).

revolves around a man who, after being transformed into a dog, tries to prove to others that he is, in fact, a rational human being (675). Fitting is Cornelius's fascination with the play because it addresses the problem of confirming one's identity—precisely the problem he faces throughout the novella. Cornelius is, as the narrator points out, so taken in by the play that he breaches the boundary between actor and spectator, an incursion which is not registered by the townspeople, who, believing Cornelius is part of the show, cheer on his duel with the clown. The feast at the fair thus highlights the failure of distinctions, a failure reflected in the confusion of boundaries between body and world, rich and poor, commoner and noble, actor and spectator.

Although *Isabella* is to function as a metaphorical meal for Arnim's audience by encouraging a sense of national communion, its dining scenes undercut the meal's power to fix collective identity. Two images in particular allude to this instability of the self at table. First, as part of an acrobatic trick performed by the Gypsies, the table is refunctionalized as a prop, as an object of play; we learn that one of their national pastimes is to balance heavy tables on their teeth (624). Whereas the table functions for the members of Arnim's dining society as an anchor of identity, whereby etiquette dictates where one sits, the order in which food is served, and who belongs to the community of diners, the table in *Isabella* teeters and sways; no longer a piece of furniture that fixes identity, it emerges as a wobbly platform upon which the self is chaotically performed. Second, the place setting in the frame narrative reinforces this sense of instability. Significantly, Arnim's storyteller does not serve up *Isabella* at table, but rather on an even shakier surface: in a boat. Considering the unruly staging of meals in the novella itself, the entire project of narrating Isabella's story—and thus providing a textual form of communion that binds Germans into a unified political entity—seems in constant danger of capsizing. In short, Arnim's moveable feast seems always on the brink of tipping over.

Isabella was not the first time Arnim compared literature to food. In a letter to his sister he once wrote, "Fluch aller Kunst, wenn sie weiter nichts kann, als dem armen Menschen den würdigsten Gedanken, das herrlichste Bild, seinen letzten Schatz, die Trauer um vergangene Herrlichkeit entreißen, um ihn in die Wolken hineinzuschaukeln, bis es sich im Kopfe dreht und im Magen dehnt" (qtd. in Werner 26-27). Such a statement indicates Arnim's understanding of art's social function. With *Isabella*, he does not publish a fantastic tale solely to make his readers' heads spin in delight, but rather, as one critic claims, to promote the history of his country, to express trust in its people, and to show a historical-political alternative (Werner 27).[73] But given the instability of culinary codes and the breakdown of communion in *Isabella*, Arnim's novella merits a curse similar to that expressed in his own letter. While the story of his Gypsy princess should serve up a digestible political alternative, it reflects instead on the slipperiness of collective identity, a message that risks making his readers' heads spin and their stomachs turn. As a pedagogical, patriotic text, the novella fails to satisfy its consumers. Readers of *Isabella*, much like the birds pecking at Zeuxis's painted grapes, are left confused and unfulfilled. Finally, a focus on diet and communion in the novella emphasizes the role of the body in the Table's Society's understanding of German-Jewish difference, whereby the mouth emerges as a key expression of this distinction. Yet while the mouth promises to construct a distinctly German identity, it also reveals itself as a locus of anxiety, whereby the social meanings attributed to food are anything but fixed. As a part of the body where myriad aspects of identity collide—be they culinary or linguistic—the mouth fails clearly to mark the boundaries

[73] While I agree with Werner's assessment of the social function of Arnim's texts, I do not read *Isabella* as a provocation for practical social engagement for contemporary readers.

of the social body with which Arnim implicitly compares Germany. Ultimately, his vision of a stable, unified nation at table proves hard to swallow.[74]

Conclusion

Read through the lens of Brentano and Arnim's table speeches, *Wehmüller* and *Isabella* imagine Germany as an exclusive club whose membership is defined by taste. While "Philister" and *Wehmüller* advocate the Philistine's exclusion on the grounds of aesthetic taste, "Kennzeichen" and *Isabella* target the Jew on the basis of dietary differences. To guarantee hospitality in the Table Society—and by extension the nation it represents—its members must show inhospitality to groups it deems a threat. The literary texts expand upon these problems of inclusion and exclusion. By marking the tasteless Philistine as a negative example of Germanness, *Wehmüller* critiques a hollow form of cosmopolitanism that seeks to eradicate traditional national distinctions. However, given its particular staging of community, the novella also demonstrates skepticism toward definitions of national identity based on stereotypes. By concluding with the image of the hospitable gathering at the estate, *Wehmüller* ultimately imagines a political community whose members, through the stories they tell about themselves and each other, maintain their individual differences while at the same time coalescing in a group with a common identity. While Brentano's novella depicts a gathering embodying the ideal of unity in difference, Arnim's raises the troubling question of the necessary exclusions that guarantee group cohesion. His table speech "Kennzeichen" identifies the Jews' diet as a means to distinguish between members and non-members, and his novella *Isabella* explores what happens when such culinary codes are deployed as a means of discrimination. However, whereas

[74] My interpretation thus diverges from Friedrichsmeyer's (62), who claims that *Isabella* documents the fantasy of an ethnically pure German nation.

"Kennzeichen" is a relatively straightforward ideological text, *Isabella* complicates the idea of diet as marker of collective identity. As it is laid out in the speech, the metaphor of the mouth as a bulwark against the integration of unwelcome elements comes undone in the course of the novella. Instead of sealing off the German social body, it emerges as an ambiguous space in which the several aspects of identity, be they culinary or linguistic, jostle and collide.

Given the rhetoric of taste and discrimination in the Table Society, *Wehmüller* and *Isabella*, these ambiguities of the mouth also call to mind the space of the table and its role in gathering a national community. Both mouth and table are simultaneously openings and closings that allow for incorporation and exclusion. Although the Society and the Germany it envisioned itself representing remain relatively exclusive gatherings at table, Brentano and Arnim dish up texts to an expanded circle of consumers who may not be official members of the club but can nonetheless indulge in the shared fantasy of a national community as they read works like *Wehmüller* and *Isabella.* In this sense, narrative literature becomes a vehicle for national distinctions, providing thereby a space—one not unlike the club's table—where members are gathered into a society of shared tastes. The text, then, substitutes the table; a *Textgesellschaft* replaces a *Tischgesellschaft* that no longer constitutes itself as a literal community around the table, but rather as a literary community that forms around the text. This expansion, however, remains problematic. As the images of hospitality in *Wehmüller* and *Isabella* suggest, German readers may be invited to participate in a symbolic symposium, one attended by strangers united by common literary tastes, but the texts refuse to resolve the problem of distinguishing between insiders and outsiders. On the contrary, both novellas insistently put such issues on display. *Wehmüller* may gesture toward the idea of a political community bound by shared aesthetic tastes, but its skepticism toward Philistine cosmopolitanism and rigid nationalism leaves one

wondering how serious we are to take its utopian conclusion. Similarly, *Isabella* offers itself as a text around which a national readership can unite. But despite its insistence on distinctions between Jews, Gypsies, and Germans, its portrayal of collective identity remains so slippery that it becomes hard to view the national table (and the texts that come to substitute for it) as a space coherent enough to foster the imagination of a German national community.

Chapter Three

Rituals of Family and State Membership in Heine's *Deutschland: Ein Wintermärchen* and Stifter's "Der Kuß von Sentze"

As we saw in chapter two, Clemens Brentano used the metaphor of a distasteful national soup to criticize the German Confederation as a hodgepodge of states that he believed failed to authentically express national identity. About 30 years later, Gabriel Riesser, a Hamburg lawyer and politician, used a different metaphor of hospitality to characterize the Confederation's failure to adequately define state membership in German-speaking Europe. On March 21, 1849, Riesser delivered a speech to his fellow Frankfurt parliamentarians in which he asked "weil ich den Bruder in mein Haus aufnehme, mit den Seinen, und wenn auch etwa ein Adoptivkind darunter wäre,—habe ich darum mein Haus zu einer offenen Halle gemacht, in die fremde Schaaren nach Belieben eintreten könnten ohne meine Zustimmung?" (525). Riesser's comparison of the nation with a family home was part of a larger debate of whether the culturally and linguistically non-German territories of the Austrian Empire were welcome members of the new German nation the Frankfurt Parliament sought to define.[75] His use of the subjunctive suggests skepticism. Germany could accommodate its cultural and linguistic "brother" states as well as those "adopted" lands that could, in time, be successfully incorporated into the nation. But he also asserts that the state's hospitality is limited—that opening Germany's doors too far could turn a well-ordered

[75] See Vick's study for a discussion of how varying interpretations of nationality among the Frankfurt Parliamentarians influenced the debate over Germany's borders. Vick focuses on how the contested regions of Schleswig (142-49), Poznania (149-59), and the non-German Habsburg lands (159-71) challenged the delegates' vision of a new united Germany that could still maintain a distinct national character.

homeland into a chaotic hall teeming with unwanted foreign guests. I include Riesser's metaphor because it hints at a problem to which the texts under discussion in the present chapter respond. Heinrich Heine's *Deutschland: Ein Wintermärchen* (1844) and Adalbert Stifter's "Der Kuß von Sentze" (1866) also address the difficulty of defining state membership in German-speaking Europe during the nineteenth century's middle decades, a period that saw the redrawing of borders following the Napoleonic Wars, the revolutions of 1848/49, and the Austro-Prussian War of 1866. Both Heine's poem and Stifter's novella liken the nation to a family home in which hospitality plays a decisive role in determining membership. Like Riesser's speech, they identify Germany's thresholds as spaces where the issue of expanding the national family is negotiated.

This chapter examines how hospitality scenes in Heine's poem and Stifter's novella invoke larger discourses of state membership—that is, how they both participate in debates similar to those conducted by Riesser and his fellow delegates. The chapter focuses on how the two protagonists assume the precarious status of the guest who, in the course of his visits, experiences the nation as a family home in disarray. Heine and Stifter's protagonists traverse German-speaking Europe at a time when state borders are anything but fixed, and the two texts reflect upon this uncertainty in their staging of the guest's passage over the host's threshold. In other words, threshold scenes in the *Wintermärchen* and "Der Kuß" raise the question of national borders and political self-definition; they constitute moments in which the texts try to determine who is welcome to cross such boundaries and thus belongs to the national family. I also examine the host's offerings of hospitality, those rites of incorporation that promise to foster unity among members not only in the familial sphere, but also on the national level. As was the case in Riesser's analogy, Heine's poem and Stifter's novella invoke a metaphor of hospitality to ask the question of how Germans defined themselves as a nation in the middle decades of the nineteenth

century. More specifically, these literary texts contain rituals, rites of hospitality, that promise to renew a sense of familiarity and cohesion among members who have become estranged from one another. The ceremonies performed during the guest's arrival and visit prove key to renewing a sense of community on the familial and national levels.

In their preoccupations with the relationship between ritual and group cohesion, the *Wintermärchen* and "Der Kuß" recall what the anthropologist Arnold van Gennep describes as "the ceremonial patterns which accompany a passage from one […] social world to another" (10). In *The Rites of Passage*, van Gennep identifies three types of ceremonies individuals undergo as they enter a new society: he calls "the rites of separation from a previous world, *preliminal rites*, those executed during the transitional stage *liminal* (*or threshold*) *rites*, and the ceremonies of incorporation into the new world *postliminal rites*" (21). Similarly, Heine's poem and Stifter's novella stage a process of initiation, a progression of rites that accompany their protagonists' separation from home, their passage over the threshold, and their incorporation into a redefined group. Van Gennep's model proves fruitful for a discussion of national self-definition in these two literary texts by encouraging a more careful examination of those social mechanisms that aim to renew family and state membership. Given their preoccupation with the guest's negotiation of such ceremonies, the *Wintermärchen* and "Der Kuß" insist on a relationship between ritual and group definition, and a closer look at hospitality rituals promises a nuanced reading of how the literary texts construct family and national identities.

Borders, Belonging, and State Membership in Heine's *Wintermärchen*

When Heine undertook the journey that inspired the *Wintermärchen* in 1843, he returned to a homeland he had not experienced firsthand in over twelve years. His absence had already begun to worry Heine's publisher Julius Campe by the late 1830s. In a letter to Heine dated May

22, 1839, Campe complains, "Sie sind allen Verhältnißen entfremdet—, im Vaterhause sind Sie nicht mehr zu Hause! […] Lebten Sie in Deutschland: Sie würden beßer mit der Nation stehen: (Heine, *Briefe* 211-12). In a similar letter from 21 August 1840, Campe warns Heine, "Sie sind den Deutschen und Deutschland entfremdet—; kennen die Gesinnungen nicht mehr;—[…] Hüten Sie sich! sonst ist Ihre Popularität ganz zum Teufel" (277). Campe's letters warrant attention for two reasons. First, they anticipate the problem of reception by questioning Heine's ability to deliver effective political commentary on a homeland to which he no longer belongs.[76] Estrangement from Germany, Campe suggests, undermines Heine's authority as a writer; the exile will not be welcomed as an objective observer of domestic political conditions. Heine's

[76] Atkinson (202) dismisses the *Wintermärchen* as a "political speech without politics," while Tonelli (191) maintains it wallows in polemics without offering genuine, positive alternatives. Hannah (307) concludes that it is "ineffectual" and "impotent" as a political treatise, while Pugh claims Heine had difficulty in taking himself seriously as a political actor (676) and delivers a rather pessimistic assessment of progressive politics in the *Wintermärchen* (680). Other critics appraise the *Wintermärchen* more positively. Hermand (247) praises its condemnation of the German "Misere" as a "historisch-dialektische Betrachtungsweise" (247), while Würffel (436) lauds the modernity of the poem's negative dialectic as the tactic of a speaker who refuses to adhere to one viewpoint or political party, and Dethlefsen (211) views the poem's lack of a coherent position as the attribute of a sharp observer of European political life. Finally, Horstmann-Nash (33) describes the poem's contingencies as the expression of an aesthetic that eschews universal truths and elicits sympathy with the downtrodden, while Zantop (178-79) asserts that the speaker's ever-shifting position allows him to parody the ideology of an exclusive national identity.

absence, in short, renders his opinions vulnerable to accusations of inaccuracy and irrelevance. Heine's ambiguous relationship to Germany thus detracts from works like the *Wintermärchen*, whereby the returning exile's perspective is more problematic than privileged. Second, Campe's analogy of the "Vaterhaus" complicates his anxieties about Heine's reception. Much like Riesser would do a decade later, Campe compares Germany to the family home. By using this analogy Campe construes Heine as a prodigal son who must be reincorporated into the national family. No longer at home in the paternal home of the German nation, he must be reinitiated, readopted, so to speak. Anticipating the role of hospitality rituals in the *Wintermärchen*, Campe's letters link Heine's literary reception to his reception at the nation's points of entry. By crossing Germany's borders, the speaker not only reacquaints himself with the conditions from which he has become estranged; by crossing thresholds he also undergoes rites of passage that seek to renew the membership he had relinquished over a decade earlier.

The *Wintermärchen* accords thresholds a special significance. The poem's first *Caput* is a case in point. After a stanza of atmospherics describing the bleak November weather, the poem shifts to Heine's arrival at the French-German border. Here his heart begins to pound, his eyes well with tears, and when he hears the German language, he believes that his heart "[r]echt angenehm verblute" (*Wintermärchen* 91). As a space in which two political identities converge, the border also reflects the convergence of opposing loyalties in the speaker. His word choice evinces this ambivalence: crossing Germany's threshold both inflicts the pain of a bleeding heart and awakens a pleasant sensation.[77] From the poem's outset, the border thus represents an ambiguous space where the speaker's wounded heart evinces his uncertain membership status.

[77] Hannah makes a similar observation, identifying this ambivalence as a "quandary from which he [the speaker] will not escape for the remainder of the entire text-journey" (292).

This imagery reccurs during his dream in Cologne, when his *Doppelgänger* follows him through the city and then destroys the statues of the three Magi in the cathedral.[78] The speaker lingers on his "Herzenswunde," describing how he dips his finger in blood and smears the "Haustürpfosten […] im Vorübergehen" (107). This same wound erupts with blood right before he wakes, precisely when his double hacks the Magi to bits (109). The marking of doorways refers, of course, to the Passover: the Jews distinguish themselves from the Egyptians, whose first-born sons are to be struck down by God.[79] Yet Heine's poem inverts this Biblical scene from a moment when identity is confirmed to one in which it is confused. The ritual of marking the threshold, in other words, no longer clarifies identity. For the speaker, the rite expresses his ambivalence, an internal division that is underscored by the details surrounding the double. During this episode, the speaker is psychically and physically cloven: his anxieties of belonging manifest themselves in the double, his divided loyalties in the gaping chest wound. Equally important, these fissures are opened as he encounters thresholds—be they Germany's borders or the doorposts in Cologne. Finally, the designation of the double as "einen vermummten Gast" (103) highlights how the poem construes belonging as a question of hospitality. Not only a projection of the speaker's divided identity, the "Masked Guest" underscores how thresholds in the *Wintermärchen* become sites where the guest's identity—and thus his place in the community he reenters—is not affirmed but obscured.

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[78] See Dethlefsen for a discussion of the double's political significance (214-20).

[79] In addition to raising questions of membership, Heine's reference to the Passover motif also—quite ironically—marks the German home as the protected space, with the Jew playing the role of the victimized Egyptian.

While borders and thresholds exacerbate the speaker's estrangement, they do not, as Campe feared, render Heine's comments on Germany's political conditions irrelevant. When the speaker approaches another border, the Rhine, a conversation unfolds that demonstrates an acute awareness of contemporary national issues. The exchange between the speaker and the personified river is depicted as a reunion between father and son: Father Rhine greets the speaker, bellowing "Willkommen, mein Junge, das ist mir lieb, / Daß du mich nicht vergessen; / Seit dreyzehn Jahren sah ich dich nicht, / Mir ging es schlecht unterdessen" (101). Above all, Father Rhine laments to his metaphorical son that Germans have used him as a tool of nationalist propaganda against the French. No German chauvinist, the river actually longs for the French to cross his shores once more, as they had during the Napoleonic Wars. Yet the speaker reminds Father Rhine that the French have changed—that they have, in fact, been Germanized: "Sie philosophiren und sprechen jetzt / Von Kant, von Fischte [sic] und Hegel, / Sie rauchen Tabak, sie trinken Bier, / Und manche schieben auch Kegel" (102). German culture has, the speaker asserts, crossed a supposedly fixed national border. The river does not, he suggests, constitute an impenetrable boundary between France and Germany, but rather functions as a conduit for cultural transmission. While German nationalists insist the Rhine is a natural bulwark marking difference between France and Germany, the speaker claims that the river helps to transfer intellectual and social mores from one country to the other. The river has, as it were, transmitted Germany's philosophy and social habits to its western neighbor, thus proving, as the speaker suggests, this border is less a rigid barrier against the French than a passageway through which culture flows.

In addition to the speaker's exchange with Father Rhine, Heine's poem also references Germany's disputed border with France in its introduction. Rebuffing accusations of disloyalty,

Heine asserts, "ich werde den Rhein nimmermehr den Franzosen abtreten, schon aus dem ganz einfachen Grunde: weil mir der Rhein gehört. Ja, mir gehört er, durch unveräußerliches Geburtsrecht" (301). Here Heine alludes to the Rhine crisis of 1840: the border conflict that threatened to erupt following France's claims on the Rhine as its eastern border, claims interpreted by many Germans as the potential annexation of the river's left bank.[80] More than a declaration of his position regarding the Rhine Crisis, Heine's assertion that he would never yield the river to French control also alludes to the larger problem of defining Germany's borders. In other words, his claim that the Rhine belongs to him because of an "inalienable birthright" recalls a historical debate about the criteria of state membership, a debate that questioned whether birthplace or descent determined citizenship. More specifically, the problem of defining membership in Germany's western frontier states became especially complicated after Prussia acquired vast new territories following the Congress of Vienna. While certainly beneficial to Prussian interests, such acquisitions—including the Rhineland of Heine's childhood—also presented the state with the tremendous task of integrating a diverse body of new subjects (Gosewinkel 67). Accordingly, Prussia enacted a law, designed to standardize state membership, in 1842, two years before the *Wintermärchen*'s publication. "Das Gesetz über die Erwerbung und den Verlust der Eigenschaft als preußischer Untertan" sought to replace an incoherent system of municipal and communal laws by placing the authority of conferring membership solely in the hands of the Prussian state. But with more borders to police, Prussia also faced the problem of the mass migrations that followed the liberation of the peasants and the opening of all occupations (Brubaker 65). Ultimately, with more and more people crossing its

[80] Zantop describes the conflict in more detail in her analysis of Prussia's expansion into the Rhineland (180).

borders, Prussia needed a practical, systematic code of belonging that distinguished between members and non-members. The law of 1842 promised to define those boundaries depicted in Heine's poem; Germany's ambiguous western thresholds were, in short, to become more clearly marked.

Having grown up in Düsseldorf—a city that alternated between German and French control—Heine experienced precisely those inconsistencies the new Prussian law sought to combat. Before becoming a Prussian at age 17, Heine had been a subject of the Duchy of Jülich-Berg, the Palatine, Bavaria, and even France (Sammons, *AMB* 31). Although he was born in Düsseldorf, Heine was also entitled to reside permanently in France because of a law passed in 1814 that affected Germans born in territories formerly occupied by Napoleon's forces (Hirth 120). Heine recalls these vagaries in *Ideen. Das Buch Le Grand*. He jests, "es [war] nicht meine Schuld, wenn ich von der Geographie so wenig lernte, daß ich mich späterhin nicht in der Welt zurecht zu finden wußte" (*Ideen* 188-89). All humor aside: the impermanence of borders not only confused Heine's narrator as a schoolboy; these constant shifts also hindered his ability to articulate his national identity later in life. Such geographical uncertainty confuses *Ideen*'s narrator to the point where he all but abandons what he has learned about other nations: "auch die Charaktere der Völker änderten sich, die Deutschen wurden gelenkig, die Franzosen machten keine Komplimente mehr, die Engländer warfen das Geld nicht mehr zum Fenster hinaus" (189). While the narrator of *Ideen* skewers the very idea of national characteristics, he also draws attention to the slippery relationship between political boundaries and national identity. With their borders blurred, the Germans, French, and English no longer act in accordance with stereotypes, but rather deviate from prescribed characteristics. The Germans in particular, the narrator suggests, have become "gelenkig," more flexible. Of course, he is, on the one hand,

upending stereotypes by inverting the image of the socially stiff German; on the other hand, he is also anticipating the problem of borders in the *Wintermärchen*. In both texts, borders emerge as "Gelenke" that link different members, joints that have become loosened to the point that the social body of Germany threatens to disintegrate. National identity has come unhinged.

The *Wintermärchen* exposes this unstable relationship between borders and identity, in particular when the speaker crosses political boundaries. For example, when Prussian customs officers at the French border stop the speaker and inspect his luggage, the poem lingers on a moment when national identity should be confirmed. The speaker is, after all, obliged to identify himself and reveal his political loyalties by declaring the contents of his baggage. But his interaction with the officers serves to obscure his identity: at no time does the speaker state his name or show his passport.[81] Similarly, when the speaker enters the town of Minden, he is asked to show his identification: "Es trat an den Wagen ein Corporal / Und frug uns: wie wir hießen? / Ich heiße Niemand, bin Augenarzt / Und steche den Staar den Riesen" (131). By alluding to Odysseus's encounter with the Cyclops, the speaker not only compares himself with one of literature's most famous exiles; he also aligns the Prussian corporal with a one-eyed giant who seeks to identify, capture, and murder his guests. Like the Cyclops, the corporal—a representative of the Prussian state—violates the code of hospitality invoked by Odysseus: "Respect the gods," he warns the giant, "We're suppliants—at your mercy! / Zeus of the Strangers guards all guests and suppliants" (Homer 9.303-05). Both *The Odyssey* and the *Wintermärchen* thus recognize the ascertainment of the guest's identity as key to the host's power. And both Odysseus and Heine's speaker survive by adopting a name that is no name at

[81] See Gosewinkel for more on the implementation of a standardized passport system at this time (74).

all: "Nobody." Remaining unidentified allows both guests to survive their host's hostility. In Homer's case, the Cyclops fails to devour Odysseus; in Heine's, the Prussian state fails to detain the speaker. Moreover, by referring to Polyphemus's blinding, the speaker also critiques the state's efforts to police its borders. Like the Cyclops with his one impaired eye ["Staar"], Prussia suffers from impaired vision. It views those who cross into its boundaries from a single, clouded, narrow perspective. In a sense, the speaker's refusal to identify himself "blinds" the corporal, thus frustrating Prussia's efforts to monitor and ensnare unwanted guests at its thresholds.

Heine's speaker also highlights the state's inhospitality during his passage into Germany from France. Here a fellow traveler extols the German Customs Union for lending coherence to an otherwise fragmented nation: "'Der Zollverein," he claims, "Wird unser Volksthum begründen, / Er wird das zersplitterte Vaterland / Zu einem Ganzen verbinden" (*Wintermärchen 4*). In the following two stanzas, the traveler identifies not only the Customs Union, but also the censorship authorities as central to the project of national unification: "Er [der Zollverein] giebt die äußere Einheit uns, / Die sogenannt materielle; / Die geistige Einheit giebt uns die Censur, / Die wahrhaft ideelle – // Sie giebt die innere Einheit uns, / Die Einheit in Denken und Sinnen; / Ein einiges Deutschland thut uns Noth, / Einig nach Außen und Innen" (94). Germany's unification, according to the traveler, hinges on clarifying external and internal definitions of national identity. While the Customs Union binds an otherwise disjointed jumble of states by enforcing Germany's external borders, the censors impose unity on German intellectual life by silencing dissidents. On the textual level, the traveler's desires for unity are mirrored in his diction: he monotonously repeats the word "Einheit," as well as words within the same semantic field such as "Zollver*ein*," "*Ein ein*iges Deutschland," and "*Ein*ig." To a certain extent, such repetitions sap the word "unity" of its meaning, and tellingly, the poem puts these empty phrases

into the mouth of a figure, who, like the speaker, returns to Germany from abroad. However, whereas the traveler blindly accepts the attempted standardization of state membership as the price of unification, the speaker, it seems, has developed a more critical eye during his time in exile. Upon returning to Germany, he, unlike his fellow traveler, refuses to endorse hollow and oppressive expressions of national unification like the Customs Union and the censors.

As an outsider who straddles the oppositions of inside and outside, proximity and distance, indifference and commitment, Heine's speaker emerges as a border figure, a guest in his own home who commands a privileged perspective. In the course of his passages over Germany's thresholds, he delivers, contrary to Campe's fears about his estrangement from the "Vaterhaus," an astute assessment of Germany's political conditions. More specifically, the speaker displays a special insight into those criteria of state belonging that have shifted since his departure from Germany. He recognizes measures like the new Prussian Law of Subjecthood, the Customs Union, and the censorship of intellectual life as impoverished expressions of national identity. He points out that Germany's external borders have not been defined through the establishment of a democratic, constitutional state, but rather through bureaucratic measures intended to further Prussian economic and political interests. As for Germany's internal unity, he shows that cohesion springs not from free intellectual debate among state members, but rather from its suppression. Accordingly, the speaker's estrangement from Germany allows him to see "Die große Douanenkette" (94)—and measures like it—in a more critical light than Campe assumed was possible. While the Customs Union may bind a loose patchwork of German states together, it is also, the speaker implies, a chain that simultaneously shackles and strangles them.

An Aching Belly and a Critical Eye: Digesting National Identity in the *Wintermärchen*

To return to van Gennep's terminology: the *Wintermärchen* designates borders as transitional spaces where the speaker's reincorporation begins. In other words, after crossing Germany's thresholds, he continues his passage by partaking in rites that seek to reinforce membership. One such ceremony is the meal, and the poem, to use van Gennep's term, focuses on rites of incorporation that hinge on food and drink. More than banal details or breaches of aesthetic decorum, culinary and gastrointestinal references highlight the speaker's re-initiation into his former homeland.[82] In Cologne, for example, he recognizes the power of food to renew his sense of belonging. Here he links the inhalation of sorely missed "deutsche Luft" with a reawakened appetite for German food: "Ich aß / Dort Eyerkuchen mit Schinken, / Und da er sehr gesalzen war / Mußt' ich auch Rheinwein trinken" (97). This connection between cuisine and identity repeats itself during the speaker's lunch in Hagen, where he reencounters "Die altgermanische Küche" (111). While sautéed "Krammetsvögel" chirp "Wilkommen, Landsmann" and admonish the speaker for fooling around with foreign birds, "Stockfische" and "Bückinge" also rekindle his sense of national identity: he uses the adjective "heimisch" to describe the first dish; he associates heartfelt loyalty to the "Vaterland" with the second (112).

The speaker does not only dine alone. During the banquet scene in Lorenz's Cellar, for instance, he reconnects with a circle of old friends in Hamburg (142), the city where he formed the memory of eating his first oyster (137). Similarly, the speaker visits his mother, who serves him a meal that not only sates his hunger, but also frames their reunion by punctuating the entire

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[82] Here I disagree with Sammons, who dismisses the speaker's feast in Hagen as a "dull chapter about food" (*EP* 293). And although I agree with Kolb that food in the *Wintermärchen* alludes to aesthetic and political revolution (202-09), I would add that it also represents an engagement with the articulation of national identity.

conversation (135-36). Shared meals, in short, constitute moments of communion. As we will see, his relationship to food parallels his relationship to Germany itself. The *Wintermärchen* employs a gastrointestinal metaphor by consistently aligning the speaker's ability to digest German cuisine with his ability to assimilate Germanness into his wider identity. The question whether food can be incorporated also raises the question whether the speaker himself can be included in the nation. While his heart begins to bleed as he crosses Germany's border, his stomach also indicates the difficult process of reintegration that unfolds throughout the poem.

However, dining scenes in the *Wintermärchen* do not only highlight communion, that is, the speaker's reconnection with the community of his homeland. In fact, considering numerous intratextual references, most of the speaker's positive culinary experiences are rendered negative by the poem's end. While he may relish the eggs he is served in Hagen, for example, his stomach later turns at the thought of the Prussian eagle's eggs in Hamburg (139). Further, while the cod and kippers he enjoys in Hagen evoke positive connotations of the Fatherland, he later worries about choking on a fishbone as he dines with his mother (135). And although the "Krammetsvögel" in Hagen greet him as a fellow countryman, he hesitates to eat the goose meat served immediately afterward, criticizing it as "sehr zähe" (112). Even the pleasurable sociability associated with the feast in Lorenz's Cellar is diminished, given the speaker's reference to the memory of his first oyster. As he strolls through Hamburg, he is confronted with a city he hardly recognizes. The fire of 1842 has consumed the familiar sights of his childhood, including the oyster cellar in which this positive culinary memory was formed (137). Significantly, the speaker's estrangement from the Hamburg of his youth is further aggravated by culinary reminiscences: he wistfully searches for the pavilion where he once ate several cakes (137), and

to his surprise, even the dietary habits of the local Jewish community have changed (141).[83] Hence, as much as food links the speaker with his past, it also underscores his separation from it. Culinary memories may hint at the continuity of his identity, but they also remind him of his status as an outsider. Finally, while his mother's dishes promise to ease the speaker's reintegration, they largely fail to do so. Instead of encouraging him to commit to Germany, food inhibits a clear declaration of national identity. With his mouth full of German goose meat, he refuses to give clear answers to his mother's questions concerning his preference of France over Germany (136). While the Fatherland's food momentarily sates the speaker's hunger, it ultimately fails to sustain his sense of national belonging.

Drink plays a similar role in the speaker's reincorporation. When he visits the inn at Unna, for example, a warm glass of punch conjures memories of his place in a larger community: "Viel süße Erinnerung dampfte der Punsch, / Ich dachte der lieben Brüder, // Der lieben Westfalen womit ich so oft / In Göttingen getrunken, / Bis wir gerührt einander an's Herz / Und unter die Tische gesunken!" (113). The punch reawakens the sweet memory of the speaker's inclusion in a brotherhood bound by alcohol. Paradoxically, however, the memory of this community is bound up with forgetting: the speaker and his Westphalian "brothers" may have joined hearts during their drinking bouts, but such a bond—one forged between members lying inebriated under the table—appears fragile and fleeting given the circumstances of its genesis. This scene is echoed during the speaker's visit with Hammonia. In both episodes, attractive female hosts influence his memory and sense of belonging through the provision of alcohol. Yet unlike the barmaid in Unna, Hammonia uses drink strategically to manipulate his memory. Just as Circe does with Odysseus, she plies the speaker with a potion designed to make

[83] See Zantop (183-84) for a discussion of the poem's treatment of Jewish identity.

him forget. After giving him cups of tea mixed with rum, she pleads with him, "Bleib bey mir in Hamburg, ich liebe dich, / Wir wollen trinken und essen / Den Wein und die Austern der Gegenwart, / Und die dunkle Zukunft vergessen" (153). And like Circe, Hammonia concocts an elixir intended to make her hostage forget about his mission—the liberation of his comrades from oppression—and give in to his baser appetites. Drink may allow him to commune with other members of his former homeland, but it also threatens to stupefy him into accepting the very conditions that drove him into exile in the first place.

The poem also thematizes the process of digestion itself. In the preface, the speaker describes the expansion of German territory in gastrointestinal terms: "Elsaß und Lothringen kann ich freylich dem deutschen Reiche nicht so leicht *einverleiben*," he explains, "denn die Leute in jenen Landen hängen fest an Frankreich wegen der Rechte, […] die dem bürgerlichen Gemüte sehr angenehm sind, aber dem *Magen* der großen Menge dennoch Vieles zu wünschen übrig lassen" (301, emphasis added). Even if Alsace and Lorraine were "ingested" by Germany, they would, because of their adherence to French liberty, ultimately upset the state's stomach. Yet the speaker employs the metaphor of digestion not only to criticize German expansionism; he also uses it to mock the fear of territorial loss incited by the Rhine Crisis. During his conversation with Father Rhine, the river complains of the stomach pains he suffers when hearing Nikolaus Becker's patriotic song "Der deutsche Rhein" (101). Further, the nation is attributed with the ability to digest during the speaker's stay in Minden, when he suffers the nightmare of the Prussian eagle consuming his liver. "Er fraß mir die Leber aus der Brust, / Ich habe gestöhnt und gejammert" (132). An allusion to Prometheus's punishment, the eagle's attack not only aligns the speaker with a mythical liberator of humanity; by ingesting his liver, this incarnation of the Prussian state also draws attention to one of the organ's primary functions:

detoxification. As a political metaphor, the liver thus hints at the state's desire to filter out "poisonous" voices like the speaker's. Because of his political views, in other words, he cannot be incorporated into the body of the state. Lastly, by reducing Charlemagne's throne to a chamber pot, the speaker reemphasizes Germany's excretion of undesirable members. Instead of assimilating disparate voices in a process beneficial to all, the body of the state simply expels them as waste. While certainly crude, Heine's metaphor nonetheless performs an important critique: it denounces the politics of state belonging as a disgusting form of exclusion.

As for the speaker's own stomach, the poem portrays an ever-worsening case of indigestion. In fact, his ability to stomach Germany—literally and figuratively—wanes in the course of the *Wintermärchen*. The poem begins optimistically, touting itself as the proclamation of a new age in which the lazy bellies of the upper class will no longer devour food produced by the diligent hands of the poor (93).[84] Yet despite the speaker's initial hopes, his vision of harmony gives way to one of discord, a deterioration registered by his stomach. By the time he reaches Minden, the nation's cuisine has become almost inedible: "Das Essen wollt mir nicht schmecken," he complains (131). Given such allusions to indigestion, even the speaker's enjoyment of Hamburg's food appears diminished. While he certainly enjoys the rounds of oysters and Rhine wine in Lorenz's Cellar, the excess of cayenne pepper in Hamburg's mock turtle soup and the greasiness of its carp, he infers, could cause an upset stomach (139). Moreover, considering his prayer to God after leaving Lorenz's Cellar—"Nun laß mich, Vater, diese Nacht / Das Essen gut verdauen!" (143)—it seems that his ability to digest Germany's food, and by extension, the nation itself, has been compromised. As the *Wintermärchen*'s climax,

[84] Hermand takes the first caput at face value and ignores the poem's pessimistic end. He claims Heine strikes "auch einige 'positive' Klänge" at the beginning of the *Wintermärchen* (248-49).

the night mentioned in the speaker's prayer contrasts with the poem's initial promise of a culinary utopia in which the well-fed body of the German nation has achieved harmony. On the contrary, by construing Charlemagne's chamber pot as a window into Germany's developmental trajectory, the *Wintermärchen* culminates in an image of repulsion and discord. Yet this image does more than just address the state's inability to successfully incorporate all its members. Given the speaker's prayers for good digestion, his overindulgence in food and drink, and his admission of illness to Hammonia, the chamber pot functions as a window into his development throughout the *Wintermärchen*.[85] Indeed, his "use" of the pot at the poem's end suggests that his homesickness—the "Vaterlandsliebe" he equates with a "Krankheit" (147)—is not only an expression of the exile's broken heart, but also an indicator of his struggle to digest the German aspects of his identity.[86] The speaker's "Heimweh" (146), the poem implies, is inextricable from his "Bauchweh."

Taken as a nasty case of indigestion, the *Wintermärchen* seems to offer little resolution. By insisting on a metaphor that emphasizes discord, expulsion, and incompatibility, the poem apparently withholds any positive answers to the political ills it goes to such great lengths to depict. Yet by developing a politics of the stomach, the Wintermärchen does, in fact, deliver an astute piece of political commentary, one that anticipates the following aphorism from Nietzsche's *Jenseits von Gut und Böse*: "Wir haben wahrscheinlich Alle schon an Tischen gesessen, wo wir nicht hingehörten; und gerade die Geistigsten von uns, die am schwersten zu

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[85] Atkinson (200) makes a similar observation, mostly to demonstrate the speaker's ironic treatment of political issues.

[86] Here I dispute Hannah's privileging of the heart as the seat of the speaker's "opposing drives and feelings" (306).

ernähren sind, kennen jene gefährliche dyspepsia, welche aus einer plötzlichen Einsicht und Enttäuschung über unsre Kost und Tischnachbarschaft entsteht" (230-31). Like Nietzsche's dyspeptic diner, Heine's speaker joins a national table to which he no longer seems to belong. And because of the disappointment over the quality of Germany's food and his table companions, he too suffers a dangerous case of dyspepsia. However, more than an eruption of literal and figurative bile that follows profound disappointment, the poem also clearly demonstrates the other word Nietzsche designates as the cause of indigestion: "Einsicht." Although the *Wintermärchen* hardly represents a neat and tidy political treatise with definite answers to definite problems, it does provide shrewd insight into the construction of German national identity in the mid-nineteenth century.

In the end, the metaphor of indigestion in the *Wintermärchen* is bound up with its goals as a piece of political criticism. As a guest in his own homeland, Heine's speaker bears witness to processes intended to tighten the bonds of state membership, and through his depiction of the hospitable encounter, he exposes the increasing narrowness and latent hostility of such ambitions. Moreover, his estrangement from Germany may engender feelings of ambivalence strong enough to turn his stomach, but it also accords him a privileged perspective into the conditions of state belonging. The status of outsider, the poem insists, lends the speaker insight that his hosts simply lack. Lastly, by uncovering the ambiguities of hospitality, the *Wintermärchen* not only critiques state efforts to regulate membership; it also portrays a speaker with a deep awareness of the intersections between personal and national identity. While certainly sickened by what his hosts offer him, Heine's speaker undergoes his own struggle to arrive at a stable notion of what it means to be German, and ultimately recognizes that national identity, like digestion, is a process in flux. Partly absorbed, partly rejected, the German aspects

of his identity are rarely settled, and accordingly, neither is his stomach. Although his digestive tract may rumble as it goes through this dynamic process, another part of the body profits from the upset. Heine's poem offers more than waste at the end of its own process of digesting Germany; an aching belly also yields a critical eye.

A House Divided: The German Question as Familial Conflict in "Der Kuß von Sentze"

Adalbert Stifter's novella "Der Kuß von Sentze" shares much with Heine's *Wintermärchen*. Both feature first-person narrators who, during their passage through German-speaking Europe, experience a homeland struggling to define itself. Both texts also construe the nation as a familial entity: like Heine's speaker, Stifter's protagonist Rupert experiences a "Vaterhaus" in disarray. In a series of visits that take Rupert from Nuremberg to Vienna, from Vienna to Habsburg Northern Italy, and from there back to Bavaria, he witnesses not only his biological family at odds with itself (the two branches of the Sentzes have become estranged); during his travels, Rupert also witnesses his national family's internal fragmentation (the House of Habsburg seeks to secure its borders during the revolutions of 1848/49). Moreover, the *Wintermärchen* and "Der Kuß" designate a body part, the mouth, as emblematic of familial and national estrangement. But whereas the mouth in Heine's poem functions primarily as a gateway—the first station in a process of indigestion—Stifter's novella lingers on that gateway, on the lips that perform its titular kiss. An explanation of that ritual kiss unlocks the plot of this lesser-known work. Tracing the historical conflicts of the aristocratic Sentzes, the novella centers on the "Friedens- und Liebeskuß," a ritual intended to reconcile quarrelling family members. Rupert's father dispatches him to Vienna, where he is to propose marriage to his cousin Hiltiburg. Yet the would-be lovers develop a mutual hatred, and instead of winning Hiltiburg, Rupert joins Radetzky's campaign against the rebel Italians. Upon his return, he is dispatched

once again: this time, Rupert visits his uncle Walchon, who eventually reconciles his nephew and daughter. But the ritual kiss at the novella's climax achieves more than peace. Rupert and Hiltiburg realize their love and agree to marry. With the promise of their offspring, the Sentze family line, which had faced a dead end, is once again secure. The kiss, as a rite of hospitality, functions similarly to dining in Heine's poem. As a rite of incorporation, it promises to renew membership after a period of estrangement.

Like the *Wintermärchen*, "Der Kuß" also engages with contemporary issues of state belonging. Set between 1846 and 1849, the novella also focuses on a period when state borders in central Europe shifted. In addition to the Austrian campaign against the break-away Italian states, "Der Kuß" alludes to other examples of national fragmentation. When Rupert mentions "die Unruhen, die damals durch halb Europa gingen" (153), he also hints at the unrest in other member states of the Habsburg Empire. Such conflicts included the granting of autonomous rights to Hungary in March 1848 and the abolition of the historical divisions of Croatia and Transylvania one year later.[87] Looming even larger was the German national question. Delegates from the various states that comprised the German Confederation debated in the Frankfurt Assembly whether Germany should include Austria (and its German-speaking territories), or whether the Habsburg Monarchy would be altogether excluded, thereby granting Prussia the dominant position in the new nation. "Der Kuß" is thus situated at a historical moment when the nation's borders were to be redrawn according to the opposing models of *Großdeutschland* and *Kleindeutschland*. Moreover, Stifter published the novella in the same year the conflict between the Habsburgs and Hohenzollerns reached its climax in the *Deutscher Krieg*, when Prussia forced Austria out of the Confederation in 1866. Stifter himself decried what he called a "Krieg

[87] See Jelavich (47-51) for more details on the historical developments alluded to in the novella.

Deutscher gegen Deutsche" in a letter from 25 July 1866, about a month before the Confederation's dissolution: here he laments that "Menschen desselben Stammes, Menschen eines herrlichen Volkes […] sich bekriegen und sich mordend gegenüber stehen" (*Briefe* 131). In both his letter and his novella, Stifter construes the warring German states as family members in violent conflict. The potential dissolution of the Sentze family caused by Rupert and Hiltiburg's estrangement parallels the potential dissolution of the German Confederation caused by Habsburg Austria's estrangement from its member states, on the one hand, and from Prussia, on the other. German-speaking Europe is, like the Sentze family, a house divided.[88]

Stifter's novella also conflates familial and national conflicts in subtle ways. In one of the few pieces of criticism dedicated solely to "Der Kuß," Wolfgang Frühwald reads the Sentze family conflict as an allusion to the German national question, pointing out how the novella develops a complex (and easily overlooked) code of colors and dates. He sees, for example, references to national flags in the color schemes of houses and clothing, as well as correspondences between key events in German national history and the dates of the novella's turning points.[89] However, while Frühwald convincingly argues that "Der Kuß" contains a

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[88] Also see Stifter's essay "Der Staat" (26-29), in which he uses the metaphor of the family to the nation.

[89] In his characterization of the novella's "Spiel der Farben," Frühwald interprets the red and white stones of the houses on the Sentze estate as an allusion to Habsburg heraldry and the white and black combination of Hiltiburg's dress as an allusion to the Hohenzollern flag (38-39). He also identifies the novella's "Zahlenspiele," interpreting Rupert's twenty-fifth birthday in 1846 as a reference to 1821—the year Metternich assumed the "Staatskanzlerschaft,"—and the 45-year gap between Rupert and Hiltiburg's ritual kiss in 1849 and that of their fathers as a

political message that other critics have either downplayed or ignored, he pays little attention to the role of ritual in the Sentze family conflict, and, in turn, the state conflict it allegorizes.[90] By examining how the rites of hospitality during Rupert's passage renew family and, by implication, state membership, I combine political readings of the novella with those that emphasize the role of ceremony.[91] The novella's treatment of state membership, in short, is not a separate issue from its preoccupation with ritual; the rites of hospitality performed by the Sentze family shed light on how unity is reestablished among warring members of the same national family. In this sense, van Gennep's model allows us, as was the case in Heine's poem, to trace how the guest's passage over the threshold and eventual incorporation promises to reinforce group cohesion.

How, then, does the novella stage the guest's passage? Unlike the *Wintermärchen*, "Der Kuß" depicts the preliminal phase of its protagonist's passage—those rites that accompany his separation from home.[92] Whereas Heine's poem reveals nothing about the speaker's departure

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reference to the "Trennung der österreichischen von der deutschen Kaiserkrone" in 1804 (38). In contrast, Enzinger (256) connects the color schemes to another Stifter text, *Die Narrenburg*, while Schoenborn (507) reads the juxtaposition of red with white as a cipher for the conflict between passion and purity.

[90] Also see Schoenborn (516-17), who also stresses the novella's political subtext.

[91] In an early interpretation of the novella, Hohoff (80) connects the novella's emphasis on etiquette and ceremony to the tradition of medieval courtly literature and argues that the observance of proper form is tied to human freedom.

[92] Here it is important to note van Gennep's concession that each state is "not developed to the same extent by all peoples or in every ceremonial pattern" (11). In other words, whereas as some passages emphasize the rites of separation, others may accord them a less prominent status.

from France, Stifter's novella details the ceremonies surrounding Rupert's departure from the Sentze estate. As soon as the frame narrative transitions into Rupert's first-person account, the text emphasizes his status as a liminal figure, as an initiate: "Am dreizehnten Tage des Monates April des Jahres 1846 hatte ich […] den Tag meiner Mündigwerdung. Ich kleidete mich am Morgen in meinem Schlafzimmer sorgfältig an und ging in mein Wohnzimmer" ("Kuß" 146). Rupert's passage thus begins with the crossing of four kinds of boundaries. First, the commencement of his story constitutes a transition from one narrative level to another, from the frame text to the embedded tale he relates. Second, Rupert passes from one psychological state to another, from sleep to consciousness. Third, he awakes on the day of his "Mündigwerdung," the day that marks his graduation from childhood to adulthood, the transition from one legal and social status to another. Fourth, he moves across a physical threshold, from his bedroom to the living room, from a private space to a communal one. Taken together, these transitions underscore how the novella marks Rupert as a liminal figure and initiate whose passage from one stage of life to another offers clues about the text's understanding of family and state membership.

A particular object Rupert sees on the first morning of his initiation is emblematic for the novella as a whole. Significantly, once he enters the living room, he glimpses "sehr schön gebundene Bücher" on a table, "eine Sammlung *aller* altdeutschen Dichtungen" (146, emphasis added). Given the numerous other references to state conflict in "Der Kuß," this collection of *all* Old German poetry can be read as an allusion to the nationality question. Seen from this perspective, Rupert beholds a collection of all of German-speaking Europe's voices, a metaphorical nation lying on the table—one neatly bound together. The beautifully bound book thus announces the novella's central conflicts, thereby anticipating how such a harmonious

cohesion could be achieved, not only among the estranged members of the Sentze family, but also among the divided states of the German national family. Given this textual metaphor for gathering a German community, literature's role is clearly essential to this process of reuniting disaffected members, and the chapter's conclusion will address how narrative functions as a kind of hospitality. But for now, let us focus on the threshold rites Rupert undergoes during his visits to estranged family members.

Designated as an initiate, Rupert begins his passage, which, as one critic has described the novella's structure, constitutes an "Aneinanderreihung von Gastverhältnissen" (Fountoulakis 38). Indeed, his father's request that he court Hiltiburg prescribes two visits: the first takes place at his aunt Laran's home in Vienna, the second at his uncle Walchon's home in an unnamed Bavarian forest. During these two visits, Rupert is to undergo the rites of hospitality—the rites that accompany his passage across the threshold, as well as those that seek to reestablish group cohesion. Now separated from his childhood home, he travels to Vienna, where his hosts greet him at the door. However, despite the warm welcome he receives from Laran and her daughters, there remains an undercurrent of hostility, a lingering sense of estrangement. Significantly, Hiltiburg—she is, after all, the primary reason for Rupert's visit—refuses to meet him at the threshold. She later explains that she was busy preparing for the following day's evening ball and could not, therefore, greet her cousin and prospective husband. Yet considering the letter Rupert sends her before departing for Vienna, this refusal to welcome him seems more problematic. He writes to her, "[d]enke Dir aber nicht, daß ich in dem Sinne nach Wien komme, Dich durchaus heiraten zu wollen, du hast die Freiheit, wenn ich Dir *fremd* wäre und Du nie etwas von mir gehört hättest" ("Der Kuß" 147-48, my emphasis). Viewed in conjunction with Rupert's suspicion that the two cousins have become estranged, Hiltiburg's absence at the threshold

appears in a different light. Of course, his letter seeks to reassure her that their potential marriage hinges on reestablishment of genuine mutual affection after years spent apart. Yet the suggestion that he has perhaps become a stranger to her anticipates further tensions. Seen from this perspective, Hiltiburg's absence is a breach of decorum, a breakdown in the rites of hospitality. Rupert's transition from the preliminal to the liminal phase is thus staged as a stalled passage. In a word, he stumbles at the threshold, faltering at the point where he begins the next stage of a process that is both to propel him into adulthood and to reestablish group cohesion.

Like his reception in Vienna, Rupert's arrival at Walchon's home—the novella's second prominent threshold scene—is infused with tension. His first impressions of the house warrant special attention: "Ich […] gelangte endlich in ein Gehege, auf dem ein Trümmerwerk von grauen Granitsteinen begann […]. Mitten in dem Steingetrümmer stand ein Haus" (159). As the guest approaches his host's dwelling, he describes the more sinister aspects of the house's placement in the landscape. Walchon's home is not only cut off from the rest of the world, enclosed in a "Gehege"; it is also situated amongst debris, "Mitten in dem Steingetrümmer." Images of isolation and fragmentation, in other words, figure prominently during Rupert's arrival at the threshold of a family member with whom he is supposed to reconcile. Further, after Rupert waits for an hour, Walchon finally returns, accompanied by a "Wolfshund von ungewöhnlicher Größe" that greets him with "einige Mißtöne" (160). In addition to the host's absence—this absence echoes Hiltiburg's refusal to greet Rupert—the threatening dog also suggests that Walchon's threshold constitutes another space where the rites of hospitality are less than honored. Just as the landscape surrounding the house indicates discord, so too do the hostile dog's "Mißtöne." Dissonance seems to prevail at Walchon's doorstep, and after two tense arrivals, estrangement among the Sentzes remains unalleviated.

A specific intertextual reference underscores this relationship between hospitality and hostility at the threshold. Just as allusions to *The Odyssey* designate the threshold as site of conflict between guest and host in the *Wintermärchen*, references to the *Nibelungenlied* in "Der Kuß" suggest that hospitality may divide more than it unites.[93] How Walchon finally greets Rupert and invites him to enter the house hints at this dynamic: "So besuchst du mich in meiner Waldburg. Sie ist aus Holz wie die des alten Königs Ezel […]. Gehe herein" (160). Walchon's identification with Etzel, the Hungarian king in the *Nibelungenlied*, is perplexing, especially given its occurrence at his doorstep. For a text that seeks to imbue ritual with the power of reconciling family members, Stifter's novella unexpectedly refers to a work that depicts the opposite phenomenon. Hospitality in the *Nibelungenlied* constitutes a set of rites that bring about a family's disintegration. Kriemhild, Etzel's wife, uses her power as hostess as a weapon. She invites those family members complicit in Siegfried's murder to partake in the festivities held at her husband's palace, where the hosts turn on their guests and a bloodbath ensues. The hospitality practiced in Etzel's home perverts those rites that should reunite estranged family members. While the Sentzes, unlike the Nibelungs, do not slaughter each other, the alignment of Walchon's home with Etzel's palace indicates an anxiety about ritual's ability to foster group cohesion. Moreover, the medieval epic even thematizes the ritual kiss in the same chapter Kriemhild hatches her plans for revenge. The poet first describes a dream in which she kisses her brother Giselher and subsequently describes what will become, in retrospect, the treacherous kiss

[93] Frühwald also mentions the *Nibelungenlied*, but he emphasizes the reference as part of Stifter's understanding of literature's historical purpose, its task to establish "Kontinuität und Kontinuitätsbewußtsein über die Anfänge der Geschichte hinaus bis hin zu den mythischen Wurzeln der Menschheit" (40).

of peace she gives her brother Gunter: "Ich glaube, der üble Teufel hatte Kriemhild dazu geraten, sich in Freundschaft von Gunter zu verabschieden, den sie im Land der Burgunden mit einem Kuß versöhnt hatte" (*Nibelungenlied* 421). Given the parallels between the *Nibelungenlied* and "Der Kuß," Walchon's invocation of the epic is no coincidence. It colors Rupert's arrival as a moment of underlying hostility—a moment characterized not by promises of harmony, but rather by images of discord and potential violence. Ultimately, the rites that accompany the guest's passage across the threshold threaten to exacerbate the very estrangement they are intended to alleviate.

The latent hostility of Rupert's arrivals thus complicates one critic's reading of the novella as a "Welt der Heiterkeit" whose characters inhabit "eine von Sorgen unbelastete, meist auf Schlössern paradiesisch lebende Gesellschaft" (Sengle 1014). While "Der Kuß" certainly manifests many elements of a "Lustspielgeschichte" (1013)—the text culminates, after all, in Rupert and Hiltiburg's union—the novella's threshold scenes challenge this interpretation. On the one hand, the staging of the guest's arrival hints at the persistence of conflict on both the family and state levels; on the other hand, Rupert's difficult transitions also imply that hospitality is not guaranteed to restore order and reinforce membership. In his analysis of "Der Kuß," Curt Hohoff identifies the visit as a larger phenomenon in Stifter's oeuvre, designating the guest-host encounter as a moment when order is created. He writes, "Dergleichen [der Höflichkeitsbesuch] ist bei Stifter stets wichtig, darin symbolisiert sich ihm die Ordnung der menschlichen Beziehungen. Die Personen machen einander im gleichen Hause die förmlichsten Visiten" (Hohoff 80). In this regard, one thinks of *Der Nachsommer* (1857): Heinrich Drendorf's host von Risach initiates his guest into a highly ordered, harmonious world where social relations are carefully maintained through ceremony and routine. But Stifter's other works present a more

complicated vision of hospitality. In *Der Hagestolz* (1844), for instance, Victor visits his uncle's isolated, disorderly, inhospitable home, and although the two relatives eventually reconcile, the relationship between guest and host is marked by antagonism—so much so that Victor's uncle holds him hostage.[94] Unlike Victor's uncle, Walchon never imprisons his guest; yet in its description of Rupert's arrival, "Der Kuß" nonetheless recalls how hospitality is perverted in *Der Hagestolz*, how it destabilizies human relationships instead of harmonizing them. On the contrary, the visit in "Der Kuß" constitutes a more ambiguous interaction, an irritating oscillation between hospitality and hostility, unity and disunity, order and disorder. As much as ritual promises to reconcile the Sentzes—and by implication, the German national family—it seems the novella must first reconcile itself with ritual's potential to reestablish group cohesion.

Reconciling with Ritual: Ceremonial Kisses and Group Cohesion in "Der Kuß"

While eating and drinking constitute the primary rites of incorporation in the *Wintermärchen*, other forms of communion play a larger role in Rupert's passage. On the day after his arrival in Vienna, for instance, he attends a ball, which, like the greeting scene, is replete with underlying tensions. First, Rupert arrives at the dance later "als man gewöhnlich zu thun pflegt" (149). Second, he wonders whether the dancing is "ruhiger und vielleicht auch lieblicher, […] als man sie jetzt sieht" (150). Finally, Hiltiburg refuses to dance, opting to sit in a corner, draped in a black dress that signals her unwillingness to participate (151). Although the ball constitutes an ordered social interaction, subtle ruptures seem to undercut its overall purpose: to facilitate unions between young people in the form of marriage. Instead, Stifter's protagonist fails to arrive on time and cannot even give a good reason why; the dancing provokes him to

[94] See Bürner-Kotzam (176-88) for an interpretation of the dialectic of hospitality and hostility in *Der Hagestolz*.

reflect on whether it meets current standards of decorum; and his love interest eschews any chance of a pairing by pouting in the corner. As was the case with threshold rites, the dance, as a rite of incorporation, achieves little to advance Rupert's passage.

The ball thus typifies how ceremony is a problem in the novella, and Rupert's complaints about the convention of social life in Vienna underscore this. He laments, "[i]n Wien war damals ein großer Aufwand und ein Prunk in Wohnungen, Geräthen und Kleidern" (152). Particularly fond of pomp is Hiltiburg, who, Rupert claims, exceeds all others in this regard: "so überglänzte sie fortan Alles durch ihre äußere Erscheinung" (152). It is Hiltiburg's ceremoniousness, in fact, that alienates her from Rupert. After he chastises her shallowness and she rebuffs his critique, they fall out with little hope of reconciliation. Rupert then describes how "etwas wie Verachtung gegen Hiltiburg" enters his very soul, and he later notes how "etwas wie Haß" flickers in her gaze whenever she looks at him (153). Significantly, the disintegration of their relationship coincides with the outbreak of the March revolutions throughout Europe—those "Unruhen" mentioned by Rupert two sentences after he notices Hiltiburg's nasty glances. By aligning the conflict between the two family members with the state conflicts that erupted in 1848, the novella suggests that "Hochmut und Prunksucht" provoke alienation between group members. However, considering what Rupert and Hiltiburg wear at their wedding, ceremony as such is not necessarily bound up with fragmentation: he appears in "der schweren Kleidung der Palsentze" (the older form of the family name), she in "einem reicheren Schmucke als sie je einen gehabt" (174). What, then, is the problem with "Prunk?" Why does the novella seem to imbue ceremony with the powers of integration and disintegration? Which rites of incorporation achieve their end and which do not?

Despite the undercurrents of hostility that emerge during Rupert's arrival at Walchon's threshold, his uncle's home nonetheless serves as the space where the ritual kiss ultimately reforges the broken bond between the Sentzes. Beforehand, however, Walchon initiates his nephew in another way, namely through their joint project of classifying species of moss.[95] While such a project recalls the Biedermeier bent for "Sammeln und Hegen" (Sengle 1016), it also alludes to a more general desire to restore order to a world where relationships remain severed. In other words, the purpose behind Walchon's moss collection is linked to Rupert's experiences during the Radetzky campaign. While the uncle imposes order on the natural specimens he collects by cataloguing their affinities, the nephew fights for the imposition of order in the Austrian Empire by helping to prevent the secession of the rebel Italian states. Walchon's desire for order on the micro-level thus reflects the Habsburgs' desire for order on the macro-level.

This parallel becomes clearer in Rupert's descriptions of the collection. Here he uses language that alludes to the novella's engagement with the issue of state membership: he sees "Verwandtschaften, Verbindungen und Uebergänge"; he marvels at the "Schärfe und Eigenthümlichkeit" of the pressed and catalogued specimens; and he adds new "Stämmchen" to the collection, and by doing so establishes a bond ["ein Band"] with his uncle for the first time during his visit (165-66). Considering how "Der Kuß" depicts a family at odds with itself,

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[95] Fountoulakis (45) reads Walchon's moss collection as an expression of the novella's preoccupation with genealogy, in particular the fathers' goal of perpetuating the family name and future generations. Enzinger (256), similar to Sengle, views the catalogue as characteristic for Stifter's recluses in general, claiming Walchon spends his days with "abwegigen Beschäftigungen."

Walchon's collection assumes a symbolic role. Put differently, he encourages his nephew to recognize a family dynamic in the mosses. The relationships between the different types are to remind Rupert of the connections between different members of the familial state; the sharpness and individuality of various mosses point to the desire for a clear definition of membership; and the "Stämmchen"—a sly wordplay—not only refer to little stems, but also to the "Stämme," that is, groups of people, who make up greater Germany. The scientific discourse surrounding the catalogue of mosses points to the view that differences between types (and by extensions peoples) function as supplements. What is modeled is a configuration in which individuality is maintained and a coherent totality is proposed. Each individual, in other words, helps to complete the larger species. By including his guest in a project centered on organization and classification, Walchon performs the first rite of hospitality in the novella that successfully furthers his nephew's passage. Rupert's initiation is now ready to culminate in its final ritual: the kiss.

What exactly does the ritual kiss entail? After Hiltiburg arrives at her uncle's home, the two young people slowly begin to repair their bond by conversing more often, examining the moss catalogue, and reading together. However, it is not until they agree to perform the ritual kiss that harmony is restored, and the Sentzes are reconciled through their wedding. As Walchon explains to Rupert, the ritual itself stipulates that he and Hiltiburg spend three days in prayer, all the while occupying themselves with "Betrachtungen über den Schwur und mit Lesung der Schwurschriften" (169). After completing these preparations, they face each other, speak the prescribed phrases "Hiltiburg, mit Gott" and "Rupert, mit Gott," and press their lips together (170). Ecstatic that the kiss not only dissolves their enmity but also reveals their mutual love, they can only bring forth the words "Hiltiburg, Rupert" (171). Inherent in the ritual's success, it

seems, is the clear articulation and recognition of identity in the form of names. One remembers, after all, that the cause of their alienation was rooted in the problem of misrecognition. Rupert criticizes Hiltiburg for her pomp, that is, her preference for appearances over substance. Deceit and shallowness have, the novella suggests, been replaced with assertions of genuine inner feeling. Yet the kiss not only repairs the broken relationship between the young lovers but also invokes a tradition that has been ignored in the scholarship on "Der Kuß." By centering on the "Kiss of Peace," the novella refers to an important practice of the early Church. As Philip Michael Penn shows in his study *Kissing Christians*, the ritual shaped the formation of religious communities. Penn argues that the kiss constituted a form of communion similar to the Eucharist: "At the Eucharist," he writes, "the church no longer consists of individual bodies; through the kiss, Christians join their souls with each other binding all community members" (42). Similarly, the kiss in Stifter's novella is more than an exchange between individuals. Like the early Christian communities the text refers to, the Sentzes also kiss to renew membership in a larger group. By alluding to the image of the Eucharist, "Der Kuß" repeats the metaphors of consumption and incorporation found in the *Wintermärchen*. Instead of literal food and drink, however, the novella invokes the kiss as a symbolic form of communion that establishes communal bonds.

Despite the novella's happy ending, however, it nonetheless seems to problematize the ritual kiss. Its first mention suggests that the kiss is an ambivalent, polyvalent rite. The frame narrator reports on one of the Sentze forefathers, a man whose two sons live in "beständigem Hader" (143-44). To end the conflict, the father implores the brothers to kiss, with the following proviso: "Durch einen Kuß hat Judas den Heiland verrathen, und das ist die schlechteste That gewesen, die auf der Erde verübt worden ist. Ihr solltet euch einmal küssen, und von da an sollte

keiner dem andern ein Leid thun, weil sonst noch ein Judaskuß auf der Welt wäre" (144). By invoking Judas's treacherous kiss, the father thus hints at the ambiguity inherent in the rite itself. On the one hand, he asserts that the kiss will not only reestablish peace between the brothers, but that it will also prevent future conflict. On the other hand, the father recognizes that the same gesture can embody contrary meanings, that on the surface it can signal peace while simultaneously aiming to inflict harm. The kiss, in short, can signify love and treachery, unity and disunity. Penn elaborates on the Judas kiss, explaining how the ritual is open for an "ironic reversal," whereby a "symbol of love" can be used as "an instrument of betrayal": he argues that each time Christians ritually kiss, they face a choice of whether "their actions reflect their inner feelings" or whether they "deceitfully kiss with only their mouths" (116). Penn continues: "If, like Judas, their kisses illustrate not reconciliation but enmity toward group members, they could share Judas' fate; the ritual kiss forces a choice: participants can either strengthen the group's cohesion or they can be a traitor to the community" (117).

By referencing the Judas kiss, Stifter's novella registers the ambivalence identified by Penn. After describing the first occurrence of the ritual kiss in the Sentze family history, the frame narrator then traces how it becomes a tradition. By doing so, he seems to admit that because of a recurring demand for conflict resolution, the kiss fails to secure a perpetual peace among family members. The story of the kiss's social function becomes itself a family custom, a ritual that crystallizes over generations: "Die Sache wurde in dem Geschlechte der Sentze fort erzählt, da es unter den Nachkommen manche Streitbare gab, wiederholt, sie wurde endlich bräuchlich" ("Der Kuß" 144). As a transmitted narrative that weaves its way through Sentze family history, the story of the ritual kiss become ritualized itself. Yet the establishment of the kiss as a custom ("bräuchlich" is the narrator's word) reveals a paradox. The fact that the kiss has

become a ritual indicates its ineffectiveness: if it successfully secured a lasting peace, there would be no need for its institutionalization. As much as the kiss appears to guarantee continuity in the family, its very existence highlights the discontinuities it is supposed to smooth over and preempt. The frame narrator alludes to this uncertainty, admitting that there are "keine Nachrichten vorhanden, ob einmal einer von Sentze die Verpflichtung aus dem Kusse gebrochen hat" (144). These potential gaps in the family archive highlight the ambiguity of the ritual kiss. Although there is no record of any family member violating the contract sealed by the kiss, the fact remains that conflict is inevitable among the Sentzes. But this inevitability does not necessarily mean that the ritual fails to reinforce family unity. The frame narrator's concession that there are ruptures in the archive in the form of possible omissions suggests a connection between the kiss itself and the narrative community established in the family annals. The ritual thus represents an adhesive on two levels: it binds estranged members, while at the same time gluing together the different narrative strands of the family archive. In the form of a family story, the kiss repeats itself as a narrative that is consumed throughout the generations. The story of the kiss, then, functions similarly to the Eucharistic ritual invoked in "Der Kuss": each generation of Sentzes can consume the stories collected in the annals and remind themselves of their shared bond.[96]

The novella's form evinces this act of binding by performing the kiss on a structural level. Not only does the frame introduce the Sentze family history before its narrator's voice yields to Rupert's; and not only does the frame round off his tale with an epilogue that reports

[96] Fountoulakis (42) makes a similar point, but does not refer explicitly to the Eucharist. She also discusses the Judas kiss as an ambiguous act, focusing on the image of the mouth, which is both an opening and an enclosure (46-47).

how the family flourishes after Rupert and Hiltiburg's marriage. Structurally speaking, the frame also "embraces" Rupert's narrative, enveloping it, "kissing" it, as it were. To linger on this analogy: the frame's two ends recall two lips, the body part the text bestows with the power to reinstitute harmony. They also call to mind the two quarreling family members themselves, with a narrative of reconciliation standing between them, binding them together, urging them to bridge a division. Considering the importance of reading the "Schwurschriften" before performing the kiss itself, the idea that Rupert's text also functions as shared object of contemplation between two estranged members is certainly plausible. Further, the embedded tale can also be said to undertake a passage similar to that of its narrator. Just as Rupert is ultimately incorporated into a larger community, so too is his tale incorporated into a larger collection of texts. More specifically, we learn from the frame narrator that Rupert's narrative is but a part of a communal text. In a transition from the frame to the embedded tale, the narrator announces, "Wir theilen aus der letzten Schrift des weißen Hauses [the house inhabited by Rupert and his father] Folgendes mit" ("Kuß" 145). By inserting Rupert's text into the family archive, the frame narrator thus enacts the very process of incorporation the entire novella traces; he shows how an individual "ich" narrative (Rupert's story) is collated into a larger "wir" narrative (the family annals). This collation recalls the image that stands at the beginning of Rupert's passage: the beautifully bound collection of German poetic works. Rupert's individual voice is interpolated into a collective of voices, a collective, the novella suggests, that parallels the nation. With family and state membership renewed, "Der Kuß" has, through narrative, reconciled with ritual's ability to reconcile. It has, so to speak, "kissed and made up" with those rites that seek to

reestablish group cohesion by providing a Eucharistic text around which members can commune.[97]

Conclusion

In their depictions of the guest's passage, Heine's *Wintermärchen* and Stifter's "Der Kuß" imagine an expanding national family in the middle decades of the nineteenth century. Like Riesser's speech to the Frankfurt Parliament, the poem and the novella use a metaphor of hospitality to ask who belongs to Germany and how membership is determined. Will the national homeland only welcome immediate family members, or will it also include estranged relatives and adopted children? While the *Wintermärchen* and "Der Kuß" share a preoccupation with the guest's arrival at the threshold and his incorporation, they offer different answers to questions of defining family and state membership. As a poem about an exile's return, the *Wintermärchen* is based on a model of reintegration. It traces the guest's crossing of thresholds as a way to criticize problematic definitions of Germanness and emphasizes the metaphor of indigestion to suggest that the speaker can neither incorporate Germany into his identity nor be incorporated into a political community to which he no longer belongs. The rites intended to reinitiate him into the national family turn out to be wrongs. Stifter's "Kuß" also interrogates the role of ritual in its depiction of Rupert's passage. In his arrivals at the threshold and his participation in the rites of incorporation like the kiss, the text puts the tensions of renewing membership on display but insists on their resolution. Given its allusions to the marriage politics of the Habsburgs, it is perhaps no coincidence that the novella offers the ritual of a kiss and a wedding as its final answer to the question of membership. Ultimately, the rites of hospitality seal broken bonds. The

[97] Fountoulakis (41-43) connects the narrative structure to the family genealogy but does not relate these to the issues of nationhood raised in the novella.

German national family, at least in the world of the text, is not divided by a civil war like the conflict between Prussia and Austria but rather reconciled through a ritual kiss and the story about it.[98]

Two intertexts used by Heine and Stifter shed light on this relationship between ritual, narrative, and nationhood. In other words, by referring to *The Odyssey* and *The Nibelungenlied*, respectively, the *Wintermärchen* and "Der Kuß" reflect on literature's potential to foster a sense of common political identity in mid-nineteenth-century Germany.[99] In many ways, Heine's poem recasts *The Odyssey*. Like Odysseus, Heine's speaker is threatened with detainment and persecution during his voyage, and just as Odysseus must liberate his Ithacan homeland, Heine's speaker, in writing his poem, must liberate Germany from false political suitors. In contrast, Stifter's novella draws on *The Nibelungenlied* in its account of a family at odds with itself. Like the conflict between Kriemhild and her brothers, the rift between the Sentzes threatens to divide the family. However, although "Der Kuß" alludes to the bloodbath at Etzel's palace and the treacherous kiss that seals the Nibelungs' doom, the novella reworks the epic's tragic ending into a happy one, whereby the family—and by extension, national—conflict is resolved. By retelling these epics, the *Wintermärchen* and "Der Kuß" present their readers with differing models for state membership. Heine bases his on a classical myth with a positive outcome: after slaying the suitors, Odysseus reestablishes his position in his homeland. Heine's speaker, however, does not

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[98] See Frühwald (40-41) for a discussion of what he reads as the "großdeutsche Traum Stifters."

[99] This is not to suggest that the two epics are the only intertexts in the *Wintermärchen* and "Der Kuß." On the contrary, the poem is replete with allusions ranging from Aristophanes to Dante to Shakespeare. In addition to referencing *The Nibelungenlied*, Stifter's novella also cites Goethe's *Hermann und Dorothea.*

achieve such a success: he returns to Germany but cannot be reincorporated. Stifter bases his model on a Germanic legend that does not have particularly positive implications for nationhood. But whereas the Nibelungs perish in a slaughter, the Sentzes overcome their estrangement and renew their bonds through the ritual kiss and its retelling. As Stifter's text suggests through its reference to the bound volume of all German epics and the interpolation of Rupert's story into the family archive, narrative can, like the ritual kiss, establish (or reestablish) bonds between members of the national family. Heine's poem presents a less optimistic perspective on the ties between Germany and estranged family members like himself. His text, like Stifter's, may present itself as a story of reintegration, but through its imagery of indigestion, repeated readings of the *Wintermärchen* promise to disrupt any notion of belonging to a shared German national narrative.

Chapter Four

Germany's Hostesses: Louise von François's "Der Posten der Frau" and Eugenie Marlitt's *Im Hause des Kommerzienrates*

This chapter concentrates on the figure of the hostess in two female-authored texts published in the years preceding and following German national unification in 1871: Louise von François's novella "Der Posten der Frau" (1857) and Eugenie Marlitt's novel *Im Hause des Kommerzienrates* (1876). In doing so, it supplements the previous chapters, which focus on other categories of identity in their discussions of hospitality and the imagined national community. Curiously, several of the literary texts under investigation raise the question of gender: in Goethe's *Unterhaltungen*, for example, a resourceful hostess gathers refugees threatened by the French invasion into a narrative community; in the *Tischgesellschaft*, women are excluded from the club's table and its vision of Germany; and in Stifter's "Der Kuß," the host offers the guest his daughter to renew the bonds between members of an estranged national family. These examples suggest that gender is anything but a marginal issue in texts that employ images and metaphors of hospitality to comment on literature's capacity to foster German national identity. In contrast to the works discussed thus far, François's novella and Marlitt's novel more directly interrogate the extent of female participation in the construction of national belonging, and both texts deem the figure of the hostess as essential to this process. As an intermediary who traffics between the private and public spheres, the hostess in "Der Posten" and *Im Hause* complicates the more traditional domestic roles of wife and mother. By focusing on this intermediary figure as an alternative form of female agency, the novella and the novel ask how women and their texts expand the definition of the German home and the gender roles bound up with it. To be sure, neither text imagines the home as a space where both men and women could gather as

equal members of the same national community. They do, however, shed light on the task of more clearly defining gender in the years straddling German unification.

While François's novella and Marlitt's novel enjoyed a wide readership at the time of their publication, the two texts have become relatively obscure. Written a little more than a decade before unification in 1871, François's "Der Posten" relates the story of Eleonore von Fink, an aristocratic woman who abandons her husband after he offends her honor. During Eleonore's flight, she encounters Frederick the Great, who persuades her to return to the domestic sphere and fulfill the duties required of the woman's post mentioned in the novella's title. While the text clearly defines that post in terms of motherhood and marriage, it presents a complicated notion of female agency, especially when one considers Eleonore's function as a hostess—a role that requires her to participate in the public sphere in several ways. In addition to exploring Eleonore's engagement with the public, the chapter also focuses on the novella's political function; it examines how the text itself assumes a role reminiscent of the hostess by providing a space for German readers to gather and collectively experience a founding national narrative. Like "Der Posten," Marlitt's *Im Hause des Kommerzienrates* explores women's roles that bridge the private-public divide. Set during the turbulent years following unification, the novel centers on the social and financial struggles of the Mangold family and lays out a set of alternative roles for its female characters, who, like François's protagonist, function as hostesses in different capacities. These capacities are tied to three spaces: Marlitt's hostesses furnish loci of interaction in the parlor, provide sustenance at the communal hearth, and further the public good in their texts. By examining these expanded possibilities for female civic participation, I interrogate the novel's vision of women's contributions to the newly founded nation. In focusing on the hostess figure in "Der Posten" and *Im Hause*, the chapter adds to the scholarship on the

relationship between gender and German identity, which has, to name a few examples, concentrated on the roles of mother, daughter, and national allegory.[100] Examining the hostess's role in these texts broadens our perspective on the intersections between gender, literature, and national belonging[101] by exposing the tensions surrounding the redefinition of the German home and women's place in it. The hostess figures in both texts evince an expanded notion of female participation, but "Der Posten" and *Im Hause* ultimately imagine a Germany in which women play a limited role in bridging the space between the home and the nation.

The Hostess's Honor: Feminine Founding Narratives in "Der Posten der Frau"

The title of François's novella draws immediate attention to women's roles, and by its conclusion, the text seems to have settled on a clear definition of "The Woman's Post." Set in a small Saxon town during the Seven Years' War (1756-63), it recounts the trials of Eleonore, a Prussian aristocrat married to Moritz von Fink, a Saxon count who has allied himself with Prussia's enemies, France and the Holy Roman Empire. The novella's primary conflict stems from a perceived affront to Eleonore's honor. After Moritz sees his guest, a French officer named Crillon, kissing Eleonore's hand, he forbids her from attending a ball arranged for the

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[100] Kontje (xiii) prefaces his study on German women novelists and nationhood with the question of how the fatherland looks from the perspective of wives and daughters, while Herminghouse and Mueller (2-3) introduce their anthology *Gender and Germanness* with a discussion of the allegorical figure of Germania.

[101] For more theoretically-oriented discussions of the hostess and issues of identity construction, see Still (122-34), who focuses on women's place in fraternal models of friendship and maternity as a form of hospitality, and McNulty (xxvii; xxxvi-iii), who examines the supplemental logic behind the property relationship between the host and hostess.

occupying forces. Moritz imprisons her in a room from which she eventually escapes, and during the evening of her flight, Eleonore encounters a Prussian officer, who, she discovers shortly before the novella's conclusion, is none other than Frederick the Great. In the course of an argument surrounding the definition of a woman's post, Frederick convinces Eleonore to return to her husband's home, where she is to fulfill her primary task: the rearing and education of her son. François's protagonist accepts that her honor is bound up with the dutiful administration of the home, and after the Prussians defeat the enemy and reestablish order, Frederick visits Eleonore at the estate she has managed during Moritz's absence (he follows the Saxon king into exile). Frederick concludes his visit—and the novella itself—by clapping his hostess on the shoulder and praising her efforts as a wife, mother, and estate manager. The novella thus seems to end with the restoration of traditional gender roles by insisting that our heroine has, despite the possibility of deviation, learned her lesson. Eleonore herself concludes that "der Posten einer Frau sei das Haus" (François 266).

A closer examination of the novella's closing scene, however, reveals a more ambiguous definition of women's roles in the years preceding national unity. After Frederick praises Eleonore for learning a valuable lesson about her duties, she claims she owes this insight not only to the king himself, but also to the "Gnade auf ihrem bescheidenen Posten von dem ruhmreichsten Helden visitiert zu werden" (266). Frederick responds with further praise: "Kompliment für Kompliment: die Hosen passen Ihnen gut, Madame" (266). Finally, the king offers his hostess one hand while placing the other on her son's head and proclaims: "halten Sie mutig Stand auf Ihrem Posten, brave Frau, […] das verheißt dem Stamme meines alten Looß noch einen kräftigen Zweig, und der Herr Graf von Fink wird seiner schönen Hausehre die Ehre seines Hauses danken lernen" (266). Here Frederick claims that Eleonore, by manning her post

and raising her son, ensures the prosperity of her lineage ("meines alten Looß" refers to the name of her father, Frederick's former comrade). More importantly, the king also claims that Moritz owes "die Ehre seines Hauses," to his wife, "seiner schönen Hausehre." This repetition constitutes no mere tautology but rather contains a semantic play that proves key to understanding the novella's arguments about redefining the household and women's roles within it. The passage emphasizes differences between the kind of honor tied to the husband's home (and the lineage it signifies) and the wife who embodies it. The possessive adjective "sein" makes it clear that Eleonore is still subordinate to Moritz, but the novella also accords the woman an important status by making the home's honor contingent upon her. This passage in particular and the conversation between Eleonore and Frederick more generally raise several questions at the moment when the novella seems to have defined the woman's post. For example, what could it mean that the text designates its heroine as the embodiment of "house honor?" How does such a designation complicate its definition of the woman's post as primarily domestic? In what ways does Frederick's quip about Eleonore "wearing the pants" inform the text's imagination of gender? How does the protagonist's role as hostess position her between the private and public spheres? What could it mean that Eleonore views Frederick's visit to her home as inseparable from the lesson he imparts? And why does a historical novella published in 1857 deem it important that a Prussian king who waged war against other German states one hundred years earlier play the role of its heroine's guest?

Let us begin with Eleonore's embodiment of "Hausehre." Grimm's dictionary offers three definitions of the term. First, "Hausehre" refers to the "*ansehen, glanz, ehre des hauswesens und seines vorstandes*" (656). This definition highlights the public nature of "house honor," how it hinges on an outsider's view of the home. The household and its management, in

other words, create an image for non-family members, something underscored by the visual nouns "Ansehen" and "Glanz." The second definition construes the woman as the central actor in the production of this image: "Hausehre" is described as "*das ansehen eines Hauswesens, sofern es durch die frau, wirtschaftlich und sittlich, gestützt wird*" (656). Here the dictionary not only insists that the woman is the primary bearer of "house honor," but also that it consists of two facets.[102] The overall reputation to be put on display results from maintaining a household's economy and its morality. The third definition equates "Hausehre" with the woman's person: "*die hausfrau* [*wird*] *selbst eine hausehre genannt*" (656). As the guarantor and personification of "Hausehre," the protagonist of François's novella thus negotiates a complex notion of honor, one defined by her role as the household's main representative as well as by her moral and economic virtues. These manifold aspects of Eleonore's role are summarized at a key moment in the novella, when Frederick finally convinces her to return to her husband. As he prepares to depart, she cries out, "was soll ich tun?" He replies, "Standhalten, haushalten, *Ihr* Haus halten. […] Einst lautete der Ehrenspruch der Frau: 'Casta vixit, lanem fecit, domum servit'" (François 238). Roughly translated as "she lived chastely, spun the wool, and served the house," this Latin phrase proves essential to understanding gender in the text. It combines the three elements that make up "Hausehre," and in the course of the novella, Eleonore displays the honor of her home in the three ways dictated by the phrase. First she is to "live chastely" by projecting moral virtue; second, she is to "serve the house" by performing domestic service; and third, she is to "spin the wool" in a poetological sense—that is, to "spin" the tale that is "Der Posten der Frau." By accomplishing these three tasks, the novella suggests, Eleonore secures the honor of her house and performs the manifold duties bound up with the woman's post.

[102] For further discussions of "Hausehre," see Stewart (88-89) and Frevert (209-10).

As Frederick's Latin phrase dictates, the first of those duties is living chastely, and Eleonore is charged with the maintenance and display of her family's virtue. Her role as hostess is pivotal in this regard. The narrator's description of how she receives her first guest, a local clergyman named Gutfreund, highlights Eleonore's function as the representative of the home's reputation: "Der geistliche Herr machte seine Reverenz, während seinem kleinen, grauen Auge kein Zeichen einer ungewohnten Zerstreuung und lauschenden Unruhe der schönen Hauswirtin entging" (191). When the hostess enters the text, her representative function is underscored by the description of the visitor's gaze. Gutfreund's small, gray eyes perceive a calm, composed, attractive head of the household. The hostess's role as the visual manifestation of the home is also emphasized by the appellation "die schöne Hauswirtin," which recurs throughout the text. Moreover, in the previous paragraph, the narrator lingers on Eleonore's physical appearance, claiming "[s]ie hatte mit Recht für die schönste Frau an dem in Deutschland noch immer schönheitskundigsten Hofe von Sachsen gegolten, daher man ihrem Liebreiz […] die gegen die sächsische Biegsamkeit verstoßende, kurz angebundene preußische Art und altväterische Sittenstrenge zugute hielt" (191). Again, the hostess's visual appeal stands at the forefront. Eleonore can be considered the most beautiful woman of a court known for being the most "schönheitskundig" in Germany. Yet the narrator qualifies these comments, noting that she achieves a balance between appearance and character by wedding Prussian stringency with Saxon flexibility. Her charm is counterbalanced by her moral qualities. As the embodiment of "Hausehre," Eleonore first appears as an object of scrutiny, a beautiful and moral representative of a private home that welcomes public figures like the clergyman Gutfreund.

More importantly, the novella places the hostess's representative function at the center of its primary conflict. The moment Eleonore's husband Moritz witnesses the French officer Crillon

kissing his wife's hand recalls her reception of Gutfreund, albeit with important differences. Moritz enters the room when Crillon presses his lips on the hostess's hand: "Die Huldigung seines Gastes in Wort und Bewegung konnte ihm [Moritz] so wenig als das Erröten der anmutigen Wirtin entgangen sein" (203). Just as Eleonore's composure does not escape Gutfreund's gaze, her husband also visually registers her blushing cheeks. The repetition of the verb "entgehen" links these two reception scenes by emphasizing how visitors and members of the household perceive the hostess. This perception shapes Moritz's reaction to his wife's conduct. His subsequent punishment of Eleonore expresses an anxiety that the news of Crillon's behavior could cause a public scandal. He forbids her from attending the ball to protect his reputation: such an affront to his honor could be revealed "unter den Augen aller Welt" (204). Consequently, he deems it necessary to forbid her from appearing at the public function that is the ball. Eleonore, however, has her own ideas about house honor; she reminds Moritz that such a ban would also disgrace him, noting "Sie haben mich nun einmal in Gegenwart Ihres Gastfreundes zu diesem Feste *ihm* zu Ehren eingeladen" (204). Moritz is thus faced with a dilemma of hospitality, a double bind, whereby his wife's presence and absence could undermine his house's honor. By imprisoning Eleonore in the private sphere he would simultaneously undermine his reputation because he would violate the promise he made to his guest that she would appear at the public function of the ball. The honor of hosting a public celebration is complicated by the maintenance of private honor. By making the hostess the guarantor of the home's moral reputation, "Der Posten" suggests that the woman's representative function complicates the private family's relation to the public sphere. Family alliances, the text insists, jostle with political ones. More than a pretty face or a performer of niceties for her guests, the hostess determines the public image of the private family. The staging of Eleonore's

punishment and escape is essential to the novella's imagination of the hostess's role in displaying and maintaining "Hausehre." Insulted by her imprisonment, she rips the flowers from her hair, tramples them, paces the room, and resolves to abandon her home: "niemals werde ich in dieses Haus zurückkehren, niemals diesem Elenden wieder angehören" (212). Returning home, Eleonore insists, endorses Moritz's possession of her; belonging to a miserable husband is something she can no longer accept. Eleonore then tries to escape through a narrow window, but the crinoline under her dress hinders her. The solution to this dilemma is symbolically loaded: Eleonore "muß noch einmal zurück, sich der modischen Fessel zu entledigen. Da steht das eherne Gerüst gleich einem Haus, das erste Hindernis auf neuer Bahn, ein Symbol des Herkommens, mit dem sie bricht" (216).[103] While the comparison of the crinoline with the house points to a metaphorical escape from the prisonlike constraints of domestic life, this image suggests further complexities of Eleonore's role. The restrictive piece of fashion is not even primarily linked with her role as wife and mother. Such a garment is, in fact, more closely tied to her duties as a hostess. The crinoline is, after all, a significant part of Eleonore's presentation of herself as the mistress of the house to outsiders. The crinoline therefore not only signifies Eleonore's confinement to the private world, but also her status as a liaison to the public sphere. Furthermore, the symbolic gesture of the crinoline's removal anticipates another image of fashion that signifies female agency: the pants that Frederick claims fit her so well at the novella's conclusion. While Eleonore ultimately resigns herself to the post of wife and mother,

[103] Boetcher-Joeres (283) reads the crinoline's removal as the symbolic transgression of the divide between private and public spheres. Similarly, Fox (113) contends that she breaks with the traditions represented by the garment, abandoning the decadence of high society in favor of the "masculine" task of managing Moritz's properties.

Frederick's words also indicate a sustained ambiguity surrounding gender roles. Eleonore may reassume the duties dictated to her by a male-dominated society, but her shedding of the representative functions symbolized by the crinoline and her adoption of the duties coded as masculine by the pants point to a more complex imagination of gender than the novella initially suggests.

This transition from crinoline to pants demonstrates how the hostess's house honor is bound up with both moral and administrative roles. After she sheds the crinoline and embarks on her flight, it is Eleonore's first conversation with Frederick that reinstalls her as the mistress of the house. But there is a difference. Whereas she had primarily functioned in a representative capacity (coded by the visually extravagant crinoline), the hostess now begins to function as an administrator of her estate (signified by the practical pants). Put differently, when Eleonore returns home, she has not returned to the same post. From this point on, her role has expanded, with her responsibility for the immediate family and a limited number of guests being augmented by service to a wider community. Dedicated to helping those racked by the chaos of the Seven Years' War, Eleonore spends all her time "anordnend, aushelfend, Rat und Beistand gebend, die Hungernden speisend, die Nackten kleidend, die Obdachlosen beherbergend, den Übermut bändigend, entschlossen wie ein Mann" (251-52). With the resolve of a man, Eleonore becomes a different kind of hostess, one with a redefined relationship to the public. Previously a facilitator of largely ceremonial interactions between members and non-members of the household, she now functions a charitable hostess who provides the community with food, shelter, and consolation. In this sense, the novella expands its definition of "haushalten" from one centered solely on the immediate family to one that benefits the larger family of the local community. Accordingly, when Frederick advises Eleonore that she must "standhalten, haushalten, *Ihr* Haus

halten," he implies that she should not simply retreat into a purely private role. On the contrary, the novella suggests that her honor springs from an engagement with the public good. "*Her* house," in other words, opens out into the social sphere; her role as hostess charges her with the care of her fellow subjects.

By depicting how her role of nurturer expands from the private to the public sphere, "Der Posten" interrogates certain tensions between the women's various obligations, be they as a mother, a wife, or administrator of the home. For instance, when Eleonore and Moritz reunite, she has learned to accept the subordinate position of wife. During the last stage of her flight, Eleonore recognizes this bond, conceding that "ein siebenjähriges Band doch nicht so gleichgültig gelöst werde, wie sie noch vor wenigen Stunden gewähnt hatte" (242-43).[104] Nevertheless, she is prepared to run the household without Moritz, especially because she identifies him as a detriment to the house's honor. Although they have apparently reconciled, she criticizes him for preferring an inconstant life that has compromised their son, their property, and their relationship (256). After seven years of courtly indulgence, Eleonore proclaims she will forgo the luxuries of her former life and dedicate herself to the "Dienst meines Hauses," "Die Erziehung unsres Sohnes, die Verwaltung Ihrer Güter, der Notstand unsrer Eingesessenen" (257). Moritz rejects her new identity, assuming that she will become bored with the drudgery of managing the household—that she will in time give him back "den Hausschlüssel" and exchange it for "den Ballfächer" (258). Here the text characterizes the husband as being concerned with the soft pleasures of court life; coded as feminine, Moritz relinquishes his position as a father figure, a resignation that is underscored by Eleonore's earlier exclamation, "O, daß er ein Mann wäre!"

[104] It is no coincidence that the marriage's duration is the same as the war's.

(199).[105] As the pants-wearing administrator who keeps the house key, the wife assumes the husband's position. The final conversation between Eleonore and Frederick both highlights this reversal and complicates it. When she recites the lesson she has learned, she asserts that the woman's post is not merely the household, but also the site in which "sie Ihrem Sohne […] den Vater zu vertreten habe" (266). François's novella thus undermines both the husband's and the father's positions by expanding the role of wife and mother to that of the hostess, a post requiring her to manage a household and to dispense charity to a war-torn community.

The novella's characterization of the community's plight suggests that the hostess's administrative and charitable duties have national political consequences. Indeed, the domestic conflict that shakes Eleonore and Moritz's household is juxtaposed with the state conflict of the Seven Years' War. The opening description of the setting hints at this parallel and the importance of the hospitality relation as a way to negotiate conflict. Before introducing the private space of Eleonore's home, the narrator details the effects of the French and Imperial occupation on the town and the surrounding countryside. We learn that the town is located in the "Kornkammer des Landes," a breadbasket that has been "kläglich ausgeleert" by the occupying forces (182). These parasitical "guests" have driven the locals to the point that they no longer know how to satisfy "Die Requisitionen von Freund und Feind" (182). The novella thus renders the war in terms of the hospitality relation, whereby unwanted guests have become a burden on their hosts. It turns out that the once friendly region has become "eine unglückliche Gegend" where the French and Imperial forces have plundered it so much that the peasants' hardships have become indescribable (251). This chaos is further underscored during Gutfreund's

[105] See Fox (113-14) for more on how the novella feminizes Moritz and demonizes his political allegiances with the French.

discussion with Eleonore's servant Lehmann. Before Lehmann admits Gutfreund into her home, he describes the occupation as follows: "alle Tage andre Gäste und für jedeweden untertäniger Wirt und Knecht" (186). Lehmann refers to how the Saxons have betrayed the Prussian cause, a betrayal that has turned them into hosts and servants at the same time. By allying themselves with the French and the Empire against a fellow German state, the Saxons have given up their rights as masters of their own domain; they have relinquished their dominant, sovereign position as political hosts only to become subservient to their ravenous guests.

Given its name and the history of its ownership, Moritz and Eleonore's home is emblematic for the novella's political conflict. "Das Polnische Haus" received its name from an earlier period, when it was passed "aus den Händen eines herzoglichen Kammerherrn und polnischen Grafen" to those of its current owner, Eleonore's husband (183). By pointing out the house's "etwas zweideutigen Namen," the narrator emphasizes that the novella's most important setting is situated in a political landscape where several political identities converge: Polish interests jostle next to those of the Saxons, and with the war's outbreak, Prussian, French and Imperial claims also destabilize the region. Such instability begs the question of loyalty, a question played out on the domestic level as Eleonore and Moritz must choose between loyalty to each other or to their political leaders. Moreover, the house plays a structuring role in the text: just as Frederick's visit concludes the novella, Gutfreund's arrival at Eleonore's doors sets the plot in motion. In other words, the text opens and closes at the same time that her door is opened and closed for her guests. But before we follow Gutfreund into the home, the narrator turns our attention to the house's external appearance and its relationship to the surroundings. A stately building surrounded by gardens, it belongs to a town that once had its own "Herzogszweig" before returning to "dem kurfürstlichen Mutterstamme" (181). Finally, the narrator compares

how the neighboring "Schloß" hovers over the town like a hen over "einen Haufen winziger Küchlein" (181). By designating the aristocratic family that owns the home as a "Mutterstamm" and by likening part of the Fink estate to a mother hen, the text accords gender a prominent role in shaping political identity. The house, town, and surrounding area are caught in between conflicting state interests, and the text encourages its readers to see its hostess protagonist as key to resolving the conflict. Eleonore, like the hen that protects her chicks, secures the community's welfare and demonstrates a form of charitable patriotism during wartime. To recall Frederick's Latin phrase: she lives chastely by displaying the family's virtues and serves the house by administrating the estate and the adjacent community. How, then, does she perform the third task included in the phrase? How does she "spin the wool?"

The novella's choice of Frederick the Great as the mouthpiece for its definition of the woman's post offers a plausible answer to these questions. During Eleonore's first conversation with the king, she argues with him about women's rights. She implores him to issue her a pass that will allow her to travel safely to her father in Prussia. Frederick assures her no such document is necessary, but Eleonore insists, protesting that her husband has legal rights that could end her flight: Moritz, she reminds him, has "Ansprüche […] an mich oder meinen Sohn" (233). Frederick replies by correcting her: "*Seinen* Sohn," he interjects, reminding her that she and her son are her husband's property. What then follows becomes a lecture not only on the definition of a woman's post, but also a reference to the legal definition of female citizenship at the time of the novella's composition. Frederick reminds Eleonore that Prussian laws do not protect women who abandon their husbands (234). More specifically, the text reveals how Eleonore has relinquished her original Prussian citizenship by marrying a Saxon. When Eleonore asserts "Ich bin eine Preußin," Frederick corrects her again: "Gewesen, Gräfin Fink, gegenwärtig

sind sie eine Sachsin" (234). He then admonishes her, reminding her that she has no legal claim to her son: "Ein Kind gehört seinem Vater und eine Frau unter das Dach ihres Ehemannes" (233). While Eleonore does not know at this point that she is speaking with the king and not just a simple soldier—Frederick's identity is revealed later—it is nonetheless significant that the novella appoints Frederick as the interlocutor who convinces Eleonore to accept her second-class status as the property of her husband. In a way, she finds the solace she seeks not in her biological father, but rather in a figurative one. And that Frederick should be the one to define the woman's post also indicates that not only the family but also the state determine political belonging.

Although François's novella is set 100 years before its publication, Frederick's comments reflect mid-nineteenth-century conceptions of women's civic status. Like Heine's *Wintermärchen*, "Der Posten" alludes to the 1842 Prussian Subjecthood Law to comment on changing definitions of citizenship. But while Heine's poem critiques such measures as an impoverishment of state membership, François's novella invokes them to comment on gender's role in determining belonging. The 1842 law stipulated that if a Prussian woman married a non-Prussian man, she ceased to be a Prussian subject (Nathans 63). At this time in Prussian legal history, state membership and family relations were intertwined. As Dieter Gosewinkel notes in his study of German citizenship, "[d]er Primat des Mannes in Erwerb und Verlust der Staatsangehörigkeit wurde wiederholt bestätigt: Die Staatsangehörigkeit der Ehefrau und der ehelichen Kinder folgt der des Mannes" (75). By grounding its definition of female civic status in the Prussian legal code, and by having Frederick the Great articulate this definition, the novella encourages its German readers to understand state membership in two ways. First, "Der Posten" suggests that Prussia plays the dominant role in defining subjecthood; as the head of the

state, Frederick reminds them of that. Second, the text suggests that Prussia's role has a historical precedent, one stretching back at least one hundred years. Moreover, the novella reminds its nineteenth-century female readership that strong Prussian father figures like Frederick (and not weak Saxons like Moritz) determine who belongs to the German national family. And given Moritz's exit into Poland—he flees to Warsaw when he hears of Frederick's arrival at his home—the Prussian king becomes not just a substitute husband and father for Eleonore and her son, but also a national father figure, a symbolic patriarch who unites the German states. Given this substitution of the biological Saxon father by the symbolic Prussian one, François's novella seems to question contemporary legal notions of citizenship. National character, it implies, trumps gender, at least on a symbolic political level.

However, while "Der Posten" certainly looks to Frederick and the patriarchal state he embodies to define membership, it does not accept it as the only model. The novella also imagines nationality as a product of matrilineal descent, in particular when it employs the metaphor of the family tree. Just before Eleonore describes Frederick as the anchor of an ascendant fatherland, she tells Gutfreund that she still defines herself, despite her marriage, as a Prussian: "Ich bin eine Preußin. Auf Ihren Boden verpflanzt, kann ich von meiner heimischen Liebe, von dem Glauben an meinen Helden und König so wenig lassen, als Sie von Ihrer angestammten Treue" (193). Eleonore claims that while she, as a Prussian, has been transplanted onto Saxon soil, she nonetheless retains not only her loyalty to Frederick and the state he represent, but also her character as a Prussian. In this sense, the novella suggests that women, as wives and mothers, still play a role in determining national identity. Although husbands and fathers determine the citizenship of their wives and children, women still inhabit a position of authority as the educators of future generations and as the transmitters of national culture and

identity within the home. In his account of the intersections between gender and state belonging in mid-nineteenth-century Germany, the citizenship historian Eli Nathans makes precisely this point. He argues that the very qualities that defined German culture—language, personal habits and values, church attendance—were more likely to be transmitted from generation to generation by mothers than fathers (Nathans 5).

In François's novella, Frederick also acknowledges how women foster national values within the home when he draws on the metaphor of the family tree. He implores Eleonore, "Es war ein kräftiges Mark in dem alten Stamme der Looß. Sorgen Sie dafür, daß das letzte Reis, auf fremden Stamm gepfropft, unentartet Wurzel schlage" (François 238). Here Frederick asserts that her son, as the last member of Eleonore's Prussian lineage, may be grafted onto a foreign (Saxon) family tree, but he, under his mother's care, can still strike "unspoiled roots." As illogical as it may be—how is the branch supposed to strike roots?—this metaphor of grafting proves significant for the text's vision of women's role in transmitting national characteristics. Passed from mother to son, superior Prussian values can establish themselves on non-Prussian soil. Frederick repeats this idea in the novella's last sentence, claiming that by "manning" her post, Eleonore promises "dem Stamme meines alten Looß noch einen kräftigen Zweig" (266). Ultimately, Prussian identity is transplanted into other states, and women, as the transmitters of this identity, are accorded more than a purely passive role in the construction of the nation. While this sentiment certainly endorses the same Prussian state that defined membership as the result of patrilineal descent, "Der Posten" nonetheless hints at an alternative model based on matrilineal bloodlines. The rhetoric of the woman as the keeper of the family tree echoes the metaphor used to describe the how the town once had its own "Herzogszweig" before returning

to "dem kurfürstlichen Mutterstamme" (181). The male duke possesses but a branch of the family tree, but the trunk from which it springs is that of the mother.

If women like Eleonore function as keepers of the family tree, Frederick oversees the nursery in which they perform this task. By according him this position of the patriarch who allows for certain forms of female participation in growing the state, François's novel clearly endorses Prussia as the driving force behind forging a unified nation. This endorsement becomes clear during the key scene of Frederick's visit to Eleonore's home. When the king arrives after defeating the French, Moritz curiously links himself with Frederick, exclaiming, "Dort mein alter ego!" (262). This is an important moment, because once a call of "Der König!" (Frederick is meant) echoes from the courtyard, Moritz desperately cries, "der König, […] *Mein* König, mein armer Herr, zu ihm, fort, fort!" (262). Moritz reacts to the Prussian king's arrival by pledging loyalty to the exiled Saxon king. Eleonore then excuses her husband, explaining how his duty requires him to follow his "Landesherrn" into Poland (262). Yet the narrator complicates matters by commenting on Eleonore's justifications of her husband's flight: "ihn vor sich selber rechtfertigend, fügte sie hinzu, ihren Knaben an die Brust drückend: 'Er liebt *einen Herrn*. Du aber mein Sohn, daß du ein Mann werdest, kenn, liebe *ein Vaterland*'" (262, emphasis added). Juxtaposing loyalty to one lord with loyalty to one fatherland, Eleonore critiques her husband's decision to serve a ruler who comes to stand for a fractured Germany. As an alternative, she encourages her son to follow a leader like Frederick who can unite disparate states and interests into one fatherland. This critique of Moritz (and by implication, political leaders like him) is repeated throughout the text. During one of Eleonore's first outbursts she complains, "er liebt, nein, er kennt kein Vaterland!" (199). This idea of the Prussian-led fatherland is also expressed when Eleonore argues with the Saxon Gutfreund, who mourns his king ("einen schutzlosen

Herrn"), while she gives allegiance to Frederick, the "Anker eines emporstrebenden Vaterlandes" (193). It is also noteworthy that Moritz's flight to the Saxon king (his symbolic father) repeats Eleonore's efforts to return to her biological Prussian father. With this symbolic substitution—Frederick, as national patriarch, takes the place of both the Saxon king and Eleonore's father—the novella argues for a kind of patriotism that is grounded in what it holds up as the female traits of love and charity, characteristics that contrast with Moritz's mindless loyalty. The juxtaposition of *love* for one fatherland with *devotion* to one lord emphasizes a form of patriotism one can successfully practice and by doing so foster the creation of a Germany unified through the establishment of Prussian leadership and the transmission of Prussian character.

The last task included in Frederick's Latin phrase—the duty of spinning wool—sheds light on the hostess's particular contribution to the nation's unification. By hosting Frederick in the novella's closing scene, she does not merely welcome him into her home, but also provides a narrative space where the story of coming to know her true post is, like the metaphorical wool, spun into a narrative for wider consumption. The spinning of this tale ends with the image of a symbolic family, whereby Frederick, Eleonore, and her son form a triangle: "Ihr König reichte ihr eine Hand, indem er die andre auf des Knaben Haupt legte" (266). At this moment the text reaffirms its message about the woman's post. We are left with a female figure of authority, a hostess who has learned to adhere to the three points of Frederick's phrase. Eleonore has lived chastely and maintained her honor; she has served the house and her community; and her story is part of the larger text(ile) of a national founding narrative, one that transforms an eighteenth-century Prussian hero into a contemporary national father figure. In this sense, Francois's novella contributed to the wealth of historical novels and history books devoted to Frederick the Great,

the man who supposedly paved the way for German unification under Prussian leadership in the middle decades of the nineteenth century. The novella revises the austere Prussian warrior king, turning him into "Old Fritz," a benevolent figure with whom all Germans can identify.[106] Further, Eleonore herself enacts this process of transforming Frederick in the course of the novella. After their initial encounter, she does not recognize him as the Prussian king, but rather as a "Grobian" (235), "eine fast dürftige Gestalt" whom she distrusts (237). However, by the text's conclusion, Eleonore has not only recognized Frederick, but also accepts him into her home. This act of receiving the king has a double meaning: by inviting the stern but loving patriarch into her home, Eleonore invites him, in turn, into the homes of François's readers, thereby encouraging Germans to imagine a common past as a prerequisite for a shared future. The hostess, in short, emerges as a mediating figure, as a transmitter of a national founding narrative.

Eleonore's home thus functions as a textual space where the founding narrative can be heard, shared, and retransmitted, thereby calling into existence a community of national readers. By giving this story a space, she becomes the hostess of shared narrative. François's narrator underscores this act of narrative hospitality by appealing to her female readers. She tries at one point to reassure them, pleading, "Wir wollen […] keineswegs eine bängliche Apprehension in dem Gemüte einer holden Leserin erwecken" (207-08). By voicing concern for the reader's emotional response, the narrator attempts to establish a relationship between author and audience, and this concern is echoed by Eleonore's efforts to lend cohesion to a community in a time of disunity and war. Put differently, while the narrator takes care of her readers on the

[106] See Peterson for a broader discussion of how historical novels and history books of the period transformed Frederick into a pan-Germanic hero (18).

narrative level, Eleonore takes care of her family and community on the plot level. A further example of narrative hospitality occurs when the narrator asks her readers,

> Sollen wir hier […] erzählen, ob, wann und von wem unsre Heldin auf ihrem Posten visitiert worden ist? Wir bitten noch um eine kleine Geduld, auf den Vorwurf hin, gegen eine gute Regel zu verstoßen und in den Fehler unsres würdigen Pfarrherrn zu verfallen, der sich gleicherweise schwer entschließen konnte, das Buch im rechten Augenblicke zuzuklappen. (249)

In addition to currying favor with her readers, the narrator creates for them a figure of identification around whom they can rally by calling Eleonore "our heroine." She also emphasizes her status as hostess by asking the question whether, when, and by whom Eleonore will be visited. Finally, the narrator construes reading as an act of willing participation. She not only builds suspense by reminding her readers not to make the same mistake as the pastor and close the book too soon; she also encourages them to stay in Eleonore's textual space, to linger until they, too, can witness Frederick's arrival and final transformation into a symbolic father figure. Ultimately, the narrative strategies employed here belong to woman's post; they work to create a textual gathering whose "guests" imagine themselves as members of a Prussian-led national community, one whose female members are bound together by interweaving the threads of Eleonore's story with their own. While François's novella still represents a conservative vision of female participation in the gathering of a fatherland—the text may gesture toward a motherland, but it remains a gesture—it nevertheless invites female readers to imagine themselves not only as wives and mothers but rather as hostess figures who, like Eleonore, furnish textual spaces where national narratives are invented, told, and retold.

Parlor, Hearth, and Text: Marlitt's *Im Hause des Kommerzienrates*

Like "Der Posten der Frau," Eugenie Marlitt's 1876 novel *Im Hause des Kommerzienrates* explores the expansion of the role of the nurturer from the private to the public sphere. And like François's novella, *Im Hause* reflects on the relationship between gender and nationalism in mid-nineteenth-century Germany. But unlike "Der Posten," Marlitt's novel features a conflict that seems almost entirely confined to the domestic realm. Whereas the historical novella abounds with political references, *Im Hause* remains for the most part a family drama. And while the novella holds up a figure like Frederick, the novel, which takes place in the early 1870s, never mentions the prominent political figures of its day (neither Bismarck nor Wilhelm I, for instance, are named). *Im Hause* focuses instead on the romantic and financial struggles of the Mangold sisters in the years following German unification. The central conflict unfolds between Käthe and Flora Mangold. The former embodies modesty, honesty, and industry, the latter extravagance, cunning, and shallowness. Determined to save the upstanding Dr. Bruck from a disastrous marriage to Flora, Käthe attempts to set a good example of female virtue, and she ultimately succeeds. Bruck ends the engagement to Flora and decides to marry Käthe. This conflict plays out for the most part in the house of the Kommerzienrat, the ostentatious home of the sisters' parvenu uncle Moritz Römer.[107] Along with his social-climbing mother-in-law, the Präsidentin Urach, Römer represents the same values as Flora. By the novel's end, these three figures are condemned for their lack of virtue: Flora loses Bruck, Moritz his fortune, and Urach her social standing. By contrast, Käthe and Dr. Bruck gain in each other the promise of founding a solid bourgeois family, and the novel chimes out with the ringing of

[107] See Belgum (*Interior Meaning* 114-16) for more on how the parvenu's home furnishings reflect his imitation of the aristocratic lifestyle.

Easter bells. Both Christ's resurrection and the revitalization of the Mangold family name are celebrated in its final sentence: "das Fest wurde eingeläutet—Ostern!" (Marlitt 388).

While *Im Hause* is primarily a domestic drama, it by no means ignores the political happenings that transpire beyond the home's walls. Indeed, the novel alludes to several national events. We learn, for example, that Bruck acted as a "Regimentarzt" in the Franco-Prussian War (103). Although the war that brought about the foundation of the German nation is mentioned only once, the consequences of unification play a central role. In many ways, Marlitt's novel offers a glimpse into the social and economic climate of the *Gründerjahre*. Römer is ennobled because he has provided "bedeutende Verdienste um die Hebung der Industrie im Lande" (52). Here the text refers to Germany's economic conditions following its victory over France. This national boom is mentioned at the novel's beginning, when Römer opens a safe and "eine Anzahl Napoleondore" spill onto the floor (11). This avalanche of French coins is an allusion to the reparations that flowed into Germany after the war, an influx that allowed businessmen like Römer to kick-start the national industrial economy.[108] Further, the novel mentions the stock market crash of 1873, which results in Römer's financial ruin. The narrator describes the bust of the early *Gründerjahre* as follows: "Schon seit Monaten füllten die Sensationsnachrichten von dem Zusammenbrechen des Gründungschwindels in Wien und später in der preußischen Hauptstadt die Spalten der Zeitungen. In allen öffentlichen Lokalen, in allen Salons war der welterschütternde Einsturz dieses modernen Turmes zu Babel das Tagesgespräch" (286). The vertigo of Germany's founding years becomes part of a public discussion in the form of newspapers in the two most important German-speaking capitals of Berlin and Vienna. Yet it is

[108] See Nipperdey (283-85) for more on the economic and psychological consequences of unification and the stock market crash of 1873.

also noteworthy that the narrator then makes an important shift in his descriptions of the reactions to the crisis, one that moves public to private, from "allen öffentlichen Lokalen" to "allen Salons." The public topic of the crash becomes a private matter as it drifts from spaces like newspapers and restaurants to the family parlor. The novel therefore not only thematizes the economic chaos of the *Gründerjahre* but also illustrates how the national and the domestic are intertwined.[109] The space where these spheres converge in Marlitt's novel is the parlor, an intermediary space between the private and the public.

Kommerzienrat Römer's parlor—the most important "Salon" in the novel—exemplifies this convergence of public and private. Marlitt's narrator lavishly describes the room as Römer enters it for the first time: the furnishings "ließen [den Salon] feenhaft aber auch herausfordernd wie eine Schaubühne aus dem intensiven Dunkel des Winterabends treten" (18). The narrator follows Römer, leading the reader from the intense dark of the winter evening into a fairy-like, theatrical space. While this shift from outsider to insider perspective allows the reader to experience the visual splendor of the parlor, it also introduces the reader into the "zahlreiche Abendgesellschaft" gathered there (18).[110] The narrator provokes further curiosity by exclaiming "aber welche Namen waren da vertreten! Offiziere von hohem Range, pensionierte Hofdamen und Herren vom Ministerium saßen an den Spieltischen, oder umsaßen […] plaudernd den wärmenden Kamin" (18). By listing the high-profile figures who have congregated in the

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[109] Kontje (185) identifies the role of the family in the new nation during the *Gründerzeit* as a recurring topic throughout Marlitt's fiction.

[110] In her reading of the parlor's description, Belgum (*Interior Meaning* 116-17) makes a similar point about the reader's voyeuristic gaze but argues that this glimpse is afforded to encourage the condemnation of the parvenu mimicking the aristocracy.

Kommerzienrat's parlor, the narrator emphasizes how such a space functions as a bridge between public and private. As a meeting place for representatives of the military, court, and government, the parlor is not an exclusively domestic domain. On the contrary, it is "eine Schaubühne" on which public affairs are played out, and the director of this stage, we find out, is Römer's mother Urach. While explaining her relationship to the Kommerzienrat, the narrator deems the hostess Urach as the powerful facilitator of this interactive space: "Die Frau Präsidentin Urach war die Großmama seiner verstorbenen Frau: sie machte mit unumschränkter Macht über seine Kasse die Honneurs im Hause des Witwers" (18-19). Like François's novella, Marlitt's text accords the hostess a special status, a representative function that shapes the interaction between insiders and outsiders. With unrestricted power over the purse that finances gatherings in the parlor, Urach stages the interactions that take place there. By presiding over the Kommerzienrat's parlor, she embodies one category of hospitality in the novel, namely, representative hospitality.

Im Hause highlights Urach's role as representative hostess by detailing her appearance, demeanor, and social position. One of the first descriptions of her is largely positive: despite her seventy years, she maintains a largely youthful, friendly appearance (22) and exudes a truly regal grandeur (23). Yet the narrator undercuts this initial praise by juxtaposing Urach's benevolence and friendliness with "eine nicht zu verkennende Herablassung" (23). Gracious and condescending at the same time, Urach combines positive and negative traits in her position as hostess. In the course of the novel, however, she emerges as a largely negative figure, one that reigns, commands, and expects her son-in-law Römer simply to obey (135). The power she wields in the Kommerzienrat's home often becomes a point of criticism for the Mangold sisters. Flora, for example, claims Urach is armed to the teeth (253), while the third sister Henriette writes in her diary that she rules the house more despotically than ever before (282). Not

surprisingly, then, Urach presides over the home, manipulating the interactions that take place in her parlor. Although the novel accords the hostess a prominent position, it critiques Urach as a representative of the home, primarily because of her aggressiveness and shallowness. She herself hints at this critique when she describes her own function: "ich […] habe gern die Repräsentation dieses Hauses übernommen; dafür verlange ich aber auch die unbedingte Rücksicht für meine Stellung und meinen Namen. Ich will nicht, daß man in der Gesellschaft über uns flüstert und zischelt" (27). More concerned with appearance, display, and reputation, Urach creates a space that takes on those same negative qualities. The parlor in Marlitt's novel thus emerges as a stage for petty chatter, not genuine communication. As a spin doctress primarily concerned with manipulating public opinion, the representative hostess furnishes little more than a gossip mill where a few whisperings could endanger the family's interests.

Marlitt's novel also details how the representative hostess uses the parlor to gain social status. One of Urach's primary functions, the narrator explains, is to create a space where the private fortunes of the family become intertwined with public events. While Römer is responsible for amassing the family's wealth, she ensures he climbs the social ladder. Through her connections and social influence, Urach makes Römer "zu dem […], was er geworden war" (126). Key to this process is furnishing his home in two senses of the word: she not only provides space for social ascent but also renders it aesthetically appealing with furniture and ornamentation. With her incomparable taste, she transforms his home into a small palace capable of impressing "den verwöhntesten Hofleuten" (126). The once simple bourgeois home has been remade into an aristocratic space, a transformation that links the family to their social betters from the court. Furnishing Römer's home plays a decisive role in his success, and we learn both that the villa becomes more sociable than ever following his ennoblement, and that the festivities

there are only possible because of his bottomless pocket book and the "Erfindungsgabe der Präsidentin" (233). Power broker, interior designer, and party planner, Urach assumes a position perhaps best explained in her own words. She contends, "zu einem anmutenden Familienleben gehören heutzutage auch komfortable Räume, und das Beschaffen derselben macht mir augenblicklich große Sorge" (219). For Urach, family life hinges on the creation of comfortable, aesthetically impressive spaces. By extension, she suggests that furnishing such spaces communicates the family's social position to outsiders. Charged with the duties of display and sociability, the hostess emerges as a powerful intermediary figure who choreographs the family's interactions with the public.

As the representative hostess's domain, the parlor becomes an object of criticism throughout the novel. The narrator often compares it to a fairyland. Römer's parlor, as we recall, is first introduced as "feenhaft aber auch herausfordernd wie eine Schaubühne" (17). While this visually pleasing, whimsical room could be viewed positively, it is more often characterized as an unwelcoming space where appearance trumps substance. When Käthe first approaches Römer's villa, she perceives the house as estranging: "Noch nie war ihr das kleine Feenschloß so aristokratisch unnahbar erschienen" (289). Given the family's efforts to appear aristocratic by furnishing the home as a fairytale castle, Käthe's reaction indicates how the novel critiques the parvenu's fondness of display.[111] Yet by pointing out how "Dieser gefürchtete und namenlos verhaßte Witwensitz" has become "ein wahres Feenschloßchen," the novel also emphasizes the hostess's role in transforming the home. Gender and social climbing also become linked, with Urach functioning as one of the text's negative examples of female authority. Although Urach

[111] See Belgum (*Interior* 106-08) for more on the role of the *Gründerzeit* parvenu and how the novel critiques his mimicry of the aristocracy.

has helped the family gain influence, her use of the home to achieve those ends proves disastrous. By the novel's conclusion, Urach's fairytale castle reveals itself as a house of cards. It is no coincidence that the fairy play staged to celebrate Flora's birthday is destroyed when the ruins of the neighboring castle explode (Römer ignites the stored gun powder in an old tower to destroy the paper trail of his reckless business deals).[112] Chaos erupts, and a single "Stoß hatte die kostbare, aber leicht gefügte Feerie […] in ein schauerliches Gemengel von zahllosen Scherben und Trümmerresten zusammengeschüttet" (318). The destruction of the stage is emblematic for representative hospitality in the novel. An analog to the carefully furnished parlor, the "leicht gefügte Feerie" is exposed as little more than a façade, a shaky stage for social theatrics. Urach's carefully composed setpiece comes crashing down.

Despite her power over the Kommerzienrat's parlor, Urach is for the most part a peripheral character to the novel's main plotline. But this does not mean that the representative hostess as such is not essential to the text's primary conflict. On the contrary, Flora Mangold is also associated with the parlor and the falseness displayed there. Indeed, Dr. Bruck's choice between the virtuous Käthe and devious Flora can also be conceived as a choice between two different types of domestic space. By marrying the prestigious doctor, Flora also becomes "die Salonrepräsentantin des berühmten Mannes" (304). For her, the role of wife largely consists of duties related to the parlor; her main function is that of the representative hostess. Flora elaborates on her views of marriage, explaining that Bruck will learn to appreciate her efforts as hostess: "Dann erst wird er meinen Wert vollkommen erkennen, wenn der Salonverkehr, dem ich präsidiere, den rechten Lüster über seine hervorragende Stellung wirft" (257). The wife's true

[112] Belgum (*Interior* 118) argues that the gunpowder symbolizes the dangerous character of *Gründerzeit* emphasis on appearances.

value, Flora contends, stems from regulating the interactions in the husband's parlor, particularly those interactions benefitting his social position, his public reputation. By presenting Flora as its main negative example of femininity, *Im Hause* further condemns the parlor as a female space. More concerned with creating a shiny surface than a meaningful social space, the representative hostess is held up as the false choice for marriage and the establishment of a family. As the male figure faced with this choice, Bruck must decide whether to marry the woman who embodies those values the novel so consistently criticizes. His selection of Käthe over Flora indicates the privileging of a second female-dominated space, one that privileges substance over appearance.

That second space is the hearth, the domain of what I would like to call the economic hostess. By this term I mean the female manager of the household, who, like Eleonore in "Der Posten," also devotes herself to the public's welfare. The difference between parlor and hearth is most evident in the contrast between Flora and Käthe. The two sisters often discuss their competing definitions of female duties, with Flora endorsing the role of the representative hostess and Käthe that of the economic hostess. Belittling Käthe's vision of the wife's role in a marriage, Flora asks whether she can truly imagine standing at the stove and cooking vegetables for the rest of her life (121). Flora's words are just as important as the gesture she makes immediately afterward: she turns her head toward the parlor, where Bruck sits reading the newspaper. Here the opposition is set up between two possibilities for women: hearth or parlor. Later, when Bruck considers the reality of a marriage to Flora, the narrator conveys his anxieties: "Er hätte einen besuchten Salon, aber kein Daheim, eine in unbefriedigtem Ehrgeize sich verzehrende Weltdame, aber kein wahrhaft liebendes Weib, keine 'mitringende, mitfühlende Gehilfin' gehabt" (174). The narrator clearly privileges the woman's domestic duties. She contrasts the self-centered, ambitious woman of the world with the truly loving wife, the

empathetic helper of the man who cares more about creating a home than an esteemed parlor. Käthe tries to prevent Bruck from marrying a woman more interested in the latter, and during a confrontation with Flora argues that Bruck should begin a new life with a more suitable partner. By doing so, he could create for himself "eine Häuslichkeit […], die ihn beglückt und befriedigt,"—what Käthe imagines as an upstanding domestic life that would spare him from leading "ein steifes Salonleben" at the side of "einer herzlosen Gefallsüchtigen" (358-59). Käthe's critique of a phony parlor run by a vain hostess reinforces the narrator's earlier condemnations of Urach and Flora. If the parlor is a space of female vices like selfishness and vanity, then the hearth is a space of female virtues like dedication and self-sacrifice. A proper home in Marlitt's novel is only possible under the management of an economic hostess like Käthe.

In this sense, Marlitt's text is quite conservative. After all, the parlor at least allows women to participate in the public sphere. The hearth, by contrast, seems restricted to the private realm. However, the novel does not depict the economic hostess as a purely domestic figure, but, like François' novella, expands the role of the nurturer from the private to the public sphere. In other words, while Käthe does not offer hospitality in the conventional sense, she supports, cares, and nourishes the wider community. She begins, for example, by helping disadvantaged schoolchildren and suddenly realizes, "daß sie im Grunde ihres Herzens den Beruf, die jungen Wesen an Leib und Seele zu stützen, sie kräftig und gesund zu erhalten, […] jedem anderen weit vorziehe" (236). To be sure, Käthe does not literally host the children; she imagines a schoolteacher's positive, sustaining influence on them. But the following paragraph emphasizes the kind of support a metaphorical hostess provides. Put differently, the novel broadly defines female hospitality by highlighting Käthe's provision of nourishment to children who are not her

own. She arranges a plentiful meal for the pupils, and we learn it is a pleasure for others to see how she arrives with a basket of fruit and bread rolls, and how she rewards the children with apples (237). As representative of the hearth, Käthe stands in opposition to Flora, whom she at one point calls a vampire (358). This is not only a slight at her shallow sister but also a hint at how the novel juxtaposes (and evaluates) contrasting female roles. Unlike the vampiric parlor hostess, Käthe provides nourishment instead of simply "feeding" on others. She creates a space in which life is fostered, whereas Flora "consumes" her guests in order to better her social status. The economic hostess thus conducts a different kind of exchange than her parasitic counterpart. While the representative hostess furnishes a space where gossip is exchanged and relationships are exploited for social gains, Käthe fosters a space where self-improvement (the children's education) is rewarded with food. The novel ultimately criticizes one form of female participation in the public sphere while endorsing another.

Im Hause also emphasizes Käthe's other efforts to nurture the public. She not only "hosts" the schoolchildren but also other community members. When local workers get into legal trouble, for instance, Käthe ensures their children receive the necessary care. For her it stands to reason "daß diese fünf hilflosen Menschen unter der notwendigen Strafe nicht mitleiden dürfen," and she vows to provide for the five children until their parents are able to work again (248). Käthe appoints herself as a communal hostess who both dispenses nourishment and arranges housing for the needy. She views the community as an extended home, claiming it is her duty to compensate for her haughty family's indifference to the plight of the local workers. In fact, Käthe sees charity as a way to atone for the misdeeds of her grandfather, a greedy mill owner whose wealth allows Römer, Urach, and Flora to put on aristocratic airs in the villa. As a gesture of public hospitality, Käthe uses her family's money and property to benefit the local population.

Referring to the cash and stocks Käthe has inherited from her grandfather, Flora complains that her sister opens "ihren kostbaren Goldspind" and scatters her "Aktien unter das Volk" (215). Similarly, Käthe frees up land for low-cost housing by changing her family's plans to build on the property she inherited from her grandfather: the real estate for prospective country homes is to be given over to people building houses near the local factory (83). Through her charity work, Käthe furnishes space for community members and contributes to the public good. Much like Eleonore in "Der Posten," she emerges as the administrator of an expanded household that is not limited to the needs of the private family but also dedicated to welfare of the larger public.

Käthe's administration of her grandfather's mill also epitomizes the text's conception of economic hospitality. Having assumed a traditionally male position, she is characterized as an androgynous figure, most explicitly when the narrator reports she works day after day like a man (374). However, while the text attributes "male" diligence to Käthe, it also describes how she performs stereotypically female duties as the mill's owner. In addition to displaying her business acumen—we learn of the firm's unprecedented growth and profit under her stewardship—Käthe also uses her authority for charity. She takes in the widow and children of a worker, providing them with "ein Asyl in einem neu hergerichteten, kleinen Seitengebäude der Mühle" (374). Käthe thus combines the qualities of the successful entrepreneur with the qualities of the charitable hostess. Economics and *haushalten* are intertwined, the novel suggests. Käthe herself articulates this combination of public and private economies when she describes "die kleine zur Mühle gehörende Oekonomie und das Hauswesen" (374). It thus follows that a mill emerges as the realm in which the novel's primary economic hostess shines. On the one hand, the mill is a largely male domain, one that requires hard physical labor to produce and distribute the flour. On the other hand, it is coded as a feminine space where nourishment is produced and housing is

provided. Seen symbolically, it recalls the hearth, especially when one remembers how Käthe brings bread to the needy schoolchildren. In an expanded capacity, she achieves something similar by "bringing bread" not only to the local community but beyond—the narrator reports how the mill's flour is transported by rail (288) and that Käthe has business correspondents in the port city of Hamburg (383). The economic hostess expands her domain of influence from the insular space of the immediate family's hearth to the kitchens of her fellow countrymen and women.

Im Hause clearly upholds Käthe's administration of the mill as a positive example of female participation in the public sphere. Curiously, by the novel's conclusion she is removed from this post. After Bruck ends his engagement with Flora and decides to marry Käthe, he all but bans her to the private sphere. He explains to Käthe how it is her calling, "ein Familienglück zu begründen, nicht […] 'Tag für Tag' einsam am Geschäftspult zu stehen" (369). Bruck's repetition of "Tag für Tag" recalls the narrator's earlier praise of Käthe's masculine diligence. This positive quality has become a liability, and as the novel approaches its end, it seems to scale back the economic hostess's role: founding a private family as a wife and mother apparently trumps working for the public good. Käthe, despite her passion for and devotion to the symbolic hearth, accepts Bruck's opinion and relinquishes her position as mill owner. As the male mouthpiece for conventional marriage, Bruck articulates the novel's imagination of the woman's primary role when he explains to Flora why she cannot be his bride. He complains, "ich litt schwer unter dem Bewusstsein, einer liebeleeren Zukunft entegegenzugehen, ich, […] der ich mir den eigenen Herd nicht ohne die verklärende Familienliebe denken kann" (332). The family hearth, for Bruck, is the domain of the proper wife. Having avoided the "wrong" woman in Flora, Bruck chooses the "right" one in Käthe, who, unlike her sister, promises to deliver him the

kind of family whose center is the hearth. As the couple celebrates this future and the Easter bells ring, the possibility of expanded female agency appears greatly diminished. While the representative hostesses in Marlitt's novel are decried as frivolous, the economic hostess is all but reduced to a wife and mother.

By laying out a set of female roles beyond those of wife and mother, Marlitt's novel depicts the same possibilities found in François's novella. In its preoccupation with the hostess's intermediary position between private and public, *Im Hause* depicts opportunities for women to perform the tasks Frederick announces in his Latin phrase. Marlitt's hostesses, like Eleonore, represent the family's reputation and serve the home and community. The novel also raises the question of how writing and storytelling—"spinning the wool," so to speak—can function as acts of female hospitality. *Im Hause* symbolically links the production of texts with the provision of charity. This connection manifests itself during a conversation between Flora and Bruck as they discuss her text "Die Frauen," a manuscript promoting women's rights and calling for the assistance of female workers. Bruck is skeptical and maintains that the text will not reach the press, and even if it did, it would fail to achieve its charitable goals. "Worte bauen ihnen keine Heimstätte," he insists (64). Bruck's rhetoric warrants special attention because it lends insight into the novel's vision of women's roles. Most obviously, he believes that Flora's manuscript will not bring about improvements to working women's lives. The "Heimstätte" he refers to are low-cost homes, and her words, he asserts, will fail to move donors to finance the project. On a metaphorical level, however, Bruck suggests that words, text, and narrative can function as a form of hospitality. Composed in the right way, words could provide shelter to those in need, and given the theme of charity in the novel, women, as writers, can perform acts of hospitality not only as representative and economic hostesses, but also as literary/textual ones. *Im Hause* differs

from “Der Posten” in this regard. While Eleonore’s story furnishes a national founding narrative around which readers gather, writing in Marlitt’s novel represents an opportunity for women to promote acts of charity that nurture their communities.

In addition to Bruck’s metaphor of words building homes, *Im Hause* associates writing with hospitality in key scenes that feature its antagonist and protagonist. Flora, unsurprisingly, provides a negative example of how women can nurture others with their texts. When she attempts to convince Bruck that she is, in fact, suitable for the bourgeois marriage he desires, she juxtaposes the roles of housewives and writers. For a short time, Flora visits the home of Bruck’s aunt—where he lives before marrying Käthe—to demonstrate her skills in the kitchen. This time spent at the hearth, she complains, forces her to expose her delicate face to the “Glut des Küchenfeuers” (237). Significantly, this reference to fire in the kitchen echoes Flora’s earlier comments, when she compares housewives and writers. Imagining the degradation her talent would suffer were she a housewife, Flora claims she would become a slave, “Eine Sklavin wäre ich ein armes niedergetretenes Weib, dem man den göttlichen Funken der Poesie aus der Seele gerissen hätte, um—das Küchenfeuer damit anzuzünden” (162). Here Flora juxtaposes the fire of poetic inspiration with the fire of the family hearth. For her, these roles are mutually exclusive, with the duties of the housewife consuming the dreams of the author. For his own reasons, Bruck is of a similar opinion. Hostile to Flora’s literary ambitions, he criticizes her, conceding that while women are entitled to the kind of agency achieved through publication, such efforts must not compromise their domestic duties: “übernommene ältere Pflichten” and the “edle deutsche Familienleben” they guarantee, are sacrosanct for him (161). As the novel’s most important male character and the future spouse of its heroine, Bruck insists on restricting female influence by pitting the press against the hearth. Although he recognizes a place for women in public life, he

nonetheless maintains that German family life is their primary concern. Wives and mothers, he contends, will serve the nation better than writers.

Although Käthe is not a political writer and aspiring poet like her sister, she symbolically nurtures others through the texts she produces as the mill's owner and bookkeeper. The account books and other texts she produces as an administrator insure that the mill's flour is processed and distributed to the wider community. Metaphorically, she provides nourishment through her texts, and while *Im Hause* certainly privileges this kind of writing over Flora's empty, extravagant words—they fail to provide "Heimstätte"—it nonetheless removes the role of the writer from the set of possibilities it lays out for women. The particular staging of Käthe's concession to marry Bruck and to give up her work underscores this. He persuades Käthe that her true calling is to found a family, and that her place is not in the office at her writing desk but rather at the family hearth: "eines Tages," he assures her," wird man Sie wegholen und nicht danach fragen, wo Sie in den Büchern gerade mit Ihrem Soll und Haben stehen (369). Käthe's account books, for Bruck, are ultimately of no account. What matters is not her contribution as an administrator but rather her duties as a wife and mother.

Furthermore, the moment she is more or less banished to the private sphere emphasizes how her role as a writer is no longer relevant. Bruck approaches, of all places, her writing desk, closes the mill's ledger ["das Hauptbuch"], and proclaims that her career as the mill's administrator is over (386). Bruck's actions once more underscore the symbolic traffic between Käthe's account books and the act of writing. It becomes clear that our heroine's primary task is not that of a writer who engages with the public, but rather that a wife and mother who, as the man's helper, establishes a domestic idyll. The irony, of course, is that a piece of literature written by a woman hands down this verdict. This is not to suggest that all texts are literary; one

must differentiate between types like Flora's political writings, Käthe's ledgers, and Marlitt's novels. But if Käthe's utilitarian account books can be seen as an analog to Marlitt's straightforward, didactic account of its protagonist's development from inexperienced girl to charitable businesswoman to subservient bride, the novel presents a perplexing, perhaps even cynical account of female authorship. It certainly does not figure literary hospitality as a positive alternative to the representative and economic types. In the end, *Im Hause* presents writing as one of many possible roles for women—be it the representative, economic, or literary hostess—only to dismiss it as unviable. The novel deems the text as yet another space where women can potentially act as intermediaries between private and public life but ultimately advocates separating these spheres.[113]

Conclusion

Set in the years proceeding and following German unification, François's "Der Posten" and Marlitt's *Im Hause* interrogate the relationship between gender and nationhood. By focusing on the figure of the hostess, they look beyond the traditional roles of wife and mother to address this question. François's heroine may concede that her primary duties are rearing and educating her son, but she also assumes the "masculine" duties of an estate administrator who dispenses charity to a community in crisis. Her story itself functions as a hospitable gesture that recalls Eleonore's charitable acts: her efforts to provide food and shelter to the war-torn community mirror her tale's provision of a founding narrative that binds a national community fragmented

[113] Belgum's (123) argues similarly, claiming that *Im Hause* exemplifies a "conservative, anti-modern ideal of a return to the intimate family" in which the distinction between the private and public is maintained, but she ignores the role of female writing as a bridge between the two spheres.

by regional and political differences. Marlitt's *Im Hause* also focuses on the expansion of women's roles. Its female characters are not primarily defined as wives and mothers but rather as the managers of spaces that straddle the private and public spheres. The novel's hostesses furnish loci of interaction in the parlor, provide sustenance at the community hearth, and seek to further the public good in their texts. The novel's significance resides in how it posits such possibilities for women's civic participation in the years following Germany's unification. However, in contrast to "Der Posten," *Im Hause* lays out these alternatives only to conclude that they are secondary, if not irrelevant, to the roles of wife and mother. While both texts certainly present conservative visions of women's roles, "Der Posten" leaves its protagonist in a position of greater agency than that accorded to Marlitt's female characters. Despite the novella's relatively clear definition of the woman's post as the home, Eleonore manages a household that is not sealed off from the public sphere. In contrast, it is hard to imagine that the home Käthe is destined to found as Bruck's wife will be much more than a private idyll for the intimate family. While the novella suggests that women also shape the emergent German nation, the novel insists that their public contributions are no longer necessary in the post-unification period.

Like the texts discussed in the previous three chapters, "Der Posten" and *Im Hause* offer insight into literature's capacity to foster the imagination of a German national community. They differ in this regard by concentrating on how women in particular figure in the metaphors and structures of hospitality examined thus far. This chapter has argued that focusing on the hostess expands our understanding of the relationship between gender and national belonging in the period around unification. On the plot level, the hostesses depicted in François's novella and Marlitt's novel contribute to the construction of national identity by nurturing and gathering a community beyond the family. Such efforts repeat themselves on the textual level as acts of

narrative hospitality in that the texts, like the hostesses they portray, provide a communal space where readers who would otherwise remain strangers can congregate. It has been argued that domestic fiction like "Der Posten" and *Im Hause* were essential to this process of literary nation-building. Disseminated through mass-produced magazines marketed to women, such stories appealed to the family as a base upon which German readers were addressed as potential members of an imagined national community (Belgum, "Domesticating" 106).[114] Seen from this perspective, François's novella and Marlitt's novel constitute offers of narrative hospitality in that they provide spaces where a common national identity can be experienced. Regardless of region, religion, or politics, German readers could gather as a national family as they consumed domestic fiction like "Der Posten" and *Im Hause*. Like the spaces over which their hostesses preside, the texts gather disparate groups—be those differences based on gender, region, or class—and foster a sense of belonging. By serving up a founding narrative for all Germans, "Der Posten" is the clearer example of such narrative hospitality. Critics have also claimed that Marlitt's novels participate in this larger phenomenon of gathering a national reading community in which women play an active part. *Im Hause*, in particular, seems to contradict this broader assertion. While the novel certainly looks to the family as the bedrock of the imagined community, its vision of Germany remains one in which women have a limited role in bridging the space between the home and the nation.

[114] See Kontje (183-85), who also discusses the publishing context of Marlitt's fiction, in particular its appearance in the popular family magazine *Die Gartenlaube*.

Chapter Five

Administering Regional and National Narratives in Storm's *Der Schimmelreiter* and Fontane's *Der Stechlin*

The previous chapter argued that Louise von François's "Der Posten der Frau" performs an act of narrative hospitality that gathers a national community of readers. Just as its hostess protagonist oversees the space of an expanding home, François's text provides a space where a founding narrative about the role of women in nation-building is invented, told, and retold. The two texts at the core of the present chapter, Theodor Storm's novella *Der Schimmelreiter* (1888) and Theodor Fontane's novel *Der Stechlin* (1898), perform similar acts of narrative hospitality: both works designate the host as a facilitator of communal spaces where German national identity is articulated through the stories narrated there. However, Storm's novella and Fontane's novel differ from "Der Posten" in two significant ways. First, they present a different historical perspective. Whereas François's novella addresses literature's political function during the run-up to 1871, *Der Schimmelreiter* and *Der Stechlin* address its role in the decades after unification. "Der Posten" anticipates the achievement of nationhood, while Storm and Fontane's texts focus on how national identity is consolidated in the closing years of the nineteenth century. Second, *Der Schimmelreiter* and *Der Stechlin* constitute more sophisticated examples of narrative hospitality than François's novella. Like "Der Posten," both texts imagine the host's role in narrative terms—that he provides a communal space where stories can serve to bind members together. But *Der Schimmelreiter* and *Der Stechlin* add further layers to this metaphor of hospitality by figuring storytelling as a complex exchange between the host who dispenses narratives and the guests who receive them. The two texts superimpose the relationship between narrator and narratee onto that between host and guest. This superimposition proves key to

understanding how *Der Schimmelreiter* and *Der Stechlin* imagine literature's role in consolidating the German national community at the end of the nineteenth century. Both texts address the problem of narrating a nation still internally fragmented. They look to narrative hospitality as a means to more intimately bind a nation of strangers decades after unification, whereby the host-narrator administers to his guest-narratees stories all Germans can share.

The key term in the chapter's title, "administering," hints at the questions raised by the two primary texts. By "administer" I do not wish to stress the frustration with bureaucracy that may first come to mind. Instead, I emphasize the verb's older meanings, which come closer to capturing the problems of narrating the nation in *Der Schimmelreiter* and *Der Stechlin*. Its etymology suggests that figuring narration as the exchange between guest and host is fraught with tensions. While "administer" has Latin roots meaning to help, serve, attend, and wait on, it also means to manage, control, rule, and direct. To administer narrative, then, amounts to a complex gesture, whereby the host both aims to accommodate and control. As a minstrel, an entertainer, a poet, so to speak, the host assumes a role that is simultaneously subservient and authoritative. These contradictory tendencies prove significant in Storm's novella and Fontane's novel when one considers the issue of narrative authority in both texts. By administering stories to their guest-narratees, the host-narrators seek to control and direct the reception of those tales. In addition to examining how the hosts in *Der Schimmelreiter* and *Der Stechlin* dispense narratives to their guests, the chapter focuses on the communal spaces in which this interaction is staged. Neither purely private nor public, these spaces allow for the hospitable gathering of both intimates and strangers, where interactions function to exchange and redistribute collective memories. By investigating narrative's administration and the spaces where collective memories are transmitted (and retransmitted), this chapter asks how Storm's and Fontane's texts imagine a

united Germany that must still negotiate a plethora of internal divisions, and how narrative, conceived as an interaction between host and guest, opens up parameters for a growing community whose members renegotiate the regional and national aspects of their identities.

"Mein Gastfreund, der Schulmeister": Administering Narratives in *Der Schimmelreiter*

Der Schimmelreiter begins with an image of comfort that anticipates how the text at large construes narration as a hospitable act. This is the novella's first sentence: "Was ich zu berichten beabsichtige, ist mir vor reichlich einem halben Jahrhundert im Hause meiner Urgroßmutter […] kund geworden, während ich an ihrem Lehnstuhl sitzend, mich mit dem Lesen eines in blaue Pappe eingebundenen Zeitschriftenheftes beschäftigte" (*Storm* 634). As soon as the novella begins, it stages the act of reading as a domestic comfort, a quiet pleasure. In his account of the first reading the story of the eponymous rider, the outer frame's narrator emphasizes his status as a recipient of text who sits snugly in an armchair in his hostess's cozy home. This relationship between comfort and narrative is also stressed in the second frame as the unnamed traveler listens to the schoolmaster's tale of Hauke Haien. When the traveler arrives at the tavern where the story is recounted, he joins a group of patrons gathered around a steaming bowl of punch. Despite his outsider status, the traveler gains entry into this community with an ease and speed marked by the way he receives his first drink: before he can even place his order, a steaming glass of punch appears before him (637). Almost magically, the drink, like his inclusion in the group, spontaneously materializes. Yet most striking is the schoolmaster's treatment of the traveler when the two men leave the tavern's parlor and retire to the schoolmaster's private room. Here the care taken to accommodate the narratee is recounted in detail: "Machen Sie sich's bequem," the schoolmaster pleads as he invites the traveler to relax in a large wing-backed chair as he tosses chunks of peat into the stove to warm the room and prepare a glass of grog

(679).[115] The schoolmaster's new title—the traveler calls him "mein freundlicher Wirt"—certainly registers the guest's appreciation of his host's hospitality; but it also shows how the novella aligns the reception of hospitality with the reception of narrative. In this sense, *Der Schimmelreiter* designates its most important narratee as a guest, its most important narrator as a host.

Storm's host-narrators privilege what Gérard Genette calls the function of communication. Describing the narrating situation as an interaction between storyteller and recipient, Genette claims this function "concerns the narrator's orientation toward the narratee—his care in establishing or maintaining with the narratee a contact" (255). In *Der Schimmelreiter*, this concern for the narratee manifests itself in the novella's alignment of the reception of stories with the reception of hospitality. One particular image signals this connection between the provision of hospitality and the narrator's orientation toward the narratee: part of the schoolmaster's invitation for the traveler to "make himself comfortable" is an offer to sit in the aforementioned wing-backed chair. While this gesture says little of the relationship between hospitality and narration in English, the chair's German designation proves telling. While the large "Ohrenlehnstuhl" promises physical comfort, it also calls to mind the act of listening. In other words, the invitation to sit in an "armchair with ears" underscores the guest's status as the host's narratee, and the novella reinforces this relationship in the traveler's language as he relaxes in the chair and implores the schoolmaster to continue his tale. The guest not only describes the chair as "behaglich" but also equates sitting in it and listening to the narrative with a form of accommodation by using the verb "unterbringen": as the schoolmaster resumes his

[115] On the function of the schoolmaster's room, see also Hoffmann (338), who interprets it as an ambivalent space marked by conflicting images of life and death.

narration, the traveler comments how he is 'in seinem Lehnstuhl untergebracht' (679). Hence, when he later calls the schoolmaster "mein Gastfreund," he not only refers to his host's provision of shelter, warmth, and drink, but also to his provision of a pleasurable narrative, one delivered with a heightened awareness of the recipient sitting before him.[116]

However, a closer look at the schoolmaster's narrative hospitality complicates Genette's function of communication. While the schoolmaster is certainly a concerned "Gastfreund," he also tries to maintain control over the offered narrative, an authority hinted at in his title: he is master over the schoolhouse and over the tales he tells. Given the novella's multiple narrative voices—both real and potential—such a desire to maintain authority over the story of Hauke Haien becomes part of the host-narrator's role.[117] As but one of the four narrators mentioned in *Der Schimmelreiter*—the first frame narrator, the traveler, and the current dikegrave's housekeeper, Antje Vollmers are the other three—the schoolmaster seeks to establish his voice's dominance during his interactions with the narratee.[118] His efforts manifest themselves in the text's structure: in addition to taking up the most narrative space in the novella, the schoolmaster's words structure the text through his numerous interruptions. Conceived in spatial terms, these interjections parallel the host's provision of shelter: while he offers a structure to his

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[116] See also Hoffmann (341), who compares the narrative relationship between the schoolmaster and his guest to a pact with the devil.

[117] Neumeyer (89) claims that the schoolmaster's effort to maintain authority is coupled with a loss of authority: by emphasizing that the schoolmaster tells but one version of the legend, the novella, he argues, questions the authenticity of that version.

[118] Ellis (155-58) identifies four visible and implied narrators in the novella, claiming that they are part of a longer process in which Haien's story is transmitted over generations.

guest in the form of a temporary home, he offers a structure—a home, so to speak—to the tale itself. Further, the schoolmaster's interruptions reassert his control over the narrative in two ways. First, by repeatedly inserting his voice into the story, he reminds the narratee of his role as the tale's transmitter and administrator. Second, the schoolmaster uses the interruptions to deem himself the keeper of the truest version of Haien's story. At one point, he stops narrating and addresses the traveler, reminding him that, unlike the competing voices of the villagers, he has drawn on objective evidence in crafting the story. While the schoolmaster "reports"—he uses the verb "berichten"—that the data he has collected stems from 40 years of "Überlieferungen verständiger Leute" and the "Erzählungen der Enkel und Urenkel," his rival narrators simply produce "Geschwätz" (695). Ultimately, the schoolmaster's orientation towards the narratee is no simple accommodation. His efforts as narrative host suggest that he is no mere transmitter but rather an administrator of stories in both senses of the word: as he dispenses the narrative, he manages its reception. By administering narratives, the schoolmaster complicates Genette's function of communication. As he serves up the legend of Haien and directs its reception, he not only maintains narrative contact but also a narrative contract with the narratee.

During another of the schoolmaster's interruptions, he takes further steps to shore up his position as the novella's primary administrator. Although he begins his account of Haien's life in the communal space of the tavern's parlor, he decides to invite the traveler into the private space of his room upstairs, where he tells the story's second half. Granted, the traveler gratefully accepts the invitation to leave what has become a chilly and empty room—the other guests have left to attend to the threatened dike—but his acceptance does not contradict the schoolmaster's use of the invitation as a means to assert narrative control. The traveler's description of the schoolmaster's room highlights its qualities as a locus of storytelling that reflects the narrative

struggle between the novella's numerous voices. For example, the architectural placement of his room in the tavern's structure points to his narrative authority. Positioned on the floor above the parlor, his room commands a superior view of the dike that plays such a significant role in his story. As the traveler observes following the schoolmaster's conclusion of the tale, "Ich blickte neben ihm hinaus; die Fenster hier oben lagen über dem Rand des Deiches" (754). The placing of the schoolmaster's windows reflects the dominance of his narrative. Just as the perspective from his window is higher than the parlor's, his narrative perspective is marked as more highly regarded than the perspective of the storytellers gathered beneath him. Further, the preposition "neben" reveals that the gaze of host and guest are parallel. Symbolically, this "nebeneinander" suggests an interaction without hierarchy. Narrator and narratee share a common view.

Other voices contest the schoolmaster's authority as the tale's administrator. Granted, as soon as he is introduced, the schoolmaster's primacy in this regard is articulated: the current dikegrave informs the traveler that the schoolmaster can provide the best account of the "Schimmelreiter" legend. But the dikegrave immediately qualifies this endorsement, warning the traveler, "Unser Schulmeister […] wird von uns hier Ihnen das am besten erzählen können; freilich nur in seiner Weise und nicht so richtig, wie zu Hause meine alte Wirtschafterin Antje Vollmers es beschaffen würde" (638). Not only is the traveler alerted to the singularity (and possible bias) of the schoolmaster's version; he is also warned that this version, at least in the dikgrave's view, is not as accurate as the one offered by the latter's housekeeper. By designating the source of this competing version as a "Wirtschafterin," the novella continues to use the vocabulary of hospitality to characterize the interaction between narrator and narratee. As a "Wirtschafterin," one in charge of managing a household, Vollmers emerges as a rival "Wirtin" of the "Schimmelreiter" narrative. That she is a competing narrative host is suggested by an

exchange between the schoolmaster and the dikegrave: for the former, Vollmers is but a "dumb dragon" to which he cannot be compared; for the latter, she remains the better "keeper" of the tale. In her defense, the dikegrave maintains, "bei den Drachen sollen derlei Geschichten am besten in Verwahrung sein!" (638). Here the dikegrave's use of the word "Verwahrung" once again recalls the novella's alignment of narration with hospitality. As a custodian of the tale, Vollmers not only tends to it as she dispenses this narrative treasure to her listeners, but also imbues the story with a higher truth value, as is suggested by the morpheme "wahr" in the middle of "Verwahrung."

The schoolmaster's peculiar relationship to the community gathered in the tavern also reflects the uncertainty of his position as narrative administrator.[119] His living situation exemplifies this tension. Although he assumes the role of the host of the "Schimmelreiter" narrative, he is but a guest in the tavern. Even in his private room, where he can better assert his authority as narrative host, he is still neither the "master" of the house, nor the "master" of the tale; he is at once host, at once guest in the ambiguous space of the tavern, a space that blurs the boundary between home and away. Even before the traveler follows the schoolmaster upstairs, the latter's uncertain status within the community becomes apparent, especially given where he sits in the tavern's parlor. The first mention of the schoolmaster stresses how he is both insider and outsider: "Abseits hinter dem Ofen, ein wenig gebückt, saß ein kleiner hagerer Mann […]. Er hatte mit keinem Worte an der Unterhaltung der Anderen teilgenommen" (638). His place within the community is reflected by his spatial position in the tavern. Not only does he place himself apart from the table where the other guests are seated; he also distances himself from

[119] Neumeyer (90) makes a similar observation, noting the schoolmaster's status as a communal insider and outsider.

their conversations about the story of the "Schimmelreiter." Further, the dikegrave explains to the traveler that the schoolmaster never wanted to belong to the community in the first place: "nur wegen einer verfehlten Brautschaft ist er hier in seiner Heimat […] behangen geblieben" (638). By designating its primary narrative host as a guest in the tavern, the novella complicates the interaction between narrator and narratee. The uncertainty of the roles of host and guest, on the one hand, mirrors the uncertainty of narrative authority. By aligning storytelling with the uneasy interaction between host and guest, the text suggests the narrative construction of memories—the shared, communal story of the rider—is not an act of univocal administration but rather a complex exchange of numerous voices. On the other hand, the schoolmaster's liminal position grants him advantages as a narrator. He relates the story of the "Schimmelreiter" from both an insider and outsider position, which makes an effective narrative administrator.

"Ich sah wohl, daß es ein Wirtshaus war": The Tavern as a Space of Collective Memory

Storm's decision to situate the narration of the "Schimmelreiter" legend in a tavern has consequences for the novella's frame structure. Not only does the schoolmaster's residence in the tavern—his status as guest and host—reflect his ambiguous relationship vis-à-vis the community; as the primary locus of storytelling, the tavern is also a site where opposing voices collide. Consequently, the traveler's arrival at the tavern—the moment he enters the text's most important narrative space—warrants careful examination.[120] After having encountered the spook on horseback in the midst of a storm on the North Frisian coast, he glimpses a large house whose windows beam with light. Yet when he finally realizes what kind of house it is, it is no longer light but rather sound that captures his attention: "Ich sah wohl, daß es ein Wirtshaus war

[120] See also Neumeyer (90), who reads the traveler's entrance as an arrival in a narrative community.

[…].‘Ist hier Versammlung?‘ frug ich [den Knecht], da mir jetzt deutlich ein Geräusch von Menschenstimmen und Gläserklirren aus der Stubentür entgegendrang” (636-37). Of course, one would expect the sound of human voices and clanging glasses in a tavern. Considering the novella’s preoccupation with narrative voices, however, the traveler’s characterization of the sounds bursting out of the tavern’s door hint at something more significant than atmospherics. More specifically, the verb “entgegendringen” suggests pressure and opposition, as if the tavern can hardly contain the conversations inside. This assemblage of voices is further underscored by the traveler’s exchange with the groom, who, after all, answers his question in Low German. Not only does the narrative space the traveler seeks to enter contain voices that clang together like the glasses of their owners; the moment immediately preceding his admission is marked by an altogether different “voice,” the groom’s dialect, a form of speech that contrasts with both the traveler’s, the schoolmaster’s, and the external frame narrator’s.

Once inside, the traveler further details how linguistic exchanges characterize the tavern. Having received an invitation to join the other men at table, he then emphasizes the relationship between conversation and narration. After he discovers his table companion is the current dikegrave, he remarks, “wir waren ins Gespräch gekommen, und ich hatte begonnen, ihm meine seltsame Begegnung auf dem Deiche zu erzählen. Er wurde aufmerksam, und ich bemerkte plötzlich, daß alles Gespräch umher verstummt war. ‘Der Schimmelreiter!’ rief einer aus der Gesellschaft” (638). While the traveler’s account of the confrontation with the ghostly rider initially hushes the other guests’ conversations it also sets in motion a different kind of conversation, an exchange of different versions of Hauke Haien’s story. In this sense, the novella’s tavern constitutes what one critic of the novella calls a “Rederaum”—a space that provokes verbal exchange, one in which a “Vielzahl von Stimmen” generates stories whose

"Wahrheitsgehalt aufgrund der Polyphonie in Frage gestellt wird" (Neumeyer 87-88). While this notion of the "Rederaum" captures how the tavern, as a linguistic space, shapes the novella's construction of reality, other aspects play a decisive role in *Der Schimmelreiter*—namely how the tavern also provides a space where the community defines itself via the memories it generates and retransmits. Here Jan Assmann's arguments concerning the link between collective memory and communal space prove helpful. "Jede Gruppe," he writes, "die sich als solche konsolidieren will, ist bestrebt, Orte zu schaffen, […] die nicht nur Schauplätze ihrer Interaktionsformen abgeben, sondern Symbole ihrer Identität und Anhaltspunkte ihrer Erinnerung. Das Gedächtnis braucht Orte, tendiert zur Verräumlichung" (39). Seen from Assmann's perspective, the tavern in Storm's novella constitutes not only a "Rederaum" where linguistic interaction is staged, but also an "Erinnerungsraum" where the community articulates its identity through the memories it exchanges through collective storytelling.

Storm's novella consistently designates the tavern as a gathering space where the community's contours are defined. To return to the traveler's arrival: as he enters the tavern, he first hears the other guests' voices and then confronts an image that hints at the formation of a community. He remarks, "[a]ls ich eintrat, sah ich etwa ein Dutzend Männer an einem Tische sitzen […]; eine Punschbowle stand darauf" (637). While the punch bowl hardly conjures up the Last Supper, the number of guests does: the gathering of a dozen men at table, not to mention the schoolmaster's reference to Christ's betrayal at the novella's end (754), clearly evokes a form of communion, thereby highlighting the tavern's function as a communal hub. Further, the other tavern in the novella—the "Kirchspielkrug" in the schoolmaster's tale—plays a similar role by providing an important site of collective self-definition. During the winter festival of Hauke's youth, for example, it is at the tavern where the villagers make decisions concerning the ice

bowling competition and hold the dance thereafter. First, before the game begins, we learn about a selection process: "In der Nebenstube des Kirchspielkruges droben auf der Geest war eine Anzahl von den Werfern erschienen, um über die Aufnahme einiger zuletzt noch Angemeldeten zu beschließen" (349). Second, following the competition, another selection takes place, namely the choosing of partners at the dance: as the young people pair off in the tavern, the schoolmaster informs us, "jeder sah nur auf seine Dirne und drehte sich mit ihr im Kreis herum" (354). Whereas the tavern provides a space where the community's youth are selected to participate in the yearly ritual of the ice bowling match, it also serves as the site where potential marriage partners—and by implication, future offspring—are identified. In short, the tavern, in both frame and embedded tale, proves essential to the community's efforts to consolidate itself.

Beyond furnishing a stage for celebrations, the novella's taverns also provide a space where collective memories are propagated. Indeed, the speakers in the tavern often reference the passing of time as they discuss the events related to the "Schimmelreiter" story. Reacting to the traveler's fear that the dike could fail to prevent flooding, the dikegrave explains, "unser Hauptdeich ist schon im vorigen Jahrhundert umgelegt" (637). Similarly, when the other guests fall silent following the traveler's report of the ghostly rider, the dikegrave cites a previous flood in "anno 17" that affected a neighboring community (638). Finally, during one of the schoolmaster's interjections, he tells the traveler, "Das Jahr, von dem ich Ihnen erzähle […] war das Jahr 1756, das in dieser Gegend nie vergessen wird" (414). Taken together, these examples point to an awareness of time among the tavern's guests. By citing specific dates, they relate the memory of Hauke Haien in its different permutations as a phenomenon that repeats itself at various points in time. Consequently, the "Versammlung" the traveler enters is more than an assembly of men charged with observing the dikes; it is also a "Sammlung" of differing versions

of the same memory, which has been transferred by word of mouth in the tavern over the years. To use Assmann's terminology, the memory has over time been "verräumlicht" in the tavern, which functions as a repository for the story's different versions. It is in this space that collective memory is rehearsed and circulated among the community's members, and it is no coincidence which guests in particular call for the schoolmaster's tale once he finally joins the other men at table: "'Erzählt, erzählt nur, Schulmeister,' riefen ein paar der Jüngeren aus der Gesellschaft" (639). As younger members of the community—they might even be the schoolmaster's recent pupils!—who are perhaps unfamiliar with the memory of Hauke, these patrons seek to gain greater access to the collective by listening to an older member's rendition of the story. They have entered the tavern, of course, to help monitor the threatened dikes, but they also frequent a space where their identity as community members is secured through the reception of the collective memories narrated there.[121]

Moreover, the tavern's function as a headquarters for the dikegrave, the "Gevollmächtigten," and other "Interessenten" (637) parallels its function as a space for the repetition of collective memories. It should be noted that, unlike other frame novellas, *Der Schimmelreiter*'s embedded narratives relate not different stories, but rather multiple retellings of the same tale. Instead of a group of storytellers who gather to swap various narratives à la Boccaccio's *Decameron*, the assembly in Storm's tavern concerns itself with different versions of only one narrative: the life, death, and afterlife of Hauke Haien. Hence, the task of monitoring the tide mirrors the task of monitoring this particular memory. This parallel becomes more apparent when one considers the German word for the waves that crash into the dikes:

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[121] See also Schilling (51), who reads the novella as the documentation of an attempt to anchor an individual existence (Haien's) in collective memory.

"Gezeiten." The tavern's guests are thus charged with observing both the movement of the tides and the movement of the "times." And because the dike constitutes the meeting point between those times and the physical contours of the community, the project of maintaining the dike emerges as a project of maintaining collective memories. In both the frame and embedded tale, the tavern is designated as a communal center where matters related to the dike are discussed, and it follows logically that one of the novella's final images is a map left behind by the dikegrave in the tavern (755). As the traveler retires for the night, he has his last conversation with the dikegrave, who has returned to pick up the map. As a record of the coastline's contours, this map also points to how the community delineates its boundaries over time, a task that resembles the narration of collective memory. Just as the map represents the passage of time in spatial terms, so too does the tavern provide a space in which memories are catalogued for the purpose of "mapping out" communal identity.

Yet Storm's novella does not limit the tavern's role to the cultivation of local memories and the identities bound up with them. By its very nature, the tavern is a public space in which not only locals gather; it is also where foreigners come into contact with natives. Accordingly, the memories related in such a space are also received by listeners who reside outside of the community, strangers who retransmit what they hear to a broader audience. One particular passage exemplifies how the tavern functions as an interface between an otherwise isolated community and the wider world. In the embedded tale, Hauke's antagonists gather in the tavern, where they mock him for gaining the position of dikegrave on account of his wife's social position and land holdings. Here the schoolmaster emphasizes how the table in the tavern constitutes a springboard for dissent: "Aber es war an öffentlicher Wirtstafel gesprochen worden, es blieb nicht da, es lief bald um im Geest- wie unten in dem Marschdorf" (689). Read in

isolation, this passage suggests that what is said in the tavern more or less remains in the village; but when one considers his earlier remarks in this sequence, such conversations emerge as directed at a much broader audience. Describing the initial meetings of Hauke's critics in the tavern, the schoolmaster reports, "Dann kam ein störendes Wort in Umlauf.— Als von den jüngeren Besitzern der Marsch und Geestgemeinde […] ein etwas unruhiger Trupp im Kruge droben am Trunke festgeblieben war, redeten sie beim vierten oder fünften Glase zwar nicht über König und Regierung—so hoch wurde damals nocht nicht gegriffen—wohl aber über Kommunal- und Oberbeamte" (688). One the one hand, the circulation of "ein störendes Wort" appears confined to complaints about local affairs—the problems caused by "Kommunal- und Oberbeamte." But it is important to note, on the other hand, that the schoolmaster distinguishes the time in which Hauke's critics gather from the time in which he narrates the story. Whereas "damals" tavern talk was limited to local affairs, it is now directed, he implies, at figures on the national stage like the king and the government. Put differently, the schoolmaster registers a change in the tavern's function that has occurred between Hauke's time and the time of narration in the frame. By no means an isolated outpost dedicated solely to local concerns, the tavern constitutes a window on the wider world, a hub where local and national narratives are circulated and dispatched.

From Pub to Publication: The Traveler as National Publicist of Local Memories

Storm's novella registers the tavern's role in public life in rural nineteenth-century Germany. As a space in which to discuss communal issues like dike maintenance, to celebrate events like the ice bowling competition, and to swap stories like the legend of Hauke Haien, the tavern in *Der Schimmelreiter* constitutes a public sphere in miniature. Further, given the historical period in which the novella's frame is set, the public house represents a contact point

where collective identity is not restricted to the village or even the region. Set in the 1830s, the frame depicts a tavern at a time when such institutions provided a sphere for the development of a national consciousness. As the historian James T. Brophy has shown in his study of popular political culture in the first half of the nineteenth century, it was in taverns in regions as disparate as Baden, the Palatinate, and the Rhineland that community members insulted the Prussian king and circulated illegal political literature (156-58). Further, the provincial governor of the Prussian Rhineland noted the tavern's status as a site of political activity in 1839, claiming, "It cannot be denied that in taverns [*Gasthöfen*], newspapers and other newsprint are read more frequently and diligently than before; that one politicizes about war and peace" (qtd. in Brophy 159). While the North Frisian tavern community depicted in *Der Schimmelreiter* differs from those in Brophy's study, it nonetheless evinces similar practices. As noted earlier, Storm's novella hints at an engagement with national politics among its tavern's patrons: whereas its guests may not have discussed "König und Regierung" during Hauke's lifetime, they no longer, the schoolmaster suggests, shy away from complaining about events transpiring in the national political sphere (688). And although *Der Schimmelreiter* does not directly mention the circulation of political literature in the tavern, it still reflects on the relationship between local and national identity in its focus on the role of the traveler. Put differently, the novella traces how the guest bridges the gap between the regional and the national by recording the villagers' stories and retransmitting them on the national stage that is the journal publication read by the outer frame's narrator.

Storm's traveler is an intermediary who links the local with the national, and it is precisely his status as a guest, as an outsider, that allows him to transform a village tale into a national narrative. The traveler bridges the public sphere of the tavern and the public sphere of

the journals referred to by the outer frame's narrator. In short, the traveler carries the novella's central narrative from the pub to publication. His arrival at the tavern underscores his role in connecting these disparate spheres. Describing his approach, he notes, "vor den Fenstern gewahrte ich die sogenannten 'Ricks,' das heißt auf zwei Ständern ruhende Balken mit großen eisernen Ringen, zum Anbinden des Viehes und der Pferde" (637). While hitching up one's horse to a post could be seen as a banal detail, this gesture also suggests that the guest's function is to link up discursive communities that would otherwise remain separated. Metaphorically speaking, the traveler "tethers" together the villagers who tell the story of *Der Schimmelreiter* with a national readership that eventually consumes the tale. Although relatively little information is given about the traveler's identity, the novella gives clues about his role as a mediator. Significantly, we learn he is broker of some kind: the reasons for his journey are "Geschäfte in der Stadt" (635). Despite the vagueness of this explanation, it sheds light on the traveler's function in the novella's frame structure. While the nature of his business dealings is left unspecified, his primary motivation is some kind of transaction. Of course, on the most obvious level, he sets off on his journey to facilitate an exchange of goods or services; but the other definitions of transaction point to his status as an intermediary. One the one hand, "transactions" can refer to the published proceedings of a meeting; on the other, they can refer to a communicative action between two parties that influence one another. While the traveler is driven to reach his destination to make an exchange, he also conducts metaphorical transactions by engaging in reciprocal communication with the tavern's patrons and recording and publishing the proceedings he hears there.

In addition to conducting literal and figurative transactions, the traveler provides translations to his readers. As soon as the frame tale begins, he establishes himself as a guide

who alerts his readers to the nuances of an unfamiliar regional culture: "Es war im dritten Jahrzehnt unseres Jahrhunderts, an einem Oktober-Nachmittag […], als ich bei starkem Unwetter auf einem nordfriesischen Deich entlang ritt" (634). Not only do we receive details on the time gap between narrator and narratee; we are also informed of a specific geography. The following characterization of "das Wattenmeer der Nordsee" recalls a travel report that evokes a world entirely different from that of most of Germany's land-locked readership. Although the journal version published in Storm's lifetime did not contain the glossary of dike terminology "Für binnenländische Leser," the traveler still fulfills this role of translating the peculiarities of North Frisian culture. For example, when he observes the deep pools of water that develop as a result of the pounding surf, he pauses and explains, "Als ich jene Stelle erreicht hatte, sah ich hart am Deich im Kooge unten das Wasser einer großen Wehle blinken—so nennen sie dort die Brüche, welche von den Sturmfluten in das Land gerissen werden" (636). He repeats this kind of explanation when he mentions the "Ricks"—the horse posts at the tavern—and just before he enters and the groom answers his questions in Low German, he explains, "ich erfuhr nachher, dass dieses neben dem Friesischen hier schon seit über hundert Jahren im Schwange gewesen sei" (637). Such pauses in the traveler's narrative reveal two aspects of his role as cultural translator. First, he designates himself as an outsider who also learns about cultural differences: he admits he had not initially known about the prevalence of Low German and Frisian in the area, thereby signaling that he is not a local. Second, he accords himself the position of an interpreter, through whom the foreign culture of the region is filtered before it reaches his readership.[122] Therefore, when he implores the schoolmaster to leave in the superstitious

[122] Plöschberger (257) argues similarly in her discussions of the traveler's status as an intermediary, but she does not address the relationship between region and nation.

elements of Hauke's story, he is also reinforcing his function as an interpreter: "Traut mir zu," he insists, "dass ich schon selbst die Spreu vom Weizen sondern werde!" (639). Accordingly, he reassures his own audience that he can make the right discriminations and pass on only relevant information. By doing so, the traveler positions himself as a hermeneut, a messenger who delivers his own version of the "Schimmelreiter" text to a national readership. In this sense, the traveler assumes a position similar to that of the schoolmaster. He is not only an interpreter but also an administrator of narrative. Just as the schoolmaster functions as the traveler's host, the traveler functions as a host to the readers of his published story.

The trajectory of the traveler's journey further underscores his role as a mediator. Although he omits his starting point, he does reveal his destination and two stops along the way. Before arriving at the tavern, the traveler spends three days at a relative's farm waiting for the storm to abate. From there, he rides south until he reaches the coast and eventually the tavern, where he spends the night before, as the novella's last sentence informs us, he rides "über den Hauke-Haien-Deich zur Stadt hinunter" (755). His path thus consists of three stations: the first is the rural space of the relative's "Hofe […] in einer nördlicheren Harden" (635); the second the tavern "auf halber Höhe des Binnendeiches" (636); the third the unnamed city "ein paar Stunden weit nach Süden" from his starting point (635). In sum, the traveler passes from the sheltered, rural, northern space of the relative's farm to an open, urban, more southerly location of the city. This journey thus mirrors the path taken by *Der Schimmelreiter* itself. In other words, the story of a relatively isolated northern community travels, in the form of the journal in which the traveler publishes it, southward into other German cities, where it is circulated and consumed by a largely urban audience. It also follows logically that the tavern, the space in which the traveler receives the message that he later delivers in print form, is situated between these two points: it

functions as a meeting point between two worlds, a site where memories are exchanged and then retransmitted. Significantly, the tavern's in-between status is echoed in the surrounding geography: it is located at "a middle elevation of the inner dike" (636). Lastly, that Storm's traveler-messenger "delivers" the "Schimmelreiter" narrative to an expanded audience is reflected in the novella's single-ended frame structure. After all, it is not the first narrator who concludes the story: narratively speaking, that task falls to the traveler, a messenger whose ride ends at the very moment when the text reaches its own destination, the printed page of the journal read by both the first narrator and the implied reader.[123]

Given the culture of journals in the second half of the nineteenth century, it is no coincidence that Storm's novella likens the traveler's journey to the path of publication. Indeed, several journals employed the metaphor of the border messenger in their titles and mission statements, for example, *Die Grenzboten*, *Der Grenzbote*, and *Der norddeutsche Grenzbote*. The editors of *Daheim* likened their journal to a guest traveling throughout the nation dispensing family-friendly entertainment: "Unser Blatt klopft an alle deutschen Thüren und bittet um Einlaß. Es hofft ein Freund des Hauses zu werden und des Ehrenrechts eines Familiengastes, dem *jedes* Haus seine Thür vertrauend öffnen darf, werth zu bleiben" (qtd. in Aust, *Realismus* 44). While Storm's traveler does not reveal what exactly his business in the city entails, he nonetheless undertakes a journey comparable to the medial journeys described by the journals mentioned above.[124] Regardless of the literal transactions he wishes to complete, he is, above all,

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[123] See also Hoffmann (367-68), who argues that the complex chain of narrative transmission evinces anxieties about posterity.

[124] On the relationship between the oral and written transmission of narrative, see Plöschberger (251).

a "Grenzbote," a carrier of narratives who transcends regional borders and makes his delivery by crossing the thresholds of "alle deutschen Thüren." Of course, it is not only the traveler who plays the role of border messenger; his host, the schoolmaster, also straddles the divide between insiders and outsiders, and his narrative—as he administers it to his guest—also crosses the thresholds throughout Germany.

The novella alludes to the journal's role as a messenger of collective memories in the opening frame. Here the narrator foregrounds his initial reception of the "Schimmelreiter" narrative, emphasizing how journals forged the memory that allows him to recount his tale. He describes how reading a story in the "Leipziger" or "Pappes Hamburger Lesefrüchten" affected him so much that his memory of the narrative has remained intact, despite the lifetime that has passed between his reception of the tale and his composition of the novella (634). As much as the narrator colors his story as something almost stubbornly local, as a portrait of North Frisian life, the novella's genesis reveals a path of transmission that bridges the regional and the national. Indeed, the tale that inspired Storm did not take place on the North Sea coast, but rather on the banks of the Weichsel.[125] Moreover, the journals his narrator mentions were not the primary sources of the "Schimmelreiter" legend. "Der gespenstige Reiter" first appeared in the *Danziger Dampfboot*, only to be reprinted in *Pappes Hamburger Lesefrüchte*. Storm's retelling ultimately appeared in the *Deutsche Rundschau*. The story thus takes a long, twisted path, one stretching from a journal published in a peripheral German territory to one with an explicitly national audience. In other words, the "Schimmelreiter" narrative travels from a Danzig-based journal to one published in Hamburg, which is then read in Husum by Storm, who eventually rewrites and publishes it in the *Deutsche Rundschau*. This final station marks the end of a process in which a

[125] On Storm's adaptation of his sources, see Plöschberger (251-52).

regional narrative reaches a national readership, a process facilitated by the traveling guest, who, after having the tale administered to him, administers it to the consumers of the journal and to the nation at large.[126]

Hosting Histories and Assembling Voices in *Der Stechlin*

Upon first glance, the narrative situation of *Der Stechlin* differs considerably from that of *Der Schimmelreiter*. While Storm's novella features a small number of storytellers concerned with only one narrative—the life of Hauke Haien—Fontane's novel includes a sprawling cast of characters, who, as the author himself put it, "sprechen […] Gott und die Welt durch" (qtd. in Aust 85). The two works also contrast in terms of structure: whereas *Der Schimmelreiter*, with its elaborate frame, draws a firm line between its narrative levels, *Der Stechlin*, with its seemingly endless string of conversations, evinces a loose, meandering narrative structure. Despite these initial differences, however, the two texts share common ground. Although the number of speakers differs, both Storm's novella and Fontane's novel insist that no single narrative voice maintains absolute primacy. Just as we receive a synthesized version of the different tellings of the Hauke Haien story in *Der Schimmelreiter*, we receive an assembly of multiple perspectives on the topics of conversation relayed in *Der Stechlin*. Further, despite the obvious structural differences, Fontane's novel can also be understood as a frame narrative

[126] While Hermand (45) focuses on Haien as an example of a "gründerzeitlichen Übermenschen," who, like Bismarck, creates a new land, one could make a similar claim about the tale's administrators. Like Haien's "creation" of new land through his dike project and Bismarck's "creation" of a German nation, the hosts and guests in this tale contribute to the "creation" of a national readership.

whose frame and embedded tales dissolve into one another.[127] Finally, both texts stage the interaction between narrator and narratee as an exchange between host and guest. Whereas *Der Schimmelreiter* appoints the schoolmaster as its primary narrative host, *Der Stechlin* designates Dubslav von Stechlin as its main administrator of stories and hospitality. Just as "mein Gastfreund, der Schulmeister" accommodates his guest with comfort and stories, Dubslav, as a "Mann der Form und einer feineren Gastlichkeit" (Fontane, *Stechlin* 323), provides visitors not only with food, drink, and shelter, but also with narratives.

Although Dubslav von Stechlin is not the only character to receive guests, the novel nonetheless designates him as its most important host. Visits to his estate in rural Brandenburg coincide with major turning points and play a structural role in framing *Der Stechlin*, which begins with Dubslav hosting a dinner party and ends with him receiving a series of guests at his deathbed. Further, by inviting visitors to his manor, Dubslav provides a gathering space to the region's otherwise isolated inhabitants. As one guest points out, "wenn wir nicht den Herrn von Stechlin hätten, so hätten wir so gut wie gar nichts" (28). By furnishing this sociable space, Dubslav initiates his guests into a narrative community, one whose members exchange news, gossip, and stories. Dubslav himself articulates his understanding of the host's role in a conversation with Captain von Czako, his son Woldemar's friend and military comrade. Here Dubslav designates storytelling itself as a hospitable gesture, as a gift he bestows upon his guest: "die Geschichte will ich Ihnen doch als Andenken mitgeben," he proclaims (38). The story in question concerns Countess von Zeuner, who meets Prussia's King Friedrich Wilhelm IV by

[127] Goetschel (119) perceptively compares *Der Stechlin* with *The Decameron*, claiming that the novel, like the novella cycle, depicts a retreat from a threatening world, whereby the characters look to conversation for distraction.

chance, and after treating him to a delicious breakfast of "Blut- und Zungenwurst" begins sending him a crate of sausages every Christmas (38). After several years, the king reciprocates by sending her a sausage-shaped, jewel-encrusted keepsake with a note that reads, "Wurst wider Wurst" (39). In its focus on gift giving, Dubslav's story exemplifies his philosophy of storytelling as such: narrative, he suggests, constitutes a form of exchange. As gifts of food, these gifts refer, of course, to hospitality in the literal sense. But the preposition "gegen" suggests further aspects, both equal exchange and an opposition. In other words, tangible food is exchanged for symbolic food, an act that connotes the extension of hospitality from Dubslav's table to the text about him. Further, Like the "Andenken" he gives to Czako, the keepsake given to the countess serves, above all, as a conduit of memory to be recounted through narration. Storytelling and hospitality thus become linked during visits to Dubslav's estate, where he, as the host of this narrative space, presides over the recollection and transmission of memories. The stories, the "Andenken" the host dispenses to his guests, relay common memories whose future retelling binds the narrative community together.

But the novel also problematizes Dubslav's narrative hospitality. Although he welcomes guests to his estate and regales them with stories, he also exploits his authority as host and storyteller. When Armgard and Melusine, his future daughters-in-law, visit him to celebrate Armgard's engagement with Woldemar, he also invites his sister Adelheid. Anticipating conflict between the free spirit Melusine and the uptight Adelheid, Dubslav fears his home could incur the "Blame der Ungastlichkeit" (248). As the narrator informs us, despite the possibility of "einer schrecklichen Szene" between the two women, Dubslav not only dreads but also relishes his sister's discomfort in Melusine's presence: "Es erheiterte ihn ungemein, aber es beunruhigte ihn doch auch" (248). In addition to enjoying Adelheid's anxieties, he abuses his power as host when

she visits him at his sickbed toward the novel's end. Annoyed with her abrasive personality, Dubslav devises a plot that will allow him to preserve his reputation as a good host, while at the same time forcing her to leave of her own accord. "So wenig er sich aus ihr machte," the narrator explains, "so war er doch zu sehr Mann der Form einer feineren Gastlichkeit, als daß er's zuwege gebracht hätte, seinerseits auf Abreise zu dringen" (323-24). His plot involves inviting a further guest, one who will render his home inhospitable to Adelheid. The guest is a local illegitimate child, whom Dubslav installs at the window of the room where he and Adelheid eat breakfast, claiming the girl is his new caretaker. Aware that his sister's moral outrage over the child's parentage will prompt her to leave, he uses this "Gast am Fenster" to rid himself of her (324). Inviting one guest, in short, results in the expulsion of another. Dubslav's trick indicates a tension between accommodation and control. While he welcomes visitors into a space where they exchange narratives, he also attempts to maintain control over his guests by managing who is included. Storytelling is essential to Dubslav's sleight of hand, his playing of one guest against another. The trick he devises to uninvite his sister—the narrator uses the word "Ränke"—takes the form of a narrative, a plot, so to speak. Objecting to his decision to enlist Agnes as his nurse, Adelheid complains, "Die soll dich nun rumdrehen und heben? […] Was du dir doch alles für Geschichten machst" (351). The fictions Dubslav tells allow him to maintain his authority as administrator who uses hospitality to exclude unwelcome guests like his sister. "Geschichten" can be exploited to shape the contours of the narrative community and raise the question of which stories and storytellers to include in it.

Storytelling's role in shaping the community becomes clearer during the gatherings at Dubslav's estate. Throughout the opening chapter's dinner party, the narrator comments on

Dubslav's ability to facilitate conversation.[128] After Dubslav gives a toast, the narrator describes how his fellow diners resume "die durch den Toast unterbrochenen Gespräche," and how Dubslav, "als guter Wirt," limits himself to sprinkling in "kurze Bemerkungen nach links and rechts" (28). The good host, the narrator insists, is not overbearing; he allows his guests' conversations to take their course. Yet the repetition of a specific metaphor complicates matters. When two further dinner guests try to initiate a conversation, they are forced to switch interlocutors, "weil Dubslav durch eine Zwischenfrage den Faden abschnitt" (25). This image of the thread of conversation is then repeated after the meal: "Das ein paar Minuten lang geführte gemeinschaftliche Gespräch kam, all die Zeit über, über ein unruhiges Hin und Her nicht hinaus, bis der Knäuel, in dem man stand, sich wieder in Gruppen auflöste" (33). The metaphor of weaving a conversation points to the narrative host's anxiety: on the one hand, he must pull the strings of the conversation just enough so that the group does not unravel; on the other hand, if he pulls too much, the thread breaks. As he presides over a narrative community, Dubslav must achieve a delicate balance, whereby individual speakers are encouraged to assemble into a unit.

And yet the dinner party at Dubslav's estate is more than a performance of genteel social codes; it features several moments when an understanding of collective storytelling is articulated. The textual metaphor of threading together individual stories into a communal tapestry hints at the novel's vision of narrative's role in gathering a political community, be it regional or national. This image of threading together conversations echoes an earlier reference, when Dubslav comments on the German Imperial flag as he decides which guests to invite to the dinner party. Reacting to his butler's suggestion of stitching a red stripe onto the black and white

[128] On Dubslav's role as a facilitator of conversation and sociability, see Bowman (888), Häntzschel (158), and Müller-Seidel (437).

Prussian flag to acknowledge the Empire's founding, Dubslav refuses. He asserts, "wenn du was Rotes dran nähst, dann reißt es gewiß" (15). In this sense, the text(ile) that is a united Germany could disintegrate if the wrong memories are threaded into it. Dubslav, the novel suggests through this textual metaphor, remains skeptical that Imperial Germany is a story that can hold up.[129] The primary narrative host in *Der Stechlin* insists that incorporating the stories of the events that made the Empire's foundation possible could result in a fragile narrative. The novel as a whole raises the question of which narrative threads are interwoven to create a common national (his)story, and during Dubslav's hospitable gatherings, personal, familial, regional, and national narratives are stitched together to create a communal text, but a tension remains over which stories are privileged in the process. Dubslav clearly privileges Prussia over a united German nation, and, as we will see, the novel that bears his name often takes the same events from Prussian history that were used as national founding narratives and recasts them as regional tales. Dubslav's flag, in other words, can be seen as an emblem for the novel's vision of narrating collective identity.

Given Dubslav's predilection for weaving historical anecdotes like the story of sausage into his guest's conversations, likening the Imperial flag to a fragile patchwork of narrated memories is entirely plausible. During the dinner party, precisely the question of combining individual and collective memories comes to the fore. After debating the advantages of the telegraph, for example, Dubslav complains that the "Verschiebungen in Zeit und Stunde" brought about by this new technology has tangled his own memory of historical events like the revolutions in France: "Ich sagte: Septemberrevolution. Es kann aber 'ne andre gewesen sein; sie

[129] While I agree with Brude-Firnau's (462) reading of Dubslav's skepticism toward the Empire and the Kaiser, she neglects the textual metaphor in her interpretation of the flag.

haben da so viele, daß man sie leicht verwechselt. Eine war im Juni, 'ne andre war im Juli—wer nicht ein Bombengedächtnis hat, muß da notwendig 'reinfallen" (23-24). Dubslav's confusion between the upheavals of 1871, 1830, and 1789 is followed by his request to the butler to bring in the fish course, and this particular fish becomes the topic of a conversation revolving around collective memory. One guest, Woldemar's friend Czako, claims the carp he and the others dine on indicates "Menschheitsentwicklung," suggesting that this fish, in its old age, has likely witnessed the passing of several historical events: "da frag ich mich denn unwillkürlich (denn Karpfen werden alt; daher beispielsweise die Mooskarpfen), welche Revolutionen sind an diesem hervorragenden Exemplar seiner Gattung wohl schon vorübergegangen?" (24). In light of these musings about the carp, Dubslav's table emerges as a site where collective memories are dished up, chewed over, and digested by the members of a narrative community. While Czako's observations are not without humor, the fish nonetheless fulfills a serious function.[130] By providing literal and figurative fodder for Dubslav's guests, the carp feeds both their bodies and their memory banks. The old fish, with its reservoir of experience, also recalls Dubslav himself. Like the carp, he has witnessed several historical upheavals during his lifetime, and the threads of his individual story become interwoven with the threads of collective history.

The conversations at Dubslav's estate often concern events relevant to German national history, but he insists on intertwining them with personal and regional histories. For example, he interrupts the conversation between Czako and Frau Gundermann because of its limited scope—Dubslav believes the story is too individual and will not appeal to all members of the narrative community. To render Czako's personal story more universal, Dubslav puts it into a wider historical context, providing reference points familiar to all. He intervenes with the observation,

[130] For other interpretations of the carp scene, see Cartland (24) and Goetschel (118).

"Zu Hause ist es am Ende wirklich am besten. Und gerade wir hier, die wir den Vorzug haben, in der Rheinsberger Gegend zu leben. Ja, wo ist so was? Erst der große König, und dann Prinz Heinrich, der nie 'ne Schlacht verloren […]" (32). Dubslav praises the region he and his guests call home by mentioning Prussian historical figures whose stories are common knowledge. In a progression from the personal to the regional to the national, Dubslav threads together several categories of identity. He demonstrates this tendency once more during a toast following the lunch that concludes Armgard and Melusine's visit later in the novel. Here Dubslav compares his son's victory—his successful engagement to Armgard—with Prussian military victories in the 1675 battle of Fehrbellin against the Swedes and the more recent wars against Austria and France (260). Ultimately, *Der Stechlin* portrays a host who not only seeks to create a society of guests, but also a society of storytellers who interweave their individual memories with regional and national ones. As the novel's primary narrative host, Dubslav presides over an assembly of narrative voices that negotiates among personal and collective stories that can be combined to articulate a shared history. National narratives are part of this shared history, but they do not dominate.

The space in which Dubslav organizes the novel's assembly of voices also informs the novel's understanding of narrating a shared history in the closing years of the nineteenth century. In other words, his home functions not only as a gathering space where memories are interwoven but also as a monument to historical change and a repository of historical objects. The house's architectural features testify to its original construction in the century of Martin Luther, its destruction in the wake of the Thirty Years War, and its reconstruction during the reign of Friedrich Wilhelm I, the founder of the Prussian state (6). By aligning the house's history with historical moments considered to be founding events of the German nation, the novel emphasizes

Dubslav's role as the transmitter of collective memories to his guests. During their visits, they become confronted with a space imbued with historical significance, one in which regional and national memories jostle.[131]

The "Museum" Dubslav constructs inside his home is precisely such a space in that it encourages guests to reflect on a common history. However, as much as Dubslav functions as a host-historian, his museum does not impose a dogmatic view of the past. On the contrary, while he may assume a degree of authority by conducting tours of the museum and explaining the historical significance of its contents, he delegates the role of curator to his friend, the local schoolmaster Krippenstapel. Dubslav even participates in a friendly feud with Krippenstapel concerning the origins of a particular item, a weather vane in the shape of a seventeenth-century Prussian soldier carrying a standard (257). This lack of seriousness suggests that Dubslav's idea of narrating history is anything but dogmatic. As an example of how Dubslav gathers stories, the museum is even dismissed at one point as a joke (254). With its collection of seemingly random and banal relics, the museum could be dismissed as an eccentric project, but upon closer examination, the objects themselves shed light on his way of transmitting historical memories. In addition to a window frame through which Friedrich the Great supposedly watched his friend Katte's execution, the museum exhibits old mill wheels, rainwater pipes, and several weather vanes. No mere detritus, the wheels and pipes can be read to represent a cyclical notion of history that welcomes continual reexaminations of the past, and the weather vanes point to Dubslav's desire to know both literally and figuratively which way the wind blows, that is, to understand historical change. Finally, the window is linked, of course, with a central event in the development of the early Prussian state; yet it also signifies one's perspective on historical events

[131] Also see Solheim's (95) reading of Dubslav's manor as a repository of history.

as such. In short, it emphasizes *how* one sees historical events just as much as it emphasizes *what* one sees.

As significant as his museum may be, an interpretation of Dubslav's views on narrating history would remain incomplete without an analysis of his walking tours around one of the novel's main symbols, Lake Stechlin, or as Dubslav puts it, "die große Sehenswürdigkeit von Dorf und Schloß Stechlin" (247). As a self-appointed "Cicerone," a tour guide in charge of explaining local sights to his guests, Dubslav assumes a role of authority in that he determines what they see and shapes how they interpret it.[132] Dubslav's walking tours do not, however, attempt to control history's transmission. As much as Dubslav influences his guests' reception of historical events, the novel depicts an open, dynamic process of narrating collective history. Like the museum, Lake Stechlin functions as a repository of memories that encourage retellings of the past.[133] Considering Fontane's previous descriptions of the Lake in the first volume of his travel writings *Wanderungen durch die Mark Brandenburg*—not to mention his adaptation of other accounts of local legends surrounding the lake—the descriptions of the lake and its connections to world events in *Der Stechlin* constitute a retelling in and of themselves. The Lake is not therefore an immobile monument that becomes the object of one standard narration of the past; on the contrary, it resists efforts to control its history and instead constantly invites the exchange of new perspectives from those who view it. The very name of the lake, roughly translatable from its Slavic origins as "wild, turbulent water" (Aust 5), conveys a process of articulating history in constant upheaval, as does the jet of water that bursts from its surface whenever

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[132] For a discussion of Dubslav's role as tour guide, see Müller-Seidel (435).

[133] On the metaphor of the lake, see also Cartland (20-21; 27) Häntzschel (157), Müller-Seidel (447), and Solheim (94).

natural or political eruptions occur elsewhere on the globe (Fontane 5). The body of water, like the assembly of narrative voices Dubslav presides over, is no static entity. Read as an ever-shifting, incomplete narrative that blends the personal, the regional, the national, and even international, the lake mirrors the collective story the novel advocates during scenes of hospitality at Dubslav's estate.

Hybrid Spaces, Hospitable Spaces: Revisiting National Histories in *Der Stechlin*

Like *Der Schimmelreiter*, *Der Stechlin* designates the spaces in which the host offers hospitality as sites where collective memories are told and retold.[134] Dubslav's estate, in this sense, resembles the tavern and the schoolmaster's room: a host-narrator administers stories to his guest-narratees in a neither purely private nor public space. Such sites, to recall Assmann's arguments concerning the link between collective memory and communal space, allow groups to consolidate—not only by providing a stage for linguistic interaction but also for memory exchange. Memory, Assmann claims, needs spaces, and those hospitable sites presided over by Storm's schoolmaster and Fontane's aristocrat function as spaces of memory where a common identity can be narrated. However, *Der Stechlin* differs from *Der Schimmelreiter* in this regard because it does not limit itself to one space of memory. In other words, whereas Storm's novella situates the narration of the Haien legend solely in the tavern (and the schoolmaster's room located within), Fontane's novel features numerous sites where its personal, local, and national histories are relayed. In addition to Dubslav's estate, his museum, and tour route, *Der Stechlin* includes several other locations where narrative is administrated. These sites share a common trait: they are gathering spaces where a wider community assembles. Taken together, the hybrid

[134] See also Warning (303), who draws on Bakhtin's notion of the chronotopos to describe how conversation and narrative function in these spaces.

spaces of *Der Stechlin* provide a forum in which memories are exchanged between an ever-rotating set of speakers. The number of narrative voices in Storm's novella is multiplied in Fontane's novel, which, as we will see, evinces a different understanding of consolidating a narrative community. Instead of administering a local tale to a national readership, *Der Stechlin* moves in the opposite direction by recasting national founding narratives as regional lore. It invites the narratee (both listeners in the novel and readers of the novel) to critically revisit stories that have been transmitted as a coherent German national history in the years following unification.

One hybrid, hospitable space where such stories are revisited is the parish house in Stechlin, the home of Dubslav's friend, the local pastor Lorenzen. Here an important conversation about events related to German national history takes place between Lorenzen and his guest Melusine.[135] Recalling Hegel, he identifies three great historical epochs. First, he describes the reign of Friedrich Wilhelm I, under which Prussia was stabilized as a kingdom of order and justice (252). Second, he describes Friedrich II's reign as a period when an otherwise "ungenial" state saw itself as struck by the lightning of the monarch's genius (252). Third, Lorenzen views the era of the Wars of Liberation as a time when a vulnerable state showed its belief in "die höhere Macht des Geistigen, des Wissens und der Freiheit" (252). Significantly, Lorenzen's three great epochs have nothing to do with events that more immediately preceded German unification. He omits the wars with Denmark, Austria, and France, and also ignores both

[135] In his focus on conversation's function in the novel, Goetschel (119) accords a special status to the meeting between Lorenzen and Melusine, claiming that it is the only real dialogue in the text, which tends to privilege the art of conversation, "Causerie," over its contents.

Wilhelm I, the king responsible for these wars, and the current emperor, Wilhelm II.[136] Although Lorenzen is enthusiastic about Prussia's earlier history, he sees no greatness in its establishment of an Empire. Prussia's earlier glory remains its own and should not, he suggests, be functionalized as part of a longer trajectory of German national history.

Debates over Prussia's role in constructing such a national history occur in the novel's most important hybrid spaces, namely, taverns. In the "Prinzregenten," for example, several members of the local nobility gather to converse about politics and history. One of these aristocrats, von Molchow, views those events from early Prussian history not as glorious moments, as Lorenzen does, but rather as periods of internal strife between the Hohenzollerns. Standing in front of the tavern, von Molchow describes these conflicts and their lasting influence on the region: "Aufmuckung war hier immer zu Hause," he complains. "Erst frondierte Fritz gegen seinen Vater, dann frondierte Heinrich gegen seinen Bruder, und zuletzt frondierte August, unser alter forscher Prinz August gegen die Moral" (175). These acts of rebellion within the royal family mirror the differing conceptions of narrating founding historical events in *Der Stechlin*. The disagreements between the family members suggest that the novel is at odds with itself over the connection between German history and national identity. Disagreement, not harmony, is central to narrating a national history that draws from regional events like the family conflicts between the Hohenzollerns in Brandenburg.

Taverns like the "Prinzregenten" function similarly to the tavern in *Der Schimmelreiter*. In such spaces private individuals not only secure accommodation but also gather to discuss public affairs. For instance, before arriving at Dubslav's estate for the dinner party, Woldemar's

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[136] Brude-Firnau (467) argues that such omissions are part of the novel's implicit critique of the Kaiser's politics.

friends Czako and Rex turn in at the "Gasthaus zum Markgrafen Otto," where Rex becomes involved in a lively conversation about "die in der Stadt herrschende Gesinnung" (99). As was the case in Storm's novella, the guesthouse functions as an interface where locals and strangers exchange and distribute information. The novel's two most important taverns are, however, the village tavern in Stechlin and the "Prinzregenten" in the nearby town of Rheinsberg. As the site where the locals congregate to proclaim Dubslav's candidacy for a seat in the "Reichstag," the village tavern not only provides an arena for social and political exchange; it also functions as a commercial hub for the community. The grandest of the four buildings that form the village's center square, the tavern is an "Eck- und Kramladen" (6). While the fact that it serves multiple purposes in the community is not atypical, the tavern in Stechlin can nevertheless be seen as a kind of repository, a space where miscellaneous goods are sold and miscellaneous memories are exchanged. Moreover, that the kinds of memories exchanged in the novel's taverns are bound up with narrating a collective history is underscored by the name of the other important inn in *Der Stechlin*. Also a political center for the community—here the ballots are cast in the "Reichstag" election—the "Prinzregenten" hints at the theme of historical transition. In a novel that so consistently concerns itself with the changes affecting Germany at the century's end, it is perhaps no coincidence that the discontinuity associated with a regency government manifests itself in the name of the space where a major political upheaval is announced. It is in the "Prinzregenten," after all, where the Conservative Party members learn of their electoral loss to the Social Democrats.

Although the wars leading to German unification remain unmentioned in Lorenzen's parish home, they are addressed in the village tavern in Stechlin. Here several veterans of the Prussian wars against Denmark, Austria, and France gather for a Conservative Party committee

meeting. The committee's chairman, Katzler, wears a medal that reminds his table companions of his service during the Franco-Prussian war: an iron cross he earned at the battle of St. Marie aux Chênes (153). What may seem like a costume detail gains in significance when the narrator notes that Katzler usually wears a black and white ribbon instead of the cross. This ribbon recalls Dubslav's remarks about the flag on this estate: once again, the colors of Prussia, not Imperial Germany, are displayed; once again, national identity does not supersede regional affiliations. The nature of the gathering underscores this stubborn regionalism. At an assembly where community members are to deliver their "Stimmen" regarding the nomination for the national election, they also give their "voices" to a narrative of national history; metaphorically, they assemble to "vote" which memories take precedence. While the Franco-Prussian War directly led to Germany's unification, other patrons in the tavern challenge its status as the most significant battle. Constable Kluckhuhn, a veteran of the war with Denmark, wears a medal commemorating the battle at Düppel. As the narrator remarks, Kluckhuhn downplays the wars with Austria and France: "[er] trat, wenn sich die alten Kriegbundleute von 66 und 70 aufs hohe Pferd setzen wollten, für die von 64 ein. 'Ja, 64 Kinder, da fing es an. Und aller Anfang ist schwer […]; das andre kommt dann schon wie von selbst'" (154). The importance of the Prussian wars may not be questioned, but this tension between the veterans' accounts nevertheless hints at a historiographical conflict, a disagreement expressed in their discussions about each war's role in bringing about national unification. Similar to Katzler's ribbon, a costume detail alludes to this disagreement. At the meeting's conclusion, when Katzler and Kluckhuhn face each other and bow, their medals, the narrator observes, oscillate ["entgegenpendeln"] toward each other. As emblems of two historical events, the medals, like the two men who experienced and narrate these events, seem at odds with one another. As they

are staged in the village tavern, narratives about events that paved the way for unification fail to converge into one cohesive account. Instead, they demonstrate disunity similar to the political fragmentation the Prussian-led wars were to overcome.

Although the novel's taverns function as meeting points where collective memories are narrated, the text also problematizes communication in these spaces. Two tavern scenes in particular underscore how conversation falters. First, the tavern in Stechlin should allow the community to assemble and articulate their interests. However, the Conservatives choose Katzler as their chairman, who, the narrator points out, is "ein entschiedener Nichtredner" (155). Katzler himself alludes to the linguistic impotence of the community gathered in the tavern when he complains, "Wir haben […] niemand an diesem Tisch, der das Parlamentarische voll beherrscht" (155). Although the tavern should function as a public sphere where individuals congregate and voice, as a miniature parliament, their collective interests, the novel showcases a community struggling to consolidate itself. Conversation is largely absent in the very space where it is supposed to bind individuals into a collective. This inability to communicate is driven to the point of parody in a second tavern scene, when the Conservatives set up their election-day headquarters in the "Prinzregenten." They choose as their chairman the decrepit nobleman Herr von Alten-Friesack, whose lack of communicative talent means little to his fellow party members: "ob er nun sprechen könne oder nicht, das sei […] durchaus gleichgültig. Überhaupt, die ganze Geschichte mit dem 'Sprechen-Können' sei ein moderner Unsinn. Die einfache Tatsache, daß der Alte von der Alten Friesack dasäße, sei viel, viel wichtiger als eine Rede" (177). Instead of choosing a dynamic speaker who inspires enthusiasm for the national election, Alten-Friesack's colleagues elect a speaker who, as his name suggests, remains as silent as an

old sack.[137] Of course, the irony of this gathering is that on the day the Conservatives are to cast their "Stimmen," they choose to remain silent on the election as soon as their defeat is announced. "Siegen ist gut, aber zu Tische gehen ist besser" is their mantra as they concede their political loss, forget the election, and begin a banquet befitting a victorious party (176).

This gathering in the "Prinzregenten" is, however, not a completely silent affair. While the Conservatives largely forget the election's outcome and the surprise victory of the Social Democrats, they do not remain entirely voiceless. Far from a gathering where "Sprechen-Können" is completely dismissed, the banquet features three stories whose common theme hints at the community's understanding of German history at the century's end. The first story is embedded in the mill owner Gundermann's toast: he relates the anecdote of a tinsmith's unfaithful wife, who falls in love with his apprentice, poisons her husband, and is executed for the murder. Recounted by the aristocrat von Kraatz, the second tale revolves around the scandal of Lilie, a local girl who deceives her fiancé and absconds with her tutor to Great Britain. Finally, Thormeyer, the school rector, tells the fairy tale of a Siamese princess kidnapped by an evil prince and forced to become his concubine. Taken together, all three narratives recount a process of restoration: in the case of the tinsmith's wife, her husband's honor, Gundermann asserts, is restored with her execution; for Lilie, who has since returned from Britain, her misdeeds are to be forgiven and her engagement reinstated; and the Siamese princess's lost virginity is restored following a purifying ritual, a "Reinheitswiederherstellung," as Thormeyer describes it (182). On one level, the patrons of the "Prinzregenten" exchange these stories for entertainment. Having failed to assert their political voices in the national parliament, they now assert their voices as storytellers in a narrative parliament. But on another level, the theme of

[137] On the ironic staging of the banquet following election, see also Goetschel (118)

restoration so pronounced in their stories can also be transposed to the national level; it can be seen as a clue to their understanding of a collective history. What the three stories allude to is the Conservatives' desire to turn back the clock and return to a supposedly purer past, a time when their voices, and not those of the Progressives or Social Democrats, set the tone for Germany's historical development.[138]

With their emphasis on the parliamentary election, the tavern scenes in *Der Stechlin* raise the question of whose voice contributes not only to national politics but also to national history.[139] Who, in other words, assembles in the textual, parliamentary space of the novel and narrates Germany's collective past? If the hybrid spaces of the taverns are taken as representative, the gathering of voices is fairly exclusive. With few exceptions, the congregation at the "Prinzregenten" consists primarily of local noblemen who mingle with figures like the recently ennobled parvenu Gundermann, the rector Thormeyer, and the recent Dutch immigrant van der Peerenboom. The tavern in Stechlin is more inclusive: among the constituents gathered to proclaim Dubslav's candidacy are well-to-do farmers, government officials, professionals, and businessmen. Contrast these gatherings with the assembly on the public square in front of the "Prinzregenten," where hundreds of Progressives and Social Democrats are gathered. Perhaps it is telling that a parliament of voices dominated by the aristocracy is housed inside the tavern, while the middle and working classes remain outside of it. The novel, this division suggests, is prepared to exclude certain voices from its narrative program. In the end, despite the numerous scenes in *Der Stechlin* where different social classes converge, the novel is less inclusive than it

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[138] See also Solheim for a reading of the stories' historical implications.

[139] For deliberations on the novel's representation of class and issues of narrative exclusion, see, for example, Bowman (882; 885), Cartland (27), Sagarra (127), and Warning (303).

initially appears. In other words, who narrates and who merely gets narrated remains a pivotal distinction. Although the narrator goes to great lengths to mention all the different kinds of patrons in the tavern in Stechlin, they are ultimately rendered silent, never granted the privilege of direct speech. This silencing of the middle and working classes is even more pronounced during the scenes in the "Prinzregenten," where a cadre of noble men dominate the conversation. While this relatively small group of aristocrats (and their few bourgeois companions) is accorded considerable narrative space as they chat, give toasts, and tell stories, the Progressives and Social Democrats in front of the tavern speak not a single word. Ultimately, in these hybrid spaces, where divergent perspectives should be heard, we are left with a largely exclusive "parliament" of narrative voices that assert an authoritative take on national history and community.

Conclusion

Taken together, *Der Schimmelreiter* and *Der Stechlin* illustrate the problem of narrating the nation in the closing decades of the nineteenth century. In their preoccupation with the administration of narrative and the spaces where narrative voices assemble, they exemplify how literature imagined a Germany in many ways still internally divided decades after unification. The hybrid, hospitable spaces in the novella and the novel call to mind Homi K. Bhabha's characterization of the nation as incomplete narrative. Indeed, sites like the taverns in both texts constitute what Bhabha describes as "*in-between* spaces through which the meanings of cultural and political authority are negotiated" (4). This negotiation, according to Bhabha, provokes a sense of tension, intimacy, and revelation by exposing the process through which the nation is narrated. In this sense, the nation is articulated as a fragile space, "where meanings may be partial […]; and history may be half-made because it is in the process of being made; and the image of cultural authority may be ambivalent because it is caught, uncertainly, in the act of

'composing'" (3). Bhabha's rhetoric of exposure is apt for describing how *Der Schimmelreiter* and *Der Stechlin* imagine the nation as a narrative under construction. The texts afford a glimpse behind the curtain, so to speak, so that readers witness the act of composing the "text" that is a unified Germany. In the case of Storm's novella and Fontane's novel, however, it is no mere act of composure; more precisely, both texts expose how narratives of collective identity are administrated and assembled. To expand upon Bhabha's imagery, they not only show the invention of national narratives, but also the complicated process of sharing, telling, and retelling such stories. In short, the literary works draw attention to the reception of national narratives and the consequences that reception has on consolidating Germany.

While both *Der Schimmelreiter* and *Der Stechlin* expose the act of administrating and assembling national narratives, they arrive at different conclusions about literature's capacity to gather a German national community. In its depiction of the schoolmaster's narrative authority, the tavern as a space of collective memory, and the guest's publication of a regional tale in the national press, Storm's novella figures the administration of narrative in largely positive terms. It traces how the host-narrator dispenses a regional story to his guest-narratee, and how that guest then retransmits the story to a national audience of readers. This may not be a simple path of transmission, but *Der Schimmelreiter* nonetheless makes it clear how regional identity can be nationalized in the process. *Der Stechlin* evinces a different understanding of literature's role in gathering a national community. Like Storm's novella, Fontane's novel also affords a glimpse into the process of narrating the nation, but it exposes that process as more ambivalent, unfinished, and even chaotic. Through its portrayal of Dubslav's narrative hospitality, *Der Stechlin* uncovers how local stories—most of which center on Prussian history—that have been transformed into national founding narratives are recast as regional lore. The flag on his estate

and Lake Stechlin prove to be key images in this regard. By refusing to weave together stories into a national narrative reflective of Imperial Germany—Dubslav insists on keeping his "text" Prussian—he returns stories appropriated by nationalists to the regional level. Symbolizing the novel's understanding of narrating collective memory, Lake Stechlin recalls the novel itself. By no means a coherent entity, the lake, like the novel, is a chaotic reservoir of memories that does not privilege the nation bur rather blends together individual, regional, national, and international narrative voices. Both the text and the body of water whose name it shares insist as much on cacophony as polyphony. An examination of hybrid, hospitable spaces in the novel underscores this notion of assembling disparate narrative voices. Tavern scenes in *Der Stechlin* showcase competing accounts of collective memory, whereby a parliament of voices emerges that is not organized along national lines. Through its depiction of such parliamentary spaces, Fontane's novel critiques the construction of a coherent narrative of the German nation at the century's end. It uncovers the problems of administering and assembling a shared national narrative at this time and thus performs its own act of narrative hospitality. In other words, *Der Stechlin* invites its readers to enter into intimate, half-hidden spaces where a common German history is still in the process of being made. This invitation to look behind the façade of nationalist discourse amounts to a critical plea—that is, a hospitable offer to revisit the past.

Conclusion

Reimagining the Imagined Community: Literature as Hospitality

Thirty years after its publication, Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* remains a valuable interpretive tool because it recognizes literature's role in nation-building. Novels, to restate Anderson's argument, encouraged readers to imagine themselves as members of the same nation by fostering a sense of communion among political subjects who would otherwise never meet. Novels, he emphasizes, allowed strangers to commune by creating a shared temporal experience. Despite the value of this insight, Anderson's imagination of literature's capacity to foster community is, well, rather unimaginative. The first novel he cites, José Rizal's *Noli Me Tangere*, demonstrates the limitations of his argument because the text's imagery is far more interesting for thinking about literary nation-building than the idea of a shared temporal experience among readers. Beginning with the image a dinner party on the brink of being crashed by undesirable guests, this text portrays anything but a simple communion of intimates; on the contrary, it stages an anxious performance of belonging, whereby a group of strangers must create the appearance of enduring bonds between themselves and their host. Taking nineteenth-century German literature as its case study, this dissertation has argued that images of hospitality like the one in Rizal's novel can be read as ciphers for the imagined community. The preceding chapters have uncovered themes, metaphors, and structures of hospitality that allow for a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between imaginative literature and nationhood. Closely reading images of hospitality offers a diverse set of national conceptions based on how the texts in question stage the gathering of host and guest. Examining the hospitable gathering as a metaphor for the nation calls for reimagining the imagined community as a space where definitions of political membership require constant regenotiation.

What kinds of community, then, does nineteenth-century German literature imagine? And how do changing paradigms of hospitality shape the imagination of the nation? Chapter one argued that narrative entertainment in Goethe's *Unterhaltungen deutscher Ausgewanderten* and E.T.A. Hoffmann's "Der unheimliche Gast" fosters communal bonds strained by the French invasion and the Napoleonic Wars. Both texts imagine the fatherland in familial terms—as a circle of insiders traumatized by a foreign threat—but neither propagates a nationalist vision of Germany. The narrative frame and the community that inhabits it remain porous in both texts, with foreign elements mixing with native ones on both the textual and familial levels. In chapter two, literal and figurative taste emerged as a means to discriminate between members and non-members in the German Table Society, Brentano's *Die mehreren Wehmüller*, and Arnim's *Isabella von Ägypten*. In their imagination of the nation as exclusive club gathered at table, these texts envision Germany in ethnic and religious terms. However, while Brentano's and Arnim's literary texts insist on the same exclusions as their ideological table speeches, the slippery metaphors of taste in the novellas problematize a national communion in which only German men of Christian blood can partake. Chapter three asserted that hospitality rituals in Heine's *Deutschland: Ein Wintermärchen* and Stifter's "Der Kuß von Sentze" regulate membership in an expanding national homeland during the century's middle decades. These two texts go beyond the kind of blood ties emphasized by Brentano and Arnim, arguing instead for a model based on the reintegration of estranged family members and the adoption of distant relatives. Stifter's novella, in this regard, is more utopian about the possibility of including disparate members than Heine's poem. Chapter four investigated the figure of the hostess in François's "Der Posten der Frau" and Marlitt's *Im Hause des Kommerzienrates* to interrogate women's civic participation in the years running up to and following national unification. Like the texts in chapters one and

three, "Posten" and *Im Hause* imagine Germany as a family, but they question definitions of belonging based purely on purely patrilineal descent. While it would be inaccurate to claim these texts present a viable alternative, they nonetheless imagine the possibility of German women assuming a more equitable political status. In chapter five, a focus on the host's administration of regional and national narratives in Storm's *Der Schimmelreiter* and Fontane's *Der Stechlin* showed how memories are assembled into a collective history at the close of the nineteenth century. Here the dominant category of communal identity is historical. Storm's novella envisions a national history of synthesized regional legends, while Fontane's novel advocates a parliament of regional narratives under aristocratic guidance.

Taken together, these texts shed light on German literature's political function in the century in the course of which nationality superseded other forms of belonging. They render this function more complicated than Anderson suggests, especially considering the different ways literary texts in this period—to return to the metaphor in my title—accommodate the nation. Like the hosts they depict, the literary texts provide a space for a national readership to gather; and like the food, drink, and entertainment the host provides, the texts often function as a form of communion between members who might otherwise remain strangers. In this sense, nineteenth-century German literature accommodates the idea of the nation by welcoming readers to imagine themselves as a unified national collective of intimates. But the texts also accommodate the nation in another sense of the word by including multiple visions of belonging. Accommodation, then, means to gather competing definitions of community. Nationality, in other words, does not replace but rather jostles next to other categories of identity, be they familial, communal, regional, ethnic, or religious.

On a more general level, literary texts offer a unique way of accommodating the nation and perform as a result various acts of hospitality. When they were written, the German works in question were embedded in discourses of nationhood. However, as much as they are products of these discourses, they also helped to produce them. Significantly, these texts can imagine a community by experimenting with different models of belonging; they do not simply reflect nineteenth-century history nor simply restage it in narrative form. Put differently, they create their own knowledge, furnish their own ideas of what it means to belong to a nation and often expose in the process the dilemmas of determining membership in such a community. Reflecting the hospitality relationship, with its rules of inclusion and exclusion, these texts also dictate discursive regulations: they determine who is allowed to belong to the community, who is allowed to narrate it, to be part of its performance. In this sense, literary texts in general are inherently hospitable in that they accommodate a diverse collection of voices and meanings. Finally, imaginative literature reflects on its own participation in the project of gathering political communities like the nation. Such texts are hospitable because they bring together the family and the polis, the regional and the nation, the included and the excluded in one place: the text itself. Like a good host, literature furnishes a space were discussions between different parties unfold, and in this way provide a forum where no single national community but rather myriad national communities are imagined. The result is not one image of Germany but a complex gathering of images that change over time, be it in the course of the nineteenth century, when national citizenship took hold, or in a globalized age, when the link between nationality and citizenship grows increasingly contested.

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