

Chapter 1

Introduction: Die Schlafwandler as an Apocalyptic Text

Hermann Broch's trilogy, 1931-32 trilogy, *Die Schlafwandler* [*The Sleepwalkers*] has often been described as an apocalyptic text.¹ This characterization is primarily used to convey the trilogy's gloomy portrayal of German history from the late 19th century until the end of the First World War as an increasingly materialist society whose status quo is preserved by pervasive apolitical and amoral apathy.² The use of the term "apocalyptic" seems to suggest that Broch holds a deterministic vision of Germany's future. With the exception of Karl Heinz Osterle's article of the early 1970s, no one has extensively examined what makes Broch's trilogy apocalyptic. In fact, those who describe *Die Schlafwandler* as apocalyptic tend to focus on the catastrophic outcomes of apocalypse, neglecting the full scope of both the apocalyptic genre and the trilogy. Neither the

¹ Hermann Broch, "Pamphlet gegen die Hochschätzung des Menschen (ca. 1932)," in *Philosophische Schriften I. Kritik*, ed. Paul Michael Lützeler (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1977); Hermann Broch, "Pamphlet gegen die Hochschätzung des Menschen (ca. 1932)," in *Kommentierte Werkausgabe. Philosophische Schriften I. Kritik*, ed. Paul Michael Lützeler (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1977); Hermann Broch, *Die Schlafwandler: Eine Romantrilogie. Kommentierte Werkausgabe*, ed. Paul Michael Lützeler, vol. 1 (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1978). From here on, citations from the trilogy are indicated under "D.S." In referring to the individual part of the trilogy, I use the terms "Volume" and Roman numerals, as well as the following descriptive terms: "The Pasenow story" (Volume I), "The Esch story" (Volume II), and "The Huguenau story" (Volume III).

² Lützeler even refers to the tone of cultural pessimism in the recent essay, "Einleitung: Brochs Theogonie der Ethik," in *Hermann Broch: Religion, Mythos, Utopie -- zur ethischen Perspektive seines Werks*, ed. Paul Michael Lützeler and Christine Maillard (Strasbourg: Recherches Germaniques, Université Marc Bloch, 2008). Cf. Steven Aschheim, *Culture and Catastrophe: German and Jewish Confrontations with National Socialism and Other Crises* (London: McMillan, 1996); Austin Harrington, "Hermann Broch as a Reader of Max Weber: Protestantism, Rationalization and the 'Disintegration of Values'," *History of the Human Sciences* 19, no. 4 (2006): 7, 10, 11; Paul Michael Lützeler, "Einleitung: Brochs Theogonie der Ethik," in *Hermann Broch: Religion, Mythos, Utopie -- zur ethischen Perspektive seines Werks*, ed. Paul Michael Lützeler and Christine Maillard (Strasbourg: Recherches Germaniques, Université Marc Bloch, 2008); Heinz D. Osterle, "Hermann Broch, Die Schlafwandler: Revolution and Apocalypse," *PMLA: Publications of the Modern Language Association of America* 86, no. 5 (1971): 951-954.

apocalyptic genre nor the trilogy is solely about catastrophe, as they are in fact also about the promise of redemption and utopia. After all, despite prophetic admonition, *Die Schlafwandler* ends with the comforting words of Apostelgeschichte 16:28 (Elberfelder Bibel): “Tu dir kein Leid! denn wir sind alle noch hier!”³ While acknowledging the existence of the silver lining in Broch’s trilogy, scholars have not given serious attention to the element of hope in the trilogy.⁴ By analyzing how religious tropes and apocalyptic rhetoric are used as poetic devices in the trilogy, I seek to examine how Broch contours the delicate yet persistent note of hope in the redemption of the human soul.

Theories of apocalyptic texts point out that apocalypse denote “revelation,” which means that apocalyptic texts are narratives of revelation.⁵ According to the standard definition, apocalyptic texts are highly symbolic texts that are written by an oppressed people to encourage others among them to persevere through a seemingly endless period of hardship.⁶ Disguising social and political criticism with figurative language, authors of apocalyptic texts claim that their message carries a divine vision of the ultimate punishment of the oppressors, who are deemed evil, and promises rehabilitation in a new utopian kingdom for the persecuted, who are deemed righteous. By examining what it means to call the trilogy apocalyptic, my study of Broch’s first three novels contributes to

³ The Book of Acts 16:28 (New International Version): “Don’t harm yourself! We are all here!”

⁴ Cf. Monika Ritzer, *Hermann Broch und die Kulturkrise des frühen 20. Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart: Metzler Verlag, 1988); Ernestine Schlant, *Hermann Broch* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1978, 1986), 66-67.

⁵ Jürgen Brokoff, *Die Apokalypse in der Weimarer Republik* (München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2001); Frank Kermode, *The Sense of an Ending: Studies in the Theory of Fiction* (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2000; reprint, With a new epilogue). Klaus Vondung, *Die Apokalypse in Deutschland* (München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1988).

⁶ For an extensive theological explication of the Biblical genre of apocalypse, see the exemplary study by Jürgen Roloff, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes*, 2nd edition ed., Zürcher Bibelkommentare, vol. 18 (Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 1987).

our understanding of Broch's poetics, which centers on thematic and structural tensions, commonly found in modernist literary works.⁷

My dissertation argues that the Biblical apocalyptic text of The Book of Revelation serves as the central subtext for the trilogy's structure and content. By no means do I intend to say, however, that Broch's novel is a religious text, but rather that Broch's trilogy is a modernist secular novel that uses religious rhetoric to criticize the phenomena of modernity, including the effects of secularization in the early 20th century. The treatment of the trilogy as a text of worldly revelation, rather than an eschatological text about the end of the Wilhelmine era as the end of humanity, helps improve our understanding of Broch's novels as a kind of *Erkenntnisweg*, a path of comprehension, during a specific critical period in German history. This line of inquiry contributes to a nuanced view of the trilogy's unresolved tensions, while allowing readers to detect the importance of (the idea of) hope in *Die Schlafwandler*, which is an understudied aspect in the body of literature on the trilogy.

In depicting the Wilhelmine era as an apocalyptic time, *Die Schlafwandler* works with the anticipation of catastrophe and of renewal, thus conveying both admonition and desire for an alternative. First, Broch expresses a harsh criticism of the imperial period as an unjust, amoral, and oppressive epoch. Over the course of the trilogy, the sense that Judgment Day is approaching intensifies. The expected event, however, never happens;

⁷ For comparisons of Broch to other modernists, see the following studies as examples: Aschheim; Dagmar Barnouw, *Weimar Intellectuals and the Threat of Modernity* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988); Hermann Broch, "James Joyce und die Gegenwart. Rede zu Joyce's 50. Geburtstag", Herbert Reichner Verlag; S. D. Dowden, *Sympathy for the Abyss: A Study in the Novel of German Modernism: Kafka, Broch, Musil, and Thomas Mann Studien zur Deutschen Literatur* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1986); Manfred Durzak, "Hermann Broch und Alfred Döblin: Begegnung und Kontroverse oder der deutsche Roman am Scheideweg," in *Hermann Broch: Das dichterische Werk. Neue Interpretationen*, ed. Michael Kessler and Paul Michael Lützel (Tübingen: Stauffenburg, 1987); Endre Kiss, "'Dichter werben für Dichter' (Hermann Broch und Elias Canetti)," *TRANS. Internet-Zeitschrift für Kulturwissenschaften*. No. 7(2005). http://www.inst.at/trans/7Nr/kiss_canetti7.htm (accessed September 2005).

the period of waiting continues indefinitely. In the trilogy, everyone is haunted from 1888 to 1918 and beyond by a longing for something that no one can define. The first volume of the trilogy, *Pasenow oder die Romantik – 1888*, emphasizes the suffocating Protestant moral sensibilities through which the protagonist, Joachim von Pasenow, a Junker and officer of the imperial Prussian military, filters his social reality.⁸ The second volume, *Esch oder die Anarchie – 1903*, is characterized by the accountant August Esch’s search for redemption through his relations with women and his fantasies of self-sacrifice. Esch subscribes to an eschatological-apocalyptic fantasy of the world’s cleansing which is tied to a vulgarized version of Pasenow’s moral(istic) sensibilities. Toward the end of the second novel, the narrator lends words to Esch’s instinctual eschatological disposition: “[U]nabänderlich ist das Irdische, mag es sich auch scheinbar verändern, und würde selbst die ganze Welt aufs neue geboren, sie würde trotz des Erlösers Tod den Stand der Unschuld im Irdischen nicht erlangen, nicht ehe das Ende der Zeit erreicht ist” (*D.S.* 379). The clerk’s experiences in Cologne and Mannheim color his view of the empire’s heydays and offer a glimpse into petit bourgeois life in an industrialized society.

The third volume, *Huguenau oder die Sachlichkeit – 1918*, takes place during the last year of the First World War in the small Southern German town of Kurtrier. It foregrounds a figure who straddles several boundaries: Wilhelm Huguenau is a talented businessman and a deserter. Originally from Alsace, Huguenau serves in the German army during the war, and traverses national and social frontiers fluidly, due to his fluency in both French and German. He is a pragmatic man of no particular principle, and even

⁸ In a chance encounter with an old friend from the military academy, Pasenow makes the following comparison, pitying his interlocutor for the lack of a protective, aesthetically appealing uniform: “wieder schämte er sich, daß er, schön gekleidet in seiner Uniform, mit einem sprach, der sozusagen nackt in Zivil vor ihm stehen mußte, und am liebsten wäre er dem Antrag, gemeinsam zu speisen, ausgewichen” (*D.S.* 31).

converts from Catholicism to Protestantism so that he can marry into a wealthy family in Nassau (located in a Protestant region). The narrator remarks ironically that financial considerations move the “free spirit” (“Freigeist”) to convert: “Und weil die Braut und ihre Familie dumm genug waren, Wert darauf zu legen, so war er ihnen zuliebe eben dem evangelischen Glauben beigetreten” (*D.S.* 697). His lack of confessional loyalty shows those around him how little religious or political ideologies mean to him: “so verwies der Freigeist Huguenau auf die Bedeutungslosigkeit derartiger Formalitäten, und gleichsam zur Bekräftigung solcher Ansicht gab er trotz evangelischer Glaubenszugehörigkeit seine Stimme der katholischen Partei, als dieselbe anno 1926 ein Wahlbündnis mit den Kommunisten einging” (*D.S.* 697). Through him, the third volume stages the birth of a calculating, opportunistic social type at the end of the First World War and the Weimar Republic’s beginnings.

In the third volume, the protagonists of the previous volumes reappear: an aged Joachim von Pasenow (Major Pasenow, decorated with the Iron Cross), and August Esch (who has retired from a successful career as an accountant and become the editor of the local newspaper). Toward the end of the trilogy, Huguenau triggers Pasenow’s nervous breakdown and literally stabs Esch in the back, killing him in cold blood. *Huguenau oder die Sachlichkeit – 1918* is told through multiple points of view and features different narratives. Two main story lines take place in two geographically opposed places: one unfolds in Baden’s provincial Kurtrier (hereafter “the Huguenau story”) and a side story line entitled “The Story of a Salvation Army Girl in Berlin” (hereafter “the Berlin story”) is set in the German Empire’s capital. In addition, there are two types of narrators: a third person narrator for the Huguenau story and a first person narrator, Dr. Bertrand Müller,

for the Berlin story. Finally, the third volume also contains the aforementioned series of philosophical essays, “Zerfall der Werte.” The lives, attitudes, and relationships between the characters are of greater social significance because the characters are social types for three specific historical periods in German history.

Throughout the three volumes, the majority of the characters, who are emotionally detached from each other, passively bear their existence side by side. They all feel that values – such as filial obedience, patriotism, and loyalty to family and friends – are disintegrating and that the world is becoming meaningless with such a weakened moral backbone.⁹ Feeling locked into emptiness, they all long for a powerful outsider to bridge the gaps between them and their neighbors, to fill them spiritually, and to redeem the world by endowing it with new meaning.¹⁰ While the medium of fulfillment can take different forms and shapes, the characters predominantly project the image of a spiritual medium and/or supernatural redeemer onto another person. This search for a decisive

⁹ Aesthetic and ethical values take center stage in Broch’s trilogy. As Richard Eldridge points out, definitions of values are varied and numerous: There is no settled methodology for constructing a theory of value. How to think about values at all is one of the standing topics of both aesthetics and ethics. [...] Whether [a theory of value] is neo-Aristotelian, neo-Humean, neo-Kantian, neo-Hegelian, or neo-Nietzsche in sensibility, the effort will be simultaneously to sustain particular judgements of value persuasively and to articulate a general way of looking at values, where these joint efforts will be part of the ongoing self-conscious construction of a point of view (Richard Eldridge, “Aesthetics and Ethics,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Aesthetics*, ed. Jerold Levinson [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003, 731]).

The subject of values is a common thread that runs through Broch’s eclectic collection of works. In his philosophical and culturally critical essays, poems, short stories, and novels, Broch reflects on values in various ways. These approaches converge on the then common attempt to come to terms with the idea that multiple, incompatible systems of social values exist, while also defining a universal value system. Broch was concerned with the issue of value relativism in particular, and followed contemporary discussions on values by notable figures such as Max Weber and Max Scheler closely. For discussion of the influence of the Weberian systems of values on Broch’s theory of values, see Harrington; Paul Michael Lützeler, *Die Entropie des Menschen: Studien zum Werk Hermann Brochs* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2000); Ritzer. It is not for nothing that the trilogy’s subtitle is “Zerfall der Werte” (“Disintegration of Values”), which is also the title of a series of philosophical essays in *Die Schlafwandler*’s concluding volume.

¹⁰ I cannot accept Dagmar Barnouw’s suggestion in her summary of the novel that the characters somehow find redemption. The degree to which they feel lost may shift from time to time, but their basic condition remains the same. Barnouw, 234.

solution is tied to an either/or thinking and is reminiscent of an anticipation of the Final Days. *Die Schlafwandler*'s third person narrative questions this kind of thinking in absolute terms by emphasizing how subjective such views of characters are.

Apocalyptic Signs in Language and Interactions

On the level of language, Broch uses Biblical apocalyptic language and rhetoric of The Book of Revelation. He uses tropes of natural catastrophes, such as the blackened sun, the Army of the Anti-Christ, the Anti-Christ, prophetic message, and resurrection. Broch depicts the disintegration of the familiar world through the breakdown of communication and through intensified occurrence of disturbances in interpersonal relations that even peak in thinly disguised theft and murder. Both the breakdown of communication and eruption of violence indicate the loss of values, which in turn are signaled by resignation and people's indifference toward each other. As the next chapters demonstrate, the apocalyptic catastrophe of the novel is in the resignation and apathy of people to each other, which leads to the much discussed emptying of values. Broch's text is apocalyptic in the sense that it is a warning and revelation of the things that could go wrong, yet it reminds readers that disintegration is not inevitable. By using apocalyptic rhetoric, Broch actually problematizes a one-sided interpretation of his contemporary period as a catastrophic age.

The same topics of ethical and aesthetic values that are found in "Zerfall der Werte" appear in the rest of the trilogy. I argue that negotiations of values take place during the apocalyptic period of waiting for catastrophe and redemption, and that these negotiations are portrayed through the presentation of the characters' interactions. On the individual level, the characters' fraught relations model possible worst-case scenarios of

feared catastrophes. They signal conflicts on the greater social level, such as divisions between classes or the war between nations, which are merely theorized in the philosophical essays in *Die Schlafwandler*.

The secondary literature on Broch's novels often treats the philosophical essays as a guide to understanding the author's position on values. Moreover, because of the trilogy's large scope and complex narrative, critics tend to view "Zerfall der Werte" as a key to decoding the entire trilogy.¹¹ These essays on German history and culture are filled with an undercurrent of bitter condemnation of the materialist culture that had manifested itself in the industrialization of the twentieth century and the First World War, both of which are shown as symptoms of modernity. Disillusionment with German politics and culture make up a large portion of the essay, with such jeremiad laments as:

Eine Zeit, feige und wehleidiger denn jede vorhergegangene, ersäuft in Blut und Giftgasen, Völker von Bankbeamten und Profiteuren werfen sich in Stacheldrähte, eine wohlorganisierte Humanität verhindert nichts, sondern organisiert sich als Rotes Kreuz zur Herstellung von Prothesen; [...] Aufgelöst jedwede Form [...] tastet der Mensch, einem irren Kinde gleich, am Faden irgendeiner kleinen kurzatmigen Logik durch eine Traumlandschaft, die er Wirklichkeit nennt und die ihm doch nur Alpruck ist (*D.S.* 418-419).

In light of the bleak description of the early twentieth century in this passage, it is not surprising that readers' attention is drawn to Broch's disappointment with the

¹¹ See the following works, among others, in which the essay is foregrounded in Broch's oeuvre: Manfred Durzak, *Hermann Broch: Dichter und seine Zeit* (Stuttgart, Berlin, Köln, Mainz: 1968); Harrington; E. W. Herd, "Essay and Novel: Hermann Broch's *Die Schlafwandler*," *Jahrbuch für Internationale Germanistik* 8, no. 1 (1976); Michael Kessler, "Hermann Broch: Menschenrecht, Demokratie und Toleranz," in *Hermann Broch: Politik, Menschenrechte -- und Literatur?*, ed. Thomas Eicher, Paul Michael Lützel, and Hartmut Steinecke (Oberhausen: Athena Verlag, 2005); Ritzer; Mark W. Roche, "National Socialism and the Disintegration of Values: Reflections on Nietzsche, Rosenberg, and Broch," *Journal of Value Inquiry* 26, no. (1992); Judith Ryan, *The Vanishing Subject: Early Psychology and Literary Modernism* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1991); Ernestine Schlant, *Die Philosophie Hermann Brochs* (Bern and München: Francke Verlag, 1971); Theodore Ziolkowski, *Hermann Broch*, ed. William York Tindall, *Columbia Essays On Modern Writers*, vol. 3 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964).

Kulturnation, whose cultural foundation seems to be depicted as being entirely hollow and without a future.

By mapping the Biblical apocalypse onto the trilogy, I show that Broch's novels reveal more facets of the disintegration of values than are found in the theoretical portion. In my work, I demonstrate how disintegration is not only feared and critiqued but also longed for. Furthermore, the disintegration is not necessarily a phenomenon that can only be met with resignation and lamentation, or with religiously fanatic anticipation of a Second Coming or the arrival of the Messiah. In fact, it can also be foreseen and received with sober reflection on how to come up with a set of new universal ethical values. The trilogy contains no solution or resolution for the tension between despair and hope, nor does *Die Schlafwandler* end with a nihilistic position. The three novels are texts of revelation, to reiterate my initial premise, and in a Derridian sense, hope lies in the unfinished poetic gestures that constantly invite the readers' interpretation.¹² Openness, not finality, is the guiding poetic principle of *Die Schlafwandler*.

The Novel as Open Form

Broch regarded the novel as the literary medium that came closest to representing a "total picture" of his time.¹³ Dagmar Barnouw describes *Die Schlafwandler* as "a novel of ideas explicitly intended to address the totality of the conflicts and complexities of the modern world. [...] [*Die Schlafwandler*] touches on the most important clusters of sociopsychological and sociophilosophical questions confronting intellectuals between

¹² Cf. Jacques Derrida, "On a Newly Arisen Apocalyptic Tone in Philosophy," in *Raising the Tone of Philosophy : Late Essays by Immanuel Kant, Transformative Critique by Jacques Derrida*, ed. Peter Fenves (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993).

¹³ Ritzer. For example, see her section "Das Bild der Bilder" on Broch's establishment of epic totality in his novels, pp. 184-90. Cf. Lützel, *Die Entropie des Menschen*, 34, 35.

the two world wars.”¹⁴ The scope of Broch’s trilogy is sweeping, capturing topics such as a search for new spiritual orientation, political polarization and partisanship, and traversing class and national boundaries. Broch sets these frequently intersecting topics in the daily lives of average people from various sectors of society.¹⁵ Like his contemporary Spengler, Broch takes a historical approach in making sense of the times. Also like Spengler, Broch presents the war and the unstable political Weimar state after 1918 as the serious results of an empty system of values of the West that, according to Spengler, was in its declining years. Broch embeds these discussions on the state of the human spirit in the literary medium, in which he uses self-reflexive narration because matters of the spirit and its verbal medium are inextricably related for him. In his essay, “Geist und Zeitgeist,” published a year after the seizure of power by the National Socialists, Broch writes:

Des Menschen Verzweiflung ist groß, denn da er am Wort zweifelt, verzweifelt er auch am Geiste, am Geist seiner eigenen Menschlichkeit, am Geist, der durch die Sprache wirkt – nichts ist das Wort ohne den Geist, und kein anderes Lebensfeld als das Wort ist für den Geist

¹⁴ Barnouw, 234.

¹⁵ For example, the first and second protagonists are drawn to grass-roots Christian movements and religious icons, such as the Virgin Mary or the crucified Jesus Christ, foremost for their aesthetic rather than the symbolic value. The first protagonist’s father fears damnation on his spiritual quest, and the third protagonist is an atheist who changes his religious affiliation to help advance his career. The apolitical and political attitudes of characters are mentioned as part of the characters’ identity, such as the second protagonist’s socialist friend Martin Geyring. The narrator weaves the issues of social injustice into the plot and narrative structure: Geyring is arrested for his involvement in unionizing workers at the Hamburg docks. His arrest angers the second protagonist, the accountant August Esch, who wants to free Geyring by blackmailing the aristocratic industrialist. In the third volume, the Junker Joachim von Pasenow and petit bourgeois Esch become friends through their shared apocalyptic vision of their times. Esch feels that he may treat Pasenow almost as his equal because the war temporarily erases social divides between the classes. Meanwhile, the third protagonist, Wilhelm Huguenau, aligns himself with whoever helps him rise in social status and material wealth: as a deserter of the Prussian Army, he seeks refuge among the Belgians. Later he aligns himself with the conservative city council of Kurtrier, and after the war, he dons the political and religious garb of whoever is in power, becoming a Protestant, conservative republican in Berlin. The spiritual, political, and social questions intersect within the aesthetic framework of the novel.

vorhanden; wer den Geist tötet, tötet das Wort, und wer das Wort schändet, schändet den Geist, untrennbar sind sie einander verbunden.”¹⁶

In this passage, the author expresses the need and difficulties involved in finding a complete understanding of his contemporary era. For Broch, such comprehension was necessary to agree on a common vision and a common language to articulate the vision in order to shape a new, meaningful epoch. Broch addresses this topic by distilling what he considers to be a constant of the multi-faceted *Zeitgeist*: lack. Similar to Robert Musil in *Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften*, Broch focuses on what he calls a “Wert-Vakuum” (value vacuum) as a source of societal and cultural dissolution in his time.¹⁷ Writing novels during such a time is to articulate that which seems to be dissipating for Broch, while also determining whether the ideal wholeness that Broch laments in his essays – as the fictional author of “Zerfall der Werte” also does – ever really existed.¹⁸ What do value and the emptying of values mean for Broch’s aesthetic theory?

The author addresses this question in his essay “Das Weltbild des Romans” (1933), where the author equates representing values in a novel with aesthetic-ethical action:

¹⁶ Hermann Broch, “Geist und Zeitgeist: Ein Vortrag (1934),” in *Schriften zur Literatur 2. Theorie*, ed. Paul Michael Lützel (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1975), 177f.

¹⁷ Lützel, *Die Entropie des Menschen*, 38. Quoting from Broch’s lecture on the topic of “kitsch,” Lützel remarks: “Nach Broch’s Werttheorie hatte sich der ‘Zerfall der Werte’ im 19. Jahrhundert längst vollzogen und sich das eingestellt, was er nach dem Verlust des Zentralwertes das ‘Wert-Vakuum’ nannte.” Hermann Broch, “Einige Bemerkungen zum Problem des Kitsches: Ein Vortrag (1950),” in *Schriften zur Literatur 2. Theorie*, ed. Paul Michael Lützel (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1975). Cf. Hermann Broch, “Hofmannsthal und seine Zeit : Eine Studie,” in *Schriften zur Literatur 1.*, ed. Paul Michael Lützel (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1976). From here on, I refer to the concept in German and in English (value-vacuum).

¹⁸ For example, the series of essays begins with the questions, carried by much pathos: “Hat dieses verzerrte Leben noch Wirklichkeit? hat diese hypertrophische Wirklichkeit noch Leben? die pathetische Geste einer gigantischen Todesbereitschaft endet in einem Achselzucken, -- sie wissen nicht, warum sie sterben; wirklichkeitslos fallen sie ins Leere, dennoch umgeben und getötet von einer Wirklichkeit, die die ihre ist, da sie deren Kausalität begreifen” (*D.S.* 418).

Was bedeutet dies [i.e. ethischer Akt und ästhetisches Resultat]? Es bedeutet das eigentümliche Doppelgesicht des Begriffes ‘Wert’, bedeutet eine Doppelansicht, die oft und oft unbeachtet bleibt, obwohl erst von hier aus es verständlich wird, was ein Wertsystem eigentlich ist und was hinter so verschiedenen Weltbildern, wie etwa des Militärs und dem des Romans, als gemeinsame Struktur sich verbirgt; ein Wertsystem ist ein Gebilde unendlich vieler Einzelhandlungen, die – von den verschiedenen Angehörigen des Wertsystems ausgeführt – alle dem gleichen unendlichen fernen Wertziel zugewendet sind und von diesem Wertziel her ihre Wertung als ethisch oder unethisch empfangen.¹⁹

Broch states that value systems and the values they contain are dynamic and change constantly: “das System ist lebendige Fortentwicklung, es besteht aus Jetzt und aus Zukunft.”²⁰ Following one of his great literary role models, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Broch believes in the importance of the Faustian principle of constant striving for total insight, in the novel and in life, regardless of its realizability.²¹ I now turn to a discussion of the topic of crisis in order to address oppositional ways of perceiving dynamic changes as results of productive or destructive forces.

Apocalyptic Discourse as Crisis Discourse

In *Leben in der Krise*, Martin Lindner describes an attitude prevalent among intellectuals and artists from the 1890s until the 1950s towards discerning the unconscious and unsaid, and argues that this attitude inspired an engagement with the

¹⁹ Hermann Broch, “Das Weltbild des Romans (1933),” in *Schriften zur Literatur 2. Theorie*, ed. Paul Michael Lützeler, Kommentierte Werkausgabe (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1975), 90-91.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 91.

²¹ In his essay “Denkerische und dichterische Erkenntnis” (1933) Broch writes: “Man muß immer wieder auf Goethe zurückgreifen, nicht nur, weil in Goethes Person die wissenschaftlichen und künstlerischen Strebungen in einer seit der Renaissance nicht erhörten Weise vereinigt waren, sondern viel mehr noch, weil Goethes Idee der ‘Bildung’ schon vor hundert Jahren der Dichtung eine Rolle zuwies, die, bei aller Festhaltung an der Autonomie der Kunst, deren Durchtränkung mit wissenschaftlichen Geist bereits in sich schließt und fordert” in Hermann Broch, “Denkerische und dichterische Erkenntnis (1933),” in *Schriften zur Literatur 2. Theorie*, ed. Paul Michael Lützeler (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1975), 45f.

notion of crisis.²² Lindner illustrates his point by analyzing the influences of “Lebensideologie” (vitalist ideologies) on 1920s New Objectivist writers in Germany.²³ He argues that crisis functioned as a catalyst for finding new ways to express corresponding new life experiences. This development took place during a period when the idea of mediation between (inner) life and its forms of expression was gaining predominance among philosophers, intellectuals, and artists.²⁴ In “Wandel der Kunstformen” (1916), for instance, Georg Simmel examines the aesthetic trends of the time (especially naturalism), in which he detects a longing for immediate expression and communication of life in a particular historical period through art forms that match the life experiences of that period. While contemplating the function of literature, the authors of the 1920s and 1930s were revisiting early cultural crises of perception, which writers

²² Martin Lindner, *Leben in der Krise: Zeitromane der Neuen Sachlichkeit und die intellektuelle Mentalität der klassischen Moderne : mit einer exemplarischen Analyse des Romanwerks von Arnolt Bronnen, Ernst Glaeser, Ernst von Salomon und Ernst Erich Noth* (Stuttgart: Metzler Verlag, 1994), 48-49. Most of following references pertain to the Weimar period. However, the boundaries between Berlin and Vienna were porous and fluid in the early 20th- century, and Sprengel and Streim argue that the literary productions of the early 20th- century Berlin and Vienna were much more intertwined than commonly perceived. According to these scholars, the division between Vienna of impressionism and symbolism, and Berlin as the Americanized, modern metropolis was based on stereotypes, created and perpetuated by authors themselves, by critics, and the publishing industry. Peter Sprengel and Gregor Streim, *Berliner und Wiener Moderne: Vermittlungen und Abgrenzungen in Literatur, Theater, Publizistik* (Wien: Böhlau, 1998).

²³ I employ Richard McCormick’s translation of Lindner’s term “Lebensideologie,” which McCormick defines as related to, but broader than “Lebensphilosophie.” For Lindner, “Lebensideologie” means a web of ideas and beliefs whose shape was influenced by figures like Friedrich Nietzsche, Wilhelm Dilthey, and Georg Simmel. Richard W. McCormick, *Gender and Sexuality in Weimar Modernity : Film, Literature, and 'New Objectivity'* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 48-9.

²⁴ Georg Simmel, “Wandel der Kunstformen,” in Georg Simmel: Aufsätze und Abhandlungen 1909-1918. Band II, ed. Klaus Latzel (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2000). Although naturalist artists claim to represent life as it is, Simmel objects that naturalism is a form of expression, not life itself. He points to the aspect of mediation in art and asks how it is possible to find a formal expression that accurately reflects the condition of life at the time of the artistic creation. On the debate on the changing function of literature, see Anton Kaes, *Weimarer Republik. Manifeste und Dokumente zur deutschen Literatur 1918-1933* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1983), XXXVI f. Cf. Anton Kaes, Martin Jay, and Edward Dimendberg, eds., *The Weimar Republic Sourcebook*, Weimar and Now; 3 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994). See also Wolfgang Beutin et al. *Deutsche Literaturgeschichte von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart* (Weimar, Stuttgart: Metzler, 1994) especially pp. 344-384. For a general commentary, see Joachim Bark, Dietrich Steinbach, and Hildegard Wittenberg, eds., *Von der Weimarer Republik bis 1945* (Stuttgart: Ernst Klett Verlag, 1985).

expressed in discussions of the “language crisis” (*Sprachkrise*) of the turn of the century.²⁵ The responses of the interwar authors were concentrated around, and shaped by, the incomprehensible brutality of the First World War.²⁶ Several overwhelming factors (e.g. the unexpected material devastation of Germany from 1914-1918 and the consequent end of the German Empire) intensified the writers’ need to find ways of conceptually organizing their recent past and present in a politically rough period. The euphoria and hope after founding Germany’s first democratic republic in 1919 subsided in the early 1920s, as political parties that held conflicting visions frequently became embroiled in parliamentary deadlocks.²⁷ Paramilitary activities of both the left and right and their street fights in the early years of the Weimar Republic set the tone for the growing polarization in the government throughout the 1920s. The Communist uprising

²⁵ I use the term “language crisis” to refer to an epistemological crisis that is associated with the Viennese literary circle of the turn of the 20th-century. Stefan George and Hofmannsthal are emblematic figures of this topic. See Carsten Strathausen, “Of Circles and Riddles: Stefan George and the “Language Crisis” around 1900,” *The German Quarterly* 76, no. 4 (2003). In German literary studies, the term “Sprachkrise” is linked to Hofmannsthal’s “Ein Brief” (1902). In this fictitious letter, the protagonist voices skepticism toward poetic language because words twist meaning. Scholarship on Hofmannsthal treats the comedy *Der Schwierige* (1921) as another important example of the author’s reflections on the topic of crisis of language. Guidry argues that *Der Schwierige* addresses the social use of language. Glenn A. Guidry, “Hofmannsthal’s ‘Der Schwierige’: Language vs. Speech Acts,” *German Studies Review* 5, no. 3 (1982). For a comparison to another contemporary work, which deals with an epistemological crisis and addresses the decline of the Habsburg Empire, see also Margarete Johanna Landwehr, “Modernist Aesthetics in Joseph Roth’s ‘Radetzky Marsch’: The Crisis of Meaning and the Role of the Reader,” *The German Quarterly* 76, no. 4 (2003). She refers to Hofmannsthal’s *Der Schwierige* as an example of “language crisis” that comments that the comedy “evokes the meaning-less void left after the empire’s collapse.” (405) Cf. Ryan. Her study is exemplary in the sense that she ties the crisis of perception to the specific phenomenon of empiricism.

²⁶ See Peter Sloterdijk, “Weltanschauungsskizzen und Zeitdiagnostik,” in *Literatur der Weimarer Republik 1918-1933*, ed. Bernhard Weyergraf (München, Wien: Carl Hanser Verlag, 1995). Sloterdijk argues that the motivation to make sense of the then unprecedented violence of the First World War was common to the various diagnoses on the dynamically changing society and culture during the Weimar Republic was the motivation to make sense of the then unprecedented violence of the First World War. Cf. Lützel, “Einleitung: Broch’s Theogonie der Ethik.” Lützel comments on the influence of the war on Broch’s work: “Die Katastrophe des Krieges und die Krise der Religion wurden von Broch in einem ursächlichen Zusammenhang gesehen, und es war die Erfahrung des Krieges, die ihn dazu veranlasste, seine Wert- und Geschichtstheorie zu entwerfen, als deren Kernpunkt er das Verschwinden eines in der christlichen Religion gegründeten gesamt-kulturellen europäischen Zentralwertes betrachtete” (p.10).

²⁷ Dietrich Orlow, *A History of Modern Germany: 1871 to Present* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1999), 127-32.

of January 1919 and their violent defeat by the Free Corps (led by General von Lüttwitz) within a few days is emblematic of the belligerent events in the following months.²⁸

Intellectuals and writers on the right detected the dangers of anarchy and the seeming failure of the parliamentary system.²⁹ Those on the left were disappointed that political and economic powers remained in the hands of the same people who held control before the regime change.³⁰ Regardless of their political loyalties, both sides believed that an accord on social and cultural values had to be found to guarantee a materially secure future for Germany. In addition, intellectuals and artists of both the left and right sought to find such a system by correctly diagnosing the cause of an apparently chaotic transition period so that steps towards political stability could be taken— or at least so that what Spengler refers to as the “decline of the West” could be slowed down.³¹ *Die Schlafwandler* offers an exemplary literary perspective on these questions of despair and hope for Germany’s future. The three volumes present a particularly rich palate of intellectual strategies and literary tendencies, which rely on apocalyptic discourse to digest and to cope with the disintegration of the familiar world order.

²⁸ William Carr, *A History of Germany: 1815-1985*, Third ed. (New York: Edward Arnold, 1986), 247. A further example is the revolution of Communists and Independent Socialists in April 1919 in Bavaria, which came to an end at the end of the month after violent fighting with the Free Corps. The year 1920 saw the Kapp Putsch, a failed right wing military cooperation, which was followed by the organization of the Red Army in the Ruhr region. The Red Army was defeated by the state military and Free Corps units. More such clashes ensued, including conflicts between communist workers and the police in Mansfeld in 1921 (p. 247f). Cf. Orlow, 95ff., 115ff.

²⁹ For instance, Schmitt finds fault with the Weimar parliamentary system for its seemingly endless and unproductive talks. Carl Schmitt, *Politische Theologie: vier Kapitel zur Lehre von der Souveränität*, 6th edition ed. (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot GmH, 1993).

³⁰ For discussion of political position of artists on the left, see Joan Weinstein, *The End of Expressionism : Art and the November Revolution in Germany, 1918-1919* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1999).

³¹ Spengler’s influential *Der Untergang des Abendlands (The Decline of the West)* is the most prominent example of a pessimistic prognosis for the early 20th- century. See the classic Oswald Spengler, *The Decline of the West*, English abridged edition prepared by Arthur Helps from the translation of Charles Francis Atkinson ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).

Various literary works produced toward the end of the First World War or shortly thereafter, such as Kraus' *Die letzten Tage der Menschheit*, stress the aspect of social and political injustice. However, they ignore the idea of renewal, and self-destruction seems certain. Such gloomy illustrations of the war and post-war period with apocalyptic-catastrophic allusions overshadow the hopeful anticipation of a better future. In the end, one is left with a disbelief in human renewal and progress. At first glance, Broch's trilogy seems also to provide a predominantly negative portrayal of German society from the 1880s until 1918. But *Die Schlafwandler*'s emphasis on waiting for the "right time" of redemption and renewal – even by showing instances of characters' failed waiting – revives the hopeful aspect of the apocalyptic narrative. The trilogy presents Broch's recent past as an apocalypse (which is as a type of crisis) and in so doing, invites readers to reexamine their contemporary period by thinking through types of motivations for anticipating an epochal change.³²

Differentiating Crisis Discourses: Perceptive and Analytical Models

The apocalyptic discourse in Broch's novels is a part of the crisis discourses of the 1920s and 1930s. According to Reinhardt Koselleck, the term "crisis" signals the period before an either/or decision is made: in theological terms, it refers to a period before Judgment Day, before the divine judge separates people into the groups of condemned or saved.³³ Koselleck states that secularization, especially in political paradigm shifts from the 18th- century into the 20th- century, played an important role in

³² Douglas J. Cremer, "Protestant Theology in Early Weimar Germany: Barth, Tillich, and Bultmann," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 56, no. 2 (1995).

³³ See *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie* (1971), s.v. "Krise."; Reinhardt Koselleck, *Critique and Crisis : Enlightenment and the Pathogenesis of Modern Society* (Oxford, New York, and Hamburg: Berg, 1988).

using and defining the term “crisis” throughout this period. He also suggests that a sense of a general disorientation at such shifts can be culturally productive, underlining the positive potential of crisis. Additionally, Koselleck points to an aspect of crisis that can be generalized as a valuable theory of “crisis”:

It is in the nature of crisis that a decision is imperative, but that this decision has not yet been taken. And another aspect of crisis is that it remains open what outcome will result. The general uncertainty in a critical situation is, therefore, marked by the certainty that – indefinite when, nonetheless definitely, unsure how, yet surely – an end of the critical condition is on the horizon.³⁴

Koselleck observes a dialectical movement between profound indecision and the belief that the critical moment will end. In other words, crisis involves the acute anticipation of a solution whose arrival is impossible to predict.³⁵ Koselleck’s emphasis on anticipation rather than concrete resolution in his definition and the analogy to Judgment Day that he makes elsewhere³⁶ are noteworthy, as they support my characterization of war and post-WWI years as a time of apocalyptic waiting. The dramatic tension of an apocalyptic narrative mainly arises from the focus on the idea that the world as one knows it will soon end and be replaced by a utopian age. In the case of the Christian apocalyptic model of The Book of Revelation, for instance, the faithful community awaits the final battle between the forces of good and evil and the eventual arrival of Christ as the supreme Judge and Redeemer of humanity. The certainty to which Koselleck’s quote refers is the

³⁴ Koselleck, *Critique and Crisis*, 105. The topic of decision plays a role in the discussion on Schmitt and Tillich in my second chapter.

³⁵ A case in point is the debates on government bailouts of banks and the major automotive companies during our current economic crisis in the United States. Despite the widespread consensus that quick decisions are imperative, pundits disagree on the issue of how exactly the government should be involved in stabilizing the failed banks and automotive industries. See “Will the Geithner’s Plan Work?” Opinion section, *The New York Times*, March 23, 2009, <http://roomfordebate.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/03/24/will-the-geithner-plan-work/>, “Baptism by Fire: America’s treasury secretary is torn between politics and policy,” Apr 23, 2009, *The Economist*.

³⁶ See, s.v. “Krise.”

belief that all oppression and injustice will end and that the world will be renewed. It is, however, uncertain when exactly the moment of justice, redemption, and renewal will happen.

The understanding of crisis as a two-sided term is also found among Weimar theologians, such as Karl Barth, who uses the Greek word *krisis* as a starting point in describing the direction of modern theology.³⁷ While Barth used this term to develop his liberal theology, his etymological reading of crisis helps us understand the ambiguity of the term in the literature of the interwar period. *Krisis* has “the connotations of discord, trial, judgment, decision, and punishment” and conveys the sense of turning point rather than of an actual ending.³⁸ The word apocalyptic means “revelation”, implying that something new will be revealed—the Second Coming of Christ in the Christian context—and thus a state of utter annihilation that must purify the ground for the Messiah.³⁹ This discourse of crisis and apocalypse exhibits a tension between the irrational violent tendency to annihilate the old and the tendency to value and evaluate the function of reason.

Making Sense of the Present through Apocalyptic Discourse

As indicated above, I treat apocalyptic discourse as a type of crisis discourse. Like crisis, apocalypse has two sides: one is the annihilation of all that is deemed beyond repair and the other is the redemption of the faithful in a divine, utopian society. Apocalypse, i.e. revelation, refers to a symbolic text written for an oppressed people and intended to offer them hope and encouragement to persist despite suffering until they are

³⁷ Cremer: 294.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ See Roloff. See also Raymond Brown, “The Book of Revelation (Apocalypse),” in *An Introduction to the New Testament* (New York: Doubleday, 1997). Further discussion of apocalypse follows below.

liberated by a divine force. According to Jürgen Roloff's reading of the Christian Bible's Book of Revelation, the apocalypse is a genre of prophetic and wisdom literature that developed in the late Israelite period, around 150 B.C.E. until 100 C.E. Its purpose was to warn people about the world's sins and also to give the oppressed Israelites hope that their suffering would end, so that they may endure the hardship until their circumstances changed for the better. In that sense, the hard times are seen as a period of trial for the faithful.⁴⁰ An apocalyptic text is usually a prophetic narrative filled with symbols and visions that must be decoded. Thematically, the visions are about the course of history towards the end of time and about the future of humanity. The apocalypse's usual textual components include an angel who imparts the word of God by revealing visions of the sinful past, the terrible present, and the utopian future for the righteous to a chosen individual. This individual is the scribe, in the case of The Book of Revelation, who, as the medium of God's word, records the visions of the last days of the world that the angel shows him.⁴¹ The angel also interprets the symbolic text. The symbolic language describes a vision of the annihilation of the oppressors and the redemption of the oppressed in a utopian age. Historically, this codified language was supposed to protect both speaker and the oppressed from being discovered by the oppressor.⁴² For the modern era, The Book of Revelation serves as a source for the literary imageries of the religious and secular engagement with the apocalyptic genre.

⁴⁰ This idea of enduring periods of trial is important in the theological discussions of apocalyptic time, for example, when Schmitt describes the present time as a "Frist." Horst Bredekamp, "From Walter Benjamin to Carl Schmitt, via Thomas Hobbes," *Critical Inquiry* 25, no. 2 (1999): 252f. Kracauer also emphasizes the importance of endurance "ausharren" in his 1922 essay "Die Wartenden."

⁴¹ Roloff, 9-25.

⁴² E.g. the oppressive Roman Empire is represented as the whore of Babylon (Rev. 12:3) and as beasts (Rev. 9:17). See Roloff on the symbolic language in the Biblical apocalypse. *Ibid.*, 12, 13.

As mentioned above, my theoretical framework draws on the apocalyptic theories of Kermode, Vondung, and Brokoff. All of them have written on the apocalyptic text and their application to readings of secular texts at different points in time, but each of them emphasize different points. Kermode's *Sense of an Ending*, based on a 1967 lecture series on apocalyptic narratives as kinds of end-of-the-world narratives in Western literature, is a classic take on the work of Biblical rhetoric and tropes in secular literature. According to Kermode, the apocalypse is foremost a type of fiction that deals with the prospect of the world's end during trying material circumstances, such as political oppression or suffering due to catastrophe.⁴³ He argues that apocalyptic fiction serves to make sense of harsh conditions in one's world and to preserve an account of one's experiences for posterity. By telling these stories, people hope that their souls will continue to exist whenever their stories are remembered and told by those who come after them.⁴⁴ Kermode argues that the apocalyptic text reveals what he regards as the human need to understand one's meaning of life in relation to others and the world. He postulates that, at least in Western literature, people have long used historical markers to situate their own personal life stories within the greater framework of history. Kermode refers to "a need to speak humanly of a life's importance in relation to it [the world]—a need in the moment of existence to belong, to be related to a beginning and to an end."⁴⁵ Kermode's comments on the interpretive possibility of using the apocalyptic text are relevant in thinking about the role of the archetypes and narrative structures of the apocalypse as a driving force in literature and in shaping social consciousness in major historical

⁴³ Kermode, 5.

⁴⁴ Kermode's greater purpose is to develop a theory on the function and perception of fiction by looking closely at a specific genre of fiction that imagines the concrete end and a new beginning of the actual world. See the introduction in *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 3f.

paradigm changes. He writes that there is a set of expectations that we have about apocalypse, i.e. that the figurative predictions could take literal form (e.g. including the sun turning bloody and seeing the Four Horsemen). This kind of expectation leads to problems of interpretation when one tries to map these predictions onto historical reality (e.g. what the Seven Seals may symbolize).⁴⁶

The belief in apocalyptic predictions and the search for their realization derives from a sense that the decadent present world is obviously coming to an end. But since the final end does not actually happen, the historical timeline is constantly revised, for, as he argues:

time discredits [the apocalypse]....Apocalypse can be disconfirmed without being discredited. This is part of its extraordinary resilience. It can also absorb changing interests [...] It allows itself to be diffused, blended with other varieties of fiction—tragedy, for example, myths of Empire and of Decadence—and yet it can survive in very naïve forms...[A] mistaken prediction can be attributed to an error of calculation, either in arithmetic or allegory...[Y]ou need not be too depressed if your choice [of Antichrist] should die too early, since at this level of historical abstraction you can always believe he will return at a convenient season [...]"⁴⁷

In Kermode's view, apocalyptic prophecies are powerful and lasting. Projected into the distant future through speaking or writing, the apocalyptic events have not been proven or disproven.⁴⁸ Furthermore, since the apocalyptic text is cryptic, the interpreter of any unfulfilled apocalyptic event is blamed, rather than the apocalyptic text itself. The notion of the apocalypse's lasting power helps explain why apocalyptic symbols and rhetoric have survived and have been adopted by secular discourse time and again to describe a state of profound crisis.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 8.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 8f.

⁴⁸ Cf. Richard Landes, "On Owls, Roosters, and Apocalyptic Time: A Historical Method for Reading a Refractory Documentation," *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* 49, no. (1996).

In *Die Apokalypse in Deutschland*, the first extensive analysis of apocalyptic rhetoric in German literature, Klaus Vondung foremost approaches apocalypse as a historical text.⁴⁹ Vondung follows Kermode's model, but takes a more historically specific approach, focusing on German literature in the modern era. According to Vondung, apocalyptic rhetoric expresses a particular perception of social reality that is characterized as "spiritual" or as evoking "religious feelings." Writers who engage in apocalyptic rhetoric play the dual role of prophetic medium – God's mouthpiece that paints verbal pictures of the religious visions through symbols– and interpreters of the religious symbols. While presenting the religious symbols and interpreting them, the writers are co-creators of a specific religious experience. In that sense, John of Patmos, author of The Book of Revelation, expresses the suffering and anguish of the persecuted people of the seven Christian churches in Asia, and reveals coded visions of the destruction of their perceived enemies, the end of suffering, and the promise of a better life.⁵⁰ Vondung insists that apocalypse must be understood as a type of text with a specific purpose and tied to historical events rather than as a theoretical concept that can explain certain kinds of historical events, such as types of terror. While focusing on the specificity of events that are described as apocalyptic, Vondung tends to set certain limits on the scope of the apocalyptic rhetoric by classifying it as one type of narrative. Despite the rich illustrations of how apocalyptic tropes have been used to describe oppressive situations in German literature since the 18th- century, he does not sufficiently account for the versatility of the literary adaptations of apocalypse across time. In this sense,

⁴⁹ Klaus Vondung, *The Apocalypse in Germany* (Columbia and London: University of Missouri Press, 2000), 34f.

⁵⁰ See Roloff on the debate on the historical period of The Book of Revelation: Roloff, 16-20. Cf. William Franke, *Poetry and Apocalypse: Theological Disclosures of Poetic Language* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2009), 8-18.

Vondung's approach to the apocalyptic text as an explanatory model for understanding historical events does not differ significantly from Kermode's *Sense of an Ending*.⁵¹

The use of apocalyptic discourse in relation to political divisions and the notion of the Third Reich are employed by Brokoff in comparing tendencies in political thought during the Weimar Republic.⁵² Like Kermode and Vondung, he examines the apocalypse as a specific type of text with a specific rhetorical structure and purpose. While Vondung focuses on historical variations and observable experiences and expectations that have led to the production of apocalyptic texts, Brokoff emphasizes the textual self-reflexivity of the apocalyptic text and its claim to witness a higher truth.⁵³ Brokoff cites the beginning of The Book of Revelation as an example: "This is the revelation that God gave to Jesus Christ." (Rev 1:1, New International Readers Version).⁵⁴ By focusing on the literary aspects of the apocalyptic text, Brokoff is primarily concerned with the way that the "divine" message is communicated. The content of the message is secondary. He then argues that the foundation of this genre is structured according to the distinction between transcendence and immanence and variations of this pair, and finds that the differentiation between transcendence and immanence is pronounced in The Book of Revelation. With the distinction between this oppositional pair, the story of destruction of the immanent world and the construction of the "Second Jerusalem" of the transcendental God is set. The transcendence-immanence model helps the text to formulate apocalyptic

⁵¹ Cf. Kermode. Both Vondung and Jürgen Brokoff cite him in their literature review of the apocalyptic in secular literature and philosophy.

⁵² Brokoff.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 9. See also Vondung, *The Apocalypse in Germany*, 75.

⁵⁴ Brokoff, 7. Brokoff cites the Luther Bible: "Dies ist die Offenbarung Jesu Christi, die ihm Gott gegeben hat, seinen Knechten zu zeigen, was in der Kürze geschehen soll" (Offenbarung 1:1).

claims of truth (verity) and credibility vis-à-vis the text's own rhetoric (i.e. what I say is true and valid) and to assert it (i.e. it is true because it is thus said).⁵⁵

According to Brokoff, only a specific type of Weimar texts has adopted the apocalyptic structure of The Book of Revelation, namely texts that transpose the religious differentiation between the transcendental and immanent to a non-religious field: the political area.⁵⁶ Through careful analysis of works by Walter Benjamin, Carl Schmitt, Ernst Jünger, and Adolf Hitler, Brokoff presents the characteristics of apocalyptic rhetoric during the Weimar Republic. He notes structural similarities between the Biblical apocalyptic prototype and representative texts of these historical figures. One of the most important similarities is the categorical distinction between transcendence and immanence. Brokoff insists that this differentiation is preserved and adopted in his selected corpus of Weimar texts. He argues that the integration of apocalyptic discourse in political texts does not transform these texts into texts that promise supernatural redemption. At stake for the scholar is the politicization of the apocalyptic rhetoric for promoting a chosen political agenda to level of transcendence in each of his chosen texts during the 1920s and 1930s. Brokoff's readings are convincing, and I especially value his insight into the politicization of the apocalyptic text after 1918.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 10. Brokoff's theoretical model is indebted to Jacques Derrida's reading of The Book of Revelation in *On a Newly Arisen Apocalyptic Tone in Philosophy*. Derrida argues that the apocalypse, as a text with a claim to be the text to end all texts violently seeks to declare the death of all language. But by writing, one staves off the end and thus forecloses the ending of language. Brokoff, however, wants to correct Derrida on this point: the structure of differentiation and the discursive violence of the apocalyptic text cannot be generalized to all texts and to language in general, as Derrida claims, but only to specific types of texts and to specific conditions. See note 11 for full citation.

⁵⁶ Brokoff argues: "In den apokalyptischen Texten der Weimarer Zeit findet folglich eine Politisierung der Apokalypse statt." Ibid., 10, see also his note on p. 131. Brokoff stresses that he does not support a secularization theory, but rather that he refers to an apocalypse that is politicized and not secularized. I assume that he makes this distinction in order to avoid the same kind of generalization for which he criticizes Derrida. Furthermore, following the secularization theory would entail that the distinction between the transcendent and the immanent would be leveled, which would invalidate what Brokoff considers to be the key characteristic of the apocalyptic genre.

My analysis of Broch's trilogy emphasizes that *Die Schlafwandler* addresses far-reaching social and cultural concerns. According to Hartmut Steinecke, Michael Mack, Mark Roche, and Lützeler, among others, Broch's works have political ambitions.⁵⁷ The trilogy employs rhetorical devices of apocalyptic texts in order to evoke a sense of totality – whether it is a widespread sense of a “fröhliche Apokalypse”⁵⁸ before or during the First World War, or final judgment at the end of the war (which seems like the end of the world), or redemption (both individual and global).⁵⁹ At the same time, these apocalyptic texts are able to express the novelty and unspeakability of historically and politically induced misery, by self-consciously addressing this unspeakability. After all, the apocalyptic text's purpose is to reveal a supernatural truth and to emphasize the act of revealing and deciphering a coded text. For Broch, the novel is the medium that is best suited to fulfill this ethical potential, which involves portraying the world in its entirety, as he suggests in his “Weltbild im Roman”:

⁵⁷ Paul Michael Lützeler, *Hermann Broch: Ethik und Politik: Studien zum Frühwerk und zur Romantrilogie "Die Schlafwandler"* (München: Winkler Verlag, 1973); Lützeler, *Die Entropie des Menschen*; Michael Mack, “The Politics of Sacrifice: Hermann Broch's Critique of Fascism in *Die Verzauberung*,” *Orbis Litterarum* 55, no. 1 (2000); Roche; Hartmut Steinecke, “Menschenrecht und Judentum bei Hermann Broch vor und nach der Shoah,” in *Hermann Broch: Politik, Menschenrechte -- und Literatur?*, ed. Thomas Eicher, Paul Michael Lützeler, and Hartmut Steinecke (Oberhausen: Athena Verlag, 2005).

⁵⁸ Broch, “Hofmannsthal und seine Zeit.”

⁵⁹ In his essay on James Joyce, Broch also outlines his ambition to write novels that present as complete a picture of the experienced reality as possible. He considers such attempts the duty of literature: “Man mag diesen Erkenntniswillen des Dichterischen, wie es sich als Funktion des umfassenden Erkenntnistrebens darstellt, eine Ungeduld des Erkenntnis nennen, ein Vorseilen vor der rationalen Erkenntnis, die bloß schrittweise und niemals sie erreichend zu solcher Totalität vordringt. Aber eben diese Totalität ist ja die Aufgabe der Kunst und der Dichtung, sie ist ja ihre Grundaufgabe schlechthin, und die Ungeduld der Erkenntnis, die sich gerade in der Dichtung ausdrückt, ist nicht nur die berechnete Ungeduld des ergebundenen Menschen, der den Tod vor sich sieht, sondern sie ist auch eine wahrhaft religiöse Ungeduld. Denn alles Religiöse greift nach der Totalität der Erkenntnis, alles Religiöse weiß von der Kürze der menschlichen Existenz und sucht diese kurze Existenz mit der Totalität der Erkenntnis zu erfüllen.” Broch, “James Joyce und die Gegenwart”. This description of the human desire to join the particular to a greater entity expresses both a historiographical position that Kermode describes and a religious desire for redemption. Similar to Kermode, Broch suggests in the above passage that individual humans seek to make sense of their own personal histories within the greater context of world history. In religious terms, religious individuals seek to find safety from death and knowledge of the divine in the Kingdom of God.

[D]ie Dichtung, oder richtiger das Dichtwerk, hat in seiner Einheit die gesamte Welt zu umfassen, sie hat in der Auswahl der Realitätsvokabeln die Kosmogonie der Welt zu spiegeln, sie hat in dem Wunschbild, das sie gibt, die Unendlichkeit des ethischen Wollens aufleuchten zu lassen. [...] Der moderne Roman ist polyhistorisch geworden. Seine Realitätsvokabeln sind die großen Weltbilder der Zeit.⁶⁰

Language is instrumental in revealing a vision that one person passes to others who are receptive to the word. The message is designed to admonish about one's present ways, to warn about the future if one does not change one's ways, and envisions the destruction of one's enemies and one's own salvation. For authors such as Broch, language is not only an important medium of expression, but also the key to establishing a channel among people in order to create an understanding of one's present historical situation.

Apocalyptic Discourse and Politics

Although the terms "apocalypse" and "religiosity" both appear frequently in the secondary literature on *Die Schlafwandler*, only a few scholars have explained what they define as the apocalyptic nature of the trilogy. Even fewer have gone beyond the popular understanding of the term as denoting total catastrophe when they discuss the end of the novel's third volume. One noteworthy example of scholarly examination of the apocalyptic in the trilogy is Heinz Osterle's 1971 article, "Hermann Broch, *Die Schlafwandler*: Revolution und Apokalypse."⁶¹ Osterle argues that Broch's trilogy expresses a profound pessimism about early 20th-century human values and moral character.⁶² Writing in a period marked by a wave of student revolutions across Europe

⁶⁰ Broch, "Das Weltbild des Romans (1933)," 115.

⁶¹ Osterle. To the best of my knowledge, Osterle is the first to make explicit and extensive reference to apocalypse in analyzing the trilogy.

⁶² See also Fritz Stern on the wide-spread influence of cultural pessimism at the time regardless of political position of the intellectuals who held them. Fritz Richard Stern, *The Politics of Cultural Despair: A Study*

and North America, Osterle critically assesses the political value of revolutions. The scholar analyzes the political dimension of Broch's *Schlafwandler* and stresses the political ambivalence of the author. In particular, Osterle focuses on the trilogy's end, in which a proto-revolution takes place in the small rural town of Kurtrier. This event alludes to the November Revolution of 1918. He argues that in such doomsday comparison to the violent rise of disgruntled factory workers as a bloodthirsty mob (e.g. they kill a guard at the local prison), Broch demonstrates his critique of Marxist revolution. In addition, Osterle argues that Broch presents the birth of a new type of modern individual in the figure of Huguenau. This modern type destroys and kills without remorse, and his adaptability to any situation and calculating nature attests to a lack of distinct values. Making him the prototype of the winners during the Weimar Republic is a gloomy assessment of the young republic indeed. In addition, the other characters' self-centered and atomistic religiosity emphasizes the lack of a unifying spiritual center, and the period of 1888 to 1918 (and beyond) appears as a declining period.

Osterle's intervention draws attention to the politically conservative aspect of Broch's novels. He argues that one should critically assess the philosophical essay in the trilogy and acknowledge the author's industrialist background and affinities with contemporary conservatives, such as Moeller van den Bruck, Spengler, and Hugo von Hofmannsthal.⁶³ Osterle stresses that the novel's portrayal of the November revolution of 1918 as an apocalyptic event intends to warn readers of the anarchic dangers of

in the Rise of the Germanic Ideology, California library reprint series (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974).

⁶³ Osterle: 955.

revolution, largely because he objects to what he considers a one-sided acceptance of Broch's image as a socially engaged author:

Critics have so far agreed with Broch's own view that the trilogy anticipated National Socialism. It certainly did, but in a very ambiguous way, to which the critics seem to have voluntarily closed their eyes. *Die Schlafwandler* is one of the great counterrevolutionary works of this century. The function of its apocalyptic symbolism, besides unifying the structure of the work, is to provide a basis for its eminently effective conservative rhetoric, which kept this reader, too, spellbound for a long time. This symbolism is without metaphysical substance because it is not supported by Christian faith.⁶⁴

He claims that *Die Schlafwandler* is more ambiguous on the issue of fascism and Broch's attitude toward the new German republic than previously assumed.⁶⁵ Through an analysis of the apocalyptic images of the novels, especially those regarding the proto-revolution, Osterle points to the ambiguous political position that Broch held during the 1930s. The scholar contends that this politically conservative stance, even toward the right, cannot be ignored for the sake of defending Broch's ethical program.⁶⁶ Osterle acknowledges that one finds apocalyptic remarks that liberty and vitality can be found through the destruction of old institutions of values in a final revolution. However, he believes that the fear of chaos and anarchy overshadows the potential for positive change. Unlike Osterle, I see the foreclosure of the apocalyptic ending as an implication that humans still can use their own resources to take responsibility for their own future instead of waiting

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ See also Wolfgang Freese and Karl Menges, *Broch - Forschung. Überlegungen zur Methode und Problematik eines literarischen Rezeptionsvorgangs*, ed. Karl Dinklage, Karl Corino, and Wolfgang Freese, *Musil-Studien*, vol. Beiheft 1 (Munich and Salzburg: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1977). See Robert Halsall's introduction for a summary of this debate among scholars: Robert Halsall, *The Problem of Autonomy in the Works of Hermann Broch* (Oxford, Bern, Berlin, Bruxelles, Frankfurt a.M., New York, Wien: Peter Lang, 2000).

⁶⁶ Freese and Menges, who first launched an attack against the Broch-"affirmative" scholars and called for greater critical analysis of Broch's entire oeuvre, hold a similar position. Their polemic intervention caused a stir and their distinction of the "affirmative" and "critical" schools in Broch scholarship persisted well into the 2000s. Freese and Menges. For instance, even in 2005, the Hungarian Broch scholar Kiss takes a position vis-à-vis the two schools in an article on Broch and Canetti. Kiss.

for redemption through a supernatural power. The lack of finality is important for conveying hope in this admittedly ambiguous ending. Furthermore, the importance of Broch's Christian religiosity cannot be downplayed as Osterle does.

In fact, Broch invites readers to consider the purpose of conservative positions thoughtfully without automatically associating them with reactionary politics. For him it is the case that "das Konservative – nicht als rückläufige reaktionäre Bewegung, vielmehr als mitaufbauendes Element – in allem menschlichen Fortschritt, ja, in allem Revolutionären mitwirkt und mitschwingt."⁶⁷ While he does view the wish to break with the past as a legitimate motivation for progress and change, he also comments on the fear of the unknown that must be alleviated through reminders of attained achievements. Such reassurances can provide a secure ground for the establishment of anything new, be it in thought, art, culture, or politics: "Das Vergangene und Gefestigte dagegen, das bereits Erreichte und Geformte, es ist der Punkt der Sicherheit und es ist die Gewähr für das Fortbestehen und für die Erreichbarkeit des Neuen."⁶⁸ Broch considers it the duty of artists to relieve humans of their fear of the new and maintain the striving for new insights and expressions thereof: "Der Mensch ist keinen Augenblick von seiner Lebensangst befreit, sein Streben, Werte zu schaffen, deren Gesamtheit erst die Kultur ausmachen, beruhigt sich erst am Anblick des geschaffenen Werkes und seiner Ewigkeit. [...] Und darauf kommt es an. Es handelt sich um die Wiedergewinnung der religiösen Haltung in ihrer ganzen gemeinschaftsbindenden Strenge und in ihrer ganzen ideellen Einheitlichkeit."⁶⁹ Citing Goethe's call to writers (in his *Maximen und Reflektionen*) to

⁶⁷ Hermann Broch, "Die Kunst am Ende einer Kultur (1933)," in *Philosophische Schriften I. Kritik*, ed. Paul Michael Lützel (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1977), 55.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 55-56.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 57.

serve the greater unifying spirit, Broch spells out what he considers the duty of every artist: “Aufgabe des geistig schaffenden Menschen ist einzig und allein, das religiöse Ziel der platonischen Erneuerung im Auge zu behalten. [D]as wahrhaft Sittliche erzwingt sich immer wieder Gehör, und es versagt bloß, wenn es sein eigenes Ziel verliert und damit ins Unsittliche umschlägt.”⁷⁰ The effort itself is important, not the result. Any finality – whether of communist revolutionary or conservative revolutionary (reactionary) – would violate this principle of creation, which, for Broch, is also a principle of ethical life.

I support Osterle’s call to take a more critical position toward the author’s aesthetic-ethical program, and agree that the conservative leanings in the trilogy should not be ignored out of a fear of detracting from the author’s history of social engagement. In fact, acknowledging the conservative leanings in Broch’s works contributes to recognizing the complexity of the novel as representing unresolved intellectual and literary attempts in understanding the overlapping political and ideological boundaries of the 1920s and 1930s. Furthermore, this ambiguity supports my claim that we can use Broch’s novel as a discursive surface for launching comparisons between disparate figures such as Tillich and Schmitt by using Broch’s representation of the 1920s and 1930s as apocalyptic time. Broch’s political ambiguity helps to complicate any neat categorizations. Barnouw argues that, by acknowledging the similarities between Broch’s novels and proto-fascist literature, one can “bring into sharp focus the similarity of cultural concerns and conflicts underlying a wide spectrum of political and intellectual affiliations.”⁷¹ Thus, she contends that Broch’s theoretical essay on the disintegration of values reflects the influence of “a radically conservative, largely irrational, metaphysical

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Barnouw, 233.

position of cultural despair which [Broch] shared, even in details of blood and soil imagery and rhetorical appeal, with the extreme right: modern urban men and women are like sleepwalkers, caught in profoundly inauthentic lives, in desperate need of redemption and finally somehow redeemed.”⁷² Barnouw’s position resembles Osterle’s in that they both examine the trilogy for its political aspects. Barnouw, though, does not go so far as to place Broch in the same camp as reactionary intellectuals, as Osterle implies. Writing in the 1980s, when Broch’s social, ethical, and political thoughts attracted more attention, Barnouw aims for a less polemical and more judicious view of Broch’s political and ethical motivation.⁷³

In a more recent article on the political dimension of Broch’s novels of the 1930s, Michael Mack positions Broch on the side of anti-fascism. Mack focuses on Broch’s novel *Die Verzauberung* as a critique of fascism, the seed of which he detects in the trilogy,⁷⁴ and refers to the link in relation to totalitarian ideas about the *Führer*. He ascribes the link to Carl Schmitt’s influence on Broch, but he does not indicate which specific Schmittian source he used.⁷⁵ Unlike the trilogy, *Die Verzauberung* is specific to one geographic location and time, and limited to the narrative perspective of a single first person narrator. The novel is about the phenomenon of collective, political violence and

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Examples include the essays in Stephen Dowden, ed. *Hermann Broch: Literature, Philosophy, Politics. : The Yale Broch Symposium 1986* (Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1988); Paul Michael Lützeler, ed. *Hermann Broch*, 1st ed. (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1986).

⁷⁴ The novel was mostly written between 1934 and 1936 and was first published posthumously in 1953 as *Der Versucher*. It is also known as Broch’s “Bergroman.” Cf. Judith Ryan, “The Self-Destructing Message: A Response to P.M. Lützeler,” in *Hermann Broch: Literature, Philosophy, Politics: The Yale Broch Symposium 1986*, ed. Stephen Dowden (Columbia: Camden House, 1988).

⁷⁵ Mack. Cf. Lützeler, *Die Entropie des Menschen*, 129f. Lützeler observes Broch’s critical reaction to Carl Schmitt’s catchphrase around 1933, “Der Führer schafft das Recht,” and sees the main difference between Broch’s ideas and Schmitt’s slogan thus: “Während bei Schmitt das Recht der Macht unterworfen wird, verlangt Broch den revolutionären Aufstand gegen den Tyrannen, damit dem Menschrecht Macht verschafft werde” p. 130.

religiosity, and shows how easily and dangerously the public can be manipulated with religious rhetoric.⁷⁶ The manipulation of irrational fear in mobilizing a violent group, which *Die Schlafwandler*'s third volume briefly explores, becomes the focus of *Die Verzauberung*. This novel demonstrates how Broch's aesthetic and political theories overlap and reaches a pinnacle of kitsch in the aestheticized virgin sacrifice toward the novel's end.⁷⁷

The idea that aesthetic and ethical values are intertwined in Broch's novels is also the subject of Ruth Kluger's analysis of the author's understanding of kitsch. On Broch's aesthetic theory and on his understanding of the term "kitsch," she comments that "[w]here art is conservative, kitsch is reactionary."⁷⁸ For Broch, kitsch in the aesthetic realm is art that imitates aesthetic structures to achieve a certain emotional, psychological, or intellectual effect. In a later essay, Broch comments:

Wer für die Kunst bloß neue Schönheitsbereiche suchen will, schafft Sensationen, aber keine Kunst: die Kunst entsteht aus Realitätsahnungen, und nur durch sie erhebt sie sich über den Kitsch. Wäre es anders, so

⁷⁶ The villagers of a mountain community succumb to the spell-like leadership of a charismatic man, Marius Ratti. He resembles a fascist leader and has been compared to Adolf Hitler, as Mack also points out. On the comparison between Ratti and Hitler, see Mack. See also Wendelin Schmidt-Dengler's article on the figure of redeemer in Broch's novel and Ernestine Schlant's response. Wendelin Schmidt-Dengler, "Children Born and Unborn: Images of Redemption in the Work of Hermann Broch," in *Hermann Broch: Literature, Philosophy, Politics: The Yale Broch Symposium 1986*, ed. Stephen Dowden (Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1988). Ernestine Schlant, "Political Turmoil and Broch's Redeemer Figure: A Response to Wendelin Schmidt-Dengler," in *Hermann Broch: Literature, Philosophy, Politics: The Yale Broch Symposium 1986*, ed. Stephen Dowden (Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1988). Schlant praises Schmidt-Dengler for presenting the intellectual historical background that Broch inherited and reads the text of 1934-36 as a warning of an Austrian writer about the possibility of fascist rising and susceptibility to fascist demagogy in Austria, mirroring events that had already taken place in Germany.

⁷⁷ As Ernestine Schlant points out in the first biography of Broch written in English, the author had his own idiosyncratic definition of aesthetic and philosophical terms, including "kitsch." Schlant, *Hermann Broch*.

⁷⁸ Ruth Kluger, "Kitsch and Art : Broch's Essay 'Das Böse im Wertsystem der Kunst'," in *Hermann Broch, Visionary in Exile. The 2001 Yale Symposium*, ed. Paul Michael Lützeler (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2003), 19. See also Theodor Adorno, "Theses Upon Art and Religion Today (1945)," in *Notes to Literature*, ed. Rolf Tiedemann (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), 292-98. One of the strongest points of this 1945 article is Adorno's apprehension that art be used for political (and specifically fascist) purposes. The idea that art is used in the service of achieving a specific (political or economic) effect is also a point of contention for Broch.

könnte man sich mit den bereits aufgedeckten Schönheitsbereichen, z.B. mit dem der ägyptischen Skulptur, die ohnehin unübertreffbar ist, vollauf zufrieden geben.⁷⁹

Sentimental literature, for instance, that primarily aims to make readers cry, is considered kitsch: “In the area of politics, kitsch practice would be political rhetoric that merely aims to sway the public in the desired direction, such as the public’s approval to go to war.”⁸⁰ Kluger couches this distinction in the aesthetic terms of “verisimilitude,” which denotes the semblance of reality or truth, and “verity” (“Wahrhaftigkeit” and “Wahrheit”). She further argues that the redemptive aspect of art for Broch lies in its ability to overcome death “through an experience of timelessness, of eternity, which we call beauty, whereas kitsch is simply flight from death, a running away, the art of escapes, as in escape literature.”⁸¹ Though this remark sounds somewhat romantic, Kluger’s analysis underscores the importance of personal responsibility in Broch’s theory of aesthetics and ethics.⁸² Kluger’s analysis of Broch’s aesthetic theory shows one dimension of how the apocalyptic is explored in Broch scholarship.⁸³ She draws attention to the apocalyptic

⁷⁹ Broch, “Einige Bemerkungen zum Problem des Kitsches: Ein Vortrag (1950),” 168. Cf. Hermann Broch, “Das Böse im Wertsystem der Kunst (1933),” in *Schriften zur Literatur 2. Theorie*, ed. Paul Michael Lützeler (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1975).

⁸⁰ Kluger, 17.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² This connection between aesthetics and ethics is analyzed in depth by Lützeler in his seminal *Ethik und Politik*, in which he argues convincingly that the question of ethical and political responsibility constitutes the common thread in Broch’s novels and philosophical essays. Lützeler, *Hermann Broch: Ethik und Politik*. See also the more recent analysis by Thomas Eicher, Paul Michael Lützeler, and Hartmut Steinecke, eds., *Hermann Broch: Politik, Menschenrechte -- und Literatur?*, ed. Thomas Eicher, Paul Michael Lützeler, and Hartmut Steinecke (Oberhausen: Athena Verlag, 2005); Gunther Martens, “Hermann Broch: Ethik der Erzählform,” in *Hermann Broch: Politik, Menschenrechte -- und Literatur?*, ed. Thomas Eicher, Paul Michael Lützeler, and Hartmut Steinecke (Oberhausen: Athena Verlag, 2005).

⁸³ See the following collections of scholarship on the ethical and political dimensions of Broch’s literary works: Friedrich Vollhardt, *Hermann Brochs geschichtliche Stellung: Studien zum philosophischen Frühwerk und zur Romantrilogie "Die Schlafwandler" (1914-1932)* Studien zur Deutschen Literatur (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1986); Eicher, Lützeler, and Steinecke, eds; G. R. Heidenreich, “Ethics and Subjectivity in the Novels of Hermann Broch” (Dissertation/Thesis, University of Oregon, 1998); Michael Kessler and Paul Michael Lützeler, “Hermann Broch : das dichterische Werk, neue Interpretationen : Akten des Internationalen Interdisziplinären Hermann Broch-Symposiums 30. Okt.-2. Nov. 1986, Akademie der

textual structure, which she centers on the opposition between Christ and Anti-Christ, and points to the theological concept as an integral subtext of Broch's work. Following Broch's lead, Kluger connects aesthetics and social morality in the author's literary works.

In their engagement with the catastrophic aspect of the apocalyptic trope they use, Osterle and Kluger rely largely on a vague and popular sense of the term "apocalyptic." Downplaying hope as the necessary polar opposite of catastrophe in the genre of the apocalyptic text, they emphasize either the implicit politically conservative stance (Osterle) or the international humanism of Broch and the trans-denominational aspect of the spirituality present in the trilogy (Kluger).⁸⁴ My work goes further in pointing out that Broch's *Die Schlafwandler*, which rests on the Christian concept of *agape*, i.e. neighborly love, contains the religious aesthetics and religious ethics of a Catholic author, and that Broch's religiosity plays a significant role when the role of apocalyptic rhetoric is discussed – even if it is discussed as a rhetorical strategy. These interpretations could be further enriched by taking Broch's Catholicism seriously and by laying out the relevant theological significance of religious language for the Judeo-Christian tradition, which

Diözese Rottenburg-Stuttgart", Stauffenburg; Katrin Kohl and Ritchie Robertson, *A History of Austrian Literature 1918-2000* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2006); Martin Swales, "Story, History, Discursiveness: On Hermann Broch's *Die Schlafwandler*," in *Hermann Broch: Modernismus, Kulturkrise und Hitlerzeit-Londoner Symposium 1991*, ed. A. Stevens, F. Wagner, and S. P. Scheichl (Innsbruck: Inst. für Germanistik, Univ. Innsbruck, 1994); Friedrich Vollhardt, *Hermann Brochs geschichtliche Stellung: Studien zum philosophischen Frühwerk und zur Romantrilogie "Die Schlafwandler" (1914-1932)* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1986).

⁸⁴ In his 1973 monograph, Paul Michael Lützel, who addresses the religious aspect of Broch's work, indicates that the author seeks to move beyond a Christian moral ethics. Lützel, *Hermann Broch: Ethik und Politik*: "Das 'neue Ethos' einer Religion ohne Gott, einer 'Religion an sich', steht im Mittelpunkt der abschließenden Überlegungen des 'Epilogs' [of *Die Schlafwandler*, SYK]. Mit dem Ausblick auf dieses neue, nach-kantische Ethos, das nicht mehr wie die Ethik der Aufklärung dem christlichen Glauben verhaftet ist und das die Grundlage für eine 'neue Humanität' abgeben könnte, schließt die Trilogie." 13f.

grounds the trilogy's apocalyptic rhetoric. Moreover, the persistent hope for a spiritual renewal in *Die Schlafwandler* could be grasped in a more structured and analytic way.

Inverting Religious Imageries for Social Criticism

Until the early 21st century, Broch scholarship scarcely engaged with religious tropes or rhetoric in analyzing the author's oeuvre. At most, they were interpreted as lenses for Broch's ethical, political, or literary quests. The last ten years have seen a resurgent interest in religiosity with two noteworthy commentaries on Broch's work: 1) Lützeler's monograph on the role of spiritual crisis in Broch's trilogy,⁸⁵ 2) the collection of articles based on the conference proceedings of the Internationaler Arbeitskreis Broch and published as *Hermann Broch: Religion, Mythos, Utopie – zur ethischen Perspektive seines Werkes*.⁸⁶

Lützeler presents Broch's exploration in the literary realm as a way of dealing with a spiritual crisis in the author's cultural epoch.⁸⁷ According to Lützeler, Broch struggles with a particular challenge of modernization that remains unresolved: a colossal crisis of faith (*Glaubenskrise*) that sparked the split of the Catholic (in the sense of universal) Church during Reformation and continued to perpetuate and grow. Thanks to a chain of socio-political changes and conflicts due to secularization in political, intellectual, and cultural spheres from the Thirty Years War onward, the effects of the major schisms ripple across various epochs to the 20th century. This crisis of faith led to a break in culture itself (*Kulturbruch*) because faith was the soul and foundation of

⁸⁵ Paul Michael Lützeler, *Kulturbruch und Glaubenskrise: Hermann Brochs Die Schlafwandler und Matthias Grünewalds Isenheimer Altar* (Tübingen: Francke, 2001).

⁸⁶ Paul Michael Lützeler and Christine Maillard, eds., *Hermann Broch: Religion, Mythos, Utopie: zur ethischen Perspektive seines Werkes* (Strasbourg: Recherches Germaniques, Université Marc Bloch, 2008).

⁸⁷ Lützeler, *Kulturbruch und Glaubenskrise*.

Western culture. In fact, during the Thirty Years War, the different German principalities formed political alliances according to their confessional orientation, where Protestant principalities sided with Protestant ones and Catholic principalities joined forces with other Catholic principalities. The idea that there may have been one unified Western culture – perhaps best exemplified in religious icons that find their place in churches but also in the fine arts – was challenged. In a culture riddled with religious and political schisms, the meaning of religious symbols was a matter of dispute.⁸⁸ There is no unity in religious institutions, or in questions of faith and cultural meanings. *Die Schlafwandler*, whose story also spans thirty years and deals with the disintegration of major institutions and crises of faith and culture, presents another kind of Thirty Years War.

As for the artistic background of *Die Schlafwandler*, Lützel positions the trilogy in the context of expressionism, both in the realm of visual art and literary art. He argues that the themes and motifs of the famous Alsatian triptych in Colmar by the 16th-century artist Grünewald comprise the integral subtext of the three volumes and hold them together.⁸⁹ The main themes of the triptych, which was revered by expressionists of the first quarter of the 20th century in particular, are annunciation, crucifixion, and resurrection. According to Lützel, these themes inform the structure of the trilogy and the visual intertext is composed of an ekphrastic treatment of the triptych.⁹⁰ He refers to the tendencies among expressionist painters to use widely known iconic images of earlier

⁸⁸ On religious schisms and artistic rendering of religious symbols/icons, see Kurt Aland, *Die Geschichte der Christenheit* 2vols., vol. 2 (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus Mohn, 1982).

⁸⁹ Lützel, *Kulturbruch und Glaubenskrise*, 14f., 18-19.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 24. In *Die Schlafwandler* the triptych is even explicitly referenced in the third volume. *DS* 144-46. An ekphrasis is a translation of a visual artwork into text, usually via descriptions of the text. A famous example of an ekphrastic work is Lessing's description of Laocoon's sculpture. On ekphrasis, see W.J.T Mitchell, "Ekphrasis and the Other," in *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994).

times—as seen in religious art proper in churches—and to place them into contemporary contexts.⁹¹ While the themes of annunciation, crucifixion, and resurrection form the organizational center of each volume of the trilogy, the Biblical events are rendered in an inverted manner and critically illuminate various segments and the social and cultural state of the Wilhelmine era. Lützel argues that the author translates bits and pieces of the Isenheimer altar into writing and represents isolated parts of the painting in changed states. When these individual pieces of the altar are applied to the novel plot, the pieces contradict the Biblical stories and have an alienating effect; stories of truth and faith are inverted to expose characters' hypocrisy or lack of compassion. According to Lützel, such use of Biblical tropes is one way for Broch to express the dissolution of values.⁹²

With his narrative experiments, Broch probes the aesthetic boundaries of the novel, in order to make a case for artistic innovation as befitting the new spirit of the age, so that one could conjure up a new period with this art. It seems as though Broch were looking for a “magical” new language: by finding a viable aesthetic and social medium, one could find the way to a better age. Lützel writes that Broch identifies with Grünewald's aesthetic ambitions and context:

Wie Grünewald an der Wende vom katholischen Mittelalter zur protestantischen Reformation steht und dabei Teil der vorreformatorischen Welt bleibt, sieht sich Broch im Zeitbruch eines noch radikaleren Epochenwandels: desjenigen von christlicher zu nach-christlicher Zeit,

⁹¹ Lützel, *Kulturbruch und Glaubenskrise*, 65, 22ff. The primary intention of the expressionists' inversion of Biblical symbols is not simply to strip these symbolic figures, such as Mary, of any spiritual characteristics, but to give them new meaning in their own time. By overturning common religious meanings, the painters, such as Max Beckmann, comment on social injustice and a perceived deficiency in moral awareness. In Beckmann's *Der Traum* (1921), the artist envisions a society of alienated people without unifying higher values. He achieves this effect by placing his scene literally in an attic, where most figures, lacking eyes, are engaged in their own individual activities, and ignore each other.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 22.

wobei auch er—qua Referenz und Zitat—der Gedanken- und Bildwelt christlicher Kultur verbunden ist.⁹³

Epochal breaks and changes in Christian theological paradigms accompany and reinforce each other. The last radical schism that Broch senses approaching is that of a final break with Christian theological models and values in a completely secularized world.⁹⁴

Like Lützeler, I regard religious vocabulary as part of the cultural heritage of the milieu portrayed in the three volumes.⁹⁵ Religious language furnishes the cultural and moral consciousness of the main protagonists and – more pertinent to the trilogy – underlines the lack of morality in the cultural milieu described by Broch. As Lützeler points out, Broch does seek to find a new religious ethics as a foundation for a new humanism – both of which strive to go beyond the framework of Judaism or Christianity. While I agree with Lützeler, Osterle, and Kluger on this particular point, I also want to highlight how Broch expresses his careful optimism in his quest for a new social moral ethics. I propose that by closely examining the theological topoi in *Die Schlafwandler*, one can understand the author's ethical and cultural concerns more deeply. I contend that the particular choice of Judeo-Christian metaphors is significant in enriching our understanding of Broch's contribution to both modernist literature and generally to the literature of socially engaged intellectuals – intellectuals who seek to change their milieu, as defined by William M. Johnston – of the interwar era.⁹⁶

⁹³ Ibid., 19.

⁹⁴ This kind of ambition resembles that of Lessing who invented the *bürgerliches Trauerspiel* to represent and to engage with the social reality and concerns of his audience, which was composed of the new middle class rather than the noble class. He did not deem the model of the Greek tragedy as suitable for accurately answering the cathartic need of his German middle class audience, i.e. to create timely art. Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, *Hamburgische Dramaturgie* (1767-69).

⁹⁵ See also William M. Johnston, *The Austrian Mind : An Intellectual and Social History, 1848-1938* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972).

⁹⁶ Ibid., 2f.

The trilogy demonstrates that religion is often embedded in morality. Moreover, the following distinctions are made in illustrating this embeddedness in the trilogy: the separation between spirituality and the church as a religious institution; the structuring of secular morality with church principles; and the maintenance of these religiously tinged social structures without any religious spirituality, which, for Broch, is at the heart of morality. Although the idea of disintegration of values has been dealt with by various scholars, the particular reflection on religious language has not yet been exhausted.⁹⁷ The silver lining, the message of hope in the future, has often been glossed over or minimized.⁹⁸ I foreground the aspect of spirituality and of hope for a new utopian community ruled by *agape* in my last chapter, which, as I argue, is the underlying motivation of *Die Schlafwandler*.

A Map of the Dissertation

A close look at theological roots of the apocalyptic narrative and trope in the trilogy sheds greater light on Broch's contribution to the discussion of values in the novel. More specifically, Broch's trilogy shows that disintegration of values involves the correlated ideas that the spiritual core of modern German society is dissolving and that such dissolution is necessary for a spiritual revival. His utopian society, as glimpses of scenarios in the trilogy show, is that of intellectual, self-reflexive, responsible, and socially engaged individuals. As a genre with religious connotations, the apocalyptic text calls on its readers to become conscious of perceived social, political, and cultural ills. Yet, the apocalyptic as a text of revelation also evokes the idea that radical alternatives to

⁹⁷ Cf. Lützel, Halsall, Martens, and Aschheim.

⁹⁸ Schlant, *Hermann Broch*, 38f, 66f.

the present condition are possible, and that, in order to find these alternatives, one must address the difficult question of whether ideal moral values are feasible. Each school of thought I underline – the theological, social, and aesthetic – emphasizes different diagnoses for the reasons for the disintegration of values and poses various strategies for finding a solution. My aim is not to settle on one answer, but rather to observe these diagnoses of early 20th- century intellectuals and authors as strategies in finding means to articulate their way from disorientation to comprehension. Broch and his trilogy is a case study that offers opportunities to observe the points of intersection between the three discursive strands (theological, social, aesthetic) discussed here. Lützelers argument on the crisis of faith and cultural rupture, in connection with expressionist aesthetic exegesis, helps to launch my discussion on how Broch dealt with the question of disintegrating Western values by scrutinizing religious language as a basis for Western cultural grammar.

In the second chapter, I illustrate Broch's own contradictory political position in wanting to conserve order, while seeking to find a utopian alternative. While the method of finding alternatives differ, each inclination – the conservative as well as the socialist – recognizes spirituality and individual ethical responsibility as the centre of a viable society. I use the oppositional tendencies as starting points to examine the attitudes of intellectuals with contrasting theological concepts on social organizations.⁹⁹ In this

⁹⁹ For example, see Michael Makropoulos, "Haltlose Souveränität. Benjamin, Schmitt und die klassische Moderne in Deutschland," in *Intellektuellendiskurse in der Weimarer Republik: Zur politischen Kultur einer Gemengelage*, ed. Manfred Gangl and Gérard Raulet (Frankfurt am Main, New York, and Paris: Campus Verlag & Editions de la Fondation Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 1994); Hartmut Ruddies, "Flottierende Versatzstücke und die ideologische Austauschereffekte : Theologische Antworten auf die Ambivalenz der Moderne," in *Intellektuellendiskurse in der Weimarer Republik: Zur politischen Kultur einer Gemengelage*, ed. Manfred Gangl and Gérard Raulet (Frankfurt am Main, New York, and Paris: Campus Verlag & Editions de la Fondation Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 1994).

chapter, I argue that apocalyptic discourse was prevalent in different areas during the Weimar era by positioning Broch alongside interlocutors of the areas of theology (Paul Tillich), politics (Carl Schmitt), and cultural analysis (Siegfried Kracauer). In the texts of Tillich, Schmitt, and Kracauer, one finds the same sets of themes and concerns: search for greater meaning, longing for a unified society with a spiritual core, yearning for change, comprehensive overview, and order. While these texts are all from the early Weimar era, Broch picks up on them about ten years later, which shows that these issues have not been resolved and that each strand has become increasingly polarized.

Broch fleshes out the abstract concepts by working them into novel scenarios and imagining contents for these concepts in fiction. In addition, he shows their judgments and disappointment by imagining what the realization of possible resolutions might entail, be it conserving the status quo, Socialist activism, Messianism, or apolitical Christian mysticism. Like Kracauer of the early 1920s, who gives serious weight to reflection by theorizing the topic of waiting during an apocalyptic time, Broch of the early 1930s shows that proposed solutions may not be desired and that one must still continue to wait – not just in the early 1920s, but also in the early 1930s. Broch scrutinizes the search for meaning during the Weimar Republic and participates in a specific continuous critique of modernity.

In the third chapter, I continue to demonstrate how Broch takes issue with the different shapes of political and economic powers during and after the German imperial era. *Die Schlafwandler*'s beginning with the description of the despicable patriarch, Herr von Pasenow foreshadows from the beginning that these powers will be responsible for the lack of social unity after the war. For instance, the patriarch seems to be walking into

nothingness (“diese Gradlinigkeit und dieses Vorwärtsstreben: auf das Nichts gerichtet!” *D.S.* 12). Moreover, he is portrayed as a “böser alter Mann” who appears like a harsher version of the Emperor: “Er trug den Bart des Kaiser Wilhelms I., doch kürzer geschoren, und an seinen Wangen war nichts von der weißen Wolle zu bemerken, die dem Herrscher das leutselige Aussehen verlieh” (*D.S.* 11). The third chapter discusses Broch’s critical depiction of imperial European powers as devourers of their own children and as producing parasites like the materialist Huguenau. This chapter illustrates judgment and oppressive imperial powers on the personal level, whereby Judgment Day is experienced as the condemnation of the first protagonist, Joachim von Pasenow, by his father. The narrator extends the social critique from the personal to the social level by drawing a parallel between the Junker’s demand that his sons put the family name before themselves and the Emperor’s call to young German men to sacrifice themselves for the fatherland during the First World War. The example of the fraught relationship between Joachim von Pasenow and his father demonstrates the spreading of a dangerous resignation and inaction, whose ultimate proof is the characters’ inability to speak or to write.

In the fourth chapter, I closely examine the role that language of everyday life and characters’ increasingly cold interaction play in presenting apathy as apocalyptic catastrophes. The characters’ constant communication breakdowns signal that they have no common vision; cacophony takes the place of dialogue. The first half of the chapter concentrates on the disintegration of meaning by analyzing Pasenow’s paralyzing fear of the familiar moral order and the role that language use plays in supporting the indifferent acceptance of words without meaning (e.g. automatic voicing of condolences without

awareness). In the second half of the fourth chapter, I examine the increasing reduction of human relations to functionalities: from the aristocratic-businessman Bertrand to the common-businessman Huguenau; from recognition of social structures to reduction of people into types. This is also done through the use of language, such as the legalese of business contracts.

My fifth chapter discusses narration as a possibility for finding redemption. In this chapter, I address how the author problematizes the authority of the narrator figure, thus foreclosing not only the apocalypse in the plot, but also foreclosing the authority of a prophetic medium. As theorized in Derrida's essay on the apocalyptic in literature, Broch's trilogy staves off the apocalyptic ending through his narrative. Although his narrator might sound authoritative, aloof, distanced, and untouched by the times, Broch shows that his narrator does not have the final say. By making his supposedly omniscient narrator into the identifiable Dr. Bertrand Müller, who is in search of an answer and community like other characters in the novels, and he disempowers the narrator. While the trilogy's plot escalates from social disintegration to war and proto-revolution from 1888 until 1918 with intensifying gloom, *Die Schlafwandler* diverts from the Biblical apocalyptic model in the end. The end has not yet come, and the Biblical narrative of the world's end opens up a space to create readers' own sense of the time.

Chapter 2

Conceptualizing Apocalyptic Time

Broch's trilogy bears the marks of the First World War and the failed November Revolution of 1918. The trilogy tells of the collapse of the Wilhelmine Empire, portraying its end as an apocalyptic time of social and political oppression, material hardship, and societal fragmentation.¹⁰⁰ While the trilogy begins with Germany's growing prosperity and expansionist ambitions in the first volume, the internally felt dissolution finds material manifestation in the catastrophic war, as the narrated time moves closer to 1918. The third volume explicitly describes the war years as a prelude to Judgment Day. The apparently endless war is depicted as the most intense period of this apocalyptic time: several characters allude to the war as a divine reckoning for accumulated human sins, and some, like the second protagonist, Esch, see it as a period of amnesty before Judgment Day and the subsequent dawn of a utopian age.¹⁰¹ The First

¹⁰⁰ By apocalyptic time, I mean a period perceived as a time of social and cultural disintegration because of dire material circumstances. Such periods give rise to different strategies to cope intellectually, psychologically, and artistically with predominantly negative situations. Coping mechanisms include not only images of endings and judgment, but also visions of new, alternative societies in which one finds redemption from the old destructive tendencies. Richard Landes identifies the practical aspect of "apocalyptic time" as "that perception of time in which the End of the World (variously imagined) is so close that its anticipation changes the behavior of the believer. Such perceptions of time operate on several levels of cognition, of individual, group, and mass psychology, and have been closely studied by anthropologists, sociologists, and psychologists for decades." Landes: 21-24. Like Frank Kermode, Landes does not distinguish between different genres of the end of the world narratives, i.e. millennialism, eschatology, apocalypse, and Messianism. Kermode, 6-17.

¹⁰¹ See Esch's apocalyptic fantasy in Volume III, after the violence of a proto-revolution breaks out. Pasenow is injured and Esch takes him to a safe place and goes out to seek help for his friend: "Doch seine [Eschs, SYK] Gedanken waren bei dem Mann, der in dem Keller lag, die Petroleumlampe zu seinen Häupten. *Wenn das Licht erlischt, ist der Erlöser nahe*. Er muß das Licht erlöschen, damit die Zeit gezählt werde" (*D.S.* 676, my emphasis). The mention of lamps is reminiscent of Jesus' parable of the wise and foolish virgins who prepare for the arrival for the groom, who symbolizes the Messiah (Matthew 25: 1-13).

World War is depicted as the embodiment of an unstoppable, massive wave of devastation – including material and economic devastation, the loss of countless lives, and other physical and psychological damages.¹⁰² Only supernatural powers seem capable of putting an end to cruelty and annihilation. Both catastrophic conditions and redemption from them are perceived as beyond human control, just as ending the war seems to be beyond human control.

The incomprehensibility of the historical events coincides with the uncontrollability of time that the narrative stresses. My analysis of apocalyptic time in the trilogy shows that Broch harnesses this uncertainty, and makes some sense of it himself, by characterizing the chaos and trauma that came with the war in terms his readers would have found familiar. For instance, labeling the period the Last Days is the first step in Broch's conceptual strategy to make the unfamiliar manageable by placing it into the framework of apocalyptic discourse. The analysis of apocalyptic time in Broch's trilogy also reveals the view that the Last Days extend beyond the war into the Weimar Republic. The trilogy thus shows the ups and downs of Germany's first republic as parts

In Christian theology, this story is told for the first and the second coming of Christ. Two additional particularly noteworthy examples of explicit apocalyptic references. 1) the self-declared prophets are quoted by religious characters: "Samwald sagte: 'Gödicke [a severely wounded veteran, who had a near-death experience and is seen as a "resurrected" person], dem kann nicht einmal die Pest mehr was anhaben[...] er ist ein Auferstandener.' Fendrich wusste noch einiges zu dem Thema: 'Nach der Bibel müssen jetzt *alle Heimsuchungen der Apokalypse* kommen [...] das hat auch der Major prophezeit... Esch sagt es auch.'" (D.S. 659, my emphasis). 2) The "resurrected" figure Gödicke during the chaos of a proto-revolution: "[Gödicke] stand auf der Berglehne, die er sich als Aussichtspunkt gewählt hatte, und streckte seine beiden Stöcke gegen den Himmel./ Mann hätte meinen können, daß er jauchze. [...] Gödicke wies mit den Stöcken auf die Flammen drüben und brüllte entzückt: '*Das Jüngste Gericht*... auferstanden von den Toten... auferstanden von den Toten... wer nicht auferstanden ist, kommt in die Hölle... der Teufel holt euch alle... alle holt er euch jetzt...'" (D.S. 671, my emphasis). But when one of the male nurses calls out to him that it is mealtime, he comes down. His bodily needs outweigh the spiritual ones.

¹⁰² E.g. amputation, whose emasculating and traumatizing effect is illustrated by the character Jaretski. See the following chapters in D.S. 6, 19, 23, 28 (discussion on the inhumane practice of medicine and amputation), 74 (prosthesis).

of an ongoing and unfinished process of disintegration that began in the Wilhelmine era of the preceding century.

While Broch participates in discussions on Germany's political and social stability in his essays and short fiction throughout the 1920s, *Die Schlafwandler* represents a synthesis of the viewpoints and political stands the author took over a decade.¹⁰³ Despite the various shifts in his worldview, Broch consistently turns to metaphysics to combat the cultural "Wert-Vakuum" discussed in the Introduction, which he holds responsible for Germany's cultural "disintegration." The author derides the supposedly progressive German spirit by employing similar theological rhetoric and tropes found in early 1920s cultural criticism by intellectuals from such disparate fields as theology, politics, and sociology.¹⁰⁴

This chapter concentrates on the depiction of the period between the two World Wars as an apocalyptic time by examining the intellectual and cultural milieu of Broch's early literary career. I look at apocalyptic rhetoric in the works of major figures, such as Paul Tillich, Carl Schmitt, and Siegfried Kracauer in order to demonstrate the prevalence of apocalyptic discourse in disparate fields during that period. Although these intellectuals' positions differ in political and ideological direction, their theoretical approaches in making sense of their period of great transition from the Empire to the Republic intersect in their use of apocalyptic discourse. For instance, their thoughts

¹⁰³ For a spectrum of Broch's political sympathies, ranging from nationalist conservative to Austro-Marxist, see the following studies, all of which trace the different political focus and interest in Broch's writings from the early years to his American exile: Kessler, "Hermann Broch: Menschenrecht, Demokratie und Toleranz."; Lützel, *Hermann Broch: Ethik und Politik*; Ritzer; Schlant, "Political Turmoil and Broch's Redeemer Figure."

¹⁰⁴ See also Karl Jaspers' 1931 *Die geistige Situation der Zeit*. Jasper belongs to the aforementioned group of intellectuals who analyze the period of rapid social, economic, and political changes from the late 19th-century until the 1930s.

intersect on the topic of the appropriate social and political action that would hold open the possibility of redemption, i.e. the liberation from adverse conditions and the restoration of peace, harmony, and wholeness from a prior state of material and spiritual damage through the sacrifice of a person or an object.¹⁰⁵ All of their writings display an overlap between cultural-political discourse and the theological discourse of apocalyptic eschatology.¹⁰⁶ Although *Die Schlafwandler* was published nearly ten years later, the resurgence of international economic crises in 1929 and the rise of fascism in the early 1930s motivated Broch to revisit the prewar era in his trilogy as a way of understanding a variety of unresolved problems marring Germany's development.¹⁰⁷ The trilogy resonates with the thoughts of Tillich, Schmitt, and Kracauer, which were produced during periods of intense searching for deliverance –whether religious or purely political – in the face of crises.

The connection that I am making in this chapter is a part of on-going work on establishing affinities between supposedly unusual interlocutors, such as Walter Benjamin and Schmitt.¹⁰⁸ Broch participated actively in political and cultural discussions

¹⁰⁵ In Christian terms, redemption would specifically refer to the deliverance of humanity from its collective sin through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In the Judaic tradition, redemption means the restoration of a utopian past. According to cabbalistic teachings, redemption comes in two forms: one is through a miracle; the other is through human action. In Volume III, *Die Schlafwandler* depicts the two monotheistic eschatological-apocalyptic interpretations through the interaction between Christian, Jewish, and atheistic characters, all of who long for deliverance from the war (in 1918). Broch's emphasis on the totally restorative quality of redemption is similar to that of Kracauer, for whom the term means, "in the utopian sense[,] a restoration of all things past and present." The unrealizability of this wish is treated more closely in chapter 3. On redemption in the early essays of Kracauer, see Miriam Hansen, "Decentric Perspectives: Kracauer's Early Writings on Film and Mass Culture," *New German Critique* 54, no. Special Issue on Siegfried Kracauer (Autumn, 1991): 53.

¹⁰⁶ I define "apocalyptic eschatology" as the rhetoric of the end of history and of divine revelation of humanity's redemption.

¹⁰⁷ One of the key goals in Broch's work is to inspire reflection about one's historical reality. In chapters 4 and 5, I discuss this point in conjunction with Broch's definition of the ethical potential of literature.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Keith Bullivant and Bernhard Spies, eds., *Literarisches Krisenbewußtsein : Ein Perzeptions- und Produktionsmuster im 20. Jahrhundert* (Munich: Iudicium, 2001); Moritz Föllmer and Rüdiger Graf, eds.,

in Berlin literary journals of the 1910s until 1930s, such as Franz Blei's journal *Summa*, which had also published book reviews and articles by Benjamin, Kracauer, and Schmitt.¹⁰⁹ Broch's interest in practical questions of ethics, as translated into social engagement, is evident in his essays on philosophy, culture, and literature. After the rise of German and Austrian fascism, Broch's interest in political writing deepens, as demonstrated in his 1937 pamphlet on the League of Nations before Germany annexed Austria in 1938;¹¹⁰ Broch also helped numerous Jews and other prosecuted citizens flee Germany during the 1930s and 1940s through letter campaigns, which allowed the persecuted Jews to obtain travel documents to leave.¹¹¹

Like Broch, Tillich and Schmitt share the contemporary apprehension over possible social and political collapse, but they also believe in an eventual release from this condition and its consequences through divine or human intervention, which involves help from outside of the sphere of accepted normality.¹¹² The concept of apocalyptic time

Die "Krise" der Weimarer Republik : zur Kritik eines Deutungsmusters (Frankfurt am Main; New York: Campus, 2005); Makropoulos.

¹⁰⁹ See bibliographical information in Felix Blindow, *Carl Schmitts Reichsordnung: Strategie für einen europäischen Großraum* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1999), 172; Hermann Broch, *Das Teesdorfer Tagebuch für Ea von Allesch*, 1st ed. (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1995), 230-231. In recent Broch scholarship, Friedrich Vollhardt points out that Broch and Schmitt had not only read each other's works, but also respected each other's works. For further description of his engagement in religious discourse in intellectual and literary magazines from 1917 until the early 1930s Friedrich Vollhardt, "Hermann Broch und der religiöse Diskurs in den Kulturzeitschriften seiner Zeit (*Summa*, *Hochland*, *Eranos*)," in *Hermann Broch: Religion, Mythos, Utopie -- zur ethischen Perspektive seines Werks*, ed. Paul Michael Lützel and Christine Maillard (Strasbourg: Recherches Germaniques, Université Marc Bloch, 2008), 44f. In the 1931 correspondence Blei comments that Schmitt liked the first volume (*1888 – Posenow oder die Romantik*), and mentions that Broch would like to hear from Schmitt. See Franz Blei, *Briefe an Carl Schmitt 1917-1933*, ed. Angela Reinthal (Heidelberg: Manutius, 1995), 76. In a letter to Brody, the publisher at the Rhein Verlag, Broch asked him to send Schmitt copies of the *Die Schwandler*'s second and third volumes. Vollhardt, note 25, p. 45.

¹¹⁰ Hermann Broch, *Völkerbund-Resolution: Das vollst. polit. Pamphlet v. 1937 mit Kommentar, Entwurf u. Korrespondenz*, Brenner-Studien (Salzburg: O. Müller, 1973).

¹¹¹ Lützel, ed. *Hermann Broch*.

¹¹² For discussion of discourse of crises between the two World Wars, see works like Karl Prümm, "Antifaschistische Mission ohne Adressaten : Zeitkritik und Prognostik in der Wochenzeitschrift Deutsche Republik 1929-1933," in *Weimars Ende. Prognosen und Diagnosen in der deutschen Literatur und politischen Publizistik 1930-1933*, ed. Thomas Koebner (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 1982). Prümm's article

forms the backdrop of Tillich's and Schmitt's central socio-theological perception of their historical era. They consider their contemporary period in need of restorative spiritual unity. However, their conceptual strategies differ: their individual theological and political leanings indicate that they diverge considerably in the emphasis they place in their diagnosis of what may be wrong with their culture and in the means they envision to cope with its dissolution. With his concept of *kairos*, Tillich emphasizes the intervention of the indirectly named God, who inspires humans to recognize their part in finding salvation as the transcendental source of human redemption.¹¹³ Schmitt, however, prefers the notion of *katechon*, with which he stresses the necessity of restoring legal order in society chiefly through the intervention of strong human leadership.¹¹⁴ On the

analyses discussions of artists and intellectuals who sought to warn the public about the rise of fascism in Germany through literary and intellectual journals. Another example mentioned in the first chapter is the more recent collection of essays that share the starting point of questioning the term "crisis" as an accurate description of the Weimar Republic: Föllmer and Graf, eds. In a recent article, Christine Maillard and Michel Deneken also use Paul Tillich and Robert Bultmann as influential theologians during the interwar period: Michel Deneken and Christine Maillard, "Littérature et religiosité dans le premier tiers du xx^e siècle: Configurations plurielles," in *Hermann Broch: Religion, Mythos, Utopie -- zur ethischen Perspektive seines Werks*, ed. Paul Michael Lützel and Christine Maillard (Strasbourg: Recherches Germaniques, Université Marc Bloch, 2008), 4-6. Cf. Cremer.

¹¹³ The Greek word "kairos" means "the right time." In Christian theology, it refers to the first and second coming of Jesus Christ as the Messiah. For a comprehensive definition of "kairos," see *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr Siebeck, 2001), s.v. "Kairologie." In this entry, Englert ascribes the contemporary understanding of "kairos" to Paul Tillich: "In der neueren Theol. gebraucht P. Tillich den Begriff Kairos im Sinne einer auf die Zeichen der Zeit gerichteten prophetischen Geschichtsdeutung. Dieses Anliegen wird, angestoßen durch das Vaticanum II (Past Johannes XXIII. als 'Lehrer der Zeichen der Zeit'), später bes. in der kath. Pastoraltheol. breit aufgegriffen: im Sinne einer humanwiss. belehrten theol. Gegenwartsanalyse." My discussion of Tillich's concept of "kairos" is based on his essay "Kairos I". This essay was originally published in *Die Tat* in 1922. It was translated into English as *The Protestant Era* in 1948 (Chicago) and retranslated into German in 1950 as *Der Protestantismus* (Stuttgart). The version I refer to is the 1950 re-translation from English in Paul Tillich, "Kairos I," in *Der Widerstand von Raum und Zeit: Schriften zur Geschichtsphilosophie* (Stuttgart: Evangelisches Verlagswerk, 1963). For a comparison between the different theological descriptions of the period as "crisis" (used by Karl Barth) or "kairos" (Tillich's term) see Cremer: 294-299.

¹¹⁴ Cf. chapter 3. The term "katechon" comes from the Greek participle "ὁ Κατέχων, τὸ Κατέχον," referring to something being slowed down. It appears in 2. Thessalonians 2:6-7. In 2:6, the word appears in a neutral form ("that which restrains") and in 2:7, in a personalized masculine form ("one who restrains"). In the context of political theology, the term refers to the force that restrains the enemies who prepare the way for the opposition's Anti-Christ-like force. For an extended discussion of "katechon," see Blindow, 144-60. Cf. Andreas Koenen, *Der Fall Schmitt: Sein Aufstieg zum "Kronjuristen des Dritten Reiches"* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1995), 594-98. See also Horst Bredekamp's discussion of "katechon"

one hand, the theologian Tillich seeks to alert the German public to the necessity of a heightened spiritual and ethical disposition at the dawn of a new divine era. On the other, the political philosopher Schmitt views the conservation of legal order as most crucial while waiting for Judgment Day. In Broch's *Die Schlafwandler*, these perspectives are interwoven, with an added modicum of Tillich's belief that Germany's deliverance lies in the mystical combination of human action and divine powers. *Die Schlafwandler* presents a variety of contrary theological and political views of Weimar Germany, which in the view of Broch and his contemporaries faced major social collapse and renewal. The complex presentation of this theological, political, and social ambivalence is Broch's great literary achievement. Broch conveys the ambivalence of this period through the trope of waiting; the uses of waiting in the trilogy also help illuminate the different approaches to apocalyptic time other than those taken by Tillich and Schmitt.

Critical Diagnostics and Resolutions in Apocalyptic Times

Despite representing contrary political and confessional leanings, Tillich and Schmitt have a common starting point. Along with other German intellectuals, they share a general propensity to view Western civilization in its entirety as being in a state of irreversible disintegration.¹¹⁵ The increased tendency to talk and write about a general

in the context of Schmitt's definition of the state of exception. Bredekamp: 252-53. Further examination follows in the section on Schmitt. Incidentally, Schmitt's *Politische Theologie* was published in 1922, the same year as Tillich's "Kairos I." Cf. Jan-Werner Müller, *A Dangerous Mind: Carl Schmitt in Post-War European Thought* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 62-76, 156-168; Andreas Kalyvas, "Constitutional Failure: Carl Schmitt in Weimar," *Perspectives on Politics*, 4, no. 1 (2006): 161-63.

¹¹⁵ The most prominent example of early 20th-century cultural analyses presenting a sweeping view of the battered state of German society as part of a generalized cultural demise of the Western world is, of course, Spengler's *Der Untergang des Abendlandes*. See John Stroup for a description of different conservatisms, such as conservative revolutionaries, nationalists, and *Vernunftrepublikaner* among others. Stroup points out that conservatives offered various appealing arguments in criticizing the new Weimar Republic, each attracting diverse groups of followers, from the most educated members of polite society to the most violent thugs. John Stroup, "Political Theology and Secularization Theory in Germany, 1918-1939:

social, cultural, and political dissolution among German intellectuals in the 1920s was partly due to an effort to absorb, comprehend, and respond to modernization: from material culture (new technologies and increased penetration of technologies in society) and lifestyle (urbanization) to political structural transformations (end of the German Empire, partially enforced democratization after 1918, and partisanship), each change necessitated adjustments. Cultural pessimists during and after the First World War claimed that the war was an irreparable historical rupture with the past, multiplying their diagnoses of just what was wrong with German society with each new postwar economic fluctuation and indication of political instability.¹¹⁶ Under the circumstances, the view that only drastic measures could stave off Germany's demise further increased.¹¹⁷ Alongside the debate about the shape of the new state at the end of the imperial era, however, the period after the First World War appears as a time of both an epochal ending and new opportunities.¹¹⁸

Emanuel Hirsch as a Phenomenon of His Time," *The Harvard Theological Review* 90, no. 3 (Jul., 1987): 322. For a specific example of differentiating between different conservative positions, see J.B. Bendersky, "Carl Schmitt and the Conservative Revolution," *Telos* 72, no. (Summer 1987). Cf. Makropoulous. Makropoulous also distinguishes between the different layers within conservatism, even showing similarities among traditionally unlikely figures. De Wilde's article is a more recent example of research motivated by such comparisons. Marc De Wilde, "Violence and the State of Exception: Reflections on Theologico-Political Motifs in Benjamin and Schmit," in *Political Theologies : Public Religions in a Post-Secular World*, ed. Hent De Vries and Lawrence Eugene Sullivan (New York: Fordham University Press, 2006).

¹¹⁶ Cf. See also Anton Kaes' article on the influence of material circumstances on the literary culture (for both writers and readers) during the interwar period. Anton Kaes, "Schreiben und Lesen in der Weimarer Republik," in *Literatur der Weimarer Republik 1918-1933*, ed. Bernhard Weyergraf (München: Carl Hanser Verlag, 1995). Kaes delineates the interrelationship between changing post-1918 economic and political models and the various tendencies in literary visions and output during the Weimar Republic. His main argument is that the fluctuating economy and the new democratization triggered fundamental changes in authors' self-conception, the relationship between readers and writers, and the general understanding of literature's role in the new society.

¹¹⁷ Cf. Chapter 14, "Cultural Pessimism: Diagnoses of Decline" in Kaes, Jay, and Dimendberg, eds., *The Weimar Republic Sourcebook*, 355-87. See also Stern; B. Widdig, "Mann unter Männern: Männerbünde und die Angst vor der Masse in der Rede Von deutscher Republik," *The German Quarterly* 66, no. 4 (1993). Spengler's influence is unmistakable.

¹¹⁸ See also Weinstein on the initial high hopes for actual political change among intellectuals of the left in 1918, and their disappointment soon afterwards, in 1919 and into the early 1920s. Joan Weinstein, *The End*

In analyzing their contemporary critical epoch and in considering possible solutions to its problems, Tillich and Schmitt both divide time according to theological categories. The theological terms they use, *kairos* and *katechon*, reveal that they both think about their contemporary period as an apocalyptic time. Their divergent views become apparent in the emphasis they place on particular aspects of apocalyptic time. In describing each, the similarity with Broch's understanding of time is revealed. I hence show in which complex context one can view Broch's cultural criticism.

Apocalyptic Time and Tillich's *Kairos*

Broch's diagnosis of contemporary German society resembles Tillich's. Like Broch, Tillich understands the Weimar present as an apocalyptic time and believes that people can find redemption through their joint efforts in a spiritual community.¹¹⁹ In contemplating how Weimar society undergoes a material and spiritual crisis, Tillich invokes the theological concept of apocalyptic time by opposing historical time to the moment of divine intervention. In his theological interpretation of culture, Tillich expresses the two perceptions of time by using the Greek terms *kronos* (historical time) and *kairos* (right time). In his discussion of *kairos*, the theologian further clarifies the term's meaning in Christian theology and in the philosophy of history:

of Expressionism : Art and the November Revolution in Germany, 1918-1919 (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1990); Weinstein, *The End of Expressionism : Art and the November Revolution in Germany, 1918-1919*. Cf. the following collection, which includes writers' manifestos on effecting change through literature and art. Paul Pörtner, ed. *Literaturrevolution 1910-1925: Dokumente, Manifeste, Programme*, vol. 2 (Berlin-Spandau: Hermann Luchterhand Verlag, 1961). For a selection of translated manifestos of 1918 (Spartacus Manifesto, Founding Manifesto of the Communist Party), Heinrich Mann's hopeful essay on the revolution of 1918, and the constitution of the Weimar Republic, see Kaes, Jay, and Dimendberg, eds., *The Weimar Republic Sourcebook*, 35-51.

¹¹⁹ As is the case with Broch, the First World War "was a decisive influence on all Tillich's reading and thinking for years to come. In a sense, then, the idea of a theology of culture was a response to [a sense of profound] desolation." John Heywood Thomas, "Philosophical Influences on Tillich's Development of a Theology of Culture," in *Kairos and Logos*, ed. John Carey (Mercer University Press, 1984), 187. Cf. Lützel and Maillard, eds., *Hermann Broch: Religion, Mythos, Utopie*.

Kairos in seinem *einzigartigen* und universalen Sinn ist für den christlichen Glauben das Erscheinen Jesu als des “Christus”. Kairos in seinem *allgemeinen* und speziellen Sinn ist für den Geschichtsphilosophen jeder Wendepunkt in der Geschichte, in dem das Ewige das Zeitliche richtet und umwandelt. Kairos in seinem *besonderen Sinn für uns*, in seinem für unsere augenblickliche Lage entscheidenden Charakter ist das Hereinbrechen einer neuen Theonomie auf dem Boden einer profanierten und entleerten autonomen Kultur.¹²⁰

Tillich provides three definitions of *kairos* that are specific to Christian theology, historiography, and his contemporary society. First, in Christian theology, the “right time” refers to the time of Jesus Christ’s appearance as the Messiah, both through His birth and the Second Coming when the world ends.

Second, in historiography, *kairos* is a general term for a turning point between historical paradigms. Even in this definition, which is not specifically Christological, *kairos* retains a theological meaning for Tillich: historical turning points are characterized as interventions of the eternal (God) in the temporary (human lives), in which the eternal directs or judges and transforms temporality.¹²¹ Especially the word “richten,” which could mean ‘to direct’, ‘to judge’, or ‘to repair’, implies the involvement of supernatural judgment, rectification, and/or redemption as part of a major historical shift. Tillich filters his view of historical turning points through a theological interpretive mode. He views historical changes as crises that end when the eternal (i.e. the spiritual, the divine, or, simply, God) intercedes and transforms the impermanent, material conditions in chronological time.

¹²⁰ Tillich, 24. Emphasis in original.

¹²¹ Here I draw a parallel to Brokoff’s distinction between the transcendental and immanent. He considers this distinction characteristic of apocalyptic rhetoric that can be transferred to other non-biblical texts. See the introduction to Brokoff, 8-14.

Third, in interpreting the term *kairos* for himself and his contemporaries (“*Kairos in seinem besonderen Sinn für uns*” [emphasis in original]), Tillich presents a theological diagnostic of his epoch. Like Broch, he considers Germany in the early 1920s to be in a time of a profound crisis of values in “einer profanierten und entleerten autonomen Kultur.”¹²² Again like Broch, Tillich believes that his contemporary society has gradually become empty of meaning and needs superhuman intervention in order to build up a new socially engaged, compassionate society with a religious center.¹²³ According to Tillich’s view of the contemporary period as *kairos*, the beginning of a new era of divine law is close: “in seinem für unsere augenblickliche Lage entscheidenden Charakter ist das Hereinbrechen einer neuen Theonomie.”¹²⁴ In other words, Tillich believes that his society is in an apocalyptic time and awaits divine redemption under a new theonomy, or “law of God”. Slightly more than ten years later, Broch asks a question on the state of social relations and values in “Geist und Zeitgeist: “Hat der Mensch dieser Zeit sich wirklich vom Geist und Logos losgesagt? Sein äußeres Leben und die Weltlage sprächen sicherlich dafür, sein Versinken in die positivistische Stummheit spräche dafür, daß er sich losgesagt hätte.”¹²⁵ Broch asks whether a self-centered, materialist mentality has eradicated the pursuit of higher meaning, which he equates with intellectual understanding. Notably, he evokes the equation between the word (Logos) and Spirit (Geist) through an allusion to the Christian Creation Myth: “steht am Eingang des

¹²² Tillich criticizes modernity for being transformed by secularization and materialism to the point that his contemporary Germany became void of spirituality (“entleert”). His use of “autonomy,” in describing a society that is ruled by the consensus of independent and unrelated individuals alludes to the discussions on the changing German culture at the time. Cf. Simmel’s notion of “objective culture” and its analysis in David Frisby, *Simmel and Since: Essays on Georg Simmel's Social Theory* (London: Routledge, 1992); George Ritzer, *Sociological Theory* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1992), third edition.

¹²³ Tillich, 26-28.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 24.

¹²⁵ Broch, “Geist und Zeitgeist,” 190.

Geschehens: ‘Am Anfang war das Wort’ ... ‘und der Geist Gottes schwebte über den Gewässern.’ Und gewaltiger noch [...] als dieses prophetische Wissen ist in jenem Satz des Anfangs das Wissen um den geheimnisvollen Doppelursprung der menschlichen Seele eingefangen.”¹²⁶ Quoting from John 1:1 and Genesis 2:2, the author equates God to Logos and Spirit. His essay suggests that Broch, like Tillich, perceives an increasing alienation from metaphysical meaning. This perception can be further elucidated through an examination of Tillich’s understanding of the societal role of the dominance of the spiritual.

In order to appreciate the significance of Tillich’s concept of theonomy and the way it structures the relationship between humans and the transcendental for him, it is helpful to understand that theonomy is one of the three laws that theologians of the time considered to govern life; the other two fundamental laws are autonomy and heteronomy.¹²⁷ Theonomy is the law of God; divine will determines the order of the world. Tillich emphasizes the mutual reliance between the eternal and the transient as the foundation of the law of God. A world governed by theonomy holds the mysterious and mystical as accepted principles because divine intervention inexplicable by worldly laws could happen at any time.¹²⁸ Tillich observes that there are limits to the contemporary scientific methods of orienting oneself in the world and relating to other people in it. His emphasis on theonomy opposes the idea that everything is explicable by underscoring the persistence of something inexplicable and ephemerally absolute.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 186.

¹²⁷ These terms “theonomy,” “autonomy,” and “heteronomy” were common currency in the theology of the time. Stroup uses these terms to describe how Hirsch tried to reconcile a religious view of history with his theory to legitimize Hitler’s totalitarian regime. Stroup: 343.

¹²⁸ Tillich, 21-24.

Autonomy is the law of the individual; it is based on individual reason. Seen positively, an autonomous society calls on the ethical consciousness of each individual member to consider how they influence each other (i.e. one's neighbor, "seinen Nächsten"). A society guided by the principle of autonomy focuses on social relations among individuals rather than the relationship between God and humans, as under theonomy. Autonomy is not necessarily not religious, but its emphasis is different from that of theonomy. According to the theologian, the rule of autonomy supports the dominance of empirical, scientific method of relating to the material world through observable evidence.¹²⁹ In positive terms, one strives for an objective examination of one's environment. Seen negatively, an autonomous culture, which Tillich calls a profane, empty culture, consists of self-interested individuals. In economic terms, capitalism thrives in an autonomous (i.e. atomized) society because the needs or desires of individuals are put before those of the collective. Cynicism and skepticism can dominate an overtly autonomous culture in the name of pragmatism and realism, and these attitudes purge the soul from contemporary German culture, along with other enigmas. Those who are unfulfilled by an entirely autonomous culture are either consumed by longing for a bygone theonomy or wait for a future era of theonomy. In words reminiscent of Kracauer's essay "Die Wartenden" and the attitudes of ambivalent waiting in Broch's trilogy, Tillich writes of a creative and receptive stance of waiting until the right time appears ("in einer Haltung schöpferischen Wartens, bis der Kairos

¹²⁹ Ibid., 21. Cf. Stroup: 322f. Tillich's skepticism toward autonomous society is reminiscent of some conservative critique of the modern, individualistic society. I do not mean to expose Tillich's conservative leanings, but rather to underline Stroup's point that there was a variety of different conservatisms, which challenges any overt generalization.

erscheint.”)¹³⁰ The moment that a new theonomy intervenes in a society ruled by autonomy, a major historical turning point materializes.¹³¹ According to Tillich, theonomy can co-exist with autonomy as the answer to a society’s problems, bringing harmony to relations among independent and autonomous individuals who long for an overarching spirituality. This is close to the vision of an ideal spiritual society that *Die Schlafwandler* also hints at, as when the narrative periodically presents moments of communal spirituality, arising serendipitously and without any irony.¹³²

Among the three types of law, heteronomy (the law of another person) has the most negative connotation. Heteronomy cannot co-exist with the law of God. Under heteronomy, the autonomous is suppressed because the individual is subjected to the law of another; individual spirits are oppressed. Tillich cites the rise of fascism as a political example of heteronomy.¹³³ He is critical of heteronomy, which he characterizes as subscribing to an unreflective, pragmatic eclecticism – possibly in reference to populist rhetoric – so that the end may justify the means. Tillich is skeptical toward the common turn-of-the-century view of history as a teleological development and instead views history as a series of divinely sanctioned turning points, including Marxist or socialist revolutions. He is similarly critical of any absolutist position on the right or the left

¹³⁰ Tillich, 24.

¹³¹ Ibid., 23.

¹³² Throughout the trilogy, harmonious moments arise serendipitously, when conflicts are diverted. E.g., during a visit of neighboring landed gentlemen and gentlewomen, a looming tension is defused through a canary’s song, which everyone deems beautiful: “Ein giftiger Blick strafte sie für diese Richtigstellung [...] und es wäre sicherlich zu einer kleinen Auseinandersetzung gekommen, wenn nicht der Harzer Kanarienvogel in seinem Käfig die dünne gelbe Garbe seiner Stimme hätte emporschießen lassen” (*D.S.* 86). The narrator describes this scene as an oasis for the interlocutors’ souls, that find temporary relief from deadly loneliness in an atomized society: “Da saßen sie um ihn herum wie um einen Springbrunnen und vergaßen für ein paar Augenblicke alles andere: es war, als ob dieser schmale gelbe Stimmstreifen auf- und niedergleitend sich um sie schlänge und sie zu jener Gemeinsamkeit vereinte, in der die Behaglichkeit ihres Lebens und Sterbens begründet lag” (*D.S.* 87).

¹³³ Tillich, 23.

because these positions leave out the aspect of divine intervention, relying wholly or almost entirely on human agency. He argues:

Die konservativ-absolute Geschichtsphilosophie kehrt wieder in dem Kampf der Theonomie, dem “Kampf zwischen Glaube und Unglaube”, wie er genannt worden ist. Dieser Kampf geht durch die ganze Geschichte und trägt in sich die höchste Spannung, aber er ist nicht identisch mit dem Kampf um die historische Kirche.

Die revolutionär-absolute Geschichtsphilosophie ist im Recht, wenn sie die absolute Spannung auf absolute Erfüllung betont, wie sie in jedem Kairos erfahren wird. In jedem Kairos ist “das Reich Gottes nahe herbeigekommen”, denn in ihm vollzieht sich eine welthistorische, unwiederholbare, einmalige Entscheidung für oder gegen das Unbedingte. Deshalb ist jeder Kairos, wenn auch verhüllt, der universale Kairos, der sich in seiner Einmaligkeit manifestiert hat in der Erscheinung des Christus, aber er bringt die Erfüllung nicht in der Zeit.¹³⁴

Tillich underlines the idea that the unique and universal meaning of *kairos* is determined by divine redemption that goes beyond the scope of historical comprehension. That said, the arrival at apocalyptic moments, in which monumental conflicts reach a critical point, can be put into historical terms: the conservative thesis of history emphasizes an intensifying battle between faith and faithlessness, and the revolutionary thesis stresses the ever-increasing anticipation of radical change. Yet, *kairos* cannot be conclusively explained, nor can any individual or group bring it about, nor can one progress toward *kairos*.

By stressing that the right time will eventually arrive, Tillich distinguishes his theology from the *krisis* theology of Karl Barth, who subscribed a more fundamentalist theology.¹³⁵ In a comprehensive overview of the thoughts of three monumental figures of early twentieth century Protestant theologians – Paul Tillich, Karl Barth, and Rudolf Bultmann – Douglas Cremer notes that Tillich’s *kairos* emphasizes the moment of

¹³⁴ Ibid., 24. The term “das Unbedingte” refers to God.

¹³⁵ Cremer: 299.

redemption more than *krisis*. *Krisis* calls attention to the moment of decision and judgment that comes before humanity's redemption by God.¹³⁶ Although Tillich has a more optimistic outlook than Barth, who was also deeply disillusioned by the First World War, Tillich's socialist position and Barth's conservative positions cannot be separated as neatly as Cremer does for the sake of his argument.¹³⁷ In fact, in Tillich's evocation of apocalyptic imageries, especially divine judgment and decision, and in interpreting their shared historical time as one of crisis, Tillich comes closer to Barth than Cremer claims. Christ, as the Messiah and the one who determines the "right time," is as important to both Barth's and Tillich's theologies as is Christ's role as the final determiner of the fate of the world. Admittedly, Tillich's socialist inclination and his trust in human agency evidence optimism, which is more important for him than for the crisis theologian Barth. But for both Tillich and Barth, humanity's salvation depends on the grace of God.

Throughout his essay, Tillich distinguishes between socialism and religious socialism. The theologian warns against placing anything on the same level as the divine,

¹³⁶ Ibid. Karl Barth's emphasis on decision, as noted by Cremer, recalls Carl Schmitt's stress on decision in his theory of the sovereign. The difference between Barth and Schmitt is that for Barth, only God can make the right decisions, whereas Schmitt argues that the sovereign takes on a transcendental position as the law-provider in crises. Both Barth and Schmitt are conservative and they have similar starting points (and even similar vocabulary), but their end points differ widely. Cf. Stroup on the diversity of conservatism during the Weimar Republic. Stroup.

¹³⁷ Cf. Stroup in note 129. Cf. Ruddies. Ruddies examines the tensions and parallels among Weimar theologians and intellectuals on the political left and right, in relation to democracy and national identity in the new republic (e.g. concerns with ideas of "Gemeinschaft" and "Gesellschaft"). According to Ruddies, the ideological overlap between the left and right during the Weimar Republic originate in eschatology for the rootless in modernity ("Eschatologie für die Entwurzelten der Moderne," p. 22). For instance, the conservative protestant theologian, Ernst Troeltsch, supported the cooperation of the conservatives and independent during the early Weimar years (1919 and 1922, before the Rapallo agreement). Troeltsch was aware of a desire for an absolute faith and the efforts to gain that kind of faith in theology, philosophy, and politics on both the left and right. This was called a "Krisentheologie." Another noteworthy example that Ruddies cites is the Paul Tillich, who responds to the rise of German fascism from a theological viewpoint. Tillich wrote in 1932 that contemporary political thought did not only stem from a wish for a utopian ideal, but also from a romantic yearning for origins, earth, and tradition in a regime, whose strong leader was Adolf Hitler. At the time, Tillich saw a possibility of a temporary cooperation between the proletariat with the fascist groups under the banner of revolution.

even well-intentioned party politics: “Der religiöse Sozialismus darf zur Zeit weder eine kirchenpolitische noch eine parteipolitische Bewegung werden, weil er dadurch die rücksichtslose Energie verliert, Kirchen und Parteien unter das Gericht des Unbedingten zu stellen.”¹³⁸ Tillich is thus critical of any kind of fundamentalist party politics, whether socialist or right wing conservative. Cremer’s emphasis on Tillich’s faith in social activism as a means to contrast him with the fundamentalist, conservative Barth, is somewhat unsatisfactory for this reason; Tillich participated in social activism because he believed in taking practical actions to remedy human problems, not because he believed that his actions would have any effect on bringing about divine intervention. Again, we return to the idea of the grace of God as the crucial factor in judging, redeeming, and transforming the world. Ultimately, Tillich wants to alert his contemporaries to the importance of God’s presence and divine order in the immanent world. Schmitt’s pragmatic description of the sovereign as occupying a transcendental position under the rule of law goes against Tillich’s theological view of society, which does not distinguish strictly between the ordinary and the divine.

Apocalyptic Time as “Frist” (Reprieve) and Schmitt’s *Katechon*

Like Tillich, Schmitt uses theological categories to make sense of the social and political instabilities of the 1920s.¹³⁹ However, Schmitt differs from Tillich in his motivation to find practical solutions for the instability of the Weimar Republic’s governance. Instead of envisioning the dawn of a religious utopian age, Schmitt addresses

¹³⁸ Tillich, 28. This advice could apply to anyone who ascribes a transcendental status to anything but God, for instance, someone ascribing it to politics.

¹³⁹ See De Wilde’s description of Schmitt’s political theology: De Wilde, 189-90.

the Weimar constitution's function in maintaining order.¹⁴⁰ This focus on practical solutions is apparent in his employment of *katechon* to reflect on the implied meanings of apocalyptic time.¹⁴¹ Schmitt refers to political powers as the forces that hold the existing legal order together until the time is ripe for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.¹⁴²

Unlike Tillich, Schmitt privileges a critical political solution to put an end to the political strife and civil war-like conditions in the Weimar Republic's early years. Schmitt believed that instituting a state of exception would stop the "politics on the street," or violent clashes between paramilitary groups of the left and right.¹⁴³ In a state of exception, a sovereign takes absolute power to end threats to the established legal

¹⁴⁰ For instance, Stroup makes the case that Schmitt's political theory is decidedly in the realm of politics and specifically in the area of writing the constitution. Stroup argues that Schmitt's theological language is mainly used to illustrate Schmitt's points on governmental legitimacy and is not intended to justify Hitler as a divinely sanctioned ruler. Rather than as a "theologian dabbling in politics," one should focus on Schmitt as primarily "a jurist and political theorist." Schmitt, according to Stroup, believed that the political crisis of the Weimar Republic required recourse to "metajuristic sources." That, for him, meant that it was the appropriate time for the popularly elected president to declare a state of exception – similar to our current understanding of a "state of emergency" --, a right granted him under Article 48 of the Weimar constitution. What is more, Stroup makes the influential Protestant theologian, Emanuel Hirsch, responsible for crafting the theological legitimization of the National Socialist government. Stroup: 337f.

¹⁴¹ See note 114.

¹⁴² Blindow quotes from Schmitt's letter to Albrecht Erich Günther: "Zu Κατέχων: ich glaube an den Katechon; er ist für mich die einzige Möglichkeit, als Christ Geschichte zu verstehen und sinnvoll zu finden." See also Andreas Koenen, "Visionen vom "Reich" : Das politisch-theologische Erbe der Konservativen Revolution," in *Metamorphosen des Politischen : Grundfragen politischer Einheitsbildung seit den 20er Jahren*, ed. Andreas Göbel, Dirk van Laak, and Ingeborg Villinger (Berlin: Akademischer Verlag, 1995), 68-73. Even though Schmitt first mentions the term in 1942, the concept of the *katechon* is central to his understanding of history and political theology of the 1920s. The ideas of delaying destruction through strong decisions and conserving legal order, which are inherent to *katechon* are already present in Schmitt's *Politische Theologie* of 1922. See Blindow, 156. See also Bredekamp: 252-53. See also Koenen on the role the concept of *katechon* plays for Schmitt's theory of Germany's Third Reich: Koenen, "Visionen vom Reich," 68-73.

¹⁴³ Although it would be called into effect in the same manner as a "state of emergency," a "state of exception" has a distinct meaning for Schmitt, in the sense that he especially stresses the sovereign's role in determining when the exceptional situation arises. Neil Levi comments: "Schmitt loosely defines the state of exception as a situation of extreme danger to the state's existence. [...] The sovereign is the name of that person (legal or actual) who decides not only that the situation is a state of exception but also what needs to be done to eliminate the state of exception and thus preserve the state and restore order.[...] As with the state of exception, there are no rational criteria for distinguishing friend from enemy [the distinction between friend and enemy determines political action, SYK]. All conflict is situational conflict." Neil Levi, "Carl Schmitt and the Question of the Aesthetic," *New German Critique* 34, no. No. 2 (Summer 2007): 29, 34. See also De Wilde, 198 ff.

order.¹⁴⁴ The first chapter of Schmitt's *Politische Theologie* discusses the state of exception and the definition of the sovereign together. From the beginning, Schmitt emphasizes decision-making as the primary characteristic of the sovereign: "Souverän ist, wer über den Ausnahmezustand entscheidet."¹⁴⁵ Schmitt derides the democratic political model, preferring rule by a decisive dictator.¹⁴⁶ Schmitt refers to the authority of Donoso Cortes in his judgment of the bourgeois class as a "diskutierende Klasse." He draws a parallel between the ineffective Weimar parliamentary rule and that of Cortes' historical situation. Schmitt argues: "Eine Klasse, die alle politische Aktivität ins Reden verlegt, in Presse und Parlament, ist einer Zeit sozialer Kämpfe nicht gewachsen."¹⁴⁷ He paraphrases Cortes' sarcastic comment on bourgeois liberals' indecision and timidity: if the liberals had to choose between Jesus Christ or Barrabas, they would either request an adjournment or form a commission of inquiry to investigate the matter further.¹⁴⁸ (66)

Schmitt continues to attack the Republic's leaders through Cortes:

¹⁴⁴ Schmitt. On the necessity of restoring order through such extreme measures, Schmitt argues: "Jede generelle Norm verlangt eine normale Gestaltung der Lebensverhältnisse, auf welche sie tatbestandmäßig Anwendung finden soll und die sie ihrer normativen Regelung unterwirft. Die Norm braucht ein homogenes Medium.[...]Es gibt keine Norm, die auf ein Chaos anwendbar wäre. Die Ordnung muß hergestellt sein, damit die Rechtsordnung einen Sinn hat. Es muß eine normale Situation geschaffen werden, und souverän ist derjenige, der definitiv darüber entscheidet, ob dieser normale Zustand wirklich herrscht. Alles Recht ist 'Situationsrecht'. Der Souverän schafft und garantiert die Situation als Ganzes in ihrer Totalität." Schmitt, 13, 19. Cf. De Wilde, 200. Cf. Bredekamp: 252.

¹⁴⁵ Schmitt, 13.

¹⁴⁶ Earlier, he points out that democratic parliamentary rule serves those with economic might and that the working class is still oppressed, drawing a parallel between early 19th-century France and early 20th-century Germany: "sie [the bourgeoisie] schafft die Aristokratie des Blutes und der Familie ab und lässt doch die unverschämte Herrschaft der Geldaristokratie zu, die dümmste und ordinärste Form einer Aristokratie. [...] Die heute herrschende Art ökonomisch-technischen Denkens vermag eine politische Idee gar nicht mehr zu/ perzipieren. Der moderne Staat scheint hier wirklich das geworden zu sein, was Max Weber in ihm sieht: ein großer Betrieb.[...] Verschwindet hier das Politische im Ökonomischen oder Technisch-Organisatorischen, so zergeht es auf der andern Seite in dem ewigen Gespräch kultur- und geschichtsphilosophischer Allgemeinheiten, die mit ästhetischen Charakterisierungen eine Epoche als klassisch, romantisch oder barock goutieren. In beidem ist der Kern der politischen Idee, die anspruchsvolle moralische Entscheidung, umgangen. Die aktuelle Bedeutung jener gegenrevolutionären Staatsphilosophen aber liegt in der Konsequenz, mit der sie sich entscheiden." Ibid., 68f.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 63f.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 66.

Sein Wesen [of bourgeois liberalism] ist Verhandeln, abwartende Halbheit, mit der Hoffnung, die definitive Auseinandersetzung, die blutige Entscheidungsschlacht, könnte in eine parlamentarische Debatte verwandelt werden und ließe sich durch eine ewige Diskussion ewig suspendieren./ Diktatur ist der Gegensatz zu Diskussion.¹⁴⁹

Schmitt juxtaposes the decision-making power of sovereign leadership to the verbose ineffectiveness of bourgeois liberal rule. He stresses the sovereign's ability to make and enforce decisions, and contrasts this ability with the supposedly meaningless talk of bourgeois republicans. Schmitt's theory of the sovereign and the state of exception follows an apocalyptic-eschatological logic: sovereign power, which has the unique ability to save a society from collapse, can be claimed only by a person who is outside the boundaries of the normality threatened by the impending collapse. The sovereign thus appears as a Christ-like figure by entering the scene of crisis from the margins of normality, and restores and maintains order by making decisions and enacting legal rules.¹⁵⁰ In light of Schmitt's conception of historical time, the sovereign seems like a placeholder for Christ. In this context, Schmitt's use of the word *katechon* is important in understanding his conception of how order is maintained in times of crisis and, in fact, how historical time itself is constructed. According to Bredekamp, *katechons*, who maintain the status quo and slow down the forces of the Anti-Christ, also create history.¹⁵¹ History, according to Schmitt, would therefore involve the maintenance of social and political order in chronological time, as opposed to transcendental or divine time. This understanding of history would furthermore imply that apocalyptic time would

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 67.

¹⁵⁰ De Wilde underlines the idea that making decisions is the most important function of the sovereign. De Wilde, 192ff. Cf. Chapter 3 in Schmitt. Cf. Stroup on Schmitt's decisionism, which is specific to the Weimar government Stroup: 332. Cf. Levi: 29. Levi states that political decisionism plays a crucial role in Schmitt's political theory. According to Levi, Schmitt defines politics as being "about recognizing the usually urgent need to act, having the power to decide what to do in a limited time, and doing it."

¹⁵¹ Bredekamp: 252f.

be part of history, and that history would, as a result, necessarily be a time of anticipating divine intervention.

Tillich's and Schmitt's conceptions of time coincide in both their leanings toward dividing time into ordinary time and intervention brought about because of unusual circumstances. As Bredekamp proposes, for Schmitt, "the state of exception in temporal terms may be described as the cessation of ordinary time."¹⁵² This cessation of ordinary time means temporarily giving power to a sovereign ruler whose foremost function is to make decisions quickly in order to stop political unrest and to restore order. Considering his criticism of parliamentary politics – he comments that the nature of bourgeois liberalism is "Verhandeln [...] mit der Hoffnung, die definitive Auseinandersetzung [...] könnte in eine parlamentarische Debatte verwandelt werden und ließe sich durch eine ewige Diskussion ewig suspendieren"¹⁵³ – Schmitt's response to his contemporary circumstances becomes more understandable: committee meetings among bureaucrats seem inappropriate means by which to save the young republic of Germany from intergovernmental and partisan strife. Action by unilateral decision, not waiting, is Schmitt's only viable option against the forces threatening to tear the state apart. Waiting for the right time takes different shapes and forms, and, for Schmitt, waiting without taking active steps to improve local conditions is not an appropriate response to dire circumstances. While Tillich emphasizes wakeful waiting for a divinely guided revolution into a new theonomy (implying the Second Coming of Jesus Christ), Schmitt stresses the need for decision and action in the here and now. The function of jurisprudence, as Schmitt sees it, is to conserve the existing societal order. Schmitt

¹⁵² Ibid.: 252.

¹⁵³ Schmitt, 67.

considers a radical revolutionary transformation or overhaul of the existing form of governance for the sake of maintaining legal order viable only under a strong dictator.

Anatomy of Apocalyptic Time

The esteem in which Tillich the theologian, Schmitt the political philosopher, and Broch the author hold the role of religiosity in German society is evidenced in that they all believe that spirituality is the core of any strong society. While they both prefer communitarian ideals, Tillich is more open toward the vagaries of civil societies than Schmitt, and his essay asks how social injustice can be eliminated in civil societies without necessarily going back to the organic community model.¹⁵⁴ Beside their obvious political divergence, Tillich and Schmitt differ in their visions of the appropriate solutions to the problems plaguing Weimar Germany and also in their opinion of which steps are most useful to take during critical times: Schmitt, the conservative thinker and pragmatist, believes that exceptional times call for exceptional measures, and theorizes that a charismatic sovereign would reveal the way out of the extraordinary period of crisis.¹⁵⁵ Tillich, who protests against social inequalities exacerbated by modernization, envisions a country governed by a community-oriented, socialist system and argues that the best way to found the ideal future society is through promoting *agape*.¹⁵⁶ In *Die Schlafwandler*, the different socio-theological tendencies overlap, thus confirming the

¹⁵⁴ This categorization of community and society follows Ferdinand Tönnies, *Community and Society (Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft)*, trans., Charles P. Loomis (New Brunswick (U.S.A.) and London (U.K.): Transaction Publishers, 1988; reprint, With a new introduction by John Samples). See also Liebersohn's incisive study of German sociological analyses from the German Empire until the early 1920s, in which Liebersohn situates Tönnies alongside contemporary sociologists: Harry Liebersohn, *Fate and Utopia in German Sociology, 1870-1923* (Cambridge, Mass. and London: The MIT Press, 1988), 11-39.

¹⁵⁵ Schmitt, 67-70.

¹⁵⁶ In the Christian context, *agape* is defined as non-sexual, spiritual love – at times also defined as love for one's neighbor. E. A. Livingstone, ed. *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).. Cf. 1 Corinthians 13.

complex motivations behind them, as well as the impossibility of agreeing on universal societal values after the First World War. Like Tillich, Broch believes that redemption is most likely to come about through the grace of God, i.e. favorable supernatural intervention, and therefore shows conflicted attitudes toward different kinds of concrete solutions, none of which he foresees as being effective on their own.¹⁵⁷ Recognizing how theological concepts related to apocalyptic time are used in these works helps elucidate the relationship between spiritual and social concerns in the trilogy.

In their diagnostics, Tillich and Schmitt show disappointment in the German nation of culture (*Kultur*). The terms they use to describe the present show that they perceive the post-war, post-imperial period as being a catastrophic, apocalyptic time that that Germans have brought upon themselves. Tillich and Schmitt present two dominant tendencies that attest to the influence of theological and political rationales in assessing their historical situation and also in finding a way out of the chaos and civil unrest in Germany during the early 1920s. They ask whether trusting a divinely guided revolution or religious socialism is justified, and question whether complete faith in a dictator is a valid choice. To a certain degree, both Tillich and Schmitt express doubt in absolute, divine truth after seeing the atrocities of the First World War. But the degree to which they believe in humanity's ability to govern itself differs. In the end, their goals vary as well: Tillich puts his faith in a closer relationship between humans and the divine, which would come closer together in anticipation of the new turning point, i.e. *kairos*. Schmitt, however, thinks more practically of a human-made legal solution to preserve

¹⁵⁷ The discussion of redemption follows in more detail in the next chapter. In particular, I discuss redemption in the sense of characters' failures to wait and their movement toward judgment instead of grace.

order in the streets. Broch's *Die Schlafwandler* picks up on both of these theologically inflected arguments.

Metaphysical Longing in Kracauer and Broch

Regardless of the political orientation of each particular cultural and social analyst, many interwar intellectuals employ theologically charged end-of-the-world fantasies to articulate the impact and of war and revolutionary uprising for the young republic. As noted above, this intersection can be analyzed by a closer examination of the idea of enduring and waiting (“ausharren”) and the idea of a grace period (“Frist”)¹⁵⁸ before the end of the world. These two concepts of “ausharren” and “Frist” are integral to Messianism, Christological Utopianism, the vision of the Anti-Christ, and redemption. Apocalyptic-eschatological narratives indicate the movement towards an apocalyptic historiography, as Kermode, Vondung, and Brokoff have convincingly shown.¹⁵⁹ By stressing how to endure present hardships while waiting for redemption, Tillich, Schmitt, Kracauer and Broch create a vision of a vacuous history consisting of cycles of crises – though their visions have different outcomes. Rejecting any easily attainable utopias, all of them seek to reclaim a space for a transcendental presence. Their searches take on different forms: from inquiries into developing and maintaining timely constitutional structure to the discussion of the ephemeral topics of the right time and the right attitude. Waiting and enduring connect the present, the time of suffering, to the future, onto which several theological and/or political outcomes are projected, ranging from Judgment Day,

¹⁵⁸ Cf. Blindow, Koenen, and Bredekamp et al. Bredekamp and his co-authors define “katechon” as a delay. On the term “Frist,” see Koenen, *Der Fall Schmitt*, 147. Koenen cites a German translation of Tertullian’s influential *Apologeticum*, in which the word “Frist” describes a grace period, during which the day of final judgment is delayed.

¹⁵⁹ Brokoff; Kermode; Vondung, *The Apocalypse in Germany*.

the arrival of the revolutionizing Messiah, and the Marxist revolution, to the Kingdom of God. The promise of the end of misery soothes anguished souls and, at the same time, reinforces hope for a utopian replacement of all that is perceived to be “bad” with all that is “good:” a radical eradication of the old flawed order and its replacement with the final, perfect order for the world.

Kracauer’s 1922 essay “Die Wartenden” grounds my discussion of cultural and spiritual divisions that characterize apocalyptic time and, in particular, the meaning of waiting in Broch’s trilogy and aesthetic theory. Kracauer’s essay does not directly employ apocalyptic rhetoric (as Tillich and Schmitt do) to analyze various attempts to cope with the end of the war and structuring of a post-war society. But in his depiction of the multifarious strategies to give meaning to the new Republic, he criticizes an apocalyptic logic by focusing on the idea of waiting itself, during which one reflects on all kinds of attempted resolutions without settling on a final answer. “Die Wartenden” attests how prominent theological rhetoric was in cultural discourse, especially in expressing a longing for redemption through the reintroduction of the transcendental into the immanent world.

A similar metaphysical longing and an esteem for aesthetic media as a channel to transcendental “truths” of Kracauer’s early essays stand out in Broch’s literary and theoretical works of the 1920s and 1930s. Kracauer scholars have ascribed his emphasis on metaphysical yearning to Georg Lukács’ influence on the author, drawing attention to the impact of Lukács’ *Theorie des Romans*, while Broch scholars have explored similarities between the aesthetic theories and metaphysical longing in Lukács and

Broch.¹⁶⁰ However, to my knowledge, no one has yet analyzed the affinity between Kracauer's and Broch's attitudes toward metaphysical longing. My discussion of the link between Broch and Kracauer suggests that the comparison between Broch and Kracauer could illuminate the trilogy's unsettled tension between cynicism and hopefulness, both of which seem to go beyond political affiliation, in the context of the Weimar period.

Kracauer (in the 1920s) and Broch (in the early 1930s) both view spirituality as an integral component of a strong society, though spirituality assumes different shapes for each of them. Both Kracauer and Broch support the idea that the arts, especially literature, enhance spiritual social engagement, which they equate with social sensibility. Their differences appear in the societal models they envision for the future. Kracauer favors a civil society, whereas Broch prefers a communitarian model.¹⁶¹ In his essays of the 1920s, Kracauer offers literary snapshots of life in cities, in which mass entertainment and individual anonymity are part of normalized processes and modes of interacting in a civil society.¹⁶² The cultural critic sees the possibilities of transferring the transcendental into modern life, as in his essay on the hotel lobby.¹⁶³ Broch, on the other hand, stresses the necessity of an overarching, unifying value, writing: "Das Religiöse reicht über das

¹⁶⁰ For example, see Friedrich Vollhardt on the comparison between Broch and Lukács: Vollhardt, *Hermann Brochs geschichtliche Stellung*. Hansen refers to Lukács' influence on the early Siegfried Kracauer on several occasions in her paper. Hansen: 50, 54.

¹⁶¹ By "communitarian" I mean the body of theory that the community shall have primacy over the individual. For a general theoretical definition, see Robert Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon & Schuster: 2001).

¹⁶² For example, see the collection of Kracauer's essays in *Das Ornament der Masse*, also available in English as Siegfried Kracauer, *The Mass Ornament: Weimer Essays*, translated, edited, and with an introduction by Thomas Y. Levin ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995). His view of urban life as a pool of analytical subject resembles the position of his teacher Georg Simmel, who was open toward modernization and recorded his observations in such essays as Georg Simmel, "Die Großstädte und das Geistesleben," in *Georg Simmel: Aufsätze und Abhandlungen 1901-1908. Band I*, ed. Rüdiger Kramme, Angela Rammstedt, and Otthein Rammstedt (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1995).

¹⁶³ Kracauer, 173-85. According to Levin, the essay "The Hotel Lobby" was a section in Kracauer's longer study of the detective novel, which was written between 1922 and 1925. The author selected this essay to be included in the German original of *Das Ornament der Masse* in 1963. See Levin's note on p. 393.

Gläubige hinaus, es entsteht erst in der Welt, wenn ein logisches Gebäude errichtet ist, unter dessen Dach alle erkenntnismäßigen und alle seelischen Strebungen des Menschen ihren wohlgeordneten Platz finden.”¹⁶⁴ He focuses on what he considers an increase of relativistic values that correlate to compartmentalization in modern society, both of which obstruct the formation of a core value. In somewhat romantic terms, Broch idealized the medieval period as an era of cultural unity, made possible by the position of the Catholic church as the political, spiritual, and cultural center of daily life.¹⁶⁵ In his metaphysical yearning for wholeness and the urgent need for a way out of a time of disunity and fragmentation, however, he is similar to the Kracauer of the early 1920s.¹⁶⁶ They both hold that the search for a new mode of communication is intimately connected with the search for deliverance from social and political threats and oppression.

The Kracauer of the early 1920s holds onto a hope for the historical intervention of the transcendental, just as Broch, though ambivalent, does in the 1930s. In “Die Wartenden,” Kracauer comments on contemporary cultural pessimism and Spenglerian discourses of cultural degeneration. He examines the effects and competing strategies of coping with a pervasive sense of the loss of a higher, unifying force during the first three years of the Weimar Republic. He analyzes his contemporaries’ seemingly frantic search for a replacement spiritual center through joining social organizations, by means of films or other diversions, political organizations, anthroposophist groups, aestheticism, historicism, sober pessimism, and neo-mysticism. Under the influence of Lukács’ concept of “transcendental loneliness,” Kracauer notes that a pervasive sense of loss and

¹⁶⁴ Hermann Broch, “Neue religiöse Dichtung? (1933),” in *Schriften zur Literatur 2. Theorie. Kommentierte Werkausgabe*, ed. Paul Michael Lützeler (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1976), 54.

¹⁶⁵ Broch, “Das Weltbild des Romans (1933),” 373; Lützeler, *Die Entropie des Menschen*; Roche.

¹⁶⁶ Kracauer gradually moved from cultural conservatism toward an embracing of modernization over the course of ten years. Cf. the section on “Metaphysical Longing in Broch and Kracauer” below.

metaphysical despair connects everyone regardless of social differences: “Es ist das metaphysische Leiden an dem Mangel eines hohen Sinnes in der Welt, an ihrem Dasein im leeren Raum, das diese Menschen zu Schicksalsgefährten macht”.¹⁶⁷ But in his essay he indicates that a situation of anguish and crisis can lead to creative solutions – though not all of them may get humanity closer to its anticipated rebirth or deliverance.

According to Thomas Levin, Kracauer’s early essays are “generally marked by a resigned and even lapsarian metaphysical tone. This melancholic perspective is a product of Kracauer’s understanding of the historical process – namely, as an evacuation of meaning, a bifurcation of being and truth that has culminated in a modernity bereft of unity and substance.”¹⁶⁸ The hint of melancholy pervades the characters of *Die Schlafwandler* as well; both Kracauer and Broch initially view the Weimar Republic as a society in “the final stage in a process of ‘decay’”.¹⁶⁹

In addition, according to Levin, Kracauer had a “highly romanticized vision of a utopian Middle Ages, which he describes as a ‘unified culture’ that was ‘saturated with

¹⁶⁷ Siegfried Kracauer, “Die Wartenden,” in *Der verbotene Blick, Beobachtungen, Analysen, Kritiken* (Leipzig: Reclam Verlag, 1992), 90. Cf. the note on Hansen above. See also Siegfried Kracauer’s 1922 book review of *Die Theorie des Romans*: Siegfried Kracauer, “Georg von Lukács’ Romantheorie,” in *Der verbotene Blick, Beobachtungen, Analysen, Kritiken* (Leipzig: Reclam-Verlag, 1992). Kracauer praises Lukács’ attempt to describe accurately a sense of spiritual loss that seems to dominate Western society as a consequence of increasing secularization in the modern era: “Zu Beginn seines Buches führt Lukács das erleuchtete Wort von Novalis an: ‘Philosophie ist eigentlich Heimweh, der Trieb, überall zu Hause zu sein.’ Ein unnennbares Heimweh nach dem entschwundenen Sinn brennt und bohrt auch in Lukács selber, jenes gleiche Gefühl, das jeden hohen Menschen beseelt, der sich seines Aufenthaltes in unserer gottverlassenen Welt als eine Verbannung bewusst geworden ist. Und es ist vielleicht die tiefste Erkenntnis, die man aus dem Werk von Lukács gewinnen kann, dass sich heute mehr denn je die Aufgabe der Philosophie – und nicht nur der Philosophie – darin erschöpft, die Flamme der Sehnsucht wach zu halten, bis endlich einmal der Genius erscheint, der durch seine Tat diese unsere aus den Fugen gegangene Welt von dem Fluche der Sinnlosigkeit erlöst.” It appears that Kracauer would support the view that literature, like philosophy, would also serve the task of maintaining the longing for a messianic solution. This maintaining of the flame of longing (“Flamme der Sehnsucht”) is then analyzed in his essay, “Die Wartenden.” The quotation from Kracauer also demonstrates the influence of Lukács’ thoughts on the modern novel on the contemporary intellectual climate and, at the same time, a deep longing for a new direction that seemed to be an equally important part of the intellectual milieu.

¹⁶⁸ Thomas Levin, “Introduction,” in *The Mass Ornament : Weimer Essays* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1995), 13.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

meaning,' [which] forms a striking contrast to his reading of modernity, which he considers above all in terms of its spiritual lack, indicting it for its estrangement from the absolute and its want of a master narrative."¹⁷⁰ This is the kind of view of history that Broch would express twelve years later, in his 1934 essay, "Geist und Zeitgeist." Lützel describes Broch's idealization of the Middle Ages -- as a period of centralized and unified spiritual values -- as Broch's own idiosyncratic view of German history.¹⁷¹ Furthermore, Levin's description of the nature of Kracauer's use of the then-popular contrast between organic community (*Gemeinschaft*) and technological-functional society (*Gesellschaft*) could also apply to Broch's understanding of the distinction. Both men understand this contrast as "less a sociological than a metaphysical distinction which attempts to mark, respectively, the presence and absence of meaning (*Sinn*)."¹⁷² Noting a similar metaphysical tenor, Hansen points to the explicitly theological language that is used to analyze new cultural phenomena, such as film. Hansen, however, regards Kracauer's "Die Wartenden," as a turning point away from an early cultural pessimism:

While still resonating with the rhetoric of "transcendental homelessness," ["Die Wartenden"] also marks a turning point away from the cultural pessimism and nostalgia of Kracauer's earliest writings. Directed against premature attempts to restore meaning (from anthroposophy through religious mysticism to the George circle, but also against the "desperado" skepticism of someone like Max Weber), the essay advocates an alternative attitude of self-conscious, active "waiting," a "hesitant openness" (*zögerndes Geöffnetsein*). The rejection of panaceas for the modern malaise is accompanied by a shift of focus from the "theoretical I" to the "I of the entire human being," from "the unreal world of formless forces and high values depleted of meaning" to "the world of reality and its domains." Because of the onesidedness of theoretical thinking,

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Lützel, *Die Entropie des Menschen*. Cf. Lützel, *Kulturbruch und Glaubenskrise*.

¹⁷² Levin, 13.

Kracauer warns, a “terrifying” gap has opened up between thinking and a contemporary reality which is “filled with corporeal things and people and therefore demands to be seen concretely”.¹⁷³

In “Die Wartenden,” Hansen notes Kracauer’s turn away from the model of historical development through progress and reform.¹⁷⁴ Hansen finds Kracauer’s interpretation of modernity in the essay as the historical period in which “the world is disintegrating into a chaotic multiplicity of phenomena. This process is synonymous, in the economic and social realm, with capitalist rationalization and the concomitant alienation of human life, labor, and interpersonal relations.”¹⁷⁵ Kracauer saw a radical break as the only option for change.

Theological Thoughts in Broch

Broch’s oeuvre shows an internal tension between the desire to revive an idealized medievalist spiritual society and the equally present longing for a new spiritual society after a social tabula rasa. His philosophical and culturally critical writings demonstrate a conservative tendency.¹⁷⁶ His lamentations about the disintegration of a romanticized notion of a natural and fundamental community and his aversion to revolution because of its potential for anarchy draw Broch’s views closer to those of

¹⁷³ Hansen: 50. Hansen quotes Kracauer from *Das Ornament der Masse*, pages 116 and 118.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.: 52.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.: 51.

¹⁷⁶ On the tone of lament, see the quote and discussion of “Geist und Zeitgeist” in my introduction, p. 2f: “Eine Zeit, feige und wehleidiger denn jede vorhergegangene, ersäuft in Blut und Giftgasen, Völker von Bankbeamten und Profiteuren werfen sich in Stacheldrähte, eine wohlorganisierte Humanität verhindert nichts, sondern organisiert sich als Rotes Kreuz zur Herstellung von Prothesen; [...] Aufgelöst jedwede Form [...] tastet der Mensch, einem irren Kinde gleich, am Faden irgendeiner kleinen kurzatmigen Logik durch eine Traumlandschaft, die er Wirklichkeit nennt und die ihm doch nur Alpruck ist (*D.S.* 418-419). On the tendency described in the body of the section is closer to Martin Buber, whose work Broch esteemed. See Lützel’s note 6 on Broch’s collection of Buber texts, which included *Die Geschichten des Rabbi Nachman, ihm nacherzählt von Martin Buber* (Frankfurt am Main: Rütten & Loening, 1908) and *Die Legende des Baalschem* (Frankfurt am Main: Rütten & Loening, 1908); Broch, *Das Teesdorfer Tagebuch für Ea von Allesch*, 86. Lützel comments that Broch was influenced by the “I and Thou” philosophy of Buber (see p. 173).

conservative thinkers such as Schmitt. *Die Schlafwandler* reflects an ambivalent position toward proletarian revolution, drawing an unflattering parallel between mob action and the historical November Revolution of 1918 toward the end of Volume III. Broch is against the conservation of political order at any cost, and against violence in social and interpersonal settings.¹⁷⁷ Though Broch himself prefers a more indirect method of communicating with the public, he shares the same ethical motivation of Weimar leftist intellectuals' hopes and eventual demoralization in the face of political developments around 1930.¹⁷⁸

Although Prümm does not discuss Broch's writings, his discussion of the intellectual tactics used to address the German public directly through the printed medium helps to elucidate the context of Broch's political orientation further. Prümm examines how Weimar intellectuals attempted to engage the German public through print media. Left-oriented intellectuals founded and used the weekly journal *Deutsche Republik* (1929-1933) as a platform to warn their readers about the possible dangers of the National Socialist Party (NSDAP). According to Werner Thormann, the editor-in-chief of the journal, and also other contributors to the journal, the late 1920s, which were believed to be a period of total crisis, could be a time for a profound and necessary cleansing of the whole German society and politics: "dass die 'dumpfe Krise dieser Jahreswende zur Reinigungskrise der deutschen Demokratie und der deutschen Parteien' werden könne."¹⁷⁹ Apocalyptic terms such as "Totalkrise des Weltkapitalismus" and "Endkrise," evoke the dualistic expectation of catastrophe and the onset of a utopian

¹⁷⁷ Lützel, *Hermann Broch: Ethik und Politik*.

¹⁷⁸ Broch scholars have acknowledged Broch's politically and culturally conservative tendencies. See, for instance Barnouw; Freese and Menges; Lützel, *Hermann Broch: Ethik und Politik*; Mack; Osterle; Roche.

¹⁷⁹ Prümm, 111.

age.¹⁸⁰ Prümm notices a longing for social disintegration as a kind of solution to the cultural crisis: “Nach der Lektüre dieser Wochenzeitschrift begreift man, dass in diesem Kreis die Selbstaflösung des Zentrums beinahe als historische Notwendigkeit begrüßt wurde.”¹⁸¹ The journal’s warnings about the dangers of the fascist movement did not inspire its readers to counter-fascist action, but instead affirmed the public’s defeatism because the readers merely saw their own assumptions about their politically grim present confirmed in the journal’s articles, and they did not anticipate that conditions would become any worse in the future under a fascist government. The darker the picture painted by the *Deutsche Republik*, the more readers it gained. But an increase in readership did not mean that the public developed any distaste for fascism.¹⁸² Thormann expresses his disappointment in a 1930 editorial: “Das deutsche Volk will einfach nicht, dass zur Sache gesprochen wird. Der *Appell an die Vernunft* hat keine Wirkung mehr. Die Warnung vor der Katastrophe hat versagt. Wir stehen in der paradoxen Situation, in der Politik des Möglichen abgelehnt und das *Unmögliche* verlangt wird. Das ist der eigentliche Inhalt dieser Krise.”¹⁸³ Thormann concludes that the Weimar Republic was experiencing a crisis of rationality in political thought: “Krise der politischen Rationalität, als Desaster der Vernunft.”¹⁸⁴ According to Ernestine Schlant, Broch would eventually reach a similar state of disappointment of the Weimar intellectuals, as the political situation increasingly looked grim: “The Germany of 1933 fulfills the prophecy of the advent of the Anti-Christ expressed in *Die Schlafwandler*. [...] Hitler as Anti-Christ

¹⁸⁰ Compare this dualistic expectation to Broch’s criticism and his persistence on warning the German public in his essays, such as “Das Böse im Wertsystem der Kunst” (1933) and “Geist und Zeitgeist” (1934).

¹⁸¹ Prümm, 107.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 132.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 126.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 127.

concludes the interpretation of German history as *Heilsgeschichte* or rather *Unheilsgeschichte*.”¹⁸⁵ His doubts over the effectiveness of literature as a vehicle of enlightenment increased after *Die Schlafwandler*’ publication, which is partly reflected in his letters, commenting on and justifying why he wrote the trilogy.¹⁸⁶

Die Schlafwandler: Redemption Through Endurance?

Broch’s novels engage with discourses of *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* (community and civil society). Neither is singled out as the best path toward a viable future. Broch thus presents his readers with different irreconcilable models: e.g. liberal, socialist, romantic, mystical, and conservative. Among them, two extreme positions are noteworthy, because both maintain a belief in the distinction between the transcendental and the immanent:¹⁸⁷ the socialist-minded Salvation Army and the unionist Martin Geyring represent the political left, and the conservative, religious, community-oriented, Bible-thumping Esch and Pasenow personify fundamentalist conservatives. Both of these groups are impatient; they do not want to wait for divine intervention, but call for the immediate formation of an ideal society, whichever way they can. Though Broch presents both positions ironically, he does privilege one over the other. While he treats the socialist group with gentle mockery through repeated comments on the naïveté of the “good” and “obedient” *Heilsarmee* members and faults Geyring for being too tolerant of others’ personal flaws, he does not mock its orientation toward the greater good or its

¹⁸⁵ Schlant, *Hermann Broch*, 141.

¹⁸⁶ Lützel, *Die Entropie des Menschen*, 39, 40f., Schlant, *Hermann Broch*, 110f.

¹⁸⁷ According to Brokoff, the distinction between the transcendental and the immanent plays a definitive role in apocalyptic rhetoric. Brokoff. That Broch’s characters organize their worldview according to this distinction in the end-of-the-world atmosphere reveals the apocalyptic thinking of these characters.

egalitarianism.¹⁸⁸ His socialist characters display compassion and grace toward others, despite their naïveté. His portrayal of the conservatives is less forgiving, particularly those who wish to conserve the old imperial regime and hierarchies, and especially those who wish for the arrival of a strong leader. In describing the relationship between Pasenow and Esch, Broch shows that both are out of touch with social reality. They perceive themselves as the chosen ones to fight the forces of “degeneration,” which the protagonist of Volume III Huguenau represents for them. For instance, by showing how Esch compares his relationship to Pasenow with that of John the Baptist, who waited for Jesus Christ as the Savior figure all along, Broch demonstrates the two characters’ self-delusional tendency and self-righteousness. While Pasenow uses his religiosity to distance himself with a holier-than-thou attitude, Esch becomes a self-appointed, bullying spiritual leader who believes that he and Pasenow are the only remaining moral conscience of their community.¹⁸⁹ With Pasenow’s mental breakdown and Esch’s death in the end, Broch signals that fundamentalist conservative visions belong to the past. This

¹⁸⁸ In conversation with others, Esch disapproves of Geyring’s socialist activism because of its “anarchist” potential. At the same time, the protagonist of Volume II, acknowledges that Geyring is a decent person: E.g.: Esch says about Geyring to Mother Hentjen: “‘Ein Anarchist’, sagte er. Frau Hentjen zuckte die [...] Schulter: ‘Und wenn schon, ist doch ein anständiger Mann...’ – ‘Anständig ist er’, bekräftigte Esch. [...] ‘Der möchte mich auch zu seiner sozialistischen Gesellschaft bringen. Ich tue es aber nicht. [...] Ordnung muß sein, wenn man hinaufkommen will’” *D.S.* 186. In another instance, Esch shows respect to Geyring, when he visits the friend who was arrested while trying to organize dock workers: “Dann hörte er Schritte auf dem gepflasterten Gang und das Klappern von Martins Krücken. Esch erhob sich, als sollte ein Vorgesetzter kommen” (*D.S.* 324).

¹⁸⁹ When Esch is rudely interrupted during a worship scene that he leads, he retorts with equal crassness: “Esch entblöbte sein Pferdegebiß, lachte: ‘Du darfst selber dein ungewaschenes Maul halten, Gödicke.’ Das waren grobe Worte. [...] Der Major allerdings vernahm weder die Grobheit der Rede noch das überlaute Lachen, denn in seinem besseren Wissen sah er durch die Rauheit der Oberflächen hindurch [...] es [war] ihm, als würde Esch mit leichter Hand alles in Ordnung bringen können. [...] [Esch] fühlte sich stark, fest und wohlbestellt, robust auf seinen Beinen, ein Kerl, den umzubringen sich schon verlohnte. Er streckte die Arme aus wie einer, der vom Schläfe aufwacht oder wie ein Gekreuzigter [and speaking to Gödicke]: ‘Na, willst du mich vielleicht gar erschlagen...mit deinen Krücken...du läufst ja auf Krücken, du Mißgeburt’” (*D.S.* 588f).

radical break with the past is reminiscent of Kracauer's above-mentioned view that only a drastic movement can introduce actual political and social change.

Another similarity between Broch and Kracauer is their insistence on taking time to reflect while "waiting out." In *Die Schlafwandler*, finding a way out of uncertainty and crisis involves waiting out the stifling present. Waiting out comprises waiting consciously and patiently for a true new beginning, without resorting to utopian fantasies that resurrect bygone ideals or antiquated systems of values.¹⁹⁰ Waiting out entails gaining awareness of existing social problems and understanding as many aspects of the divided *Zeitgeist* as possible, in order to combat conditioned passivity or the conscious abstention from seeking solutions to contemporary social, cultural, and political challenges. As Steven Aschheim notes, the trilogy presents an argument against indifference, as Broch, via Dr. Bertrand Müller in Volume III, explicitly holds willful ignorance and apathy responsible for the cultural disintegration of Germany and the West.¹⁹¹ Willful ignorance pervades *Die Schlafwandler*; Broch repeatedly signals characters' indifference to the idea of taking the initiative to change society by having them simply shrug their shoulders. Willful ignorance as a harmful type of non-action may, in fact, be the polar opposite of waiting out, since waiting out signifies continuing to strive to live despite unbearable material hardship or feelings of meaninglessness. In contrast, the indifference that certain characters in Broch's novel exhibit may be expressed as "Trägheit" of sentiments, a general fatigue, a passivity, or a lack of reflection. Stubbornly insensitive to the needs of others, the self-centered characters, Pasenow and Esch, either freeze in a state of inaction,

¹⁹⁰ According to Broch, constructing utopian fantasies geared toward reconstructing past glorious times and their aesthetic forms is "kitsch". See Broch's 1933 essays on the novel, for instance: Broch, "Das Weltbild des Romans (1933)." I elaborate on this point in chapters 4 and 5.

¹⁹¹ See Aschheim, 85-96.

afraid to make any decisions, or they act with little or no reflection – in each case, doing harm to themselves and to society at large. In the next chapters, I highlight the self-aggrandizement of characters as soldiers of God’s purpose in apocalyptic times. I underline the different facets of waiting out and the contrasting varieties of indifference. Examining the circumstances in which each type of behavior occurs deepens our understanding of Broch’s warnings about the future and message of hope, both of which are present in *Die Schlafwandler*.

Conclusion

This chapter discussed the role that theological and political discourses on the end of history play in diagnosing perceived social and cultural malaise in the Weimar Republic and in searching for solutions by partaking in a shared vision. This partaking can only take place when one finds timely forms of social organizations, which Broch suggests is lacking in his time. As a starting point, I analyzed two contrary theological and socio-political positions – those of the socialist Protestant Paul Tillich and the conservative Catholic Carl Schmitt. The ways in which their theological understanding of time as an analytical category overlap indicate the difficulties and possibilities involved in finding a satisfactory means to redeem *Germany* from its impending cultural demise, and for carrying the West into a new epoch. These complexities appear in Tillich’s and Schmitt’s discussions of the optimal ways in which individuals can partake in the establishment and maintenance of a harmonious society in accord with the contemporary categories of organic communities and civil society. By representing multiple facets of these discussions, *Die Schlafwandler* embodies a political ambivalence that can also be analyzed as an expression of Broch’s attempts to determine the best ways for people to

relate to each other, ways that could possibly redeem Germany from disintegration. Analyzing this uncertainty about ways of organizing societies reveals the trilogy's multi-layered social and cultural assessment, and, most importantly, the inconclusive negotiations of social values within Germany. Examining the fluctuating attitudes toward the shape of the German society with theological positions in mind opens new channels to analyze the role of spirituality in the foundation of contemporary social values and their associated ideal forms of society in Broch's novels. As shown in chapter 5, an awareness of theological considerations is important because spirituality is inextricably linked to aesthetics and ethics for Broch, as his theoretical essays on aesthetics demonstrate.

Ten years after the Weimar Republic's foundation, Broch indicates that he sees the contemporary economic and political instabilities as consequences of unresolved political issues of the Weimar Republic's early years. Questions about what Germans ought to do to improve their lot had been asked in the early 1920s, and Broch poses them again in the early 1930s. The 1922 texts of Tillich, Schmitt, and Kracauer all show disillusionment with humanity's barbaric side after the First World War and look at the future of Germany after the empire's end as unstable and uncertain. In his trilogy, Broch revisits the same period in the 1930s and suggests that his time needs more humble self-knowledge and a receptive, forward-looking gaze to break with the destructive past. The apocalyptic tenor which threads their disparate works together points to an urgently felt need for redemption through transcendental powers. All four of these intellectuals are of the same generation, and all write about the limits and possibilities of action and inaction; they differ in their characterization of this transcendental component. The intellectuals

stress human subjectivity, but their emphasis is different; while Tillich, Schmitt, and Kracauer grew more doubtful about the future of the Republic and more radical in their respective political positions – Tillich leaning towards socialism, Schmitt siding increasingly with the fascists, and Kracauer turning away from the metaphysical and toward revolution¹⁹² – Broch preserves the sense of metaphysical longing for the transcendental and, simultaneously, doubts about its possibility. Through his presentation of characters' desire for deliverance from the period between 1888 and 1918 as an apocalyptic time, Broch shows the undercurrent of uncertainty about the future of the Weimar era.

¹⁹² Cremer; Michael Hollerich, "Carl Schmitt," in *The Blackwell Companion to Political Theology*, ed. Peter Scott and William T. Cavanaugh (Malden (MA), Oxford (UK), Victoria (AUS): Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2004), 107-09. Hansen.

Chapter 3

Fantasies of Sacrifice and Redemption

“Ehre ist keine bloße Konvention” (*D.S.* 484).

“...es stieg das Chaos, aber aus dem Chaos im Pfuhe giftiger Gase grinste die Fratze Huguenaus, die Fratze des Verräters, Werkzeug der göttlichen Strafe, Urheber des wachsenden Unglücks” (*D.S.* 643).

“Er suchte Tinte und Papier” (*D.S.* 142).

Honor, punishment, redemption¹⁹³, and sacrifice are the terms with which the protagonists of *Die Schlafwandler's* first two volumes express their apocalyptic and Messianic visions. These ideas not only express the characters' desire to be liberated from a time of personal and societal crisis of meaning, but also reflect a fatal blindness to their historical situation. Pasenow and Esch regard themselves as guardians of decency and righteousness, and aspire to sacrifice themselves for the supposed greater good. The protagonists fatalistically believe they can fight the “degeneration” of Germany only through self-sacrifice. Because Pasenow and Esch are consumed by these ideas, they increasingly lose touch with the present to such an extent that they cannot comprehend

¹⁹³ The redemption that protagonists of the first and second volumes seek is a kind of Christian fundamentalism and grassroots movement. In the third volume Esch, for instance, organizes his own grassroots Christian fellowships, which Pasenow visits. The group sings songs of redemption:

Herr Gott, Zebaoth,
Nimm uns auf in Deine Gnade,
Schling um uns Dein einend Band,
Führe uns mit Deiner Hand,
Herr Gott, Zebaoth.
[...]
Rett, oh rett mich vor dem Tod,
Herr Gott, Zebaoth (*D.S.* 586-87).

See also the entire chapter 63 in Vol. III, *D.S.* 583-92.

the possible causes of the ruptures in their daily lives, such as the protest of the working class against social injustice or the casualties of the seemingly endless war. In addition, their fixation on apocalyptic and redemptive fantasies, in which they imagine that only a supernatural solution is possible for a seemingly catastrophic present, prevents them from recognizing their own responsibility and ability to shape the solution that they long for. The examples of Pasenow and Esch illustrate how the notions of “honor” and “sacrifice” can be filled with romantic ideals of heroism, while revealing that these romantic ideals and the words describing them seem to have lost all symbolic value. “Ehre ist keine bloße Konvention” (*D.S.* 484), but instead honor is the anchor the protagonists cling to, only to realize (and subsequently deny) that it is a hollow social construct with the potential to destroy lives.

By showing how the characters fail to find redemption, Broch suggests that apocalyptic and Messianic visions of a redeemer, as Pasenow and Esch use them for romantic heroism, are signs of intellectual regression. This shortcoming becomes clearer when one understands that redemption is linked to the idea of heightened self-awareness and to the individual’s responsibility to be socially engaged. For Broch, inspiring readers’ self-awareness and reflections on one’s place in history is an ethical function of literature.¹⁹⁴ This lack of confidence in deliverance through sacrifice demonstrates that Broch’s understanding of redemption is not grounded in one grand sacrifice or the death of a Messianic figure.¹⁹⁵ By discrediting the concept of redemption through a heroic

¹⁹⁴ A number of articles by Broch address the mission of the ethical author. See Broch, “Pamphlet gegen die Hochschätzung des Menschen (ca. 1932),” 38. Broch, “Die Kunst am Ende einer Kultur (1933),” 57. On the “totalitätserfassbare Erkenntnis” that the modern novelist seeks to convey, see Broch, “James Joyce und die Gegenwart”. On ethical action in Broch, “Das Weltbild des Romans (1933),” 97.

¹⁹⁵ This understanding differs significantly from Walter Benjamin’s definition of Redemption, which does involve the sacrifice of the Messiah. For an insightful presentation of Benjamin’s thoughts on redemption,

individual, Broch conveys his skepticism of the conservative call for strong sovereign leadership. The trilogy illustrates that an exclusive reliance on a *Führer*-centered society – favored by political conservatives like Carl Schmitt – is destructive because such a model perpetuates the abdication of individual subjectivity and responsibility. In fact, through his portrayal of the protagonists’ false belief that they represent the last bastion of German moral values and his depiction of their misguided search for a redeemer, Broch discredits the possibility of redemption.¹⁹⁶ Broch shows that this community, which adopts the hierarchical structure of the crumbling Empire, with the Junker Pasenow as the leader and the bourgeois Esch as his second in command, is not in tune with the times. Neither their redemption fantasies nor the social institutions that support them are viable for the twentieth century.¹⁹⁷

Critique of Redemption

Broch shows how romanticizing chivalry is regressive, and even destructive, when self-sacrifice is institutionally and routinely expected instead of being purely voluntary. The first case is the death of Pasenow’s elder brother, Helmuth, during a duel;

see Richard Wolin, *Walter Benjamin: An Aesthetic of Redemption* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), 48-63.

¹⁹⁶ Another example of an alleged Jesus-like figure in the novel is Gödicke, who appears to be literally and symbolically resurrected from the dead. (Resurrection is also another defining component of the apocalyptic genre, according to Roloff. Roloff. Like the other characters who structure their existence with an apocalyptic logic, Gödicke is another false redeemer figure. See Stašková’s argument that Gödicke fails to provide an ethical example despite his special “resurrection” status because he does not recognize his former self, which signifies an abdication of personal story as well as the greater history. Alice Stašková, “Das Werk als Opfer. Zur Ethik der Ästhetik in der Romantrilogie *Die Schlafwandler*,” in *Hermann Broch: Politik, Menschenrechte -- und Literatur?*, ed. Thomas Eicher, Paul Michael Lützeler, and Hartmut Steinecke (Oberhausen: Athena Verlag, 2005), 128, 131, 140f.

¹⁹⁷ I contrast Broch’s criticism of these redemptive fantasies with his suggested workable alternative in the realm of this world. The display of condemnation with doomsday rhetoric, which juxtaposes positive examples of friends helping each other, indicates that for Broch, redemption means restoration of a harmonious community of like-minded individuals, who recognize their responsibility for their actions. *Die Schlafwandler* shows that one cannot redeem oneself and that one cannot rescue others like a Messianic figure.

the second case is the death of German men during the First World War. In the first instance, the rules of social decorum and honor force Helmuth to walk into quasi-certain death. Helmuth's letter to Joachim encapsulates a sense of numb fatalism:

Ich weiß nicht, ob ich aus dieser etwas überflüssigen Angelegenheit lebend herauskomme. Natürlich hoffe ich es, aber mir ist es trotzdem fast gleichgültig. Ich begrüße das Faktum, daß es so etwas wie einen Ehrenkodex gibt, der in diesem so gleichgültigen Leben eine Spur höherer Idee darstellt, der man sich unterordnen darf. Ich hoffe, daß Du in Deinem Leben mehr Werte gefunden hast als ich in dem meinen; manchmal habe ich Dich um die militärische Laufbahn beneidet; sie ist wenigstens ein Dienst an etwas Größerem, als man selber ist (*D.S.* 46).¹⁹⁸

While Helmuth falls victim to a system that he finds meaningless even before his death, he perceives the duel as an opportunity to make his existence more honorable.¹⁹⁹ He is indeed celebrated as an honorable man after his death – his father repeats several times that Helmuth gave his life to defend the honor of his family name.²⁰⁰ However, this redemption comes at a high price, and his father's constant reminders that Helmuth's death truly was honorable reveal the ambiguous value of the nobility's code of honor. The cruelty of this vain sacrifice is the precursor of many more deaths for something greater than oneself – in this case the imperial military – whose battles, in the end, seem

¹⁹⁸ Later, in conversation with his friend Bertrand on the topic of “inertia of feeling” as the characteristic *Zeitgeist* of their epoch, Joachim remembers that Helmuth had been tired. Bertrand: “Die Welt ist von der Trägheit des Gefühls beherrscht...[Joachim thinking to himself:] Ja, Helmuth war müde gewesen.” *D.S.* 60, 61.

¹⁹⁹ There is a wide-ranging scholarship on the history of duels and their roles in constructing the concept of masculine honor in Germany. On the shifting role of duels in constructing an egalitarian concept of honor (among men) that is separated from aristocratic rank, see Mika LaVaque-Manty, “Duelling for Equality: Masculine Honor and the Modern Politics of Dignity,” *Political Theory* 34, no. 6 (2006). The article contains many interesting references to studies of duels during the 19th century and early 20th century, including: Ute Frevert, *Ehrenmänner: das Duell in der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft* (München: C.H.Beck, 1991).; Kevin McAleer, *Duelling: The Cult of Honor in Fin-de-siècle Germany* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994); Werner Mosse, “Nobility and Bourgeoisie in Nineteenth Century Europe: A Comparative View,” in *Bourgeois Society in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, ed. Jürgen Kocka and Allen Mitchell (Oxford: Berg, 1993); and Joanne B. Freeman, *Affairs of Honor: National Politics in the New Republic* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2001),

²⁰⁰ For a discussion of the role of duels in defending the individual and collective social status, see LaVaque-Manty: 730f. LaVaque-Manty states that death during a duel was no longer seen as valorous in the 19th century, especially when compared to previous centuries (734).

as pointless as Helmuth's duel. In the next section, I focus on the principle characters that serve as vehicles in illustrating the regressive romantic and apocalyptic fantasies of judgment and redemption.

Fantasy of Sacrifice and Redemption

The trilogy ridicules the idea of sacrificing oneself for a greater good or a higher cause as regressive romanticism through the examples of Pasenow and Esch.²⁰¹ Pasenow especially sees himself as the heroic, chivalrous savior of damsels in distress. In the first volume, he constantly tries to transform the Czech escort, Ruzena, into a respectable woman – but without a clear idea of how to do so. In the end, his project becomes an embarrassing personal failure: Ruzena finds Pasenow's non-committal attempt to shape her according to his ideal vision of her restrictive and chooses an uncertain material future over him.²⁰² In the end, Pasenow complies with his parents' wishes and marries a woman of his own social class.

As for the protagonist of the second volume, the narrator notes Esch's hypocrisy, by pointing to the protagonist's indignation over another's dishonesty, while he himself

²⁰¹ As noted in chapter 1, Broch had his own idiosyncratic definition of "romanticism." Judith Ryan comments that the term does not refer to the literary period that "Romanticism" is usually associated with, but rather to a longing to transcend everyday experience, as well as the "social and psychological characteristics of the late 19th century" (Ryan, *The Vanishing Subject*, 162. Cf. Schlant, *Hermann Broch*.
²⁰² Similarly, in the second volume, Esch wants to save the Hungarian vaudeville performer, Ilona, from being symbolically "crucified" every night. In the end, Esch is almost in financial ruins when a scheme that was supposed to buy Ilona her freedom goes awry. In drawing parallels between the first two protagonists, the secondary literature has often portrayed Esch as a parody of Pasenow. Ryan sums up the positions pithily: she describes Esch as "Pasenow updated for 1903 and transposed into a lower social milieu; but the critical engagement with nineteenth-century empiricism recedes in this volume in favor of an emphasis on the opposition between the ruthless business world and the metaphysical longings which both disturb and console its inhabitants. Esch is a bookkeeper, and in his fixation on making columns of figures tally Broch finds an ingenious equivalent for Pasenow's obsession with his uniform. A generation ago, the army set the tone; now business does"(Ryan, *The Vanishing Subject*, 165.

tells white lies.²⁰³ From the beginning, the narrator foreshadows that neither of them will save anyone, but rather have an unheroic fate: Pasenow has a serious nervous breakdown; Esch, who fantasizes about being like Jesus, is stabbed in the back in the end. By killing Esch, Huguenau eliminates all leads that might expose his financial scam in Kurtrier, and, therefore, Esch is ironically sacrificed for the “greater” good, ensuring the future of the next generation.²⁰⁴

The character of Pasenow reveals the German Empire’s weaknesses.²⁰⁵ A symbol of the Empire’s unreflective, brittle moral backbone, he cannot stand up to the oppressive power of the paternalistic state represented by his father. From the beginning, the link between the old Junker and the Prussian fatherland is drawn, starting with Herr von Pasenow’s “Kaiser Wilhelm Bart” (*D.S.* 11). Like this elder Junker, the German Empire is becoming a victim of its own rigid societal rules with double moral standards and the tendency to sacrifice its own children to keep up appearances. While Joachim von Pasenow senses a disintegration of the familiar social order, he cannot articulate it. This

²⁰³ The second novel opens with Esch’s outburst of anger over being fired unjustly from his position as accountant; he had discovered that his supervisor, Nentwig, stole from their common employer. Instead of denouncing Nentwig, the self-righteous Esch blackmails him into writing a respectable recommendation letter, so that Esch can find gainful employment elsewhere. In a brief bout of guilty conscience, he reminds himself of his civic duties: “Die Inventuren waren also geschwindelt, man müßte also den Mann der Polizei übergeben. Ja, es war einfach Bürgerpflicht, sofortige Anzeige zu erstatten” (*D.S.* 188). The possible negative consequences of speaking the truth, however, convince him not to pursue the matter: “Dann gab es für ihn weder ein Zeugnis, noch war irgendwo ein Posten zu finden. Esch freut sich des Scharfsinns, mit dem er alle Konsequenzen zog, aber er war wütend. [...] Und mürrisch und unzufrieden ob des vergällten Sieges, musste er sich wieder betrinken und mit einem Mädchen schlafen” (*D.S.* 189). This kind of internal debate continues throughout the second volume, in which Esch senses what one would expect of a moral person, but finds compromise solutions that are convenient for him. Over the course of the novel, however, he becomes increasingly moralistic, turning into the Bible-thumping character described in this chapter.

²⁰⁴ Pasenow’s breakdown: *D.S.* 641-46, 675, 683; Esch’s death: *D.S.* 677. He stands in the position of one crucified on a few occasions. E.g.: “Esch war stehen geblieben. Irgendwie fühlte er’s wie in einen Stich im Herzen. Dann sagte er sich: ‘Wer sich opfert, ist anständig.’ [...] Esch lächelte, er stand robust und fest auf seinen Beinen und dann streckte er die Arme aus wie einer, der vom Schläfe aufwacht oder wie ein Gekreuzigter. Er fühlte sich stark, fest und wohlbestellt, und als wäre das eine Rechnung, in der die Welt glatt aufgeht, wiederholte er: ‘Wer sich opfert, ist anständig’”. Cf. *D.S.* 203, 589, 633.

²⁰⁵ Ryan, *The Vanishing Subject*, 162. Cf. Ursula Ritzenhoff, *Hermann Brochs "Pasenow"-Roman. Eine Re-Orientierung* (Bern, Frankfurt/Main, and Las Vegas: Peter Lang, 1977).

sense of an ending and the wish for a correct diagnosis and for a way out are conveyed through the wish for a redeemer.

Esch and Pasenow both structure their binary worldviews according to apocalyptic logic. With their self-aggrandizing romantic fantasies of heroic sacrifice, they behave like placeholders for a Christ figure. For instance, during the last year of the war, Pasenow sets up a grassroots Christian community. Moreover, like John the Baptist, who waits until the legitimate leader arrives, Esch treats Pasenow like the leader for whom he was waiting.²⁰⁶

Esch sah auf den weißen Scheitel des Majors, er hörte des Majors leise Stimme, und es war, als wüßte der Major alles von ihm, als wüsste er alles von dem Major, zwei Freunde, die viel voneinander wissen. Er und der Major, sie waren da wie auf erhöhter und lichterer Bühne, an bevorzugter Stelle wäre sie, still war die Versammlung, als hätte ihr eine Glocke Schweigen geboten [...] [Der Major] fühlte sich stark, fest und wohlbestellt, so stark wie in seinen besten Jugendtagen, gleichwohl geborgen und weich, als wäre er befreit von allem Menschwerk, als wäre der Raum nicht mehr aus geschichteten Ziegeln, das Tor nicht mehr aus zersägten Brettern, als wäre alles Gotteswerk und als wäre das Wort in seinem Munde das Wort Gottes (*D.S.* 585f.).

²⁰⁶ The story of the Transfiguration is found in Matthew 17:1-9, Mark 9:2-8, and Luke 9:28-36. According to Western Christian churches (as opposed to Eastern Orthodox churches), it is one of the stories of Epiphany, the revelation of Jesus Christ as the Messiah. One night, Jesus goes up to the mountain to with a selected group of disciples to pray. The disciples fall asleep at some point, but awake to a vision of Jesus conversing with the prophets Moses and Elijah. All of them appear in a supernatural light and a voice from above declares that Jesus is the Son of God. I cite from Mark (New International Version):

After six days Jesus took Peter, James and John with him and led them up a high mountain, where they were all alone. There he was transfigured before them. His clothes became dazzling white, whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them. And there appeared before them Elijah and Moses, who were talking with Jesus. Peter said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah." (He did not know what to say, they were so frightened.) Then a cloud appeared and enveloped them, and a voice came from the cloud: "This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!" Suddenly, when they looked around, they no longer saw anyone with them except Jesus.

The emphasis on brightness and the seeming physical elevation of Pasenow and Esch in the selected scene from *Die Schlafwandler* recalls this Biblical narrative. It underlines the protagonists' sense that they are chosen for a greater cause.

The Major reads from the Book of Acts 16, which also has the concluding citation of the entire trilogy.²⁰⁷ Pasenow and Esch share a moment of epiphany, during which they recognize each other as spiritual kinsmen and feel fortified through their connection. This passage instantiates Pasenow's wish to find or even be the prophetic vessel of God, which accompanies him throughout the trilogy. The subjunctive II "wäre," accompanied by the repeated use of "als ob," reveals the romanticized nature of this shared, fleeting vision. In German, the subjunctive II is used for contrary to fact statements and indicates that the vision is just a wish. Hence, the subjunctive and the use of "as if" in his narcissistic religious fantasy illustrates that his wishes to be a heroic, redeeming vessel are questionable. Broch implies that the hope for redemption lies in a psychologically unstable member of the authoritarian imperial power, which brought Germany into the destructive situation of the First World War. The solution for Germany's future does not seem to lie in the value system of a bygone historical period.

Moralistic Worldview in the Wilhelmine Era

The narrator's description of the Prussian officer's rigidity and judgmental nature serves to critique the military and upper social classes of the German Empire, which conjures up images of apocalyptic catastrophe with judgments directed against everyone. The religiousness provides structures of moral assessments through which the characters

²⁰⁷ Since the Book of Acts 16 has a significant presence in *Die Schlafwandler*, I recount the Bible story here: Paul and Silas are arrested during one of their mission trips to the Philippians and incarcerated. Although they are tortured and severely beaten, they do not lose heart, and sing hymns late into the night. Suddenly, there is an earthquake that causes the doors to open. When the guard sees the open doors, he fears the punishment for letting the prisoners escape, and he wants to kill himself. Paul and Silas, however, did not flee and stop the guard: "But Paul cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'Do not harm yourself, for we are all here!'" (Acts 16: 28, New International Version) The guard is so grateful that he treats the wounds of Paul and Silas, feeds them, converses with them, and eventually converts to Christianity. This is a story of *agape* and selfless grace.

relate to each other. In the case of Joachim von Pasenow, he pines for a wholesome and protected existence and constantly seeks material confirmation of religious moral purity (or impurity) and divine order in his environment. The ultimate conflation of religious and socio-political orders for Pasenow appears in the Iron Cross, a Prussian military decoration awarded for heroism in combat, which has the shape of the Christian symbol. The Pasenow family has a lineage of military heroes, as Pasenow's childhood memories show: "Dann gab es noch das Eiserne Kreuz, das im großen Salon unter Glas und Rahmen hing. Es stammte von einem Pasenow, der anno 13 an kommandierender Stelle gestanden hatte" (*D.S.* 14.)²⁰⁸ The military symbol reaffirms the glory and dignity of the Prussian and German imperial military and supports its claim to rule by divine authority. With his old-fashioned chivalry (military) and obsession with purity (religiosity), Joachim, the romantic, exists in a strange combination of resignation and rebellion. No longer compatible with his contemporary society and the existing strategies to understand that world, Pasenow's romantic ideas are doomed to fail. According to Ursula Ritzenhoff, Joachim subscribes to "eine Idee, die nicht mehr durch lebendige Vorstellungen gestützt ist und deshalb ihren Träger früher oder später scheitern lässt."²⁰⁹ Through Joachim's example, Broch critiques the logic of conserving order by all means. For the author, the means are as important as the ends.²¹⁰ While rigidly compartmentalizing his world according to outmoded standards, Joachim eventually falls apart when the conceptual framework does not allow him to comprehend personal tragedies, such as his brother's

²⁰⁸ His Uncle Bernhard, who participated in the Austro-Prussian war of 1870-71, is also decorated with an Iron Cross. Joachim himself also is seen with such a medal in the third volume, although it is never explained why it was awarded to him, as if the reasons no longer mattered.

²⁰⁹ Ritzenhoff, 28.

²¹⁰ For discussion of the means equating the ends for Broch, see, for instance, Lützel, "Einleitung: Brochs Theogonie der Ethik," 9-20; Martens; Stašková.

death and the father's nervous breakdown, or to cope with the consequences of his errors, such as the misjudgement of others' character or failing in personal relationships. Those outmoded standards are the absolute moral terms Pasenow employs to define his enemies.

According to Carl Schmitt, the distinction between friend and enemy is the key characteristic of political thinking.²¹¹ Pasenow's desired self-understanding as a heroic imperial subject depends on the division of the world into righteous and immoral, and he therefore divides his world into two parts: the military/religious/good on the one side and the civilian/capitalist/corrupt on the other. As an officer in the royal Prussian military, Joachim believes that he serves a higher cause and considers himself a defender of morality and honor. He imagines that an invisible war is raging between the supposedly righteous and the morally degenerate, with the military on the side of the righteous and the civilian world in a morally ambiguous realm. The assumed corruption he fights involves acknowledging any matters of the private, civilian world, which for him mean first and foremost sexual desire and other bodily needs. The so-called degenerate world is especially associated with places of amusement, such as the club (Jägerkasino), where he first meets his lover, Ruzena. Joachim must put on civilian clothing for other private occasions, such as visits to the family, outings to restaurants, and for courtship. The thought whether he is appropriately dressed (i.e. in uniform or in civilian garb) preoccupies him and illustrates that he constantly negotiates his understanding of decency – a term he uses often to denote morality – in terms of clothing, according to external

²¹¹ See Carl Schmitt, *Begriff des Politischen* (Hamburg: Hanseatische Verlagsanstalt, 1933), 7. Schmitt argues that the distinction between friend and foe is as essential to the political as the oppositional pair good and bad is to the moral and the binary beautiful and ugly is to the aesthetic.

cues, in every situation in his life.²¹² For Joachim, the uniform indicates clearly who is on the correct side because the function of its wearer is obvious: “[W]enn einer seit seinem zehnten Lebensjahr daran gewöhnt ist, eine Uniform zu tragen,...vermag...[keiner] noch anzugeben, wo die Grenze zwischen seinem Ich und der Uniform liegt. Und doch war es mehr als Gewohnheit” (*D.S.* 27). Private and personal matters become secondary or even insignificant for the wearer of the uniform, unlike for the civilian, whose clothing apparently does not bear such obvious meaning for moral values. The uniform, as the transparent symbol of honor, uprightness, and morality, represents the presence of a higher power on earth, just as clerical garments once did:

Und war es einst die bloße Tracht des Klerikers, die sich als etwas Unmenschliches von der der anderen abhob [. . .] so mußte, da die große Unduldsamkeit des Glaubens verloren ward, die irdische Amtstracht an die Stelle der himmlischen gesetzt werden, und die Gesellschaft mußte sich in irdischen Hierarchien und Uniformen scheiden und diese an der Stelle des Glaubens ins Absolute erheben (*D.S.* 23-25)

According to Pasenow’s logic, the military is to fulfill a duty that the church has failed to execute. Pasenow literally reduces the two traditionally powerful institutions, the church and the military to their emblems: the cleric’s robe and the uniform. In the above musings on the visible signs of moral certainty in everyday life, moral substances and their garb are confused. Further confusion ensues: at first the reasoning behind the uniform indicates that military attire shows the function of its wearer as the defender of the moral beliefs and social hierarchies of the nation. Military attire, which supports the notion that moral and social rules are transparent and inflexible, discourages any doubts and questions about the moral foundations of Pasenow’s society. The appearance and feel of his buttoned-up uniform gives him a sense of reassurance and stability. His signature

²¹² For example see *D.S.* 18, 29, 34, 40.

gesture is to straighten his uniform (and later, in Volume III, to grab his Iron Cross) as a gesture of reassurance. The starched uniform, stiff in its appearance and rigid in signifying the military order for Joachim, provides moral and emotional certainty to those who subscribe to the existing social conventions. In Pasenow's view, proper attire equals uprightness in moral matters.

Fearing Judgment

By depicting Joachim von Pasenow's perception of his father as problematic, the narrator takes issue with the Prussian aristocrat as an inferior social and moral authority figure of the Wilhelmine era. Broch shows that the Pasenows fail to solve their respective problems in order to illustrate the upper class' abdication of their civic responsibility: rather than acting, they passively wait for a redeemer who never arrives.

As much as Joachim's father resembles Emperor Wilhelm with his beard, his sons compare the openly lecherous old man, who regularly chases after his Polish maids, to a devil. He is described as a "böser Mann" from the beginning (*D.S.* 12), and his walk is described as that of a three-legged creature: "das Schrecklichste und Abscheulichste daran ist, daß es ein dreibeiniger Paßgang ist, ein Dreifuß, der sich in Bewegung gesetzt hat. Und furchtbar der Gedanke, daß diese dreibeinige Zielgerichtetheit so falsch sein muß wie diese Geradlinigkeit und dieses Vorwärtsstreben: auf das Nichts gerichtet!" (*D.S.* 12) Nonetheless, the old man is as concerned with the concept of honor as his son. For him, "honor" seems slightly less ephemeral and is concretely linked to the esteem and reputation of the family name, and by extension, the name of the nation.²¹³ The injury

²¹³ The lecherous Herr von Pasenow exemplifies abuse of power. His affairs with his Polish maids are an open secret, and he believes that it is his "jus primae noctis" to open the letters of his servants (*D.S.* 73). In

of the honor of the name is equated to social “sin” and its recuperation is deemed “redemption”. In the Prussian Junker family, the idea of judgment and sacrifice overrules atonement and grace.

Fantasy of Divine Intervention

Broch warns against the expectation that someone else will rectify one’s own troubles, instead contending that one must take civic responsibilities seriously and bear the consequences of one’s actions and those of one’s own people.²¹⁴ The conduct of Herr von Pasenow in dealing with a personal loss demonstrates his denial of responsibility and his blindness to his and the social honor code’s dangerous shortcomings. After his eldest son Helmuth is killed in a duel, Herr von Pasenow acquires a strange habit: he takes daily walks to intercept the mailman, as though he were waiting for an urgent message. His already unusual interest in the post of others intensifies after Helmuth’s death: “Seine Leidenschaft für die Post hatte Herr v. Pasenow beibehalten und es war daher nicht auffallend, daß sie sich vielleicht sogar noch etwas verschärft hatte” (*D.S.* 74). With the same urgency with which he runs through the mail, he beseeches his visitors, like Pasenow’s friend and rival Bertrand, to write to him, as though something more than life depended on it. His meetings with the village pastor, his absentmindedness, his fear of solitude and deafening silence, all indicate that the untimely death of his eldest son triggers existential questions and doubts that he dares not utter. The constant repetition of the phrase “Er [Helmuth] ist für die Ehre des Namens gefallen ” (*D.S.* 102) underlines his nagging doubt in the social convention that took his son. The pointlessness of Helmuth’s

addition, he commands and expects everyone to obey him. As he becomes increasingly senile and his son disobeys him, he becomes aggressive in his increasing powerlessness.

²¹⁴ On subjectivity and autonomy in Broch, see Halsall; Lützel, *Die Entropie des Menschen.*; Ritzer.

death is underscored by the fact that no one mentions or asks exactly why the young man fought a duel with a random Polish nobleman over a trifle. While the honorable death of the military son in combat would have made sense to him, the death of a territorial lord does not fit into the equation. The unexplained hatred that Herr von Pasenow develops for Joachim's passive-aggressive disobedience to his every wish reveals that the man of the old order wants to rectify this illogical situation, even if it means disowning his one remaining son.²¹⁵ With the repetition of the phrase "er ist für die Ehre ... gefallen," Herr von Pasenow reaffirms a sense of honor inscribed into a conventional practice, but this compulsive repetition indicates the instability of the link and emphasizes the idea that there is a separation between meaning and sign.

His fears, doubts, and obsessions indicate that Herr von Pasenow senses the ending of an era.²¹⁶ In Joachim's place, Herr von Pasenow adopts Bertrand, literally a stranger, as a quasi-son because he feels that Bertrand understands his loneliness:

"Bertrand drückte seine Hand, aber Herr v. Pasenow wollte anscheinend kein Beileid, sondern wollte etwas hören" (*D.S.* 102).²¹⁷ The plan to be rid of Joachim, but to

²¹⁵ Herr von Pasenow complains that Joachim does not write and that he does not pay a visit to his prospective fiancée. Later, Herr von Pasenow explicitly states that he wants Joachim to produce a son with Elisabeth von Badensen. He shouts angrily about his son's disobedience: "Ich habe ihm befohlen zu heiraten" (*D.S.* 134).

²¹⁶ On the fear of Herr von Pasenow, see *D.S.* 94, 102, 133. E.g.: "Frau v. Pasenow entgegnete, daß ihr Mann aber nun immer wieder nach dem Bett verlange, immer friere ihn und es schein auch, als sei er von einer geheimen Furcht gequält, die sich erst im Schlafzimmer etwas beruhige" (*D.S.* 133). Cf. Kermode. Heinz Osterle applies Kermode's analytical model of such end-of-the-world narratives to the characters' interpretation of historical events. Osterle.

²¹⁷ During a walk with Bertrand, Herr von Pasenow implies that he wants to disown Joachim in favor of Bertrand. When Bertrand compliments the father politely on the benefits of the estate, Herr von Pasenow replies: "Könnten Sie auch haben," striking a tone of familiarity. He adds: "Wenn Sie einmal hier leben werden, werden wir keine Angst mehr haben; beide werden wir keine Angst mehr haben... nicht?" Er hatte seine Hand auf Bertrands Arm gelegt und blickte ihn angstvoll an" (*D.S.* 102). He leads Bertrand to Helmuth's grave and expects the dead man to commune with Joachim's friend: "Bertrand drückte seine Hand, aber Herr v. Pasenow wollte anscheinend kein Beileid, sondern wollte etwas hören; er machte eine Bewegung, wie um nachzuhelfen, und als trotzdem nichts erfolgten, seufzte: 'Er ist für die Ehre des Namens gefallen...ja, und Joachim macht indessen Visiten'" (*D.S.* 102f.). Afterwards, he says to Bertrand

recognize Joachim's son as the rightful owner of the estate, eventually represents a wish to cut off the unfruitful members of the family for the sake of a new, "unspoiled" generation. "Mord und Gegenmord, viele müssen sich opfern, damit der Erlöser geboren wird, der Sohn, der das Haus bauen darf" (*D.S.* 501). Although the old man considers Joachim a failure and wishes to disown him and start fresh with a new generation: "sei er kein harter Vater, er wünsche bloß, daß Joachim mit Elisabeth einen Enkel zeuge. Dieses Kind müsse dann ins Haus gebracht werden und dann alles erben" (*D.S.* 132). This demand resembles Esch's religious maxims in the third volume: "Mord und Gegenmord, viele müssen sich opfern, damit der Erlöser geboren wird, der Sohn, der das Haus bauen darf" (*D.S.* 501).²¹⁸ Read together, these statements convey a perceived necessity for renewal literally through new blood. According to Christian theology, Jesus Christ's sacrifice ends the need for animal sacrifice, and brings about a new covenant between God and His people. During communion, which commemorates this sacrifice and the new covenant, Christians drink wine and bread, which stand for Jesus' blood and flesh.²¹⁹ The indication and direct mention of sacrifice, birth, and salvation in *Die Schlafwandler* support the idea that the longing for and fantasy of a solution are draped in religious language and doctrine, without any spirituality.

that he wants to discuss inheritance matters ("Erbschaftsangelegenheiten") and hints that he plans to write Joachim out of the will. His remarks about honor suggest that he deems Joachim unworthy of the family name. Later, the father introduces Bertrand to Joachim as his own friend: " 'Ich stelle dir meinen Freund, Herrn v. Bertrand vor,' und mit einer etwas nebensächlichen Handbewegung 'und dies ist mein Sohn... kommt von der Brautschau', setzte er vergnügt hinzu" (*D.S.* 103).

²¹⁸ Cf. James N. Hardin, Jr., "The Theme of Salvation in the Novels of Hermann Broch," *PMLA* 85, no. 2 (1970): 219-27.

²¹⁹ See the following Bible passages (all quoted from the New International Version): Matthew 26:28: "This is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins." Mark 14:24: "'This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many,' he said to them." Luke 22:20: "In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.'"

Joachim's equally self-centered worldview, which is supported with religious visions, resembles his father's, because Joachim also likens his own fate to that of his Junker class. Being cursed by his father is a liberating confirmation of the fate of future Pasenows and even his whole social stratum. For Joachim, his father appears like a mouthpiece of God, who wants to ban permanently the one remaining son from the estate as a punishment for Helmuth's death: "Joachim hatte das Gesicht zwischen den Händen vergaben. Ja, der Vater hatte ihn gebrandmarkt; nun war es eingetroffen" (*D.S.* 134-35). He brushes aside the words of comfort by the reverend, and, as the narrated monologue thinks that the servant of: "Der Pastor [...] müßte doch wissen, daß der Fluch des Vaters unauslöschbar auf den Kindern lastet, müßte wissen, daß es Gottes Stimme selber ist, die durch den Mund des Vaters spricht und die Prüfung verkündet" (*D.S.* 134).²²⁰ Although Pasenow usually dismisses everything his senile father says, he irrationally gives the father's negative pronouncements the status of higher truth because they resonate with his own fixation on the approaching apocalyptic doom of the German people. Hence, his father's condemnation of him comes almost as a relief. Yet, no imagined punishment follows, and only a sense of unease remains. In fact, when Herr von Pasenow tries to follow through with his threat and rewrite the will – and thus go against expected social norms – he suffers a debilitating nervous breakdown. Even in this situation, Joachim fears being held accountable for yet another negative event. For instance, he dreads that the physician might call him "murderer" when Joachim is asked about the circumstances

²²⁰ The sibling rivalry, Joachim's sense of guilt, and his father's judgment and banishment of Joachim from the estate echo the biblical story of Cain and Abel, the sons of Adam and Eve. See Genesis 4:10-12. In *Die Schlafwandler*, however, the story seems backwards, since Joachim is the younger brother, who feels that he was already unjustly banished from the safety of his home at a young age. Joachim's sense of guilt, which seems disconnected from the cause of his brother's death, only underline the protagonist's distorted worldview that centers on a principle of sacrifice.

behind his father's nervous breakdown: "Denn diese Fragen schienen Joachim eine zwar sanfte, aber deshalb nicht weniger eindringliche und scharfe Inquisition und er erwartete, daß plötzlich der Inquisitor mit strengem Blick durch die Augengläser und ausgestrecktem Finger auf ihn deuten werde, hörte er bereits anklagend und verdammend das fürchterliche Wort: Mörder" (*D.S.* 131). Joachim does not feel responsible for the misfortunes of his family, but he simply and inexplicably fears being exposed as a sinner. What he – and his father – actually fear is the loss of meaning of the familiar social structures. Material events that do not fit into their fixed ideas of order, such as the death of a family member for the sake of the abstract concept of honor – or later, the prolonged war whose original purpose seems forgotten – cause the Pasenows to doubt the prescribed order. The questioning is the beginning of their breakdown because their recognition of the system's failure would rob the "honorable" deaths and sacrifices of meaning.

Failure to Write and Failure to Act: From Self-Censorship to Paralysis

Decisions are constantly postponed in the trilogy, especially in the last volume, when everyone waits for the war to end. On the one hand, the characters fear what might come. On the other hand, they are tired of waiting and want someone to take action. If writing is a tool of action and a weapon against a seemingly endless, hopeless deferment, the characters' failure to write is a manifestation of their failure to act. Although they can only redeem themselves, they have come to believe that they must first wait for someone else's action. This action is linked to the delivery of a message, usually a written message, as though it were an apocalyptic text that was delivered to the chosen people. The following example demonstrates Pasenow's pronounced passivity and also

foreshadows his eventual paralysis. Pasenow tries to kill himself after his lover Ruzena leaves him:

Die Waffe in den gefalteten Händen begann er zu beten: "Gott, nimm mich auf wie meinen Bruder, ihm warst du gnädig, sei es auch mir." Dann aber besann er sich, daß er noch letztwillige Verfügungen zu treffen habe; und Ruzena durfte er nicht unversorgt zurücklassen, sonst hätte sie ja recht mit allem, was sie ihm angetan hatte, so unverständlich es auch war. Er suchte Tinte und Papier. Der Morgen fand ihn über den kaum beschriebenen Bogen eingeschlafen (*D.S.* 141-42).

This scene foreshadows a scene later in Joachim von Pasenow's life, in the third volume, when he is confronted with a more serious disgraceful mistake. As a major of the Royal Prussian Army during the war, Pasenow realizes one day that he has overlooked a deserter. This deserter is the third protagonist of the trilogy, Wilhelm Huguenau, who has climbed the social ladder as an established member of Pasenow's district, the southern German town of Kurtrier. Through a chain of self-directed criticism, Major Pasenow concludes that he has committed a grave error that would lead to the defamation of his family name, almost forgetting Huguenau's role in the inequity. Unable to forgive himself, Joachim cannot think of any other solution but to kill himself to eradicate this stain on his honor:

Es war das Ende, das unritterliche Ende! gebrandmarkt, für immer gebrandmarkt![...] Nein, es gab keinen Ausweg [...] der Major hatte aus der Schreibtischlade den Armeerevolver genommen und ihn vor sich hingelegt. Dann nahm er ein Briefblatt, legte es gleichfalls vor sich hin; es sollte das Abschiedsgesuch werden. [...] "An das..." hatte er auf das Papier gemalt mit Buchstaben, die ihm selber fremd waren, und dann war er stecken geblieben, – die Feder war zerbrochen, sie hatte das Papier zerrissen und einen häßlichen Fleck verursacht. Und den Federhalter fest, ja krampfhaft umklammernd, sank der Major, kein Major mehr, sondern ein ganz alter Mann, langsam in sich zusammen. Nochmals versuchte er, die zerbrochene Feder einzutauchen, indes es gelang nicht, er warf das Tintenfaß um, die Tinte rann in einem schmalen Bach über die Platte, tropfte auf das Beinkleid. [...] Er war mit tintenbeschmutzten Händen

sitzen geblieben und starrte auf die Türe, hinter der Huguenau verschwunden war (*D.S.* 646).

Making Huguenau's secret public, i.e. that he is a deserter and not an officer on a special mission to Kurtrier, would mean humiliation and a stain on his otherwise spotless military career. If Joachim were true to his interpretation of the imperial army's honor code, he would have to take his life. In his distorted thinking, the life and death of Huguenau are intimately connected with his own. The Major fails to finish the first sentence of his letter to the higher military command to report the offender and is hence unable to pronounce his own death sentence. This scene is filled with painful self-alienation and indicates the onset of Joachim's mental disintegration: the narrator describes how Joachim does not recognize the individual letters he has drawn, rather than written, on paper. Destroying the writing equipment – broken pen and torn paper – signifies that he, like his father, cannot be of use as a prophetic mouthpiece of the "truth." Already marked by dishonor, he inadvertently reproduces a hideous mark on the paper. The ink-soiled hands and trousers (of his seemingly sacred uniform!) complete the picture of the broken man's collapse into an infantile state.

The chapter concludes with a final attempt to preserve his dignity, where he declares to the imaginarily present enemy that he will stay in office: "Doch als sich die Türe nach einer Weile öffnete und der Ordonnanz sichtbar wurde, da gelang es ihm, sich aufzurichten und die Hand gebieterisch auszustrecken: 'Packen Sie sich', befahl er dem etwas verblüfften Mann, 'packen Sie sich...ich bleibe im Dienst'" (*D.S.* 646). Staying in office, however, entails not acting as truthfully and honorably as he could. For the sake of avoiding judgment and humiliation, he prefers to live a lie. Major Joachim von Pasenow

is unable to deal with the possibility that he has long been deceived by Huguenau and that nothing was in order.

In addition, this scene resembles almost verbatim the scene of his father's breakdown, when he had finally set himself to change his will:

Joachim sah den Vater unbeweglich am Schreibtisch sitzen, die Feder in der Hand. Er rührte sich auch nicht, als Frau v. Pasenow nähertrat und sich über ihn beugte. Die Feder hatte er so scharf aufs Papier gepreßt, daß sie zerbrochen war; und auf dem Papier stand: ich enterbe wegen Unehrenhaftigkeit mei..., [sic] und dann kam der verspritzte Tintenfleck der zerbrochenen Feder...[A]ls sie bemerkte, daß auch das Tintenfaß umgeworfen war, ergriff sie eilfertig die Löschwiese...[Der Vater] sah [...] Joachim an der Türe, grinste ein wenig und versuchte, mit der zerbrochenen Feder weiterzuschreiben. Als er wieder am Papier hängenblieb und ein Loch hineinriß, stöhnte er auf, streckte den Zeigefinger gegen den Sohn und schrie: "Hinaus mit dem dort." Dabei versuchte er sich zu erheben, vermochte es aber anscheinend nicht, denn er sank gleich wieder in sich zusammen und während er, der verschütteten Tinte nicht achtend, über den Schreibtisch fiel, vergrub er den Kopf zwischen die Arme, als wäre er ein weinendes Kind (*D.S.* 117).

Both father and son want and need to act through writing, but they fail and are reduced to infantile states. The loss of dignity is heightened from one generation to the next: while the father is slumped over the desk like an unruly, crying child, Joachim looks as though he soils his trousers with ink. In addition, to the last moment, Major Pasenow, who is not beset by malice like his father but by profound fear, actually fails to fulfill an important action with serious consequences. Furthermore, the ink on Joachim's hands signifies a recurring implication that he is a murderer. As the representative of the military power responsible for the war machinery, his hands are stained indeed.²²¹

Instead of thinking about the responsibility he and the High Command bear for the sacrificed lives of soldiers, Pasenow interprets the letter about deserters as a proof of

²²¹ Huguenau's first impression of Pasenow is that he embodies military power: "ein Mann [...], der die Militärgewalt verkörperte" (*D.S.* 407).

his own incompetence, which, in his usual overly moralistic ways, translates into disgrace for him and his family. He believes that a disgraced man is like a civilian, who tends to let his desires and selfish goals rule him instead of higher moral (i.e. military) order, contributing to the general chaos and unethical fighting during the First World War, or is perhaps even responsible for the war itself. Finding Huguenau's name on the list signifies the work of uncontained chaos:

Das Chaos der Welt stieg allenthalben, es stieg das Chaos der Gedanken und das Chaos der Welt, die Dunkelheit stieg und die Dunkelheit hatte den Klang eines höllischen Sterbens, in dessen Prasseln nur eines hörbar, nur eines gewiß wurde: die Niederlage des Vaterlands – oh, die Dunkelheit stieg, es stieg das Chaos, aber aus dem Chaos im Pfuhe giftiger Gase grinste die Fratze Huguenaus, die Fratze des Verräters, Werkzeug der göttlichen Strafe, Urheber des wachsenden Unglücks (*D.S.* 643).²²²

In Joachim's apocalyptic vision, Huguenau emerges as a helper of the Antichrist or even as the Antichrist himself, the enemy but also the tool of divine punishment. Thus, he moves from a single punishment to a generalized, even total punishment of his fatherland (the German Empire), and eventually of the world. According to his vision, the fires of hell would take over soon if the defenders of his fatherland were to lose. This defeat would be due to the betrayal of the imperial state by its subjects, who doubt the established order of the state: according to this logic, Germany succumbs to the traitors within the German nation. The letter is the final straw that begins Pasenow's mental breakdown. The war made him lose faith in Germany, which is the real beginning of his own mental decline.

²²² Cf. *D.S.* 107, 117 on father's curse that "fulfills" itself in Volume III. I return to this point in the next chapter. The process that Pasenow describes is that of anarchy. Although Pasenow romanticizes life in the country, he wants organized nature. Chaos, however, is natural. According to the second Law of Thermodynamics, things fall apart when they are left alone. In a sense, then, anarchy is letting nature rule. More discussion on nature versus conventional order follows in the next chapter, along with a discussion of the use of scientific reason to interpret interpersonal relations.

The depiction of the time leading up to the First World War as an apocalyptic time shows the author's premise that his period is a time in which moral responsibilities are lacking. His trilogy shows people going to war because of a vague notion of loyalty and sacrifice being honorable without seriously considering a) the exact purpose of the sacrifice and b) the losses and grief that blindly carrying out the action might cause. The narrative draws a parallel between Helmuth von Pasenow's death in defense of the honor code in the first volume and the death of Joachim von Pasenow's eldest son during the war through the variation of the phrase that one sacrifices one's son for the king. For instance, Herr von Pasenow says: "So geht es, wenn man Söhne hat; sie fallen für die Ehre oder für den König..." (*D.S.* 86). This passage similar to one in which Joachim von Pasenow advocates an honorable peace, whatever that may mean "[E]s soll ein ehrenvoller Friede sein [...] wofür sollen sonst alle Opfer gebracht werden?" After he says that honor is not a matter of mere convention ("Ehre ist keine bloße Konvention..." *D.S.* 484), he mentions that his eldest son fell at Verdun. While saying a conventional phrase that usually follows the recounting of a soldier's death, he stops, like his father: "[M]an muß dem König geben, was des Königs ist..." (*D.S.* 485). Notably, the third volume's chapter 39 combines the themes of sacrifice for one's country and for honor. Pasenow's deviation from his father's phrase significantly suggests a separation of justice of the state and divine justice, which Pasenow can theorize about, but ultimately finds difficult to digest. It is his separation of state from religion, which eventually leads to his own mental breakdown. For example, though he does not pronounce it, Pasenow thinks to himself that Germany no longer offered a safe haven for him. While toasting to Germany with his acquaintances, the doctors, his disappointment in Germany as a place

of reliable order and stability is revealed in a narrated monologue. He laments the loss of “eine gute Ordnung und an die Geborgenheit, die Deutschland ihm bisher gewesen war. Er sah Deutschland nicht mehr“ (*D.S.* 633). Germany, which had made honor a convention, engaged in dishonorable gas warfare like other European countries – a discrepancy which Pasenow cannot accept.²²³ The third volume traces Pasenow’s loss of faith in his country.

Failed Sacrifice, Failed Morality

Pasenow and Esch regard themselves as defenders of a Christian Germany against the forces of moral degeneration, whose manifestation they detect in the “dishonorable” warfare and such unscrupulous individuals like Huguenau (their common enemy). They both believe that they are fighting a moral battle for German souls on the home front, as the Imperial Army fights other national armies. In addition, the two men use apocalyptic tropes both to describe how their world seems to be disintegrating morally and socially²²⁴ and to reassure each other with reminders of the end of the war and the belief in the victory of the righteous. Like Pasenow, Esch partitions the world according to a binary logic. While Pasenow focuses on the Iron Cross as a symbol of Christian imperial power

²²³ During a conversation with the veteran Jaretzki, who is a victim of gas warfare, Pasenow condemns the use of gas:

„Der Major schaute auf Jaretzkis Armstumpf: „Ich verstehe nicht recht... Gas führt doch zu Erstickung...“

„Es gibt auch solche Gaswirkungen, Herr Major.“

Der Major sann eine Weile. Dann sagte er: “Eine unritterliche Waffe.”

“Gewiß, Herr Major.“

Beide dachten daran, dass auch Deutschland solch unritterliche Waffe in Verwendung habe. Aber sie sprachen es nicht aus (*D.S.* 435).

²²⁴ As I have mentioned in the previous chapters, Esch feels that their extraordinary religious worship experience temporarily nearly cancels boundaries of social rank and that he feels entitled to put his hand on the major’s arm, which he would ordinarily not dare. Cf. note above. Esch even perceives Huguenau’s unexpected presence at his worship as an evil intrusion, “wie einen hinterhältigen Angriff [...] oder wie einen unentrinnbaren Tod, der trotzdem herbeigewünscht wird [...] Esch lächelte, und weil der, der vor dem Tode steht, zur Freiheit erlöst ist und ihm alles erlaubt ist, berührte er den Arm des Majors: ‘Immer ist ein Verräter unter uns’” (*D.S.* 591). – This idea is also referenced in the text below.

and the Prussian Army as a defender of the moral order, Esch, the man of action, focuses on the crucifixion itself as a symbolic act of sacrifice and restoration of spirituality on earth. He identifies with the redeemer figure to a certain extent, which appears when he tries to emulate the essence of a Christ figure himself; the narrator describes how he stands with his arms raised, like one who is hanging on a cross.²²⁵ At first, it seems as though Esch differs in his strategies to find a way out of their contemporary spiritual and social crisis. He joins a grassroots and Christian fundamentalist community, through which he tries to give his utopian vision of a redemptive a concrete shape. But like Pasenow, Esch hopes to find a way out through a redeemer figure. He believes to have found this figure in Major Pasenow. Through his failed attempt to combine forces with Joachim von Pasenow, it becomes apparent that the attempt of creating a new society with adaptation of existing religious models results in a dead-end.

The doomed end of the redemption fantasy is apparent in the term “Galgenfrist,” a reprieve before execution. Esch uses this term to refer to the deceptive sense of peace he and the Major observe during a walk. I repeat from the chapter’s opening quote: “Hoffnungslos dünkten sie beide jegliches Leben, einziger spärlicher Gewinn ein Spaziergang in abendlicher Landschaft, auf der ihrer beider Blicke ruhten. Es ist wie eine Galgenfrist, dachte Esch. Und so gingen sie schweigend” (*D.S.* 592). Their walk follows a worship scene that Major Pasenow, as a spiritually starved man, seeks out to find otherworldly companionship. Concluding such a scene with the thought of reprieve (“Galgenfrist” *D.S.* 592) seems like a contradiction. When we place the worship scene into the context of the apocalyptic genre, this period of waiting for the end resembles a

²²⁵ Cf. fn 194; *D.S.* 203, 589, 633.

time of trial, during which the community of the faithful endure suffering together. Yet, the idea of reprieve alters – and, in fact, destroys – the idea of trial that must be endured so that rewards may be gained. Execution follows “Galgenfrist” and the violent and forced ending of life. Whose reprieve does Esch mean? Who is to be executed? Since Esch’s redemption fantasy involves his being a herald for the Christ figure, like John the Baptist, this thought foreshadows his own death. He is killed – or executed – by Huguenau, the representative of the remorseless new generation. That the worship scene ends with such morbid thought demonstrates that Esch’s fundamentalist Christian group is not the friendly community that will determine the course toward a viable future.

Upholding the military as the defender of Christian morality in the secular sphere (attempting to correct where the church seems to have failed), Joachim increasingly regards himself as the last bastion of this morality. His redemption fantasy involves a vision of himself as a member of God’s army fighting the forces of evil that come with time.²²⁶ Pasenow’s self-perception as one who restrains the forces of evil helps to elucidate the circumstances of his eventual breakdown and, by analogy, the breakdown of the Empire further. With old age, Pasenow has become hardened in his zealous views, as exemplified in an editorial in the local newspaper, *Kurtriersche Bote*, entitled “Leitartikel des ‘Kurtrierschen Boten’ vom 1. Juni 1918. Des Deutschen Volkes Schicksalswende” (*D.S.* 466-69). The Major fervently laments the state of contemporary spirituality; the article represents Pasenow’s personal religious confession and, more significantly, his attempt to act by writing for a public forum. While trying to make sense of his society’s spiritual state, he draws a grand arc of the history of a militaristic Christian faith (citing

²²⁶ Pasenow is like a *katechon*, one who restrains the forces of Anti-Christ. Cf. chapter 2 on the role of *katechon* in apocalyptic discourse in the works of Weimar intellectuals during the two World Wars.

General von Clausewitz). With his article, he reaches out to the hearts and minds of willing readers, with whom he wishes to build the kind of Christian community which he envisions to be capable of reforming what he considers to be a “corrupt” world. Notably, the views of the article strike a chord with Esch’s position on the morality of their shared historical period. Pasenow’s expectation of evil tentatively connects him to Esch as an ally in an apparently “fated” battle against a final catastrophe.

Esch’s grassroots Christian community seems to provide the setting for Pasenow’s redemption visions, which temporarily lifts him outside the historical time of the war period. Ever the romantic, Pasenow feels as though he has traveled back to the first century, when Christians used to worship in hiding and in caves:

[D]ie alten Landsturmeute und die jungen Rekruten, wie Apostel und Jünger waren sie, wie eine Gemeinde, die sich in einem Gemüsekeller oder in einer dunklen Gruft zusammengefunden hat, dunkle fremde Sprache redend, dennoch verständlich wie die Sprache der Kindheit, überglänzt von himmlischer Silberwolke, -- und voll entschlossener Inbrunst, und zuversichtlich gleich ihm sahen die Jünger zu der Himmlischen empor (*D.S.* 584).

The boundaries between opposites seem to be temporarily canceled. Yet, later, as the Major becomes aware of his present 1918 setting, the shabby old barn, and those present, his disillusionment yields to a fear of pure evil, which comes in the form of emptiness, and of the oncoming apocalyptic ending, which comes in the shape of indifference:

[A]ls Esch schloß: “Tu dir kein Leid! denn wir sind noch alle hier!” da war es nicht mehr Ruhe, es war Angst, -- die Angst, daß in der Welt des Gleichnisses und der Stellvertretung bloß das Böse leibhaftig sein könne....[D]och der Major konnte es nicht glauben, denn es waren nicht mehr Apostel und Jünger vor seinen Augen, sondern Landsturmeute und Rekruten, Angehörige des Mannschaftsstandes, und er wußte, daß Esch gleich ihm, einsam wie er selber, voll Angst auf das Tor starrte. So standen sie nebeneinander (*D.S.* 590).

Their loneliness is a beginning of a bond between the two men. The narrative repeatedly stresses their loneliness, indicating that their partnership will be short-lived. Contrary to the Biblical story of Acts 16, these men inside the barn do not expect salvation or comfort after an emotionally quaking experience. Instead, they are filled with a fear of evil and a sense of vulnerability because they lack a final confirmation of their redemption fantasy. As they stand in fearful expectancy, Huguenau appears. Most remarkable about the following scene is the description of Huguenau as a dark shadow, which then turns out to bear the harmless, curious face of the unspiritual man. Pasenow and Esch read his devilish characteristic into the scene as much as the spirituality of the worshippers. The narrator distances himself from the point of view of the characters by emphasizing the lack of catastrophe:

Und da geschah es, daß am Grunde des dunklen Kastens, daß im Rahmen des Tores eine Gestalt auftauchte, eine rundliche, untersetzte Gestalt, die sich über den weißen Kies des Hofes hinbewegte, *ohne daß die Sonne sich verdunkelte*. Huguenau. Die Hände auf dem Rücken, ein Passant, der gemächlich einerschlendert, spazierte er über den Hof und machte vor dem Tore halt, blinzelte herein (*D.S.* 590, my emphasis).

The scene is anticlimactic and is focalized through Pasenow and Esch, revealing their sense of their own impending death and ruin. “Ohne daß die Sonne sich verdunkelte” means that the men were expecting a visible indication of the coming of the Anti-Christ, whose embodiment they presume to find in Huguenau. According to The Book of Revelation, the Last Days are filled with signs, including natural catastrophe. But instead of these supernatural signals, nothing happens. The narrator continues by describing how Huguenau puts on a humble and devout face that is appropriate for the occasion. Pasenow and Esch still feel a threat emanating from Huguenau: Pasenow refers to Huguenau as “[d]er Leibhaftige“ and “der Mörder“ (*D.S.* 591). Esch, for his part, senses that his

executioner has entered the room and perceives Huguenau's appearance as "[einen] hinterhältigen Angriff [...] oder wie einen Meuchelmord, wie einen unentrinnbaren Tod, der trotzdem herbeigewünscht wird, selbst dann, wenn der Arm, der den Dolch hält, nur der eines schäbigen Agenten ist" (*D.S.* 591). Both perceive him as a traitor, as Esch says: "Immer ist ein Verräter unter uns" (*D.S.* 591). The narrator's juxtaposition of the mundane barn and the dramatic reception of Huguenau's seemingly innocuous entrance underline the apocalyptic inclination of Pasenow and Esch. The two men find a fitting end of their redemption fantasies, whose fulfilment they constantly doubt, much like the war's end that they seem to await endlessly. As described above, Major Pasenow repeats this line before his breakdown (*D.S.* 642). Esch, who labels Huguenau a murderer, is killed by the deserter. Considering these reactions to Huguenau, it seems like a self-fulfilling prophecy that the men fall victim at the hands of the third protagonist. The religious apocalyptic/prophetic language of the main characters, however, levels and neutralizes the personal, political, and historical conflicts, ranging from the German imperial years, economic transitions, and social changes to the manslaughter of the First World War. Each conflict and incident takes on catastrophic proportion, as, for instance, Pasenow draws on images of The Book of Revelation to understand anything: his relationship to others in general, the relationship between the German colonial and colonized subjects in far-away Africa, the role of the military in modern society. Hence, the preoccupation with apocalyptic imageries underline the ubiquitous fears of the men and their modes of self-deception rather than serve any revelatory purpose. Yet both Pasenow and Esch are mistaken. Esch is not a prophetic herald to Pasenow. Although Esch makes room for him at the front of the community worship, as though he had been

waiting for Pasenow's leadership all the while, the Major does not reappear there. Just as Esch is not a prophet, Pasenow is not the redeemer. Neither can stop the "evil" Huguenau, the bulldozing spirit of the new. Both Pasenow and Esch sense a danger emanating from the opportunistic outsider and man of his time who seems to combine qualities that would not be deemed valuable by the two men: like Herr von Pasenow, Huguenau acknowledges and pursues the fulfillment of his physical needs (food, sleep, and sex) and, being purely profit-oriented, is entirely free of any moral scruples. As an aspect of the *Zeitgeist* after the First World War, this juxtaposition underlines the idea that, in the advent of a new age, the penchant for mysticism, the rise of self-declared apostles exist side-by-side with the paralyzing fear of the imagined unknown and uncertain spirituality.

Conclusion

A focus on judgment and redemption reveals important aspects of Broch's assessment of the early 20th century concept of honor as an empty shell, fitting for a value-vacuum.²²⁷ The religious center that Broch supports is neither Christian, Jewish, nor resembles any other recognized official institution. Rather, he points toward a spirituality that must be viewed and discussed in completely new ways. Broch attempts to illustrate this point *ex negativo*, the emphasis being on what not to do and imagining an ideal condition for a society that does not yet exist. What the author criticizes, he treats with dramatic irony, involving the inversion of familiar forms of religious symbols and

²²⁷ Cf. chapter 1, Broch, "Einige Bemerkungen zum Problem des Kitsches: Ein Vortrag (1950)."; Broch, "Hofmannsthal und seine Zeit."; Lützel, *Die Entropie des Menschen*, 38.

narratives.²²⁸ Analyzing how, when, and what characters endure helps to connect disparate historical periods, themes, and characters under the umbrella of the apocalyptic narrative and to illuminate the cultural criticism of the trilogy.

²²⁸ For instance, Esch sees a knife thrower's assistant in a vaudeville act as a Christ-like figure. He wants to save her from crucifixion. Esch aggressively seeks a Christ-like figure to right all wrongs of the world. An accounting metaphor he brings up frequently is correcting the balance sheet. In another instance, Esch impregnates Erna, the fiancée of his friend Lohberg whom he calls a "chaste Joseph." This "Joseph" figure will also raise the child of another, and by marrying Erna, he helps maintain her and her child's status within the folds of society (*D.S.* 376f.).

Chapter 4

Mute Cacophony: Apocalyptic Entropy of Feeling

Die Schlafwandler depicts the German Imperial era as a time of continuous spiritual disintegration. The effects of a value-vacuum²²⁹ are strongly represented through the themes of resignation and apathy, both of which shape the characters' speech and habitus²³⁰ in one way or another. The narrative signals resignation through the leitmotif of "inertia of feeling" ("Trägheit des Gefühls").²³¹ First mentioned by the character Eduard von Bertrand – a kind of cultural diagnostician of his age – this inertia refers to a passive compliance with the dictates of traditional conventions, such as duels, prescribed career paths of gentlemen, and arranged marriages. This resignation finds expression in three noticeable ways and involves a type of language crisis, which I trace by examining the use of language and the habitus of the character Joachim von Pasenow and his family members: 1) the automatization of conventional phrases and actions that are usually associated with values like honor, integrity, or decency; 2) the characters' inchoate doubts in the validity of the conventions of honor; 3) the difficulty of the Pasenows to

²²⁹ Schlant uses the term "spiritual vacuum" for the same idea in Schlant, *Hermann Broch*, 69.

²³⁰ Habitus, according to Pierre Bourdieu, is a distinct composite of appearance, behavior, and tastes that a person acquires through nurture and education. Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction. A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1984). Originally published in 1979.

²³¹ The term "inertia of feeling" ("Trägheit des Gefühls") is first mentioned by Eduard von Bertrand, a friend of Joachim von Pasenow in Volume I, *D.S.* 60. He wonders why duels are seen as acceptable ways to defend one's honor in polite society at the end of the technologically advanced 19th century. The context of this discussion is the "honorable" death of Pasenow's older brother, Helmuth von Pasenow, in a duel.

articulate thoughts that break with the established norms and abruptly ending them with the repeated term, “egal,” and a dismissive shrugging of the shoulders.²³²

While the paralyzing inertia of feeling is portrayed through expressive difficulties and insistence on the habitus of a bygone age (such as Pasenow’s language and dress of the imperial military), the trilogy conveys the potential danger of apathy through an objectifying, officious language. I concentrate on the use of such distancing language by the two characters who represent different degrees of the critiqued materialist mentality: Eduard von Bertrand, the representative of the business world in the first volume, and Wilhelm Huguenau, the protagonist of the third volume. The arc of the plot and of the theme, which is drawn from Bertrand via Pasenow to Huguenau with rising intensity, demonstrates the destructive nature of inertia of feeling and indifference. The movement from Bertrand’s cool objectivity to Huguenau’s murderous coldness is indicated through the use of language as vehicle to distance oneself from people by categorizing them (Bertrand) and later, to manipulate people and facts to fulfill one’s materialist goals (Huguenau).

²³² Even when they are contemplating personal loss or the loneliness of their existence, Joachim von Pasenow and his father often end their thoughts with such phrases as: “Ist ja egal...” For instance: “Wenn der Pastor die Rede auf Helmuth [the eldest son of von Pasenow who died in a duel] brachte, so sagte Herr v. Pasenow manchmal: “Ist ja egal...” und brach zu seiner eigenen Verwunderung das Gespräch ab, fluchtartig geradezu, als fürchte er sich vor dem Unbekannten, das er doch herbeisehnte” (*D.S.* 75). The focalized view that Herr von Pasenow himself is surprised by his own interruptions of thought, demonstrates his emotional self-alienation. At other times he gives his interlocutors cryptic hints about his needs, and shrugs off their understandable mutual confusion: “Herr v. Pasenow schaute ihn [Bertrand] erst an, als ob er die Frage nicht verstünde, dann sagte er achselzuckend: “ist ja egal” (*D.S.* 94) and again on page 97: “Der Pastor sagte leise: ‘Gott allein kann Ihnen Botschaft senden, Herr v. Pasenow, bitte glauben Sie doch endlich daran.’ Herr v. Pasenow zuckte die Achseln: ‘Ich glaube ja daran...ja, ich glaube, nehmen Sie dies zur Kenntnis...’ Nach einer Pause, zum Fenster gewandt, wieder achselzuckend: ‘Ist ja egal.’” His desperate search for deeper meaning of why Helmuth died ends with such resignation and incogruency between his words and his body language. The trilogy contains many more such examples. Later, Joachim also adopts his father’s favorite phrase and gesture: e.g. *D.S.* 641-42.

In sum, this chapter argues that the trilogy lays out its critique of both passivity of a relativist age and the selfish pursuit of material wealth. That these attitudes are signs of disintegration of apocalyptic proportion is suggested through the fatalistic resignation and dehumanizing indifference that characterize the speech and behavior of the protagonists. *Die Schlafwandler* presents both friction and indifference primarily through the personal interaction and the language of characters in conversation. Broch demonstrates the emptying of meaning through scenarios in which language becomes meaningless – and thus hinders, rather than facilitates, interpersonal relations.

Inertia of feeling

The inertia of feeling, which erodes any resolution for change throughout the trilogy, is linked to an unreflective fixation on bygone ideals. Bertrand, who is the first to mention the term, uses it to describe the slowness with which any opposition to anachronistic traditions, such as duels to the death, is voiced in times of steam engines and automobiles:

Wir [human beings] tragen einen unzerstörbaren Fundus von Konservatismus mit uns herum. Das sind die Gefühle oder richtiger Gefühlskonventionen, denn sie sind eigentlich unlebendig und Atavismen.[...] Ich meine, dass das Lebensgefühl, das man hat, immer etwa ein halbes oder auch ein ganzes Jahrhundert dem wirklichen Leben nachhinkt. Das Gefühl ist eigentlich immer weniger human als das Leben, in dem man steht [...] (*D.S.* 60).

He specifically describes the reasons for Joachim von Pasenow's older brother Helmuth's participation in a duel despite the possibility of dying: "In welcher Konvention des Gefühls müssen die beiden [the dueling parties] befangen sein und wie sehr sind wir es selber, daß wir es ertragen können! Das Gefühl ist träge und daher so unverständlich

grausam. Die Welt ist von der Trägheit des Gefühls beherrscht.”²³³ Bertrand suggests that Helmuth and his opponent were caught in a convention of feeling, as are all those who accept the normality of the code of honor.

Bertrand’s exclamation that feelings are slow to change – thus leading to incomprehensible, cruel events – is contrary to the “official” version, which romanticizes the event with more attractive terms such as “fate” and “tragedy”: “daß Helmuth von einem unabänderlichen Fatum der Ehrenhaftigkeit, aus dem es kein Entrinnen gab, tragisch erfaßt worden sei” (*D.S.* 59). These words come from Joachim, Helmuth’s brother and, therefore, one of the people most affected by the loss. The fact that Joachim can summarize an official narrative of the duel – he had heard it repeated countless times (“in allen Kondolenzun unzählige Male wiederholt wurde” *D.S.* 60) – raises doubts about the sincerity of these condolences and the belief in the values of such conventions as that of saving face. Mentioning the context of an industrializing and modernizing Germany and evoking the actual reason for the duel (a trivial insult) highlight the incongruity of these weighty descriptions of the events as “inescapable fate” and “a tragic death.”

²³³ *D.S.* 60. At a later point, Joachim imagines that he would take the route of the inertia of feeling by fighting in a duel or going to war with clearly designated enemies rather than determine the ambiguous lines of morality and lack of clear order in the lives of civilians: “Mochte man es Trägheit des Gefühls nennen: nein, er war nicht feig und er würde sich ruhig vor die Pistole des Gegners stellen oder gegen den französischen Erbfeind ins Feld ziehen, aber die Gefahren des zivilistischen Lebens waren von fremder und dunkler, unfassbarer Art. Da war alles in Unordnung, ohne Hierarchie, ohne Disziplin und wohl auch ohne Pünktlichkeit” (*D.S.* 68). “Trägheit des Gefühls” also refers to the inability to convert thoughts and wishes into action. For instance, Joachim blames himself for being unable to guide his lover, Ruzena, from her life as an escort as an officer’s club to a more respectable position: “Joachim war davon getroffen; war er nicht selber voller Trägheit des Gefühls, war es nicht strafbare Trägheit, daß er nicht genügend Phantasie aufbrachte, Ruzena trotz ihres Sträubens mit Geld zu versorgen und aus dem Kasino herauszunehmen?” (*D.S.* 60). When Ruzena dreams of becoming a famous actress and even wants to take steps to realize her dreams, Pasenow only has doubts, and he is not surprised by the lack of progress: “Aber es war ein weiter Weg bis dahin [to become a famous actress] und es geschah nichts. Bertrand hatte einmal von einer vegetativen Indolenz gesprochen, in der die meisten Menschen lebten; das war wohl etwas Ähnliches wie jene Trägheit des Gefühls” (*D.S.* 72).

Indeed, Helmuth's death seems to be tied to the inertia and conventionality of feeling that Bertrand blames for the loss. He questions Joachim's defense of tradition by relativizing another grand word, "Ehrgefühl": "Ja, Ehrgefühl und ähnliches" (*D.S.* 59). Bertrand philosophizes about the value of the expected adherence to conventions to the point of self-destruction, which seem to serve no other purpose than to preserve the conventions. Bertrand believes that "überlebte Formen stets voller Trägheit sind und daß viel Müdigkeit dazu gehört, sich einer toten und romantischen Gefühlskonvention hinzugeben. Viel verzweifelte Ausweglosigkeit gehört dazu..." (*D.S.* 61). Unlike Bertrand, Joachim holds onto an idea of honor, which he distinguishes from mere convention. If Joachim were true to his principles, he would have to stay with his Bohemian, free-spirited lover Ruzena instead of marrying Elisabeth von Baddensee, the bride his parents chose for him.²³⁴ His eventual abandonment of Ruzena to an uncertain fate to preserve the family name adds further evidence to Bertrand's theory of the inertia of feelings: one is expected to sacrifice much to protect the convention that produces words such as "honor."

Taken as a symptom of a fatalistic disposition, inertia of feeling appears as a reluctance to turn thought into action and as a general fatigue throughout the trilogy.²³⁵ The metaphors, associated with the disposition of inertia, are barrenness, sleepwalking, and (cacophonous) muteness. Already in his earlier essay, "Kultur 1908/1909," Broch

²³⁴ *D.S.* 61.

²³⁵ For example, Joachim thinks of Helmuth, who sounded literally "lebensmüde": "Ja, Helmuth war müde gewesen" (*D.S.* 61). Cf. Helmuth's letter to Joachim: "Ich weiß nicht, ob ich aus dieser etwas überflüssigen Angelegenheit lebend herauskomme. Natürlich hoffe ich es, aber mir ist es trotzdem fast gleichgültig. Ich begrüße das Faktum, dass es so etwas wie einen Ehrenkodex gibt, der in diesem so gleichgültigen Leben eine Spur höherer Idee darstellt, der man sich unterordnen darf" (*D.S.* 46). This passage illustrates the mixture of resignation and also indifference towards one's own life, and a movement toward the indifference towards the lives of others. In Volume II, Bertrand also seems to have succumbed to indifference to the point at which he appears as an aesthete who leads a decadent life and eventually commits suicide (*D.S.* 363).

links the esteemed German institutions of “Kultur” and “Bildung” to images of decay. He criticizes his own social class, the educated bourgeoisie, for being responsible for their own cultural demise with their superficial rhetoric: “Daß diese Kultur ihrem Ende entgegeneilt, zeigt ihre senile Geschwätzigkeit./ Das Übelriechende dieses Sterbens heißt Bildung. Unsere Bildung ist die Fähigkeit, über Kunst zu sprechen.”²³⁶ Broch criticizes his contemporary culture for preserving antiquated cultural products that seem to have passed their expiration dates without producing any new art or cultural products in their place. He makes the honorable institution of culture – encapsulated in the word “Bildung” – partly responsible for decadence. If one substitutes “honor” for “Bildung,” the accelerated disintegration that Broch mentions in the quote applies to Pasenow’s late 19th century Imperial Germany. Hans Richard Brittnacher’s observation on romantic eschatological anticipation and a dangerous indifference in fin-de-siècle German literature may serve to describe the historical time and disposition that Joachim and his family members represent:

Wohl keine Epoche der neueren Geschichte war so sehr davon überzeugt, am Ende eines Zeitalters, vielleicht aller Zeiten angekommen zu sein, wie die vergangene Jahrhundertwende. Der Aufbruch in die Moderne vollzog sich in Erwartung des Untergangs – im schimmernden Glanz des Begriffs “Fin de siècle” hat die eigentümliche Mischung von Erwartungsangst und Nostalgie eine Formel gefunden, den ihr kein Jahrhundertwechsel mehr wird streitig machen können. *Aber auch keine andere Epoche hat ihre katastrophischen Ängste mit solchem Gleichmut ertragen* – nur die gelegentlichen dekadenten und hochstilisierten Gewaltphantasien in der Literatur dieser Zeit deuten auf eine fundamentale Verunsicherung, die nach ästhetischem Ausdruck suchte.²³⁷

²³⁶ Hermann Broch, “Kultur 1908/1909,” in *Philosophische Schriften I. Kritik*, ed. Paul Michael Lützeler (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1977), 13.

²³⁷ H. R. Brittnacher, *Erschöpfung und Gewalt : Opferphantasien in der Literatur des Fin de siècle* (Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 2001), 9. My emphasis. See also pp. 10-24 on the topic of decadence in German literature at the turn of the century. Cf. the discussion of decadence in the context of rationalization in Harrington: 6, 12.

In his monograph, Brittnacher concentrates on the violent fantasies of sacrifice in fin-de-siècle literature. In my work, however, I underline the focus on the inertia of feeling as a form of self-destructive passivity because the fatalistic resignation of Broch's characters represent a dangerous precondition of a growing indifference and spiritual stagnation, which only later in the novel grows into actual physical violence. The indifference is not only a catalyst of an apocalyptic catastrophe, but, as far as the trilogy is concerned, it is already part of the catastrophe.

Scrutinizing Polite Conversations

The juxtaposition between the narrator's comments and the first protagonist's narrated monologues as well as the focalization of the characters' thoughts reveal the protagonist's tendency to take comfort in accepting firm rules. Pasenow tends to assert his social and moral superiority by judging others and placing them into the categories of morally "good" and morally "bad." During conversations, he primarily seeks to confirm his prejudice about his interlocutors' personalities and moral qualities.

The following scene illustrates this point. Near the beginning of the trilogy, a subtle duel of politesse occurs between the two main characters Joachim von Pasenow and Eduard von Bertrand:

Als er Pasenow Unter den Linden begegnete, eckig im langen Uniformrock mit den Epauletten, eckig die Schultern, während er die seinen bequem in dem englischen Tuch bewegte, wurde ihm besonders fröhlich zumute und er begrüßte ihn so vertraut und leicht wie immer, wenn er einen der alten Kameraden traf, ja er fragte ihn ohne weiteres, ob er schon zu Mittag gespeist habe und ob er nicht mit ihm bei Dressel frühstücken wolle.

Pasenow vergaß angesichts des plötzlichen Zusammentreffens und der raschen Herzlichkeit, wie sehr er in den letzten Tagen an Bertrand gedacht hatte; wieder schämte er sich, daß er, schön gekleidet in seiner Uniform, mit einem sprach, der sozusagen nackt in Zivil vor ihm stehen

mußte, und am liebsten wäre er dem Antrag, gemeinsam zu speisen, ausgewichen. Aber er fand sich bloß zu der Konstatierung zurecht, daß er Bertrand doch schon außerordentlich lange nicht gesehen habe. Ja, das sei bei dem gleichförmigen, seßhaften Leben, das Pasenow führe, kein Wunder, meinte Bertrand, ihm dagegen, in seiner Unruhe und Gejagtheit, schiene es, als wäre es gestern gewesen, daß sie gemeinsam ihre ersten Portepées über die Linden getragen und zum ersten Male bei Dressel soupiert hätten – indessen waren sie eingetreten –, und dabei sei man doch älter geworden (*D.S.* 31).

As indicated above, these figures represent two different social types of the German Empire's foundational years (*Gründerjahre*) of the late 19th century, and they stand for two different social spheres and periods: Pasenow is the second son of a Junker and officer of the Imperial Prussian Army. With his romantic and nostalgic tendencies for an idealized traditional social order, he represents the conservative monarchical era.

Although Bertrand also originates from a Junker family and initially followed the same career path as Pasenow, he left the military academy and his family in order to pursue a career in commerce. As a successful importer, and as a practical, non-sentimental person, Bertrand stands for an era of modernization. Though reluctant to admit it, Pasenow both abhors and quietly admires Bertrand's decision to break out of the prescribed social molds of his class. Bertrand's pragmatism, material success, and Pasenow's reluctant idealization of him indicate that economic power has raised and continues to raise the status of the bourgeoisie to the point where this class becomes a noteworthy competitor of the aristocracy.²³⁸

²³⁸ On the argument that the duel was adopted by the middle class as a way to raise their honorable status to a level comparable to the aristocracy, see LaVaque-Manty: 715-40. In her monograph on Karl Kraus' theories of gender and cultural critique in fin-de-siècle Vienna, Nike Wagner draws a correlation between the increasing economic wealth of the bourgeoisie and the growth of a social moral self-censorship in this class. Put differently, as censorship by the monarchical government decreased and the bourgeoisie's self-confidence (in their intellectual and artistic productions) increased especially from the 18th century on, members of the German-speaking bourgeois class gradually adopted institutionalized self-monitoring as a civic responsibility. Wagner's description of the changing social sphere of influence in the establishment

The narrative stresses the importance of the capitalist economy for the growth of the middle class – which the author considers symptomatic of the dramatic change in social values.²³⁹ Although every remark is tested and taken personally, especially by Pasenow, the small talk between the two men goes beyond the private concerns of two former school friends. Their interaction demonstrates a power balance and exposes the prejudices that the antiquated romantic and the pragmatic progressive have toward each other. Furthermore, they have an element of the theatrical, as though both were acting a part, with their words not corresponding to their thoughts. Their thoughts before the meeting and the way of assessing each other in conversation unfold as an exchange of polite phrases and civilities appropriate for two young men of their class and social standing.

What is remarkable about this scene is not necessarily what they say to each other – in fact, the narrator reports the exposition of their dialogue in indirect speech – but rather how they size each other up in subtle ways which reveals their assessment of the

affirms that Kraus reacted to the moralizing atmosphere of the stifling bourgeois establishment, which did not leave much room for independent thought. Wagner refers to the tendency to determine which modes of communication and types of speech are socially acceptable and morally fit as the idea of bourgeois self-censorship. Cf. Nike Wagner, *Geist und Geschlecht: Karl Kraus und die Erotik der Wiener Moderne* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1982).

Thomas Nipperdey makes a comparable observation on the German bourgeoisie's lack of political power and developed economic and cultural self-confidence in the 19th century, which grew more acutely in the early 20th century. In his book, he applies theories of modernization and modernism to understand the reception of Germans to National Socialism in the 1930s. For my chapter, I highlight his brief history of modernization in Germany, in which Nipperdey points out the similarity between German and Western European modernization and also Germany's particular modernization. He begins with the Reformation (Max Weber equated modernization with rationalization and also started his history of this process with the Reformation), points to bureaucratization, economic reform and its incompatibility with the pre-modern imperial regime that kept the bourgeois politically powerless, delaying politically modernizing developments in English or France. This tension between the modern economic and cultural structure and its pre-modern politics led to an uneven development in the late 19th century and early 20th century that led to dualism between country and city and also to a spiritual disorientation, because a new spiritual model had not been found that could adapt to the new objective reality quickly enough. For details, see Thomas Nipperdey, *Nachdenken über die deutsche Geschichte* (München: Beck, 1986).

²³⁹ Cf. Harrington: 1-18.

other person. These two young men seek to confirm their own assessments of each other: Bertrand sees the embodiment of the rigidity and limitations of the military institution he left behind in his uniformed former friend (“eckig im langen Uniformrock mit den Epauletten, eckig die Schultern,” *D.S.* 31); Pasenow detects the moral decay in Bertrand’s civilian – quasi naked – appearance (“wieder schämte er sich, daß er, schön gekleidet in seiner Uniform, mit einem sprach, der sozusagen nackt in Zivil vor ihm stehen mußte,” *D.S.* 31). Each tries to outshine the other, exuding confidence about the careers that they have chosen; one convention vies for dominance with the other. As if they were fencing, they are equipped with suitable costumes and shields in this conversational duel: their clothes and composed facial expressions signal the characters’ social positions. These positions in turn dictate what rules of conduct the characters can use to engage with each other. The layers of previously held expectations and socially encoded responses entail that the men interact primarily as social types rather than as old friends. While defending their respective social functions (that of the military and the rising industrial class), they each try to discredit the other. Although they sit face to face, they almost fail to recognize the former friend behind the guise of the square uniform or the fancy English suit. Civilities reinforce the walls between the two characters.

Demystifying Socially Sanctifying Rhetoric

Bertrand questions the moral backbone of conventional society by demystifying rhetoric with his gentle mockery of the institutions that are holy to Pasenow. While comparing the businessman’s frequent travels and the officer’s sedentary life of routine in Berlin, Bertrand gently teases Pasenow:

“Warum melden Sie sich nicht wenigstens zum Kolonialdienst, da Ihnen das Reich schon den Spaß eingerichtet hat?” [...] Bertrand hatte jetzt wieder diesen ironischen Zug um den Mund: “Nun ja, was soll dabei heraussehen? Ein bißchen privater Kriegsspaß und Kriegsruhm für die unmittelbar Beteiligten. [...] Ist ja doch alles Romantik – mit Ausnahme der katholischen und evangelischen Missionstätigkeit natürlich, die nüchterne, zweckdienliche Arbeit besorgt. Aber alles andere – Spaß, nichts als Spaß” (D.S. 32).

To Pasenow’s objection that Germany is entitled to enjoy the same colonial rank as other European countries, Bertrand replies:

[E]rstens, England ist England, zweitens ist auch für England aller Tage Abend, drittens lege ich überflüssige Kapitalien immer noch lieber in englischen Kolonialpapieren an als deutschen, so dass man also sogar von einer wirtschaftlichen Kolonialromantik sprechen kann, und viertens, ich sagte es bereits, ist es immer nur die Kirche, die an Kolonialexpansion wahres nüchternes Interesse hat. [...] Ja, sehen Sie, Europa ist für die Kirche doch schon ein recht dubioser Posten geworden. Afrika hingegen! Hunderte von Millionen Seelen als Rohmaterial für den Glauben. Und Sie können überzeugt sein, dass ein getaufter Neger ein besserer Christ ist als zwanzig Europäer. [...] [In Afrika] liegt ja die Zukunft des Glaubens, dort sind jene künftigen Glaubensstreiter, die einmal gegen das heidnisch versunkene und verpfühlte Europa im Namen Christi sengend und brennend losziehen sollen, um schließlich einen schwarzen Papst inmitten der rauchenden Trümmer Roms auf den Stuhl Petri zu setzen.” Das ist die Apokalypse Johanniss, dachte Pasenow; er lästert (D.S. 32f.).

In his conversation with Pasenow, he indicates that the controlling mechanism of public opinion and value systems are passed from the top down. The upper bourgeoisie with money, but with little real political powers, wields its influence in the cultural sphere, determining what is culture and what is moral. *Die Schlafwandler* implies that this correlation between economics, politics, culture, and religion extends to a global level through his mention of European colonial ventures in Africa. Bertrand shocks Joachim von Pasenow by sardonically addressing the capitalist drive behind the European missionary and military activities on foreign soil. Bertrand uses economic terms (he speaks of the church’s interest in Africa because of the ample “Rohmaterial für den

Glauben” D.S. 33) to describe the church’s claims to save the primitive but noble souls in the colonies. Furthermore, *Die Schlafwandler* implies that euphemistic language – one that hides matters that are considered crude, such as sexuality or violence – reinforces the barriers between social classes along moralistic lines. Those who successfully blind themselves by sublimating “impure” thoughts deem themselves moral masters, while looking down upon those they supposedly want to help.

Bertrand’s ironic remarks on the romanticism and religious bigotry of Western colonial pursuits in Africa scandalize Pasenow and confirm his negative assessment of Bertrand. Although he does indeed profit from colonialism, Bertrand ridicules imperial pursuits as profitable dealings that make room for war games and romantic notions of chivalry and bravery in battle. He is fully aware of his own position as one of the exploiters, but he is weary of the hypocritical claims of other colonizers who pretend to save heathen souls and he wants to set himself apart from them. Pasenow, on the other hand, cannot read Bertrand’s self-reflexive stance because he hunts for an admission that Bertrand is corrupt. Moreover, Pasenow is not interested in politics because it is outside his prescribed field of expertise and hence outside his mental frame. Colonial duties belong to the division of the Marines, which means that they were never an issue for him.²⁴⁰ For this Prussian officer, anything outside the neatly divided military world is a potential cesspool and he wears his ignorance of the ambiguous sector of politics like a badge of honor. Bertrand’s playful insistence on his ironic position toward everything,

²⁴⁰ “Pasenow und seine Kameraden hatten sich über das Kolonienproblem nie den Kopf zerbrochen; das war ein Reservatum der Marine; aber trotzdem war er empört” (D.S. 32). Pasenow’s limitedness and easy acceptance of the existing social order appear in his thought that he never considered joining the colonial efforts because it is not part of his division. Moreover, Pasenow misses the ironic touch in Bertrand’s utterances, with which Bertrand ridicules the colonial aspirations as being based on romantic ideals (D.S. 30). Pasenow cannot think outside the box; Bertrand, skirting the margins, cannot help but provoke him.

even his own position (i.e. he refuses to take anything seriously in contrast to Pasenow, who takes everything too seriously), underlines his own detachment from world affairs. Moreover, in his playful banter with Pasenow, Bertrand suggests that the military as well as religious rhetoric and symbols are mere facades that euphemize contemporary world economic practices.

In addition to the tension of social class and contrary understandings of sacred institutions, the young men clash on the front of urban cosmopolitanism and provincialism. Pasenow retorts:

Ich begreife eigentlich nicht, was Sie gegen die Gläubigkeit von uns Europäern einzuwenden haben. Ich meine, daß Sie als Großstädter doch nicht den richtigen Einblick besitzen. Wenn man, wie ich, auf dem Lande aufgewachsen ist, so steht man zu diesen Dingen doch anders. Auch unser Volk draußen ist dem Christlichen viel enger verbunden, als Sie anzunehmen scheinen (*D.S.* 34).

As a contrast to Pasenow's limited and romantic provincialism, Bertrand's cosmopolitanism involves the command of different languages. This businessman has an advantage over the Prussian officer for reasons that Pasenow finds disdainful: Bertrand does not cling to tradition, but instead moves across social as well as geographical boundaries. He seems aloof and takes an ironic, analytical distance in interactions with others because he recognizes the social structures around him. Moreover, his ability both to transcend and trespass boundaries makes him secure in his marginal position. Notably, these thought associations happen when Bertrand directly addresses the commercial, expansionist Western countries' desires that motivate both the imperialist and missionary work in Africa. Both represent the state and church, which are sacred institutions to Pasenow. Our hero feels that his values are attacked, and he feels it as a kind of crisis of terms. Whenever he is with Bertrand, he is uncertain whether he can trust Bertrand's

words. His friend sparks a certain skepticism in Pasenow that points to a crisis of language.

Language Crisis and Values

The scrutiny of language, which is demonstrated especially by the narrator and characters like Bertrand in *Die Schlafwandler*, engages with a variation of language crisis that occupied many German-speaking authors of the early 20th century. Language crisis is most commonly associated with fin-de-siècle literature in German and, in particular, with Hugo von Hofmannsthal's famous 1902 "Ein Brief." In this fictional letter, Philipp Lord Chandos explains to Lord Francis Bacon why he stopped writing literature. With an eloquent *Redeschwall*, the letter underlines and problematizes the meaning of words by emphasizing the separation between words and their signified objects. The protagonist laments the impermanence of words and the uncertainty of judgments based on such unstable entities, which disintegrate like decaying organisms: "die abstrakten Worte, deren sich doch die Zunge naturgemäß bedienen muß, um irgendwelches Urtheil an den Tag zu geben, zerfielen mir im Munde wie modrige Pilze."²⁴¹ This sentence has become emblematic of the crisis of language of the fin-de-siècle.²⁴²

²⁴¹ Hugo von Hofmannsthal, "Ein Brief (1902)," in *Erzählungen und Aufsätze: Ausgewählte Werke in Zwei Bänden* (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer Verlag, 1957).

²⁴² Examples of philosophical attempts to grapple with the divide between thing and word can be found in the texts of Friedrich Nietzsche, Ferdinand de Saussure, and Karl Wittgenstein. See, for instance, Nietzsche's 1896 *Also sprach Zarathustra*, Saussure's 1916 *Cours de linguistique générale*, or Wittgenstein's 1953 *Philosophical Investigations*. Especially Nietzsche and Wittgenstein illustrate how language's inadequacy in communicating meaning between persons. (Although Wittgenstein published *Philosophical Investigations* in the 1950s, he is a contemporary of Hofmannsthal and Broch, and influenced by the philosophical and literary developments of the early 20th century. Lützelers shows Nietzsche's influence on Broch, especially on the thoughts on a secularized modern age that lacks self-awareness and the use of metaphors of darkness and abyss to describe modern Germany's cultural condition in the late 19th century. Lützeler, "Einleitung: Brochs Theogonie der Ethik," 9-16.

Unlike Hofmannsthal's Lord Chandos, Karl Kraus does not despair over the seemingly arbitrary connection between words and their meaning themselves nor about the possibility of communicating truths. Kraus was more concerned with a careless use of the German language – including incorrect grammar and poor style – which he considered symptomatic of careless thinking.²⁴³ The shifting attention to linguistic production is significant and holds a more liberating thought than appears at first. In a sense, Kraus suggested through his independent journal, *Die Fackel*, that first, publicly discussed ideas could become widely held truths, and second, that everyone, who used and read the German language, participated in the formation of language and its truth values. The reading public had a responsibility to themselves and each other to pay attention to the language use in their cultural environment. In his aphorisms and *Die Fackel*, Kraus underscored the facile moral pronouncements that he found in the printed media by ridiculing the discussion of censorship rules in daily reports, editorials, and feuilletons of such mainstream newspapers as *Neue Freie Presse* and the *Neues Wiener Tagesblatt*. His journal constituted a series of rigorous strikes against what its author deemed symptomatic of a bigoted society. For instance, in *Die Fackel*, Heft 216/14 (1907), he ridicules the pretense of a dermatologist as moral specialist. Professor Zeißl of the University of Vienna had concluded an interview with the *Neues Wiener Tagesblatt* with a criticism of Ibsen's and Strindberg's plays, which he blames for the spread of sexually transmitted diseases such as syphilis. Kraus, paraphrasing Zeißl, writes:

²⁴³ This is of course not a new idea; cf. Thucydides on the degeneration of Attic Greek as a sign of the decline of Athenian society. This idea is cited in his *History of the Peloponnesian War*, Book III, 82.

[Er] fragt, ob es nötig sei, “hysterischen Ekel wie Hedda Gabler oder Fräulein Julie auf die Bühne zu bringen”. Herr Professor Zeißl zählt nämlich diese Werke zur pornographischen Literatur, und die pornographische Literatur sei an der Unmoral und die Unmoral an der Syphilis schuld....Ein Syphilologe, der sich über die Moralheuchelei beklagt, bringt es zuwege, wenigstens den Namen der Krankheit, die er ausrotten will, zu unterdrücken, und läßt sich erst zum Schlusse seiner langen Ausführungen hinreißen, ganz beiläufig den Lesern des Familienblattes für Kuppelannoncen zu verraten, welche “Infektionskrankheit” er eigentlich gemeint habe.²⁴⁴

Kraus critiques language use as a critique of contemporary moral discourse. In this passage, Kraus points out the miseducation of the public that can result from the prudish indirectness of the self-proclaimed moral specialists. Instead of warding off the spread of syphilis, a scholar such as Dr. Zeißl seems to advocate stricter censorship in the cultural sphere and furthering ignorance. Moreover, it is men of science and reason who cannot be trusted on such moral matters with their faulty logic. Scientific experts perpetuate the confusion between the causes and effects of illnesses that are ascribed to sexual immorality. Thus they are ineffective in combating sexually transmitted diseases, while they further prolong and harden hypocritical attitudes. Kraus therefore presents and unmasks a hypocritical moral surface by citing the kinds of speeches that, according to him, demonstrate social irresponsibility, falsity, and absurdities in social conduct.²⁴⁵ By targeting a daily paper, the satirist contends that these kinds of intellectual and social

²⁴⁴ Karl Kraus, *Die Fackel* 216, no. 14 (1907).

²⁴⁵ Elias Canetti referred to these quoted speeches as acoustic citations, i.e. they functioned as verbal snapshots that Kraus integrated in his articles. See Elias Canetti, “Karl Kraus, Schule des Widerstands,” in *Das Gewissen der Worte* (München, Wien: Carl Hanser Verlag, 1965). Canetti elaborates on this idea of acoustic citations in *Der Ohrenzeuge: Fünfzig Charaktere* (1974). This essay collection consists of different social types that are portrayed through supposedly typical utterances. This type of ear witnessing moment opens his *Auto-da-Fé*, which begins with a dialogue between the protagonist and a boy. In this case, the reader is put in the position of witness. This typology reminds one of August Sander’s *Antlitz der Zeit*, a collection of photographs of the prototypical faces of the time. Unlike Canetti’s ear witness collection, Sander’s project is completed more in earnest. (*Antlitz der Zeit. Sechzig Aufnahmen deutscher Menschen des 20. Jahrhunderts mit einer Einleitung von Alfred Döblin*. München: Kurt Wolff/Transmare Verlag, 1929).

“crimes” are rampant. For Kraus, the primary offenses of euphemistic speech in newspapers were portraying an idea or a situation incompletely or falsely to make moral claims. This demonstration of the lacking correspondence between ideas about morality and modern practices and disciplines echoes Bertrand’s thoughts on the sluggishness with which conventionality of feelings catch up to the materially changing times.

Romantic Insistence on Military Form

In the novel, Pasenow’s uniform anchors his value system. His reliance on his uniform as a symbol of morality is an extreme example of the adherence to established social structures. In his reflections on the social function of the uniform, Pasenow focuses on the uniform’s role to envelop its wearer in a reassuring armor that lifts him from ordinary life:

[E]ine richtige Uniform gibt ihrem Träger eine deutliche Abgrenzung seiner Person gegenüber der Umwelt; sie ist wie ein hartes Futteral, an dem Welt und Person scharf und deutlich aneinanderstoßen und voneinander sich unterscheiden [...] So wird dem Mann [...] tatsächlich eine zweite und dichtere Haut gegeben, und es ist, als ob er in sein eigentliches und festeres Leben zurückkehre [...] ja, das Leben selbst rückt fernab [...] er ist mit den Dingen nicht mehr verbunden, und da sie ihn kaum mehr etwas angehen, vermag er jetzt, sie nach gut und böse zu unterscheiden, denn auf Unduldsamkeit und Unverständnis ist die Sicherheit des Lebens gegründet (*D.S.* 24-25).

When he wears his uniform, Pasenow feels secure and righteous. In the last sentence of the cited passage, however, the narrator ironically winks at the readers, signaling the oppressiveness of a system that encourages the longing for restrictive institutions by valorizing their symbols. Pasenow follows the rules of moralistic authorities that Kraus alluded to when he referred to the tendency to cover up something that the authorities and

polite society refuse to deal with. Here, language serves Pasenow's protection of his own self-image as a righteous person.

The language and habitus of the military institution are not only for subjugating others to one's will (which is the subject of Kraus' criticism) but also function as a protective armor against unwanted self-doubt. Whenever Pasenow feels threatened, he recovers a sense of established order by reassuring himself that his uniform is buttoned and is properly arranged: "Er hatte die Hand noch an den Uniformknöpfen; mechanisch vergewisserte er sich, ob sie alle geschlossen seien, und das war nun eine seltsame Beruhigung, war gleichsam eine Hoffnung auf Rückkehr in die Pflicht, Rückkehr ins eigentliche geborgene Leben" (*D.S.* 642). In an exaggerated manner, he appears to need the military to keep himself intact. The narrator makes this point even more clearly when he outlines the aged Pasenow's spiritual woes during the First World War, focalized through Pasenow's point of view:

Der Krieg, für dessen Gewerbe er erzogen worden war, der Krieg, für den er eine Jugend lang die Uniform getragen und für den er sie vor vier Jahren wieder angelegt hatte, der Krieg war plötzlich keine Angelegenheit der Uniformen mehr, keine Angelegenheit der Blauhosen und Rothosen, keine Angelegenheit feindlicher Kameraden, die ritterlich die Klingen kreuzen, der Krieg war weder Krönung noch Erfüllung eines uniformierten Lebens geworden, sondern hatte unbemerkt und doch immer fühlbarer dieses Lebens Grundlagen erschüttert, hatte dessen moralischen Zusammenhalt fadenscheinig gemacht, und durch die Maschen des Gewebes grinste das Sündige (*D.S.* 469-70).

When the familiar face of his era – the one of romantic chivalry, which the uniform represented – fades during the war, the aged Pasenow begins to collapse. He feels that the moral fiber of his age is disintegrating: "moralischen Zusammenhalt fadenscheinig gemacht, und durch die Maschen des Gewebes grinste das Sündige." Pasenow cannot survive long without his stabilizing symbol and his armor, which actually covers up lies

and meaningless sacrifices for the sake of reputation; with a shaken belief in his external representation of honor and pride, Pasenow suffers a debilitating nervous breakdown in Volume III. He can no longer speak nor understand anyone because of the defacement of moral symbols: his personal catastrophe has arrived.

Plessner's Anthropology and *Die Schlafwandler*

The close scrutiny that the novels' narrators pay to the characters' physical and mental expressions is similar to the attention that cultural philosophers of the interwar years such as Helmuth Plessner pay to everyday life. Broch and Plessner emphasize that social and cultural meanings arise when an action is performed within a given context. In his early essays of the 1920s, the anthropologist examines how actions and things acquire meaning and value during human interactions. Plessner especially examines how gestures and facial expressions translate into specific meanings and eventually acquire normalized values.²⁴⁶ His guiding questions focus on the evaluation of daily phenomena: how do people express their emotional and psychological dispositions, and how are these expressions translated into denotable behaviors and ideas? He postulates: "Entscheidend für die Möglichkeit des Armhebens oder des Gehens ist das Ergreifen und Eingreifen in die leibhaft gegebene Körpergestalt, die sowohl der physiologischen als auch der psychologischen Erklärungsebene vorausliegt."²⁴⁷ He seeks to find a comprehensive explanatory system for linking action with perception and meaning. While arguing that only the combination of biological and psychological explanatory models would deliver a full explanation, Plessner also suggests that meaning only arises when a phenomenon is

²⁴⁶ Helmuth Plessner, "Die Deutung des mimischen Ausdrucks : Ein Beitrag zur Lehre vom Bewusstsein des anderen Ichs," in *Zwischen Philosophie und Gesellschaft. Ausgewählte Abhandlungen und Vorträge* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp Taschenbuch, 1979), 166ff.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 166.

seen as part of a whole picture. In short – and simplified for the purpose of this chapter – the philosopher of culture primarily seeks a universal grammar of human behavioral codes through which one can form and convey meaning.

In particular, Plessner's application of the same principle to language is significant for this chapter. Plessner argues: "Jede Art der Sprache, sei sie Lautsprache oder irgendeine andere Zeichensprache, gewinnt Sinn, indem sie etwas besagt, bedeutet, auf etwas hindeutet."²⁴⁸ As with physical actions, the meaning of words arises through physical and linguistic actions, in an interactive context. But they differ in the following way: Plessner aims to produce a general theory of the correspondence between gesture and language in human interaction. Broch, however, lays out a quasi-anthropological typification of his contemporary cultural milieu to critique individual social sectors. What is more, throughout his novel, Broch mimics the typifying terms to take issue with interpersonal and institutional repression that can result from classificatory mechanisms.

Defacing Romantic Fronts - Diagnosis, but no Solution

If Helmut Plessner is skeptical about "a cult of authenticity"²⁴⁹ of the kind that Pasenow subscribes to, Broch seems to push for its reinstatement, though with different forms and with an emphasis on "authenticity." While Plessner makes a conscious effort to assess the practice of social acting in everyday life with as little value judgment as possible, Broch invites the readers' value judgment. Broch reacts to a calculating philosophy that he sees as a rationalizing tendency among his contemporaries that radicalizes after the war. A closer look at the similarities between Bertrand and

²⁴⁸ Ibid., 168-9.

²⁴⁹ Helmut Lethen, *Cool Conduct: The Culture of Distance in Weimar Germany*, trans., Don Reneau (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002), 53.

Huguenau, the two business types and trespassers of boundaries, reveals the movement from the pre-war “cool” to the “ice-cold” persona of the Weimar Republic.

Bertrand’s analytical views indicate a self-awareness necessary for exposing the kind of hypocritical thinking that makes up Pasenow’s worldview. Pasenow sometimes likens Bertrand to a medical doctor because Bertrand’s detached position seems to resemble that of an examiner of life; this comparison reappears in the second volume.²⁵⁰ As someone who recognizes the constructedness of social norms, Bertrand appears like a precursor of the cool persona that Helmut Lethen delineates as an essential character of the Weimar Republic. Lethen subscribes to Helmuth Plessner’s philosophical anthropology that is encapsulated in Plessner’s famous line: “Man is by nature artificial.”²⁵¹ According to Plessner, boundaries are man-made to begin with, and, following this logic, realizing this disappearing order would be to acknowledge the shifting social paradigms in the modernizing historical times. This so-called acting or masquerading that Bertrand and Huguenau are accused of would be part of being integrated into the social world.

It should be noted that Lethen does not refer to Plessner merely as someone who finds new ways to classify social behaviour. In fact, Lethen regards Plessner’s description of acting and especially the category of the cool persona as one of the defense mechanisms of the intellectuals and writers traumatized by the events of the First World

²⁵⁰ The second protagonist Esch encounters Bertrand in a dream sequence and compares him to both actor and physician: “Nun sah er ihn auch, der bartlos wie ein Schauspieler und doch kein Schauspieler war; sein Gesicht war jugendlich und sein lockiges Haar war weiß. In dem Raume gab es viele Bücher, und Esch saß neben dem Schreibtisch, als wäre er bei einem Arzte. Er hörte ihn sprechen, und die Stimme war teilnehmend wie die eines Arztes. ‘Was führt Sie zu mir?’” (*D.S.* 336).

²⁵¹ Lethen, 56.

War.²⁵² Notably, however, Broch's characterization of Bertrand as a precursor of the cool persona suggests that this tendency is a symptom of modernization and not specially linked to the war. This is a subtle but noteworthy difference: the kind of cold persona that Huguenau represents is an intensification of the cool persona. Broch locates the seeds of this coldness in the prewar period.

While acknowledging that he must respect some fundamental rules of each individual social sphere, Bertrand explores the limits of social boundaries, such as the boundaries between the (antiquated) imperialist social order and that of the (thriving) business world. His exploration is expressed in his thoughts on the acquisition of the language of the world of banking and the import business. Bertrand has mastered business vocabulary and etiquette, just as he has learned other languages. At the beginning of the following scene quoted below, for instance, Bertrand reflects on the business world's seemingly more fluid and liberating boundaries. He likens the sense to the comfort he feels in his English suit, which he contrasts with the inflexible military uniform. The idea of accessibility and class mobility is conveyed by the mention of the terminology that structures individual spheres and Bertrand reflects:

Vielleicht war auch dies einer der Gründe gewesen, um derentwillen er das Regiment verlassen hatte: so viele Dinge gab es, die ringsum sich anboten und von denen man damals ausgeschlossen war. Was sagten ihm einstens die Firmenschilder der Banken [...]? es waren tote Worte, die man übersah oder von denen man gestört wurde. Jetzt wußte er [...] was hinter den Schaltern geschah, ja, er verstand nicht nur die Aufschriften der Schalter, [...] sondern er wußte auch, was in den Büros der Direktion vor sich ging, [...] und all dies war sehr natürlich in sein Wesen eingeflossen, ihm so selbstverständlich wie jene messingene Tafel am Steinweg in Hamburg "Eduard v. Bertrand, Baumwollimporte" (*D.S.* 30f.).

²⁵² Ibid., 44.

Bertrand reminisces that he had felt removed and even somehow threatened by words on the business signs. His initial wariness toward financial terms suggests the cold relationship between the aristocratic and entrepreneurial worlds. At first, business language seemed like a foreign or even dead body and Bertrand could not accept it until he crossed the borders and changed membership from the military to the business world. The borders between different sectors of society are upheld by the special language/terms that each employs. Remarkably, Bertrand not only understands the language of the new world, his name has become one of its terms (he thinks proudly of the plaques with his name and title in Hamburg, Bremen, and Liverpool). Thus he becomes fully integrated in the other world. His plaques (and his business) in different commercial centers and even in different countries and languages (his title in Liverpool is presumably in English) underline this mobility. Pasenow and Bertrand now speak different social languages, although German is their mother tongue. Bertrand's thoughts on his former self, which resembled Pasenow at the military academy, reinforce the idea that their fin-de-siècle world is partitioned and that everyone has his/her place in the greater picture.

In his confrontation with the romantic Pasenow, the rationalist Bertrand demystifies the reverent aura around the Prussian empire and its subjects. He ridicules the rigid rules of society and the hypocrisy behind the moral rhetoric, which thinly veils the exploitation of the poor and disadvantaged in a faraway land. This kind of cold, doctor-like attitude is partly responsible for the pragmatic steps with which Bertrand "saves" Pasenow from social suicide by ensuring that Pasenow does not marry below his class. Bertrand does as much as he can for his friend without compromising his detachedness and his own level of comfort.

The belief in a certain terminology to uphold a rigid worldview has a symbolic counterpart in the uniform. For Bertrand, however, there is no space for the categorical partitions, such as between the civilian and military world, or between heaven and hell. By jarring Pasenow's worldview through the signs of change and modernization, Bertrand plays a small part in broadening Pasenow's horizon. A major shortcoming of Bertrand (and his type), however, is that he lacks a vision that goes beyond his personal well-being. Although he recognizes that military romanticism can lead many to senseless violence in the name of high ideals, he also needs the Pasenow types against whom he can identify himself. The hyperbolic version of the cool persona, Huguenau, will go further; he will compromise or eliminate others when it suits him.

Radicalization of Rationalist Attitude: From Bertrand to Huguenau

Broch's aesthetic and moral judgments are most strongly communicated through the character of the protagonist of the third volume. Huguenau personifies Broch's morally charged aesthetic concept of kitsch on several levels:²⁵³ whether in business, in private conversations, or at social functions, Huguenau is a hyperbole of a calculating person who weighs the potential gains and losses of each situation. In his lecture on the topic of kitsch, Broch remarks that he addresses a certain attitude to a way of living and not about art: "[I]ch spreche eigentlich nicht über Kunst, sondern über eine bestimmte Lebenshaltung." He continues that speaking about art necessitates the discussion about human character, especially when one defines art as a representation of its creator:

"Kunst ist, wird sie im weitesten Sinn genommen, immer Abbild des jeweiligen Menschen, und wenn der Kitsch Lüge ist – als welche er oft und mit Recht bezeichnet wird –, so fällt der Vorwurf auf den Menschen

²⁵³ I discussed the concept of kitsch in chapter 1 above.

zurück, der solch Lügen- und Verschönerungsspiegel braucht, um sich darin zu erkennen und mit gewissermaßen ehrlichem Vergnügen sich zu seinen Lügen bekennen.“²⁵⁴

With everything he does and says – even when dancing during a city ball – Huguenau aims to further his purpose. If one were to make an analogy to art, the third protagonist thus represents the artlessness that Broch describes in his theories on kitsch. According to his theories, Broch contends, somewhat radically, that art that is practiced to achieve a certain effect – such as for purely didactic purposes, for commercial reasons, or as political propaganda – is limited and inconsiderate at its best, and deceptive and lethal at its worst.²⁵⁵

The best example of unreflective, damaging indifference is Huguenau’s focus on business. During the last year of the war, Huguenau explores profitable real estate options exploiting the misery of others. After the war, Huguenau remains true to his profit-oriented principles: he cons the widow of the second volume’s protagonist, August Esch, into giving him 8000 francs for shares of Esch’s newspaper with a legal document that is based on invented facts.²⁵⁶ He ignores the fact that he once raped her and killed her husband, and believes that he is entitled to the legal share of a business venture that he founded on a lie to begin with.²⁵⁷ The narrator shows the discrepancy between the legally

²⁵⁴ Broch, “Einige Bemerkungen zum Problem des Kitsches: Ein Vortrag (1950),” 158. See also Broch, “Das Böse im Wertsystem der Kunst (1933),” 147-57. Schlant, *Hermann Broch*, 51-52.; Kluger, 13-20.

²⁵⁵ Lützeler, *Die Entropie des Menschen*. According to Lützeler, Broch’s despair increased because of the ineffectiveness of literature to combat the increasingly radical politics of the National Socialists in the mid 1930s. This frustration motivates him to author the 1936/37 political pamphlet, “Völkerbund-Resolution.” Around that time, the author turned against such over-emphasis on language as Karl Kraus’ elevation of language to a transcendental level and his earlier romantic view of language as the mystical center of values – “Dieser Überschätzung der Sprache steht Broch ablehnend gegenüber” – and seeks to develop comprehensive principle of ethics that can concretely oppose national socialist politics.

²⁵⁶ See Huguenau’s officious letter to Esch’s wife, in which he demands his supposedly fair share of the newspaper that he claims to have bought in 1918 (*D.S.* 693-96).

²⁵⁷ Huguenau pressures Esch to sell his newspaper, the *Kurtrierscher Bote* to a fictional interest group. Much of the chapter 30 reads like a legal document, including minute details of the contract between the

correct actions and immorality, through the juxtaposition of the immoral nature of Huguenau's letter, in which he simply and correctly states "Das war eine erpresserische und hässliche Handlung" (*D.S.* 696) – and the feeling that such moral indignation has no legitimate reason:

[A]ber sie [this action through the blackmailing letter] wurde von Huguenau nicht als solche empfunden; sie verstieß weder gegen seine Privattheologie noch gegen die des kommerziellen Wertesystems, ja sie wäre auch von Huguenaus Mitbürgern nicht als hässlich empfunden worden, denn es war ein kommerziell und juristisch einwandfreier Brief, und selbst Frau Esch empfand solche Legalität als ein Fatum, dem sie sich williger beugte, als etwa einer Beschlagnahme von seiten der Kommunisten (*D.S.* 696).

The character separates his past completely from his current business, in which murder does not have a place. That such ugly action cannot simply be erased comes out through the noticeable repetitions of the word "kommerziell" and "juristisch" within one paragraph, through which the narrator signals that the commercial logic and legal claim are manufactured. The questionable supremacy of the legal system as well as the lack of reflection given to important decisions is conveyed through Mrs. Esch's focalization of the situation. The choice of the word "Fatum" shows that she submits herself to a verdict that she regards as above humans, therefore elevating man-made law to a transcendental level.

two men *D.S.*456-61. During the November proto-revolution of 1918, Huguenau rapes Mrs. Esch on a whim (*D.S.* 673) and later stabs Esch in the back with a bayonet and kills him: "Esch marschierte geradeaus, schaute nicht rechts, nicht links, sogar das brennende Rathaus schien seine Aufmerksamkeit nicht zu erregen. [...] Huguenau trieb es vorwärts [...] es mußte [...] ein Schlußpunkt gesetzt werden. Und da übermächtigte es ihn wie eine Erleuchtung, – er senkt das Gewehr, ist mit ein paar tangoartigen katzenartigen Sprüngen bei Esch und rennt ihm das Bajonett in den knöchigen Rücken" (*D.S.* 677). The change to present tense indicates that the scene is focalized through Huguenau's point of view. In addition, the reference to tango in describing the third protagonist's agility and Broch's bony back aestheticize Huguenau's murderous movement and further prove that the perspective is that of Huguenau, the scrupulous, "kitschy" killer.

Huguenau is a caricature of personified objectivism and a man without values: “Huguenau, ein wertfreier Mensch, gehörte allerdings auch dem kommerziellen System an; er war ein Mann, der in Branchekreisen einen guten Ruf genoß, er war ein gewissenhafter und umsichtiger Kaufmann und er hatte seiner kaufmännischen Pflicht stets voll und ganz, ja, mit aller Radikalität Folge geleistet“ (D.S. 737). Appearing toward the end of the trilogy, this passage is an accurate description of this man, who walks through life without any development in character and who is qualified by his radical functionality. The text expresses the coldness and objectivity in tone that Huguenau embodies:

Huguenau erwachte zeitig. Er ist ein fleißiger Mensch. Anständiges Zimmer; keine Knechkammer wie bei dem Pfaffen; gutes Bett. Huguenau kratzte seine Schenkel. Dann versuchte er, sich zu orientieren. Gasthof, Marktplatz, drüben liegt das Rathaus. [...] Der Morgen war hell. Ein wenig kühl. Im Frisörladen standen zwei gelbe Lehnstühle mit schwarzen Ledersitzen. Der Meister, ein wackliger alter Mann, tat Huguenau den nicht ganz sauberen Frisiermantel um; oben steckte er ihm Papier in den Kragen. Huguenau scheuerte ein wenig mit dem Kinn hin und her; das Papier kratzte (D.S. 418-19).

There is no poetic ornamentation nor is there any extraneous information in this somewhat choppy description in a reporting style.²⁵⁸ In his dealings with others, the third protagonist is purposeful, and when he conceives of an idea (usually of a business nature), he knows how to turn the idea into action without much reflection. For example, having spontaneously uttered the suggestion of buying the local newspaper from its owner, Huguenau is gripped by the idea of realizing this project to help him turn a

²⁵⁸ Huguenau is as objective and cold as the narrative style in which he is depicted. Karl Robert Mandelkow, *Hermann Brochs Romantrilogie „Die Schlafwandler“: Gestaltungen und Reflexion im modernen deutschen Roman* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter Universitätsverlag, 1975), 135.

profitable venture that will make him, the penniless deserter, a respectable, rich man (*D.S.* 427).

As a character type of material objectivity, Huguenau is not the ideal representative of the new modern individual, but rather a self-satisfied subject to his limited system of material values who does not have any transcendental aspirations, nor does he need them, since he is preoccupied with the accumulation of material possessions.²⁵⁹ Moreover, and conspicuously, in contrast to the other two protagonists, he feels no desire for redemption through anyone.²⁶⁰ The only object of personal identification – and the only object that could be seen as his object of desire – is a printing machine:

Die Druckmaschine liebte er noch immer. Denn ein Mann, der zeitlebens von Maschinen erzeugte Waren verkauft hat, dem aber die Fabriken und die Maschinenbesitzer etwas im Range Übergeordnetes und eigentlich Unerreichbares sind, ein solcher Mann wird es sicherlich als besonderes Erlebnis empfinden, wenn er selber plötzlich Maschinenbesitzer geworden ist, und es mag wohl sein, daß sich dann in ihm jenes liebevolle Verhältnis zur Maschine herausbildet, wie man es bei Knaben und jungen Völkern fast immer findet, ein Verhältnis, das die Maschine heroisiert und sie in die gehobene und freiere Ebene eigener Wünsche und mächtiger Heldentaten projiziert (*D.S.* 520-21).²⁶¹

Interestingly, Huguenau fetishizes this object because its chief characteristic is its bare functionality and productivity. Unlike Bertrand, Huguenau's reverence of the machine is not intellectual, but resembles the romanticism of Pasenow. This is yet another exaggeration of the concept of kitsch, which, according to Broch, runs on the principle of

²⁵⁹ Leo Kreutzer misguidedly reads Huguenau as an heir of Broch's philosophy, the saviour of the new future and carrier of new values. I agree with Mandelkow that Huguenau is as much stuck in his own partial value system of the business world as the other characters are. Kreutzer overlooks the fascistic qualities of Huguenau that he only wants to ascribe to Esch. *Ibid.*, 197.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 136.

²⁶¹ During the proto-revolutionary violence, Huguenau rushes back to assure himself of the safety of his beloved machine (*D.S.* 715).

imitation of aesthetics in the service of an ulterior motive, be it political, didactic, or commercial.

Huguenau views the machine with the same kind of religious and spiritual fervor and love with which Pasenow had categorically followed the military order, the Iron Cross, and any other emblem that presented heroism and honor. As the ice-cold modernist, Huguenau winds up in the city of Berlin, the city of modernism, which is depicted as a twisted and dark place in the novel. To the manipulative third protagonist, people only matter if they can be useful to him. He eliminates any opponent without any scruples, as he stabs August Esch, the second protagonist and representative of the older generation in the back during the proto-revolutionary chaos in Kurttrier. Esch's death signals the breakdown of the old order, and Broch underlines the collapse by letting the narrative disintegrate from its conventional structure in Volume III.²⁶²

In a sense, Huguenau is Lethen's "Hochstapler," the confidence man.²⁶³ Ever the "Hochstapler," Huguenau rises to the status of respectable citizen in Berlin and Nassau during the Weimar era. He converts to Protestantism in order to marry into a higher social class. Huguenau's objectivity is mixed with kitsch: he had no appreciation of morality, just as he does not know how to deal with art. His private "theology," by which Broch

²⁶² The third volume is composed of many different disparate narratives and an essay on values that are linked by the shared experience of the First World War. Although the individual narratives of various characters, most of whom are in the same small town at the Mosel, are independent of each other, they work together like themes in a musical piece in which each character has a distinct leitmotif. Like different themes and songs, they juxtapose or complement each other, while a certain narrative harmony becomes apparent. The chapters are linked together thematically, one theme or motif linking one chapter to the next through associations (such as the mention of prosthesis, death, a perpetual sense of loss, and an equally perpetual longing for salvation, among others). Furthermore, the loneliness of the characters (as seen in the first two volumes) and their inability to relate to each other are underlined strongly. For a summary scholarly analyses of the third volume's narrative, see Gunther Martens, *Beobachtungen der Moderne in Hermann Brochs Die Schlafwandler und Robert Musils Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften: Rhetorische und narratologische Aspekte von Interdiskursivität* (München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2006), 28-31, 51-60, 94-108.

²⁶³ Lethen, 115ff.

denotes Huguenau's belief in his own ethos of profit, dictates that he claims whatever is legally his, as mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. Huguenau is an Anti-Christ figure who displays complete indifference towards other people. The gloomy picture of Huguenau provided in the last volume of the trilogy can be read as a warning sign of further moral disintegration. As the narrator explicates, Huguenau's belief system involves kitsch as well, because he uses legalese or bureaucratic language as a vehicle for material gain. But Broch also shows through some lines of continuation between Bertrand and Huguenau, i.e. tendencies for the cool persona had already existed before the war. Not the war itself is the problem, but the misrecognition of social and moral disintegration. Neither the insistence on hollow moral values nor scoffing at them as mere facades offer any solutions, but rather contribute to further social alienation. No dialogue and no possibility for new forms of sociability seem possible under these conditions.

Canetti's Armoring and Disguising Personae

Broch's younger contemporary, Elias Canetti, also explores the manipulative games for power in interpersonal relations. Canetti's novel *Auto-da-Fé (Die Blendung)* (1935)²⁶⁴ centers on the territorial struggle over the apartment of the two main characters: the misanthropic, ascetic, bourgeois scholar, Peter Kien, and his equally misanthropic, materialistic, petit bourgeois wife, Therese. Kien's apartment, which consists largely of a huge library, is the scholar's sanctuary from what he considers an illiterate – and thus doomed – world; he finds more morality and soul in books than in people. In contrast,

²⁶⁴ Elias Canetti, *Die Blendung* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1935;2004). Quotes from the novel will be referred to as *D.B.* hereafter. According to Canetti, he finished the novel in 1929 but did not publish it until 1935. For references and stories about the conception of the idea for the novel and the various turns the narrative took before its final stage, see Elias Canetti, *Die Fackel im Ohr: Eine Lebensgeschichte 1921-31* (München und Wien: Carl Hanser Verlag, 1980).

Therese is impassioned by the idea of decorating the apartment according to her ideal image of a bourgeois household, beginning with proper furniture befitting someone of the upper middle class. As Kien finds pleasure in possessing books, Therese derives pleasure from things through the mere act of acquiring them. Their conflict is marked by Kien's and Therese's respectively blinding self-righteousness and their insistence on the superiority of their motifs of their greedy intentions respectively.

The conflict between the naïve protagonist and his manipulative wife can be read as a caricature of antagonism between the traditional German spirit ("Geist") and pure capitalist materialism. Kien resembles Broch's Pasenow in his over-identification with and dependence on the representative emblems of his belief system: while Kien regards his library as a center of knowledge and education ("Bildung") and as a protective shield against the "illiterate" world, Pasenow treats his military uniform as his armor against "impure" thoughts and immorality of the civilized world.²⁶⁵ Kien, however, also shares more characteristics with his enemy-wife than it first appears: not only is Kien as fixated on the material possession of things as Therese is, but he expresses his misanthropy through distancing, depersonalizing language, just as Therese seeks to mark her territory through bureaucratic and legalistic phrases.²⁶⁶ The comparison between Therese's and Huguenau's falsity yields the frightening idea that the money-oriented type, who uses words to achieve desired effects.

²⁶⁵ Cf. William Collins Donahue, *The End of Modernism: Elias Canetti's Auto-da-Fé* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2001); Hans Magnus Enzensberger and David Darby, eds., *Auto-da-Fé. Critical Essays on Elias Canetti: Critical Essays on World Literature* (New York: G. K. Hall, 2000).

²⁶⁶ For instance, she reads a sentence that she copied from an official sign in order to lend weight to her claim to her half of the apartment: "Der Gang vor ihren Zimmern gehöre ihr.[...] Wie heiÙe es bei den Hauspassagen? [...] 'Der Durchgang ist bis auf Widerruf gestattet'" (D.B.154).

Canetti's satiric novel goes one significant step further than Broch's by ending with a scene of complete disintegration: Kien's indifference towards other humans, which grows into hatred for humanity, is ultimately self-destructive; the novel closes with the protagonists' "cleansing" self-immolation.²⁶⁷ Although Broch's protagonists long for such liberating self-destruction at times, the end is blocked: neither judgment, nor liberation, nor answers from the outside arrive in the trilogy.²⁶⁸ Those who survive the war, fade away in silence; Joachim von Pasenow's muteness and dementia is a symbolic example of the catastrophic passivity.

Conclusion

As Steven Aschheim remarks, *Die Schlafwandler* combats indifference, which the third volume's essayist explicitly holds responsible for the Germany's cultural and spiritual disintegration.²⁶⁹ While I agree with Aschheim's point, his observation seems to suggest the existence of one monolithic indifference, which led to the paralysis of a whole culture. This chapter sought to enrich Aschheim's observation by highlighting different facets of indifference – either expressed as a general fatigue, passivity, or lack of reflection. Furthermore, I argued for a radicalization of the different sides of indifference by highlighting the movement from resignation to radically rational action that does not shy away from eradicating people.

Through the protagonists' relational and conversational failures, Broch illustrates a close relationship between the perceived decay of values and a collapse of language

²⁶⁷ "Als ihn die Flammen endlich erreichen, lacht er so laut, wie er in seinem ganzen Leben nie gelacht hat" (*D.B.* 510).

²⁶⁸ As shown in my final chapter, however, foreclosing any final resolutions entails, that the end remains open and that those in this world still have a say. Broch's novel is more open-ended than Canetti's and leaves room for hope.

²⁶⁹ Aschheim, 85-96.

use. Seemingly innocuous at first, the conversational misunderstandings of the first volume eventually give way to blatant disregard of interlocutors in pursuit of characters' own goals in the second volume, and, in the most extreme case, to murder in the third volume. This development is drawn through the themes of inertia of feeling and indifference that work in tandem to create an atmosphere of inescapable loneliness and inability to act, which engulf all of *Die Schlafwandler*'s characters. The first two volumes suggest that these attitudes permeated imperial Germany long before the First World War, and the third volume and epilogue indicate that the same dispositions became radicalized during the war. Only Wilhelm Huguenau, the cold-blooded man of questionable actions, is not affected by the inertia of feeling in the third volume. The epilogue's account of Huguenau's social and financial rise during the Weimar Republic suggests a gloomy view of Broch's contemporary era.

In Chapter 3, I showed that the fixation on divine judgment and longing for redemption by the protagonists of the first and second volumes prevented them from finding timely means of making sense of their modernizing and secularized turn-of-the-20th century. This chapter examined repeated signs of disintegration, which manifest in a combination of world-weariness and indifference. This combination is encapsulated by the term "inertia of feeling" and apathy in interpersonal relations that allow for coldblooded murder and makes exploitation appear like good business strategy. Because for Broch language constitutes the foundation of culture, he portrays the characters' lack of orientation in a relativist society and their fatalistic attitudes through the theme of intensifying communication breakdown, ranging from misunderstandings, abrupt

interruptions in conversations to complete silence.²⁷⁰ While inertia slows down any willingness to act on the perceived social pressures – from the obligation to obey the code of honor to going to war to save face – it also makes the characters, who are representatives of the pre-war imperial German society, compliant victims of their own inertia, sustained through their apocalyptic fantasies.

²⁷⁰ For example, see Broch, “Das Böse im Wertsystem der Kunst (1933).”; Broch, “Das Weltbild des Romans (1933).”; Broch, “Geist und Zeitgeist.” 177-201.

Chapter 5

Finding Hope by Resisting Finality

“Und trotzdem: schon die Hoffnung auf das Wissen des Führers ist eigenes Wissen, schon das Ahnen der Gnade ist Gnade, und so vergeblich unser Hoffen auch sei, daß mit dem sichtbaren Leben des Führers das Absolute sich im Irdischen jemals erfüllen werde, ewig annäherbar bleibt das Ziel, unzerstörbar die Messias Hoffnung der Annäherung, ewig wiederkehrend die Geburt des Wertes” (“Epilog”, *D.S.* 715).

The trilogy’s final volume depicts a war-torn Germany that, along with its neighboring countries, seems to be headed for certain doom. Despite the gloomy predictions about the fate of European civilization, which resembles Spenglerian cultural pessimism, the volume also conveys hope for the arrival of a new era. This chapter will show how the oscillation between pessimism and optimism about Germany’s future guides and shapes the complex narrative.

The last volume contains three separate narratives, written in different genres. The first narrative is the main novel plot, to which I refer as the “Huguenau story.” It follows the adventures of the cunning businessman and deserter, Wilhelm Huguenau and is a loose continuation of the preceding two volumes and includes the first and second protagonists, Joachim von Pasenow and August Esch. The second narrative is a series of essays entitled “Der Zerfall der Werte” (“Disintegration of Values”) by a philosopher, Dr. Bertrand Müller. The third narrative is a short story, entitled “Die Geschichte des Heilsarmeemädchens in Berlin” (“Story of the Salvation Army Girl in Berlin”) about Müller’s experiences during the last year of the war in Berlin. This story, to which I refer in the following as the “Berlin story,” is divided into sixteen episodes and told in

different modes: first person narration and poetry. The Huguenau story, the Berlin story, and the essays on “Zerfall der Werte” are separate entities; although the three textual strands are interwoven, the characters of one story do not meet the characters of the other. Despite their differences, the three narratives share the central thematic tension between pessimism and optimism (and all take place during the last year of the First World War).

The plot of the Huguenau story shows the final stages of spiritual disintegration through an overtly materialist mentality. The protagonist, Wilhelm Huguenau, is an Alsatian businessman, who is drafted to fight for the Prussian Empire in 1917. In the spring of 1918, Huguenau deserts the army, and walks into Kurtrier, where the expert con man finds ways of improving his social and financial situation. His victims include the first and second volumes’ protagonists: Joachim von Pasenow has become the highest-ranking imperial representative in town as Major in the Prussian Army. August Esch, a retired accountant, is now the editor-in-chief of the *Kurtriersche Bote*, the local newspaper. Pasenow and Esch both have become religious zealots, and their friendship is born out of their shared apocalyptic vision of their historical period and a longing for supernatural renewal. The two men meet meaningless ends: Huguenau confirms Pasenow’s doubt in himself as an honorable man and causes the Major’s irreparable nervous breakdown; as for Esch, Huguenau literally kills him.²⁷¹ The protagonist goes on to become a successful businessman during the Weimar Republic and settles down in Nassau. Ending the trilogy only with this main narrative would make *Die Schlafwandler* a pessimistic reflection on the German Imperial era. The inclusion of the Berlin story, however, casts doubt on the finality of the pessimistic position.

²⁷¹ he plot of the book was outlined in chapter 1. I partially repeat this plot summary here for convenience.

In content and form, the Berlin story represents and accentuates the tension between despair and hopefulness, found in the entire novel. Set in the metropolis during the last year of the First World War, half of the Berlin story is told in the first-person narrative voice of Dr. Bertrand Müller. He recounts his war experience at the home front and his friendship with two religious people in transit: Marie, a converted Salvation Army girl, who waits to go abroad as a missionary, and Nuchem Sussin, an Orthodox Jewish refugee from Poland. In contrast to other relationships in the volume, the bond between Nuchem and Marie demonstrates *agape*, a non-erotic, spiritual love for one's fellow human beings.²⁷² *Agape* (a Greek word often equated to the Latin word *caritas*, 'love of one's neighbor', which is the source of the English word *charity*) is best represented in the medical help and friendship that Müller's Jewish neighbors offer the protagonist and the charitable work that Marie does as an officer of the Salvation Army.²⁷³

Notably, half of the Berlin story consists of poetry about an imagined tale of love between Marie and Nuchem, in which they consummate their love. This fictional love story, in which the boundaries of *agape* and *eros* blur, is a symbolic tale of redemption that transcends religious differences. The Berlin story thus establishes the thematic tension between despairing doubt and hopeful anticipation through contrasting presentations of a group of characters and their relationships. The interaction between

²⁷² The Concise Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church. s.v. *agape*. Livingstone, ed.

²⁷³ Toward the beginning of the Berlin story, Müller feels unwell. Hearing of his condition, one of his Jewish neighbors, the medical doctor Litwak, pays him a visit to inquire about his health. He performs an act of charity: "Es kostet Ihnen nichts, es ist nicht wegen Geld", sagte er schüchtern, "man muß helfen." *D.S.* 450. In addition to her charity work at the hospital, Marie accompanies Müller on his walks, which Dr. Litwak prescribed him for depression and anemia. She invites him to join the Salvation Army gatherings as a way of reaching out to him: "Marie sagte: 'Das Übel in der Welt ist groß, doch die Freude ist größer.' [...] Wer in Christum ist, ist nie einsam... kommen Sie zu uns'" (*D.S.* 638).

Marie and Nuchem resists any world-weary resignation (e.g. Bertrand and Müller) or cold certainty (e.g. Huguenau) in materialism that governs the other characters of the third volume. I lay out the plot and structure of the third volume in the following section in order to make a case for the important symbolic function of the Berlin story as an allegory of hope despite hopelessness in the entire trilogy.

In my analysis of the oscillation between doubtful gloom and hopeful anticipation, I focus on Müller because he connects the three narrative strands as a character of the Berlin story, as an author of the philosophical essays, and as the narrator of the Huguenau story. Martin Swales makes a similar argument about the centrality of Müller's role in the Huguenau story. I extend the identity of Müller as the fictional author of the entire trilogy.²⁷⁴ Through Müller, the idea of hope and salvation are worked out self-reflectively, which comes out most strongly in the Berlin story.

Broch challenges the concept of narrative authority by connecting the seemingly disembodied third-person narrative position to the figure of Müller.²⁷⁵ Associating the

²⁷⁴ Swales, 55ff.

²⁷⁵ See Gunther Martens for a summary of the standard interpretation of different narrative strands and focalization as evidence of polyvocality in Broch's third volume. Martens, "Hermann Broch: Ethik der Erzählform," 88, 90-91. After his summary, Martens challenges that position, and argues that the focalization remains disembodied throughout the novel. While Martens is right in pointing out that the constant shift in focalization is intended to comment and dialogue with readers, I do think that the main narrative voice belongs to a character in the trilogy. I base this observation Dr. Müller's own references to the different narrative strands and the themes of apocalyptic despair and hope that reoccur throughout the trilogy, as I seek to show in my discussion of Müller in the body of my text. By tying the seemingly authoritative voice of a third-person narrator to an identifiable (first) person in the third volume, Broch performs the kind of self-examination that he considers necessary for deepening one's insights about one's historical situation. I side with scholars such as Durzak and Cohn, who also postulate that Dr. Bertrand Müller is the fictional author of the entire trilogy. Established in the 1960's, these views remain standard analyses of the narrative position: Dorrit Claire Cohn, *The Sleepwalkers: Elucidations of Hermann Broch's Trilogy* (The Hague and Paris: Mouton & Co, 1966); Durzak, *Hermann Broch: Dichter und seine Zeit*; Ziolkowski. For a selection of more recent and relevant analyses on the topic of narration in the third volume, see Peter Hasubek, "'Konzessionen an den Leser' oder die wiedergewonnene Einheit? Zu den Schlüssen von Hermann Brochs Schlafwandler-Trilogie," in *Hermann Broch. Das dichterische Werk. Neue Interpretationen*, ed. Michael Kessler and Paul Michael Lützel (Tübingen: Stauffenburg Verlag, 1987); K. L. Komar, "Inscriptions of Power : Broch's Narratives of History in Die Schlafwandler," in *Hermann*

presumably omniscient viewpoint of the Huguenau story with that of a flawed character in the Berlin story diminishes the force of some of the moralistic and pessimistic statements found in the main story line and the essay.²⁷⁶ The series of philosophical essays within the third volume, “Disintegration of Values” (“Zerfall der Werte”), should also be read with Müller’s identity in mind.²⁷⁷ Interestingly, in this work, Broch questions the position of the intellectual cultural critic and thus undermines his own query. He uses a narrative strategy that resembles those of other prominent modernist authors such as James Joyce: similar to Joyce, in his experiments with narrative perspective in *Ulysses*, Broch calls into question the rank of the omniscient narrator.²⁷⁸ This challenge to the narrative foundations also questions the possibility of omniscience in general, which could have a religious connotation – i.e. can God be omniscient?

Broch: Visionary in Exile, ed. Paul Michael Lützeler et al. (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2003); Lützeler, *Die Entropie des Menschen*; Martens, *Beobachtungen der Moderne*; Ritzer; Schlant, *Hermann Broch*; Swales.

²⁷⁶ In the plot of the Berlin story itself, the characters around Dr. Müller do not share his pessimistic outlook, and the description of Berlin as a gloomy place, for instance, appears to be focalized through his point of view. The other characters, including the medical doctor, Dr. Litwak, indicates that Müller is a hypochondriac and simply slightly anemic. Müller suffers from world-weariness and not from any physical ailment, although he feels his world-weariness like bodily discomfort. See *D.S.* 634-38 on Müller’s own comments on his physical and mental degeneration. For instance, he blames malnutrition during the war, and dealing “mit der dauernden Unterernährung” and mentions that he constantly feels tired and going about his business only semi-present, as though he were sleepwalking.

²⁷⁷ Incidentally, this is also the title of the entire trilogy, which is additional evidence that Dr. Müller is the fictional author of *Die Schlafwandler*. There are also strong indications of Broch identifying himself with Müller, e.g. that parts of the essay appear verbatim in earlier essays “Zur Erkenntnis dieser Zeit” and “Logik einer verfallenden Welt” on which Broch worked between 1917 and 1931. In Hermann Broch, *Kommentierte Werkausgabe. Philosophische Schriften 2. Kritik*, ed. Paul Michael Lützeler (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1977): 11-80, 156-172. On a discussion of the role of the essay on “Zerfall der Werte” within the context of Broch’s theoretical works, see Lützeler, *Hermann Broch: Ethik und Politik*, 67f. Cf. Lützeler, *Hermann Broch: Ethik und Politik*; Swales, 61. Herd, 47-70; Halsall, “The Individual and the Epoch : Hermann Broch’s *Die Schlafwandler* as a Historical Novel,” *Travellers in Time and Space: The German Historical Novel/Reisende durch Zeit und Raum: Der deutschsprachige historische Roman*, eds. Osman Durrani and Julian Preece (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2001): 227-41.

²⁷⁸ Like his contemporaries, Broch was influenced by Joyce, as evidenced in letters to his translators Willa and Edwin Muir, his publisher Brody, and in his essay on Joyce. For the dust jacket, he used a comparison between his trilogy and *Ulysses* as a marketing strategy. Brude-Firna, 49, 50, 53, 54, 59, 63, 73, 75,

Purposeful Contradictions

Broch resists any form of finality, any definite revelation of judgment or path towards a utopian future. Broch's novel is an apocalyptic text in the sense of Jacques Derrida's understanding of apocalyptic texts. According to Derrida, this type of text claims intentions to reveal the final truth, but the material confirmation of the prophesied catastrophe is eclipsed before the final word can be spoken. Put differently, the apocalyptic text constantly taunts and invites readers to approach with the promise of revelation, but withholds the ending.²⁷⁹ In this context, Derrida foregrounds the motif of approaching and the importance of the verb "to come." He cites Revelation 17:1: "Come. I shall show you the judgment/ of the great whore'" and Revelation 21:9: "Come! I shall show you/ the bride, the wife of the Lamb'." ²⁸⁰ Derrida argues that the survival of the text of revelation itself depends on the withholding of the final word. Such an interpretation of revelatory approaches means that there is dialogue without end:

Come is apocalyptic. [...] Our *apocalypse now*: there would be no more chance, save change itself, for a thought of good and evil whose announcement would come to *gather* itself in order to be with itself in a revelatory speaking; [...] and (no) more chance even for such a gathering of gift, *envoi*, destiny (*Schicken, Geschick*), for the destination of a "come" whose promise at least would be assured of its own proper event.²⁸¹

The emphasis on approaching and on the act of revealing and listening itself as an endless cycle is also found in Broch's experimentation with the narrative position. Swales aptly explains how the structural complexity of the third volume is in tune with Broch's theory of ethical literature:

²⁷⁹ Derrida, 162-64, 166-67.

²⁸⁰ Ibid., 163.

²⁸¹ Ibid., 167.

By teasing us with the question of the narrator's identity, Broch reminds us that the discourse of events, of plot, setting, and character in a novel is always embedded in a meta-discourse whereby the narrative voice comments, evaluates, interprets, reflects; but equally, the hints as to the narrator's possible identity remind us that the meta-discourse, however reflective, abstract and purely philosophical it may become, never gets away from the discourse of story-telling.²⁸²

For Broch, the novel is a product of its time that engages critically with important historical topics and is equally subject to scrutiny by readers. The hope that the trilogy expresses is placed in the novel as a medium through which one challenges all certain conclusions and judgments and, furthermore, provides a historically specific yet also metaphysical space of critical engagement between reader and author.

It is in this light that the third volume's eschato-apocalyptic imageries must be understood: they both criticize the competitive and materialistic spirit of the times and hint at a silver lining for a new era. The silver lining of the dense historical trilogy consists of a hope and belief in humanity's ability to form charitable communities of faith. These communities of faith, as indicated by the trilogy's thematic comments on religion and spirituality, would be unified under an as yet undefined but universal spirituality that facilitates connections between people and creates unity in an allegedly divided world. Of course, one cannot ignore the inherent contradiction between Broch's advocacy of a brand new spirituality for a new age and his rehabilitation of Christian values. But the awareness of this contradiction helps to address Broch's own limitations, which he acknowledges through the cynical voice of Müller in the story, and also situates Broch in his own cultural milieu, from the turn of the century until the interwar period of the 1930s.

²⁸² Swales, 59.

Challenging Finality in Theory

The idea of constantly challenging any finite position is also found in Broch's theory of ethical art and can help explain how the presentation of unresolved contrary positions, i.e. of pessimism and optimism, in the trilogy serves an aesthetic-ethical purpose. As mentioned above, Broch condemns art that is primarily used for promoting set agendas as "kitsch."²⁸³ Broch categorizes both emotional effect and one-sided didactic art as trivial literature. He asserts that determination and concretization of concepts should not belong to the domain of literature but rather in the domain of politics.²⁸⁴ Broch articulates his concern with the difficulty of establishing over-arching systems of values that a community at large could consent to instead of their (unilateral) imposition by a higher authority. The idea of responsible action is at stake, as well as the essay's underlying question of how one can make responsible, ethical choices and to respect the rights and values of one's fellow human beings. The kind of literature that Broch considers ethical is supposed to challenge readers to examine their daily ethical choices in human interaction through thought-provoking scenarios instead of moralizing lessons. Applied to the trilogy, the questioning includes a scrutiny of the narrating process itself because this process would provoke the readers to think actively about the state of their social reality. By thinking actively about these questions, readers would already begin to shape their future. According to Broch, didactic literature would stand in the way of the readers' development of their own moral sensibility.²⁸⁵

²⁸³ Broch, "Das Böse im Wertsystem der Kunst (1933)," 119-57.

²⁸⁴ Schlant, *Hermann Broch*, 160.

²⁸⁵ Cf. Martens, *Beobachtungen der Moderne*, 248-52.

As modern literature, *Die Schlafwandler*'s narrative is highly self-reflexive and by necessity of its own dictum ironically scrutinizes the argument of the novel's value/purpose as a social ethical medium. Robert Halsall follows up on the author's insistence on the ethical dimension of aesthetics, addressing Broch's understanding of the role of the ethical in works of art and his promotion of a strategy of indirect communication.²⁸⁶ Referring to Broch's "A Methodological Novella," Halsall outlines how Broch reflects on the ethical implications of literature:

The work of literature must, for Broch, be "wissenschaftlich" in the sense that it seeks to communicate an objective truth about reality. The work of literature which attempts to communicate an essentially ethical or religious truth must do this without this being dependent on the authority of the author over this truth....The truth-content must be dependent solely on the "Logizität des Gesprochenen."²⁸⁷

Emphasizing the importance of the act of communicating, Halsall points out that Müller models this ethical independency as he takes an ironic distance from the main action in order to reveal his social and cultural analytical methods. Müller's analytical view and his friends' eschato-apocalyptic expectations contradict each other – though both parties recognize that the world as they knew it has ended.

Müller as a Recovering Prophet of Disintegration

As argued above, Müller represents an early 20th-century intellectual position of alienation and cynicism about Germany's future. Considering the wide-spread influence of Ernst Mach's "lost 'I'" on modern authors, especially at the turn of the century, Broch is not alone in thematizing the uncertainty of trusting perception to make objective truth

²⁸⁶ Halsall, 27.

²⁸⁷ Ibid., 73-74. Cf. Gunther Martens, "Spielräume des auktorialen Diskurses bei Hermann Broch: Eine methodologische Novelle," *Orbis Litterarum* 59, no. 4 (2004).

claims. In an examination of the reception of late 19th-century psychology and empiricism by modernist writers of the 1880s until the 1940s, Judith Ryan reflects on Mach's influence on Broch.²⁸⁸ She discusses Broch in the context of other contemporary authors, such as Alfred Döblin and John Dos Passos, and the way that empiricist views influenced the presentation of perception in their novels. According to Ryan, all of these authors wrote in epic style and used innovative narrative technique in focalization, but unlike Broch, they featured the multifaceted life of the modern metropolis in their novels. Ryan argues that these authors focused on the collectivity of the city's inhabitants, while Broch – under the influence of Mach's theory of the indeterminable boundaries between individual subjects – concentrated more radically on the phenomenon of individual isolation.²⁸⁹ Yet, Broch's portrayal of Müller as a lost individual, who seems to be in a state of "transcendental homelessness,"²⁹⁰ carries a note of irony, so that I cannot fully agree with Ryan on the result of Broch's narrative experiment with perception.

The lonely and tired Müller detects decay everywhere, including in himself. The biological metaphors of decay found elsewhere in the trilogy are used by Müller to express his bleak outlook on wartime Berlin. His spring in Berlin, for instance, is filled with oxymora of withering trees in spring, children with aged faces, and the metropolis that has uncannily become rural, like a copy of itself: "die Bäume in den Straßen waren schon im Frühling welk, sahen aus wie Kinder mit Greisengesichtern, und blies der Wind, so wirbelte er Staub und Zeitungsfetzen auf; Berlin war dörflicher geworden, sozusagen natürlicher, aber eben dadurch unnatürlich, es glich sozusagen seiner eigenen

²⁸⁸ Ryan, *The Vanishing Subject*, 160-170.

²⁸⁹ Moreover, unlike Döblin, who also engaged with the topic of individual alienation in large, bustling cities, Broch did not engage with the heterogeneous nature of metropolitan crowds in the trilogy.

²⁹⁰ Georg Lukács, *Die Theorie des Romans* (Darmstadt and Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1971), 32.

Kopie” (*D.S.* 433). In a similar manner, while still depicting springtime, the lyrical I uses an oxymoronic combination of “withered” with “spring” such as “the withered spring” (“welke Frühling”) in Episode 5. Marie, the Salvation Army Girl, is described with the metaphors of a wilting flower that had just budded: “Sie war ein Mädchen und sie tat verblühen” (*D.S.* 429). Over the course of the third volume, Müller becomes increasingly tired, he complains about his lack of energy, the lack of food supplies because of the war, and his chronic illness.²⁹¹

The narrator also seems to be on the brink of an intellectual decline, as he begins to doubt his project of writing a philosophy of history of the Western world. At some point, he literally does not even want to face the world, complaining of his aversion to leaving his home (*D.S.* 437). Like Berlin during the war, which resembles a post-apocalyptic expressionist painting, Müller seems to be degenerating. Thus the first person narrator literally feels the cultural decline, which he describes in his philosophical essays, as a process of physical deterioration. Müller’s signs of physical weakness (e.g. malnutrition, fatigue, and indisposition) parallel his emotional and mental disintegration (his growing doubts in his literary projects and his hypochondria).²⁹² However, his hypochondria calls his perception of decline and degeneration into question. The unreliability of the first person narrator shakes the omniscient narrator’s authority behind the voice of “truth” or “truthful facts” on the reported disintegration of values, both of the entire trilogy and of the essays, because these statements are obviously grounded in Müller’s subjective perception. The noticeable effects of the war on the narrator’s psyche

²⁹¹ The news of Müller’s slight illness brings him into contact with his helpful Jewish neighbors (*D.S.* 450).

²⁹² See Episode 14: His Jewish acquaintance, Dr. Litwak, teases him, stating that he is a hypochondriac who is only slightly anemic and needs fresh air. – Notably, even his sense of loneliness is not only portrayed as a fancy of the imagination but also as a psychological disorder from which he recovers after the war (*D.S.* 636).

and body – his profound disappointment in the progressive potential of German *Geist* and his growing sensitivity, expressed in his hypochondria – cast doubt on the authoritative tone of his claim that European culture will continue to become empty of cultural and moral values after the war. Since Müller’s pessimistic view resembles those of contemporary prophets of doom, his frailty expresses doubt about the validity of Domsday prophets, most notably Oswald Spengler.

The influence of Spengler’s widely read philosophy of Western history, *Der Untergang des Abendlands*, on the political and cultural discourses of the 1920s is significant for appreciating the intellectual context in which Broch’s *Die Schlafwandler* was conceived. Such background helps to understand how the featured pessimism is constructed in the trilogy and what contemporary discourses the novel responds to. At the time of *Die Schlafwandler*’s conception, the future of Europe was a highly debated and popular topic in France, Germany, and Austria during the 1920s. Lützelzer states that the metaphor of decay was practically in the air. The scholar cites Iwan Goll’s novels *Die Eurokoke* (1927) and *Der Mitropäer* (1928), as well as Goll’s bacteria metaphor and the idea of a diseased European culture that resembles the cultural disease that one finds in the *Zerfall der Werte* essay. Though *Der Untergang des Abendlandes* was not unique in using the metaphor of disintegration in its cultural analysis, it was the most influential of its kind.²⁹³ According to the morphological theory of the development of cultures, the West of the early 20th century was in its dying phase, which Spengler called winter, and which he suggests started around 1800. Stressing the prominence of pragmatism,

²⁹³ Paul Michael Lützelzer, “Hermann Broch und Spenglers Untergang des Abendlandes : Die Schlafwandler zwischen Moderne und Postmoderne,” in *Hermann Broch: Modernismus, Kulturkrise und Hitlerzeit-Londoner Symposium 1991*, ed. Adrian Stevens (Innsbruck: Inst. für Germanistik, Universität Innsbruck, 1994), 19.

rationality, and technology, Spengler speculated that the arts occupied a minor role in the Western culture's winter.²⁹⁴ Unlike Spengler, Broch still held the view that fictional writing was a valuable tool for interpreting and influencing their shared reality.²⁹⁵ As Lützeler states, Broch objected to Spengler's work for basing the arguments mainly on analogies and morphological theories. As Broch indicates in his *Teesdorfer Tagebuch für Ea von Allesch*, he also had ambitions to write a philosophy of history: "Was Spengler anlangt, so läßt sich eigentlich nichts gegen ihn sagen: er hält eben das für Geschichtsphilosophie, was alle dafür halten. Und diese Meinung zu widerlegen bedarf es eben meines Buches. Ansonsten ist nur seine ignorante Präpotenz widerlich."²⁹⁶ Unlike Spengler, Broch wished to base his philosophy of history on philosophy of knowledge and of moral values instead of biological theories, which he saw as inadequate. His "polyhistorical novel," *Die Schlafwandler*, is an attempt at such a work.²⁹⁷

Through Müller, Broch does not take issue with scholarly works, but rather with what seems to have been the more popularized versions of attempts to analyze the social reality analytically in early 20th century Germany. In Episode 1, the first-person narrator indicates the historical and intellectual context in which he places such views. He distances himself from them as positions that his younger self used to hold, which shows

²⁹⁴ Ibid., 27.

²⁹⁵ Ibid., 24-27.

²⁹⁶ Broch, *Das Teesdorfer Tagebuch für Ea von Allesch*, 14.

²⁹⁷ Schlant, *Hermann Broch*, 27f, 42. Schlant observes that the early Broch was influenced by neo-Kantianism and held a faith in "progress of knowledge, that is, obedience to the Kantian exploration of cognitive boundaries" (27). In this idealistic system, this progress of knowledge "becomes the driving force of history." This belief in the intellect "as historically determining factors" is dominant in his literary, political, and philosophical writings. Schlant describes Broch's theory of history as progressive knowledge and Broch's "humanistic imperative," i.e. a modification of the Kantian categorical imperative (28). Applied to the trilogy, she argues that the web of symbols, imageries, leitmotifs, and the theory of values foremost yield "a philosophy of history" (42).

that the lack of inter-connectedness itself is a specific historical response to a specific period. He thus opens the Berlin story:

Zu den vielen Unduldsamkeiten und Beschränktheiten, deren die Vorkriegszeit eine Fülle besaß und deren wir uns heute mit Recht schämen, gehört wohl auch das gänzliche Unverständnis gegenüber allen Phänomenen, die auch nur ein wenig außerhalb einer sich völlig rational dünkenden Welt lagen. Und weil man damals gewöhnt war, bloß die abendländische Kultur und ihr Denken als verpflichtend anzusehen, alles übrige aber als minderwertig abzutun, so war man leichthin geneigt, alle Phänomene, die der rationalen Eindeutigkeit nicht entsprachen, der Kategorie des Unter-Europäischen und Minderwertigen zuzurechnen. (D.S. 416)

The comparison between the narrated past and the narrating present indicate Müller's awareness of the discrepancies between his views then and at the time of recounting them in the story. Müller comments that he prepared a historical-philosophical work on the disintegration of values during the war, and thus he puts the philosophical essays in a specific historical situation, as something that is behind him. This self-reflexive temporality explains the essays' gloomy tone. In addition, the narrator implies that he used to share the chauvinistic arrogance of Western Europeans vis-à-vis outsiders, religious, ethnic or otherwise. Müller underlines an over-developed rationalism that he sees as having been symptomatic of a haughty prewar German *Zeitgeist*. In the above passage, the narrator displays remorse for a belief in Western cultural superiority. In retrospect, he recreates the polarized division between the superior rational West and the spiritual/irrational inferior non-West. He includes himself as a Western subject in contrast to Marie, whom he places in the same social-outcast/non-European category as his Orthodox Eastern Jewish neighbor, Nuchem, with whom she socializes.

In the following quote, Müller shows how the Salvation Army was ridiculed during a time of aesthetically appealing heroic figures. In this context, the Salvation Army was ridiculed as pacifist, weak, and anti-heroic:

Und trat nun gar ein solches Phänomen, wie etwa die Heilsarmee, im kleinen Gewande des Friedens und der flehentlichen Bitte auf, da war des Spottens kein Ende. Man wollte Eindeutiges und Heroisches, mit andern Worten Ästhetisches sehen, man glaubte, daß dies die Haltung des europäischen Menschen sein müsse,...und der Spuk fand erst ein Ende, als die Welt so viel Heroismus zu sehen bekam, daß sie vor lauter Heroismus nicht mehr zu sehen vermochte (*D.S.* 416).

The emphasis on heroism echoes Spengler's insistence that heroism and cold objectivity were emblems of the present time. The quote contains a notable observation of a world that seems to be blinded by all of the deeds of the war all around (a "geblendete Welt," so to speak) and explains Müller's continued tone of regret. Müller changes his perspective on the Salvation Army and acknowledges its call to social engagement, indicating that the former cynic has detected as a small ray of hope in seemingly hopeless times:

Heute geselle ich mich zu jeder Heilsarmeeversammlung, die ich auf der Straße antreffe, ich lege gern etwas auf den Sammelsteller und oft lasse ich mich in Gespräche mit den Heilssoldaten ein. Nicht, als ob ich von den etwas primitiven Heilslehren bekehrt worden wäre, doch ich meine, daß wir, die wir einst in Vorurteilen befangen waren, die ethische Pflicht haben, unsere Verfehlungen, wo immer es angeht, wieder gut zu machen, auch wenn diese Verfehlungen bloß den Anschein ästhetischer Verworfenheit hätten und wir überdies die Entschuldigung unserer damaligen großen Jugend ins Treffen führen können (*D.S.* 416).

Müller feels that he and others of his time have the ethical obligation (towards humanity and towards themselves) to compensate for past indifferences toward one's fellow humans. He regrets his past arrogance and prejudices. His comment on his former dismissal of the Salvation Army on aesthetic grounds suggests that this dismissal is of

moral consequences. Connections are drawn between aesthetic valuation, moral valuation, and valuation of religious organization and of religious morality.

Holy Heroism?

The connection between aesthetics and morality also appears in the main story line, especially regarding the first protagonist, Major Joachim von Pasenow, for whom aesthetic form plays an important role in constructing a sense of order in his environment.²⁹⁸ Pasenow represents the voices that wish for appearance of a hero who also adheres to the image of a (fairy-tale or mythical) romantic knight. As a combination of an aesthete and soldier, who had never experienced battle in his youth, the proper military attire and upholding the appearance of honour equals preserving world order. Believing that dressing like a hero equals being one, Pasenow blindly follows the Prussian imperial military order with religious devotion, similar to Marie's dedication to the order of the Salvation Army. Pasenow and Marie therefore represent different facets of Christian militant religiosity and methods of evangelizing others.

Pasenow's attitude to war seems to have changed over the years, because his public declaration of his Christian faith as a member of the Prussian military sounds like a message of appeasement that the Salvation Army might present. In an editorial published in Esch's newspaper, the Major asks where one can find a way out of the seemingly apocalyptic situation: "Wo ist der Teufel, den es aus der Welt zu jagen gilt, wo die Engel, die wir zur Hilfe herbeirufen wollen?" (*D.S.* 466) He answers his own question, starting with a Biblical quote:

²⁹⁸ The term aesthetic, in this specific context, means things concerning appearance.

“Aus Schrecken vor ihm flohen seine Feinde, alle Übeltäter wurden bestürzt, und die Rettung liegt in seiner Hand” (Makkabäer III.6), so darf es nicht auf die Verfolgung der fliehenden Feinde ankommen, sondern auf die Rettung, auf die Rettung des eigenen wie des fremden Volkes [...] und fast mutet es uns an, als müßten sich erst die schwarzen Heerscharen über die ganze Welt ergießen, damit aus dem Feuer der Apokalypse die neue Brüderlichkeit und Gemeinschaft erstehen könne (D.S. 467f.).

In his editorial, Pasenow seeks to make sense of the seemingly endless war and hardship and loneliness that he and others around him are suffering. While his use of subjunctive I, which tends to be used in newspaper articles, seems sensible, his use of the subjunctive II, such as “als müßte” appears strange. The subjunctive II is used to make a statement that is contrary to fact, and hints at Pasenow’s uncertainty that the hardship is necessary before peace can be had. As seen in chapter 3, Pasenow still hopes for supernatural intervention, even in the establishment of a new Christian community of “Brüderlichkeit und Gemeinschaft.”

On the other hand, Marie’s militancy promotes *agape* instead of an ultimate supernatural battle. If Pasenow and Esch see themselves as *katechons*, those who slow down the forces of the Anti-Christ, Marie would be a herald of the Messianic age. This is analogous to the Biblical story of Mary, the mother of Jesus: she lives among the poor, and the heroine herself was a fallen girl, who has found acceptance in a new community that is built on the principle of community service. Of course, especially Catholic theology emphasizes Mary’s purity through the idea of her Immaculate Conception. However, the Biblical story itself also reads that Joseph doubted Mary’s innocence when he first learned of her condition, although they had no sexual relations. Her pregnancy out of wedlock would presumably have aroused comment and led people to see her as

‘fallen’ (even though she was not). Joseph fears that she would be stoned if he did not marry her and recognized her son as his own.²⁹⁹

The narrator’s attitude towards Marie reveals a contradiction between Pasenow’s need for a new spiritual community and his adherence to the well-established Christian religious model for maintaining hope in the future. While the religious praxis of Pasenow and Marie differ significantly, the military tone of religious practices remains a critical point for Müller’s critique of Marie’s and Nuchem’s piety. Although the narrator clearly prefers the religious practices of Marie and Nuchem, Müller problematizes their belief in heroism that resembles Pasenow’s romantic militarism and an element of blind faith. The two figures represent religious leanings that focus on similar visions of a holy land where they will find a new spiritual home at the end of the world, often accompanied by belligerent imageries: Marie’s theology of the Salvation Army is Christian and focuses on the Christian army’s preparation for the Second Coming of Jesus, while Nuchem awaits the arrival of the (Jewish) Messiah who will vanquish their enemies and take the chosen people to the Promised Land on earth. Both arrivals are supposed to mark the end of the world, and both are represented by the word “Zion” and “Jerusalem,” which the characters use as synonyms and praise in their hymns. For instance, Marie sings about the Promised Land in the Salvation Army hymn and a psalm that Marie quotes states: “Durch

²⁹⁹ See Matthew 1:18-24 (New International Version): “This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly. But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, ‘Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.’ All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ‘The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel’ – which means, ‘God with us.’ When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.”

Zions Tore zog schon ein/ ein Heer so mächtiglich,/ Gewaschen in des Lammes Blut-- / und Raum ist auch für dich“ (*D.S.* 514). Zion or Jerusalem is depicted as the Promised Land for God’s chosen people. Incidentally, Esch and Pasenow also sing Salvation Army hymns of Zion and Jerusalem and recite poems about the Second Coming of Christ (*D.S.* 558f.). The individual characters have different understandings of Zion, such as a blissful sensation that the narrator observes of Dr. Litwak, when he hears the word “Zion.”³⁰⁰

Questioning Religiously Sanctioned Divisions

Müller presents two contrary interpretations of the relationship between Marie and Nuchem: one being a doomed romantic love story and the other demonstrating spiritual love as a condition for a new inclusive community, and Broch thereby models the attitudes of pessimism and optimism about Germany after the First World War. Through the story of Marie and Nuchem, Müller’s temptation to join a Christian religious community – even for a cynic – conveys his investment in the idea of salvation. Especially Episode 5 and Episode 12, in which Zion functions as a symbol of hope and holy land, and in which the two characters’ spiritual connection is foregrounded, demonstrate this view.

Suspecting an ulterior motive behind Marie’s and Nuchem’s common interest in religious activities, Müller also undermines the spirituality of his friends. Müller supposes that his friends use their fellowship as an opportunity to see each other and their singing and praying together as a compromise solution in dealing with their subdued sexual attraction. Episode 9 begins in the narrator’s room, in which Müller, Marie, and

³⁰⁰ Irreverently, the cynical Müller describes Dr. Litwak’s face as that of someone who is sucking a piece of candy when he enunciates the word “Jerusalem”: “[Müller]: ‘Ob er [Nuchem] als Jud oder Christ nach Jerusalem kommt, ist doch Wurscht.’/ [Litwak]: ‘Jerusalem’, sagte er wie einer, dem man ein Bonbon in den Mund gesteckt hat’” (*D.S.* 513).

Nuchem sing a militaristic song, “Wir ziehn zum Kampfe froh hinaus,” that celebrates the flag of the Salvation Army and in which the members pledge allegiance to the organization.³⁰¹ Müller admits that his perceptions might be clouded by his conversations with the elderly Jewish doctor, who expressed his concern and that of Nuchem’s family that the young man is spending too much time with a Christian girl, Marie: “Während des Spiels blickten sie manchmal einander an, aber es mag auch sein, daß es mir bloß so erschien, weil ich durch die Reden des Dr. Litwak misstrauisch geworden war” (*D.S.* 549). Müller imagines vividly how the whole Nussin clan is piled on top of the other outside the door, spying on the alleged couple. That this is only Müller’s exaggerated imagination is apparent when he opens his door to an empty corridor at the end of the chapter. After the song, Marie suggests that they pray together and kneeling, she begins with Psalm 122: “Ich freute mich über die, so mir sagten: lasset uns ins Haus des Herrn gehen! Unsere Füße stehen in deinen Toren, Jerusalem. Jerusalem ist gebaut, daß es eine Stadt sei, da man zusammenkommen soll, da die Stämme hinaufgehen, die Stämme des Herrn, wie geboten ist dem Volk Israel, zu danken dem Namen des Herrn.” As with his suggestion of the tune of the Salvation Army song, Müller ridicules the scene of worship and utters his mock prayer: “Wir wollen Tee kochen den Töchtern und Jünglingen Israels, wir wollen Rum in den Tee hineintun, Kriegsrum, Heldenrum, Ersatzrum, um unsere Einsamkeit zu betäuben, denn übergroß ist unsere Einsamkeit, sei es nun in Zion

³⁰¹ From the website of the *Museum of the Salvation Army* on the meaning of the colors of the Salvation Army: “Die Fahne der Heilsarmee - ein Symbol für den Glauben: Mit der Erklärung der Bedeutung der Farben und der Aufschrift wird die Fahne der Heilsarmee ganz klar zu einem Symbol des Glaubens eines jeden Salutisten: Das Blut des Herrn Jesus Christus (rot), welches uns reinigt und von unserer Schuld befreit und der Geist Gottes (gelb), der uns führt und leitet, und schliesslich die blaue Umrandung als Symbol für die Reinheit. Heil und Heiligung kommt auch in den Worten ‘Blut und Feuer’ zum Ausdruck.” <http://www.heilsarmeemuseum-basel.ch/D/fahne.php> - accessed on November 11, 2008. The colors of the Salvation Army and their flag plays a significant role in Episode 9.

oder in der heiligen Stadt Berlin” (*D.S.* 550). In the end, he exclaims that Nuchem’s manner of praying is obscene: the young Jew rocks back and forth, facing a faded curtain that reminds Müller of the blue-yellow-red flag of the Salvation Army, with his hind swaying in Müller’s direction.

While Marie and Nuchem might disguise their sexual interest through religious fervor, religious rhetoric for Müller sublimates belligerent and nationalist attitudes. The narrator twists the sense of a religious gathering to expose the kind of unholy and unglorious historical and practical circumstances of the war. During war times, political leaders use similar religious rhetoric of God’s army, fighting for the survival of the nation. In Müller’s parody of Marie’s prayer for unifying all of God’s chosen people at the end of the days, he criticizes a widespread tendency that he observed in the war times. This tendency, on the national level, is to mend social rifts within nations temporarily by glorifying the violence of wars, thus rallying people behind one cause. The discourse of violence implicates the establishment of national boundaries and the determination of who belongs within the boundaries and who does not. These are the “saber rattling cavalry,” as Pasenow fantasizes. The reality, however, entails inglorious trench warfare, chemical warfare, and amputated limbs.³⁰² On the individual level, the same tendency

³⁰² The crudity of wartime reality is also apparent in the conversations around the military hospital. A doctor comments to his colleague on the future of modern medicine, making a case that the younger colleague should change his specialty to surgery: “Flurschütz, in Kürze wird es überhaupt nur noch Chirurgen geben...das ist das einzige, was von dieser ganzen poweren Medizin übrigbleiben wird,...der Mensch ist ein Schlächter und überall bleibt er ein Schlächter, was anderes versteht er nicht.“ (*D.S.* 508). The doctors regard amputation as modern medicine’s method of saving lives by physically reducing people who were damaged by modern weapons: “[E]s war das Jahrhundert der Chirurgie, gekrönt von einem Weltkrieg mit Kanonen...jetzt lernen wir auf Drüsen um, und beim nächsten Krieg werden wir diese verfluchte Gasvergiftungen schon glänzend behandeln...vorderhand bleibt wohl wirklich nichts anderes übrig als schneiden.” The century that witnessed advancement in technology and science also produces a deadly gas whose use is repeatedly condemned (See chapters. 6, 23, 39: “Sauerei mit dem Gas” (*D.S.* 399); Pasenow in conversation with Jaretski: “Eine unritterliche Waffe” (*D.S.* 435); on the brutal nature of modern warfare: “Ehre ist keine bloße Konvention,...früher wäre Giftgas als Waffe verpönt gewesen”

translates into glorifying violent acts like duels that support boundaries between social classes, determining who is an insider and who is an outsider (e.g. Pasenow's brother Helmuth dies in a duel; Pasenow's eldest son dies during the war).³⁰³

The power imbalance is muted in Marie's prayer, which takes a text from the shared Holy Scripture – the Jewish Holy Text or the Christian Old Testament – and neither Marie nor Nuchem address their respective theological position regarding the definition of Jerusalem and the people of Israel. Furthermore, in this particular ecumenical gathering, the narrator ironically suggests to use the tune of the Andreas-Hofer-Lied, an Austrian resistance song against Franco-Bavarian influence during the Napoleonic era. The passage suggests that religion is always linked to politics, and moreover, reflects the uncritical acceptance of religious faith and naivety by Marie and Nuchem.

Theater of Saints

Müller's mistrust of *agape* and charitable activities, such as Marie's work at the hospital or Dr. Litwak's visits to Müller as an ailing neighbor, is highlighted further in the "Symposium" chapter, which immediately follows the described passage above. The

(D.S. 485). When Pasenow realizes, however, that he had been duped by Huguenau, a deserter who lived comfortably in his community, his world is turned upside down, and the realities of the war from which he had distanced himself crash down on him. The pathos in the narrative that filters through Pasenow's point of view marks the major's devastation: "Das Chaos der Welt stieg allenthalben, es stieg das Chaos der Gedanken und das Chaos der Welt, die Dunkelheit stieg und die Dunkelheit hatte den Klang eines höllischen Sterbens, in dessen Prasseln nur eines hörbar, nur eines gewiß wurde: die Niederlage des Vaterlands – oh, die Dunkelheit stieg, es stieg das Chaos, aber aus dem Chaos im Pfuhe giftiger Gase grinste die Fratze Huguenaus, die Fratze des Verräters, Werkzeug der göttlichen Strafe, Urheber des wachsenden Unglücks" (D.S. 643).

³⁰³ In conversation with the doctors, Pasenow suggests that the war, an incarnation of evil and misery, conducted with dishonorable methods, such as the use of poisonous gas in the trenches, is a punishment for not having given God His due: "Sehen Sie, daß man Gott nicht gibt, das ist des Grund des Übels" (D.S. 485, in ch. 39) We learn in this scene that the major has lost his eldest son, who would have been the same age as the wounded soldier Jaretzki, and that his second son is about to be called into service.

“Symposium” – whose original meaning is “drinking party” and is a reference both to Plato and to the Last Supper – unfolds around a dinner table among the trilogy’s three protagonists, Pasenow, Esch, and Huguenau. Their triangular constellation resembles the grouping of Marie, Nuchem, and Müller. During their conversation, the characters in the “Symposium” change their roles constantly, moving between “God,” “brother” and a “fellow disciple.” The dinner quickly turns into a discussion of spiritual truth and a moment of confession of faith in the hope for a divine Savior for the religious characters, Pasenow and Esch. Huguenau, the objective realist, feels excluded from their exchange. Structured like a play, including stage directions, the narrator foregrounds his own creative role by positing himself as a dramaturge, with his characters as actors on a stage and with suggested stage directions. The narrator states that his main purpose is to display explicitly how everyone acts within the constraints of his social roles and that no one is able to break out of his lonely, atomic existence:

[w]as immer der Mensch vom Menschen erfahren kann, bleibt bloßes Symbol, Symbol eines unfaßbaren Ichs, reicht über den Wert eines Symbols nicht hinaus...und verlangt im wahren Doppelsinn des Wortes nach der Vorstellung. Es wird daher niemandem Schwierigkeiten bereiten und wird höchstens der Kürze der Erzählung dienen, wenn man sich vorstellen wollte, wie das Ehepaar Esch zusammen mit dem Major und Herrn Huguenau sich auf einer Theaterszene befindet, in eine Darbietung verstrickt, der kein Mensch entgeht: als Schauspieler zu agieren (*D.S.* 551).

By highlighting the theatrical aspect of the characters’ constellation and their interaction, the narrator draws a comparison to the scene between Marie, Nuchem, and Müller. In both, the potential danger of justifying thoughtlessness and social exclusivity with religious symbolic language is demonstrated. During their shared meal, which resembles the Last Supper (another Christian example of *agape*), the Protestant Major Pasenow and

the Catholic August Esch express their wish for the Second Coming of the Messiah (*D.S.* 553). The spirituality is heightened by the stage directions:

Die Druckmaschine stellt die Arbeit ein; die Schläge verstummen; man hört die Grillen zirpen. Nachtwind bewegt die Blätter der Obstbäume. Um den Mond herum sind einige weißbeleuchtete Wolken sichtbar. In der plötzlich eingetretenen Stille erschweigt das Gespräch (*D.S.* 556, italics in original).

These lines are followed by a dream-like sequence, in which Pasenow and Esch partly speak in verse and in prose. They seem to be of the same mind,³⁰⁴ starting and finishing each other's sentences:

ESCH: Manchmal ist es, als sei die Welt nur eine einzige furchtbare Maschine, die nie still wird...der Krieg und alles [...] oh, die Maschine ist das Böse und das Böse ist die Maschine. Ihre Ordnung ist das Nichts, das kommen muß...ehe die Zeit wieder anheben darf...

MAJOR: Symbol des Bösen...

ESCH: Ja, ein Symbol [...]. Mein Gott, gibt es keine Möglichkeit, daß ein Mensch zum andern kommt!...

MAJOR: (legt begütigend ihm die Hand auf den Arm): Doch, Esch...

ESCH: Wer ist für mich nicht böse, mein Gott?

MAJOR: Der dich erkannt hat, mein Sohn,...bloß der Erkennende überwindet die Fremdheit.

ESCH: (*die Hände vor dem Gesicht*): Gott, du sollst mein Erkennender sein [...]. Erkenn' mich, oh Herr, erkenn' mich in furchtbarer Not, Wenn der Vorraum des Todes sich senkt über mich, der ich im Träume gewandelt [...].

MAJOR: So sei mir der Bruder von einst, der Bruder, den ich verloren Sei als Bruder mir nah'...

Die beiden im Wechselgesang, etwa im Tone der Heilsarmee (der Major Bariton, Herr Esch im Baß):

Herr Gott, Zebaoth,
Nimm uns auf in deine Gnade,
Schling um uns dein einend Band;
Führe uns mit deiner Hand,
Herr Gott, Zebaoth,
Aus dem Krummen in das Grade,
Führ uns ins gelobte Land,
Herr Gott, Zebaoth... (excerpts from *D.S.* 556-59).

³⁰⁴ Cf. Acts 4: 32: "All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had."

The common goal of the Major and Esch is salvation through companionship with a kindred spirit, with whom one enters, in loving harmony, into the safe haven of the Kingdom of God (*D.S.* 556). Like Marie and Nuchem, who are praying together, Pasenow and Esch are gripped by a shared spiritual state from which the others feel excluded. This exclusion of others from the theoretically welcoming, all-embracing Christian community is ironic. The two men also begin to sing a hymn that resembles a Salvation Army song and thus explicitly echo the Berlin story. Moreover, they reflect the idea of religious community, embedded in the Berlin story, which is most explicit in their “communion” and sharing of spiritual moment. The juxtaposition of the two fellowship scenes – both narrated by Müller – strengthens Müller’s prominent position within the novel and draws attention to the impossibility of finding a genuinely compassionate community. Such longing for genuine faith is also modeled in a theatrical exchange of on Christian faith between Pasenow and Esch as sinner and Savior. I stress the theatricality of the scene in order to show the mistrust in genuineness of feelings in social interaction.

Similar to the manner in which Müller ridicules Nuchem’s and Marie’s fellowship, Huguenau interjects the dialogue between Pasenow and Esch with mundane comments and jokes that reminds the rest of the dinner party of their earthly reality: he ridicules Esch’s religiosity as fake (“*unser Freund Esch ist ein Wolf im Schafspelz,*” *D.S.* 552);³⁰⁵ to Frau Esch’s complaints that Huguenau tends to discredit everything that is holy (“*heilig*”) for her husband, Huguenau replies that is only pretense, “*Scheinheilig*” (*D.S.* 553); when Esch gets carried away by his increasingly mystic narrative about his

³⁰⁵ It is ironic that Huguenau uses this phrasing, considering that he is the one in disguise. Cf. Matthew 7:15: “Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves.”

fears that the world may disappear by the devil's magic, Huguenau jokes: "Hokuspokus, weg ist sie....der große Zauberer Esch..." (D.S. 553).³⁰⁶ Like the cynic Müller in Berlin, the businessman in Kurtrier discredits the existence of a spiritual love among humans that the other two men in his company implicitly professed. Moreover, similar to Müller's assumptions about Nuchem's and Marie's relationship, Huguenau believes that the connection between Esch and Pasenow is based on an unspoken sexual attraction. When the dinner comes to an end, and he leaves the Esch residence with the major, Huguenau silently chides Esch for being inconsiderate toward the major by retiring so obviously to his bedchambers with Mrs. Esch: "Sowohl der Major als Huguenau schauen zu den Fenstern [of the Esch's] hinauf...: seine [the Major's] Gedanken sind wahrscheinlich bei Esch, sagt sich Huguenau und er missbilligt es, dass Esch jetzt bei der Frau liegt und den guten Alten damit betrübt" (D.S. 560). Both Müller and Huguenau strive for a realistic view of their environment and both feel like bystanders to the spiritual union of their acquaintances.

Writing Oneself out of Despair

With the parallel between the Huguenau story and the Berlin story, Müller points to the question of how one is to write about the conflicted historical period without following the trend of pessimism or sugary/romantic spirituality, nor the kind of amoral

³⁰⁶ This sentence contains another vulgarized allusion to the Last Supper. The phrase 'hocus pocus' probably comes from Latin *hoc est corpus [meum]*, 'this is my body', which is what Jesus says to the Apostles in the Vulgate's discussion of the Last Supper. See 1 Corinthians 11:23-24 (Biblia Sacra Vulgata): "accepit panem et gratias agens fregit et dixit hoc est corpus meum pro vobis hoc facite in meam commemorationem." The Oxford English Dictionary disagrees with the derivation from Latin, stating "The notion that hocus pocus was a parody of the Latin words used in the Eucharist, rests merely on a conjecture ..." (OED s.v. *hocus pocus*). However, some scholars still accept the Latin etymology, stating that "hocus pocus is a mutilation (!) of the Eucharistic phrase". Elizabeth Wayland Barber and Paul T. Barber, *When they Severed Earth from Sky: How the Human Mind Shapes Myth* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), p. 135 fn. 1; *Deutsches Wörterbuch von Jacob Grimm und Wilhelm Grimm*. (s.v. *Hokus pokus*).

“realism” of Huguenu. Episode 13 begins with a sentence that resembles the beginning of the first “Disintegration of Values” essay: “Hat diese Zeit, hat dieses zerfallende Leben noch Wirklichkeit?” (*D.S.* 615). The chapter immediately following is the ninth essay in the series of the “Disintegration of Values” essays, with the subtitle: “Epistemological Excursus”. The beginning is almost identical to the previous chapter: “Hat diese Zeit noch Wirklichkeit? besitzt sie eine Wertwirklichkeit, in der sich der Sinn ihres Lebens aufbewahren wird?” (*D.S.* 618). Both in Episode 13 and the “Epilogue,” Müller wonders about the value of his project of writing about his historical period in order to make sense of it. This episode contains a curious passage about Müller’s growing resignation toward philosophizing and writing literature. It seems as though he believes to have had influence over Marie and Nuchem, both of whom are dear to him (in fact, he says that he loves them), and whose influence is merely imagined. He writes:

Oft scheint es mir, als wäre der Zustand, der mich beherrscht...nicht mehr Resignation zu nennen, als sei er vielmehr eine Weisheit, die sich mit der allumschließenden Fremdheit abzufinden gelernt hat. Denn selbst Nuchem und Marie sind mir fremd, sie, denen meine letzte Hoffnung gegolten hat, die Hoffnung, daß sie meine Geschöpfe seien, die unerfüllbare süße Hoffnung, daß ich ihr Schicksal in die Hand genommen hätte, es zu bestimmen. Nuchem und Marie, sie sind nicht meine Geschöpfe und waren es niemals. Trügerische Hoffnung, die Welt formen zu dürfen!...Ist dies Resignation? ist es Abkehr von allem Ästhetischen? wo stand ich einst? mein Leben verdämmert hinter mir, und ich weiß nicht, ob ich gelebt habe oder ob es mir erzählt worden ist, so sehr ist es in den fernen Meeren versunken....Ich bin viele Wege gegangen, um den Einen zu finden, in dem alle anderen münden, indes sie führten immer weiter auseinander, und selbst Gott war nicht von mir bestimmt, sondern von den Vätern” (*D.S.* 617).

The narrator ponders the relationship with his environment and the people around him as a writer of fiction. He muses that life itself could be shaped like a fiction that also comes to life by being told. Yet, Müller is also plagued by the question of who shapes these

stories. On a literal level, the “Väter” are the head of the neighboring Jewish household and General Booth, the founder of the Salvation Army. On a figurative level, he refers to higher authorities like the Kaiser and his generals that influence and govern the course of the empire’s subjects. He voices frustration over the lack of autonomy in thought and spiritual matters, which seem predetermined by those who came before him by “the fathers.” The episode ends with Müller’s annoyance with the felt senselessness of his attempts to understand the world through his literary and philosophical activities: “Ich sagte zu mir: ‘Du bist ein Trottel, du bist ein Platoniker, du glaubst, die Welt erfassend, sie dir gestalten zu können und dich selbst zu Gott zu erlösen. Merkst du nicht, daß du daran verblutest!’/ Ich antwortete mir: ‘Ja, ich verblute.’” The last sentence, in particular, contains a visceral reminder of the physicality of the world, which cannot be completely rationalized or controlled. Through the narrator’s thoughts, Broch voices his own doubts about the value and impact of literary activities in helping others interpret the experienced reality.

Room for Redemptive Hope in Poetry

A stylistic complement to Müller’s philosophical reasoning in “Zerfall der Werte” essays is the lyrical portion of the Berlin story. The poems appear to express the unarticulated desire for hope and as the irrational compliment to intellectual critique. As Gisela Brude-Firnao points out, Broch believed that in literature, especially poetry, the unexpressed, inexplicable, and irrational could find expression. According to Broch, poetic language could provide a suitable context for the presentation of the irrational and

illusory, and in which they could then be analyzed.³⁰⁷ Halsall argues, specifically about the Berlin story, that the first meeting between the protagonist and Marie signifies “a form of ‘Erlösung’ for him from the loneliness of Berlin.”³⁰⁸ The way that they establish a connection is simple: she asks him to join a gathering of the Salvation Army: “Kommen sie zu uns” (*D.S.* 417). When he declines, they talk and, deeply immersed in their conversation, wander the streets until they suddenly realize that they are lost. On the representational level, the description of the encounter between Nuchem and Marie is significant because the lyrical poetry suggests that it might be possible to gain knowledge of someone or something intuitively without the divisions of people into religious, national, ethnic or other divisions. This kind of knowing and relating to other people in a non-intellectual way is foreign to Müller. In the lyrical poetry part of the Berlin story, the representatives of two monotheistic religious traditions are able to relate to each other and form a bond. The sections of lyrical poetry resist the rationalizing and self-conscious view of the first-person narrator, and direct readers’ attention to the relationship between the central characters instead. In these poems, *agape* and *eros* are intertwined and left entangled. Earlier, I mentioned the juxtaposition of new life and decay, when discussing how Müller’s bleak impressions of the prewar and war times are expressed through imageries of a wilting spring. To recapitulate, the following scenes of decay open the poem:

Der welke Frühling steinerner Gesetze,
Der welke Frühling einer Judenbraut,
Der welke Lärm der Stadt, der gleichsam ohne Laut
Gefangen liegt im unsichtbaren Netze,

³⁰⁷ Gisela Brude-Firna, *Materialien zu Hermann Brochs Die Schlafwandler* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1972), 7-8.

³⁰⁸ Halsall, 88.

Ein Sommertag aus Stein, dem keine Milde taut,
Ein welker Himmel blickt auf Asphaltplätze,
In Straßenschluchten, und wie eine Krätze
Breitet sich Stein auf grauer Erdenhaut (*D.S.* 480).

The ‘steinerner Gesetze’ signify the sacred Jewish laws (referring to the engraved tablets with the ten commandments that Moses received on Mount Sinai) and the wilting spring of a Jewish bride, which refers to Marie’s position vis-à-vis Nuchem, foreshadows an unfruitful relationship. In this kind of spring, everything, including the season, sky, the pavements, and even the noise of the city, seems to be decaying. It is as though the whole city and all that is in it are under a strange spell (“Gefangen liegt im unsichtbaren Netze”). Müller’s Berlin seems like a post-apocalyptic landscape, in which only the damned and sinners are left behind, and is reminiscent of Pasenow’s perception of Berlin and the use of the metaphor of web to describe the city’s dangerous allure in Volume I.³⁰⁹

At first, Berlin is contrasted with the idea of the New Jerusalem or utopian place:

Oh, graue Stadt, Station blasser Nomaden
Am Zionswege, der zu Gott hinführt,
Gottlose Stadt, ins leere Netz geschnürt,
Der leere Steinraum, fluch- und schmerzbeladen,
In dem die Heilsarmee die dünne Trommel rührt,
Auf daß der Sünder lasse seine Schaden

³⁰⁹ Pasenow fantasizes about rescuing his Czech lover Ruzena, an “Animierdame,” from the web of moral corruption: Compare the first passages with Pasenow’s experience of Berlin. He feels that he must rescue Ruzena from the urban cesspool. Note the city-country binary contrast he sets up in parallel to his brunette Bohemian lover Ruzena and his blond fiancée and social equal Elisabeth von Baddensen: “[W]enn dies auch in einer nur schwerverständlichen Weise an Ruzena erinnerte, so war es doch deutlich, daß Ruzena sonderbar durchsonnt, dennoch dunkel und ein wenig verwahrlost, mit Berlin so eng verbunden war wie Elisabeth mit den Feldern, durch die sie jetzt fuhr, und mit dem Herrenhaus, das in dem Parke liegt. Das war eine Art befriedigender reinlicher Ordnung. Trotzdem war er froh, Ruzena dem dunklen Animierberuf und seiner falschen Helligkeit entzogen zu haben, froh, daß er daran war, sie aus dem Gewirr der Fäden zu lösen, die diese ganze Stadt umspannten, aus diesem Netz, das er überall fühlte, am Alexanderplatz und bei der rostigen Maschinenfabrik und in der Vorstadt mit dem Gemüsekeller, ein undurchdringliches unfaßbares Netz des Zivillistischen, das unsichtbar war und dennoch alles verdunkelte. Aus solcher Verstrickung galt es, Ruzena zu lösen, denn auch hier galt es, sich Elisabeths würdig zu erweisen. Aber das war bloß ein sehr undeutlicher Wunsch, ein Wunsch, den er sich überdies gar nicht klarmachen wollte, weil er ihm wahrscheinlich selber absurd erschienen wäre” (*D.S.* 70-1). This quote emphasizes the theme of salvation and honor, which is especially pertinent to Pasenow’s prewar generation.

Heimfand auch er zum Wahrheitsweg voll Gnaden,
Zum Zionswege, den die Liebe kürt. – (D.S. 480)

The passage alludes to the meeting between Marie (“Heilsarmee”) and Nuchem (“blasser Nomaden”), both of whom are depicted as pitiful souls on an anonymous, inhospitable path, consisting of rocky grounds that indeed cannot bear any fruit, instead of the nation’s capital. Yet, in the final six lines of the poem, the idea of an oxymoronic wilting spring is omitted. Spring regains its usual status of new beginnings. The last line “Sie sahen Zion und ihr Sein war Danken,” compared with the line above, “Heimfand auch er [der Jakobsjüngling] zum Wahrheitsweg voll Gnaden,/Zum Zionswege, den die Liebe kürt,” suggests that Zion, which means Jerusalem for the Jews and the Kingdom of God for Christians, and for both, a divine place of salvation (i.e. a symbolic no-place) – is not tied to a geographical location, but rather is found in the encounter of like-minded people and their interconnection.

In dieser Stadt Berlin, in jenen Frühlingstagen
Traf Nuchem Sussin auf die Heilsmarie
Und eine Weile war ein süßes Zagen
Und ihre Seelen fielen in die Knie;
Sie fühlten nicht des Schicksals schwere Pranken,
Sie sahen Zion und ihr Sein war Danken (D.S. 481).

These last lines do not refer to the barren rocky landscape. Although the line “Sie fühlten nicht des Schicksals schwere Pranken,” foreshadows already during their first poetic meeting the couple’s eventual separation, the emphasis is nonetheless on their joint hopeful stance for salvation from their lonely existence, which the two characters find in each other. This is attributed to another important key word, “Gnade,” which is necessary for divine redemption and transcendence of their loneliness.³¹⁰

³¹⁰ Cf. the discussion of Tillich in chapter 2.

In her article on the Berlin story line, Margarite Pazi rightly points to the importance of the theological differences between Judaism and Christianity as one of the obstacles to the union of the Salvation Army girl and the Orthodox Jew.³¹¹ Pazi uses this instance to support her argument on the presence of Jewish theological traditions in Broch's trilogy. However, it might make more sense to read this scene as an irrational or pre-rational vision of these representative characters' opening up their ethnic and theological boundaries, and this despite the uncertainty that a concrete reconciliation between the two people of different religious orientations could be realized. In fact, the emphasis on the Christian concept of grace and spiritual love in these lyrical passages suggests that Christian theology might be privileged. The plot supports this idea: Nuchem shows interest in Marie and her organization first, and he voluntarily seeks out opportunities to hear her Christian songs. In the narrative portion, Marie and Nuchem exercise grace by offering the narrator and each other their friendship.

While the narrator distances himself from Marie and Nuchem, he cautiously accepts these invitations of friendship with grace. In Episode 12, Müller strives to understand the idea of friendly movements of two religious representatives towards each other by imagining a new religion that could result from a union between Marie and Nuchem. The poem itself begins with indications that it is a dream sequence, a "Zionstraum," a dream of Salvation, of "er" (Nuchem), "sie" (Marie), and another "er", who seems to be a mixture of Jesus and Müller, as the creator of this literary dream that makes the union between the two friends possible. The mention of a decorated donkey

³¹¹ Margarita Pazi, "Ethnische Bewußtseinsverschiebungen im Werk Hermann Brochs : Am Beispiel der Episoden der Geschichte des Heilsarmeemädchens in Berlin aus *Die Schlafwandler*," in *Hermann Broch. Das dichterische Werk. Neue Interpretationen*, ed. Michael Kessler and Paul Michael Lützeler (Tübingen: Stauffenburg Verlag, 1987), 28-29.

with a “Purpurzaum,” referring to Jesus’ last visit to Jerusalem before His arrest, and of the suffering on the cross later indicate the Biblical reference:

Er sprach: mein Maultier tragt mit raschen Hufen,
mit Schellenkränzen und mit Purpurzaum
und trägt uns beide durch den Zionstraum.

The following is an excerpt of the rest of the poem:

Er sprach: ich habe dich gerufen.
Er sprach: in meinem Herzen ist ein großes Schaun,
den Tempel schaue ich und seine tausend Stufen
und schau die Stadt, an der die Ahnen schufen.
Er sprach: wir wollen eine Hütte bau’n.
Er sprach: bisher war Warten, daß ich mich vergeude,
nur Warten gab’s, Versunkenheit im Buch.
Er sprach: ich harrte seiner und nun kam die Freude...,
er sprach es nicht, doch war’s des Herzens Spruch.
Auch sie war stumm. In Schweigen und versunken
so gingen sie und waren dennoch trunken.
So gingen sie und waren dennoch trunken
von Schweigen, Sehnen und versteckter Pracht,
so gingen sie und keines hatte acht
der Straßen, Mietskasernen und Spelunken.

Throughout the poem, the use of the personal pronoun “er” to refer to the speaking male figures leads to a merging of Jesus and Nuchem. This pathos-laden conflation between the Biblical and contemporary times lends the passage a quality of atemporality. The reference to the city streets, low-income housing complexes, and casinos connect “er” and “sie” back to a specific place and time. The “er” of the poem’s middle section seems to be Nuchem speaking, since he talks about studying the Scriptures and lives in anticipation of the arrival of the Messiah. The passage also communicates the longing for a union between “er” and “sie”, which is indicated by their state of drunkenness in each other’s company and their sense of a silent, mutual understanding. The curious ending of the poem, laden with Biblical allusions, can be read in two different ways:

Er sprach: ich habe dein gedacht.
Sie sprach: mein Herz ist aufgeglommen,
du neigst der Büsserin das milde Antlitz zu.
Er sprach: hell glänzt der Weg, der Zionsweg des Frommen.
Sie sprach: für uns am Kreuze littest du.
Sie sprachen nichts: das Wort war abgeblendet.
Sie taten nichts: die Tat war schon vollbracht.

This passage suggests that “er” and “sie” are drawn to each other for different reasons. It seems as though “sie” identifies Nuchem with Jesus, who atones for her and the rest of humanity’s sins. He desires to be unified with her – exactly how remains unclear. Regardless of their reasons, they both long for a place or person to which and to whom they belong; they equal this found belongingness to Salvation. In the end, the merging of “er” and “sie” into the plural personal pronoun “sie” indicates that the spiritual union between the two characters is fulfilled. The sexual undertone, which is not qualified positively or negatively, is most explicit in the last two lines, in which the omniscient eye of God or Jesus, signified by “das Wort,” is turned away. The deed was done, “die Tat war schon vollbracht,”³¹² even without words or action on the part of “er” and “sie,” implies that the desired union was completed.³¹³ The connection between people, in verbal or other forms of communication, comes about in the gaps between the utterances. Whichever way it may be, the overall tone of the poem is dreamy and filled with images of fulfillment rather than of loss or longing.

³¹² The Biblical allusion refers to Jesus’ last words as He dies in John 19:30 (Luther Bibel): “Da nun Jesus den Essig genommen hatte, sprach er: *Es ist vollbracht!* und neigte das Haupt und verschied.” (my emphasis).

³¹³ Cf. Halsall on “die Tat” in the seventh excursus of the essay, Halsall, 115f. The narrator is against a mere following of aesthetic passivity. Halsall’s discussion of “die Tat” in relation to the essay helps decipher some of the cues in the poetic scene.

Conclusion

Through his use of multiple modes of writing fiction, Broch circumvents committing a potential literary “wickedness” by his own definition: in his condemnation of propagandistic literature, he seems to suggest that there is a correct literary endeavor (ironic, poetic, indirect) and an incorrect one (direct, didactic, propagandistic or commercial). Through a highly self-reflexive narrative style and experiments with narrative perspective, *Die Schlafwandler* thus illuminates a part of Germany’s story – the 30 years leading up to the end of a seemingly apocalyptic moment of 1918 – through different perspectives, and leaves the readers with a set of questions about the architecture of the future system of values.

In this chapter, I argued that the oscillation between hopefulness and hopelessness is central to the entire trilogy. The most important quality of hope, which the trilogy advocates, is the idea that one can challenge any set of beliefs. To take the analogy of language in interaction, as in the previous chapter, no one has the final say, and as long as channels of dialogue are open, doom is foreclosed. Being as critical of blind religious faith as he is of cynicism, Broch places the idea of meetings of opposites as the most valuable exercise in writing his trilogy, especially through his character-narrator Müller. Literature can act as an inspiring and creative medium – and thus also as a thought-provoking and ethical tool, according to Broch’s definition – precisely because it can model the encounters of contrary voices.

Chapter 6

Conclusion: Productive Doubts

In his review of the trilogy, Broch's contemporary Hermann Hesse recognizes the life-affirming gestures of *Die Schlafwandler*:

So will das ernste Werk nicht Führer und Programm sein, sondern liebevolle Betrachtung, denkender Blick ins Chaos, dessen Bedrohlichkeit wir ja von immer neuen Seiten zu sehen und zu spüren bekommen, das aber doch die Keime zu neuer Ordnung, zu einer neuen Menschlichkeit enthält.³¹⁴

It is possible that Hesse's appreciation of the novel's hopeful tenor is due to his geographical distance from Germany and Austria, where the rise of fascism was felt more acutely. Considering that the review was written in 1932, it is nonetheless remarkable that Hesse supports Broch's utopian hope that political and economic crises might be overcome through compassion and cooperation. I examined scenes of feared judgment and imagined modes of redemption among *Die Schlafwandler*'s characters in order to reveal the relationship between this hope and cultural critique that the trilogy presents. Through a provocative display of the characters' fear of Judgment Day and anticipation of deliverance, Broch seeks to inspire the readers' rational and emotional receptiveness for an ethical community.³¹⁵ As much as Broch evokes apocalyptic rhetoric in his trilogy

³¹⁴ Hermann Hesse, "Zur Trilogie," in Gisela Brude-Firnau, *Materialien zu Hermann Brochs Die Schlafwandler*, ed. Gisela Brude-Firnau (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1972), 104.

³¹⁵ Community formation and mode of communication are connected for Broch. In the novels, the author hints at a communication without judgment for a community of equals. The centralizing aspect of this community is made up of a common goal that the members of the community strive for. To motivate and guide the striving, the tension is, perhaps surprisingly, necessary to uphold a movement toward a goal together. Although this aspiration for the end of chaos through a strong leader and a political center with

to tell stories from the late 19th century to the early 20th century, it also appears that these stories resist a sense of doom.

As demonstrated in *Die Schlafwandler*, Broch is critical of the self-centered indifference, which he views as being symptomatic of the “disintegration” of a materialist and overly pragmatic culture. In his trilogy, he portrays possibilities of injustice practiced in the name of political organizations – be it on the left or right – as well as the dangers of thoughtless hope in a leader, a “Führer,” who promises redemption. The kind of hope he privileges is different from the trust in a redeemer with a political program and party, which the author explored in his next novel, *Die Verzauberung*.³¹⁶ In this project, Broch examines the question of how religious mysticism can be combined with the rhetoric of redemption and hope to mobilize a people behind a violent movement. This novel depicts how a community in a mountain village gradually falls under the spell of a charismatic leader; the novel ends with a ritualistic virgin sacrifice. Also in the 1930s, Broch would begin his study of mass hysteria, *Die Massenwahntheorie*.³¹⁷ Despite being aware of the darker potential of religiosity and hope in renewal, Broch holds onto spirituality and trust in humanity in his visions of a viable future for his society and culture. In fact, in *Die Schlafwandler*, hope emerges from productive doubting, uncertainty in truth claims, and skepticism vis-à-vis the modern belief in rationality.

strong moral values sounds similar to Carl Schmitt’s notion of the sovereign, there are fundamental differences: As much as Broch is critical of a violent revolution as a solution to the political chaos of the 1930s Germany, he is also skeptical of solutions through a strong leader, a *Führer*.

³¹⁶ Hermann Broch, *Die Verzauberung*, ed. Paul Michael Lützeler (Frankfurt am Main and Zürich: Rhein-Verlag, 1976). Though written between 1934-1936, it was posthumously published in 1954 as “Der Versucher.” In the 1970s, it was republished as “Die Verzauberung.” Throughout the 1930s until now, it has often been referred to as the “Bergroman.”

³¹⁷ Hermann Broch, *Massenpsychologie : Schriften aus dem Nachlass* (Zürich: Rhein-Verlag, 1959); Hermann Broch, *Massenwahntheorie*, ed. Paul Michael Lützeler, Kommentierte Werkausgabe (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1979). Published posthumously.

Put differently, *Die Schlafwandler*'s apocalyptic rhetoric causes productive doubts. According to William Franke, doubts arise when one is faced with contradictions, which are part of the apocalypse:

Apocalypse stands for the contradiction of all that is human and of every worldly order [...] by the advent of a higher power and authority. This 'other' order is unspeakable within the present world order. It is what cannot be represented. But it operates as a limit to all that can be represented as a boundary of discourse in general. Recognition of this boundary can prove highly necessary to all that *is* represented in language and to communication among different cultures, as well as even just among different individuals, given their different mindsets and the different world orders that they envision. As such, apocalyptic thinking is a serious and indispensable exercise in imagining possible worlds and even the possibility of no 'world' at all as we now know or represent it.³¹⁸

That which cannot be said – be it yearning for metaphysical meaning or complete understanding of another person – is addressed through opposing apocalyptic tropes. As his starting point for dialogue, Broch takes profound collective and individual pain, which result from historical crises, such as loss of religious faith, existential loneliness, and the unprecedented violence of the war, all of which reach the everyday level.

Broch's trilogy contains a utopian vision of finding a space and time when people come together in one limitless, timeless place.³¹⁹ In the early 1930s, in which the author

³¹⁸ Franke, 18.

³¹⁹ One notable example is a scene in the third volume. During a gathering composed of Pasenow and two military doctors, one of the doctors plays his cello. Although the three men usually have nothing in common but their shared brush with the war – through the sites of veterans and daily updates on deaths of soldiers – they catch a rare glimpse of each other's lonely souls: "Er spielte. Wahrscheinlich war er bloß ein Dilettant, aber das dürfte für ihn...gleichgültig gewesen sein: denn die lärmende Stummheit dieser Zeit, ihres Getöses stummer und undurchdringlicher Schall, aufgerichtet zwischen Mensch und Mensch, eine Wand, durch die des Menschen Stimme nicht hinüber, nicht herüber mehr dringt, so dass er erbeben muss, - - aufgehoben war die entsetzliche Stummheit der Zeit, es war die Zeit selber aufgehoben und sie hatte sich zum Raum geformt, der sie alle umschloss, da nun Kessels Cello erklang, aufsteigend der Ton, den Raum aufbauend, den Raum erfüllend, sie selber erfüllend" (*D.S.* 631-32). This scene illustrates the kind of timeless and limitless space alluded to above. The three men find temporary reprieve from their disconcerting reality, in which violence has become the norm. The narrator juxtaposes the same sense of timelessness and indeterminable space with examples of material reasons that disorient his characters.

feared the take-over of the “mute cacophony” (“die lärmende Stummheit dieser Zeit”), by which he means the dangerous lack of interest in other human beings, the dialogue begins with the powerful apocalyptic rhetoric as a call to one’s neighbor. Franke points out that apocalyptic thinking puts to test our willingness to engage in dialogue with others.³²⁰ In my work, I sought to examine how *Die Schlafwandler* probes this inclination of readers. Broch’s fiction complements philosophical reflections with the evocation of utopian spaces for genuine human encounters.

How would an ideal community be structured according to Broch? Following his theory, his utopian community would have a spiritual center. This center would be built on a new myth that is written collectively, involving an active dialogue between people who take both roles of writers and readers. No monopoly on truth claims would exist and yet there would be a higher truth and a standard of values that the community members would agree on. This kind of community is not realizable, and yet it does exist: in the realm of the arts and literature; in the domain of creative imagination.³²¹

³²⁰ William Franke, “Apocalypse and the breaking-open of Dialogue: A negatively theological perspective,” *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 47, no. (2000): 65.

³²¹ Hannah Arendt observes, that even after his exile to the United States and after the Second World War, Broch does not lose confidence in readers’ ability to engage with difficult intellectual and political questions. He continues to challenge them to cultivate their own sensibilities to the changing times, and to formulate metaphysical meanings for themselves. Arendt writes on Broch’s approaches to writing novels in times of crises: “Jede Krise, jede Wende der Zeiten ist Anfang und Ende zugleich. Als solche birgt sie, in den Worten Brochs, ein Dreifaches in sich: das ‘Nicht-mehr’ der Vergangenheit, das ‘Noch-nicht’ der Zukunft und das ‘Doch-schon’ der Gegenwart. [...] Der moderne Roman dient nicht mehr der ‘Unterhaltung und Belehrung’ (Broch) und er ‘weiß nicht mehr dem Leser Rat’ (Benjamin), sondern er konfrontiert ihn unmittelbar mit Problemen und Formen, die sich nur dem erschließen, der gesonnen ist, sich von selbst auf sie einzulassen.” Hannah Arendt, “Hermann Broch und der moderne Roman (1949),” in *Materialien zu Hermann Broch's Die Schlafwandler*, ed. Gisela Brude-Firnau (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1972).

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