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ZEITGEIST

*THE UNDERGRADUATE JOURNAL FOR
GERMAN STUDIES STUDENTS UNION*



*Presented by the German
Studies Students Union*



Letter from President

Dear Readers,

We are delighted to present you with the triumphant return of *Zeitgeist*, the German Academic Journal of the Department of German Language and Literature at the University of Toronto. As president of the German Studies Student Union, I am honoured to introduce this publication, with the help of our editorial team, contributors and members of the GSSU.

We are grateful to all authors for contributing to *Zeitgeist*. We are also grateful to our hardworking editorial team: Eduard Haertel, Teya Knightdale, Tobias Streibel May and Ulis Bertin, and the departmental staff who made the journal's revival possible.

As we launch this first issue, we do so with the hope that *Zeitgeist* will seek to inspire curiosity, foster interdisciplinary connections, and promote a deeper understanding and appreciation of German studies among students and scholars worldwide. By embracing diversity, promoting inclusivity, and valuing academic excellence, *Zeitgeist* aims to make meaningful contributions to the advancement of knowledge and scholarship in the field of German studies.

Herzliche Grüße,
Aditi Kolluru
President, GSSU



Meet the team

This issue reflects a broad range of topics and linguistic depths - mirroring the student body in the German department. This edition highlights the collection of historical, cultural, linguistic works and reflections on German studies.

We hope it motivates future work in the department, as we aim to increase the involvement of the student body with the German department and engage students taking German classes to become more involved with German studies as an academic pathway.

With gratitude,
The Zeitgeist editing team.



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Zeitenwende in the Zeitgeist: Reflections on German Security Policy Developments in Light of the Russian Invasion of Ukraine, 2022

Rudy Yuan

Abstract: Since its own reunification, Germany has had an urgent and pressing need to redefine its security and defence policy to reflect changing borders and allegiances in Europe. Efforts at reform from the 1990s to the 2010s were largely half-hearted, though German leadership committed to accelerating these efforts with the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022. As Europe's largest economy, German actions generate great salience among the rest of the European Union and the North Atlantic alliance, but if Germany wishes to become a leader in security policy, it must decide whether it seeks to uphold its role as a conciliator or to seek more assertive capacities.

Since the end of the Cold War and its own reunification, Germany has had an urgent and pressing need to redefine its security and defence policy to reflect the changing borders and allegiances in Europe. Cold War-era German defence doctrine emphasized the importance of holding the Fulda Gap¹ against any potential Soviet ground incursion and slowing

down any full-scale Warsaw Pact invasion to give the rest of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) time to prepare.² The then-West Germany shared borders with the Soviet satellite states of East Germany and Czechoslovakia, and hosted permanent American, British, and Canadian military bases. With the reunification of Germany and the collapse of the Eastern Bloc, NATO's borders have moved eastward as Poland and the Baltic states were admitted to the alliance. In recognition of this fact came the withdrawal of British and Canadian troops from Germany and their subsequent deployments in the Baltic States alongside German troops,³ which had become the new frontline states against Russia. German security policy, therefore, is as of 2024 in a transitional stage, where various domestic political actors and Germany's international allies have recognized the need for systematic reform and have begun making public calls towards increased defensive

¹ The Fulda Gap was the name given to the narrowest part of the then-West Germany, between the inner-German border near Fulda and the French border near Karlsruhe. In the event of war with the Eastern Bloc, it was anticipated that Soviet-aligned troops would attack West Germany at this point.

² Martin Zapfe, "Strategic Culture Shaping Allied Integration: The Bundeswehr and Joint Operational Doctrine," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 39, no. 2 (2016): pg. 250.

³ Olaf Scholz, "The Global Zeitenwende: How to Avoid a New Cold War in a Multipolar Era," *Foreign Affairs* (vol. 101, no. 1, January/February 2023): pg. 29.

capacity. Despite the increased perception of threat, little progress has been made in the realm of comprehensive security reform, owing to a series of institutional pathologies, cultural attitudes, and general mismanagement, on which this paper will reflect and offer some potential future policy options.

Germany abandoned conscription in 2011 as part of ongoing defence reforms,⁴ ending a policy which was introduced under the first postwar Chancellor, Konrad Adenauer,⁵ in favour of adopting a fully professional military. However, because Germany was no longer a NATO frontline state, defence spending and development had fallen by the wayside, with no new security doctrine rising to replace outdated Cold War-era plans. This, combined with the Merkel government's attempts to integrate Russia economically and diplomatically within Europe, has hindered the necessary positive identification of major security challenges that is required for the development of a coherent national defence strategy in

line with Germany's regional and international allies.

The Bundeswehr has, since the end of the Cold War, suffered from chronically low morale, funding, and standards. The Angela Merkel government (2005–2021) attempted to address this through the *Neuausrichtung*⁶ policy for defence reform, introduced in 2010 and highly publicized in 2016 with the release of a comprehensive white paper. Political will for Bundeswehr reform to counter rising geopolitical challengers has never been in short supply, despite the presence of pro-Russian and Russia-leaning individuals within the Bundestag and under previous governments. Although Russia was identified in the 2016 white paper as an emerging security challenge for Germany and its allies due to the role it played in the ongoing War in Donbas and its 2014 annexation of Crimea, government policy still prioritized the development of common interests and relationships between Russia, Europe, and NATO,⁷ part of Merkel's larger policy of engagement with the Russian leadership. When Russia announced its invasion of Ukraine in February

⁴ Archive of the German Federal Government, *Neuausrichtung der Bundeswehr*, [Realignment of the Bundeswehr] accessed March 5th, 2023

⁵ Jens O. Koltermann, "Citizen in Uniform: Democratic Germany and the Changing 'Bundeswehr,'" *Parameters (Carlisle, Pa.)* 42, no. 2 (2012): pgs. 109–111

⁶ Lit. "realignment".

⁷ German Federal Ministry of Defence, *Weißbuch zur Sicherheitspolitik und zur Zukunft der Bundeswehr*, [White Paper on Security Policy and the Future of the Bundeswehr] (Bonn: Federal Ministry of Defence, 2016): pg. 32

2022, the Chancellor, Olaf Scholz, announced to the Bundestag the beginning of a *Zeitenwende*— a turning point in time – for the global community, and also in German defence policy and military spending.⁸ The Chancellor promised an unprecedented increase of 100 billion euros in military spending⁹ and a firm commitment to the NATO 2 per cent military spending target, despite his government’s conspicuous decision to not supply Ukraine with lethal aid – a decision that stood out among NATO members. Although the latter decision was rectified shortly after its announcement,¹⁰ there has been little sign of the *Zeitenwende* coming into full effect in the military sector one year on from the Chancellor’s announcement. Indeed, *Zeitenwende* has replaced the previous *Neuaustrichtung* policy as the keyword in German defence reform, and unlike its predecessor, the *Zeitenwende* has had a very high degree of resonance in German public life, being chosen by the Association for the German Language as its word of the year in

2022.¹¹ Despite this publicity, the government has not yet released concrete details on the policy’s implementation and priorities, and although the military has had its budget increased, it has not released any details on its planned allocation.

The most prominent legacy of the Merkel government’s policy towards Russia was the German dependency on Russian natural gas for heating and energy. On this front, the Scholz government has made remarkable progress in transitioning Germany firmly away from Russian gas, which enables an independent German energy policy. The long-term success of this transition hinges on whether the decision to temporarily reopen coal-fired power plants in Germany will become a permanent one or not,¹² as this jeopardizes and conflicts with government action for climate security in the long term. Though Germany’s most salient and immediate security challenge remains Russia, there is a growing understanding among the German leadership that a comprehensive security doctrine against China must

⁸ Olaf Scholz, “Policy statement by Olaf Scholz, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany and Member of the German Bundestag, 27 February 2022 in Berlin,” translated transcript of speech delivered at the Bundestag, Berlin, February 27, 2022.

⁹ Scholz, “The Global *Zeitenwende*,” pg. 28.

¹⁰ Scholz, “The Global *Zeitenwende*,” pg. 29.

¹¹ “GfđS wählt »Zeitenwende« zum Wort des Jahres 2022,” [GfđS chooses “*Zeitenwende*” as the 2022 word of the year] Association for the German Language, accessed March 15th, 2023

¹² Scholz, “The Global *Zeitenwende*,” pgs. 31–32.

also be established.¹³ Unlike Russia, China has not yet launched any wars of aggression, but, like Russia, remains structurally and ideologically opposed to the rules-based international order championed by Germany and the EU at large.¹⁴ The most immediate focus, therefore, should remain on Germany's efforts to promote collective security within Europe.

Some key aspects that must be considered when analyzing Germany's defence and security policy are the true operational capacity and efficiency of the Bundeswehr, integration efforts with allied forces, specifically the establishment of joint units like the Franco-German Brigade, and the comprehensibility and feasibility of large-scale doctrinal shifts. Historically, the Bundeswehr was set up with the express purpose of serving a role within NATO as an "alliance army", even to the degree that it lacked an independent joint operations command.¹⁵ Now, as fears of an imperializing Germany have become history in the West, it stands to reason that the Bundeswehr must be able to

match to its contemporaries in terms of operational capacity and efficiency.

There is considerable evidence of bureaucratic and organizational pathologies and inefficiencies within the German military, possibly owing to commonly held beliefs and attitudes within the German public. The dominant view in German public life is that the use of the military to conduct any operation that might be considered offensive is at best to be viewed with a high degree of skepticism, and at worst institutionally illegitimate and dangerous.¹⁶ Civil-military relations in Germany are therefore a key factor in determining the success of any defence policy reform. Post-World War II German public attitudes towards its military and military spending are rooted in Germany's national culture of penance and discussions about *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* – coming to terms with the past. As a result, the exact nature of civil-military relations in Germany at any given time has long been difficult to gauge effectively. Although the Russian invasion of Ukraine galvanized public support in Germany for defensive military action against unprovoked aggression, it may not be enough to fundamentally shift the prevailing culture of sometimes

¹³ Ministry of Defence, *White Paper on Security Policy*, pg. 30.

¹⁴ Scholz, "The Global Zeitenwende," pgs. 35–37.

¹⁵ Zapfe, "Bundeswehr and Joint Operational Doctrine," pgs. 246–247.

¹⁶ Zapfe, "Bundeswehr and Joint Operational Doctrine," pgs. 251–252.

excessive caution in the realm of security policy, especially public justifications for security reform, and consequently overcome the associated pathologies within the German defence complex. 21st century German attitudes towards the military and its members post-professionalization and pre-Ukraine are characterized by a growing disconnect and even marginalization between civil society and the armed forces, with older and younger generations having vastly different attitudes towards the military, as more and more Germans grow up without having had the experience of national service.¹⁷ This has apparently been shaped by media portrayals of the Bundeswehr, which, owing to the institution's many shortcomings and failures, have been largely negative.¹⁸

Despite these difficulties in civil-military relations in Germany, the structure of the German defence establishment may possibly prevent them from manifesting into full-fledged pathologies and institutional conflicts. There is not necessarily a fundamental disagreement between the German culture of repentance for the past and

a positive modern civil-military relationship. Evidence can be found in the structural foundation of the Bundeswehr, which was set up in the 1950s with the express purpose of being a military force integrated into the civilian population, subject to strong civilian political oversight. This was done initially to temper elements of the strong traditionalist, conservative leadership of the postwar Bundeswehr, exemplified by general and staff officers who had served in the Wehrmacht in the Second World War.¹⁹ The inclusion of these officers in the postwar German military was and remains controversial, as although they were not indicted war criminals, they were reminiscent of the Nazi regime and the necessity of their inclusion was often questioned politically. Though some of these officers did attempt to resist the civilian leadership and made strong calls for the reimplementation of a Prussian military culture, conflicts were eventually resolved by the 1970s by the then-Minister of Defence, Helmut Schmidt, who would go on to become Chancellor, through the establishment of military universities that would produce a more diverse young officer corps.²⁰ Later structural challenges, like the absorption of the former East German military

¹⁷ Francesca Fogarty, "Backing the Bundeswehr: A Research Note Regarding the State of German Civil-Military Affairs," *Armed Forces and Society* 41, no. 4 (2015): pgs. 747-748.

¹⁸ Fogarty, "German Civil-Military Affairs," pgs. 749, 752.

¹⁹ Koltermann, "Citizen in Uniform," pgs. 111-112.

²⁰ Koltermann, "Citizen in Uniform," pg. 113.

post-reunification, were solved in a similar manner, with reform being initiated by the civilian leadership that emphasized a commitment to democratic and pluralistic values within the military.²¹ The responsiveness to public opinion capabilities of the German defence establishment, therefore, should not be underestimated nor discounted as a factor in establishing positive civil-military relationships. Whether this can aid in long-term military reform still remains to be seen.

Germany's actual capacity and capabilities for creating a comprehensive security policy should also be considered and analyzed to complement discussions into the self-correcting capabilities of the German defence establishment. Following the 2014 events in Ukraine, the then-Defence Minister and future President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, identified that the corequisite downsizing of the German armed forces associated with professionalization brought in the consequence of reducing the number of deployable troops for any given task. This was correctly seen as a key limitation of the *Neuausrichtung* reforms, and subsequently, von der Leyen called for an immediate

expansion in military capacity.²² Germany has subsequently established various initiatives for military integration with its NATO and European Union (EU) allies in what could be considered an effort to address this, which has become one of the cornerstones of the Scholz government's foreign and security policy. The government is actively seeking to maximize its relationship with France to establish the EU as a united bloc in and of itself, being able to provide for its own security needs.²³ Past German and French governments have already laid the groundwork for enhanced cooperation with the Elysée Treaty in 1963,²⁴ and as long as both states maintain their commitment to seeing a united European security bloc, closer Franco-German security relations are absolutely vital. An extremely significant yet sometimes understated product of this enhanced cooperation is the Franco-German Brigade, created in 1987,²⁵ which

²² Michael Shurkin, *The Abilities of the British, French, and German Armies to Generate and Sustain Armored Brigades in the Baltics* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2017): pgs. 8–9.

²³ Scholz, "The Global Zeitenwende," pgs. 34–35.

²⁴ Ulrich Krotz and Katharina Wolf, "Franco-German Defence and Security Cooperation," in *The Handbook of European Defence Policies and Armed Forces* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018): pg. 441.

²⁵ Dominik von Wolff Metternich. "The Franco-German Brigade: A German Perspective," *The RUSI Journal* 136, no. 3 (1991): pg. 44.

²¹ Koltermann, "Citizen in Uniform," pg. 114.

combined elements of the French and German armies into a joint standing army unit. Although the project was initially greeted with skepticism, being viewed as more of a symbolic gesture of cooperation than a concrete step towards joint operational integration, the capacity it had to evolve into a genuine example for allied integration and enhanced cooperation was recognized even at the time. Aside from appearing on the parade ground as a unified binational unit, the Franco-German brigade trains, lives, and deploys together, setting an unprecedented example in Europe when it deployed as part of the larger Eurocorps to Bosnia in 1998.²⁶ These horizontal exchanges have resulted in extremely intimate institutional ties between the French and German militaries, harmonizing defence doctrines and familiarizing personnel with the other institution's practices and standards.

Despite significant positive efforts for Franco-German security integration, there remain some key differences between French and German security policy in practice. Though the Chancellor and the French President, Emmanuel Macron, share the goal of establishing a more united European Union that can emerge as a truly independent Western actor, the

²⁶ Krotz and Wolf, "Franco-German Cooperation," pg. 450.

"high politics" of the two states differ in their ideal for this united Europe.²⁷ Macron, like many of his predecessors, views France as a great leading power,²⁸ whereas German governments have traditionally looked to the transatlantic partnership for security policy guidance.²⁹ This culture has begun to shift under Scholz's chancellorship, emphasizing instead the capacity of the EU.³⁰ Differences also exist in specific practices and ideals. France demands unilateral operational capacities from its military, and the Bundeswehr is an alliance army.³¹ France is a nuclear-armed and nuclear-powered state, and Germany is pacifistic about nuclear weapons and skeptical of nuclear energy.³²

This is not to cast doubt on the relevance or effectiveness of the

²⁷ Krotz and Wolf, "Franco-German Cooperation," pgs. 440–442; the structural differences are also described in Matthias Gebauer et al, "Die Entfremdung." [The Alienation] *Der Spiegel*, no. 3, January 14, 2023, pgs. 74–75.

²⁸ Gebauer et al, "The Alienation," pg. 75; Krotz and Wolf, "Franco-German Cooperation," pg. 446

²⁹ Ministry of Defence, *White Paper on Security Policy*, pg. 64.

³⁰ Scholz, "The Global Zeitenwende," pgs. 28–29, 34–35.

³¹ Krotz and Wolf, "Franco-German Cooperation," pgs. 453–454.

³² Krotz and Wolf, "Franco-German Cooperation," pgs. 447–449; German commitments to nuclear non-proliferation are outlined in Ministry of Defence, *White Paper on Security Policy*, pgs. 40–41, 80–82.

Franco-German relationship – Germany and France have successfully collaborated on large-scale defence projects in the past, such as the development of the Eurofighter Typhoon.³³ Indeed, given the fact that much of the European security framework was created through Franco-German cooperation and their bilateral cooperation within both the EU and NATO,³⁴ it seems unlikely that this close-knit relationship could be seriously jeopardized by differences in domestic policy on other fronts. There is overall more common ground between French and German security interests than differences. The German government, therefore, should seek to make full use of its relationship with France when pursuing the goal of creating a European security framework. This could be accomplished through exporting successful models of military integration and cooperation, such as the Franco-German Brigade, to other projects, and further integration between German and allied militaries. These exchanges and integrated units promote cohesion and familiarity between allied states, and if the government hopes to produce a security doctrine that will complement those of its allies, it must dedicate

³³ Krotz and Wolf, “Franco-German Cooperation,” pg. 445.

³⁴ Krotz and Wolf, “Franco-German Cooperation,” pg. 454–456.

more resources to exchange programs for the military, both within the general staff and among the ranks. This enables the military leadership to produce reports on the Bundeswehr’s effectiveness in relation to allied militaries, which will better inform political decision-making.

The emphasis is on relaying accurate information to the political leadership because there is a great disparity between what the German government claims it has achieved in military reform and the actual effects felt at the bottom. Mismanagement and institutional pathologies have led to a tendency for the Ministry of Defence to not publicize reports on its own inadequacies, but rather only submit them to political leaders in the Bundestag in an attempt to solve the problems before they are publicized, without due consultation with military leaders.³⁵ Issues like aging armour and transport equipment are exacerbated by an insufficient supply chain that cannot adequately equip a military that is required for increasingly diversified tasks, such as counterinsurgency operations.³⁶

³⁵ Martin Sebaldt, “Rüstungspolitik im Zeichen des Versagens: Die Trendwende Material der Bundeswehr zwischen Anspruch und Realität,” [Armament Policy in Decay: The Equipment Turnaround of the German Bundeswehr between Aspiration and Reality] *Zeitschrift für Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik* 13, no. 2 (2020): pg. 179.

³⁶ Sebaldt, “Armament Policy in Decay,” pgs. 180–181.

Indeed, this has given rise to the opinion that the modern Bundeswehr is too diversified and complex to be easily manageable and operationally effective, creating for itself too many points of failure. Government promises of reform, like the ones outlined in the 2016 white paper, are by comparison too abstract and not grounded in the current material and logistic problems facing the German military.³⁷

This should not, however, be taken as a rejection of the necessity of establishing technological capabilities necessary for military operations in the 21st century, even though there exists a scholarly view that militaries should be scaling back their reliance on technology and their cyber warfare capabilities in favour of low-tech solutions that are less logistically complex and are easier to train personnel to be proficient in. According to its proponents, this also makes militaries less vulnerable to cyber attacks.³⁸ This is by no means a credible solution to the equipment and capacity problems facing the German military, as the crux of the problem is less an overreliance on technology but rather bureaucratic inefficiencies and unclear guidance from the political

leadership. De-technologizing the German military while attempting to increase its capacity through structural and institutional changes will create critical vulnerabilities in the short term as existing cyber information systems cannot be used, undoes ongoing efforts to modernize not just the Bundeswehr but the German government at large, and in the long term puts Germany severely behind its European and other allies in the realm of cyber defence and security.³⁹ Given the context of the War in Ukraine, it is absolutely detrimental to Germany's defence and security interests to be detaching the Bundeswehr from the cyber realm, when the threat of cyberattacks against civilian infrastructure by state-organized or sponsored hackers has grown exponentially larger.

Although many government documents have been released emphasizing the importance of defence and security reform, there is to date no comprehensive framework for defence reform,⁴⁰ only a motley collection of various white papers, position papers, and reports that vaguely allude to each other. What is necessary to achieve an effective turnaround in military materiel is comprehensive and reactive civil

³⁷ Sebaldt, "Armament Policy in Decay," pgs. 183–184.

³⁸ Sebaldt, "Armament Policy in Decay," pgs. 182, 187.

³⁹ Ministry of Defence, *White Paper on Security Policy*, pgs. 37–38.

⁴⁰ Sebaldt, "Armament Policy in Decay," pg. 183.

political leadership, a necessity that has been recognized even years before the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the announcement of the *Zeitenwende*. Without it, the concept of the *Zeitenwende* risks losing its relevance and saliency, which means the government, especially the Federal Ministry of Defence, must play a proactive role in defence material procurement and target setting, identifying any bureaucratic inefficiencies and rectifying or eliminating them based on feedback from the military instead of from the civilian bureaucracy. This is necessary not only for producing an effective security overhaul, but in the long-term improvement of civil-military relations in Germany, which has already been identified as another major challenge earlier in this brief.

The establishment of the Federal Academy for Security Policy (*Bundesakademie für Sicherheitspolitik*, BAKS) in 1992 as a central institute for security policy education in the Bundeswehr and German intelligence community⁴¹ indicates a growing institutional awareness regarding the establishment of comprehensive security doctrines. Following Chancellor Scholz's announcement of the beginning of the *Zeitenwende*, the BAKS issued a

working paper that stressed the importance of maintaining continuity within existing frameworks, naming the previously discussed 2016 defence white paper as a key doctrinal document.⁴² A necessary precondition for the security policy transformation envisioned by the Chancellor in the *Zeitenwende* speech is multilateral coordination between the Federal Ministry of Defence, the Bundestag, the Federal Foreign Office, and NATO and EU allies.⁴³ To establish clarity of policy and logical prioritization, the inclusion of scholarly and policy advisory voices are also required for the establishment of a complex, adaptive system, as outlined in the 2016 white paper.⁴⁴ Integration with NATO allies, meanwhile, seems to be taking a top-down approach where NATO doctrine is transposed verbatim onto the German military establishment, with minimal supplementary documents.⁴⁵

The limitation to this approach is that it may drive a wedge

⁴² Jan Fuhrmann, *Ein Kompass für die Zeitenwende: Die Bundesregierung auf dem Weg zur nationalen Sicherheitsstrategie*, [A Compass for the Zeitenwende: The Federal Government on the Way to a National Security Strategy] (Berlin: Federal Academy for Security Policy, 2022): pg. 2

⁴³ Fuhrmann, *On the Way to Security Strategy*, pgs. 2–3.

⁴⁴ Fuhrmann, *On the Way to Security Strategy*, pg. 4.

⁴⁵ Zapfe, "Bundeswehr and Joint Operational Doctrine," pgs. 255–257.

⁴¹ "FAQ," German Federal Academy for Security Policy, accessed March 9th, 2023

between civil and military actors in Germany and provoke a pathological reaction from the bureaucracy.⁴⁶ This is increasingly complicated by the competing interests within the coalition federal government and the volatility of external actors like Russia.⁴⁷ The impetus, therefore, should be focused on developing a framework under which strategy and policy can be continuously analyzed and adjusted, incorporating existing institutions like BAKS as watchdogs. BAKS should be correctly identified as a starting point, as it has a proven track record of independently reviewing government defence and security policy and exists within the defence establishment. This would necessitate an increase in the budget and scope of operations for BAKS, and given the government has already demonstrated a willingness to fund defence reform initiatives, BAKS should be recognized as a priority recipient for budgetary allocations. It has already produced independently of the government a roadmap for the implementation of the *Zeitenwende* policy, and in releasing its actual definitive policy document, the government should heed advice from scholarly circles, especially those attached to the defence establishment.

⁴⁶ Zapfe, "Bundeswehr and Joint Operational Doctrine," pg. 257.

⁴⁷ Fuhrmann, *On the Way to Security Strategy*, pgs. 4-5.

Two prominent questions should be considered by the federal government when effecting the promised *Zeitenwende*. Firstly, what is Germany's role now within NATO? Germany is no longer a frontline state, but it is the largest economy in Europe, and as it takes a more proactive role in European leadership, it must also demonstrate that it has the capacity to lead and innovate in the security realm. The Chancellor has already identified the complementary nature of NATO and the EU, and if Germany is to take the lead in one institution it must simultaneously step up its efforts in the other. Germany must step up to lead NATO in Europe or step aside and let the United States resume its role as the ultimate guarantor of security, which, in a time where isolationist foreign policy is finding more and more ideological footing in the US, may very well prove to be a short-sighted move. The lack of impetus for tangible institutional change in the wake of the *Zeitenwende* speech has proved to be a major disappointment for Germany's European partners and NATO allies. Rather, Cold War-era German defence attitudes have re-emerged. Instead, the German government has squandered the high-profile status generated by the initial salience of the *Zeitenwende* speech, and although Germany remains a committed partner for Ukraine, it has failed to emerge as the

centre-piece of NATO in Europe. Indeed, *Zeitenwende* has fallen out of the zeitgeist as quickly as it entered it.

Secondly, which institutions and actors should have the most to say when it comes to security? The German bureaucracy, both military and civilian, has proven that it has several deficiencies and pathologies when it comes to implementing political change. Bundeswehr service members complain of their concerns not being addressed, and budget increases sit idle, waiting to be put to use. An effective Federal Minister of Defence has the capacity to effect significant and lasting structural changes in the defence establishment, as historical examples have demonstrated, but when the Federal Ministry of Defence lacks political direction and initiative, it is prone to stagnation and failure, exemplified by the ineffectual and lacklustre initial response to requests for military aid from Ukraine and recent foot-dragging on deliveries of the most up-to-date weapons systems.

Although successive German governments have made *bona fide* attempts to create new, comprehensive defence and security strategies following the end of the Cold War, various external shocks and internal structural problems have limited their effective implementation and relevance. The rapidly changing

nature of geopolitical realities in Europe have only complicated these attempts, and consequently, German governments must be willing to continue to demonstrate a capacity and willingness for rapid adjustments to existing policies in order to keep up with its allies in a time of increasing uncertainty in Europe and across the world. Announcing budgetary increases without a framework for reform is not enough. Though Germany has the economic means, institutional capacity, and political will to establish a comprehensive and effective national security policy, this must be put into action by mobilizing the relevant bureaucratic, academic, and political institutions, and by seeking inspiration from institutions that have fallen under the bureaucratic radar. The German government must learn a lesson from the missed opportunity after the *Zeitenwende* speech, where it could have seized the impetus and saliency it has created and put policy into motion, or it risks its security doctrine falling behind those its allies and challengers even further.

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The rise of the AFD in Germany

Alia Sagermann

Abstract: The Alternative für Deutschland (AFD) is a far-right German political party founded in 2013 in response to the Eurozone financial crisis, gaining traction by opposing Chancellor Angela Merkel's 2015 immigration policy and advocating for Germany's exit from the EU. The AFD, which draws significant support from former East Germany, has faced backlash due to a leaked report detailing a secret meeting with neo-Nazi activists and Christian Democratic Union (CDU) members, where they discussed plans to deport immigrants, including asylum seekers and citizens with immigrant backgrounds. This sparked massive protests, with many drawing parallels between the AFD's ideologies and Germany's Nazi past. Despite Germany's democratic safeguards, there is concern about the AFD's influence on political policies and the potential rise of radical ideologies. As major parties like the CDU refuse to collaborate with the AFD, citizens have called for its disbandment, challenging democratic principles. The AFD's rise has led to significant cultural shifts, driving social movements that leverage concepts like **parrhesia** (truth-telling) and collective memory to oppose its radical views and emphasize the need to prevent a recurrence of Germany's dark history.

The Alternative für Deutschland (AFD) is a far-right political group founded in 2013 following the

'Eurozone' financial crisis.¹ At the time, the German government took part in a financial bail-out of several EU nations including Portugal, Greece, Ireland, and Spain, among others. These countries had accumulated massive budget deficits following a period of severe public debt. Upset at their government's decision to allocate German budget funds to assist countries that some saw as wasteful, founding members established the AFD political party. The AFD's primary concerns were the 2015 immigration crisis, during which German Chancellor Angela Merkel welcomed over a million refugees into the country, and to push for Germany's secession from the EU.² A majority of AFD voters reside in former East Germany and are the same individuals who opposed the reunification of the communist East and West Germany in 1990.³ Today, the party's extreme policy stances, which would diminish freedom and civil liberties, make up its foundation. In January 2024, a report was released, detailing a secret meeting held between the AFD, neo-Nazi activists, and members of

¹ VanDusky, Julie. 2024. "A far-right political group is gaining popularity in Germany – but so, too, are protests against it." *The Conversation*.

² Zhou, Li, and Malina Dittrich. 2024. "AfD Germany: The dangerous resurgence of the country's far right, explained." *Vox*.

³ VanDusky, Julie. 2024. "A far-right political group is gaining popularity in Germany – but so, too, are protests against it." *The Conversation*.

the Christian Democratic Union (CDU). The meeting's primary outcome was a "masterplan" that outlines the parties' plans to deport immigrants back to their 'countries of origin'. Included under the term 'immigrants' were those seeking asylum in Germany, "non-assimilated citizens", and citizens with immigrant backgrounds (At secret meeting, far-right German party AFD). This proposed deportation plan is in stark contrast to existing policy, considering Germany is currently the largest host to immigrants in Europe.⁴

Following the report release, the AFD tried to "publicly distance" itself from the news (VanDusky), as massive protests were held throughout the nation. Amidst the protests, private citizens and opposing government parties compared the AFD's radical views to those of Germany's former Nazi party. "It feels like 1933, AFD ban now!" read a banner at a protest in Berlin.⁵ Comparisons have also been made between AFD ideologies and those of the former West German government. These compatible ideologies include nationalism, anti-communism, harsh immigration laws, and the opposition of political elites.

Implications for this emergence of radical political ideologies are uncertain. Germany functions under a democratic and federal parliamentary government system, meaning no single

government can take power. Therefore, although the AFD may pose a threat to opposition parties, it cannot threaten Germany's entire political framework. Policy repercussions may be seen, as other parties could begin changing their policies to win over AFD voters. However, opposing major parties, including the CDU, have formally declared they will not be engaging with the AFD (Li and Dittrich). Alongside nationwide protests, many citizens have increased pressure on the current government to disband the AFD. This becomes challenging as it begins to infringe on basic democratic guarantees, even though Germany has 'legal safeguards' to prevent extremist parties from gaining power (Li and Dittrich).

Contemporary culture refers to the present times' prevailing attitudes, values, norms, beliefs, practices and antiques. It can be represented through various mediums such as art, literature, music, fashion, technology, media, language, human expression and interaction. As it is shaped by social, political, economic, and technological changes, it is constantly evolving. To understand how contemporary culture develops, one must look at historical legacies and cultural norms and traditions.

The rise of the AFD has evoked three primary changes in Germany's contemporary culture, including: a shift in ideologies, a change of policy, and the emergence of social movements. The AFD's ability to become one of the more prominent political parties is indicative of a shift in the ideologies of the population. In conjunction with

⁴ VanDusky, Julie. 2024. "A far-right political group is gaining popularity in Germany – but so, too, are protests against it." *The Conversation*.

⁵ "What's behind mass protests against Germany's far-right AfD party? | News." 2024. *Al Jazeera*.

this change in ideologies, opposing parties' political leaders are shaping their policies to accommodate these new beliefs and values. On the other hand, for those voters in strong opposition to the AFD there has been a major change in cultural attitude toward the German government, one of reduced confidence and distrust. Moreover, a change in policy has ensued following the rise of the AFD, as evident by the CDU changing its immigrant policies to "put an end to uncontrolled irregular migration".⁶ Germany's cultural diversity is at risk, potentially forever being altered because of the new laws and policies that have been put into effect.

Finally, contemporary culture has been impacted by the rise of social mobilization to counter the AFD and its radical ideologies. In addition to challenging existing power structures, these social movements have altered the cultural narrative.

To better understand the implications of the AFD's rise, and ensuing counterprotests one can apply an analytical lens to the third primary change of social movements, making connections to the notions of collective memory and parrhesia. Parrhesia is an ancient Greek form of free speech in which one feels an obligation to speak truth for the common good, even if it involves personal risk or consequences. This concept can be applied to social movements, as protestors are speaking their truths to an institution of power, expressing dissent, risking consequences and fostering accountability. Those citizens of

Germany able to recognize the severity of this potential for a return to radical political ideologies are critiquing the AFD, its beliefs, and proposed policies. Without concern of repercussion, they are disrupting complacency to provoke critical reflection and action by the German government. Amidst addressing the immediate concerns for the AFD party gaining a voice in German politics, protestors are contributing to a broader project of democratic accountability and social justice.

Collective memory refers to memories held by a group of people which are passed from generation to generation, such as those concerning historic events. Hitler, WW2 and the Holocaust will forever remain one of humanity's most significant collective memories. These memories left a lasting mark on global consciousness, representing a collective reckoning with human capacity for both evil and resilience. They serve as a reminder of the dangers of unchecked hatred and intolerance, remembered through various means such as: museums, literature, film, and memorials. Accordingly, when the press release was made detailing the AFD's "masterplan", Germans called attention to the parallels between AFD views on immigrants and those of Hitler and the Nazi's Final Solution. Collective memory was used to identify the ideologies that led to the Holocaust, and to criticize similar ideologies in the AFD today.

The combination and feedback of ideological, policy, and cultural changes make Germany face the possibility of witnessing a recurrence of a past so horrifying that laws are in place to prevent anything

⁶ Ibid.

like it from ever happening again. The protests of the AfD are an event which deserves to be remembered, as they are a symbol of Germany's ability to take accountability for their past and take action to prevent it from occurring again. Individuals coming together to challenge their institutions of power, defending those voices often overlooked is an occasion which should be commemorated.

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The Inevitability of the Berlin Wall

Robbie Janzen

In 1945, Berlin and Germany were divided into four sectors by the Allied Powers following the end of the Second World War. Exact plans for the future were uncertain, but the Allies intended to one day reunite the separate parts. Relations quickly deteriorated between the capitalist powers controlling the western sectors and the communist power controlling the eastern sector, however, and in 1961, the political divide became physical, with a massive wall built separating East and West Berlin. A closer examination of the relations between the East and West during and after the war makes it clear that the construction of the Berlin Wall was inevitable. There were three factors involved in this: the weak foundation for the wartime alliance, the failure of negotiations at critical points, and the impact of postwar events as each side pursued their own differing interests.

Joseph Stalin had long believed that it was the USSR's purpose to spread communism across the world, so his holding on tightly to his part of Berlin is understandable. In addition, he believed during the war that the capitalist countries of Europe would start feuding with each other, leaving the USSR in a better position to

spread its influence¹. What happened instead was that capitalist Europe began making efforts to strengthen its relationship with the United States, in effect making the main capitalist superpower of the world even more powerful². Stalin no doubt was alarmed by this, and it had an influence on his subsequent actions related to the division of Germany and Berlin.

Moreover, Stalin had already been frustrated by the actions of the Western Allies during the war. As early as 1942, he had been asking them to open up a second front in Western Europe to relieve pressure on the Soviet military in the East. The Soviet and British ambassadors were able to reach a consensus that a second front would help things greatly, but when Stalin got to meet with Churchill, he found him unwilling to do so³. In spite of their wartime partnership, East and West remained focused on their own interests at the expense of true collaboration. Thus, it would not take much for their partnership to fall apart in the face of disagreement, as would later be proven.

¹ Westad 58, 2007

² Ibid

³ Stalin, 1942

It should be noted that the Western allies had an opportunity to capture the entirety of Berlin all by themselves. With the American army marching towards the capital in 1944, President Roosevelt and General Eisenhower ordered the American army to hold up and let the Soviet army do the bulk of the work in taking Berlin. It was estimated by some generals that taking the city by themselves would cost up to 100,000 lives, and it was better to let the Soviets suffer those losses⁴. The Allies underestimated how controlling Stalin would be of the territory he captured. Once Berlin was captured and the common enemy subdued, the negotiating began, and the insurmountable differences between the allies began to show more clearly.

As early as 1942, the Allied Powers of WWII had settled on the idea of dividing Germany, but not on how it should take place. Firstly, nobody could agree on how many new states should be created out of the former German Reich, a deadlock that continued until 1945. All sides eventually conceded that a permanent division wouldn't work, as doing so would be economically disastrous for each state⁵. Shortly after this, France was allowed to join the United States, United Kingdom, and USSR in being

assigned a sector of both Germany and Berlin. Notably, the USSR never agreed to this, but rather just did not respond to the proposal, which the United States and the United Kingdom took as tacit approval⁶. Soon after, the Allies began discussing the terms of surrender the German government would be given. Whether or not the word "dismemberment" should be included in reference to the planned German division was a point of contention. Eventually, the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF), acting mostly separately from the Allied government leaders, delivered the terms of surrender without including the term dismemberment or any explicit mention of German division, making it a purely military surrender rather than a political one.

This decision had significant consequences. While this simplified the text and made it easier for the Germans to understand, a non-political surrender limited the official authority that the Allies would have in Germany⁷. The Allied attempt to fix this was to declare complete victory over Germany, under the pretext of the German government falling apart and not being able to sign any new orders, giving them full authority to do what they wanted. The USSR declared that they had no intention of

⁴ Spitzer 105, 1976

⁵ Mosely 490, 1950

⁶ Ibid, 495

⁷ Ibid, 496-7

dividing Germany, yet as they were saying this, they were setting up a military government in the Eastern part of the country, just as the other Allies were doing⁸. These events served as a bad omen for the prospect of a unified Berlin.

On September 18, 1945, the American Government submitted the Hoover Report to the Allied Level of Industry Committee, discussing the prospective future of Germany. The report expressed doubts about the agreements reached at the Potsdam Conference and whether the Soviet Union was committed to maintaining them. The USSR's deindustrializing Eastern Germany, the report said, was incompatible with the Potsdam agreement to maintain a respectable minimum standard of living in the former German state⁹. Other events would only make things worse. At the Potsdam Conference, the Allies had agreed on a provision to treat the different German zones as a single economic unit. However, the Soviets violated this understanding not just by disassembling factories in East Germany but by establishing a communist provisional government.

As to why they did this, some real-life events provided additional possible motivation. Firstly, a failure to come to terms with German reparations would explain a Soviet

desire to take a portion of the industry for themselves. That was not the entire reason, however, and looking at elections from around this period helps to paint a clearer picture. In the fall of 1945, elections held in occupied Austria and Hungary both had the communist parties suffering big losses, as did the January 1946 elections in West Germany¹⁰. Such events would have undoubtedly alarmed Stalin, and his subsequent forcing of communism on the East German people without a proper election made more sense. One that must be noted is that, in terms of the factory disassembling, what the Soviets did was not too dissimilar from what the French did in their sector, something the U.S. was okay with. The reason for this is clear, as the U.S. had a much better relationship with France than it did the U.S.S.R., and so would tolerate more.

Beyond the European continent, the Soviet Union was starting to get into direct conflicts with the Western Allies. In 1946, the Turkish Straits crisis erupted as a result of a Soviet desire to control access to the Black Sea. No shots were fired, but both sides sent their naval forces to intimidate the other before the Soviets ultimately backed down¹¹. In Iran, The Soviets attempted to set up a

⁸ Ibid, 498

⁹ Schlauch 121, 1970

¹⁰ Wilke 56, 2014

¹¹ Westad 59, 2007

breakaway communist Azerbaijan People's Government, although they would withdraw there as well once the situation turned against them, leaving the people's republic to be crushed by the Iranian military¹².

That's not to say that these actions by the Soviet Union took place in a vacuum. Revisionist historians of the Cold War point to actions committed by the Western powers that could have further motivated the Soviet Union to act the way it did. For example, a letter by former United States Vice President Henry Wallace to President Harry S. Truman acknowledges that American monopolizing of the atom bomb as well as the establishment of military bases close to the Soviet Union could be a cause of alarm for the Soviet leadership¹³. Around this time, a state of pessimism regarding negotiations was developing on both sides. In a telegram to Secretary of State James Byrnes on February 22, 1946, U.S. Ambassador George Kennan argued that the Soviets had an inherently paranoid mindset about the world since they knew that they weren't as well developed as the capitalist powers¹⁴. Therefore, they would never willingly give up the territory they controlled. Soviet Ambassador Nikolai Novikov wrote

on September 27th that the United States's foreign policy was centered around a desire for world domination. Seeing the Soviet Union emerge in a stronger position after the war, the United States was alarmed and subsequently began viewing them as their main rival¹⁵. What these documents show is that figures on both sides were starting to definitively see each other as enemies, and neither would give up territory unless they were forced to. At least on the American side, this would be made official by the 1947 declaration of the Truman Doctrine, which expressed determination to help all global efforts towards freedom and democracy¹⁶. The ideological war had begun.

The Berlin Blockade and subsequent airlift can be considered the first major confrontation between the Soviet Union and the remaining former Allied Powers. The so-called Attlee Plan had agreed on the borders of the German Zones without ensuring that each country would have a guaranteed right to use the access routes. Similar to the Western Allies not taking the city first, this demonstrates an underestimation of Stalin's dictatorial tendencies. The plan's lack of access route guarantees can be attributed largely to British

¹² Ibid, 61-64

¹³ Thomas 11, 1958

¹⁴ Kennan, 1946

¹⁵ Novikov, 1946

¹⁶ Truman, 1947

naivete. Communications between British leadership from this period revealed a belief that the military division of Germany would quickly subside once the Allied powers could put aside their differences and that therefore, codifying who had control of the routes leading to Berlin was not important¹⁷. With a stalemate in Washington delaying the US response, the Soviets agreed to the plan first, which made subsequent negotiation difficult, as any change in terms would likely have required them to surrender territory granted in the original draft.

If the Attlee Plan had ensured that the West had control of at least some of the Berlin routes, it would not have automatically solved all of the problems related to the division of Berlin. It would not have made the Soviets less worried about policies in the other Berlin sectors, and the Western powers still would have introduced the Deutsche Mark currency in their territories, thus causing the same economic panic that led to the Berlin Blockade. However, the Soviets would not have been able to seal off the city. As it happened though, they were. Thus, the blockade was put into effect, the Berlin Airlift took place, and while the Western sectors were eventually freed, relationships between the USSR and the West grew worse.

In 1948, the United States enacted the Marshall Plan, which granted massive financial aid to European Countries with the intention of helping the continent recover from WWII¹⁸. On the surface, this appears unrelated to the ongoing conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union. However, The Soviets and their satellite states were completely excluded from the plan despite their significant casualties and material damage. The intention behind this was obvious. The United States cared only about helping Western capitalist Europe. By excluding Eastern Europe, they wanted to make sure the living conditions there remained behind that of the rest of

the continent, and thus hasten the collapse of the communist governments. This exclusion serves to only demonstrate how far US-Soviet relations had fallen.

In 1953, a brief spark of hope appeared for a united Berlin. Joseph Stalin passed away and, after a short period of internal conflict, Nikita Khrushchev emerged as the new leader of the Soviet Union. On assuming power, Khrushchev immediately began enacting drastic political reforms. He publicly denounced the policies of Stalin and set out to undo many of his domestic actions. The question of how he would respond to issues in Soviet Satellite states, particularly in East

¹⁷ Harrington 89-90, 1984

¹⁸ Marshall, 1947

Germany, was still up in the air. Soon, however, it would be answered.

Khrushchev inherited an East Germany in turmoil. West Germany had been politically independent since 1949 and had just recently aligned itself with the Western powers. Stalin responded by setting out on a mission to turn East Germany into a well-built Soviet satellite state. He did this by prioritizing industrial development above all else, while also forcibly suppressing the church. This resulted in a disruption of agricultural production, which in turn caused mass food shortages, while the church suppression drastically altered the social character of the area. Germans responded by fleeing in droves to the West¹⁹. Khrushchev's response was to work with the leaders of the governing German Socialist Unity Party and announce a "New Course" for socialism in Germany. The new course did nothing to change the high output requirements and the general poor conditions the workers faced, which triggered mass strikes in East Berlin. Khrushchev subsequently declared martial law in East Germany to maintain order²⁰. It was clear that, while of a different breed than Stalin, Khrushchev was still very much a dictator who would not hesitate to use force to subdue civilian protests.

¹⁹ Ostermann 62, 1996

²⁰ Ibid, 64

One of Khrushchev's major efforts to differentiate himself from Stalin was his professed commitment to peaceful coexistence between the United States and the Soviet Union. Khrushchev declared that the Soviet Union was built on an ideology of peaceful relations with other countries. As he pointed out, one of the first actions carried out by the Soviet Government was to withdraw from the First World War²¹. His commitment to this idea was strong to the point that it played a key role in his personal conflict with Mao Zedong, ultimately leading to the significantly consequential Sino-Soviet split. While this might have temporarily soothed relations with the United States, by design, it could not solve the German question. As a foreign relations policy, it did nothing to fix the fact that the quality of life in East Germany as a whole was still far behind that of the West. Moreover, as mentioned previously, Khrushchev had already shown the people of Berlin his true nature, and they were not likely to simply accept their lives as they were.

In 1958, Khrushchev decided to make an offer in regard to the problem of Berlin. Taking advantage of the fact that no treaty officially ending WWII had officially been agreed upon, he informed the Western Allies that he wanted to sign one. As part of the agreement, however, he wanted them to

²¹ Khrushchev 3, 1959

recognize East Germany, withdraw all of their forces from the West, and drop any intention of working towards German reunification. If this didn't happen within six months, he would sign his own agreement with the East to establish a separate peace for the Soviets, which would result in access to West Berlin being more restricted than it already was²².

The agreement had no chance of working. Firstly, the Allies would have never given up the fight for all of Germany to be under Western influence. Furthermore, withdrawing its presence from Berlin would have left it completely vulnerable to attack by the Soviets. Secondly, even if the United States and the United Kingdom had found this agreement satisfactory from their perspectives, the closely allied West German government considered German reunification to be a non-negotiable requirement, making such an agreement a practical impossibility²³. By that point, West Germany had recovered from the war and subsequent occupation to a point where their opinions had to be taken seriously by fellow Western countries. As expected, this agreement was rejected. Khrushchev, realizing that he faced the risk of actually having to follow through on his initial promise, stepped back

considerably. He made a second offer, that Western troops could remain in West Berlin, but that they could not interfere in internal affairs, and that Soviet troops should be allowed as well²⁴. This, obviously, was rejected by the West.

The 1961 Vienna Summit held in June between Khrushchev and U.S. President John F. Kennedy was one of the last major events leading up to the building of the wall. In a conversation with the American ambassador to Moscow Llewellyn E. Thompson, Khrushchev expressed his desire to go forward and sign his own treaty with East Germany if nothing came of these talks. In his eyes, France and the U.K. were highly unlikely to aid the U.S. in any military conflict, which decreased the chance that one would happen²⁵. When the summit actually happened, talks on Berlin did not go anywhere. Khrushchev pressured Kennedy to withdraw, but Kennedy refused to give an inch. As Kennedy pointed out, the U.S. was contractually obligated to stay in and defend West Berlin, so leaving it would make it so that no other country would trust an agreement with the U.S. government. The U.S. was in a position, militarily, where they had the ability to refuse any offer they didn't like. Even if France and the U.K. did not offer them aid, the U.S. leadership

²² Barker 60-62, 1963

²³ Fulcher 285-287, 2002

²⁴ Barker 65-66, 1963

²⁵ Wilke 214, 2014

knew that the Soviet Union would never risk a direct attack on their forces during the height of threatened nuclear conflict.

What is interesting about these negotiations is that the idea of reuniting Berlin didn't even come up. All that was being discussed was the political status of West Berlin, not the idea of it being reunited with the East. It appeared as if both sides had accepted that fully reuniting them was not a practical goal barring one of them undergoing massive political changes.

Throughout the course of these developments, the border between East and West Berlin still had not been secured. As a result, travel between the two halves was frequent. As an example, it is estimated that West Berlin cinemas and theaters sold on average 9 million tickets annually to East Berliners during this period²⁶. Of course, not all East Berliners who traveled West did so just to catch a movie or a play. Since the establishment of East Germany as a country, the number of refugees fleeing the country into the West per year had never dropped below 100,000, with many of these being young intellectuals and skilled laborers seeking better opportunities than they could get in the totalitarian state²⁷.

In order to stop the flow of East Germans fleeing to the West, German Socialist Unity Party Chairman Walter Ulbricht set a goal in 1958 to overtake the West in the consumption of basic goods by 1961. By 1960, however, the situation was growing dire. The forced collectivization of crops had resulted in reduced output, and a lack of skilled laborers in factories meant that both the agricultural and industrial sectors were lagging²⁸. This only encouraged even more East Berliners to flee to the West. Even those who stayed in East Berlin were not necessarily contributing to the economy. The open border allowed many people to commute to the West for work while still living and shopping in the East, allowing them to take advantage of the West's high pay and the East's low costs²⁹.

Those in charge of East Germany were well aware of this issue, and they were even more aware of the fact that, as long as the border remained unsecured, this brain drain would continue unchecked. As Ulbricht said in a letter to Khrushchev, "Simply put, the open border forced us to raise the living standard faster than our economic capabilities allowed³⁰." With the situation in East Berlin reaching critical levels and seeing no

²⁶ Frei 464, 1961

²⁷ Ritter and Hajdu 30, 1989

²⁸ Ross 27, 2004

²⁹ Ibid, 31

³⁰ Ibid, 25

other option, Ulbricht and Khrushchev finally crossed the Rubicon. On August 13th, 1961, transport into West Berlin was stopped, and construction on the Berlin Wall began. A long process 16 years in the making had been completed, and the political divide between the two halves of Berlin became physical. Immediately, the wall's desired effect would be realized, as the number of East German refugees coming into West Berlin plummeted to almost negligible levels³¹.

The Soviet Union and its Western allies were able to mostly put aside their differences during the war. Once the fighting concluded and they no longer had a shared enemy, however, their differing interests eroded their working relationship, and they quickly began viewing each other as rivals. This in turn meant they were unable to negotiate a reunification of Berlin, and the subsequent fleeing of East Berliners to the West made the Soviets feel they had no choice but to build a wall. The people of Berlin found themselves caught in the middle of a global ideological war between two superpowers, and they paid the price for it.

³¹ Ritter and Hajdu 30, 1989

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A Defining Force in the History of Legal Evolution: The Legacy of
Nuremberg and How the IMT Influenced the Development
of the ICTY, the ICTR, and the ICC

Logan Walsh

For individuals born in the 21st century, it is challenging to imagine a world in which international law does not exist. Before 1945, countries only abided by customary international laws, which they were not bound to; they chose to follow them. While customary international laws still exist today, the international twenty-four top Nazi officials for the atrocities they committed during the war.¹ Nuremberg's example served as the most important precedent for the formulation and procedure of international laws and tribunals, informing the creation of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), and the International Criminal Court (ICC). The IMT ultimately provided countries with the appropriate institutional framework and principled precedents to hold malefactors accountable for their pejorative actions during situations previously outside of any jurisdiction. This is especially important to recall in an era riddled with ongoing conflicts and human rights violations.

legal system was revolutionized after Nazi Germany's demise at the end of the Second World War. The Nuremberg International Military Tribunal (IMT), 1945-46, led by the United States, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union, and France, was created to try

Before the establishment of the IMT, citizens were only subject to their nation's laws, as there was not a set of crimes under international jurisdiction. Consequently, if one were to be accused of committing war crimes on behalf of advancing their nation's interest during a major global conflict and the only juridical body capable of trying the accused is said nation, a conflict of interest would likely arise. The IMT sought to end this practice and establish an independent and international tribunal capable of prosecuting objectively. At the end of the First World War, the Leipzig trials (1921-22) were held in Germany to try German soldiers who had committed war crimes. Nevertheless, the *Reichsgericht* (the Supreme Court of the German *Reich*) carried out these trials, and its decisions were widely criticized for

¹ Crowe, *War Crimes, Genocide, and Justice: A Global History*, 162-65.

being biased.² The field of international law began to change in September 1944, when Colonel Murray Bernays wrote a memorandum within the U.S. War Department calling for a trial of Nazis after the war due to their treatment of American Prisoners of War (POWs).³ This initiative was expected to draw criticism from the Nazis themselves as it was incredibly uncommon to invoke *nulla poena* and try someone for an act that was not considered a crime when they committed it.⁴ This prediction was correct: Robert Ley famously criticized the trials for labelling him as a war criminal, as he argued that he had not committed any of the crimes for which he was indicted.⁵ However, according to Herbert Wechsler, the Assistant Attorney General in the War Department during WWII, the crimes were “obviously” criminal because they violated *jus cogens*, which are the norms that govern customary international laws.⁶

² Graf, “Transitional Injustice at Leipzig: Negotiating Sovereignty and International Humanitarian Law in Germany after the First World War,” 35.

³ Taylor, *The Anatomy of the Nuremberg Trials*, 35-36.

⁴ Priemel, *The Betrayal: The Nuremberg Trials and German Divergence*, 69.

⁵ Overy, “The Nuremberg Trials: International Law in the Making,” 1.

⁶ Priemel, 69.

While drafting the IMT Charter and assessing the legal intricacies, it became clear that the Americans and their British counterparts conceptualized the law differently than the Soviets and the French. Curiously, Russia’s historical archives have been more accessible to Western scholars since the collapse of the Soviet Union, which has allowed for greater recognition of the Soviet perspectives and contributions at the IMT.⁷ Nevertheless, these legal disagreements led to a clash between the delegations because of Article 6 of the Charter, where the Soviets, represented by Iona Nikitchenko, wished to criminalize the Nazis for waging an “aggressive war,” to which the American and British delegates disagreed.⁸ Eventually, a compromise was reached, and the four powers decided to prosecute the Nazi defendants for the following crimes: crimes against peace, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and conspiracy to commit the aforementioned crimes.⁹ In essence, crimes against peace are defined as the planning or waging of an aggressive

⁷ Fitzpatrick, “Impact of the Opening of Soviet Archives on Western Scholarship on Soviet Social History,” 377–78.

⁸ Crowe and Schulmeister-André, “‘May Justice Be Done!’ the Soviet Union and the London Conference (1945),” 151-52.

⁹ Crowe and Schulmeister-André, 151-52.

war, which is a conflict without the justification of self-defence.¹⁰ War crimes are the “violations of the laws and customs of war,” which includes the mistreatment of POWs.¹¹ Crimes against humanity involve “the murder and torture of civilians on racial, religious and political grounds”.¹² In time, these crimes formulated by the IMT would define the basis of the modern international legal system.

Interestingly, Justice Robert H. Jackson, who was the U.S. Chief of Counsel during the IMT, wanted to prove the “criminal character of several voluntary organizations” in Germany, which would eventually be integral to creating the legal entity of Joint Criminal Enterprises (JCEs) during the ICTY and the ICTR.¹³ This idea was implemented in Articles 9-11 of the Charter and outlined the concept of “organization crime” so that individuals “could be prosecuted in national proceedings for their membership in criminal organizations”.¹⁴ After many drafts and meetings between delegates from

the four powers, a final draft was reached when Nikitchenko finally got approval from the Kremlin regarding Article 6.¹⁵ Thus, the International Military Tribunal Charter was signed on August 8, 1945, and the tribunal began on November 20, 1945.

Over the next year, an array of Nazi leaders, from Minister of Foreign Affairs Joachim von Ribbentrop to Commandant of Auschwitz Rudolf Höss, were tried. Many blamed their superiors, explaining that they had no choice or free will while committing their crimes, yet this was not considered a viable defence. This was seen in *Generalfeldmarschall* Wilhelm Keitel’s case, as he did not see himself as guilty and claimed he was simply a soldier following the *Führer*’s orders and the Armed Forces were a mere “tool of the politicians”.¹⁶ Others like *Reichsmarschall* Hermann Göring used their witnesses to downplay their actions and were caught during the cross-examinations.¹⁷ Most of the decisions were agreed upon unanimously, although the acquittal of Hjalmar Schacht, the former President of the *Reichsbank* and former *Reichsminister* of Economics, was

¹⁰ Ehrenfreund, *The Nuremberg Legacy: How the Nazi War Crimes Trials Changed the Course of History*, 35.

¹¹ Ehrenfreund, 35.

¹² Ehrenfreund, 35.

¹³ Heller, *The Nuremberg Military Tribunals and the Origins of International Criminal Law*, 11.

¹⁴ Crowe and Schulmeister-André, 152.

¹⁵ Crowe and Schulmeister-André, 161.

¹⁶ A. Tusa and J. Tusa, *The Nuremberg Trial*, 308.

¹⁷ A. Tusa and J. Tusa, 288-90.

opposed by the Soviets.¹⁸ Ultimately, the IMT ended with fourteen hangings, seven prison sentences, and three acquittals.¹⁹

The IMT's precedent allowed subsequent international tribunals to be inaugurated almost immediately, with the establishment of the International Military Tribunal of the Far East (IMTFE) between 1946 and 1948 and the Nuremberg Military Tribunals (NMT) between 1946 and 1949. The Nuremberg IMT influenced the IMTFE as it prosecuted the same crimes, maintained that defendants could not argue they were simply following orders, and followed the same trial process.²⁰ Controversially, General Douglas MacArthur maintained *direct* influence over the IMTFE and decided not to indict Emperor Hirohito to prevent an uprising, facilitate the Allied occupation of Japan, and further American interests.²¹ This meant that the Emperor's accused subjects bore absolute responsibility for the crimes they committed *in the Emperor's name*. As a result of MacArthur's authority, the trials were criticized for being biased.

Similarly, the NMT was a series of proceedings adjudicated by the United States (through the Office of the United States Government for Germany) based on the Allied Control Commission Law 10, which sought to conduct criminal trials in the Allied occupation zones on the same charges as the IMT.²² There were twelve trials, and defendants ranged from *Schutzstaffel* officers to physicians and industrialists. The trials were conducted by American civilian judges with indictments filed by Brigadier General Telford Taylor.²³ After the conclusion of the NMT, an international tribunal was not seen again until the ICTY in 1993.

The importance of the precedents set during the IMT resurged during the Yugoslav Wars, which coincided with Yugoslavia's dissolution into six separate countries. These wars saw an array of violent crimes fuelled by a relatively quick rise of ethnic tensions, which included breaches of the Geneva Convention, war crimes, genocide, and crimes against humanity.²⁴ The breakup of this multiethnic nation led to the

¹⁸ Poltorak, *The Nuremberg Epilogue*, 381-82.

¹⁹ A. Tusa and J. Tusa, 504.

²⁰ Ehrenfreund, 114-115.

²¹ Ehrenfreund, 113-18.

²² Robson, *Papers of the International Military Tribunal and the Nuremberg Military Tribunals 1945-9*, v.

²³ Robson, v-vi.

²⁴ United Nations, "Updated Statute of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia," 5-6.

deaths of over 100,000 people and the displacement of 2.2 million.²⁵ The most prominent act of genocide committed during this war was in the town of Srebrenica, an enclave and UN-declared safe area.²⁶

As a result of this, on February 22, 1993, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) established the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) after a unanimous vote.²⁷ The ICTY was *ad hoc* like the IMT, and Nuremberg's legacy could be seen immediately within the development of the ICTY because it prosecuted the same crimes with the notable addition of genocide. Before the ICTY, no one had ever been convicted of genocide.²⁸ In this context, genocide is defined as the intent to destroy a group based on their ethnicity, race, nationality, or religion through acts such as killing, inflicting severe physical harm, and preventing births, among others.²⁹ The ICTY also recognized that one could be convicted for participating in a

Joint Criminal Enterprise (JCE) for the aforementioned crimes.³⁰

This is based on Jackson's revolutionary approach during the IMT when he proposed that defendants should be tried based on their individual participation in criminal organizations. The IMT's fabrication of this approach facilitated rejections of baseless defences that sought to avoid individual guilt within broader felonious organizations. Yet the difference lies in the fact that during the ICTY, participation in a JCE to carry out genocide held a greater sentence than simply aiding and abetting genocide.³¹

Moreover, in IMT fashion, the ICTY set out to hold political leaders and military commanders responsible for the actions of their subordinates, with notable cases being former Serbian President Slobodan Milošević and Colonel General Ratko Mladić.³² The IMT's innovative laws were used as veritable precedents during the ICTY. In the Miltar Vasiljević case, Law No. 10, which provided a uniform basis for the prosecution of war crimes at the IMT, was used as evidence "that customary international law criminalizes extermination as a crime against

²⁵ Bazzyler, *Holocaust, Genocide, and the Law: A Quest for Justice in a Post-Holocaust World*, 236.

²⁶ LeBor, "Complicity with Evil": *The United Nations in the Age of Modern Genocide*, 110-111.

²⁷ Bazzyler, 236.

²⁸ Bazzyler, 243.

²⁹ United Nations, 5-6.

³⁰ Bazzyler, 244.

³¹ Bazzyler, 245.

³² Bazzyler, 241, 247.

humanity”.³³ Nevertheless, both the ICTY and the IMT faced criticism from legal scholars. One of these criticisms is that these tribunals had inconsistent jurisprudence, with the IMT having no precedent for its laws and the ICTY having no precedent for prosecuting genocide.³⁴ However, the ICTY addressed specific criticisms of Nuremberg and improved upon them in the removal of the death penalty, the removal of trying and convicting defendants *in absentia*, the establishment of an appellate tribunal, and providing further due process guarantees, such as the right to self-representation.³⁵ Fundamentally, the ICTY followed in the Nuremberg IMT’s footsteps by further establishing that individuals *will be punished* for their despicable actions and violations of international laws.

Around the same time as the Yugoslav Wars, the Republic of Rwanda saw the development of an intense civil conflict that would engulf the country and lead to genocide. During the 1994 Rwandan genocide, it was widely reported that over 800,000

people were killed in just 100 days.³⁶ However, some accounts indicate that the death toll exceeded one million, although the true number of those killed during the genocide, whether higher or lower than current estimates, is unknown because of unreliable data.³⁷ Nevertheless, while the ethnic tensions between the Hutu majority and the Tutsi minority had been brewing for decades, the genocide began just after Rwandan President Juvénal Habyarimana’s plane was shot down.³⁸ Within hours, Hutu militants took control of Kigali and began killing Tutsis and moderate Hutus.³⁹ During the genocide, Canadian Lieutenant-General Roméo Dallaire was in charge of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR). Despite his desperate efforts, the United Nations (UN) and many of its member states repeatedly ignored Dallaire’s pleas for assistance and primarily pursued a policy of indifference.⁴⁰

³³ Heller, 386; McNarney et al., “Law No. 10: Punishment of Persons Guilty of War Crimes, Crimes Against Peace and Against Humanity”.

³⁴ Bazylar, 252.

³⁵ Bazylar, 239-40.

³⁶ Power, *A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide*, 334.

³⁷ Meierhenrich, “How Many Victims Were There in the Rwandan Genocide? A Statistical Debate,” 73, 81.

³⁸ Dallaire, *Shake Hands with the Devil: The Failure of Humanity in Rwanda*, 224.

³⁹ Power, 331.

⁴⁰ Barnett, “The UN Security Council, Indifference, and Genocide in Rwanda,” 573.

However, in a similar situation to that of Yugoslavia, the IMT's legacy influenced the UNSC to establish the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR). The ICTR was founded on November 8, 1994, and sought to prosecute individuals who committed genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity.⁴¹ Interestingly, the ICTR considered the public incitement of genocide a crime falling under the categories of genocide and crimes against humanity. This recalls the case of Julius Streicher, a Nazi newspaper editor who was convicted of crimes against humanity for inciting genocide during the IMT and was hanged.⁴² Nuremberg's significant contribution to jurisprudence adopted in Rwanda demonstrated that the media could be just as much an instrument of death as any weapon.⁴³ Unsurprisingly, Joseph Serugendo, the radio station director of *Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines* (RTLM), Georges Ruggiu, a Belgian radio broadcaster for RTLM, and Simon Bikindi, a famous Rwanda singer, were all charged with incitement of genocide for their rampant anti-Tutsi influence over the masses.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Bazzyler, 237.

⁴² Bazzyler, 246.

⁴³ Bazzyler, 246.

⁴⁴ Bazzyler, 247.

Furthermore, command responsibility, which was a large part of the IMT, was penalized at the ICTR with the sentencing of Colonel Théoneste Bagosora, the primary organizer and leader of the genocide against the Tutsis. Bagosora was found guilty of multiple counts of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes and was sentenced to life imprisonment.⁴⁵ In essence, the ICTR continued to uphold the Nuremberg principles in its prosecution of those responsible for and complicit in the genocide against the Tutsi, particularly with continuing the practice of charging individuals for inciting violence against minority groups and upholding the legal doctrine of command responsibility.

After the creation of the two *ad hoc* tribunals in 1994, it became clear that there was a need for an international criminal court to be influenced by the structure and principles set out by the Nuremberg IMT. This led to the creation of the Rome Statute on July 17, 1998, and its initial adoption by 120 states, which created the International Criminal Court (ICC).⁴⁶ Interestingly, the ICC is founded on complementarity, meaning it may only exercise its jurisdiction when a state fails or cannot carry out

⁴⁵ The Prosecutor v. Théoneste Bagosora et al., [2008] ICTR-98-41-T, 568, 574.

⁴⁶ Bazzyler, 257.

proper legal proceedings.⁴⁷ Nevertheless, the ICC's jurisdiction is limited to the same crimes as the IMT, with the addition of genocide.

Therefore, the Rome Statute is the IMT Charter's natural successor. It retained the fundamental crimes incorporated into international law by way of the IMT while also expanding its purview and applicability. The IMT provided the initial stimulus for developing an international legal system, to which the ICTY and ICTR reignited the momentum, and the ICC solidified in the current era. For instance, the IMT provided the initial definition and applicability of a crime against humanity. However, the Rome Statute expanded on this definition by explicitly mentioning the criminality of rape, sexual enslavement, torture, and apartheid, among others, for improved legal preciseness and to keep abreast with the global social changes that occurred following the IMT.⁴⁸ Furthermore, while the IMT attempted and largely succeeded with its impartiality during its proceedings, the Allied delegations could be viewed as sanctimonious because the Axis powers were not the only ones to

commit war crimes during WWII.⁴⁹ However, the ICC truly adheres to the importance of impartiality adopted at the IMT by acknowledging that "the laws of war are not a one-way street" and noting that anyone from any member country could be tried, no matter if they are a head of state or a common foot soldier.⁵⁰

Recently, certain scholars have accused the ICC of institutional racism for primarily indicting individuals from African countries, even though these countries are the only ones to have ratified their signatures of the Rome Statute while currently having war criminals residing within their borders.⁵¹ However, just as the IMT maintained its legitimacy, the ICC is unlikely to dissolve on the grounds of unfounded claims of racism because it is capable of providing independent juridical proceedings in unstable countries, which may not be limited to Africa in the future. Hence, the ideas of the Nuremberg IMT culminated in creating a permanent sitting court responsible for trying the most severe

⁴⁷ Schabas, *An Introduction to the International Criminal Court*, 19.

⁴⁸ International Criminal Court, "Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court," 3-5; UK, USA, France, USSR, "Agreement for the Prosecution and Punishment of the Major War Criminals of the European Axis," 288.

⁴⁹ Becker, "The Inequality of Harm: Unpunished Allied Atrocities, the Nuremberg Fallacy, and Why Global Criminal Justice Remains a Mirage," 252-53.

⁵⁰ Taylor, 641; Booth, "Prospects and Issues for the International Criminal Court: Lessons from Yugoslavia and Rwanda," 179-80.

⁵¹ López, "Black Guilt, White Guilt at the International Criminal Court," 211.

of international crimes while seeking to deter individuals from committing such actions in the future.

In conclusion, the IMT established vital principles that continue to influence international law today. Although the development of the IMT was often messy and should not be viewed mythically, it provided the impetus for developing a solid international legal system.⁵² The ideas and principles it set out eventually led to the creation of the ICTY, the ICTR, and the ICC. The *ad hoc* tribunals prosecuted the same crimes, followed the same judicial process, and continuously used IMT cases as their precedents, all of which the ICC continues to do today. Therefore, it is evident that the IMT succeeded in completing its legal objective of establishing an international jurisdiction for trying extraordinary criminal actions and served as the single most important precedent for all future tribunals and courts dealing with international law because of its versatile tenets. Thus, with current conflicts ensuing around the globe, whether between Russia and Ukraine or Israel and Palestine, the international legal system and the lessons from the IMT continue to play an active role in modern international

relations as a positive force for change.

⁵² Hirsch, *Soviet Judgment at Nuremberg: A New History of the International Military Tribunal after World War II*, 416.

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Authority, Fear, and Indifference: Vichy France's Attitudes to the Jews

Ulis Bertin

Abstract: What is the true nature of France's collaboration with the Germans during its WW2 occupation by Germany from 1940-1944? Historical opinion since the 1970s has shifted from a narrative of German-enforced collaboration to the voluntary acquiescence of the Vichy French government. Building on landmark publications like Robert Paxton's *Vichy France* and Paxton and Michael Marrus's *Vichy France and the Jews*, this article analyses the pieces of the Vichy French psyche that created collaboration, focused through its mistreatment of French and foreign Jews. Beginning with the collapse of the Third Empire and the breakdown of the French ideals liberty, equality, and fraternity for Marshal Pétain's *Travail, Famille, Patrie*, it makes a case for French complacency and the banality of evil in France's wartime government.

What is the true nature of France's collaboration with the Germans during its WW2 occupation by Germany from 1940-1944? Historical opinion since the 1970s has shifted from a narrative of German-enforced collaboration to the voluntary acquiescence of the Vichy French government. Building on landmark publications like Robert

Paxton's *Vichy France* and Paxton and Michael Marrus's *Vichy France and the Jews*, this article analyses the pieces of the Vichy French psyche that created collaboration, focused through its mistreatment of French and foreign Jews. Beginning with the collapse of the Third Empire and the breakdown of the French ideals liberty, equality, and fraternity for Marshal Pétain's *Travail, Famille, Patrie*, it makes a convincing case for French complacency and the banality of evil in France's wartime government.

The unthinkable of the German troops occupying half of France in six weeks changed everything in French policy¹. Decades of progressive liberal reforms under the Popular Front government of the Third Republic were disavowed as if they had never existed because, writes Robert Paxton in *Vichy France*, "in losing the war, the Third Republic had lost its legitimacy"². Consequently, a radical new vision of Nazi-occupied French politics had to evolve. Maréchal Philippe Pétain knew this to the letter, and from his appointment as head of the provisional government on June

¹ Robert Paxton, *Vichy France*, 1.

² Paxton, 20.

16th, 1940³, intently pursued a program of “National Revolution,”⁴ seeking to sew over the Third Republic’s fatal wounds. Eventually, these policies would help the Nazis deport and exterminate tens of thousands of Jews.

But first, a little context must be given to understand the pre-war period. The Vichy mentality was largely the result of France’s “long, slow rot”⁵ since 1932, with industrial production still 15 to 17 percent below pre-crash levels a decade later⁶. To replace its workforce, France was receiving a flood of refugees that had not slowed since 1918. With the rise of Nazi repression in Germany, it began to take in more. 55,000 Jewish refugees were admitted into France after 1933; 150,000 Spanish soldiers from the Spanish Civil War were let in as well⁷. Crumbling under the weight of its foreign charges, France decided it had taken enough of foreigners, and public opinion slowly began to sour against them.

But antisemitism was not enough. Vichy France’s halting collaboration with the Holocaust depended on three important factors; first, a cold indifference to the fate of the Jews.

Second, an anxious and overwhelming belief in France, especially by the military government, in “social disorder as the highest evil”⁸. And lastly, a universal fear of regression to the defunct Third Republic. Only with these three aspects reunited were the French able to ply their own sins so blindly. The chief officials in Vichy France were not antisemites. Maréchal Pétain, despite approval of antisemitic policies, never spoke out publicly against Jews. Even Pierre Laval, his Prime Minister who collaborated extensively with the Nazis, had no history of antisemitism. But in the climate of a National Revolution where “Travail, Famille, Patrie”⁹ was the rallying cry, it was the real zealots like Xavier Vallat and Darquier de Pellepoix, Commissioners-General for Jewish Affairs, who could accomplish their aims. Glancing at the populace and the Germans with an anxious eye, their superiors worked to preserve the illusion of unity in the French state. This meant destroying the values that defined it as a nation. Before the first German tank rolled through the Ardennes, the first antisemitic policies in France were imposed by the French.

The cultural, political, and economic antisemitism that built up at the end of the Third Republic found its outlet at the beginning of the occupation. On the 27th of April 1940, the Vichy

³ Paxton, 6.

⁴ Paxton, 21.

⁵ Paxton, 21.

⁶ Michael Marrus and Robert Paxton, *Vichy France and the Jews*, 35.

⁷ Paxton, 36

⁸ Paxton, 382.

⁹ Paxton, 140.

government repealed the Marchandean law¹⁰, which aimed to prevent the spread of anti-Jewish propaganda. This was the start in a long series of antisemitic laws that culminated with the Statut des Juifs of October 3rd 1940, mirroring the German Nuremberg laws by defining the Jews as a race, excluding them from the officer corps, teaching, radio, film, the press, theatre, and all forms of society and government. Other laws, like the law of 17 July 1940, stripped fifteen thousand immigrants and six thousand Jews of French citizenship¹¹. At the 1947 trial of Xavier Vallat, former civil staff chief André Lavagne compared the Statut des Juifs to “contrefeux” or the lighting of small fires to save the forest¹². It was no such thing. The permissiveness of these anti-Jewish laws was only possible through Vichy’s preservation of order, reactionary fears, and indifference.

Throughout the occupation, France’s government was determined to implement antisemitic policies itself, and – most importantly – to use their own administration to do it. This seems paradoxical. But Pétain’s movement of *Révolution Nationale*, “authoritarian and hierarchical”¹³ in its ideology, was vitally dependent on maintaining structures of power in the

French state. It was also deeply threatened by the influx of foreigners that had settled in France throughout the crises and depressions of the 1930s. In *Vichy France and the Jews*, Marrus writes that German authorities had planned for the transfer of Jews to France, but never specifically for their persecution or deportation to the East.¹⁴ Vichy’s anti-Jewish legislation preceded German aims and, while not signed into law by antisemites, permitted anti-Jewish measures that far outstripped each individual’s antisemitism. As Paxton writes in *Vichy France*, “Those who cling to the social order above all... know more clearly what they are against than what they are for.”¹⁵

Order, fear, and indifference are clearest in Vichy’s internment of foreign Jews pre-summer 1942. The law of 2 June 1941 allowed Jews to be interned for “any punishment whatsoever decreed by the prefect”¹⁶. Prefects in France are regional civil servants endowed with strong administrative and executive power. Vichy could have made an effort to help foreign Jews emigrate, but instead chose to make document requirements for emigration supremely difficult, and to intern Jews in camps entirely administered by the French¹⁷. When

¹⁰ Marrus and Paxton, 3.

¹¹ Marrus and Paxton, 4

¹² Marrus and Paxton, 9

¹³ Vaucher, Paul, *The National Revolution in France*, 9.

¹⁴ Marrus and Paxton, 13.

¹⁵ Paxton, 382.

¹⁶ Marrus and Paxton, 167

¹⁷ Marrus and Paxton, 161

Prefect André Jean-Faure reported on the Gurs camp in southwestern France, a holdover from the refugee crisis, he found eighteen thousand men, women, and children cramped in a space intended for fifteen thousand. The camp that once housed Hannah Arendt contained “shacks in deplorable condition”¹⁸ where inmates received 1,600 calories a day and a quarter of them lost over 25 percent of their weight¹⁹. In the first months, 1,000 people out of 13,500 died of starvation, dysentery and typhoid²⁰. When Jean-Faure sent his report to the Vichy Chief of State, it was clearly marked “not to be acknowledged.”²¹

Here, the illusion of Vichy’s sense of order is clearest. In an attempt to preserve the social makeup through fear, it set completely indifferent requirements to the offered internment as an alternative to emigration for foreign Jews, its requirements were shoddy, and prefects treated the Jews with an uncertain “mixture of muddle and brutality”²² At least one prefect in the Alpes-Maritimes said he hoped his internments would make the Jews “more prudent.”²³ Though the Vichy officials were rarely antisemites or genocidaires, their fear of chaos barred Jews from staying in France and they

were too indifferent to provide bearable conditions for them. This opposition of order, fear, and indifference created paradoxical policies that destroyed the Jews.

The role of the French people in tacitly accepting the genocide is also too important to ignore. Though Pétain’s government worked to maintain a united state, “Never had so many Frenchmen been willing to accept discipline and authority”²⁴. The crises of the 1930s bred a general climate of xenophobia that blamed scarcity of money and food on foreigners. Beset by years of poverty, “...the public seemed to follow the lead of right-wing politicians at Vichy who built an antisemitic program into the ‘National Revolution’...” writes Michael Marrus.²⁵ Already in late 1934 with over 400,000 unemployed in France, a French senator spoke of a “hatred, muffled but ready to explode [which] separated French workers from foreign workers.”²⁶ There were anti-Jewish demonstrations in Paris in September 1938 where Jews were attacked in the street²⁷. Popular resentment grew while the most extreme antisemitic writers like Louis-Ferdinand Céline, began publishing racist tirades in newspapers:

¹⁸ Marrus and Paxton, 172

¹⁹ Marrus and Paxton, 173

²⁰ Marrus and Paxton, 176

²¹ Marrus and Paxton, 173

²² Marrus and Paxton, 168.

²³ Marrus and Paxton, 168

²⁴ Vichy France, 33.

²⁵ Marrus, *The Holocaust in History*, 102.

²⁶ Marrus and Paxton, 37.

²⁷ Marrus and Paxton, 40.

“If you really want to get rid of the Jews, then, not thirty-six thousand remedies, thirty-six thousand grimaces: racism! That’s the only thing Jews are afraid of: racism! And not a little bit, with the fingertips, but all the way!.. Like complete Pasteur sterilization.²⁸”

As this extremism coloured the edges of popular discourse with agile writers like Céline, Brasillach, and Rebatet²⁹ a slow, central antisemitism began to grow. When the *Statut des Juifs* was instituted in October 1940, only fourteen prefects out of forty-two in the Unoccupied Zone reported any reaction - nine favourable, four unfavourable, one mixed³⁰. The majority of these Frenchmen were not diehard antisemites, but weary of receiving refugees and reeling from the French defeat. They resorted, simply, to xenophobia. But behind this simplicity it is important to note the prevailing ideas on immigrants in the 1940s. France’s population could not benefit from modern ideas of immigrants as economic stimulus³¹. The economic success stories of West Germany in the 1950s and post-Algerian France in 1962 were as yet unimagined³², and so immigrants

were seen as a shifty burden. There remained only the moral argument for immigration, which could not compete with the promise of order and economic stability from the National Revolution.

Not all the French supported the government at Vichy, of course. There was a famous deal of opposition from the Catholic Church and the French Resistance. But when it came to Jews, their movements often failed to become politicised and therefore effective. Historian François Bédarida writes about the effectiveness of Father Pierre Chaillet’s clandestine journal *Cahiers du Temoignage Chretien*, which lacerated the Vichy régime from Lyons for four years on behalf of the Catholic faith. In its fourth apparition, *Antisémites* (April-May 1942) the journal claims that “in striking Israel, antisemites strike the Christ,³³” refutes Nazi ideology and claims the incompatibility in Vichy of Christianity with antisemitism. Brave words, constituting what Bédarida calls “spiritual resistance, base of the Resistance point blank.³⁴” This resistance by the Church has supreme relevance in the opposition to Vichy. Political dissidents such as Vaclav Havel argue that the “fundamental threat [to an authoritarian regime] is

²⁸ Marrus and Paxton, 42.

²⁹ Paxton, 21

³⁰ Marrus and Paxton, 182.

³¹ Marrus and Paxton, 33.

³² Marrus and Paxton, 49.

³³ Bédarida, Anne and François, *Une Résistance Spirituelle*, 21.

³⁴ Bédarida, 21.

living the truth,”³⁵ and that ideas are the beginning of political action. Throughout the occupation, Catholic groups would prove this by frequently aiding in rescuing Jews from massacres and roundups.

In the French Resistance, despite its armed struggle against the Nazis, opinion was very slow to move against Vichy in its first years. Most high-ranking members of Resistance groups, such as Christian Pineau of Libération-Nord in 1940, were unwilling to attack Vichy directly and believed Marshal Pétain to be playing a double game with the Germans in a ‘sword and the shield’ dynamic with Charles de Gaulle³⁶. Thus, Libération-Nord only began writing against Pétain in spring 1941 and advocating for armed struggle in 1943³⁷. The fledgling Resistance’s philosophy is best summarised Robert Salmon’s phrase in the underground newspaper *Défense de la France* in 1941: “TO RESIST IS ABOVE ALL TO DEMONSTRATE TO THE INVADER THAT HE IS UP AGAINST A SUPERIOR CIVILIZATION THAT HE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ABSORB.”³⁸ Resistance efforts focused on maintaining an image of the French struggle against the Germans, and refused to take into account the

concessions their government was making. Many groups “renounced the role of ideological or spiritual leadership on the question of anti-Semitism, preferring to bow to tendencies they suspected were strongly implanted in public opinion³⁹” writes Renée Poznanski. The French Resistance’s insistence on consensus in this first combat against the invader prevented them from ‘living the truth’ against Vichy and allowed it to coexist with genocide. “The final weapon of a people whose conventional army has disintegrated is chaos⁴⁰” writes Paxton. The Resistance, who were already using this chaos against the Germans, were reluctant to assume concrete positions against Vichy for its Jewish abuses.

As the machine of German genocide advanced during the summer of 1942⁴¹, Vichy’s program of order, fear and indifference began to slip at the seams. On June 30th, Adolf Eichmann arrived in Paris with an official directive requiring the deportation to the East of all Jews in France.⁴² It could not be ignored. Was Vichy to decline, or protest? As usual, the French showed complete indifference and then negotiated. When faced with an initial figure of 50,000 Jews to deport from the Occupied Zone, police

³⁵ Havel, Vaclav et al., *The Power of the Powerless*, 20.

³⁶ Wieworka, Olivier, *The French Resistance*, 142.

³⁷ Wieworka, 142.

³⁸ Wieworka, 44.

³⁹ Poznanski, Renée, *Propaganda and Persecution*, 129.

⁴⁰ Paxton, 14.

⁴¹ Marrus and Paxton, 221.

⁴² Marrus and Paxton, 220.

chief René Bousquet asked if it was possible also to deport some foreign Jews from the Unoccupied Zone.⁴³ In the end, Laval's contribution to the mandate was only allow foreign Jews to be deported. On 4 July, he, Bousquet, and Pétain collectively approved the deportation, "*as a first step*, of all stateless Jews from the Occupied and Unoccupied Zones."⁴⁴

All the weakness of the National Revolution is clear in that *as a first step* in Bousquet's response. Attempts to negotiate with the unthinkable caused the French government to put in place antisemitic policies that "made the Final Solution much easier"⁴⁵. The deportations of Jews to Auschwitz, far from being a moral quandary, relieved the French government of foreigners who threatened French unity. It could be argued Laval was trying to save the Jews in his limited capacity. But he knew this effort was in itself dishonest; Eichmann had clearly told him the Nazis' directive was to arrest *all* Jews in France⁴⁶. In this case, his response shows both the bluster and cowardice of the Vichy bureaucracy. He compromised with Germany to pretend the French state was still sovereign, while making possible the arrest of foreign and French Jews at an

alarming rate. Vichy continued its bad-faith attempt to "save the state" at the cost of "losing the nation"⁴⁷. It would become unflinchingly aware of its foolishness as the war went on. In compromising to the very edge of French values, French officials only encouraged the Germans to overstep their territory.

There was a turning point after 1942 when Vichy became more critical of German policies, but their previous agreements only gave the Germans free rein. Pétain refused to implement the Jewish star for the Occupied Zone in June 1942; so the Germans simply began enforcing it themselves. In its agreements, Vichy's ideas were even more starkly naked than in its refusals: the Germans ordered a large Jewish roundup in July 1940, planning to arrest 28,000 Jews and house them pitilessly in the Vel d'Hiv stadium. French police agreed to carry out almost the entire Vel d'Hiv operation. In the end, 13,152 stateless Jews were arrested, including 4,115 children⁴⁸, who were then taken to the Drancy internment camp, where "no French authority wished to take proper responsibility" for conditions⁴⁹. Many died. 4,000 Jews rounded up in August had only 1,200 beds to share and local markets provided an unnatural diet of cabbage soup. In the end, it was a German sanitary inspector who had to

⁴³ Marrus and Paxton, 232.

⁴⁴ Marrus and Paxton, 234.

⁴⁵ Paxton, 185.

⁴⁶ Marrus and Paxton, 234

⁴⁷ Paxton, 382.

⁴⁸ Poznanski, Renée, *Rescue of the Jews*, 13.

⁴⁹ Marrus and Paxton, 253.

visit the camp in July to “raise hell,⁵⁰”. When the Germans took over that month, material conditions even improved⁵¹.

The “chimera of sovereignty and independence”⁵² that held up the Vichy régime’s pride was a lie. The French government demonstrated repeatedly through its fear of chaos, its repudiation of the Third Republic, and its indifference to the Jews. They were desperate to hold onto their administration, even if it meant applying the Germans’ genocidal policies. Just in the dynamic by which Nazi officials would be judged at Nuremberg, the “bureaucratic blindness”⁵³ of Vichy officials allowed them to perform “jobs...tinctured with evil by the overall effects of the system.”⁵⁴ Ideas of forced collaboration or Vichy’s national defence collapse in the numerical realities of Vel d’Hiv; by mid-1942, there were only 3,000 Nazi policemen in France. If the Germans had wanted to do it themselves, they could never have had the men⁵⁵. Vichy France was always more concerned with preserving structures of control than in caring for the innocent. It was never opposed to the genocide, but parallel to it.

As the tide of atrocities swelled in summer 1942, the indifference of the French public could not stay intact. Once Parisians were exposed to the spectacle of misery affecting French Jews, they could not stay silent. Germany forced through the policy of marking Jews with a star on 7 June 1942, and suddenly 100,000 Jews over the age of six in the Occupied Zone needed to wear a star marked *Juif* or *Juive* on the left half of their garments.⁵⁶ Seeing their friends and neighbours thus subjected, Parisians could not conceal their indignation. Jean Guéhénno wrote eight days after the decree, “Never have people been as agreeable [to the Jews]...There is nothing more ignoble than to constrain a man at all times to be ashamed of himself, and the people of Paris know it.”⁵⁷ In defiance of the authorities, Parisians helped Jews obtain food and even wore humorous mock-stars labelled “*Auvergnat*”, “*Goy*”, or “*Zulu*”⁵⁸ to irk the Germans, which sent many with their Jewish neighbours to Drancy⁵⁹.

Though admirable, historian Renée Poznanski argues this “symbolic resistance”⁶⁰ only puts into sharper contrast the indifference that came before. While the outrage revealed the

⁵⁰ Marrus and Paxton, 253.

⁵¹ Marrus and Paxton, 253

⁵² Marrus and Paxton, 245.

⁵³ Paxton, 382

⁵⁴ Paxton, 383.

⁵⁵ Marrus and Paxton, 241.

⁵⁶ Marrus and Paxton, 236

⁵⁷ Poznanski, Renée, *Porter L'étoile Jaune*, 58.

⁵⁸ Poznanski, 62.

⁵⁹ Poznanski, 59.

⁶⁰ Poznanski, 70.

foundations of French civility and *bonhomie*, it never appeared before 1942 when the interned Jews were a distant political issue. Only when the signs of Vichy's policies stained the French's doorsteps that the population began to care, and this fell away sharply. Following the star, the Germans imposed a slew of anti-Jewish restrictions; in July, Jews were relegated to the last railway car and banned from cafés, theatres, cinemas, restaurants, concert-halls and all cultural and public businesses⁶¹. The "symbolic resistance" the Parisians offered did not help at all. It never stopped the deportation convoys to Auschwitz that began that July, nor the Vel d'Hiv roundup, nor the mass arrests that drove thousands of Jews away from Paris⁶². Instead, historian Werner Rings claims this symbolic resistance "accords itself perfectly with all forms of collaboration... as long as its goal is to make the occupant feel he is dealing with a nation that is proud and conscious of its worth."⁶³ In this way, the Parisians' temporary solidarity with the Jews mostly preserved their own image, and mirrors Vichy's dynamic of authoritarian indifference by collaborating with the Germans while preserving their unique ideals. The cultural and economic protectionism which had made refugees "an

embarrassment"⁶⁴ before 1942 stayed as a double standard that allowed tens of thousands of Jews to be deported as long as they were a distant idea.

This delayed engagement of humanitarian values is clearest in examining the press messages of the Resistance⁶⁵. After he witnesses the train deportations beginning in 1942, Monsignor Jules-Gérard Saliège, Archbishop of Toulouse, writes "fathers, mothers, and children treated like cattle... They are part of the human species. They are our brothers like so many others."⁶⁶ These Christian sentiments pleaded the Jews' suffering through an intensely human lens, but failed to take arms directly against the state's antisemitist policies.

Poznanski writes that this reflected a tendency to frame the Jewish plight as a humanitarian issue, and not as a political struggle⁶⁷. The "real deportation"⁶⁸ for the French Resistance was always the Service de Travail Obligatoire (STO) program. Instituted in 1943, it forced 600,000 Frenchmen to labour in Germany and aroused the outrage of all *résistants*. The French Resistance's most poignant goal through the end of occupation was to beleague the Germans and end deportations by the

⁶¹ Poznanski, 68.

⁶² Poznanski, 69.

⁶³ Poznanski, 70.

⁶⁴ Vichy France, 169.

⁶⁵ Renée Poznanski, *Rescue of the Jews*, 14.

⁶⁶ Marrus and Paxton, 271.

⁶⁷ Poznanski, 14.

⁶⁸ Marrus and Paxton, 277.

STO, but never to rescue the Jews from persecution. Once the four most intense months of deportations were over, Resistance news coverage of the mistreatment of Jews stopped almost entirely⁶⁹. Certain Christian organisations like Amitié Chrétienne continued, rescuing ninety Jewish children in the infamous Vénissieux roundup in 1942⁷⁰ along with Jewish Resistance groups like the OSE⁷¹. A lone voice, Donald Lowrie, president of the YMCA during the war, recognised that “aid to hunted Jews involves resistance to the authorities at Vichy.”⁷² But these Jewish rescue organisations never succeeded in integrating their efforts with the core French resistance⁷³. Throughout the war, the French were always more concerned with the preservation of their national ideals rather than enacting them. This idea dialectically mirrors Vichy’s false pretenses to the Germans. With a larger struggle in mind, the Resistance, the French and the Vichy government all allowed themselves an indifference to the worst victims of the genocide.

In ignoring the Jews’ abuses and prioritising conventional modes of ‘symbolic resistance’, political struggle, and maintenance of order, the resistance, the government, and the

public were all sheltering a lie. Most parts of French society were no less vulnerable to the ideological sins of Vichy as the government. And all had a conception of the French State as honourable, united, solidary, and resistant to the invader. It was their indifference to the Jews in their borders that allowed them to betray those values. As Church organisations and Jewish groups fought bravely to save the Jews the French population was always prevented from fully ‘living the truth’ by the myth of its own pride and of the “Jewish problem”⁷⁴ that had defaced the 1930s. Vichy’s ideal “maintenance of social order as the highest good”⁷⁵ only perpetuated what Hannah Arendt calls the “word- and thought-defying banality of evil”⁷⁶ of the worst crimes of the Holocaust. Only in conditions of genuine indifference do the greatest evils go unnoticed.

In World War Two historiography there have been many interpretations of the Vichy period. Louis Rougier argued in 1947 that Vichy had acted as a shield to the Germans for two years. In 1954, Robert Aaron published a history of Vichy claiming that Laval supported the Germans but that Pétain opposed him⁷⁷. But regardless of the details, the analysis above shows that

⁶⁹ Poznanski, 14.

⁷⁰ Poznanski, 16.

⁷¹ Poznanski, 16.

⁷² Poznanski, 17.

⁷³ Poznanski, 18.

⁷⁴ Marrus and Paxton, 49.

⁷⁵ Paxton, 382.

⁷⁶ Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, 118.

⁷⁷ Gordon, Bertram, *The Vichy Syndrome*, 498.

the indifference to the Jews, the belief in order, and a fear of political regression accompanied the French government in its abuses of the human spirit. By pursuing antisemitic policies ahead of the Germans and relying on its own pride to enforce them, the French state showed its remarkable tendency towards order and bureaucracy over humanity. As Paxton concludes in *Vichy France*, “there are some cruel times when to save a nation’s deepest values one must disobey the state. France after 1940 was one of those times.”⁷⁸

⁷⁸ *Vichy France*, 383.

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The Development of the Prussian Middle Class and Nationalism in the 19th Century

Ilya Goheen

Introduction: In a quote often attributed to Voltaire, it was stated that “...The Prussian Army has a state.” By referencing Prussia’s large standing army in such a way, it is implied that Prussian culture was primarily military in nature. This paper aims to investigate how the emergence of the Prussian middle class led to the development of a militaristic type of nationalism. To achieve this, the study will delve into the social reforms and ideas that took place in Prussia during the 19th century, particularly in the early and mid-periods.

Nationalism and the Middle Class: Going forward, it is pertinent to define and explain just how nationalism grows and explore the dimensions of the argument, particularly the ones that will be utilized within this paper. Nationalism was explained in relatively simple terms by scholar Benedict Anderson, who stated, “[The Nation] is an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign.”¹ While lacking in some regards, this definition provides a starting point for discussing the development of

nationalism. Delving further into his argument, Anderson gave a more in-depth explanation and provided definitions for the different aspects. He states that the nation is an imagined community because its citizens will never personally know most of their fellow inhabitants, even in a small nation.² According to his theory, nations are limited in scope and do not aim to encompass all humanity. They strive for independence and the notion that every state is built on a profound sense of the camaraderie of its people.³ Especially in the context of an unstable Europe, these ideas are crucial. This definition of nationalism seems to justify the mentality of *us versus them*, which became critical to militarizing nationalism. It also emphasizes the importance of connection across vast swaths of land that could become crucial in expanding states.

While this explanation establishes a framework, it fails to specify how nationalism grew. One area of particular importance in the evolution of nationalism is education. Some scholars believe education has a

¹ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 2nd ed. (New York: Verso, 2016), 6.

² Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 6.

³ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 7.

unique ability to foster nationalism by creating homogeneity.⁴ Furthering this idea, education is a prerequisite for another essential feature of nationalism, a shared language. A shared language can be crucial in cultivating a sense of nationalism, serving as a unifying tool that facilitates a swift and seamless exchange of ideas.⁵ This is crucial to expanding nationalism as it connects language to the nation's growth. A shared and common language is essential for effectively operating an expanding state.⁶ However, education serves another vital role in developing national identity. It can help create a shared culture.⁷ One can see how this can be important in connecting societies. Assuming that education follows specific standards, it can connect large swathes of the population under the umbrella of shared standardized education. Additionally, developing bureaucratic systems is an integral part of fostering nationalism. If nationalism requires connections between its people, then bureaucracy becomes an essential institution in the expansion of nationalism and the urbanization and

industrialization of the state.⁸ A bureaucracy helps to maintain the laws and order of any state. Thus, it creates an essential connection between people of different social classes. After examining these fundamental features, one can observe how they not only gave rise to Prussian nationalism but also assisted in developing a middle class within Prussia.

It is important to define the middle class in the context of Prussian nationalism as the paper focuses on its growth. Classically, the middle class is referred to as a group of educated individuals who are neither poor nor rich.⁹ It appears, however, that in 19th century Prussia, the term middle class had a slightly different definition. Within 19th century Prussia, there were two forms of the middle class: an economic and an educated middle class.¹⁰ This is particularly notable as it draws a division between those who served economically, for example, merchants or bankers, and those who served in a more intellectual role, such as academics or bureaucrats. Recognizing this division focuses on the importance of educational reforms and the expansion of the bureaucratic arm throughout the 19th century.

⁴ Thomas Hylland Eriksen, "Nationalism and the Internet*," *Nations and Nationalism* 13, no. 1 (2007)

⁵ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 51.

⁶ Dale Stahl, *An Analysis of Ernest Gellner's Nations and Nationalism* (London: Macat Library, 2017), 459, 11.

⁷ Stahl, *Nations and Nationalism*, 11

⁸ Stahl, *Nations and Nationalism*, 28

⁹ "Middle Class" (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.)

¹⁰ Jürgen Kocka, "The Middle Classes in Europe," *The Journal of Modern History* 67, no. 4 (1995): 784.

Educational Reforms and

Nationalism: Reform of the education system came in the early 19th century. In 1806, the armies of Prussia were routed by the French in the battle of Jena.¹¹ This defeat at the hands of the Napoleonic armies marked a significant change in Prussian social policy and nationalism. Prussia found that it had to reinvent itself. To reinvent Prussia, a new Prussian citizen was necessary. This could be achieved through a complete overhaul of the Prussian education system.¹² This overhaul of the Prussian education system was not a slow process. One can see the significant growth of education by just looking at the number of normal schools in the country. In 1812, Prussia had a total of seven normal schools. It becomes clear that there was a rapid development in education when comparing this number to the number in 1840, which was 46.¹³ Education also became a crucial factor in social mobility. Unless they could afford private tuition, education at the lower and middle levels became necessary for students to enroll at a university.¹⁴

¹¹ Fredrick C. Beiser, *Johann Friedrich Herbart: Grandfather of Analytic Philosophy* (Oxford University Press, 2022), 188.

¹² Besier, *Johan Friedrich Herbart*, 188.

¹³ Thomas Alexander, *The Prussian Elementary Schools* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1918), 37

¹⁴ Eda Sagarra, *A Social History of Germany, 1648-1914* (New York: Routledge, 2017), 267.

Growth was not just limited to Prussia's normal schools. Enrollment in Prussia's universities grew significantly between 1820 and 1830, with the number of graduates reportedly doubling in this time frame.¹⁵ This shows the success of Prussian educational reforms, especially in the expansion and growth of the middle class.

Some have also credited the schools that came from the Prussian reform as responsible for the growth of Prussian nationalism and culture. This notion is supported by a statement by the director of one of Prussia's normal schools, Wilhelm Harnisch, who said that educators were a force to be reckoned with. They were people "who wished thereby to raise the German people, . . . and to furnish the Prussian state new organs for its inner life and outward defense."¹⁶ This statement shows the importance of education to the growth of patriotic national ideals. These ideas, paired with the massive development of schools within Prussia, demonstrated the pace at which the national movement had grown. It is worth noting that with the increasing importance of primary and secondary education in social mobility, many students who pursued higher

¹⁵ Matthew Bernard Levinger, *Enlightened Nationalism: The Transformation of Prussian Political Culture, 1806-1848* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 193.

¹⁶ Alexander, *Prussian Elementary Schools*, 37

education and secured middle-class jobs were exposed to nationalist principles during their studies. It is essential to note the value that Prussians put on education, going so far as to segregate the middle class into two sections: the educated and the not. Schools' cultural importance and growth demonstrated the need for education from a national perspective.

Bureaucratic Reform and Nationalism While education served as a cultural uniter and a crucial tool in national development, it also served as a tool of middle-class expansion, which became necessary when considering the reforms of the bureaucracy. Reform of the bureaucracy began in 1807 with Karl Stien, the Prussian foreign minister, who, after some time, persuaded the king to dissolve his personal cabinet and instead replace them with five ministers who headed well-defined departments.¹⁷ This could be seen as tying into Stien's notion that political mobilization of the nation could further Prussian national representation.¹⁸ The governmental reform brought about by Stien paved the way for an expansion of the bureaucracy and the middle class; it also increased middle-class interest in the political scene, for no longer was it the exclusive domain of nobility. By

expanding the bureaucracy, more jobs needed to be filled. This allowed the educated middle class to capitalize on these openings. Furthermore, the development of the public sphere was linked to the rise of nationalism due to the increased accessibility of bureaucracy and politics.¹⁹ A new, expanded intellectual job market, coupled with educational reforms, could increase national fervor and facilitate the growth of the middle class.

Under the reforms, the bureaucracy was transformed into a place of merit-based competition; thus, one's chance of joining the ranks of the bureaucracy depended on one's abilities.²⁰ Therefore, it became quite competitive. It appears that these competitive entry points also increased nationalistic tendencies. Because competition was so stiff, it eventually led to an epidemic of unemployed academics; entry into the civil service required devotion to Prussian ideals and culture that constituted nationalism. One could argue that encouraging greater public participation, particularly among the middle class, as was the case in Prussia, can strengthen the bond

¹⁷ Philip G. Dwyer, *The Rise of Prussia 1700-1830* (London: Routledge, 2014), 26.

¹⁸ Dwyer, *The Rise of Prussia*, 273.

¹⁹ Geoff Eley, "Liberalism, Europe, and the Bourgeoisie 1860-1914," in *The German Bourgeoisie: Essays on the Social History of the German Middle Class from the Late Eighteenth to the Early Twentieth Century*, ed. David Blackbourn and Richard J. Evans (Abington: Routledge, 2014), 302.

²⁰ Sagarra, *Social History of Germany*, 264.

between the idea of the nation and the citizens it represents. This can be achieved by involving citizens in developing and implementing policies, thereby creating more meaningful connections that civil servants can facilitate.

Examination of the composition of the bureaucratic elite provides further evidence of the benefits of bureaucratic expansion on the development of the Prussian middle class in the 19th century. Prussian bureaucracy in the 19th century was widely comprised of a mixture of middle-class and noble employees.²¹ This created further divides within the middle class, separating the bureaucrats from those of other professions.²² This marked divide showed the importance of bureaucratic experience to an individual's life and the cultural significance of civil service within Prussia. Prussian bureaucracy played an important role in creating national identity due to the emphasis on civil service.

Language and Nationalism:

Language is another area of vast importance to developing national identity. Admittedly, shared language

is less impactful in creating the middle class, but it is crucial in developing nationalism. Developing a standard Prussian language became integral to Prussian nationality and citizenship. In fact, by the end of the 19th century, the Prussian census registered the nationality of the population in the mother tongue (German).²³ By defining nationalism and interlinking it with spoken language, the Prussian bureaucracy aimed to institutionalize the German language across all Prussian territory.²⁴ This could be coupled with the abolition of serfdom in the early 19th century and the subsequent rise of freedom of movement.²⁵ There were many discussions and debates surrounding the topic of freedom of movement. Discussions in the 1830s and 40s upheld the right to freedom of movement.²⁶ The allowance, and thus the seeming importance of mobility within Prussia, could lead to another push for language standardization. Furthermore, it stands to reason that language standardization, coupled with the freedom of mobility, could

²³ Morgane Labbe, "Institutionalizing the Statistics of Nationality in Prussia in the 19th Century (from Local Bureaucracy to State-level Census of Population)," *Centaurus* 49, no. 4 (December 2007), 289.

²⁴ Labbe, "Statistics of Nationality in Prussia," 291.

²⁵ Dwyer, *The Rise of Prussia*, 25.

²⁶ Hermann Beck, "The Social Policies of Prussian Officials: The Bureaucracy in a New Light," *The Journal of Modern History* 64, no. 2 (1992), 277.

²¹ R. Steven Turner, "The Bildungsbugertum and the Learned Professions in Prussia, 1770-1830: The Origins of a Class," *Histoire Sociale - Social History* 8, no. 25 (May 1980): 123.

²² Turner, "The Learned Professions," 105

lead to higher levels of connection within Prussia and more opportunities for social mobility. Individuals who speak a common language and are not bound to a specific location can travel and pursue higher education. In addition, higher education plays a crucial role in developing nationalism and social mobility in the middle class. Therefore, standardizing language can not only promote nationalism but also help to a certain extent in the expansion of the middle class.

Combining the importance and reform of education, bureaucracy, and language, it becomes clear how the development of the middle class was directly related to the growth of nationalism. Education taught students the skills to be successful and instilled a sense of national pride that can be construed as nationalism. Some educated students pursued bureaucratic positions to serve their nation and, in the process, ascended to the growing middle class. The standardization of language became crucial, not only in the spread of ideas but also in mobility, which likely heightened the cultural connections necessary for developing nationalism.

The Militarization of Prussian Nationalism: To understand how the reforms led to a growth in the middle class and a growth in nationalism within Prussia, it becomes essential to look at the nature of Prussian

nationalism. This paper specifically focuses on the highly militarized forms of nationalism that became commonplace in the mid-19th century, primarily among the middle class. Given the reform's origins in Prussian defeat during the Napoleonic wars, it is not hard to imagine such reforms would give rise to a militarized form of nationalism.

During the Napoleonic wars, students at the University of Königsberg exhibited the roots of militarized nationalism. When called upon to fight by the monarch, these students immediately left the classroom and set out to the battlefield.²⁷ It could be said that these students' actions first sparked the ideas of educational reform within Prussia. This suggests that education in Prussia was a tool for nationalization and militarization, reinforced by education reforms. Tying this nationalist zeal to the reforms of 1806, one can see how some of the reforms of the Prussian army enticed the middle class to participate.²⁸ These reforms included reforming the military justice system that long stood as an obstacle to the middle-class involvement in the

²⁷ Besier, *Johan Friedrich Herbart*, 151.

²⁸ Michael Sikora, "The Prussian Army," in *The Cambridge History of the Napoleonic Wars: Volume 2: Fighting the Napoleonic Wars*, ed. Alexander Mikaberidze and Bruno Colson, vol. 2, *The Cambridge History of the Napoleonic Wars* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023), 139.

military.²⁹ The reforms of the Prussian army had a marked effect, increasing the number of educated who enlisted. Likewise, education was adopted as a tactic, with military academies opening in the 19th century.³⁰ The adoption of education by the Prussian military helped to develop an educated military and strengthened nationalism within Prussia, especially within the officer corps of the Prussian army.

The militarization of nationalism in Prussia became quite prevalent in the early 1860s, especially with the growth of the “general German defense movement.”³¹ The development of the German defense movement largely came out of the cultural and, therefore, national belief that a strong military was the future of Germany.³² Indeed, the notions of expansion and military strength were noted by Frederick II, who stated that the duties of a prince are, firstly, to survive and, secondly, to expand.³³

²⁹ William O. Shanahan, *Prussian Military Reforms 1786–1813* (Columbia University Press, 2019), 135.

³⁰ Samuel J. Newland, “The Education of an Officer Corps,” *VICTORIES ARE NOT ENOUGH: (Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, 2005)*, 52.

³¹ Frank Lorenz Müller, “The Spectre of a People in Arms: The Prussian Government and the Militarisation of German Nationalism, 1859-1864,” *The English Historical Review* 122, no. 495 (2007), 82.

³² Müller, “Militarisation of German Nationalism” 83.

³³ Dwyer, *Rise of Prussia*, 16.

This concept of expansion is understood to have meant territorial expansion. This appears to have become a cultural foundation in both the minds of the Prussian elite as well as the minds of the people. The nationalistic need for military power was kept alive in universities by patriotic student organizations.³⁴

Following the Italian War of 1859, the notion that war would lead to a great national future began to permeate the national identity of Prussia.³⁵ With the growth of militarization, the dream of a United Germany seemed to spring, something that would be useful to Bismarck during the unification of Germany. In fact, in an 1860 speech to the assembly, Prussian politician Franz Duncker ended by saying, “Then we will fight a fight that is good because it is just. We and our children - not strangers, princes, or diplomats - will happily enjoy its fruits in a great and united Fatherland.”³⁶ This statement further reinforced the expansionary, militaristic nationalism that had been integral to the Prussian national identity.

³⁴ Otto Pflanze, *Bismarck and the Development of Germany: The Period of Unification, 1815-1871* (Princeton University Press, 1963), 36.

³⁵ Müller, “Militarisation of German Nationalism” 84.

³⁶ Müller, “Militarisation of German Nationalism” 86.

The middle class was particularly fervent at this time for their devotion to national defense. During the 1860s, many organizations, some of which were started by middle-class citizens, began to sprout up with the intent of participating in the German National Defense movement.³⁷ These organizations included a variety of sportsmanship clubs, chiefly gymnastics and shooting organizations, which focused on the training and militarization of their members.³⁸ These organizations transformed what would otherwise be hobbies that connected like-minded citizens into a tool for militia-like military training.

militarized national movement within Prussia during the late 1860s.

Conclusion: The reforms of Prussian society and institutions that began in 1806 set forward a long chain of events that culminated in creating a militarized form of nationalism that swept 19th-century Prussia. The reforms particularly focused on the development of school systems that would create a new, nationalistic Prussian system and the expansion of a vast connective bureaucracy that further necessitated higher education. The development of education and bureaucracy, coupled with longstanding cultural notions of and obsessions with expansion and military strength, gave rise to a highly

³⁷ Müller, "Militarisation of German Nationalism" 82.

³⁸ Müller, "Militarisation of German Nationalism" 94.

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Militarism, Nationalism, Bismarck,
and the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1871:

How did German nationalism affect the international order in Europe during
the mid-late 19th century

Ayel Vivares

Abstract: The formation of the German Empire in 1871 drastically altered the balance of power in Europe. Berlin was now at the governing center of territory and industry that rivaled and threatened every other European empire on the continent, and the man responsible was the Prussian Chancellor, Otto Von Bismarck.

In order to unite the disparate southern German Catholic and northern German Protestant states Bismarck engineered a war in 1870 with the Second French Empire. The war succeeded in establishing the political unity of 25 different states. To make this happen Bismarck utilized fear mongering to stoke nationalist fervor in the German courts against the possibility of a French expansion eastwards. Once tensions rose, Bismarck released his famous Ems dispatch and provoked the Second French Empire into declaring war on Prussia and the German states without the popular backing from the other continental powers. Subsequently, Bismarck mobilized the Prussian

army, took “defensive” control of the southern German states, and launched a counteroffensive that would end the Second French Empire and annex the French territories of Alsace and Lorraine.

Bismarck's success with fear mongering, political manipulation, and militarism would set a precedent for state behavior in Imperial Europe that ultimately resulted in total war on the continent.

Introduction: German unification became a reality in the early spring of 1871. German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck had successfully established Prussia as the head of a new great power, the German Empire. Bismarck, also known as the ‘Iron Chancellor,’ achieved this feat at the expense of the Second French Empire in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1871.

The Franco-Prussian war began in the summer of 1870 following the Iron Chancellor's publication of the EMS dispatch –an internal telegram that was intentionally edited to provoke France

into war. However, despite France's eagerness to declare war on Prussia, they were militarily unprepared and French Emperor Napoleon III was captured 5 weeks into the campaign. Subsequently, the Second French Empire collapsed without him and Prussian forces besieged Paris to quell the remaining French resistance. Following a four-month siege, France capitulated.¹

In May of 1871, a treaty was signed at Frankfurt instating Prussian King Wilhelm I as the emperor of the newly united Northern and Southern German states. Moreover, the treaty included a German annexation of the previously French territories of Alsace and Lorraine, a 3-month post-war military occupation, and a war indemnity of 5 billion francs on the newly formed Third French Republic. This was done in concept to discourage and prevent any future French retaliation.²

In what follows, this essay will analyze the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1871 and the role of the Iron Chancellor, Otto von Bismarck. It will conclude that Bismarck instigated the war with France to foster German nationalism and cement Prussian leadership of the Northern and

Southern German states. Ultimately, Bismarck's success empowered the use of nationalism, political realism, and liberal militarism in German politics and international relations during the latter 19th and early 20th centuries.

The first section of this paper will explore concepts of Francophobia, nationalism, and political realism, as discussed in Geoffrey Wawro's *Causes of the Franco-Prussian War* and Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities*. This will establish the theoretical framework through which the appeal and possibility of Bismarck's unified German state can be understood.

Having established the relevant conceptual groundwork, the second section will analyze Todd H. Hall's *On Provocation: Outrage, International Relations, and the Franco-Prussian War*, and Bismarck's political realism, known as well as *realpolitik*, in action through the Ems dispatch. Thus, it will illustrate how Bismarck went about unifying the divided German states through war with Napoleon III's France.

Lastly, the final section will explore the general, post-war unrest in Europe due to Prussian militarism and the success of Bismarck's *realpolitik*. The implications of the precedent set by

¹Rowe, *The Franco-Prussian War 150 years on: A conflict that shaped the modern state*, (King's College London, 2020).

²Wawro, *The Franco-Prussian War: The German Conquest of France in 1870-1871*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 30.

Bismarck's war will be explored through the analysis of Christopher Barber's *The "Revolution" of the Franco-Prussian War: The Aftermath in Western Europe*, and further analysis of Geoffrey Wawro's *Causes of the Franco-Prussian War*.

Part 1: Setup In Bismarck's very first speech to the Prussian parliament in 1862 he stated that German unification would not come peacefully but through "iron and blood."³ True to Bismarck's statement, German unification was achieved almost a decade later at the expense of "iron and blood."

Bismarck had a realist approach to foreign policy. Bismarck's realpolitik emphasizes the pursuit of power and the survival of the state. In order to increase the power of the Prussian state on the European continent, Bismarck sought to utilize German Francophobia and German nationalism to bridge the cultural divide between the Northern and Southern German states.



Portrait photograph of Otto von Bismarck (The Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2024).

As foreign minister, Bismarck was unpopular in the Prussian parliament leading up to the war. As Geoffrey Wawro in *Causes of the Franco-Prussian War* explains, Bismarck's decision to go to war against Austria in the Austro-Prussian War of 1866 for control of the Northern German states had upset both the liberal and aristocratic sides of the Prussian parliament. The Prussian aristocracy not only considered Austria a fellow German ally but was also threatened by the potential formation of a German national parliament. In the eyes of the aristocracy at the time, Bismarck's actions threatened the dynastic principles that defined the structure of the Prussian courts and constituted heresy.⁴

³Wawro, *The Franco-Prussian War: The German Conquest of France in 1870-1871*, 304.

⁴Ibid, 14.

Similarly, Prussian liberals did not approve of actions undertaken by Bismarck in the unification of the North German states. While Prussian liberals were nationalists and supported German unification, they did not approve of Bismarck's military spending and his privatization of state assets.⁵ Thus, Bismarck couldn't garner full support from either aristocratic or liberal parties.

Bismarck's position in the Prussian parliament was contingent on his nationalist-heavy foreign policy of German unification and his favor with the Prussian king at the military success of the Austro-Prussian war campaign.⁶

In this essay, the terms *nation* and *nationalism* are defined according to Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities*. Anderson describes the nation as a socially constructed community, imagined by the people who perceive themselves as part of it.⁷ Despite never having met most of their fellow citizens, members of a nation share a sense of horizontal comradeship with their peers. At times, people are willing to die for the social construct of a nation. As such, feelings of strong national comradeship can be a powerful tool

for militaristic states like Bismarck's Prussia.

Moreover, Anderson describes nationalism as an ideology that fosters a sense of belonging and loyalty to the imagined community of the nation. It seeks to emphasize common cultural, linguistic, or historical ties among its members.⁸ In the context of the Franco-Prussian war, nationalism served as the ideological pretext for Bismarck to start a war with France. France had routinely opposed German unification in the years following the Austro-Prussian War despite their history of advocacy for national self-determination.⁹ Thus, Bismarck had at his disposal the narrative that France, somewhat hypocritically, stood in the way of the German people's right to a nation.

German Francophobia can be defined as the German prejudice and resentment towards France and the French people. It is the result of centuries of conflict and French aggression towards ethnic Germans. Notably, during the reign of Napoleon Bonaparte, the German states were taxed and looted by Napoleon's forces with 250,000 ethnic Germans being conscripted into the French military.¹⁰

⁵Ibid, 46.

⁶Ibid, 14.

⁷Anderson, *Imagined Communities : Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, (London ; Verso, 1991), 13.

⁸Anderson, *Imagined Communities : Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 15.

⁹Wawro, *The Franco-Prussian War : The German Conquest of France in 1870-1871*, 19.

¹⁰Wawro, *The Franco-Prussian War : The German Conquest of France in 1870-1871*, 21.

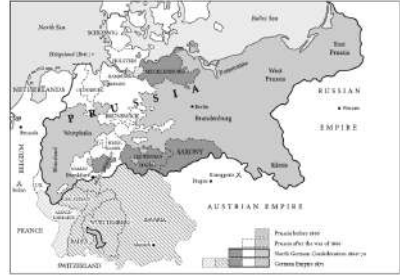
Thus, the emergence of another Emperor Napoleon on the continent in the 1850s was met with apprehension by the German populace.

Francophobia would be a vital tool in uniting the culturally distant Southern and Northern German states. The Northern states, including Prussia, had been traditionally Protestant, whilst the Southern states were starkly Catholic. As Wawro puts it, “the political and cultural obstacles separating Germany’s Protestant north and Catholic south might take years, even decades, to overcome, but a French invasion, a Napoleonic invasion no less, would smash them down in an instant.”¹¹ By capitalizing on German Francophobia and the threat of another French invasion, Bismarck could bring the Southern and Northern German states into a union out of necessity. Thus, if Bismarck wanted to establish Prussia as the hegemon of a unified German nation state then politically framing France as an imminent threat to the German people would be instrumental.

If Bismarck wanted to unite the German people into a single national entity governed from Berlin, he would have to use Francophobia and swift military action. The former would aid in the latter and aid in avoiding

bureaucratic deliberation in the Prussian courts.

Part 2: Execution



Map of Prussia, the North German Confederation, and the Southern German states from 1860-1871 (Wawro 2003, pg 5).

When it came to creating the imminent French threat, Bismarck aimed to provoke France into declaring war on Prussia. His goals were to strip France of allies and to bolster the popular support of the German states against a French enemy. With Prussia being separated from France by the Southern and Northern German states, French troops would have to march through them in order to reach Berlin. An attack on Prussia would be by extension an attack on the German people, and if it were to be seen as an unwarranted attack then France would be less likely to bring allies to their cause.

Todd H. Hall’s *On Provocation: Outrage, International Relations, and the Franco-Prussian War* illustrates

¹¹Ibid, 37.

that Bismarck had used the Hohenzollern candidacy for Spanish succession to provoke French officials into a declaration of war.

In the Spring of 1870, the Spanish throne had become vacant following a series of events that need not be discussed in this essay. Ultimately, Spanish officials approached Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern and offered him the Spanish crown in 1870. Prince Leopold was a German noble whose lineage made him as Prussian to the French as Prussian King Wilhelm I. A German king on the Spanish throne would threaten France's power and influence on the continent and allow Prussia to have a possible second front against France if war were to come.¹² Knowing this, Bismarck pushed for the Prince's acceptance in hopes of sparking French outrage. When French officials learned of the possible Spanish-Prussian alliance the general response was outrage and indignation. Notably, the French foreign minister was found "trembling with anger" after having heard the news.¹³

Bismarck's most effective measure in the issue of the Hohenzollern candidacy was his use of print media. The French foreign minister called for the withdrawal of Leopold's

candidacy and threatened war with Prussia.¹⁴ The issue with France's position was that Leopold was a prince of a sovereign South German principality and that the candidacy had come at the request of the Spanish. Thus, their demands were an act of aggression on the Southern German states and a disregard for Spanish autonomy. Subsequently, Bismarck took advantage of the situation and utilized news publications and periodicals to frame the French threat of war on Prussia as a threat to the German people.¹⁵

However, following the pressure put on him and his family by French ministers, Leopold rescinded his candidacy. France had secured a diplomatic resolution and avoided war, yet they decided to persist in the matter. Orders were sent to French ambassador Count Benedetti to push King Wilhelm I to give his guarantee that Leopold would not stand as a candidate again. Thus, At River Bad Ems during a morning stroll, Benedetti approached King Wilhelm and approached him on the matter. King Wilhelm upon hearing the request did not discuss the issue further with Benedetti and would decline his later approaches throughout the day.¹⁶ The exchange between the two was recorded by the

¹²Hall, *On Provocation: Outrage, International Relations, and the Franco-Prussian War*, (Security Studies 26: no. 1, 2017), 17-18.

¹³Hall, *On Provocation: Outrage, International Relations, and the Franco-Prussian War*, 19.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Ibid, 20.

¹⁶Ibid, 21.

King's privy counselor and sent to Bismarck. Bismarck's edit of the telegram sent to him is what is known as the Ems dispatch.

Bismarck's Ems dispatch constructed a narrative that provoked inconsolable outrage in France upon its publication. By removing and rephrasing key details of the exchange, he made the interaction seem like a confrontation. For example, Bismarck omitted the conciliatory gestures the King had made to Count Benedetti following his refusal to meet. Notably, in the original telegram King Wilhelm confirms the news of Leopold's renunciation to Benedetti and that "he could easily understand why my government was once again out of the matter."¹⁷ Thus, the original telegram conveys a tone of dialogue and respect during the interaction. In contrast, in the edited version all that is communicated is that King Wilhelm refused to see the count or hear his demands. It is mentioned that Prince Leopold had rescinded but the refusal to meet without context raises uncertainty about the permanency of Prince Leopold's withdrawal from candidacy. When shown the dispatch, the Prussian Chief of Staff Helmuth von Moltke said, "It sounded before like a parley; now it is like a flourish

in answer to a challenge."¹⁸ Thus, Bismarck, aware of the effect of his edited telegram, intentionally published it to the Prussian press and France declared war on Prussia within a little more than 36 hours.¹⁹

As Hall describes in his article, when the edited version of the telegram reached Paris, the consensus among the nation was a demand for "satisfaction."²⁰ Bismarck played on the sensibilities of nationalist fervor and drew France into a declaration of war. To an outsider, France was the clear aggressor with their declaration of war coming despite having already received the withdrawal of Prince Leopold's candidacy. Thus, Bismarck's use of print media gave would-be French allies the incentive to remain neutral. Moreover, it brought the Southern German states to band with Prussia and the North German confederation against the French offense.

Part 3: Effect Emperor Napoleon III had failed to prepare for the war effort and was ally-less at its eve. Subsequently, he was quickly defeated by superior Prussian strategy and planning. However, despite his

¹⁷Original German text printed in Otto von Bismarck, *Die gesammelten Werke [The Collected Works]*, (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1986).

¹⁸Hall, *On Provocation: Outrage, International Relations, and the Franco-Prussian War*, 22.

¹⁹Hall, *On Provocation: Outrage, International Relations, and the Franco-Prussian War*, 25.

²⁰Ibid.

capture at the Battle of Sedan in September of 1870, the campaign would continue until the full capitulation of the new French government that formed in his wake in May of 1871.

With victory over France, Prussia reorganized itself and absorbed the Northern and Southern German states into the new German empire with relative ease. Prussian leadership had demonstrated it could provide the nation with security against any possible military antagonism.

However, as Christopher Barber explains in *The 'Revolution' of the Franco-Prussian War: The Aftermath in Western Europe*, the conditions imposed upon the defeated French state were criticized by the international community. German unification drastically altered the balance of power in Europe and Bismarck set a precedent for the success of political realism and liberal militarism.



The crowning of King Wilhelm I of Prussia as the emperor of the new German Empire at Versailles, France,

1871 (The Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2024).

The success of the war can in part be attributed to Bismarck's military reforms. Similar to what he had done for the Austro-Prussian War in 1866, Bismarck had pushed through a series of military reforms that drastically increased Prussian military size, strength, and funding before the war. The Prussians had a larger army and thanks to a more elaborate series of railways they could mobilize their troops faster than the French could.²¹ Thus, Bismarck's reforms facilitated Prussian General Helmuth von Moltke's decisive victory over Napoleon III's army at Sedan.

After France's capitulation, aside from demanding war indemnities to be paid to the newly formed German Empire for costs incurred during the war, Bismarck wanted the territories of Alsace and Lorraine. The secession of the traditionally French lands was condemned by much of the international community. Notably, the British press had compared the German gain as a move synonymous with the militarism of the first Napoleonic era.²² The loss of great power territory at the hand of another was a relatively unprecedented event

²¹Wawro, *The Franco-Prussian War: The German Conquest of France in 1870-1871*, 41.

²²Barber, *The 'Revolution' of the Franco-Prussian War: The Aftermath in Western Europe*, 340.

that was viewed as an upset to the power dynamics and the balance that the Congress of Vienna had established.

Traditionally, the re-assignment of imperial territory was not uncommon in 19th-century statecraft. However, the main issue taken up by the international community with Bismarck's demands for Alsace and Lorraine was that these were two large European provinces and their loss would adversely affect France. The French territorial loss would not only be a state humiliation but a threat to national security. Bismarck had claimed the acquisition was preemptive and defensive, but to the French, it facilitated the possibility of another German attack. The Congress of Vienna, in general terms, had dictated that there must be a political equilibrium, where no great power should have an endangering advantage over another.²³ Thus, Bismarck had gone directly against the principles of the established international order.

Moreover, Prussia's defeat of France had proved so crushing and its gains had been so large that there was fear Bismarck had fostered in a new wave of contemporaries. The military conflict had succeeded where diplomacy had failed. It set a precedent for the success of the

'warrior state,' where state health was correlated to war and expansion.²⁴ It would empower militarists to pursue policies of state expansionism and nationalism. This worked against the ideals of restraint, moderation, and legitimate state conduct that worked to maintain the European balance of power.²⁵ Thus, as Barber bluntly phrases it, "the grating tutelage of Prussian victory meant that the world now only rested upon three pillars: 'power, force, and money.'"²⁶

Nevertheless, one might be enticed to argue that the war was a cause of the traditional shifting of power in Europe, suggesting that a military conflict was inevitable, as history had shown before. However, this argument would only hold true if the Second French Empire had proved itself to be ready to engage in the coming military conflict, which was not the case. Thus, the conflict and its result would not have been the same had Bismarck not published the Ems dispatch and consequently reformed the Prussian military for war. He had inflamed French opinion to such a degree that it would force a rash declaration of war, and he had prepared the Prussian military for it.²⁷

²⁴Wawro, *The Franco-Prussian War: The German Conquest of France in 1870-1871*, 312.

²⁵Barber, *The 'Revolution' of the Franco-Prussian War: The Aftermath in Western Europe*, 335.

²⁶Barber, *The 'Revolution' of the Franco-Prussian War: The Aftermath in Western Europe*, 341.

²⁷Hall, *On Provocation: Outrage, International Relations, and the Franco-Prussian War*, 26.

²³Barber, *The 'Revolution' of the Franco-Prussian War: The Aftermath in Western Europe*, 340.

Now at the height of his political career, Bismarck secured his position and drafted the constitution for the new German Empire. He made the position of German chancellor only accountable to the command of the king and granted the king near-supreme authority.²⁸ However, if a militarist official or royal were to come to power then they would have the authority to declare a war with limited interference. Thus, the survival of the state would largely depend on its ability to win militarily. This would contribute to the eventual collapse of the German Empire 47 years later.

Conclusion: Bismarck had successfully unified the German lands and established Prussia as its leading hegemon through the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1871 without any major short-term political losses or concessions. This would set an empowering and dangerous precedent for the use of aggression for state gain following the Congress of Vienna in 1814-1815.

Bismarck took advantage of the Francophobia that had lingered from the Napoleonic Wars and coupled it with nationalist rhetoric to other France from the German states. Under the pretext of French aggression,

thanks to his publication of the Ems dispatch, Bismarck was able to bring the Southern and Northern German states to a defensive union that would become permanent after the war. However, Bismarck's siege on Paris and his territorial demands for Alsace and Loraine proved to be a step too far. These were widely criticized by the international community for disturbing the European balance of power and would lay the groundwork for future conflict.

Bismarck's military reform, stoking of nationalism, and exercise of unrestrained political power would contribute towards a more aggressive and expansionist approach to international relations. However, WWI would prove this to be unsustainable at an unimaginable cost to human life and the end of the German empire.

²⁸Wawro, *The Franco-Prussian War: The German Conquest of France in 1870-1871*, 312.

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Saviour or Insurrectionist: Challenging the Portrayal of Arminius
through a Case Study of Netflix's *Barbaren*
Annika Rempel

Abstract: In Netflix's original series, *Barbaren*, Arminius is by far the most interesting character. The show presents Arminius, known to the Cherusci as Ari, as a man caught between two worlds: when he was a child, he was given to the Romans by his father, Segimer, in exchange for peace, and was raised in Rome by a general named Varus. After an illustrious military career, Arminius returns to his homeland to help his adoptive father, who has become governor of Germania. However, after reconnecting with the Cherusci and witnessing the Romans' ceaseless violence, Arminius has to decide with which group he wishes to identify. He takes over as the Reik of the Cherusci and works to unite the various Germanii to fight against the Romans, tricking Varus into entering an ambush and coming out victorious from the slaughter. However, Arminius is not a character invented by *Barbaren*; he was a real historical figure whom the show has taken liberties to humanize and flesh out in the name of storytelling.

Though *Barbaren* depicts a very biased narrative, it is still worthwhile to examine its historical elements present. Through Arminius, not only can one examine the plausibility of his characterization, but also of the show's depictions of both of these cultures and the interactions between them. This essay will critique the show's depiction of the Cherusci hierarchical structure, the treatment of Barbarian soldiers in the Roman military, and the portrayal of Arminius as a hero.

As far as depictions of Barbarians and Romans in media go, *Barbaren* is a distinctly biased, yet subversive, narrative. Roman-focused media generally depicts the Barbarians as uncivilized people, which is how they were written about by Roman scholars. *Barbaren* goes out of its way to change this portrayal, but in doing so, merely reverses the existing dichotomy. While the Germanii are not always portrayed favourably (betraying each other, cannibalizing Roman soldiers, treating their children cruelly), through the central focus on the Cherusci, they are humanized -

they have families, goals and ambitions, and clear motivations for their actions. The Romans, on the other hand, are ceaselessly violent, needlessly cruel, and power-hungry. They abuse their treaties with the Germanii, they maim and kill innocents, and see no wrong in using force to achieve their goals. However, despite the writers going out of their way to demonstrate how Arminius is part of and understands both groups, he is inherently separate from the show's presentation of what a Roman is. This is because a primary focus is given to Arminius' reactions to the behaviour of the other legionnaires, and his actions are contrasted with them. He is thus the only 'good' Roman because he is fundamentally *not* Roman.

Regardless of the show's obvious bias, it is still worthwhile to examine the historical elements present in *Barbaren*. Through Arminius, not only can one examine the plausibility of his characterization, but also of the show's depictions of both of these cultures and the interactions between them. This essay will critique the show's depiction of the Cherusci hierarchical structure, the treatment of Barbarian soldiers in the Roman military, and the portrayal of Arminius as a hero.

From the beginning of the show, a key representation of Arminius' identity struggle is the contrast of his two father figures, Varus and Segimer, both depicted in childhood flashbacks, teaching and guiding him in the beliefs of both cultures. However, the scenes of Arminius as a child with Varus not only foil those with Segimer, but also contrast his past kindness with his behaviour towards the Barbarians in the present day, showing Arminius that the man he has chosen to see as his father is not the person he believed him to be. One such turning point is when Varus orders Segimer to kill himself so that Arminius can take over as Reik of the Cherusci. This occurrence is implausible not only because there are no primary sources that mention that Segimer died or resigned his position, but also because the Romans were not drama-series villains. Cassius Dio even wrote in his *Roman History* that Segimer and Arminius worked together to revolt against Varus. Even though this event is vital for the plot, inheritance and chieftain status among the Cherusci are particularly ill-defined in the show: Thusnelda makes the comment that the Cherusci choose their Reik, however, Segestes simply declares himself Reik, and Arminius seems to be given the

position by default because Segimer was his father.

In the *Germania*, Tacitus says that there are two types of leadership among the kinship-focused Germanii: “kings [chosen] on the grounds of birth” who exert a limited power over the people, and “generals [chosen] on the basis of courage” who lead by example rather than by force. The ‘generals’ would have been war-chiefs elected during war based upon their experience and leadership skills. As for the kings, E. A. Thompson writes that the kingship Tacitus describes is seen in few early German groups, one being the first century Cherusci, which, despite the use of monarchical terminology, would have been elected from “members of a recognized ‘royal clan’”. There is no evidence to suggest that this elected position needed to pass from father to son, as it likely would have been open to any member of this royal family. In addition, the word ‘rex’ was not used by the early Germans; it is likely the closest equivalent the Romans could equate the leadership structure of the Germanii to, and was in one instance a title awarded to one Germanic leader by the Roman Senate. It is unlikely that Arminius would have used ‘rex’ to describe himself, and when primary source

accounts do state that he attempted to rule all the tribes as their king, he was killed for it. None of the sources on early German political structure mention the term ‘reik’, though the word ‘chief’ is also used in the *Germania* without definition. ‘Rex’ and ‘reik’ are linguistically related from Indo-European, though ‘reich’ is a loanword from the Celtic root into German, so Germanic leaders “never latinised their native titles”, and this linguistic relation cannot be used to equate the two terms’ meanings.

It is unknown if Segimer was a part of the Cherusci royal clan or if he was merely a war-time general, leaving Arminius’ inheritance up for debate, with some stating Arminius was an elected war-chief, but others writing about how members of Arminius’ extended family went on to succeed him, implying his membership in a royal clan. *Barbaren* is also undecided which Arminius belongs to, and actually makes this all the more confusing by making a distinction between ‘reik’ and ‘könig’, the latter only being used in the last episode when Thusnelda calls Arminius, who is Reik of the Cherusci, the king of the united tribes. It is possible that the show is using ‘könig’ in the way that the Roman Senate did when they decided on

one leader who would act as the representative of all the tribes.

One element of the show that differs drastically from actual history is the Romans' treatment of Barbarian soldiers and mercenaries. In the fourth episode, Varus makes it very clear that Arminius cannot hope to achieve further status or career progression back in Rome, in spite of his knighthood. The reasoning behind this is because of Arminius' Barbarian heritage, with Varus stating explicitly that Arminius has "everything someone like [him] could hope to achieve", and therefore was only brought up to take over the Cherusci on behalf of the Romans. This is another area that the show has taken purposeful liberties with to build up the narrative tension, as seen in Arminius' tearful response, "I thought you raised me to be your son", despite little primary evidence that Arminius and Varus had a close relationship.

As previously stated, Arminius was awarded the status of a knight in the show, and received both this and full Roman citizenship in history. Receiving an *equites*, or knighthood, was a well-regarded honour in the Roman Empire, as in the show; historically, even people from the provinces could achieve such status, and there were many

different career paths for those who achieved the *equites* status, such as entering public service, continuing a military career, as well as influence over judicial practice and ceremony. In addition, being a Roman citizen provided multiple privileges, and was awarded to people from the provinces through military service in auxiliaries or on city councils. Arminius was in charge of his own auxiliary, who went with him to Germania, making him a distinguished member of the Roman military. Nothing about Arminius should plausibly have limited him from seeking to advance his career in Rome. There is no written Roman law that excludes Barbarians from achievement in the government or army, especially not one who is a Roman citizen with *equites* status. Though no Barbarian ever became emperor of Rome, plenty of Barbarians reached some of the highest statuses in the military, and before the Battle of the Teutoburg Forest, members of Germanii tribes even acted as the bodyguards of the emperor himself.

The distinct lack of interaction between the Romans and Germanii is one element that is strange about *Barbaren*. For the Cheruscan nobles who supported or made peace with Roman occupation, like

Segimer and Segestes, they would have been highly involved with the Romans in their daily lives, doing trade together and holding assemblies. These high-ranking members would even have received citizenship as city council members or veterans. In the archaeological record, the graves of these Germanii aristocrats are separated from other burial sites and filled with imported Roman symbols of wealth, denoting the additional status and gifts the Roman occupation provided them. Roman citizens also held legal and civil privileges, and under the criminal code, were not allowed to be crucified, something that Arminius wrongly fears having done to him were Varus to uncover his treachery. Knowing these facts makes it much clearer that *Barbaren* has exaggerated the division between these two cultures by presenting them as wholly separate, only interacting when their interests come into conflict. This can also be seen in the characterization of Segestes, who is treated like a Barbarian nuisance by *Barbaren's* Varus despite being an aristocrat and a Latin-speaker (implying some sort of immersion/status among the occupiers), but who is actually highly regarded in primary sources as an ally to the Romans.

The culmination of Arminius' character in *Barbaren* comes from the show's depiction of the Battle of the Teutoburg Forest in 9 CE: the hero Arminius uniting the Germanii to fight against the Romans and liberating them all from oppressive rule. The show underlines this message with Arminius' heart-wrenching monologue about power and belonging, reciting his thoughts, on how he was raised and what he has come to learn, to the decapitated head of his adopted father. This view of Arminius stems primarily from a mythologized narrative in the late nineteenth century when Germany was emerging as a nation state. Arminius became a symbol for German nationalism when a statue called the *Hermannsdenkmal* was constructed and dedicated to Kaiser Wilhelm I, the first German emperor, who united the people just as Hermann – presumably the Germanic name of Arminius - had. As such, Arminius has often been remembered, as Tacitus describes him, as the “Liberator of Germany”. This image is held up by *Barbaren*, where Arminius rises up after coming to understand that the Romans were oppressive rulers by whom he would never be truly accepted.

This heroic portrayal, however, is not necessarily plausible when

considering historical evidence, both from primary sources and the archaeological record. Some scholars have made the argument that Arminius turned against Rome after seeing the treatment of his people and the barbarian groups in other provinces. Scholars agree that Varus was brought to Germania to implement taxation in the newly occupied regions, and as Arminius had actively fought Barbarian tax revolts in Pannonia before coming to Germania, this is a strong potential reason for him turning against the Romans. In addition, there is primary source evidence that the Cherusci had a history of resistance to Roman occupation, with a revolt happening a mere ten years before the Battle of the Teutoburg Forest that was heavily suppressed by imperial forces, which would have provided him with many supporters within his own tribe.

Despite this particular explanation for Arminius' actions, no one can be certain as to whether this was done out of a selfless desire to see his people freed. For example, not all of the Germanii tribes joined Arminius' ambush, and enough of those around the Rhine continued on peacefully under Roman occupation after the battle to suggest that anti-Roman sentiment was not as widespread as *Barbaren* would have its audience believe.

Recent scholarship regarding the Battle of the Teutoburg Forest and the archaeological site, Kalkriese, where the battle is thought to have taken place, does not show Arminius in such a light. At Kalkriese, there is significant evidence of military conflict and the artefacts that have been found are almost entirely Roman, including weapons and coins, which is in line with primary sources that describe the significant losses of the Roman legions. In *Annals*, Tacitus writes about the remnants of the Roman carnage left from the battle: skeletons heaped in piles, skulls nailed to trees, and evidence of human sacrifices. However, without the support of archaeological records like Kalkriese, primary sources written by Roman scholars and former soldiers need to be taken with certain reservations, as such texts have anti-Barbarian sentiments, especially when those Barbarians caused the deaths of thousands of legionnaires.

This also suggests that the Barbarians fought with Roman weapons, suggesting that many of the Cherusci must either have been former soldiers or have participated actively in trade with the Romans, as Tacitus writes that the Germans did not make swords. Another explanation for the

all-Roman weapons is that Arminius' Roman auxiliary unit would have defected and fought with him, making this different from other Barbarian-Roman conflicts because it is, technically, coming from "within the Roman power apparatus". To add on to this, Arminius' revolt was successful precisely because he was a Roman military leader, something that even *Barbaren* agrees with. The ideas of such inter-Roman conflict elements have led recent scholars to see the Battle of the Teutoburg Forest not as an act of liberation, but as a military mutiny, with Arminius and his forces merely using the anti-Roman sentiment among the Cherusci as a means to an end. In understanding that Arminius may have been a Roman soldier seeking to take power over Roman territory, his murder at the hands of his own tribe for attempting to rule them makes sense; the Cheruschi were not interested in replacing one Roman governor with another.

When considering this second explanation for the Battle of the Teutoburg Forest, the foundations that *Barbaren* is built on fall apart. The heart of the show, Arminius' monologue about injustice and identity, is meaningless when coming from a man who, very

plausibly, was a soldier militarizing his forces to gain power over his superiors. However, there is a case to be made that this core message is more important than any historical plausibility. Historical fiction like *Barbaren* may take liberties with its source material, but it is scarcely without reason, and I do not believe that *Barbaren* has taken such in bad faith. While I cannot condone the reversal of the dichotomy between Romans and Barbarians that is portrayed in the show, its re-creation through the story of Arminius serves a larger purpose. His monologue questions both Roman imperialism and homogeneity, and he states explicitly that Varus, and consequently the Empire at large, "never understood that some might want a different life from you [...] to believe differently, feel differently, and think differently than you". In this way, *Barbaren* is an expression of cultural diversity and, perhaps, even self-determination, which is an important message in a society striving for a post-imperial understanding of the world.

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Freeing oneself from the Nightmares of the Past:
Berlin's clubbing culture as a form of escape
Sinegha Anantharaj

Berlin's complex history has led to decades of efforts to responsibly commemorate its past while moving forward. This article examines how Berlin's vibrant clubbing culture helps Berliner's cope with the burden of historical memory. Through research at the Jewish Museum and interviews with staff and visitors, it became clear that the public's willingness to engage and learn is crucial to how the past is remembered. For many, Berlin's clubbing scene serves as an escape from the city's dark history, offering a sense of freedom reminiscent of the Weimar Republic. Iconic clubs like Tresor and Berghain, housed in repurposed industrial spaces, provide not only economic benefits but also cultural spaces where people can live in the moment, free from the weight of the past. Ultimately, Berlin's nightlife culture bridges the gap between remembrance and a more liberated present, balancing historical awareness with the desire for personal freedom and social unity.

Freeing Oneself from the Nightmares of the Past: Berlin's Clubbing Culture as a Form of Escape

Berlin is a city with a complicated and dark past that carries

many burdens and loose ends. It has tried to come to terms with its history for many decades and aims to strive forward. What does Berlin do to commemorate its past responsibly, and escape it where it can? Throughout this essay, I will be answering this question using clubbing culture in Berlin and the connotations behind it, as well as my research there.

I focused on the efficacy of the Jewish Museum and wanted to explore the degree to which it accurately represents and commemorates the past. Through my extensive research and multiple interviews with staff members, a representative from the education sector of the museum, and the general public, I discovered that effectively commemorating the past is not only a difficult task, but comes with complex intricacies. No matter how well a museum or memorial depicts the past honourably, the reflection it has on society depends on the eye of the beholder. Ultimately, people must be willing to learn, be aware, and feel responsibility to never to repeat previous mistakes.

However, it was evident through my research and interactions with the general public that many Berliners do not have an innate sense

of care or acknowledgement of the past. When asked about how they commemorate the past and whether they feel the Jewish Museum effectively pays respect to it, many individuals admitted they do not know how to answer these questions because they rarely think about it. But how do those who care release from all this stress? How do they unleash themselves from the horrors of yesterday? This is where clubbing culture comes into play.

Clubbing is very predominant in Berlin. It serves as an outlet for people to live in the moment and free themselves from Berlin's treacherous past. Doing research on clubbing culture allowed me to acknowledge that the clubbing scene in Berlin promotes a sense of freedom and the fluidity that was present in Berlin during the Weimar era. This is especially evident when looking at the renowned Cabaret play I had the privilege of watching at the Tipi Am Kanzleramt. The vibrancy of the performance, actors, costumes, interactions with the audience and the overall atmosphere truly brings us back to the extravagant and open nature of the Weimar Republic that Isherwood also depicts in his novel "*Goodbye to Berlin*".¹ As portrayed by characters such as Sally in the novel, the Weimar years were a time when Berlin's atmosphere was

carefree; there was lots of singing and dancing, expressions of art, people explored their sexuality and had many open conversations about broad and modern topics such as gender and social norms and politics. This was the case until the dark shadow of the rise of the Nazis covered the city. The Cabaret and clubbing culture bring back some of the light and freeness to Berlin.

Clubs are also becoming an effective way to repurpose unused and abandoned space, revitalizing neglected areas and making a positive impact on community development and the local economy. Many abandoned power plants and spy facilities have become clubs. An example of this is the club Tresor. Tresor is a popular techno nightclub owned by Dimitri Hegemann. It used to be located in an abandoned department store, and that location closed in 2005. Its new location, which was opened on May 24th, 2007, is in an abandoned power plant². Another example is the renowned techno club Berghain, which is located inside a former factory³. Aside from repurposing old spaces, clubs also enhance Berlin's economy and have become a common

¹ Christopher Isherwood. 1939. *Goodbye to Berlin*. London: Hogarth Press.

²Andrew Rafter. 2018. "10 Moments That Defined Tresor." *DJMag.com*. January 24, 2018.

³Mats Wurnell. 2016. "The Berghain Backstory: Building Berlin's Most Legendary Nightclub." *Medium*. 2016.

expression of leisure in a social context. The clubbing culture in Berlin serves as a rise of freedom and enjoyment from the reunification of Germany and the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Returning to the question of how people release themselves, I believe that clubbing culture plays a significant role in it. People who have been living in Berlin and acknowledge the city's past need a platform to release their sense of distress and haunting memories of the past. Clubbing culture is a social concept that aims to do this task and continues to see success. The freedom within these spaces, the immersive music, and the break from historical norms provide a unique escape. Clubs in Berlin are known for their inclusive and open atmosphere, where people can express themselves without judgment. This environment fosters a sense of liberation, allowing individuals to momentarily forget the weight of the past and embrace the present moment. Having the opportunity to learn and explore Berlin for a month, I was able to see the heavy prevalence of Berlin's clubbing culture firsthand. Compared to Toronto and other cities I have been to, I noticed that the party and clubbing scene in Berlin is much more

predominant. Using the knowledge I gained, I was able to relate it back to the devastating events that occurred in Berlin.

It is evident, based on my research and experiences in Berlin, that clubbing culture and plays such as Cabaret bring Berlin back to a more fluid and open time similar to the Weimar Republic through openness, vibrancy of costumes and extravagant music. Berlin's party scene is world-renowned and second to none; not only is it a channel of freedom and social unity for Berlin's residents, but it is also enjoyed by Berlin's visitors as well. Personally, I am not someone who drinks alcohol or goes to clubs or bars, but I was still able to enjoy bar nights with my fellow classmates and friends. Ultimately, Berlin's past is not something that should be forgotten, the victims deserve to be remembered, and people should feel a sense of responsibility to be aware of past mistakes and not to repeat them. Clubbing culture helps the city progress forward and creates a sense of social harmony that allows people to live in the moment and escape their busy lifestyles and past burdens.

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Parallelen zwischen Great Gatsby und Die Leiden des Jungen Werthers *Aditi Kolluru*

Abstract: Diese Arbeit vergleicht Johann Wolfgang von Goethes *Die Leiden des jungen Werther* mit F. Scott Fitzgeralds *The Great Gatsby* und untersucht ihre thematischen Ähnlichkeiten. Beide Romane thematisieren den Schmerz unerwidelter Liebe, da Werthers Liebe zu Charlotte und Gatsbys Liebe zu Daisy unerfüllt bleiben, weil beide Frauen an andere Männer gebunden sind. Ein zentrales Motiv beider Werke ist die Idealisierung des geliebten Menschen, wobei Werther und Gatsby Charlotte und Daisy in unerreichbare Höhen erheben, was schließlich zu ihrem persönlichen Niedergang führt. Im Folgenden werden die Themen obsessiver Liebe, emotionalen Leides und unvermeidlicher Tragödie und ihre zeitlose kulturelle und historische Relevanz für eine Auseinandersetzung mit den Komplexitäten menschlicher Sehnsucht und ihren Konsequenzen hervorgehoben..

Die *Leiden des jungen Werthers* von Wolfgang von Goethe sind ein zeitloses literarisches Werk, das das tiefe Leiden seines jungen Protagonisten Werther erforscht. Dieses Werk erinnert mich an *Great*

Gatsby von F. Scott Fitzgerald. Beide ähneln sich in ihrer Darstellung unerwidelter Liebe und beide Werke sind literarische Klassiker. Im Folgenden werde ich die Werke bezüglich ihrer thematischen Ähnlichkeiten vergleichen und aus einer persönlichen Perspektive analysieren.

Werthers unerbittliche Liebe zu Charlotte, die bereits mit einem anderen Mann verlobt ist, erinnerte mich an den Kummer und die emotionale Qual, die entstehen können, wenn man jemandem liebt, der diese Gefühle nicht erwidern kann oder will. Dieses Thema ist auch in der heutigen Gesellschaft omnipräsent. Viele Leser können den Schmerz unerwidelter Liebe und den damit verbundenen inneren Kampf nachvollziehen, und vielleicht haben gerade deshalb beide Werke eine breite Leserschaft. Unerreichbare Liebe ist auch in Fitzgeralds „*The Great Gatsby*“ ein durchgehendes Thema. Während in „*Die Leiden des jungen Werthers*“ Werthers Liebe zu Charlotte aufgrund ihrer Verlobung mit einem anderen Mann nicht erwidert wird, bleibt in „*The Great Gatsby*“ Jays Liebe zu Daisy Buchanan

aufgrund ihrer Heirat mit Tom Buchanan unerfüllt.

Ein weiteres wiederkehrendes Thema in beiden Literaturstücken ist die Vergötterung von Liebesinteressen. Werther idealisiert Charlotte und sieht in ihr den Inbegriff von Tugend und Schönheit. In ähnlicher Weise idealisiert Gatsby Daisy und glaubt, sie sei der Inbegriff von Anmut und Kultiviertheit. Beide Charaktere verleihen ihren romantischen Interessen fast mythische Qualitäten, was schließlich zu ihrem Leiden führt.

Außerdem war das Spiel zwischen Besessenheit und Tragödie in beiden Werken äußerst relevant. Werthers Besessenheit von Charlotte und Gatsbys Besessenheit von Daisy führten beide Charaktere auf Wege mit tragischen Folgen. In beiden Fällen führte ihr zielstrebiges Streben nach Liebe zu persönlichem Leid und letztendlich einer Tragödie.

Ich fand es faszinierend, wie diese Werke, obwohl sie in unterschiedlichen kulturellen Kontexten und Epochen angesiedelt sind, ähnliche Themen und Emotionen thematisieren. Die universelle Natur erwideter Liebe und die Tendenz, den geliebten Menschen zu idealisieren, bleiben relevant und finden bei den Lesern Anklang, unabhängig von ihrem kulturellen Hintergrund oder ihrer Zeit. Insgesamt fand ich „Die

Leiden des jungen Werthers“ und „The Great Gatsby“ in vielerlei Hinsicht ähnlich und wurde daran erinnert, wie mächtig menschliche Liebe sein kann und wie tiefgreifend sie unser Leben beeinflussen kann. Die Lektüre eines Auszugs über die Leiden des jungen Werthers ließ mich über die Natur von Liebe, Besessenheit und Leiden nachdenken, die über Generationen hinweg relevant und inspirierend bleibt.

Die Kerzen zwischen Helligkeit und Dunkelheit

Tianxing Xu

Abstract: This writing describes the journey of the author from his youth to the current time in a semi-analogical style in German, contains recollection and introspection about people who the author has been in contact with, and is concluded with hopes and concerns about the academic and ethical development of the author as well as the subjective portrayal of the society.

Jeder Mensch bekommt eine Kerze, die bei seiner Geburt angezündet wird. Von da an flüstert das weiße Wachs mit bleichem Licht. Die Kerze brennt allgemach ab, wie sie das Licht und Dunkel der Umwelt einsaugt. Manche verunstalten sich, manche verstellen sich und zieren sich mit dickem, buntem Wachs, doch dessen ungeachtet bleiben wenige noch am Ende beständig, kaum geändert, und schmelzen ausgebrannt in die pure Asche.

Ich, dessen Kerze seit 2003 mit vorerst einfarbigem, glänzendem, aber manchmal schädlichem Licht brannte, war keines der sogenannten „zahmen“ Kinder. Meine Zähne haben außer Essen und Getränke gelegentlich auch die Haut einiger Mitschüler (bzw. der Kinder in meinem Kindergarten, die mich hin und wieder irritiert haben) durchtrennt, so dass auch viele Eltern

deswegen sehr beängstigt wurden. Sie forderten von der Direktorin meine sofortige Ausweisung aus dem Kindergarten. Den ergrimten Eltern und meinen vom häufigen Bedarf von Entschuldigungen und Krankenhausbesuchen erschöpften und überwältigten Eltern entgegen beteuerte sie jedoch, sie werde die Ausweisung nicht vollziehen und ich dürfe den dreijährigen Bildungsgang wie alle anderen Kinder vollenden. Ein Freund meiner Mutter, der Firmenmanager war, schlug vor, meine Eltern sollten anstatt Prügel, Beschimpfungen oder Drohungen mittels Raisonement und Geduld die Ursachen für das Verhalten des Kindes erkunden. Ab dann brannten Kerzen derart hell mit dem reinen Licht der Aufrichtigkeit, Hilfsbereitschaft und Nachsicht von allen Seiten her, so dass meine krumme Kerze, die zum ersten Mal solche Mengen Schein der Umwelt fühlte, zurechtgerückt wurde. Aber der angefangene Weg nach dem allerhöchsten, jenseits der menschlichen Fähigkeiten liegenden Ufer der Tugenden ist gewiss weit und holprig.

Meine Eltern nahmen sich sofort mit Fleiß und Überzeugung der ungewöhnlichen Erziehung ihres Kindes an. Sie verwendeten eine Ausbildungsart, bei der sich eine

häufige und vernünftige Umstimmung und eine wagemutige, manchmal scheinbar schädliche Nichteinmischung abwechselten, um mich zu einer charakterlich außerordentlichen Person zu formen. Solche Art kann nicht leicht ohne persönliche Erfahrung und Beobachtung nachvollzogen oder dargestellt werden.

Sie widmeten täglich mindestens eine Stunde, um mich nach meinem Schulleben zu befragen, sowie auch mir über ihre Begebenheiten zu erzählen. Diese Stunde schloss immer mit der Rückbesinnung auf mögliche Lösungen und die Moral dieser Erfahrungen ab. Diese Tätigkeiten, die andere Eltern vielleicht einfach vernachlässigen, oder an die sie sich nach ein paar Tagen wegen der Beschäftigung ihrer Arbeiten nicht mehr interessieren würden, wiederholten meine Eltern zuweilen, bis entweder eine Versöhnung oder eine Lösung vorlag. Statt Aufmerksamkeit etwas Herkömmlichem zu schenken, wie zum Beispiel meinen Noten, schätzten meine Eltern, meine Lerngewohnheiten zu entwickeln. So ein komisches, seltsames, helles Licht strahlten ihre Kerzen aus. Das verbrannte Wachs schmolz zu warmem Öl, das in die Poren meiner Kerze eingeflößt wurde und im starken reinen Wachs nochmal erstarrt war.

Allgemach wurde meine Flamme stabiler und strahlender, und der einfältige und nervöse Geruch des verbrannten und verschmolzenen Wachses wurde durch einen tiefschürfenden und reinen ersetzt. Ich benahm mich anders als meine Mitschüler, und manche meiner Lehrer und Lehrerinnen sagten, ich sei sonderbar doch lobenswert, aufrichtig, fleißig, brav und, vor allem, nachdenklich. Eine meiner ersten Bücherserien, die noch immer meine Lieblingsserie ist, war *Chouette! Penser* von Myriam Revault d'Allonnes. Ich habe sie mit großem Enthusiasmus den Mitschülern meiner Mittelschule empfohlen, aber sie erregte keine Lust in ihnen, und die Serie verstaubte bald in der Ecke unseres Klassenzimmers. Das war das erste Mal, als ich bemerkte, dass meine Kerze wahrscheinlich anders gegenüber den anderen war.

Als ich meinen Lebensweg weiter ging, erlebte ich mehr Kerzen, manche wie meine hell brennend, andere dämmerig aber zeitweise von momentanem bleichem Licht verdunkelt, oder jene, die vom Dunkel der Umwelt fast vollständig verschluckt und in etwas Unförmiges verunstaltet waren, das zu der Streuung desselbigen Dunkels beitrug. Ich trage jetzt sorgfältig meine Kerze, schweife in meiner Universität herum, kann aber nur einige Leute erspähen, die quasi ähnliche Kerzen besitzen, deren Entdeckung mir zwar

entzückend, deren Erlöschen mir aber umso beängstigender ist.

Viele schweben mit gar darbenden Kerzen herum. Sie sind nie für meine Mühe oder mein Wohlwollen dankbar, sondern erwägen unaufhörlich nur den Wert, den meine akademischen Fähigkeiten oder häufige Hilfsbereitschaft erzeugen. Nach Betrug, Egoismus und Mammonismus riecht es um sie herum.

Es gibt viele Kerzen in der Welt. Einige mit weißem Wachs, einige mit dunklem Schlamm, einige mit Nichts, die meisten aber mit weißem Wachs außen und dunklem Schlamm innen gefüllt. Weh uns, die zuzeiten sogar unsere eigene Kerze zwischen Hellig- und Dunkelheit nicht erkennen können!

Die Fabel: Poetik zum Deutsch Lernen

Jeremy Lau, Esma Tuzunatac

Abstract: Wir waren während des letzten Jahres Studenten in der GER100 Klasse von Herrn Meunier und haben im Unterricht verschiedene Literaturformen studiert. Diese Fabel handelt von einem Bären und seinem Freund, dem Schwan, die nach Frankreich reisen. Der Bär will nur Deutsch sprechen, was problematisch wird. Die Fabel thematisiert das Verhältnis von Kultur und Sprache.

Es war einmal ein starker Bär und ein weiser Schwan, die in einem ruhigen Wald lebten.

Eines Tages wollte der Bär ans Meer nach Frankreich. Er wollte die Welt und die

verschiedenen Kulturen erkunden.

Am Waldrand traf der Bär den Schwan. Der Bär sagt: "Ich will ans Meer gehen. Möchtest du mitkommen?" Der Schwan antwortete: "Ja, das ist eine fantastische Idee!" Der Bär empfahl: "Warum organisieren wir nicht eine Reise nach Frankreich? "Dort gibt es die besten Strände."

Eine in der Nähe lebende Eule überhörte ihr Gespräch und insistierte: "Sie sollten vor Ihrer Reise andere Sprachen lernen!" Aber der Bär

erwiderte: "Nein, ich mache das nicht! Ich brauche nur Deutsch!"

Also gingen der Bär und der Schwan nach Frankreich ohne jegliche Kenntnis der französischen Sprache. Als sie in Frankreich ankamen, hatten sie Hunger und wollten zum Mittagessen gehen.

An einem Restaurant an der Küste angelangt fragte der Bär höflich, ob der Platz noch frei sei, aber der Kellner schien ihn nicht zu

verstehen. Er wiederholte seine Frage langsamer, aber der Kellner lachte und sprach in einer anderen Sprache. Der Bär fragte den Schwan: "Welche Sprache spricht er?" Der Schwan antwortete: "Er spricht Französisch. In Frankreich sprechen die Menschen Französisch".

Der Bär antwortete, "Nun verstehe ich". Beim Reisen sollte man ein kulturelles Bewusstsein haben.

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Aufsatz 2: Mein bester Urlaub

Paul Kuang

Ich erzähle euch von einem meiner schönsten Sommerurlaube, als ich ein Musik-Abenteuer und einige weitere einmalige Erlebnisse während meiner ersten Reise nach Europa genoss. Durch diese unvergessliche Reise, über eine Zeitspanne von Monaten, habe ich nicht nur theoretische Kenntnisse, sondern auch einen praktischen Gesichtspunkt über Musik — insbesondere im Geigenspiel — gelernt.

Mein bester Urlaub fand im Jahre 2019 statt, als ich zwei Monate in Italien verbracht habe. Durch eine Empfehlung meiner Klavierlehrerin hatten meine Eltern von einem Ferienlager für Musikstudenten in den Dolomiten (Nordosten Italiens) erfahren. Ich wollte auch dorthin, um meine musikalische Begabung zu verbessern. Also fing meine Reise an.

Ich bin im Juli von Toronto abgeflogen. Zuerst hatte ich Angst, denn ich musste allein reisen und im Ausland bleiben. Doch ich fand es leicht, durch den Flughafen zu navigieren, obgleich ich ein großes Gepäckstück voller Kleidung, Bücher, und meiner Geige mitgenommen hatte. In Italien konnte ich auch 3- bis 4-mal pro Woche mit meinen Eltern telefonieren.

Während meiner Zeit im Ferienlager hatte ich häufig Möglichkeiten mit bekannten Musiklehrern*innen Klavier und Geige zu spielen. Täglich genoss ich verschiedene italienische Gerichte, zum Beispiel Risotto (ein Reiseintopf mit frischen Pilzen, Käse, und Butter), und Tintenfischpasta, die vollkommen schwarz war. Leider habe ich keinen Wein getrunken, weil ich damals weniger als 18 Jahre alt war. Jede Woche bekam ich eine neue Komposition, um mit anderen Musikern zu üben und mit ihnen zu arbeiten.

Bis August waren die meisten Aktivitäten im Lager und in einem nahegelegenen Dorf. Nachdem ich und die anderen Musiker an einem großen Orchesterkonzert teilgenommen hatten, wollten wir den Abschluss der Proben feiern. Also machten wir einen Ausflug nach Venedig. Venedig hat mir sehr gut gefallen mit ihrer Altstadt, wo ich viele historische Dome und Kanalbrücken gesehen habe. Ich hätte mich auch beinahe in den kurvigen Gassen der Stadt verlaufen. Nach zwei schönen Monaten bin ich kurz vor Anfang September nach Kanada zurückgefahren.

Im Vergleich zu allen meinen früheren Reisen kann ich mich bis heute viel besser an diesen Aufenthalt in Italien erinnern, weil ich meine eigenen Freizeitbeschäftigungen wählen konnte, und auch eines meiner Bestreben erreicht habe, nämlich ein geübterer Musiker zu werden.

Mein Praktikum im Bundestagsbüro

Mathis Cleuziou

Abstract: Ich habe mich schon immer für Politik interessiert. Obwohl ich übersee aufgewachsen bin, waren meine Abende immer sehr deutsch, mit Abendbrot samt Familie und Tagesschau.

Letzten Sommer habe ich mich für ein Praktikum im Bundestag beworben, da ich hautnah miterleben wollte, wie wegweisende Entscheidungen in Berlin getroffen werden. Ich war mir nicht sicher, für welche Partei genau ich arbeiten wollte, also habe ich mich bei allen Bundestagsabgeordneten der Grünen und der SPD beworben, da ihre Werte am ehesten mit den meinen übereinstimmen. 300 Bewerbungen später, landete ich im Abgeordnetenbüro einer der SPD-Klimachefs.

Ich hatte das Glück, dass meine Eltern meine Ideen und Meinungen immer kritisch hinterfragt haben, und somit, als wir im Dezember 2016 zurück nach Deutschland zogen, wusste ich mehr oder weniger, wie die Lage in Deutschland aussah. Im Laufe meiner letzten 4 Schuljahre, wurde ich immer politischer und begann mich, mit dem Rest meiner Stufe, für das Klima mit Fridays for Future auf die Straße zu begeben. Dort, gewappnet mit mit

dem Mut, den ich von meinen Freunden bekommen hatte, sowie meinen Meinungen, die ich in Diskussionen mit meinen Eltern formulierte, begann meine aktive politische Karriere.

Als ich mit 18 nach Kanada zog, hörte mein Klimaaktivismus nicht auf. Ich wurde Teil einer Klimagerechtigkeitsgruppe, die U of T dazu brachte, ihre Investitionen von klimaschädlichen Aktionen zurückzuziehen. Ich habe auf Klimaschutzdemonstrationen geredet und bin, unter anderem, nach New York für die 'Climate Week' und die damit zusammenhängende Klimaschutzdemonstration gereist. Seitdem bin ich verantwortlicher für Klimaschutz und Umweltschutz des 'Toronto Youth Cabinet's geworden und arbeite dort mit der Stadt und der Provinz für besseren, generationengerechten Klimaschutz in unserer Gesellschaft.

Während meiner Zeit in Berlin, habe ich viele neue Freunde machen können, besonders unter den anderen Praktikant*innen und Jusos, und halte auch bis heute mit ein paar Abgeordneten Freundschaften. Ich konnte einige diesen Sommer wiedersehen und einer kam sogar im

Frühjahr nach Kanada, um mich zu besuchen.

Ein paar der Kernthemen, die ich zu bearbeiten hatte, waren das Gebäudeenergiegesetz (GEG), sowie Auftritte einer Ministerin und Fahrten von der Wählerschaft nach Berlin. Am interessantesten sind meine Eindrücke während der GEG-Verhandlungen.

Das Gebäudeenergiegesetz (GEG) ist ein Gesetz, das eine neue Energieverordnung legesliert. Es geht im Kern darum, dass Gebäude weniger passive Emissionen durch das Heizen verursachen. Wie das auszusehen hat, und besonders, welche Rolle Gasheizungen spielen sollen, wurde heiß diskutiert.

Am anfang meiner Zeit im Regierungsviertel, wurden die Negativberichte der 'Bild' - die meistgelesene deutsche Tageszeitung - über die details der anfangs-verhandlungsposition der Grünen publiziert. In meinem SPD Büro gab es viel Ärger darüber, wie dieses interne Dokument an die Presse kommen konnte, noch bevor die Verhandlungen beginnen konnten. Das Dokument ist ein Parteiinternes Dokument, dass jede Partei zusammenstellt, bevor Verhandlungen beginnen können. Es ist eine Art Anfangsposition, die jede Partei für sich definiert, wovon dann die Verhandlungen stammen. Besonders

in einer Dreierkoalition, wo alle Parteien relativ unterschiedliche Weltanschauungen haben, liegen diese Dokumente absichtlich weit weg von dem eigentlichen Gesetzesentwurf, der dann dem Bundestag präsentiert wird. In meinem Büro wurde viel hypothetisiert, wer daran Interesse haben könnte, die Verhandlungen noch vor Beginn zu torpedieren. Diese Dokumente werden oft direkt vor dem Verhandlungsbeginn an die Verhandler der anderen Regierungsparteien geteilt, so dass die Verhandlungen schneller und reibungsloser verlaufen können. Daher kam dann die Vermutung, dass eine der Parteien, die eigentlich am liebsten gegen das GEG stimmen würde, an eine der ihnen freundlichen (und den anderen Parteien feindselig) gegenüberstehende Presse 'geleakt' wurde.

Ein paar Tage danach, wurde ich frühmorgens zu einem Lobby Meeting eingeladen. Als ich zum Sonnenaufgang dann in das schicke Hotel Adlon eintraf, begegnete mir eine mir fremde Szene. Das Hotel Adlon liegt direkt am Brandenburger Tor, gilt als Adligste Hotel in ganz Berlin, dessen Hauptklientel von fremden Diplomaten und Industriegiganten besteht. Ich, in Jeans und Hemd, wurde zu einem Seitenzimmer geführt, wo ich meinem Bundestagsabgeordneter und drei Lobbyisten begegnete, die mir sagten,

dass ich mir doch bestellen sollte, was ich will. Nach ein Paar Lattes und einem ausgiebigen Frühstücksteller, traf dann auch der Verhandler einer der anderen Regierungsparteien ein. Der letzte Verhandler von der dritten Partei kam nicht, da er zur selben Zeit sich mit dem Lobbyisten eines Naturschutzbundes traf. Dies provozierte ein paar dumme Sprüche seitens des anderen Verhandlers. Im eigentlichen Meeting wurde dann diskutiert, wie man das Gesetz schreiben könne, dass möglichst wenig Kosten bei der Industrie rauskamen und man gab uns eine Kopie deren Ideen, wie das konkret aussehen könnte. Dies wurde prompt enthusiastisch von dem Verhandler der anderen Regierungspartei angenommen. Auf dem Weg vom Hotel in das Büro im Paul-Löbe-Haus sagte mir mein Bundestagsmitglied, dass ihre Forderungen nicht zumutbar waren, und probte mich zu überlegen, ob ihre Ideen mit meinen Werten vereinbar waren.

Das GEG wurde aber nicht nur mit anderen Fraktionen diskutiert. Innerhalb der SPD gibt es auch verschiedene Flügel, die konservativen Mitglieder des Seeheimer Kreises, die progressiven Mitglieder der Parlamentarischen Linken (PL), und die Netzwerker, die zwischen beiden Flügeln stehen. Mein Bundestagsabgeordneter war Mitglied der PL und der Netzwerker. So kam

es, dass ich bei den internen Diskussionen der PL mit am Tisch saß. Denen ging es allem voran darum, dass Einzelpersonen, die sich nach einem Arbeitsleben ein Eigenheim kaufen oder die mieten, nicht die Kosten dafür tragen, dass ihre Gasheizungen ersetzt werden müssen. Soziale Gerechtigkeit wurde in dieser Diskussion großgeschrieben und es wurden verschiedene Finanzierungsmodelle diskutiert, sei es durch den Staat oder die Industrie.

Wer sich mit den GEG-Verhandlungen auskennt, weiß, dass vieles auch in der Presse diskutiert und verhandelt wurde. Die CDU, als größte Oppositionspartei, war klar gegen das Gesetz. Unter dem Slogan 'Fair Heizen statt Verheizen' haben sie eine Kampagne gegen das Gesetz gestartet. Meine Rolle dabei war, Notizen zu machen, woraus eine Strategie entwickelt wurde, um diese Kampagne zu entschärfen. Meine Arbeit wurde um einiges erleichtert, als die erste Frage auf der CDU Pressekonferenz war, wer die Menschen waren, deren Gesichter für die Kampagne benutzt wurden. Es stellte sich nämlich heraus, dass diese Personen alle CDU-Parteimitglieder sind, und einige sogar im Konrad-Adenauer-Haus (Die CDU Parteizentrale) arbeiteten. Obwohl diese Kampagne immer noch passierte, war sie durch diese eine

Frage der Presse schon zu Beginn entschärft.

Insgesamt hat mir meine Zeit in Berlin, der Blick hinter den Vorhang, wenn man will, sehr gefallen. Die Arbeit hat Spaß gemacht und ich durfte hautnah ein wegweisendes Gesetz mitverfolgen und kann seitdem viel besser die Risse in der Regierungskoalition nachvollziehen. Ich kann jeder Person, die sich für Politik interessiert, es nur empfehlen, sich auch zu bewerben!