Landscapes of Holocaust Postmemory

Brett Ashley Kaplan

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For Anya, Melia, and Sasha

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Prologue and Acknowledgments

This book began in 2005 with an invitation to Germany proffered through my friend and colleague, Matti Bunzl, an anthropologist of contemporary art, Austria, and Jewishness. The photographers who invited me, Luke Batten and Jonathan Sadler, of the New Catalogue collective, were documenting the rise of the Hotel InterContinental, in the Bavarian Alps on the site of Hitler's Berghof. Having already been to the Obersalzberg several times, and having produced a series of stunning photographs (some of which are printed in Chapter 3), Luke and Jon asked me to write a theoretical/historical essay to accompany their photographs, and off to Berchtesgaden we flew. I approached this study of the transformation of the Nazi complex into a lavish hotel via historical interest mixed with fascination and horror. As a literary scholar with a focus on Holocaust studies and aesthetics, I had always peered through the victims' lenses; learning the intricate details of Hitler's life, walking where he walked, scrambling through bushes to find the remains of the house where he lived—none of these are things I had ever imagined myself doing. On the Jewish side of my family, one never uttered the word "Hitler." If there was no way around it, if one absolutely had to speak it aloud, well then one had to spit afterwards. I worried that I was somehow supporting Hitler kitsch by literally walking where he had walked, imbibing beer and sausages at his Eagle's Nest—the whole project made me uncomfortable. But what struck me when we arrived on the Obersalzberg was that we have not really made sense of the distance between past and present, space and memory. Luke, Jon, and I were walking not where genocide occurred but rather where the Nazi elite, those who materially and lucratively benefited from genocide, frolicked, consumed, gloated, planned, and displayed the glories of the German war effort. And yet it was very hard to make sense of the abyss between the landscape of the 1940s and the landscape of the early 2000s. As I learned more and more about the Obersalzberg, for example, that Freud enjoyed mushrooming there before the war, the complexity of the distance between time yet not space deepened.

It was through studying the Obersalzberg that I discovered Lee Miller, an American photographer documenting the fall of the Third Reich for *Vogue*. Miller's compelling images resonate powerfully with explorations

of trauma and space. I became a little bit obsessed with her—with her rich and fascinating life, with what she represented as a free spirit. I began to see that what she was doing with photography, space, and memory, was closely linked to a project I had been working on for some time, Susan Silas's *Helmbrechts Walk*. I had discovered Silas while writing my first book, *Unwanted Beauty*, in which I discuss some of her responses to the German painter Anselm Kiefer's work—Susan has been a wonderful artist to analyze because she cares deeply about the Holocaust, and because she engages with ideas about photography and Holocaust representation. In discussions of recent photographic treatments of Holocaust memory it was Matti (again) who introduced me to Collier Schorr's work. I found her staged representations of young German men posing in Nazi uniform fascinating, disturbing, and problematic in productive ways. From Miller to Schorr is a long road: Miller photographed actual, often dead, Nazis, and Schorr, some sixty years later, photographed contemporary Germans posing in Nazi uniform. It is an arc that speaks volumes about the transformations in Holocaust representation from the immediate postwar period until the early 2000s. I began to see that the Holocaust was appearing the world over as the emblem *par excellence* of evil. This transformed my vision so that I could see things, read things, in the work of the South African writer J.M. Coetzee that had previously been largely invisible.

Indeed, we all wear our externally molded yet curious glasses. The world is colored for each of us by our Joyce, James, Shakespeare, postcolonial, gender, queer, race, and/or modernist frames. But if one were to see the world through my eyes one would be fully capable of mistaking the word "drama" for "trauma"; "dancing" for "Drancy"; and "ask" for "ash." After two decades of reading, thinking, and researching the subject, the Holocaust has been so indelibly seared into my consciousness that I find it everywhere. Over the years, to escape it, I have indulged in other reading—often of Coetzee. Because I was supposed to be avoiding the Nazi genocide, I was deeply suspicious of my own interpretation when I read Coetzee's *Disgrace* shortly after its publication in 1999 and discovered it to be full of Holocaust references. The inevitable return of the repressed: just as I tried to escape the Holocaust, I found myself absorbed in a text resonating with profound if disturbing traces of the Shoah. And then Coetzee's *Elizabeth Costello* appeared in 2003 and related the story of a difficult and ageing woman who cannot believe that the world does not recognize the murder and consumption of millions upon millions of innocent animals as a crime on the scale of the Nazi genocide. Costello endeavors to enlighten her unseeing fellow humans and utilizes comparisons to the Holocaust as an emotional battering ram to break through to an indifferent universe. Looking at the Holocaust in Coetzee's writing reveals how the event casts its shadow across global landscapes and how the traumas of apartheid and post-apartheid South Africa are influenced by their implicit comparison with the trauma of the Holocaust. Our relationship to global complicity,

evil, shame, and reconciliation are brought into focus by reading Coetzee's work through its always already there Holocaust inflection.

* * *

Landscapes of Holocaust Postmemory has been generously supported and I am exceedingly grateful to all the institutions and individuals who believed in this project. The early stages of this book were encouraged by a wonderful fellowship at the Illinois Program for Research in the Humanities, where I was a fellow under the rubric of "beauty"; I want to thank the then-director, Matti Bunzl, and my fellow fellows, especially Deke Weaver, for stimulating discussions throughout the year. This book was also supported by a fellowship from the Center for Advanced Study at the University of Illinois, and I am very grateful to the center for their excellent program. I completed this project in the 2009–2010 academic year during my tenure as the Judith B. and Burton P. Resnick fellow at the Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, D.C. My time at the USHMM has been nothing short of wonderful. The director of the center, Paul Shapiro, has been most encouraging; among the center's amazing, talented, and welcoming staff, Suzanne Brown-Flemming, Steve Feldman, Eric Steinhart, Jürgen Matthaeus, Robert Ehrenreich, Dieter Kuntz, and Traci Rucker have been exceptional. The librarians, Ron Coleman and Vincent Slatt, are impressively knowledgeable and up to the minute; they have both provided invaluable research help in the final stages of this book. The photo archivist, Judy Cohen, barely needs a computer to find exactly the images one searches for and she generously put me in touch with Morris Rosen, whose moving testimony contributed greatly to Chapter 5. The reference archivist, Michlean Amir, provided much help locating archival materials. It has been an absolute pleasure to share this fellowship with a group of brilliant Holocaust scholars with whom I have been fortunate enough to exchange ideas. Among these, Susan Suleiman, Sara Horowitz, Anna Holian, Lisa Peschel, Mia Spiro, and Cliff Spargo have been particularly lively interlocutors and I have felt honored to be in their company. Indeed, four of these fellows generously read sections of this book and provided extremely helpful and well-considered feedback. Susan performed a detailed reading of Chapter 4 that steered me away from one line of thought into a more subtle argument and Sara contributed many brilliant insights about the same chapter into how one might connect the disturbing desire for Hitler with the larger project of annihilation. Mia and Cliff both read drafts of the Introduction and offered detailed commentary that has improved it no end.

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one on Landscape and Memory and the other on Photography and Memory, and two undergraduate seminars on J.M. Coetzee; I thank the students in these classes for their stimulating questions and interesting ideas. Parts of this project were presented at the Association for Jewish Studies, the American Comparative Literature Association, the Modernist Studies Association, the Modern Language Association, and, at the University of Illinois, the Jewish Studies Workshop, the Art History Colloquium, and the Unit for Criticism. I am grateful to the audiences and co-panelists at these conferences, lectures, and colloquia for their invaluable input.

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Some of the material in *Landscapes* appeared in earlier forms elsewhere. I am grateful to George Rowe and Margaret Olin for allowing me to reprint in revised form "Masking Nazi Violence in the Beautiful Landscape of the Obersalzberg," *Comparative Literature* (Summer 2007): 241–268; and "Exposing Violence, Amnesia, and the Fascist Forest through Susan Silas and Collier Schorr's Holocaust Art," *Images: A Journal of Jewish Art and Visual Culture*, 2 (2008): 110–128. I am grateful to Luke Batten, Jonathan Sadler, Susan Silas, and Collier Schorr for permission to print their amazing images here. I also thank the Lee Miller Archives for the right to showcase some of Miller's images and the University of Illinois Research Board for supporting the reproduction of the photographs from this archive. Citations from *Life & Times of Michael K*, copyright (c) 1983 and *Foe*, copyright (c) 1986 by J.M. Coetzee used by permission of Viking Penguin, a division of Penguin Group (USA) Inc.

The writing of *Landscapes* was delayed by a "series of unfortunate events" (to borrow a phrase from one of Anya's books); thankfully, my

wonderful family and friends were entirely and beautifully care giving. I am endlessly grateful to my mother for her generosity, support, and righteous indignation on my behalf. The other members of my family, including my father, Ralph, step-father Marty, aunt Jen Jen, cousin Becca, and aunts Jean and Lyn were wonderful; Jen Jen, Becca, Steve, Joe, and Walt came all the way from England to Champaign when I needed to be with them and for this I will always be deeply grateful. My friends, including Lara and Donna, Amy and Gayle, Audrey and Maurice, Rob and Lilya, Jed and Andrea, Matti and Billy, Polly and Jen, Michael and Yasemin, Laurie and Carl, Melissa and Elena, Dara, Yaz, Jim and Renée, Janice, Anke, Kim and John, Catharine, Carol, Katharine and Bill, Jordana, Laura, Ania and Suvir, Adam and Nadia, Deke and Jen, Bill and Julia, Manuel e Nora, Harriet and Bruce, and many other generous souls provided compassion, empathy, love, and understanding way beyond any reasonable expectation; my gratitude is infinitely greater than can be adequately expressed. To my handsome, endlessly generous Sasha, out of backshadowed superstition I say: tawn.lhfrmswitf.ily. I marvel every minute at the grace of Anya Helene and Melia Reyes; I am utterly incapable of writing the immeasurable love that I carry for, with, and through them.

Introduction

> Landscape with urn beings.
> Conversations
> from smokemouth to smokemouth.
>
> —Paul Celan

What does it mean that President Obama was inaugurated in virtually the same space where slaves were sold? How do the spaces of the past stay with us through representations—whether literary or photographic? How has the Holocaust registered in our increasingly globally connected consciousness? What does it mean that this European event is often used as an interpretive or representational touchstone for genocides and traumas internationally? *Landscapes of Holocaust Postmemory* is about the geographical and psychological landscapes of the aftereffects of the Nazi genocide; it grapples with how space and memory connect and how the Holocaust travels through contemporary geographies. This book looks at historically and culturally diverse spaces, photographs, and texts that are all concerned with the physical and mental landscape of the Holocaust and its transformations from the postwar period to the early twenty-first century. On the one hand, natural spaces have a tendency to reclaim landscapes; on the other hand, we have a tendency to build vast monumental structures in order to remember traumatic events. A stark contrast always exists between reclamation—spaces moving on, landscapes encroaching—and memorialization—either in the more traditional monumental strain or the more experimental countermonumental strain. Yet sometimes monumental structures erase rather than commemorate. The tension between memory and forgetting is always brightly evident. As the generation of survivors shrinks, the cultural weight of maintaining memory shifts not only to subsequent generations but also in some sense to the landscape itself. As this project moves through physical spaces crucial to the Third Reich to photographs that grapple with representing trauma to literature that demonstrates the geographical reach of the Holocaust, the diversity of means of commemoration (and sometimes means of forgetting) comes into focus. Landscapes are aesthetic, representational, material; by employing the term in the context of discourses on the aftereffects of the Nazi genocide this book offers a new interpretation of how space, memory, and the multinational reach of the Holocaust intersect.

The Holocaust and fascism embed in the physical and mental landscapes of our era and are used for a surprisingly contradictory series of

political aims—from Holocaust denial to the sling of "fascist" at terrorists—that testify to the ubiquity and elasticity of the memory of World War II today. *Landscapes of Holocaust Postmemory* explores traumatic landscapes (both actual and literary) that encourage us not only to reflect upon what happened in places associated with the Nazi regime and its atrocities, but also to analyze the political and cultural stakes of the Holocaust. The emotional access offered through the landscapes presented in the texts I study here, like most landscape paintings, invite and seduce, but, precisely because they are anchored in a Holocaust context, thwart or disrupt the seductive appeal of landscape. Like the images in European landscape paintings of pastoral natural scenes, many of the spaces treated in this project appeal despite the presence of loss as the overwhelming sensation evoked by these representational and material landscapes. By examining the intersections of landscape, postmemory, and trauma this project offers new insights into the effects and uses of the Nazi genocide today.

Landscapes treats three primary objects of study: space, photography, and literature; it examines what Judith Butler terms the "circumscription on representability" in the case of Holocaust memory and postmemory ("Counting"). The landscapes in which traumatic events happened, or where perpetrators dreamed up violent scenarios, can bear only unstable witness. On the one hand, visible traces of the past remain; on the other hand, an inevitable covering up of these traces by the movement of the landscape as nature either reclaims it or human desires reshape and repurpose it occurs. In the case of photography, there is always, as Roland Barthes so beautifully found, at once what is within the photograph and that which must necessarily be excluded from the frame. The photograph's ability to represent, like any given space's ability to bear witness, is also always circumscribed. In the case of the literary texts examined here an uncanny return of the Holocaust registers a global presence and circumscribes attempts to compare it to other traumas; literature, good literature, gestures towards that which cannot appear in print.

The dynamic tension between memory and forgetting appears all over this project as it traces divergent iterations of our relationship to the past; throughout spaces rewrite. Geoffrey Hartman pinpoints the problem of this relationship to the past when he finds that any given moment "suggests a quintessence, a distillate of dreamlike images or fugitive feelings in so many forms that only a shape-shifting fantasy can capture them" (27). If anything, this books charts "shape-shifting" fantasies about landscape and memory. Part One considers transformations of a Nazi location that reflect larger political and cultural alterations. Part Two looks at three very different approaches to photography, gender, and space. Part Three examines the emergence of the Holocaust as an uncanny force embedded in the postcolonial landscape. Foucault's archaeology of history, filtered through Benjamin's archaeology of memory, haunts this book.

LANDSCAPE

Throughout I use the concept of "landscape" rather broadly to articulate spaces and their representations, including man-made artifacts or portraits. As described by W. J. T. Mitchell, Dennis Cosgrove, John Barrell, and other landscape theorists, there has been an expansion of "landscape" beyond paintings of nature to encompass political, economic, iconic, gendered, powered, and other valences of the term. I also use the concept to refer to psychological, imaginative, and literary landscapes. The implicit argument in stretching the term "landscape" in all these directions is that the Holocaust has become a global phenomenon. The concrete existence of spaces where events associated with the Nazi regime and its atrocities happened forces us to grapple with how time affects trauma, with how memory embeds in space. Susan Suleiman uses landscape to describe her work as making "excursions into an inexhaustible landscape dominated by memory, with its surrounding peaks: history, testimony, imagination" (*Crises* 9). Landscape can even be described as a "dimension of existence," as Svetlana Boym remarks while in the defunct Grunewald train station from which Jews were deported: "the past is not present as a symbol but as another dimension of existence, as another landscape that haunts our everyday" (194). As these examples indicate, the word "landscape" has already become part of the lexicon of how we treat Holocaust memory, but the implications of bringing spatial troping to this discourse have not yet been fleshed out.

Another instance appears in *American Jewish Loss after the Holocaust*, wherein Laura Levitt discusses how the Shoah touches the lives of many American Jews who may not have a direct connection with its traumatic events. It is striking that in her poetic descriptions of Abraham Ravett's films, Levitt turns to the metaphors of a "landscape of living memory" and a "landscape of loss." Levitt notes that his films bring "the viewer into the haptic, tactile landscape of living memory. He explores visually how the past remains a part of our everyday lives in the ways our imaginations and desires continually shape and reshape our engagements in the world" (43). She further records how "we are also plunged back time and time again into the dreamy landscape of loss in all of its idiosyncratic specificity" (55). To take another example of this metaphorics of landscape in Holocaust discourse, in discussing George Segal's grim representational sculpture, *The Holocaust* (1984), near the California Palace of the Legion of Honor in San Francisco, Leo Bersani and Ulysse Dutoit note that "the reassuring landscape of which these figures have become a part nowhere repeats . . . the violence they have suffered" (79). The reflections offered between the peaceful landscape where Segal's memorial stands, overlooking the Pacific Ocean, and the violence of the memorial resonate with the pacific surrounds that many survivors encounter when they travel to spaces of wartime violence.

Survivors often remark on the incongruity between the calm and indeed often beautiful scenes they find when they return to places wherein they had been debased and incarcerated. How could these now pacific sites have once been spaces of horror? Sara Horowitz describes the survivor Kitty Felix Hart arriving at Auschwitz with her son:

> She comes to Auschwitz in order that the place of atrocity may bear witness to that atrocity. But the peaceful scene laid before her belies the violence of her memories. At best, the present camp can serve as a silent prop for her own incursions into the realm of remembrance. At worst, its silence and pastoralism refute what she knows to be true. . . .
>
> Poking with her son in the ashy soil over the remembered site of a mass grave, she unearths a fragment of a bone. Triumphantly she holds up the fragment for her son . . . When narrative fails, eyewitness turns archaeologist. She has found an artifact, a remnant, a trace of the old Auschwitz corresponding to the language-trace that constitutes her stories . . . The peaceful landscape, which lies through silence, yields up its secrets grudgingly and only in fragments. (*Voicing* 95–97)

In this grim scene so delicately rendered by Horowitz, the landscape proves its instability as a witness; for this survivor-turned-archaeologist the human bone offers evidence that the landscape remembers. The tension manifests clearly between the instability of the landscape and the natural tendency to reclaim and grow over versus the weight of memories of spaces configured very differently—in this case to produce trauma—or versus the sight of spaces written over by vast monumental structures or edifices that offer monuments to forgetting.

The painter Samuel Bak similarly employs landscape in a Holocaust context by terming a collection of paintings *Landscapes of Jewish Experience* (1997). Bak, himself a survivor of the Vilna ghetto, explores Holocaust memory through landscape and portraiture. Lawrence Langer, one of the pioneers of Holocaust studies in the United States, has written much about Bak's work and consistently highlights the double meaning of "landscape" implied in Bak's title—both the physical terrain of ghettoization and the psychological terrain of the endless attempt to come to terms with and represent pictorially the traumas of the Nazi genocide. Langer describes how the "landscapes of Eastern Europe have been contaminated by mass graves," but then asks, "what possible harmonies can arise from this landscape of ruin?" ("Bak"). Langer thus articulates the experience of many survivors, such as Kitty Felix Hart, who feel a shocking disjunction between the beauty of the scenery around concentration camps and the horror of their memories.

POSTMEMORY

"Postmemory" is a term developed by Marianne Hirsch to describe "the relationship that the generation after those who witnessed cultural or collective trauma bears to the experiences of those who came before, experiences that they 'remember' only by means of the stories, images, and behaviors among which they grew up" ("Generation of Postmemory" 106). "Postmemory," as I use it throughout this book, more broadly refers to a kind of collective, cultural memory that reflects the aftereffects and afterimages of the multinational landscape of the Holocaust. This specifically connects to Hirsch's contention that "Postmemory's connection to the past is thus not actually mediated by recall but by imaginative investment, projection, and creation. . . . It is to be shaped, however indirectly, by traumatic events that still defy narrative reconstruction and exceed comprehension. These events happened in the past, but their effects continue into the present" ("Generation of Postmemory" 107).[1] Thus the relationship negotiated between past and present under the rubric of postmemory is one of reshaping that past and of interfacing with Derrida's déjà là—the ineluctable material that came before. This expanded "postmemory" articulates the reach of the Holocaust across diverse eras, genres, and geographies. By adopting Hirsch's term, this project moves beyond the more immediate experience of survivors toward a reflection on the traumatic events of the Nazi genocide no matter in or through which landscapes they are remembered, referenced, discussed.

Indeed, there is an increasing, sometimes controversial, interest in comparative genocide studies and in the exploration of how the Holocaust figures internationally. As will become clear throughout this book, I agree with the gesture to place the Holocaust in context with other traumas. Michael Rothberg's *Multidirectional Memory* (2009) examines the contemporary nature of Holocaust discourse and finds that memory "is not afraid to traverse sacrosanct borders of ethnicity and era" (17). Rothberg also notes, "The spread of Holocaust memory and consciousness across the globe . . . has contributed to the articulation of other histories—some of them predating the Nazi genocide, such as slavery, and others taking place later. . . . Public memory of the Holocaust emerged in relation to postwar events that seem at first to have little to do with it" (6–7). Indeed, Rothberg brings out in his brilliant study how historically and geographically distinct traumas nonetheless speak to each other, their legacies touch each other (in Levitt's terms), and one need not be so surprised to find this rich and complex dialogue. Smart and engrossing works by scholars including Estelle Tarica and Debarti Sanyal contribute to our understanding of the Holocaust in Latin America and the French colonial imaginary, among other locations. As these works attest, the world is replete with literary and visual references to the Nazi genocide, but this is

not an exhaustive survey; rather, the works included in this project cohere as particularly compelling stories that trace a trajectory through the landscape of Holocaust postmemory.

Reflecting the relatively recent diversification of discourse on the Nazi genocide, many Holocaust museums now feature art that addresses slavery, the Cambodian genocide, the genocide of Native Americans, conflicts in Indonesia, repression in Latin America, and the Armenian genocide, among other unfortunate histories and current events. The Spertus Museum, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., the Illinois Holocaust Museum, and others house works that reflect their mission to link the Nazi genocide with other global traumas. This is part of a laudable effort to see the Holocaust in an international context and implicitly argues against the prioritization of the Nazi genocide as beyond comparison. One of the most arresting exhibits at the Illinois museum is Carrie Mae Weems's *Ebo Landing from the Sea Islands* (1992). In this triptych, two images of empty landscapes flank text in the middle (see epigraph to Chapter 9). The photographs depict palm trees blown down, marshy, watery ground; like the empty landscape that confronted Kitty Felix Hart upon returning to Auschwitz, the images in Weems's work require genocidal context to make sense. The trauma of the slave landscape forever reflects its haunting by slavery's victims. This palimpsest reverberates with the continued presence of the Holocaust in the memory of its survivors and the postmemories of successive generations who have overlaid the contemporary landscape with echoes of the past.

Landscapes of Holocaust Postmemory is divided into three interrelated parts, each containing three chapters that offer interdisciplinary, multinational studies of the political, cultural, physical, and psychological effects of the past on the present as represented in space, photography, and literature. Part One, "Burning Landscapes," examines the myths, literature, images, and transformations of the former Nazi second seat of power, the holiday complex on the Obersalzberg where Hitler built a Berghof frequented by foreign diplomats; the myths surrounding the beauty of this mountain are at the heart of Nazi ideology. That, in 2005, a five-star Hotel InterContinental could open just a two-minute walk from the Berghof would have been inconceivable until sufficient time had gone, until those who remember the Nazi complex had largely passed. The brief but fervent media storm around the InterContinental dissolved, and guests currently dip into a beautiful pool on the very spot where the Third Reich's elite frolicked. "Burning Landscapes" grapples with rewritings of a former perpetrator site into a space of commercialized forgetting. The elapse of time and the desensitizing effects of Holocaust saturation mean that a recreation spot can flourish in this troubled landscape.

Part two, "Burning Images," treats the landscape and its connection to the victims of the Nazi genocide via an examination of photography. These

chapters focus on three American photographers who chose to interact with the European landscape of the Holocaust with very different aims and results. Some of this work reflects the scene described by Dagmar Barnouw: "nothing was more clearly visible than the devastated, broken German army, cities destroyed and transformed into moonscapes, ghostlike people living in ruins, and the brutalized victims of the concentration camps" (x). Other work examined in this section finds that, while the landscape might grope toward amnesia, this photography insists on memorialization and contributes to salvaging the landscape tradition from the taint of fascist ideology.

Part Three, "Burning Silence," is a meditation on silence, complicity, guilt, and the appearance of the Holocaust in the works the South African author J. M. Coetzee. Just as the Holocaust raises intractable, unanswerable questions about evil, reading Coetzee's work through his long-standing interest in this genocide does not offer pat answers; there is no one "reason for" or "intention behind" these references to the Holocaust and Jewishness. Rather, these references accumulate into an unnerving, uncanny sense that the world's traumas are interconnected, and inevitable, that the geographical and psychological landscapes of Holocaust postmemory do not line up neatly.

This book explores the landscape of Holocaust postmemory in some of its various guises and brings us closer to understanding the elusive connection between the space of memory and the space of landscape. *Landscapes* offers a vision of how the Holocaust is manifest in various spaces, photographs, and literatures from diverse national contexts that approach trauma and its places in complex and engaging ways, but that are not limited to one approach or one "answer," to the enduring questions that haunt all discussions of the Holocaust. Walter Benjamin, our keenest student of the intersection between space and memory, most aptly describes the archaeological nature of memories buried in the landscape:

> He who seeks to approach his own buried past must conduct himself like a man digging. This confers the tone and bearing of genuine reminiscences. He must not be afraid to return again and again to the same matter; to scatter it as one scatters earth, to turn it over as one turns over soil. For the matter itself is only a deposit, a stratum, which yields only to the most meticulous examination what constitutes the real treasure hidden within the earth; the images, severed from all earlier associations, that stand—like precious fragments or torsos in a collector's gallery—in the prosaic rooms of our later understanding. . . . Fruitless searching is as much a part of this as succeeding, and consequently remembrance must not proceed in the manner of a narrative or still less that of a report, but must, in the strictest epic and rhapsodic manner, assay its spade in ever-new places, and in the old ones delve to ever-deeper layers. (*Reflections* 26)

Part I

Burning Landscapes

The Transformation of Hitler's Holiday Retreat

1 The Obersalzberg

> There was a time when archaeology, as a discipline devoted to silent monuments, inert traces, objects without context, and things left by the past, aspired to the condition of history … in our time history aspires to the condition of archaeology, to the intrinsic description of the monument.
>
> —Michel Foucault

While strolling amid the awesome beauty of the Obersalzberg, just above the Bavarian town of Berchtesgaden, it utterly chills to realize that the dank, mossy, overgrown ruins embedded in the landscape are remnants of the places where Hitler vacationed, entertained world dignitaries, and held meetings of strategic and military importance. Incongruously abutting this melancholy landscape, a huge, new, unbelievably shiny, glass and steel, horseshoe-shaped, five-star InterContinental Hotel shimmers. A pleasure palace for well-heeled tourists now mingles with the former site of an important Nazi holiday spot, Hitler's Berghof, which came to be widely understood as the Nazi spiritual home. But this complicated landscape, drenched with memory-catalyzing objects testifying to the huge complex that once dominated the mountain, shields a vast bunker system that lies below it. The moist and dewy tunnels where water dribbles down the walls offer a remarkable testament at once to the failure of the Nazi project and to the endurance of neo-Nazis who have stenciled the walls extensively. While the aboveground topography witnesses a battle between memory and forgetting, the bunker system stubbornly works toward remembrance—although often not of the victims but rather of the perpetrators. For below the beautiful mountain, swastikas, anti-Semitic, and anti-queer slogans still proliferate; on the walls, in English, one finds "No Commie Jew Fags."

What do we make of this place? What does it say about our early twenty-first century moment that we can vacation where Hitler did? How do we understand the memories that spaces hold? Studying the rise of a luxury hotel on this beautiful, troubled mountain allows us to reflect not only on the curiosities of this particular site, but also on larger questions about how the ghosts of the past inhabit the present. The Obersalzberg has gone from a place where Freud enjoyed gathering mushrooms, to a place where Hitler and many other high-ranking Nazis vacationed and plotted, to a U.S. Army recreation center, to a luxury resort. In what follows I examine what it means to say that the land is, to use Margaret Olin's words, "tainted

Figure 1.1 Bunker Graffiti. Luke Batten. Image courtesy of Luke Batten.

ground" (3). While Part One, "Burning Landscapes," focuses on a particular Nazi site, this discussion of the transformation of spaces with difficult histories is applicable to other situations. Those concerned with ground zero—the site of the 11 September 2001 terrorist attack in New York—struggle with how to incorporate a history of violence and the memory of the victims into the new form of that particular place. And, of course, there are sites all over the world where brutal events occurred, from private scenes of domestic violence to the killing fields of Cambodia, from the massacres in Armenia to the bombings in Afghanistan. As Kenneth Foote details in *Shadowed Ground*, landscapes and spaces of violence are treated very differently depending on the choices of the communities or families affected. In some cases a need arises to eradicate the site of violence, in other cases to preserve it as a memorial, and in others to reintegrate the site back into the "normal" landscape of daily life. The Obersalzberg was not a scene of violence, it was not a concentration camp; it was an immensely important strategic and propagandistic Nazi site. To be sure, the beautiful landscape unwittingly supported a violent regime. But unlike concentration camps that have become memorials and unlike daily spaces of violence that meet diverse ends, memories of the Nazi time on the Obersalzberg have to account precisely for this curious absence of violence in the very space where one of the world's most violent regimes plotted and imagined a world shaped by eradication. "Burning Landscapes" outlines some of the fascinating history of the Obersalzberg, analyzes Sybille Knauss's novel *Eva's*

Cousin (2000), looks at some curious photo albums, and finally examine the lavish Hotel InterContinental built in 2005.

In November 1938 the British magazine *Homes & Gardens* featured a gushing article detailing the delights of Hitler's holiday chalet on the Obersalzberg. "The site commands the fairest view in all Europe," the starry-eyed author and photographer, Ignatius Phayre, noted. "The curtains are of printed linen, or fine damask in the softer shades. The Führer is his own decorator, designer and furnisher, as well as architect" (194). The article goes on to describe the "delightful" and "lovely" daily routine maintained by Hitler on the Obersalzberg. Granted, when the article went to press *Kristallnacht* (9 November 1938) had not yet happened, World War II had not yet exploded, and what we now know as the Holocaust had not yet accelerated. Nonetheless, in the first five years of the Hitler dictatorship, the local and international press was full of accounts of Nazi violence so no one could legitimately claim, as the peaceful images of the Berghof suggest, that the Nazi regime would become a pacific force in Europe.[1] That *Homes & Gardens* would have made the choice to fawn over Hitler and his chalet so conspicuously seems to our early twenty-first century consciousnesses, incredible, immoral, ridiculous. Yet the kinds of photographs that accompany the article formed a crucial aspect of the Nazi propaganda machine because the idealization of the Obersalzberg became a linchpin in the Nazi plan to rationalize the war; if we only struggle through, Nazi propaganda maintained, we can all bask in Bavarian folk culture. "Frauen Goebbels and Göring," Phayre discovered, "in dainty Bavarian dress, arrange dances and folk songs" (195). Thus the *Homes & Gardens* essay paints the Obersalzberg as a folksy mountain trading on Bavarian nostalgia and Nazi kitsch that can willfully ignore the violence that had always been an inherent part of the Nazi regime; this kind of nostalgia bolstered Hitler's coupling of the city as a degenerate, Jewish space and allowed the regime to oppose the "danger" of the cosmopolitan influence with the supposed simplicity of mountain folklife.[2] The Obersalzberg is a site of beauty and cleanliness that lies at the heart of the Hitler cult.

Timothy Ryback notes that Hitler "chose this mountain in the Bavarian Alps for conceiving and engineering many of his most momentous acts of governance" (*Hitler's Private Library* 152). The Obersalzberg is almost always represented, in the view of an American soldier portrayed in the film *Band of Brothers* (which details the 101st airborne division's victorious arrival at the Eagle's Nest) as the Nazi spiritual home.[3] This enduring image of the Nazi spiritual home stems from several factors: Hitler's attraction to the area was heightened by the proximity of the Untersberg, a mountain that, as the brothers Grimm document, is legendary for its association with mighty but sleeping kings whose awakening will herald an Armageddon that will in turn usher in a new Golden Era. Hitler, who was intensely attracted to German legends, saw himself as such a king and made sure that the famous panoramic window of the Berghof faced

the Untersberg. As Heinrich Hoffmann, Hitler's foremost photographer, remembered, "the most wonderful thing of all was the superlative view from the windows of the wild massif of the Untersberg, in which, according to legend, the Emperor Friedrich Barbarossa had taken up his abode" (*Hitler Was My Friend* 185). In addition, because the area was fenced off after 1937 and was thus only accessible to important Nazis and their guests, the Nazi complex itself took on a mysterious, mythical quality. The contemporary press was full of speculation about the Führer's activities on the mountain, and toward the end of the war the Allies believed that Hitler was building a vast "Alpine Fortress" from which he intended to make his last stand. From 1936 onwards the Obersalzberg was also the place where Eva Braun, Hitler's supposedly secret mistress, was primarily living. The rumors circulating around Braun contributed to the mythical quality of the mountain and are extensively explored in *Eva's Cousin* (see Chapter 2). These and many other mysteries surrounding the mountain have made the Obersalzberg a rich source for artistic imaginings about the Nazi spiritual home. Among the texts set on the mountain are Aleksandr Sokurov's interesting film *Moloch* (1999), Harry Mulisch's Dutch novel *Siegfried* (2001), and a passing reference in John Banville's novel *Shroud* (2002).

The Obersalzberg complex was important in furthering the Nazi insistence on a premodern (and, in the context of the Weimar era, a premodernist) image of "simplicity." Yet the dark complexity of the initial incarceration of thousands of communists, the assault on the church, the devastating murders of the mentally and physically handicapped, the slaughter of thousands of Poles, the execution or incarceration of thousands of critics of the Nazi regime, and of course the genocide of homosexuals, gypsies, and millions of Jews, all of which was achieved in the name of fiercely defending this premodern "simplicity," was masked by Nazi propaganda executed on the Obersalzberg. While some of these propagandistic images featured scenes of the Nazi inner court engaged in intense, world-transforming deliberations, the majority featured the ultimately false representation of the Berghof as a space of connection with the people and as the one place where Hitler could be human. The dual, modern/antimodern nature of the Nazi project finds its perfect representation in the dual bunker-to-hotel structure of the Obersalzberg. No doubt the Obersalzberg, its history, and the many photographic, filmic, or novelistic texts it has inspired fascinate; but every fascinated person with this area is not by a long stretch a neo-Nazi. As early as 1955 Obersalzberg historians such as Josef Geiss, whose work I cite extensively here, found themselves defensive about their fascinations with the Obersalzberg. Geiss, who reissued his history of the Obersalzberg multiple times, was taken to task for what some perceived to be his Hitlerian bent. In the 1972 reissue of his 1955 history of the Obersalzberg, Geiss asks: "Who really thinks that all those visitors only come to the Obersalzberg to feel some of Hitler's and Eva Braun's spirit? This would mean that the many U.S. generals, the high foreign politicians, and even many

German ministers of our time could be accused of the same intents" (23). Geiss criticizes Nazism and remains supremely nostalgic for the time before the Third Reich, the time of Mauritia Meyer and the Pension Moritz when "simple" country living combined with artistic sensibilities. Geiss describes the arrival of the fascists thusly: "Green meadows and forests became ugly sites of construction. Pretty country- and boarding houses were torn down and modern stone buildings were erected. Instead of peace-loving and solitude seeking resort guests only politicians, people in party-uniforms, and horrible fanatics arrived" (65).

As these comments indicate, the Obersalzberg presents an interesting case for the endless debates about the modernity of Nazism; some scholars argue that, because the Nazi regime relied heavily on modern propaganda techniques and advanced military technology, because it perfected the technology of genocide by creating killing centers, Nazis should be considered as quintessentially modern (see Bauman). Other scholars argue, on the other hand, that the profound emotional ties binding Hitler to the masses depended upon his ability to project himself as a "man of the people" who would restore German greatness by mining the greatness of the past. Hitler constantly compared himself to Frederick the Great (1712–1786) and Goebbels gave Hitler the gift of Carlyle's multivolume biography of Frederick in the bunker; at the very end of the war, Goebbels "read Carlyle's *Frederick the Great* to comfort his leader, and not without effect" (Miskolczy 130).[4] Hitler also relished self-aggrandizing comparisons to Bismarck, Napoleon, and others, and he constantly evoked Teutonic myths of sleeping kings ready to reawaken at the right historical moment. The image Hitler projected from the Berghof was distinctly premodern; a man of nature, sometimes in lederhosen, caballing with the animals. Yet below the Obersalzberg complex, as the war raged on and the tide was turning against Germany, Hitler ordered a huge bunker system to be created deep within the mountain. One of the Obersalzberg historians, Florian M. Beierl, describes exploring the bunker system as a child, and recounts several complicated rumors about additional bunker-level complexes whose existence was never recorded by the Nazis but whose remains are visible today.

Today, one can leave the glories of the mountain air and enter the bunker at two points: through the documentation center and through the Hotel zum Türken. The Türken is very close to the site of the Berghof; during the Nazi era the owners of the Türken, the Schuster family, who were initially Nazi supporters but who complained about the noise and unruliness of Nazi gatherings that took place in their hotel, were forced to flee so that the hotel could become a military barracks; after the war the hotel was returned to the daughter of the prewar owner (and was the only original site returned to a pre–Nazi era owner).[5] At the Türken these days, one pays a few euros and goes through a turnstile into the dank, black world of the bunkers. On the walls Nazi sympathizers have drawn Swastikas and others have crossed them out; on the walls, in English, one also finds the kinds of unfortunate

commentary pictured in Figure 1.1. It is, therefore, highly problematic that Ingrid Scharfenberg, who ran the Hotel Türken, claimed in 1995 that "there have been no skinheads or their like around here" (qtd. in Weigelt). To the possible objection that the Swastikas I found in the Türken bunker were scribbled after 1995, note that a journalist found "Heil Hitler" and "Tot zu den Juden" (death to Jews) graffitied there in 1984 (see D. Rose). In other words, neo-Nazis, anti-Semites, homophobes, Nazi sympathizers, and others who share their views continue to visit the Obersalzberg as an homage site, and they broadcast their adulatory visits on the Web.

The idyllic image of Hitler feeding deer aboveground on a gorgeous day finds its antithesis here, belowground where the attempted eradication of Germany's communists, Jews, gypsies, protestors, and queers is celebrated. The juxtaposition of the city belowground and the ultramodern hotel atop the mountain thus functions as an excellent metaphor for the open, airy, happy premodernity of the Nazi image and the dank, dark, hidden technological modernity that strove to achieve Nazi ideals of purity, cleanliness, and harmony with nature. While the modernist aesthetics of the Weimar era were roundly dismissed by the Nazi regime, they were sporadically incorporated into Nazi architecture. Thus, clean divisions between modernist and fascist aesthetics can be hard to maintain. Yet, the Haus Wachenfeld, the simple Alpine house that Hitler bought in 1933 and transformed into the more substantial and impressive Berghof by 1937, adheres to Bavarian country architectural norms far from the modernism expressed in urban Weimar era and even Nazi structures.

Not only did Hitler construct the elaborate Berghof, but other high-ranking Nazis built or renovated holiday homes nearby, including Architect and Armaments Minister Albert Speer, Reichsmarschall and Luftwaffe head Hermann Göring, and Hitler's powerful secretary Martin Bormann. No doubt in part because of the beautiful Alpine landscape, Hoffmann took many of his most important propaganda images of the dictator on the Obersalzberg. Some of the most kitschy of them feature Hitler, Swastika clearly visible on his arm, posed against the mountains that, we are no doubt meant to believe, seem to be lending their strength to the dictator (see Hoffmann, *Bergen*). Others feature Hitler interacting with children, animals, thousands of adoring fans, or other Nazis (see Hoffmann, all). As an indication of how important the Obersalzberg was in Nazi propaganda, consider that one of Hoffmann's propaganda books, this one for the eyes of occupied France, *Un chef et son peuple*, opens with a portrait of Hitler quickly followed by an image of the Berghof surrounded by mountains (very similar to Figure 1.2), bearing the following caption: "Au milieu de la grandeur et de la solitude de la nature, c'est ici que s'élaborent les grandes decisions politiques" ("In the midst of the grandeur and the solitude of nature, it is here that he [Hitler] takes his great political decisions"). Strikingly, Hoffmann and the French writer and avid Nazi supporter, Alphonse de Chateaubriant (who wrote the preface to *Un chef)* chose the photograph

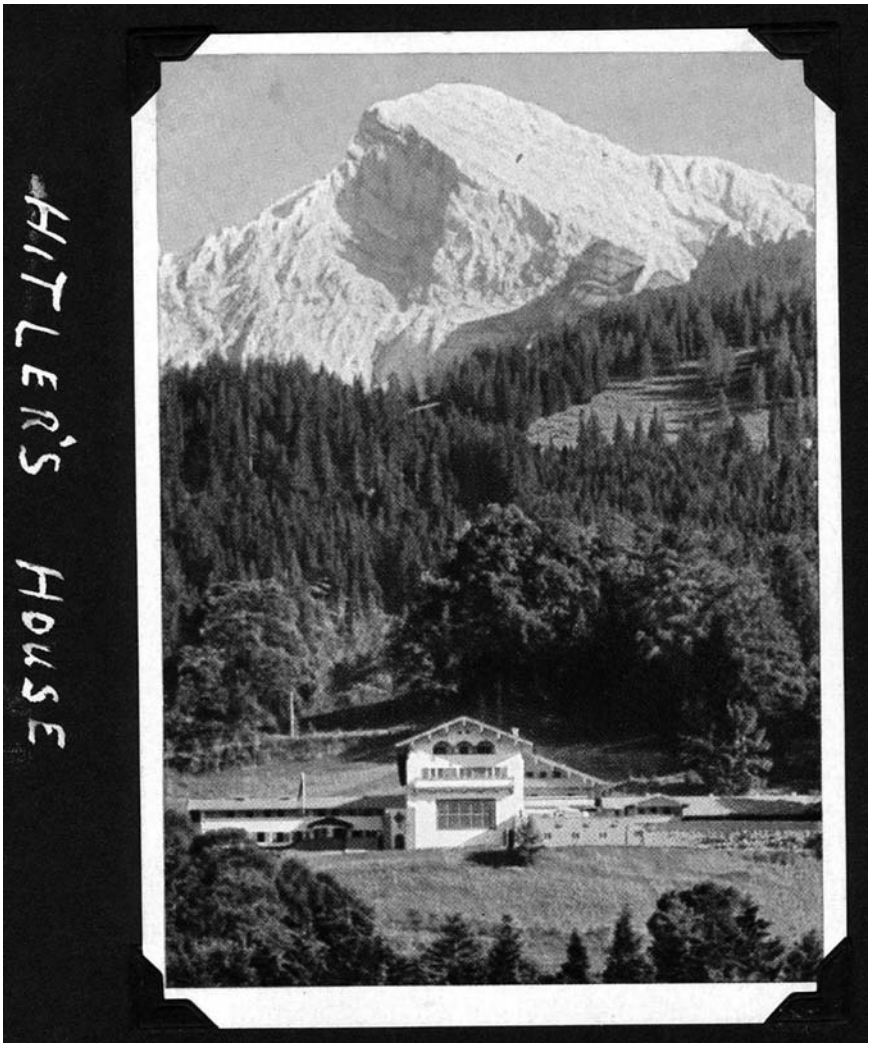

Figure 1.2 Hitler's House. Image courtesy of The Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.

of the Obersalzberg to frame a collection of propaganda images that begin here and end with a photograph of Pétain shaking hands with Hitler.[6]

Especially in the early years of the Third Reich, Hitler spent almost half his time at the Berghof; as a consequence the villa became a popular pilgrimage spot for the thousands of avid Nazi supporters who flocked there in the hope of catching sight of or possibly even touching the dictator. In 1937, due to Bormann's fears for Hitler's safety, the area was secured via a huge security fence and was then dubbed the Führergebiet; these security

measures circumscribed but did not deter the eager pilgrims. In 1937–1938 Bormann built the megalomaniacal *Kehlsteinhaus* ("Eagle's Nest") mountain teahouse, which still stands as a tourist attraction today (see Figure 3.3).[7] Hitler entertained (and often intimidated) many important global dignitaries and statesmen on the Obersalzberg, including British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain, the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, Italian dictator Mussolini, French Ambassador André François-Poncet, Hungarian leader Admiral Nicholas Horthy, and many others.[8] By the height of the war the Nazi complex on the mountain housed up to ten thousand people at any given time, including Hitler Youth, construction workers, and numerous visitors, in various barracks, hotels, and other accommodations. As Hoffmann puts it, "Bormann succeeded in turning Obersalzberg into a sort of second Berlin Chancellery" (*Hitler Was My Friend* 187).

By the time Hitler discovered the area, tourism on the Obersalzberg was well established. Berchtesgaden, the nearby lake Königsee, and the salt mines that give the area their name had already become established international tourist destinations. These salt mines were constructed in the twelfth century and were so productive that the Berchtesgaden area was dubbed as being blessed with "white gold" (Geiss 16). The salt mines ended up being important storage areas for some of the Nazi wealth amassed during the war. Frances Trollope's *Vienna and the Austrians* (1838) described the "savage majesty [of] the landscape" afforded by "mountains piled on mountains" (190) and also contained accounts of the author's descent into the salt mines. Access to the area improved with the opening of the Munich-Salzburg-Vienna train line in 1860 and the building of the Berchtesgaden railroad station in 1888. In 1877, Mauritia Meyer established Steinhausbäurin as an Alpine Inn (which became known as pension Moritz after her nickname). Fifty years after Trollope's visit, pension Moritz had become a haven for artists and others who enjoyed the "simple" life to which Meyer catered.

Pension Moritz later became the Hotel Platterhof because an extremely popular novel by Richard Voss, *Zwei Menschen*, featured a heroine named Judith Platter who was based on Meyer (Beierl 197). Voss, who had been friends with and possibly also the lover of Moritz (he was married, she was not), described Judith Platter and her beloved, Pater Paulus, as two people (hence the title of the novel) who are embroiled in a story of love, renunciation, guilt, and betrayal all set against the background of loss and reclamation of religious fervor. Mauritia Meyer was apparently such an exceptional figure that she was dubbed the "queen of the Obersalzberg" and is single-handedly credited with making the area the appealing retreat into which it blossomed. Although Meyer came from Unterwoessen and was therefore not regarded as a local, she nonetheless consistently dressed in "native costume" and performed the role of Bavarian peasant (Geiss 47). Meyer befriended the local painter George Waltenberger (whose house later became Haus Speer), who, at her request, painted legendary scenes

of the Untersberg myths to decorate the dining room. Hitler later became attached to the Waltenberger landscapes (Geiss 61, 51).

In their pioneering collection of Germanic folk legends, drawing from both oral and written sources and published in 1816, the brothers Grimm discuss various tales about the Untersberg, which they term the "Wonder Mountain"; during the Nazi era the Obersalzberg was dubbed the "holy mountain" (Geiss 186). It was imagined that the inside of the mountain had been "hollowed out and equipped with palaces, churches, cloisters, and fountains of gold and silver" (Grimm 35). Another story involves a group of giants who were supposed to live in the Untersberg, and other legends revolve around stunning deposits of gold purported to be hiding in the forms of sand or coal on the mountain. The Untersberg was also where Emperor Frederick I (1122?–1190), also known as Barbarossa, was said to reside until his beard had grown sufficiently long to wrap around a table three times, at which point "the days of the world will be at an end" (Grimm 35). In a competing version of this legend, "when the emperor wakes after sleeping in Wonder Mountain for centuries, he hangs his battle shield on a withered tree. The tree then sprouts green leaves, the signal for the Final World Battle that is to be followed by a new Golden Age" (Grimm 35). The Grimm brothers note a disagreement among scholars as to whether this legend involves Emperor Charles V or Frederick I, and the legend sometimes appears to take place in the Untersberg and sometimes in the Kyffhäuser mountain in Thuringia; in this version it is sometimes reported that, although half-asleep, Barbarossa would on occasion ask a boy to check if the ravens have stopped flying because if they ceased this was the sign that Barbarossa would be revived and would make Germany great again.

It is easy to see how these tales of splendor and wealth mixed with fantasies of Armageddon might have appealed to Hitler for the Manichean nature of these legends accorded perfectly with his extreme worldview. In 1929, Wilhelm Herzog (1884–1960), a pacifist, writer, and friend of André Gide who worked with the anti-Fascist journals *Pan* and *Forum*, published an important book on the Untersberg legends with which Hitler may have been familiar.[9] At any rate, the myths of the Untersberg would have been a strong draw to the nearby Obersalzberg; indeed, that Hitler named his invasion of the Soviet Union "Operation Barbarossa" indicates the importance of these legends to the dictator. And the myth of Barbarossa also extended to the Allies who believed that Hitler maintained an unconquerable fortress hidden in the cliffs (Chaussy 8).

In the early twentieth century, many artists set up residences in small Bavarian Alpine villages, in search of *völkisch* inspiration that they found lacking in the crush of the modern city. The American artist Marsden Hartley, for example, went to Bavaria several times in order to paint local peasants and their surrounding landscapes. Along with Wassily Kandinsky and others in the Blaue Reiter group, Hartley would often dress in lederhosen and other traditional Bavarian peasant dress. Hartley saw the famous

Passion play at the nearby Oberammergau; the production became a propaganda tool for the Nazis, especially as Hitler made a surprise appearance at the Oberammergau in 1934.[10] As Saul Friedman recounts, the Oberammergau was instrumentalized, much like the Olympics two years later, as a means of showcasing to the world the "happiness" of Hitlerian Germany. Even though, during denazification, the citizens of Oberammergau claimed to be only weakly interested in Nazism, they were on the whole avid supporters. When Hitler appeared unannounced for the 1934 production the crowds went wild with excitement at the sight of their "modern savior" (Friedman 128). Hartley would thus have witnessed Bavarian excitement at the presence of the dictator. Thus, while the Obersalzberg became crucial to the Nazis, the area had emerged as both a fashionable tourist destination and a favored spot for early twentieth-century painters who mined and mimicked the local folk culture for artistic inspiration.

While most of the holiday-goers and artists who frequented the Obersalzberg were gentiles, at least one, rather famous, Jewish intellectual vacationed there: Sigmund Freud. In Peter Gay's account, Freud zealously guarded his summer vacation time and would often enjoy being near Berchtesgaden with his family, "hunting mushrooms, gathering strawberries, going fishing, and taking hardy walks" (158). In the summer of 1922, Freud strenuously had to resist being engaged by wealthy vacationers, including some Americans, while in Berchtesgaden in order to protect his time in this "idyll." Freud was grateful for the respite from the emerging Viennese fanatical politics in the early 1920s that Berchtesgaden and its surrounds offered (Gay 417–418). Gay's description of Freud fending off wealthy American would-be patients highlights how Berchtesgaden had emerged as an internationally known vacation spot in the teens and twenties.

It was Hitler's political mentor, Dietrich Eckart, who first introduced him to the Obersalzberg in May 1923, after the failed Putsch. During this trip Eckart reported to Hanfstaengl that Hitler had "megalomania halfway between a Messiah complex and Neroism" (qtd. in Kershaw, *Hubris* 183). Hitler, who had been a two-bit scene painter and failed artist eking out a living selling watercolors in Vienna, transformed himself, after a stint in the army during the First World War, into a political leader of the then-emerging National Socialist Party (NSDAP). In 1923, he and other far-right populist politicos unsuccessfully tried to take over the German government. Because the courts were extremely biased in favor of the Hitlerians, Hitler was given a light sentence at a prison in Landsberg where he wrote the first part of *Mein Kampf*. In contrast, the second volume's writing occurred throughout the landscape of the Obersalzberg: a hut (provided by the Moritz/Platterhof innkeeper Bruno Büchner, which was later named the Kampflhäusl), the Deutsches Haus in Berchtesgaden, and the Hotel Platterhof. From 1923 to 1927, as Hitler's popularity was waxing and waning, he went to the Obersalzberg several times, and stayed in various hotels (including the Platterhof) or at friends' chalets. From 1928 to

1933, Hitler rented Haus Wachenfeld, and then after becoming Chancellor he secured his claim on the house. Göring, who had a house on the Obersalzberg before 1933 (Geiss 114), later claimed one of the best views of the mountains, where the InterContinental now stands.

Naturally, the presence of all these high-ranking Nazis meant that many important decisions and meetings took place on the Obersalzberg. For example, Nazi Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels reported on 26 March 1933 that, "[i]n the loneliness of the mountains" the Führer had decided that Germany's Jews had to be addressed.[11] Thus, Goebbels explains that for Hitler, the Obersalzberg was his "thinking place." Hitler himself echoes this sentiment and claims that his key decisions were taken on the mountain: "When I go to the Obersalzberg, I'm not drawn there merely by the beauty of the landscape. I feel myself far from petty things, and my imagination is stimulated. . . . By night, at the Berghof, I often remain for hours with my eyes open, contemplating from my bed the mountains lit up by the moon. It's at such moments that brightness enters my mind. . . . All my great decisions were taken at Obersalzberg" (136). At other moments Hitler describes his relationship to the landscape of his "thinking place": "A countryside of indescribable beauty. . . . I had become immediately attached to Obersalzberg. I'd fallen in love with the landscape" (174–175). And again, "Yes, there are so many links between Obersalzberg and me. So many things were born there, and brought to fruition there. I've spent up there the finest hours of my life" (178). Speer echoes these assessments by claiming that, "Hitler's stays on 'the mountain' provided him, as he often stressed, with the inner calm and assurance for his surprising decisions. He also composed his most important speeches there, and it is worth noting how he wrote them. Thus, before the Nuremberg Party Rally he regularly retreated to Obersalzberg for several weeks in order to work out his long speeches on basic principles" (88). Goebbels's, Hitler's, and Speer's recollections of the powerful decisions taken in the lonely mountains certainly colors the sense of the importance of the Obersalzberg to the history of the Holocaust. These descriptions underscore the Obersalzberg's strategic and inspirational centrality to the destructive choices made by the Nazi regime during the war. And all of the dictator's sentimental comments about the Obersalzberg stress that the beauty of the landscape fosters contemplation and thus helps to engender these disastrous decisions.

Some Nazis familiar with Hitler's life on the mountain claim that it was here that he delved into deep reading. Many historians, however, note that Hitler limited his reading to newspapers and trashy novels such as those of Karl May, of whom Timothy Ryback finds that Hitler "sought solace in Karl May the way others did in the Bible" (*Hitler's Private Library* xiii).[12] In 1933, Oskar Achenbach took a tour of the Berghof and found an entire shelf of May's books in Hitler's bedroom (Ryback, "Hitler's Forgotten Library" 82). Ryback notes on the one hand that several Hitler historians find that while his library may have been extensive, he never actually read

many of his own books. On the other hand, in Ryback's perusal of the Hitler library, found near Berchtesgaden and looted before being carted off to the U.S., he discovered marginalia that he attributes to Hitler. Much of Hitler's library can be found at the Library of Congress and, as Ambrus Miskolczy reports, "From the stamps in the books it is discernible that a significant part of the Hitler library came from the Berghof in Obersalzberg" (vii). Indeed, the collection at the Obersalzberg was either plundered by Allied soldiers, German citizens, and others, or stored in the ancient salt mines (Ryback, *Hitler's Private Library* 225). Irmgard Hunt, who was a child on the Obersalzberg, describes somewhat ironically the "good citizens of Berchtesgaden" taking "everything they could possibly carry or move" (204) from Göring's recently vacated house. Ryback includes a photograph of Lee Miller (see Chapter 4) seated at Hitler's desk amid scattered copies of some of Hitler's already picked through library (*Hitler's Private Library* 223). It is a testament to the occupational relationship between Germany and the U.S. that segments of Hitler's library remains close to the Capitol building; while ongoing debate about the dictator's reading habits continues, the mountain landscape he shaped to his needs was clearly vital to his imperial war efforts.

From 1936 to 1937 Hitler oversaw the transformation of the modest Haus Wachenfeld into what would become known as the Berghof. As Speer noted, "Hitler did not just sketch the plans for the Berghof. He borrowed drawing board, T-square, and other implements from me to draw the ground plan, renderings, and cross sections of his building to scale, refusing any help with the matter" (85). Speer, noting glaring shortcomings of the building, comments on Hitler's plan, "All in all, this was a ground plan that would have been graded D by any professor at an institute of technology" (86). More glaring still was a pervasive reek of gasoline that invaded the living room when Hitler's famous window was winched into the garage below. Thus, the large glass window, featuring a famously panoramic view of the mountains and an unusual ability to be entirely opened, symbolized Hitler's technological wizardry but also made the living room stink of petrol and was part of a generally bad design. One can read these design flaws as metaphors for Hitler's leadership style. As Kershaw stresses in his massive biography of Hitler, the dictator often refused sound military advice and eventually took control of virtually all aspects of military strategizing; his plans, while at first wildly successful, eventually proved spectacularly disastrous.

In commenting on the Berghof window, Lutz Koepnick notes that "Hitler conceived of this window as a self-effacing interface between exterior and interior spaces, between the landscapes of nature and those of civilization" (186). Thus while the Berghof at once symbolized the quiet country retreat of the dictator it also attempted to exhibit modern mastery of complex architectural tricks that make the landscape part of the interior. Koepnick continues to argue that "Hitler's overriding ambition [was] to disguise architecture as nature and spontaneity, to engineer a dreamlike semblance

of natural authenticity. . . . Hitler's Berghof was not meant to rest safely in its environment but to embody an organic extension of that very landscape in which it rested" (186).

The architecture of the Berghof reflected the conflicted representation Hitler projected from the Obersalzberg. On the one hand, he was supposed to be a "man of the people"; on the other hand, he aspired to the aristocratic class and fancied himself a consummate architect of buildings, city plans (viz the grandiose and unattainable Linz plan), and statecraft. Similarly, the Berghof was at once projected as a simple country residence and simultaneously served the function of impressing the many global VIPs who visited it. Geiss often points out the absurdity of the propagandistic portrayal of the Berghof as a "simple country house": "Party [i.e., NSDAP] photographers lied, when they published postcards of Hitler's house with the inscription 'The small lodge of Volkskanzler Hitler'" (69). Bormann, who had much more lavish tastes even than Hitler, similarly disguised his lush house as a simple residence. Geiss, who finds this appalling, notes, "Wood paneling on the outside of the house gave the building the camouflage of a simple country house, plain and modest. However, the interior was spacious and luxurious" (82). This kind of luxury, rampantly indulged in by the Nazi brass, was of course against the official Nazi doctrine of modest living.

The Obersalzberg was important in Hitler's attempt to transform his class status. Always very aware of his petit bourgeois origins, this upper-class resort area allowed him ample opportunity to rub elbows with the well-heeled holiday-goers who maintained Alpine residences. But, his background was always apparent to these chalet owners. For example, of a visit to his house in 1923, Ernst Hanfstaengl reported that Hitler's "awkward use of knife and fork betrayed his background" but that each "naïve act increased my belief in his homespun sincerity" ("Hitler's Friend" 45).[13] These comments of Hitler's then-close friend, Hanfstaengl, who later fell out of favor with the dictator and fled to North America, betray Hitler's class status but also the way in which the well-heeled were attracted by this "homespun sincerity." Under the heading "His [Hitler's] *faux pas* as an art expert," Hanfstaengl, whose family were patrons of the arts, describes in his memoirs taking a trip to a museum with Hitler, who pontificated about Rembrandt's Aryanness, "in spite of the many pictures he painted in Amsterdam's Jewish quarter" (*Unheard* 62), demonstrating a complete unfamiliarity with the great masters such that he unwittingly embarrassed himself by failing to distinguish Caravaggio from Michelangelo. Obviously, Hitler always maintained an awkward relationship to class. He strove to be a "man of the people," but he also wanted to mix easily with the elite; the Obersalzberg allowed him to project both images at once. Indeed, in addition to these class tensions, the Obersalzberg was the space of fulfillment for Hitlerian fantasies of artistic and architectural innovation, healthful living, and reincarnation in the form of a long-awaited Teutonic monarch.

On the one hand, in keeping with this almost entirely false image of natural "simplicity," the dictator wanted as little disruption of the environment as possible; on the other hand, a huge complex, housing thousands of people, could hardly be built without colossal disruption. Indeed, as Speer, an antagonist of Bormann, noted, he and Eva Braun resented "the coarseness with which he [Bormann] was raping the beauty of nature at Obersalzberg" (93). Although Hitler did not commission it, the remarkable construction of the Eagle's Nest also betrays this curious relationship to nature. In Sybille Knauss's words, the Eagle's Nest represents the "imperious manner in which its architects imposed their structure on the mountain," indicating the "presumptuous violence of the act" (5–6). While the Eagle's Nest, perched on top of a mountain accessible via a lavish elevator, allows views over the whole area and could be seen as a marvelous place from which to "contemplate nature," its very construction all but destroyed the landscape. Bormann had the Eagle's Nest built as a way to stun and impress foreign visitors and to offer a visible marker to the area of who resides in the panopticon. Indeed, the Eagle's Nest, the only remaining important Nazi building in the Obersalzberg area, can be seen almost everywhere from the surrounds and, whether standing out in midday on a seemingly impossible perch or illuminated at night, it towers above the valley and remains a heavily visited tourist destination today.[14]

The Eagle's Nest was built from diverse materials, including a great deal of Untersberg marble, and Bormann wanted the architectural style of the building to meld in with the beauty of the landscape. Its construction required more than thirty-five hundred workers (five of whom died and several others of whom were injured during construction) and enormous cost (approx €150 million in today's equivalent currency; Beierl 131). Several construction companies, architects, and engineers were called in to complete the project—indeed, its demands were so great that a separate engineering house for the Obersalzberg and Kehlstein areas was created in 1937. Beierl reports that "when the vastness of the project became known, it was widely believed that Bormann had lost his mind" (47). Indeed, it was Bormann, who was dubbed the "God of the Obersalzberg," rather than Hitler who created the Eagle's Nest, and Hitler apparently disapproved of the constant construction on the mountain, thus putting even more pressure on the engineers and workers to finish the grandiose project as soon as possible.[15] The entire construction of the road up the Kehlstein mountain and the building of the Eagle's Nest completed in 1938 took less than a year. Hitler, who disliked extreme heights, made a mere fourteen official visits to the Kehlsteinhaus, and perhaps a handful of unofficial visits; these visits were made, with one exception, between September 1938 and August 1939 (Beierl 117). In contrast to Hitler, Eva Braun frequented the Kehlsteinhaus as a respite from the often stifling atmosphere at the Berghof. Braun's adoration for the Eagle's Nest is portrayed in Sokurov's *Moloch* (1999), a film

that opens with actress Yelena Rufanova's sumptuous portrayal of Braun stretching and preening on its balconies.[16] In May 1945 Philip Hamburger noted that the Eagle's Nest "reveals Hitler's madness and his exquisite bad taste" ("Beauty" 70).

The French ambassador to Germany, André François-Poncet, described his visit to the Eagle's Nest in 1938. François-Poncet was powerfully struck by its majestic Alpine perch, and the Kehlsteinhaus invited him to question whether he had been transported to the realm of myth and legend:

> L'ensemble, baigné dans la pénombre d'une fin de journée d'automne, est grandiose, sauvage, presque hallucinant. Le visiteur se demande s'il est éveillé ou s'il rêve. Il voudrait savoir où il se trouve. Est-ce le château de Monsalvat qu'habitaient les chevaliers du Graal. . . . Est-ce l'oeuvre d'un esprit normal, ou celle d'un home tourmenté par la folie des grandeurs, par une hantise de domination et solitude, ou, simplement, en proie à la peur? (342–343)[17]
>
> The whole [Eagle's Nest], bathed in the fog of an autumnal evening, is grandiose, savage, almost hallucinatory. The visitor wonders whether he is awake or asleep. He would like to know where he is. Is this the Chateau of Monsalvant where the knights of the Grail lived?... Is this the work of a normal mind or that of a man tormented by the madness of grandeur, by an obsession of domination and solitude or, simply, in the grip of fear?

François-Poncet had introduced the Eagle's Nest as "un lieu extraordinaire" where Hitler liked to pass his days in good weather. Of course, we know that Hitler did not favor the Kehlsteinhaus and only went there a few times. But this account of the French ambassador's confirms its effectiveness as a form of Nazi propaganda.

According to Nazi diaries and other postwar recollections, apart from times when visiting dignitaries such as François-Poncet were in attendance, the routine at the Berghof could be utterly deadening. Hitler rose late and bored the "court" that surrounded him with the same tiresomely long speeches about Bolshevism, the Jews, and German glory. After a lengthy luncheon, each afternoon Hitler took a walk to his Mooslahner Teahouse. Here, despite strong coffee, Hitler often fell asleep; the court had to pretend that he had not snoozed and would pick up the thread of the prior conversation as soon as he awoke. Speer describes suffering what he jokingly termed "the mountain disease" and noted that he "felt exhausted and vacant from the constant waste of time" (91). But the atmosphere was different when an important visitor arrived. Braun, who lived at the Berghof from 1936 until she killed herself next to Hitler in 1945 in the Nazi Bunker below the Reich Chancellery in Berlin, sometimes had to be secreted away when dignitaries visited. But at other times, as Johanna Wolf reports, "We saw her [Braun] frequently in Berchtesgaden. She was very congenial and we often dined

together. Hitler was very fond of her. She was considered the hostess in Berchtesgaden and she was respected" ("Interrogation" 3).

One of the many key visits that occurred at the Berghof was that of British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain.[18] As Kershaw describes this 15 September 1938 visit, in order to avert a crisis, Chamberlain battled his fear of flying to accept Hitler's invitation for a meeting at the Berghof; when Chamberlain arrived, Hitler met him on the steps of the Berghof. This meeting offers a testament to how persuasive Hitler could be, especially in this glorious Alpine setting. After this event, Chamberlain wrote to his sister: "In spite of the harshness and ruthlessness I thought I saw in his face, I got the impression that here was a man who could be relied upon when he had given his word" (qtd. in Kershaw, *Nemesis* 112). Like François-Poncet, Chamberlain was much impressed by the Obersalzberg and its fantastic landscape. But the prime minister was frustrated at many points during his meeting with Hitler, at one moment declaring, "you're determined in any event to proceed against Czechoslovakia. If that is your intention, why have you had me coming to Berchtesgaden at all? Under these circumstances it is best if I leave straight away" (qtd. in Kershaw, *Nemesis* 111). Despite these ruffles, both Hitler and Chamberlain felt satisfied with their encounter—even though they seem to have misunderstood each other. This event was the lead-up to the Munich Agreement signed on 30 September 1938, by Hitler, Mussolini, Chamberlain, and the French premier Édouard Daladier that stipulated that Germany could take the Sudetenland but must agree never to war with Britain again. Obviously, Chamberlain's impression of Hitler as someone who keeps his word was a dramatic misreading.

As the war in Russia turned against Germany, Hitler began coming to the Berghof less and less and began spending most of his time in his mosquito-riddled, significantly less appealing military headquarters dubbed the *Wolfsschanze* in Rastenburg, East Prussia (now Poland: one can visit the Wolf's Lair on holiday tours). There was thus a stark transformation between the years 1933–1943, when Hitler could be found often at the Berghof, and when adoring crowds greeted him there, to the later part of the war when he retreated to the Wolf's Lair and no longer projected the image of the "man of the people" but was in fact entirely absorbed by military matters, especially, of course, conquering Russia (Kershaw, *Nemesis* 420). Hitler's last visit to the Berghof took place on 14 July 1944 (just a few days before the 20 July plot to kill him—see Chapter 9); from this last day at his "spiritual home" until the end of the war, Hitler split his time between the Wolf's Lair, Berlin, and various other, often hastily constructed, headquarters.

A huge amount of rumor circulated at the end of the war (and afterwards) about what exactly the Nazis were doing on the Obersalzberg. Some in the Allied command believed that the bunkers under the Berghof were to be Hitler's last stand and that they were stocked with years' worth of supplies; the Obersalzberg was dubbed by the Allies "Hitler's Alpine fortress." Speer,

who was at this point in the war armaments minister, ordered the German workers on the Obersalzberg to the front and had Czech and Italian laborers construct the elaborate bunker system (Geiss 165). As the bunker construction continued at a frantic pace, more and more extravagant demands were made by Bormann and Göring for the aesthetics of the bunkers; thus, what were originally planned as plain bunkers ended up including marble, wood paneling, and other luxuries (Geiss 168). From 1944 onwards, these bunkers were used daily, and on the day of the Allied bombing, thirty-five hundred were saved in the bunkers and only six died, with several others wounded (Geiss 189). However, while there had been several antiaircraft sites around the Obersalzberg, these had been abandoned before the Allies arrived. For the Allies' part, the French, British, and American forces were all eagerly competing with each other to reach Berchtesgaden first. As titles of military memoirs such as *Destination Berchtesgaden* indicate, reaching this "Alpine fortress" was a military priority (see Turner and Jackson).

During the final days of the war, so intensely captured in the film *Downfall* (2005, directed by Oliver Hirschbiegel), based on Joachim Fest's *Inside Hitler's Bunker* (2004), Traudl Junge's *Until the Final Hour: Hitler's Last Secretary* (1946), Speer's memoir, and other texts, many flights transported most of Hitler's staff from Berlin to Berchtesgaden, and a naval adjutant was ordered to destroy papers on the Obersalzberg. Hitler railed that his "generals wanted to have him drugged so that they could ship him off to Berchtesgaden" (qtd. in Kershaw, *Nemesis* 801–803). Göring had sent his wife and child to the Obersalzberg, had transferred half a million marks to his bank account in Berchtesgaden, and had trucks full of his looted art taken from Carinhall, his palace north of Berlin, to the Obersalzberg (Kershaw, *Nemesis* 799). The remains of his art collection, which has only just been catalogued by Nancy Yeide under the title *Beyond the Dreams of Avarice*, were found in a tunnel near Berchtesgaden by the 101st Airborne Division, who displayed it at a nearby inn with the sign: "The Hermann Göring Art Collection—Through Courtesy of the 101st Airborne Division." Someone in or traveling with the 101st captured this recovery of looted art and the footage includes bizarre scenes of soldiers carrying a painting down a pebbly path or loading Göring's statues onto the back of a truck. The film lingers on a close-up of the sign announcing that this vanquished Nazi's art was on display, courtesy of the U.S. Army (see "Berchtesgaden at Liberation"). Göring's ill-gotten loot was so numerous as to fill forty rooms of the inn and included the famously forged "Vermeer" that Göring had in his possession (believing, of course, that his copy of the *Christ and the Adulteress* was a priceless original, see "Obersalzberg" 28, 32–35). Göring sent a telegram to Hitler from Berchtesgaden claiming that, due to the law of succession put into effect in an edict of 29 June 1941, he was to take over command of the Reich and was set to surrender to the Western powers; Bormann, at Hitler's behest, wrote a telegram to Göring, stripping him of his powers and putting him under house arrest

at the Berghof, which was promptly surrounded by SS guards (Kershaw, *Nemesis* 808). Göring was captured by the Americans on 9 May, and was sentenced to death at Nuremberg—he poisoned himself in his cell before he could be hanged. Thus, until the very end of the war, the Obersalzberg complex was the scene of crucial events.

While in the bunker, Hitler's court pressed him to board one of the planes and leave for Berchtesgaden, but Hitler stayed in Berlin, although he equivocated as to whether or not to evacuate to the Obersalzberg. Johanna Wolf, one of Hitler's secretaries, went to the Obersalzberg by plane and her questioner at Nuremberg asked her if she expected Hitler to join her on the mountain. She responded:

> No, it was rumored that—and some people on Obersalzberg later told me that they all thought that sometimes he would come and join them but he did not say so but when we arrived down there and told them that we did not expect Hitler to join us, there, they were very disappointed. And when Fraulein Schroeder [another one of Hitler's secretaries] and I said after all we had been with him for such a long time, why he now sent us away, he said that is what he wished and there was nothing to be said against it. ("Interrogation" 17)

As Wolf's hesitant testimony demonstrates the Obersalzberg was seen, even at the very end of the war, as a refuge for the Nazi inner court. In Speer's description of his perilous flight into Berlin to bid farewell to Hitler, the architect notes that Hitler was still wavering as to whether or not to retreat to Berchtesgaden; when asked by Hitler what he should do, Speer unequivocally told Hitler he should stay in Berlin and not retreat to his "weekend house" (Kershaw, *Nemesis* 806). After finally deciding to remain in Berlin, Hitler apparently said, "I'd regard it as a thousand times more cowardly to commit suicide on the Obersalzberg than to stand and fall here . . . I can't lead through sitting somewhere on a mountain" and added that he did not want to be an "inglorious refugee sitting in Berchtesgaden and issuing useless orders" (Kershaw, *Nemesis* 810). Strangely, both Speer's terming the Berghof a "weekend house" and Hitler's referring to the Obersalzberg as "somewhere on a mountain" seem to downplay the essential role that the mountain retreat played in both the history and the propaganda of the Third Reich. After spending almost two years at the Wolf's Lair and Berlin, the propagandistic sheen of the powerful dictator framed by glorious mountains was never to be attained again. The Allies, for their part, believed in the symbolic importance of the mountain retreat and, with no actual strategic end, were intent on destroying the Berghof.

On 25 April 1945 the Allies bombed the Berghof and other sites on the Obersalzberg; on 30 April, after having lived in the bunkers in Berlin for some time, Hitler and Eva Braun took their lives; on 4 May, remaining SS

Title: The funeral pyre of the Third Reich, Hitler's house in flames
Location: Berchtesgaden, Germany
Date: 1945
Photographer: Lee Miller
Negative Number: 80-45
Notes: VN
Credit Line: © Lee Miller Archives, England. All rights reserved.

lee miller
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Figure 1.3 *The Funeral Pyre of the Reich, Hitler's House in Flames* (1945). Photograph by Lee Miller. Image courtesy of Lee Miller Archives, England 2009.

troops filled the Berghof with petrol and ignited it. Lee Miller (see Chapter 4) took a stunning photograph of her fellow photographer David Scherman watching the Berghof burn.

After this allied bombing, the many valuables in the Eagle's Nest were procured by members of the U.S. Army's 101st Airborne Division and other soldiers and looters and from there made their way into the hands of private collectors in the U.S. and elsewhere. One member of the 101st Airborne remembers that "legal looting" was eagerly looked forward to by U.S. soldiers: "I have heard stories at our reunions and such about several troopers who had found an immense fortune in Berchtesgaden, had buried it, and were going back someday to dig it up" (Burgett 159). Indeed, "Berchtesgaden turned out to be one of the most lucrative areas in Germany for pillaging by American troops" (Alford 61).

In a classic Steinism, Gertrude Stein, who visited the Berghof in August 1945, reported: "There are three million American soldiers there and each one of them has to have at least six souvenirs. Dear me. They call these objects liberated. This is a liberated camera. Liberated they are" ("Off We All Went" 58). While Stein was there she and members of the 101st Airborne Division stood on the remains of Hitler's balcony and "did Hitler's pose"—the *Sieg Heil* gesture. A striking photograph of them was published in *Life* magazine. Encircled by sturdy looking U.S. soldiers, Stein and the rest extend their right arms, looking off into the horizon. Behind them, the ruins of the Berghof, complete with graffiti scrawled in English, the American-sounding name "Dave" underlined and in capitals on the remaining wall behind them. Like the soldiers "liberating" Nazi goods, like Miller in Hitler's tub (Chapter 4), Stein on the balcony taking over "Hitler's pose" is a victorious gesture and one that indicates how, in 1945 at least, space was seen as open to glorious reinterpretation almost as soon as the perpetrators had fled.

Indeed, immediately after the war, many Americans, notably including Dwight D. Eisenhower and his wife Mamie, toured the remains of the Nazi "spiritual home." Eisenhower's 2 September 1945 trip to the Obersalzberg was preceded by his famous visit to Ohrdruf on 12 April 1945, about which he wrote a powerful statement describing the effect of this witnessing in a letter to George Marshall. A redacted version of Eisenhower's letter is engraved in stone on one of the exterior walls of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. (USHMM): "The things I saw beggar description . . . the visual evidence and the verbal testimony of starvation, cruelty and bestiality were so overpowering. . . . I made the visit [to Ohrdruf] deliberately in order to be in a position to give first-hand evidence of these things if ever, in the future, there develops a tendency to charge these allegations merely to 'propaganda'" (letter reprinted in Hobbs 221–224). A fascinating disconnect prevails between Eisenhower's words, rightly used by the USHMM as indications of America's role in bearing witness in the name of future preventative measures against genocide, and the persistent manner in which the Obersalzberg continues to be fodder for neo-Nazi fire.

On 30 April 1952, on the seven-year anniversary of Hitler's suicide, and because the Berghof ruins became an active neo-Nazi pilgrimage site, the

Bavarian government had all remaining Nazi buildings, with the exceptions of the Eagle's Nest and the Hotel zum Türken, razed. From shortly after the end of the war until 1996 the U.S. Army maintained an army recreation center at the formerly ritzy Hotel Platterhof, which was renamed the Hotel General Walker. In 1996, the area was returned to the Bavarian government; the Hotel General Walker was leveled in 1999–2000, and plans were made to unveil a Documentation Center, which opened in 1999. In March 2005, on the spot where Göring's lavish house once stood, and a two-minute walk from the site of the Berghof, the five-star Hotel InterContinental opened amid controversy. In allowing the hotel to be built on the site, the Bavarian government implicitly assumed that neo-Nazis would be kept out by the expense of the hotel (Andreas Nachama says this explicitly, see Chapter 3).

From 1945 until 1996 the former Nazi complex was an Armed Forces Recreation Center (AFRC). According to the U.S. Army Europe Military History Office in August 1945, "General Marshall expresses personal interest in the establishment of winter recreation projects in such resorts as Koenigsee and Berchtesgaden." On 6 September 1945, "Fifteen thousand pairs of skis and 12,000 pairs of skates have been procured" ("Chronology"). The Berchtesgaden AFRC was very popular and, on most weekends, was completely full. In "The AFRC Story" the European AFRC marketing division explains that, after the occupation, "Every sport imaginable was made available to occupation troops," and that "[w]ord about this Bavarian wonderland traveled fast among Americans in occupied Europe" (9). So while, as I discuss in Chapter 3, the opening of the Hotel InterContinental elicited much heated debate about how properly to transform this former Nazi space, the U.S. Army had been happily, and, as far as I can tell, without raising eyebrows recreating there since 1945. Under the aegis of the army, no doubt, the use of the landscape for recreation falls under the hard-won-spoils-of-war rubric whereas a commercial site such as a luxury hotel is not granted that same excuse.

In 1999 Dokumentation Obersalzberg (Documentation Center) opened on the remains of the Platterhof, the hotel Hitler originally expanded supposedly into a retreat for the thousands of pilgrims who daily trekked to see him but that became instead a lavish hotel where the dictator entertained military and other visitors, and the hotel that became the heart of the American recreation center. Geiss reports that the Platterhof paid homage to Nazis through its Dietrich Eckart and Richard Voss rooms (139). The Documentation Center both details the Nazi history on the Obersalzberg and offers a general history of the Holocaust. Interestingly, the book accompanying its exhibition, entitled *Die tödliche Utopie*, features on its cover an idyllic image of the Berghof very similar to Figure 1.2 under which has been added a mélange of corpses hanging, tanks, concentration camp inmates, and other images of war. The Center's visuals thus strongly support the explosion of the fetishized image of the Berghof so central to Nazi

propaganda (see Möller et al.). The Center opened partially in response to complaints that the ruins of the Berghof had become a neo-Nazi pilgrimage site and that positive images of Hitler on the Obersalzberg were still widely sold in the area (see "Hitler's Mountain"). In 1986, Peter Kurz, a Social Democratic member of the Bavarian State Parliament, noted, "Books, brochures [he notes that one of them featured a Swastika on the cover] postcards and videos are being sold in the souvenir shops which, to put it mildly, are nothing short of Nazi nostalgia" (qtd. in Holmes). Almost twenty years after this complaint, the tourist brochures may not feature large Swastikas on their covers, but many of them certainly count as "Nazi nostalgia."

There was, at least on occasion, another type of tourist on the Obersalzberg. In April 1947, Alicia Fajnsztejn (b. 1929, Warsaw) and a group of her friends, all Jewish survivors who were living in the Foehernwald displaced person (DP) camp, came to Berchtesgaden to vacation. As this photograph, which Fajnsztejn donated to the USHMM, demonstrates, the group are relaxed, on holiday, and most strikingly, framed against the beautiful Alpine scenery that was so essential to Nazi propaganda. There are tensions within the group; the woman in the middle is unhappy about something and the men who flank her try to console her. It is a victorious, glorious image. Alongside the familiar photographs of U.S. and other Allied soldiers reveling in their victory, alongside an image I discuss in Chapter 4

Figure 1.4 Jewish DP College Students from Munich on an Excursion to Berchtesgaden. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Image courtesy of Alicia Fajnsztejn Weinsberg.

of an American photographer bathing in Hitler's tub, alongside all else that happened on the mountain, this group of Jewish survivors were no doubt highly conscious of how their eradication was what was most desired by the Nazis who had vacationed and strategized where they now stood.

The Obersalzberg is a crucial part of the landscape of Holocaust post-memory because it was central in upholding the propaganda that in effect propelled genocide. The adoration of the dictator encouraged by the Obersalzberg was a condition of possibility for the destruction of European Jewry and many others. Images of a Chancellor at peace, in nature, nurturing rather than destroying, were essential to upholding the widespread belief in the chimerical futures promised by Nazi mythology. The oft-cited quote from Foucault's well-worn, dog-eared *Archaeology of Knowledge* that forms the epigraph to this chapter expresses the fundament of how the space of the Obersalzberg functions as an archaeological landscape—layers of conflicting, paradoxical history resting within, on top of, between one another, a palimpsest including Freud's mushrooms and Hitler's library.

2 *Eva's Cousin*

> It [the Obersalzberg] was the innermost citadel, the real fortress for which the Second World War was fought, the "Alpine Fortress," the most profound and precious heart of Hitler's Reich.
>
> —Sybille Knauss

Sybille Knauss's *Eva's Cousin* (the German original, *Evas Cousine*, was published in 2000; the English translation by Anthea Bell in 2002) is almost entirely set on the Obersalzberg and tells its narrative based on extensive interviews with a cousin of Eva Braun's who spent the last months of the war at Hitler's holiday chalet. By focusing on Nazis and daring to explore the lives of Germans during Allied bombing, Knauss's novel participates in the recent flood of texts about Germans' experiences during the war that do not always portray them as monstrous perpetrators. This flood of texts comes in the wake of W.G. Sebald's lectures, delivered in 1997, wherein he argues that the reluctance to represent Germans' experience of Allied bombs should be replaced by reflections on what it means to be victim and perpetrator at once. While the sense of the forbidden, thirteen years after Sebald made these remarks, attenuates—due precisely to his arguments—it still remains true that, in writing from the viewpoint of the Nazis, Knauss, who was born in 1944 (the same year as Sebald) to Nazi parents, enters a taboo zone. But in the forbidden zone Knauss creates Nazi characters who are to some degree horrific but who are also deeply sympathetic.[1]

Sebald's lectures were published in book form in German in 1999 as *Luftkrieg und Literatur* and in English in 2003 as *On the Natural History of Destruction*. In a very interesting passage Sebald refers to images of the victims of Allied bombing:

> To this day, any concern with the real scenes of horror during the catastrophe still has an aura of the forbidden about it, even of voyeurism, something that these notes of mine have not entirely been able to avoid. I was not surprised when a teacher in Detmold told me, a little while ago, that as a boy in the immediate postwar years he quite often saw photographs of the corpses lying in the streets after the firestorm brought out from under the counter of a Hamburg secondhand bookshop, to be fingered and examined in a way usually reserved for pornography. (98)[2]

Sebald takes this suggestion that discussing the bombing has an "aura of the forbidden" about it quite far when he finds that touching these images

was performed as one would touch pornography. The scene of corpses lying in the streets is often associated with the many unburied dead whose bodies were heaped on the streets of Europe's Jewish ghettos; by effectively exchanging victim and perpetrator here Sebald creates a confusing double take. The photographs are of German civilian corpses, as unburied and unremarked upon by passersby as those of Jewish victims. It is an uncanny reversal bearing reflection.

Andreas Huyssen reacted to Sebald's remarks by noting that, while there may, as Sebald contends, have been a paucity of literary texts treating the Allied attacks, "there was always a lot of *talk* about the bombings in postwar Germany" (147). Thus, while a literary silence reigned a general volubility flourished. Huyssen neatly summarizes the reasons behind the reticence that Sebald advocates ending: "To speak about the air war seemed inescapably tied to the discourse of German victimization and thus to a relativization or denial of the Holocaust. Today this taboo has lost its force" (147). Sebald's "to this day" refers to 1997, Huyssen's "today" is 2003, and in my "today" it is 2010; the landscape of Holocaust postmemory forever shifts and changes shape. Whereas Sebald found it important near the end of the millennium to encourage writers and artists to explore the catastrophe that befell German civilians in 1945, Huyssen found that there was no longer any need to repress this history. Knauss's novel appeared between Sebald and Huyssen's comments and while it does not treat the air war it breaks the other taboo of treating Nazis and their supporters as characters rather than cartoons of evil. In my today filmic and literary representations of Nazi characters swell and thus the discourse about appropriateness versus taboo-ness has transformed since Sebald's lectures. Nonetheless, when Knauss produced her novel she was among a wave of German and other writers who attempted to enlarge Nazi personalities beyond earlier strictures. While this obviously has the problematic potential of unleashing misplaced sympathy for anti-Semites it also contributes to understanding how time has affected the landscape of Holocaust postmemory.

Eva's Cousin, which was also translated into Spanish, Dutch, and other languages, received mixed reviews in the Anglo-American press. Alan Riding finds that "it is a novel that feels like the truth" (5) whereas another reviewer notes that the "moral center of the book falters."[3] Julia Pascal argues that "the book's aim is to repair Weisker's shame at complicity with Hitler" and that the novel is "as empty as Eva's head" (27). *Kirkus Reviews* terms it "an earnest if also lethargic footnote to a footnote to history" ("Rev. of *Eva's Cousin*" 830), and Barbara Conaty calls it "a work of painful honesty and chilling revulsion" (92). The German press was equally ambivalent, with one reviewer denigrating the novel by comparing the setting to the fictional center of evil in James Bond films, but another noting that Knauss succeeds in achieving the "art of balance between research and fantasy" (Schott-Falksohn 64; see also Schirning; Jauer; and Hage). These equivocal comments indicate the problematic nature of attempting

to portray a Nazi world; some readers found that, rather than exposing women's complicity with Nazi violence, the text ultimately mitigated this complicity.

The novel tells the story of Marlene, a fictionalized protagonist based on Eva Braun's cousin, Gertraud Weisker, who spent the last months of the war at the Berghof and in Hitler's Mooslahner Teahouse (a small pavilion a short walk from the main house). Knauss retained the actual names of the other historical characters, such as Eva Braun and her sisters, Gretl and Ilse, and the names of the Nazis who appear briefly in the novel, such as Albert Speer and Hermann Fegelein, but she chose to change Gertraud Weisker's name to Marlene (a play on Lili Marleen). This change is no doubt meant to signify the novelistic rather than historical character of her project; yet the other historical characters are also clearly fictionalized so the change of name for only one is a little disingenuous. Knauss also places Marlene on the mountain at the moment of the Allied bombing on 25 April 1945; by that date Gertraud Weisker had safely returned to her anti-Nazi parents in Jena.

Weisker, who used the name Elizabeth Winkler after the war, did not reveal to almost anyone the details of her time on the Obersalzberg until her husband passed away and her children became adults; her children admit that, precisely because of their mother's reticence, they knew all along that even though she herself claimed never to have been a Nazi, she had been intimate with Nazis (Grant 40). When Weisker told a fiancé about her time at the Berghof, he promptly broke off the engagement; when she told another man who became her husband, he bid her to promise never to speak of it again. The connection between Knauss and Weisker was formed after the former gave an interview in 1998 with *Der Spiegel* in which she mentioned that she planned to write about Eva Braun. Shortly thereafter, Weisker contacted her and began describing her hidden past to Knauss in copious detail; Weisker, due to *Eva's Cousin*, became something of a chat show sensation in Germany (see Grant; Marsh; Weisker). The fact that Weisker waited more than fifty years to tell her story indicates how keenly she felt the need to keep her Nazi past secret; and the fact that Knauss felt free to discuss the shame of the perpetrators and the pain the perpetrators felt because of their self-imposed silence indicates a turning point in post-Holocaust consciousness toward a greater receptivity to perpetrator stories. But in participating in this wave of perpetrator tales Knauss too forcefully represses the violence of the Nazi regime and too sympathetically represents Nazis.

Knauss's writing, often composed of short paragraphs, is sparse and lyrical, and the whole novel has a dreamlike quality, as though everything were perceived through thin gauze. Switches in narration heighten this quality because, for most of the novel, the elderly Weisker/Marlene narrates, but at times an omniscient narrator takes over and thus lends an emotional distance to some of the scenes. The work opens with a prologue in which Marlene returns to the Obersalzberg on 14 April 1999; at this time, as I

discussed in Chapter 1, the Hotel Platterhof was no longer the U.S. Army Recreation Center, yet had not been leveled, appearing as "a corpse of a hotel" (3).[4] Marlene's return to the dismal, unmarked ruins sharply contrasts with her memories of the Berghof in 1944: "The Obersalzberg had turned back into the nonplace it had always been. A lunar landscape. A field of rubble. A desert. A place no longer of this world" (55).[5] Of course, six months after this visit, the Documentation Center opened and thus transformed the absence of memory Marlene encounters when she reports that there are "[n]o commemorative plaques, nothing to help you get your bearings" (5).[6] But by placing Marlene on the Obersalzberg before the Documentation Center opened, Knauss depicts the Nazi complex as a forgotten, decaying world where only faint marks in the forest indicate where neo-Nazis, former Nazis, or other curious souls tread. Knauss thus begins from a scene of erasure even though some of this forgetting had been addressed by the Bavarian government before her novel was finished. It is fascinating that Knauss willfully ignores the upcoming Documentation Center and was drawn to the ruined, forgotten quality of the Obersalzberg. Certainly the absence of markers makes a more poetic landscape in which to project stories of repressed/forgotten memory; the Center disrupts this ruinous quality and places the violent events planned on the beautiful mountain within the palimpsest memorial topographies of the area.

By beginning with these ghostly remains of the former Nazi complex, Knauss allows the historical story to unfold as a projection through what we now know to be the destruction of the place at the end of the war. Knauss describes Marlene's immersion in the Nazi world through her depiction of a nervous, lonely Eva Braun, needing a playmate to distract her from missing Hitler. Braun had lost her sister and closest confidante, Gretl, to a loveless marriage, the ceremony of which was followed by a lavish reception at the Eagle's Nest. Gretl's husband, Hermann Fegelein, one of Himmler's liaison officers, married her to cultivate his ties to Hitler. Braun captured the ceremony and reception in her home movies and therein we see Gretl elegantly attired in the very wedding garb her sister would no doubt have appreciated for the wedding she never had, chatting amiably to Hitler (see Braun, "Berghof" and "Eva, Hitler"). Once Gretl's marriage duties began to take her away from Braun, the latter turned to her much younger (by twelve years) cousin, Gertraud Weisker, who had adored and looked up to her elder cousin for years.

In the novel's 1944, when Braun called on her cousin and invited her to spend the summer with her at the Berghof, the young Weisker/Marlene, at twenty, was thrilled to be offered the chance to experience her glamorous cousin's elegant life. However, Weisker/Marlene's anti-Nazi parents refused to allow their daughter to travel to the Berghof; they did consent to let her visit Braun in Munich, where Hitler had bought a suburban house for her—the one occupied, as I discuss in Chapter 4, by Lee Miller at the end of the war. The Weisker family's decision underscores the importance of the

Obersalzberg complex in Germans' perceptions during the war. Munich is one thing, parents might imagine, we can still get to our daughter there, but on the Obersalzberg the powerful aesthetics and sexuality of Nazi elegance would seduce and overpower her.

Braun tricked Marlene and her parents by sending a limousine with two Nazi chauffeurs to drive her cousin from the Munich train station the two hours to the Berghof. Thus even though Marlene landed at the dictator's residence by deception, she does not demand to be taken back to Munich. Rather, complicit with her cousin's trickery and ultimately with the Nazi system, she distances herself from her parents as she becomes enmeshed in the strange, listless life of the mountain. Knauss highlights the sporty nature of Hitler's mistress and describes her as avidly attached, despite purported Nazi folk ideals, to high fashion. Braun seems to have spent her days trying to fend off the sensation of waiting for Hitler, who did not return to the Berghof after 14 July 1944; thus the whole time Marlene was on the Obersalzberg the dictator was not there—but she does interact with Albert Speer and other high-ranking Nazis.[7] In the summer of 1944 Hitler primarily divided his time between his military headquarters, the Wolf's Lair, and the Reich Chancellery in Berlin. To stave off the painful sense of waiting for his phone call or his unlikely presence, Braun takes Marlene swimming, walking, or drinking at the Platterhof.

If one wanted a visual representation of all this frolicking at the Obersalzberg one would turn to the home movies Eva Braun made there. These are odd specimens indeed. Intercut with groups of revelers splashing in waterfalls are scenes of Hitler solemnly greeting high-ranking Nazis and others; between images of Braun performing gymnastics in the great outdoors one finds military salutes. Framing all, the imposing mountains look absolutely beautiful. According to the visual evidence supplied in these silent, black-and-white as well as color films, Braun seems always to be wearing a swimsuit, even while playing ping-pong. She strikes a pose . . . on the very edge of the Berghof balcony. She proves herself to be a consummate performer of "happiness in the mountains" (see Braun, "Hitler, Speer"). The films' production date appears as 1940 and the footage likely ranges in years of production; the films arrest not just in their willful turning away from the war and its attendant suffering, but in the gaiety with which they switch between relaxation and military matters as though only the former and not the latter really mattered.

In *Eva's Cousin*, as Marlene describes her attraction to Braun, we can see the intimate link between the mysterious quality of the Obersalzberg and that of her cousin: "The woman, who is a riddle for me that I would like to solve. Whose mysteries interest me, just as love and passion and their forbidden side interest me. The woman who is Adolf Hitler's lover" (25).[8] Here Braun shares with the Obersalzberg the sense of mystery and the delight that Marlene feels in entering the forbidden zone of the Führergebiet. Like Braun, the Berghof is "strange and full of secrets" (28). Or again, much later in the

novel, "There were secrets everywhere on the Obersalzberg. . . . The whole mountain was a secret. I was part of it myself. Incomprehensible, mysterious, and inscrutable" (231).[9] By using variations on the word "mystery" (*Geheimnis*) for Braun, the Berghof, and Marlene, Knauss underscores the connection between Hitler's lover and the mystique surrounding the Berghof. By repeating the same word so emphatically, Knauss excuses not just Marlene but by extension all those who became enamored of Nazism. The mysterious, secretive quality of the mountain, just like Nazism itself, seduces, invites, and obfuscates the violence at its core. Even Marlene unwittingly perhaps resonating with Hitler's fantastical dreams of Untersberg legends (see Chapter 1), imagines the Berghof as a place where knights might have planned "new acts of violence" (30). Despite these hints of violence, though, Marlene keeps the ideals of the Berghof firmly in mind, even as the Allies bomb the Obersalzberg: "The Berghof ideal was truth, beauty, permanence in the world now collapsing before our eyes" (277).[10] Thus, even though the novel is rife with violence taking place outside the cloistered Berghof, Knauss depicts the depth of Marlene's belief in the completely false, elusive ideal of truth and beauty so forcefully and effectively sold by the Nazi regime and underscored by the propaganda produced on and about the Obersalzberg.

Among dozens of fascinating historical details about the Obersalzberg one succinctly captures how the Berghof was imagined as a place that should not intersect with the violent history unfolding all around it. From the Nazi perspective, it was to remain mythically outside of time, a place where women did not engage in the manly concerns of war or politics. As I discussed in Chapter 1, Hitler's photographer Heinrich Hoffmann played an essential role in the Nazi propaganda machine because he photographed Hitler in many now iconic locations. Some of his most important photographs were taken of the dictator on the Obersalzberg and record the vast crowds of pilgrims who strained to get a glimpse of him. In other Hoffmann images from the Obersalzberg, Hitler poses with animals or children, thus conveying a false image of a relaxed-Alpine-man-of-the-people.[11] Hofmann's daughter, Henriette von Schirach, was the wife of Baldur von Schirach, leader of the Hitler Youth and later Gauleiter of Vienna. Thus, through her father and her husband, and possibly through a rumored flirtation and/or liaison with Hitler himself, Frau von Schirach was intimately involved in the Nazi inner circle (see Hanfstaengl, "Hitler's Friend" 45).

Filtered through the lens of a postwar visit she and her father took to the remains of the Berghof in 1954, Frau von Schirach remembers a painful conversation with Hitler at the Berghof on 24 June 1943. As evidence of Baldur von Schirach's distaste for his wife's frankness, before this visit she had reproached her husband after a particularly raging speech and he had apparently replied, "Keep your mouth shut, even for Frau von Schirach there is a concentration camp" (qtd. in Fishman 157). On the eve of their time at the Berghof Henriette von Schirach had told her husband that she planned to ask Hitler about the extremely rough treatment of Jewish women she had

witnessed in Amsterdam; Baldur von Schirach told her not to bring this up with the dictator. She ignored her husband's advice and raised the taboo issue nonetheless. After she spoke quietly to Hitler about what she had seen, he loudly rebuffed her with: "You are a sentimentalist! What business of yours is it? The Jewesses are none of your business! . . . Sheer sentimentality all this! Tittle-tattle about humanity!"[12] Even though it was five in the morning (Hitler stayed up until the wee hours and rose exceedingly late in the day), Bormann asked the von Schirachs to leave, which they did, in disgrace, never to be restored to the dictator's graces. After this outburst, and realizing the depth of her and, by extension, Baldur von Schirach's, disgrace, Frau von Schirach nonetheless felt "indescribably free" and realized, "We were serving an evil cause, but could not turn back without dragging our friends into the abyss . . . I knew that everything would go under, the whole magnificent, uncomfortable mountain palazzo and its inhabitants" (189). While von Schirach, who divorced Baldur because he was "married to the Nazis," would have good reason to magnify this exchange with Hitler after the war, other witnesses tell virtually the same story (qtd. in Fishman 156).[13]

Apparently, very few people, even those in the Nazi inner circle, had challenged Hitler in the way that Frau von Schirach had; Hitler, clearly misogynistic, abhorred women who discussed politics. Frau von Schirach broke this ban and inserted the violent and the political into the elegant world of the Berghof. Frau von Schirach's narrative encapsulates how Hitler wanted the Obersalzberg, even though an integral part of world politics, to appear in a distant, aestheticized realm beyond the violence that the military and other meetings taking place there enabled. The women in the upper echelons of Nazi society were silently complicit with the violence of the Nazi regime; but they were never to discuss the "men's world" of war in the company of Hitler. Eva Braun, who lived on the Obersalzberg for much of the war, was adept at keeping to this dictate and never engaged in the political or the martial. In an interesting article published in the unlikely venue of *Cosmopolitan* in 1943, Ernst Hanfstaengl unintentionally sheds light on the high emotions of this scene between Frau von Schirach and Hitler by claiming that it was because Hitler had had an affair with "Henny" von Schirach (as she was apparently known) when she was in her teens. Hanfstaengl claims that it was because of this affair that her father, Heinrich Hoffmann, was taken on as his official photographer ("Hitler's Friend" 45). In re-creating Braun and her cousin's life at the Berghof, Knauss explores how this silent complicity functioned.

Knauss compares the shame of Marlene's emerging sexuality with postwar Nazi guilt/shame through the literal and figurative remains of the war embodied in the artifact of Braun's handed-down brassiere. The novel thus explores the shame felt by some Nazi sympathizers after the war through its literal and figurative remains embedded in the landscape of places like the Obersalzberg:

> Later, when we had nowhere to turn, when we wandered aimlessly through a country that offered us no home anymore, through devastated cities. . . . I still had carried Eva's bra with me. . . . Yet one day, when I remembered whose it had been, it seemed to me a heavy burden. I didn't want it anymore. . . . No one asked questions in those days. . . . The black boots under which the roads once echoed were lost somewhere in a swamp, sinking deeper into it year by year, until nothing was left of them. No archeological dig would ever bring them to light. (51–52)[14]

In this passage Knauss associates the remains of the Berghof, Braun, the Nazi boots, and the archeology of the memory-laden landscape. As a stark contrast to this nostalgic memory of a cast down brassiere, Timothy Ryback reports that "thirty-six hours after Hitler's suicide, a Soviet medical team entered the nearly abandoned *Führerbunker*. They reemerged an hour later waving black lace brassieres from Eva Braun's wardrobe" (*Hitler's Private Library* 224). As I discuss in Chapter 4, Lee Miller occupied both Hitler and Braun's Munich residences in the immediate aftermath of their double suicide and thus explores what it felt like to sleep on Braun's bed. The auratic touch of the guilty dead. Marlene describes the boots, that here echo remnants of the army, in sexualized terms when she meets Hermann Fegelein, her cousin Gretl's husband: "All the sex appeal of martial virility. And oh, those boots" (106). If there was any doubt about the sexualization of the power conveyed by military uniform Knauss confirms it toward the end of the novel when she has Marlene confess that "the aura of his power . . . unleashes sexual desire in me" (285).[15] The sexualization of the Nazi uniform has of course been amply analyzed from Liliana Cavani's disturbing film *Night Porter* (1974) to Anjelica Huston posing with male models dressed as Nazis and beyond (see Eisner and Alonso). By combining the shame of carrying Braun's bra with the black boots sinking into the ground, and by highlighting this juxtaposition by explicitly portraying the boots and the uniforms as part of a potent sexual attraction, Knauss draws upon this sexualization of fascism without problematizing it. She thus makes sexual attraction for Nazis a means of complicity without complicating the connection between violent power and desire. The different faces of shame and secretiveness come together: from the "innocent" shame of a burgeoning sexuality, to the guilty shame of having been closely connected with Hitler's lover, to the national shame of being serenaded by the ghostly echo of Nazi marching boots, to the covering over of all this shame in the "swamp" of forgetfulness that was Germany after the war. By thus moving in a continuum from innocence (the girl's first bra) to guilt (the Nazi marching boots) Knauss offers a portrait of the layers of shame with which the postwar gentile-German world had to contend; yet by thus analogizing national guilt and shame, she attenuates the depth of guilt of the perpetrators.

But what makes a perpetrator in this context? German women such as Weisker and Braun aided and abetted the war effort yet they rarely pulled triggers. As Knauss's novel demonstrates, the Obersalzberg provides an apt location for studying the conflicted roles of gender and complicity in Nazi Germany; for in addition to this being, as Knauss amply explores, where Braun spent much of the war, Hitler also greeted thousands of pilgrims there, many of them women who kept the very stones he walked on as treasured mementos. The Nazi social circle here revolved around the "small talk" insisted upon supposedly for the benefit of the women in the Nazi men's midst, but actually imposed in order to convey an image counter to war: women at leisure, curtains (linen or damask) billowing in the breeze. Indeed, while the nexus of gender, sexuality, complicity, and violence within the Nazi regime has been examined in several outstanding studies, none have, to my knowledge, analyzed how representations of the Obersalzberg fed the justification for violence that in effect proved to be the psychological condition of possibility for genocide. From Klaus Theweleit's much cited *Male Fantasies* (1977) through Claudia Koonz's groundbreaking study *Mothers in the Fatherland* (1987), to Irene Guenther's *Nazi Chic?* (2004) to Susannah Heschel's work on female Nazi commandants, historians and other scholars grapple with how gender and sexuality meet complicity and guilt in Nazi Germany (see also D. Herzog; Stephenson). Some of the questions asked in this work include: were women associated with Nazi men to be considered guilty after the war? How much did German women married to or otherwise connected to male perpetrators know about their partners' crimes? How do we reconcile the Nazi propaganda image of the sturdy German woman with her ten children against the fashionable and childless Eva Braun (see Guenther)?

These questions run throughout Knauss's novel, where, on the one hand, readers might be sympathetic with the main character who, although not a card-carrying Nazi, certainly indicates her approval of Hitler by staying in his chalet and getting into bed with his middle-ranking Nazi Obersturmbannführer Hans. By thus offering a sympathetic portrayal of a member of the Nazi inner circle Knauss crosses a line over which many have feared to tread. The figure of Hans supports my argument about how the Obersalzberg was used by the Nazi regime as a justification for violence because Hans represents the quintessential Nazi who carries out extreme violence in the name of the seductive, beautiful "vision" so carefully instilled in Germans during the Third Reich. The supposed beauty of the postwar world was one of the most enduring Nazi myths and one of the most potent examples of the aestheticization of politics. After Hans declares that foreign workers are "not human like us," he tells Marlene that they do not have the same "visions": "Yes, he says, dreams. Like you and me. Dreams of a life of dignity. Greatness. Distinction. Pride. Courage. They don't know anything about that. We are creating a world of high ideals and values" (274).[16] Hans had been in a unit that shot six thousand innocent civilians in

Pinsk in 1941; Hans also coldly tells Marlene that the hardest thing about his job is killing women, especially those who are unsurprisingly reluctant to let their children be murdered before their eyes (102/261). That Marlene neither responds to this nor reflects on it indicates her silent complicity in the murder of innocents. The only hint that Hans conjures violence for her arrives when Knauss describes what his title continues to recall, years later, in Marlene's consciousness: "the word *Obersturmbannführer* will take shape in her dreams, a monstrous word, full of dark violence" (111).[17] Thus, whereas Marlene might have responded critically to Hans's descriptions of the murder of civilians, she instead offers a model for silent witnessing and therefore enabling of violence in the name of the beautiful idyll to which Hans subscribes.

The almost complete silence in this text about the Nazi genocide indicates the seductive pull felt by Knauss toward the beautiful vision imagined in the beautiful landscape of the Obersalzberg. In an interview included in the English edition of the text, Knauss argues that, rather than guilt silencing the Germans connected to Nazism after the war, it was shame, and she describes Germany within the novel as "a nation ashamed" (247).[18] A fine line separates guilt and shame; but Knauss here refers to the shame that covers Germans, such as Weisker, who were complicit with Nazis but not guilty of either violent or political trespasses during the Third Reich. Yet although Knauss describes the nation as ashamed, the Holocaust barely touches the novel. There are two passing references to the camps, Hans's apathetic description of his horrific violence toward women and children, and one other moment, recounted from the narrator's vantage point of the then present: "Fifty-five years away, Hitler's Berghof still stands, the chimneys of the concentration camp incinerators are still smoking, the tanks are rolling on, the sky is still fiery red with the light of burning cities, the echo of death-dealing commands still lingers in the air" (90).[19] While evoking Celan's poem "Todesfuge," Knauss's juxtaposition of the Berghof with the concentration camps happens simultaneously with the description of cities burning from Allied bombs. In other words, not only does Knauss signpost the bizarre simultaneity of the peace and beauty of the Obersalzberg with the violence and horror of the camps, but she also assimilates the concentrationary universe with German victimization. She thus gestures toward the relativization of the Holocaust that Huyssen explains as the fear of evoking German victimization from Allied attacks.

Knauss problematically diminishes Weisker's guilt by deviating from the historical record to create a moral salve for her by having her save Mikhail, a sixteen-year-old Ukrainian worker who escapes from hard labor building the bunker system. Knauss foreshadowed the unlikely figure of Mikhail at his debut by comparing Marlene's short hair (shorn after an infestation of cockchafers could be removed from her hair by no other means) with the cropped hair of a German woman publicly shamed for consorting with "Jews or foreigners imported to do forced labor" (22).

While Marlene never sleeps with Mikhail, a great deal of tension moves between them; but the shame that Marlene feels for her burgeoning sexuality is shame for being involved with a perpetrator, the Nazi Hans, not a victim. Knauss relies on the structural construct of Hitler's Mooslahner Teahouse to create a space in which to play out complicity and resistance. Knauss portrays Marlene as having interests, unlike Braun, other than fashion and frivolity, and these intellectual pursuits compel her to move into the Teahouse, a short walk from the Berghof, in order to devote her mornings to the quiet contemplation of Werner Heisenberg's *The Physical Principles of Quantum Theory*. It is unclear whether Knauss intended the ironies inherent in this choice of reading matter because quantum theory emerges in the novel as a metonym for Marlene's desire for an abstraction distant from politics and its human carnage. As Paul Rose argues, Heisenberg's legacy has been shrouded in mystery. On the one hand, he refused to join the Nazi party; on the other hand, he was involved in the Nazi atomic energy project from 1939 to 1945. Rose asks why, "despite his aversion to Nazi antisemitism and his defense of 'Jewish physics' [did he] justify Nazi war victories" (2) after the war? Thus when Marlene retreats to this space that Hitler had construed as his quiet daily retreat she engages in politics even while trying to avoid it.

The Teahouse is also the location of the only radio on the Obersalzberg within Marlene's reach; as such it affords her access to the strictly forbidden BBC broadcasts of Hugh Carleton Greene whose crisp English-accented German tells her that the end of the war is nigh and that Germany is losing. Marlene passes along this news to Braun, who, though formerly stubbornly ignorant of the world falling apart around her, now eagerly awaits this illicit flow of information. Without these illegal injections of current affairs, Braun might have been able to continue imagining the world of the Obersalzberg as detached from war. To these characters, it seems as if the war could never reach the Obersalzberg: "It's all so far away. . . . We know it [the war] can never, ever reach us. . . . Not up here on the Berghof" (80).[20]

Hitler's daily walk to the Mooslahner Teahouse was one of the staples of life at the Berghof; he would take this walk often accompanied by one of the visitors to his Alpine retreat and he apparently enjoyed the quiet view from this spot lower down the mountain. Thus, when Marlene occupies the Teahouse she symbolically enters the most intimate Nazi space. Paradoxically, it is because Marlene moves into the Teahouse that she has the privacy to shield Mikhail; it is also because she is supposedly alone in the Teahouse that Hans takes her carefully guarded virginity. Despite Hans's obvious violence, Knauss finds that Mikhail, rather than Hans, exposes the violent side of the Obersalzberg: "Through Mikhail I came to see the other, invisible side of the Obersalzberg . . . [in its] full terrible light" (189).[21] Weisker, the historical personage, chose not to notice the presence of slave laborers on the mountain; Knauss thus gives the fictional rendition of Braun's cousin more of a moral conscience and a larger sense of the world than she

actually had. These changes are interesting choices on Knauss's part, for no doubt the novel becomes more profound at the moment when Mikhail arrives; but the sections narrated from Mikhail's point of view are also the thinnest. Knauss provides much thicker descriptions of Nazis than she can muster of a Ukrainian slave laborer; she therefore shares Hans's stereotype of the limited visions of peasants. Thus, in the context of *Eva's Cousin* the Teahouse offers a space for Knauss to demonstrate the sometimes intimate link between innocence and guilt by positioning Mikhail and Hans around Marlene. By so carefully balancing the slave and the Nazi, Knauss paradoxically extends Marlene's Nazi guilt at her most anti-Nazi moment. Knauss overextends the plot so far as to include a scene in which Mikhail, now wearing a German flight jacket, an American G.I.'s cap, and wielding a pistol, harshly pushes Hans into a truck full of Nazi internees. The switch of master and slave (see Chapter 7) could not be clearer, but we are still left with Braun's cousin's guilt mitigated by her fictional resistance.

Knauss's juxtaposition of Hans and Mikhail as representatives of perpetrator and victim, both with intimate links to Eva Braun's cousin, forces us to see how complicity and resistance can coexist amid the Alpine beauty of the Obersalzberg. The world of the Berghof is represented as offering amnesia for those Nazis who choose not to see that the war has already turned against them. Yet by creating Mikhail and having Marlene save him, Knauss problematically reduces Weisker's complicity by balancing this against her fictional heroism. She also highlights the violence of the Obersalzberg and draws on the metaphor offered by the archeology of the mountain: the forgetting, the willful oblivion of the imposed serenity of the beautiful aboveground landscape versus the violence of the underground tunnels, the subliminal truth of the violence of the war and genocide that is felt but not seen on the Obersalzberg. *Eva's Cousin* represents the nexus of complicity, gender, and the means through which the elegance of high-level Nazi life masks the violence of the regime. The Nazi characters in the novel adhere to the dream of the beautiful world after the war and pretend to ignore the incredible violence necessary to achieve this chimerical vision. Because they were women, Braun and her cousin were not expected to engage politically, they were to be silent accomplices and carry out the quiet elegance of the Berghof and thus ultimately bolster Nazi propagandistic ideals.

Through its setting on the Obersalzberg *Eva's Cousin* describes the landscape of Holocaust postmemory through a complex and sometimes uncomfortable nexus of nostalgia, shame, and critique. On the one hand, the novel bravely traces the memories of a Nazi sympathizer and thus potentially opens up our imaginative horizons about the war and, implicitly, the genocide that remains its most disturbing legacy. On the other hand, by making misty life at the Berghof, Knauss also problematically falls into a certain seduction of the beauty of the landscape of the Obersalzberg and thus exemplifies the very connection between beauty and horror that this book explores. Other texts that treat the connections between the

landscape and the often repressed histories of complicity anchored there do so more ethically.

Kazuo Ishiguro's brilliant novel, for example, *The Remains of the Day* (1988), explores the depth of the British aristocracy's fascination with German fascism through the eyes of the butler of Darlington Hall, Stevens. Throughout the novel, Ishiguro carefully layers Stevens's views of the British landscape with the collaborationist past of his beloved former employer, Lord Darlington. Stevens, uncharacteristically unmoored from the manor, motoring through the countryside longing for Miss Kenton, for whom he nurtured a long unexpressed passion, remarks: "the English landscape at its finest—such as I saw it this morning—possesses a quality that the landscapes of other nations, however superficially dramatic, inevitably fail to possess" (28). Here he could just as well be discussing the suppressed nature of British national memory of its initial acceptance of Nazism—the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, after all, visited Hitler on the Obersalzberg. As Stevens later notes, when expressing his dismay that so many other great houses, including Darlington Hall, hosted the likes of the German ambassador Herr Ribbentrop, "The great hypocrisy of these persons would be instantly obvious were you to see just a few of their own guest lists from those days; you would see then not only the extent to which Herr Ribbentrop dined at these same persons' tables, but that he often did so as guest of honour" (136). The mild British landscape is a metonym for the repressed memory of British involvement in Nazism; even though it was British and American bombers that destroyed Dresden in February 1945, it was partly through the reconciliatory efforts of a group of veterans in Coventry that Dresden's central feature, the Frauenkirche, has been restored to its former glory, and the cityscape of Dresden along with it (Packer 34). Thus Ishiguro subtly leads us to a recognition of the complicitous landscape that overlays memory.

In comparing James Baldwin's *Notes of a Native Son* (1951) to President Obama's *Dreams from my Father* (1995), Colm Tóibín remarks that both authors made clear that "their fathers' pasts were not their own pasts, but the past as a different country" (18). Here Tóibín's wonderful spatial metaphor of the time before as pertaining to a different landscape echoes Baldwin's phrasing: "I was part of that generation which had never seen the landscape of what Negroes sometimes call the Old Country" (qtd. in Tóibín 18). For Baldwin the landscape of the Old Country is the landscape of the past, separating him culturally and geographically from the South; just as *The Remains of the Day* encapsulates landscape as the path of political memory, so Baldwin charts a landscape of slavery as another country. Knauss uses the landscape to showcase the seductions of Nazi ideology but does not explode, as for instance does Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day*, the complicity that is the condition of possiblity for violence.

3 Past Present

> [T]he past was an abused record with no choice but to repeat itself at the crack and no power on earth could lift the arm that held the needle.
>
> —Toni Morrison

> He who has once begun to open the fan of memory never comes to the end of its segments; no image satisfies him, for he has seen that it can be unfolded and only in its folds does the truth reside . . .
>
> —Walter Benjamin

In March 1941—after *Kristallnacht* and after evidence of genocide had been circulated—C. Brooks Peters praised the landscape of the Obersalzberg and the Berghof's décor in a gushing *New York Times* piece titled "In Hitler's Chalet."[1] Like Ignatius Phayre's essay in *Homes & Gardens* (see Chapter 1), Peters's article makes no mention of Nazi violence. These British and American articles, exporting Nazi propaganda from this crucial spot in the Bavarian Alps, were complicit in mythologizing the ultimate Nazi dream. The idealized images of the Obersalzberg represented in the popular press, including quaint Bavarian folk-dressed wives of high-ranking Nazi officers who commissioned unprecedented acts of violence, encapsulates perfectly the aestheticizing mechanism of the Nazi enterprise. The quaint, the picturesque, the stunning Alpine landscape, and the elegance of the Nazi holiday complex became part of the potent enabling factors for violence that offered a powerful counterimage to the Nazi genocide and other Nazi atrocities. But the Obersalzberg was not merely a holiday retreat; it was, as I discussed in Chapter 1, also the place where fundamental choices were made. For two examples among many, consider the Berghof meeting with Chamberlain resulting in the Munich appeasement; or the gathering of leaders of the armed forces at the Berghof to discuss plans for the invasion of Poland (22 August 1939).[2] Thus, while the Holocaust was not planned on the Obersalzberg, key military decisions that fed war were hatched amid the beautiful landscape of the Bavarian Alps. The Obersalzberg and its diverse depictions in the popular press, in literature, and in souvenir albums represent a twist on the familiar discussions of aesthetics and politics in Nazi Germany. Most of the scholarship engaging Walter Benjamin's "aestheticization of politics," where he argued that "all efforts to render politics aesthetic culminate in one thing: war" (*Illuminations* 241), focuses on the spectacular nature of Nazi party rallies made

iconic by Leni Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will*. But in this chapter, I look at the quieter side of aestheticization using the Obersalzberg and its iterations as case studies for how violence was masked and therefore ultimately justified within the perverse logic of the Nazi imaginary.[3]

The cheesy prose and photographic imagery that *Homes & Gardens* (1938) and the *New York Times* (1941) indulged in appealed to at least some folks, a few of whom attained albums that depict Hitler's chalet before and after the Allied bombing. One such album, containing forty-six images of the Obersalzberg found in the University of Illinois' Rare Book & Manuscript Library, is one of three mysterious albums in U.S. libraries with the same name, "Souvenir of Berchtesgaden." The album features a red-and-blue leather exterior and thick, black paper interior; the cover has the title embossed in gold gothic or Deutsche Schrift (sometimes called Fraktur) print; below the lettering a postcard image of Berchtesgaden appears. Most of the photographs, which are black and white with a zigzag edging, are pasted into the book, leaving traces of glue blobs in their wake; some of the postcards are hemmed in by four retaining corners. The inside front cover has a picture of the Obersalzberg bearing the caption: "Panorama of the Obersalzberg before the bombing," indicative of the album's postwar compilation. Another image bears the corresponding caption: "Panorama of Hitler's Home after the Bombing." The album was most likely composed by local Berchtesgadeners and offered as a souvenir to a G.I. whose wife, some forty years after the war, donated it to the library. (There is a donor's name, but I could not locate her—not for want of searching.) The university archives contain no information about when the album was donated, nor are there any details about who took the photographs or who wrote the captions. The album exhibits a ghostly effect as old photographs capture an uncannily empty Nazi past. It particularly compels because it not only contains photographs of the Obersalzberg but also Nazi postcards that are almost identical to the photographs. There are two other albums with the same title at the Special Collections at Northwestern University and at the San Francisco public library. The album in the Northwestern University Special Collections differs; in this album the paper is no longer black, but rather much faded and worn, the cover postcard of Berchtesgaden has been torn out (leaving thick traces of glue and the remains of the postcard itself), and, most importantly, there are no intact postcards. Therefore, either the photographs in the University of Illinois album were taken in order to reproduce the Nazi postcards or the Nazi postcards were found in order to match the photographs. This difference helps to make sense of the two different kinds of handwriting; perhaps the person who wrote in Deutsche Schrift compiled the album and the person with the "American" handwriting added the postcards later.

While it is tempting to imagine that the black-and-white photographs are copies of the color Nazi postcards, looking closely at the juxtaposed images of the conference hall reveals that the flowers on the tables are different, thus ruling out this possibility.

Figure 3.1 *Berghof Conference Hall*. Image courtesy of The Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.

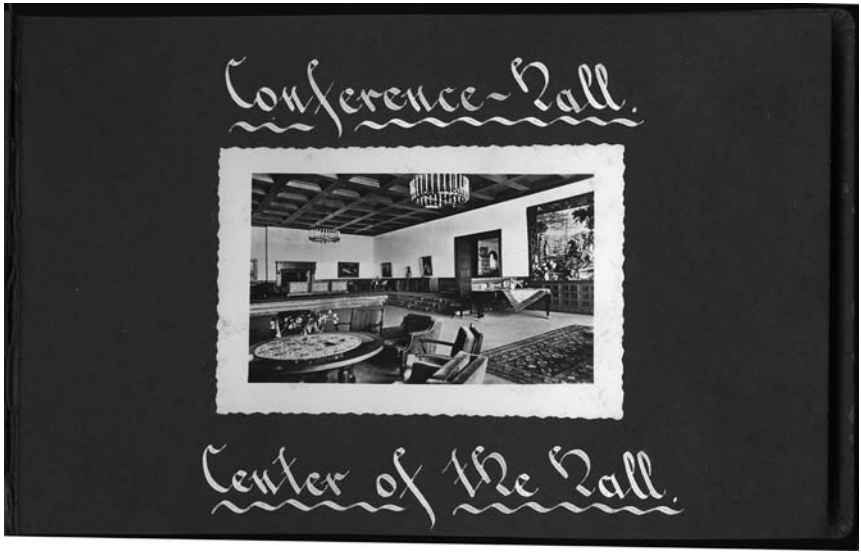

Figure 3.2 *Berghof Conference Hall*. Image courtesy of The Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.

I have perused this album in the company of several librarians and scholars and all agree that many possibilities regarding its provenance exist. First, there are two distinct styles of handwriting indicating multiple authorship. The first handwriting looks as though it was penned by a native German speaker who also spoke English, and the second appears to have been written by an American. The "American" handwriting mixes block capitals and lowercase letters and is written less carefully than the earlier handwriting (see Figure 1.2). The English calligraphic "gothic"-looking script is correct but not entirely idiomatic. In discussing Sylvia Plath's use of the word "gothic," Barbara Johnson notes that "'Gothic,' of course, is also a type of German font, one that makes the familiar letters of the alphabet themselves take on an uncanny appearance" (155; see also Halberstam). Johnson's words resonate with the jarring recognition of an English made uncanny by its inclusion in a souvenir album that metaphorically touched the Nazi inner circle.

Second, whoever took the photographs (who may or may not be the composer of the album) clearly had privileged access to secure Nazi spaces because he/she was able to restage the Nazi postcards that appear on the left page and the photographer's images, taken from almost exactly the same spot, appear on the right. There are no people whatsoever in the interior spaces in the album, which means that whoever took the photographs had the power to commandeer the relevant room and try to capture the angle produced in the Nazi postcard. The images are mostly of silent, elegant Nazi spaces. My highly conjectural reading of these attempts to reproduce Nazi postcards is that the photographer was extremely proud of her/his access to these elite Nazi spaces and that juxtaposing his/her personal images with mass-produced postcards demonstrates insider status. So the ghostly effect of the postcards derives at once from their age and from the emptiness of the interior spaces pictured—as though the images had somehow captured these spaces after the fall of the Third Reich and were mourning the absence of their owners. This is factually impossible of course, because the interiors featured in the album had already been destroyed.

The first section of the album, entitled "Pictures of Hitler's House," contains several indications that one of the two writers of the album was German, for under the image captioned "Hitler's Second House" one finds "Der Berghof" (not, in keeping with the English of the album, "the Berghof"). The not entirely idiomatic English of some captions also indicates that the calligraphic writer might have been German. For examples, consider these captions: "When the road got finished"; "The last part of the road"; "Winter time"; and "High up in the sky."

A sense of familiarity with the Obersalzberg and its inhabitants emerges; none of the Nazis are introduced by title or full name—they are merely "Bormann" or "Göring," and Eva Braun is merely "Eva" (the caption above a picture of her living room reads "Eva's living room"). While many Germans did know about Eva Braun, her existence was supposed to be erased

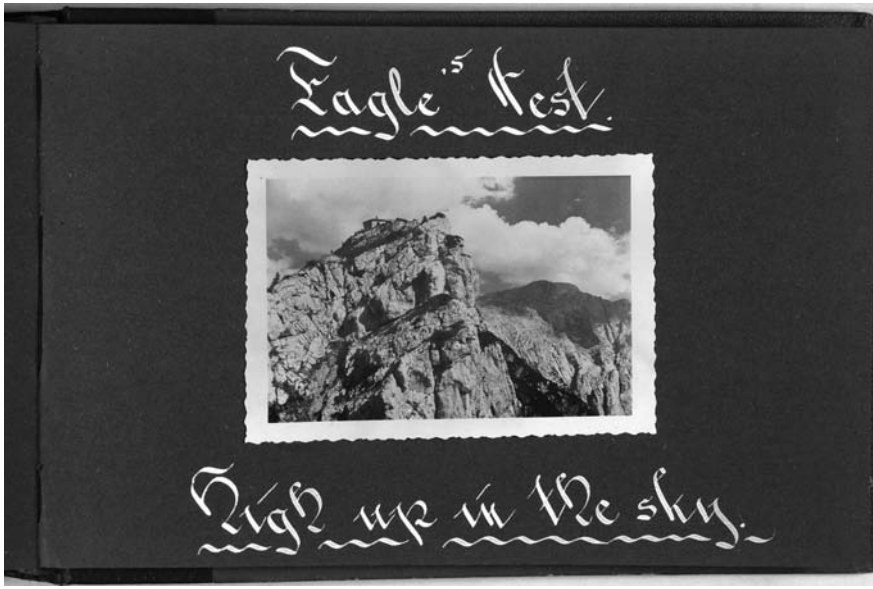

Figure 3.3 Eagle's Nest High Up in the Sky. Image courtesy of Charles Deering McCormick Library of Special Collections, Northwestern University Library.

when important visitors arrived at the Berghof, so an image of her "secret" living room implies intimacy. The interior images convey exactly the historical spaces inhabited by the fictionalized version of Braun and her cousin that Knauss depicts in *Eva's Cousin* (see Chapter 2). As with Knauss's portrayal, the interior images in the album replicate the quiet world of the Obersalzberg and are punctured by the exterior images of the mountain after the Allied bombing.

The exact dates of the photographs are hard to judge, but several clues limit the date range. One of the photographs, toward the end, depicts the bombed Berghof and features the caption "as you see it now"; the "now" must be between 25 April 1945, when the Berghof was bombed, and 30 April 1952, when the Bavarian government leveled the ruins. Based on the freshness of the destruction portrayed in the image—jagged, fallen rafters are still to be seen—it was probably snapped closer to 1945. Another image shot after the bombing, captioned "Hitler's house seen from Bormann's house," is framed from the blackened remains of one ruin into the other; the photographer must have been in a somewhat precarious position amid the ruins of Bormann's house to capture the image.

Some of the photographs at the beginning of the album were taken in 1933, or at least sometime before Hitler began serious renovations on Haus Wachenfeld in 1936. So, the photographer(s) had access to the Obersalzberg from about 1933 to 1945 or later. I speculate that these images were

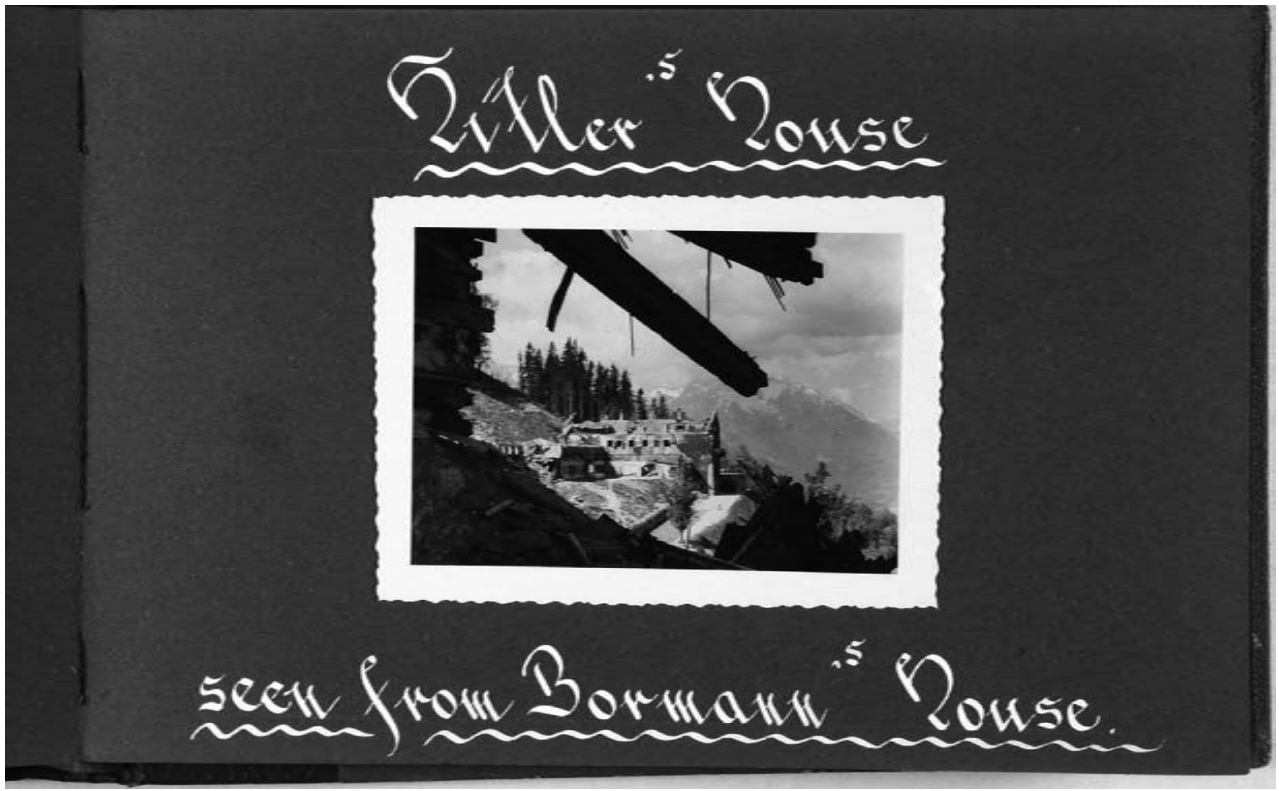

Figure 3.4 *Hitler's House Seen from Bormann's House.* Image courtesy of Charles Deering McCormick Library of Special Collections, Northwestern University Library.

taken by someone who had access to the restricted places on the Obersalzberg, throughout the years of the Third Reich, but who was not "wanted" as a high-ranking Nazi after the war, who was proud of her/his association with the Obersalzberg, and who took advantage of an enterprising business in constructing these albums for sale to G.I.'s (who arrived after all these lavish interior spaces had been bombed). It is entirely possible that the compiler of the album is not the photographer, but its deft reproduction suggests that they were one and the same. Thus, even while standing on the ruins of the Nazi second seat of power, the lovingly arranged photographs in this album covey a profound nostalgia for the Third Reich. Whatever the actual history of this album, it shares with many Nazi-nostalgia artifacts a pride in the Obersalzberg and a sense that the bombing was seen as a premature close to a chapter of Nazi history. By replicating Nazi postcards the photographer(s) is/are complicit in the Nazi ideals represented by the elegant world of the Obersalzberg. Indeed, I read the replications of postcards as a triumphant gesture expressing what Marianne Hirsch and other scholars have termed the "Nazi gaze."

For the most part, the scholarship on the Nazi gaze—imagery taken by the perpetrators of the victims—analyzes disturbing Nazi photographs shot during violent actions against Jews and others. But the images so carefully pasted into these albums can also be considered under the rubric of the "Nazi gaze" and, while the photographs taken before the bombing do not present violent scenes, and while the images after the bombing depict violence created by the Allies, the implied violence of the Nazi gaze might be helpful in untangling the possible meanings of this fascinating album. When Sybil Milton notes that "photography was a routine part of the extermination process in Nazi Germany" she correctly refers to the disturbing recording of extremely violent actions carried out by the perpetrators.[4] This trade in violent images recalls the circulation of lynching postcards in America so movingly portrayed in *Without Sanctuary*.[5] It also recalls the violent images taken more recently by U.S. soldiers in Iraq of prisoners being tortured at the Abu Ghraib prison (see Sontag, "Torture"; Butler, "Torture"). If we consider Milton's comment that photography was part of the Nazi genocide in its broadest sense, then we could include Heinrich Hoffmann and other photographers—such as the photographer(s) of the "Souvenir of Berchtesgaden" album or Ignatius Phayre of *Homes & Gardens*, or the photographers of the *New York Times* piece (who may actually be the same)—in an understanding of the masking of violence. The photographs of moments of physical violence are not the only form of violent imagery; the whole Nazi propagandistic enterprise of which the Obersalzberg complex was such an important part is also violent because it justified physical violence. The portrayals of the lives of Hitler and his inner circle (especially the Nazi women) on the mountain fed the crucial Nazi myth that the fighting, the unpleasant parts of war, were all necessary components of the larger Nazi dream of a postwar expanded Germany replete with idyllic moments such as those captured in Obersalzberg

propaganda and supported by the Nazi character Hans in Knauss's novel *Eva's Cousin*. The postwar German landscape in the Nazi imaginary would be indescribably beautiful and the violence it took to shape that beautiful Aryan dream would be forgotten in the glorious Reich. Hans wholeheartedly believed in this imperial fantasy and used the chimerical future to justify his blood-soaked present.

In discussing the infamous photograph of the little boy in the Warsaw ghetto whose arms are held aloft as overbearing Nazis point large guns at him, Marianne Hirsch notes that this incredibly iconic image, which has featured on the covers of books and pamphlets about the Holocaust produced by Jewish groups, institutions, and painters (see Bak 33) was in fact a perpetrator image. Many viewers assume that because the photograph represents the horrors of the Holocaust—the victimization of an innocent child—it was shot by a fellow victim whereas one of the Nazis terrorizing the young boy actually pressed the camera's trigger. Hirsch asks: "How can perpetrator images . . . have come to play an important, even a prevalent role in the cultural act of memorializing the victims?" ("Nazi Photographs" 21). While the "Souvenir of Berchtesgaden" album makes no attempt to memorialize the victims, we can turn Hirsch's question around and ask how those of us who identify more with the victims than the perpetrators can read perpetrator images. As we peruse perpetrator images, identification with the victims blocks or transforms our access to them. There are ethical and aesthetic differences between perpetrator images taken during violent actions and perpetrator images, such as the postcards reproduced in this album, taken for propaganda purposes. But if we understand the deep connection between propaganda and genocide—the way in which Nazi propaganda enabled genocide—then the violent valence of these images emerges. Even though these photographs are seemingly peaceful, the nostalgia they convey and the propaganda they implicitly endorse were part of the conditions of possibility for genocide.

The tidy rooms of the Berghof or of Göring's house, then, are masks for the underlying violence of the Nazi regime. The Obersalzberg functioned in the Nazi imaginary as the beautiful, secretive, mysterious place where the Führer became himself; as though the endless show of the Nazi spectacles at the Berlin *sportspalast*, the Nuremberg rallies, the pomp and circumstance of the annual celebrations for Hitler's birthday, or for the 20 January anniversary of Hitler's rise to power in 1933 could all be laid to rest in the "peaceful countryside" of the Obersalzberg. The photographs in the Berchtesgaden album reveal an intimacy with Hitler's spaces that would have been intensely coveted by the thousands of pilgrims crammed against each other desperate for a touch of the Führer's hand. The pride evident in the juxtaposition of the "official" Nazi postcards with the amateur photographer's reproduction of them comes from the sense that he/she had somehow made it through the crowd to the quiet, coveted spaces inside the inner Nazi sanctum. The reproductions reveal a fascination with Nazi spaces.

In "Emptying the Gaze: Framing Violence through the Viewfinder," Bernd Hüppauf locates in the modern technological gaze, which he dates to the post–World War I era, an "empty gaze" that attempts to document violence and horror precisely because the very technology that allows photographs of violence to be taken distracts the viewer. While I find Hüppauf's stark division between the pre– and post–World War I gazes problematic, his articulation of the empty gaze of perpetrator images intrigues. His division does not take into account, for example, representations of violence in seventeenth-century painting (see Alpers), or the violent photo documentation of the Civil War. Like Hirsch, Hüppauf is interested in perpetrator photographs taken during violent moments; he argues that after World War II, "images of Nazi party rallies, the Autobahns and urban architecture, organized leisure and advanced war technology, which the national socialist system had so successfully deployed as its vision of the present and the future were supposed to give way to images that represented the past as a criminal and barbaric time" (3–4). In other words, the propagandistic photographs Hoffmann and the photographer(s) of the Berchtesgaden album reproduced were replaced by other perpetrator images of the violence that had been suppressed in the Nazi propagandistic representations. Still and moving pictures taken and widely circulated by the Allies supplemented these images.

I consider that the photographs such as those in the "Souvenir of Berchtesgaden" album were shot at the same time as Nazi images of violence. I imagine lighting being checked, angles being considered, and shutters being pressed at the same time on two distinct scenes: one, the imagined Nazi sympathizer who snapped photographs demonstrating her/his access to the Nazi elite; two: a perpetrator who wanted to record his actions for any number of possible reasons, fetishizing violence, historical documentation, or, in Hüppauf's words, to assure "an authority that will secure a position of mastering over memory in the future" (29). The simultaneity of these two kinds of photography—supposedly peaceful, propagandistic and violent, murderous—represents the simultaneity of beauty and violence that the Obersalzberg encapsulates. I imagine the violent smokestacks of Auschwitz at the same temporal location as the quiet living rooms of the Berghof.

The replacement of propagandistic images taken and circulated by the Nazis with violent images taken and circulated by the Allies that Hüppauf charts, where during the war the "secret imagery" (29) of the only very circumscribed circulation of violent perpetrator photographs, has been transformed into the secret imagery and only limited circulation of Nazi propagandistic images. The world of Nazi postcards, Nazi paraphernalia, and other tainted residues of the Nazi genocide is active among the neo-Nazi and Nazi sympathizer set; these images are bought and sold on the Internet and elsewhere daily. But a "secret" quality dominates this circulation, just as, during the war, there was a "secret" quality to violent images taken by perpetrators (see Didi-Huberman). The assumption among the *Homes & Gardens* readers of 1938 and the *New York Times* readers of 1941 that the depiction

of the dictator's chalet, using photographs that oscillate with those found in the souvenir album, was merely an aesthetic exploration of the design of a charming building, was made utterly impossible by 1945. As I discussed in the last chapter, the connections Knauss draws between eroticism, intimacy, and violence are thematized in these photo albums and are also brought to the fore in some of the images of and by Lee Miller (see the next chapter), who was one of the first American photographers to document and disseminate on a wide scale the violence of the Nazi regime.

These albums come to us, a surprise on a visit to a room full of rare books. Their ghostly presence initiates a reading mystery: who took them, why? With what sentiments and emotions? But their meanings remain, in Paul de Man's words, "allegories of unreadability" (275). They teach us, though, about how the aestheticization of the exterior landscape of the breathtaking Alpine scenery and the interior landscape of the privileged Nazi spaces functions to mask the violence inherent in the Nazi regime. Vernacular albums are kept by families with the means to do so all over the world. Albums offer snapshots of time passing and they can, as Barthes discussed, open up memories and/or close them off (see Barthes; Sontag, *Photography*; Batchen; van Alphen, "Nazism"). Do we remember what happened before and after the photograph was taken or does the photograph become the memory? When we are confronted with delicate photographs of Nazi spaces presented as souvenir albums these images are multivalent, acting as translucent screens that open up the time around the moment of the images but also, because of their stillness, confirm their status as souvenirs, traces of the necessarily closed past.

These stuffy, compelling albums are static even while their interpretations range dramatically based on the historical and geographical location of their viewers. The aesthetic of the albums seems very distant from the modern aesthetic of the hotel that opened on the Obersalzberg in 2005. This jarring disjunction between the 1940s and the early 2000s comes into play when one considers the albums in light of the hotel.

THE HOTEL INTERCONTINENTAL, BERCHTESGADEN

The Hotel InterContinental, Berchtesgaden, is both gorgeous and over-the-top decadent.[6] It is cool, sleek, streamlined, and populated by an international mix of pampered holidaymakers. Because the hotel sits on the location of Hermann Göring's former house, and a very short distance from the ruins of the Berghof, it commands an incredible view—all rooms have enormous glass doors opening on to balconies amid Alpine splendor that overlook the Untersberg, Watzmann, and other snow-covered mountains. Timothy Ryback reports that the hotel's architect, Herbert Kochta, opted for a modern design that would stand as a "man-made challenge to the towering summits nearby" ("Shrine" 131). However, Kochta's

original design, when seen from an aerial view, looked like a "giant 'H' branded on the landscape" and thus seemed to be paying homage to Hitler ("Shrine" 131). The hotel was then redesigned to look like a horseshoe, or, as described in some of the hotel's press materials, as two wings designed to "make the monumental more manageable" ("Mountain Meadows" 2). The very architecture of the hotel, therefore, had to be extremely careful not to fall into what I have elsewhere termed "aesthetic pollution," or the fear of reproducing a fascist aesthetic (see Kaplan, *Unwanted Beauty*). In his careful study of what he dubs the "architect's debate" in Germany, Gavriel Rosenfeld finds that "the Nazi's reactionary political goals were reflected in the regime's monumental, neoclassical architecture"; in response to this, Rosenfeld notes, modernists used "glass, steel and concrete . . . as a light and transparent style of architecture that symbolized the openness and humanity of democracy" (192). The structure of the Hotel InterContinental, in order to be seen as untainted by its location's National Socialist past, adopted this "light and transparent" style. Echoes of Nazism were nonetheless found embedded in the hotel's design, which incorporates the natural environs into a modernist aesthetic.

Three months after it opened, along with Luke Batten and Jon Sadler, the photographers whose invitation to the Obersalzberg in effect launched this book and whose photographs grace its pages, we were given a tour of the hotel by one of its managers. The manager claimed that most people do not ask about the history of the site and are unaware that it was a Nazi space. In keeping with hotel policy, he deflected questions about the Nazi past onto the nearby Documentation Center, which one can see from some of the balconies of the hotel; he assured us that a brochure from the Center is available in each room. When we asked him how the hotel came to occupy this site, the manager told us that in 1996 the area was given back to Bavaria by the U.S. Army (which had used it for a recreation center since the end of World War II) and that the government allowed it to be taken over by a company, Gewerbegrund, which still manages the land on which the Hotel stands.[7] The InterContinental was then fully booked, mostly with pleasure-seekers who drove up from Munich.[8] Our guide stressed the hotel's attempt to include natural, local features and remarked that the exterior is constructed of Alpine stone (Bayrisch Gneis) and that the carpets in almost all the rooms have a snow and bark theme to reflect the natural surrounds. The wood in the rooms is treated to be hyper-grainy (Gebertzt) and thus to underscore its association with the natural surrounds—but the wood is now so grainy that many visitors question its authenticity. The manager also showed us the Vinotek, which contains 250 red and 250 white wines (ten thousand bottles total; Göring had a similarly huge, famous wine collection on this spot); the bar has 407 kinds of whiskey. The pool lies flat against the ground and one can step over from an inside pool to an outside pool, thus continuing the hotel's theme of combining an abstracted nature with a sleek interior.

Figure 3.5 A. Hitler and D. Eckart: Obersalzberg to Hoher Goll No. 3. Luke Batten and Jonathan Sadler. Image courtesy of New Catalogue.

Göring's house on the same spot was the first in the Obersalzberg complex to boast a pool (Beierl 13). Thus the hotel's staff, while clearly aware of the Nazi past, nonetheless defer conversation about this subject to the Documentation Center; and the hotel's architecture and design depoliticize by focusing on the natural rather than the historical.

Figure 3.6 Hotel InterContinental, Berchtesgaden. Luke Batten and Jonathan Sadler. Image courtesy of New Catalogue.

Yet the hotel takes an ironic stance toward its status as the inheritor of a tradition of holidaymakers on the Obersalzberg dating to the mid-nineteenth century. While on the one hand the InterContinental absolutely shuns quaint Alpine architecture, on the other hand, its interior décor, created by Mahmoudieh Design of Berlin, comments on the expectations of a ski and hunting lodge by featuring several abstractions of deer heads. The

Figure 3.7 *InterContinental Pool*. Luke Batten and Jonathan Sadler. Image courtesy of New Catalogue.

deer heads are made from colorfully painted metal and feature crooked stainless steel "horns" that delicately protrude from the flat, expressionless stylizations of animals. These deer heads are funny, and remind one that this area had been a recreation retreat for longer than the sixty years since the end of Nazi rule. As is frequently noted in accounts of Hitler's relationships with other high-ranking Nazis, the famously vegetarian dictator

enjoyed teasing Göring about his love of hunting; with this in mind, the deer heads are even more curious.[9] While it is entirely possible that the deer head designer, thinking of the site of the hotel, may have known about this joke between the dictator and the head of his air force, among the deer heads' multiple meanings, they represent the hotel's ability to recognize simultaneously its entrenchment in the history of its site and distance itself from that history. As an aesthetic and even ethical choice, the sleekness of the deer heads meshes with the aesthetic of the hotel; but they may also refer to the many Nazi jokes about hunting that were in circulation at the time. Thus the deer heads, and many other aspects of the hotel's design, are part of a complicated attempt to simultaneously thwart and celebrate recognition of the site's Nazi past. The ultramodern hotel's attempt to reflect the natural surrounds in its highly abstracted images of snow and bark or abstract, metal deer heads echoes Hitler's curious aims for the natural surrounds of the Obersalzberg complex.

The glossy advertising brochures for the hotel do not mention the Nazis, but the press packet distributed to the media refers to the Nazi past obliquely. For example, in a press release entitled "Mountain Meadows and Milky Way," the unnamed author notes, "Due to the history of the Obersalzberg it was a considerable challenge for the architects to find the right approach for the design of the hotel." What the contents of that "history" are remain unspecified in the document, which opens with the statement: "Dynamic, full of vigour, with a certain lightness of being" (2). In another press release, the hotel's theme of "humanity and nature" is attributed to the painter Otto Müller, "whose works were classed as 'degenerate art' and confiscated during the era of National Socialism" ("Colours, Clear Lines and Creativity" 1). Müller (1874–1930) favored paintings of gypsies in landscapes, further increasing his viability as inspiration for an anti-Nazi aesthetic on a Nazi site. Had Müller lived long enough to witness the appropriation of his art for a hotel's design ethos on the site that housed the regime that mocked and derided him, he would most likely be aghast. As these examples of corporate rhetoric indicate, the hotel's public relations people, unmoored from political and geographical histories, cull useful figures and phrases together in order to justify the existence of the hotel. The Hotel InterContinental and its public relations firm, Wilde & Partner, thus consistently screen the violent history of its location and advertise it as a place of lightness, rest, and relaxation. The architects and designers of the hotel were careful to stress the natural beauty of the landscape precisely because these are timeless wonders that preceded and outlived the violence of the Nazi regime. From the design of the hotel to its careful presentation to the world, the hotel's handlers play a complicated game with the history of its location, at times more and at times less willing to recognize this history, at times directly confronting, at other times demurring to the Documentation Center. Needless to say, when plans to build a hotel near the barely visible debris that is all that remains of the Berghof were announced,

there was no shortage of responses, taking a range of positions from condemnation to embrace.

WHAT THE PUNDITS SAID

For some representative examples from the American press response to the rise of the Hotel InterContinental, consider Richard Bernstein's question, "Is there something inappropriate, unseemly, gratuitous about having a pleasure palace for affluent vacationers seeking wellness on the very spot where Hitler lived out his myths about blood and soil and racial regeneration, even as he consigned millions to concentration camps and death?" ("Hitler Played" A4; see also Bernstein's article "Hotel Hopes"). Jayne Clark of *USA Today* used the familiar moniker for the InterContinental the "Hitler Hotel" to debase the new structure (8D). One might imagine that Dan Diner's argument about German guilt would be applicable to the German press's response to the hotel, for he notes that the Holocaust "generates a vagabond, cross-generational sense of guilt which has mutated into a central feature of the collective consciousness of the Germans" (305). But interestingly many German commentators supported the dissociation of the hotel from the Nazi past.

One newspaper summarized the German press situation thusly: "tortuous debates begun and the German press has pored over every nuance of the hotel's design, from the bathroom shower-heads which one newspaper suggested were 'reminiscent of the false shower-heads in the gas-chambers of Auschwitz,' to the apparent choice of beige uniforms for staff which another said were similar to the 'brown shirts of the Nazi era'" (Connolly 15).[10] As for the showerheads, the manager of the hotel, Jörg Böckeler, claims that they are replicas of those used in 1904 in London's Savoy (Davidson 2). A German journalist, Evelyn Finger, dismissed the accusations against the showerheads as "hysterical prejudgments [*hysterischen Vorverurteilungen*]" and claimed that the overall interior design of the hotel could ward off the threat of aesthetic pollution by adhering to a "radical modernism" that has the effect of "alienation [*Verfremdung*]." Another German journalist echoes this sentiment: "Does one really need to associate the panorama windows [of the hotel] with Hitler's panorama windows, or the shower-heads, which are available in every do-it-yourself store, with the shower-heads in the gas chambers?" ("Im Licht der Moderne"). Another journalist noted that "out of fear of improper Germanness [*unpassender Deutschtümelei*] the hotel board decided to do without a cozy Bavarian beer parlor" ("Zwischen Glamour und Grauen"). These responses all recognize the fear of aesthetic pollution but they also all argue against heeding this fear so far as to discount a simple showerhead for its supposed resemblance to Auschwitz gas chamber showerheads. Other German commentators were less forgiving of the InterContinental. For example, dubbing the

hotel the "Hitlerconti" Peter Roos asked, "Where am I here? At one of the most beautiful places in the world, at one of the most ghastly topographies in this world, between Watzmann [mountain] and Bormann . . . It is the soundless roar of the history of this place, it is the symbolic powers-space, whose energies are at work; it is the burden of meaning in this semantic landscape [*semantischen Landschaft*]." In an article in *Seuddeutsche* Sonja Zekri spoke with the Obersalzberg historian Florian Beierl, who concluded, "Such is our mountain. A place that cannot find rest and that does not allow for rest" (26). Hans Holzhaider quotes a local German observer who terms the hotel a "death-sin [*Todsünde*]" and asks, "How can human beings be allowed to mess up the landscape so much" by building the hotel? The German press response, as one might expect, was not monolithic and was split between those who argue for moving beyond the past and those who see Hitler's ghost floating ineluctably on the mountain.

The InterContinental chain is British so the press there was most interested in the hotel, and response was mixed from outraged to ambivalent to sarcastic. For example, Mitchell Symons wrote a searing indictment of the InterContinental that was endorsed by some of his readers, one of whom responded: "I wholeheartedly agree with Mitchell that it is the height of bad taste to encourage people to visit any site associated with the Nazis . . . to offer incentive is utterly repugnant" (Houston 31). One British journalist interviewed a German holidaymaker who claimed, "It would give me shivers to come and stay here knowing that Hitler, Himmler, and the others were here, doing the terrible things they did. For me it would be like taking a vacation at somewhere like Auschwitz."[11] Yet another holidaymaker took the opposite tack: "Hitler was the best leader we ever had . . . Hitler was for Germany. He was so modest and unassuming," (Losch, "Exhibit" I13). For some sarcastic British responses, consider the opening of a 1995 article responding to the Bavarian government's announcement that the hotel would open on the Obersalzberg: "Fancy a holiday with a difference? Why not spend a week at Adolf Hitler's summer residence in the German Alps?... Write postcards in Bormann's study and sleep in a room where the Führer cuddled up to Eva Braun" (Hagler). Or, similarly, "Fancy a spot of golf at the Alpine lair where the Führer planned the invasion of Poland?" ("Hitler Hotel" 15). This sarcastic tone represents much of the response and indicates a discomfort with pleasurable uses of the Obersalzberg site while simultaneously not offering a viable alternative. In a more sober vein, another British journalist wondered whether "it was immoral of me not to find the experience [of basking in the hotel's spa] spooky" ("Hotel"). Max Davidson of the *Observer* confessed that he planned to pan the hotel but that when confronted with the ordinariness of its reality, he was left with the hope that "perhaps, in time, this lovely Bavarian mountainside can enjoy a future which is not filled with hate" (2). Jonathan Margolis wondered if he were "the first, and possibly last, Jew" (2) to check into the hotel, and reports that the entire staff had to be background checked to

root out neo-Nazis. These interesting responses from the American, German, and British press record a range of emotions from outrage to hope and cautious acceptance, and are sometimes markedly different from the responses of various Jewish groups.

THE JEWISH RESPONSE

The Hotel InterContinental not surprisingly provoked the ire of many Jewish voices. Michel Friedman of the Central Council of Jews in Germany exclaimed: "Unbelievable!... Decisions about the murder of millions were taken here. We believe it is no place for a leisure complex."[12] Abe Foxman of the Anti-Defamation League felt that "[t]he place should remain a wasteland where people are told, 'This is where the infamous dictator thought he was going to lead a life of joy and pleasure and look what it is now'—a joy palace for the rich and famous of our time" ("Furor"). Lord Janner, chairman of the Holocaust Educational Trust, said, "I find it offensive, objectionable and totally unacceptable" (Davidson 2). As these comments indicate, many official Jewish voices were adamantly opposed to and deeply offended by the construction of the hotel. Dr. Shimon Samuels of the Simon Wiesenthal Center wrote to David Webster of the InterContinental, complaining that the hotel sits on a "seat of evil" and that it teaches visitors that "scenic beauty can camouflage and efface [Nazi] atrocities" (letter).[13] Samuels's argument thus finds that the very beauty of the spot encourages forgetting. Webster replied:

> InterContinental Hotels and Resorts has great sympathy with people whose families suffered under the Nazi regime and in no way wishes to cause any offense through managing the hotel at Berchtesgaden nor indeed does the company condone in any way whatsoever the atrocities perpetrated under Adolf Hitler's rule. The region enjoys a great tradition of tourism and has always been one of Germany's most popular holiday regions, as it still is today. (letter)

Webster's letter goes on to cite Dr. Rabbi Nachama, director of Berlin's Topography of Terror, as a prominent Jewish figure who was in favor of the hotel. I wrote to Rabbi Nachama about the hotel and his response was clear. The hotel, he argued, was necessary to bolster the Documentation Center Obersalzberg and, further, to keep out neo-Nazis who, he and the Bavarian government alike assumed, would not be able to afford the InterContinental: "There is a learning center which is used by tourists from all over Germany and tourists from other countries come also to see it. Next to it is this InterContinental which makes it certain that neo-Nazis and other sympathizers of the Nazis will not come there, since they can neither afford an InterContinental nor do they like international people around them"

(letter, minor typos emended). Unlike many other world Jewish voices, then, Dr. Nachama supported the hotel. Interestingly, this assumption prevails that neo-Nazis cannot afford the InterContinental given the conflicted use that Hitler made of the Obersalzberg vis-à-vis class (see Chapter 1). This Alpine retreat afforded him at once an opportunity to project a "man of the people" but also paradoxically to rub elbows with the aristocracy and to offer spaces for the Nazi elite to horde the loot that was one of the material gains of genocide.

Webster's letter in response to Samuels's critique also claimed that the hotel would organize a series of lectures in conjunction with the Documentation Center. I wrote to the director of the Center about these lectures and she referred me to the PR firm that represents the hotel. In response to my queries, Petra Fuelle of Wilde & Partner wrote me that "a strict task-sharing between the Documentation Centre, dealing with the 20th-century history of Obersalzberg, and the hotel as a symbol of the tourist tradition in Berchtesgaden, has been the most appropriate way of addressing the issues and themes of the region. . . . [T]his form of cooperation was initiated by the Bavarian Federal Government, with its decision to adopt a two-column concept for Obersalzberg" (letter). Fuelle refers here to Bavarian Finance Minister Kurt Falthauser's "two-column" approach, which envisioned the hotel and the Documentation Center working together, so that the former deflects historical questions onto the latter.[14] This two-pronged system, in fact, makes a certain amount of sense. The hotel is, after all, a commercial venture and not an academic or historical outfit. Yet how should the hotel's handlers account for the dark history of its location?

Huge debates have raged over the fate of former concentration camp sites: are they all to be preserved as museums? Must no ice cream be allowed in Auschwitz? Can some of them (as some have) now be used for other institutions that do not dwell on the violence of the past? But there has been less debate over the fate of former Nazi sites. This is true for many reasons. First, and most obviously, many Nazi buildings had been bombed by the end of the war. Secondly, many of those that remained all over Germany have slipped quietly into use for a variety of functions. For example, the 1936 Olympic stadium in Berlin that Hitler famously commissioned as a tool to convey to the world the wonders and virility of the Nazi regime was used in the summer of 2006 for the World Cup. During the cup's championship match (9 July) the ABC commentator coolly, repeatedly, and without critical contextualization noted that the match was being played in the "historic stadium built for the 1936 Olympics." The sportscaster did not complicate this statement by noting the ultimately violent effects of that particular Olympics nor the blatant racism against American athletes through which it is still remembered today.[15] Materials from Hitler's New Chancellery were used in a Memorial to Russian Soldiers. Hitler's former Munich residence, to take another example, now houses the Staatliche Hochshule für Musik. Klessheim Palace, a lavish Nazi

conference center and guesthouse near Salzburg, was a functioning palace after the war where, in 1972, then U.S. President Nixon spent a night on his way to Moscow; it is now a casino and Mostly Mozart concert hall. Hitler was delighted with the Nazi architect Paul Giesler's transformation of Schloss Klessheim and claimed that the "general lay-out, which corresponds so closely to my own ideas of spaciousness, pleases me particularly. There is nothing niggardly or trashy, such as one sees in the houses of some of the minor potentates. Schloss Klessheim is the Guest House of a great nation. Giesler has planned on a great scale" (Hitler, *Secret* 365). Despite Hitler's high praise and this palace's intimate involvement in Nazi history, its transformation into a casino did not seem as controversial as the rise of the InterContinental on the site of the Nazi spiritual home. Other examples of former Nazi buildings and spaces being used today are legion; indeed, countries with difficult histories (including the U.S.) would have little space to build if all sites with troubled pasts were preserved.

It makes a great deal of sense to find the hotel distasteful but it also makes a great deal of sense to allow the "tainted ground" to be used for pleasurable purposes. The Jewish DPs who chose to vacation in Berchtesgaden in 1947 clearly felt that the site should be appropriated and enjoyed rather than shunned (see Figure 1.4). Thus the lavish hotel on the Nazi spiritual home represents a series of contradictory approaches to landscape and memory. If one finds that space and landscape are themselves imbued with meaningful history, then the Obersalzberg is indelibly haunted by the Nazis. If one finds that space and landscape are devoid of meaningful history, then the hotel can be seen as a logical step in coming to terms with the Nazi genocide. For the rise of the Hotel InterContinental, on a commercial level, the beauty of the landscape draws visitors. But on a metaphorical level, the beauty of the landscape engenders forgetting; in another way, though, the surrounding landscape engages in a battle between memory and forgetting. Ernst van Alphen argues, "The space of landscape engages vision by seducing you or inviting you" (*Art* 92). Van Alphen's phrase neatly captures the seductive appeal of landscape—whether actual or represented. The seductive appeal of the Obersalzberg's landscape was keenly felt by the Nazis, as evidenced in the wartime commentary of Nazi Obergruppenführer Wilhelm Brückner, who noted that "the seeking mind, led on by the unshakeable greatness of the landscape [of the Obersalzberg] discovers the correct paths for people and fatherland" (43). Both of these assessments (from obviously ideologically opposed positions) address the seductions of landscape. While now the formerly well-tended road to the Berghof has become a weed-riddled path, Nazi bricks litter the ground, bomb craters are everywhere, and soon enough the remains of the Nazi complex will be invisible, the landscape still seduces.

I have not tried to decide whether the hotel is "good" or "bad," whether it should be there or not, whether is it unethical or moral, hopeful or terrible, for I can understand all sides of the debates the hotel has generated.

The supposedly peaceful site of a commercial enterprise such as the Hotel InterContinental at once can be seen as eliding and healing the violence produced by the Nazi regime. On the one hand, a transformation of this significant Nazi site into a pleasure palace smacks of a distasteful disregard for the victims of the Nazi genocide and of Nazism more generally. On the other hand, the dual structure of the Documentation Center and the hotel, while a calculated attempt to ward off criticism, does allow history and memory to function alongside what could be seen as a healthy moving beyond the Nazi past. If the choice is between well-heeled travelers and neo-Nazi pilgrims, the former are obviously preferable. But while neo-Nazis may not frequent the hotel more insidious and institutionalized transfers of Jewish and other victims' property into the hands of the next generations of former Nazi families indicate less visible structures of appropriation.

This transformation of the Obersalzberg raises questions about history, memory, decency, pleasure, and more. Searching for the remains of Hitler's house amid the weeds, I met a German man, probably around sixty and toting a camera, who told me that the traces of the Nazi complex were here, where we stood, but he wanted to make sure that I knew he was not a neo-Nazi and that he was looking at the remains purely for historical interest. I can understand his desire to reassure me as, to this day, neo-Nazi websites produce detailed, highly nostalgic, and laudatory webscenes containing richly detailed accounts of pilgrimages to Hitler's former spiritual home. For me, it is creepy to be where Hitler was, and uncanny to find his former spaces incredibly beautiful. Physically occupying Hitler's haunts forces one to address the nature of landscape and memory, and to ask whether the remains, the actual material of the dictator's house, are historical conveyers or mere debris. Both are true at once. The curious presence of this stunning hotel engenders both memory and forgetting in the dialectical process of treating the wreckage of the catastrophes of twentieth-century history.

Part II

Burning Images

Three Photographers Explore Traumatic Landscapes

4 Lee Miller: No Stasis

> Germany is a country frozen in the past, destroyed, a curiously extra-territorial place, inhabited by people whose faces are both lovely and dreadful.
>
> —W.G. Sebald

> Picasso had fractured the art world and cracked it wide open.
>
> —Bob Dylan

A beautiful woman rests in a bathtub, her gaze held by something we cannot see and in tension with that of a photograph of Hitler, staring imperiously out of a picture frame behind and to the left of her. The gaze of another nude intercuts the path of the woman's eyes, a classical Greek statue who regards the bathing beauty, her total nakedness in contrast with the more modest pose of the woman whose arms cover her breasts so that only her naked shoulder remains visible. In front of the bathtub a pair of combat boots gives the impression that she stepped out of her military garb and straight into the water. The muddy carpet on which the boots rest indicates that U.S. and other Allied military boots may have preceded her to this spot. At first glance the photograph arrests: the woman's gaze, intent as it is, the odd juxtapositions between her newly cleansed shoulder and those muddy combat boots, the classical Greek sculpture staring at the woman and the dictator both.

When one realizes that this portrait of Hitler rests on his own bathtub in his Munich apartment, that the photograph was taken very shortly after his suicide in Berlin, and that the woman in the tub is the American photographer and *Vogue* model Lee Miller, the portrait becomes even more engrossing. The recently deceased former Chancellor of Germany gazes out at a statue of the neo-Grecian nude that Nazi ideology relied upon to portray Aryan perfection through the mythical bond between Greece and Germany. The actual body of an American victor interrupts the dictator's gaze, falling between him and his idealized nude. She has her own fascinating story. She is in Germany to record for posterity in a popular magazine the demise of the Thousand Year Reich; she also embodies precisely this ideal of Greek/Aryan beauty. Three faces in the photograph, three divergent gazes. The bent arm of the statue, Miller's bent arm, Hitler's arm, bent at his side, all form triangles so that the statue's elbow points at the dictator and Miller's elbow, representing the opposing direction of the war, points resolutely south. While the statue bends an elbow above her head to expose her breasts, Miller's bent elbow covers hers.

Title: Lee Miller in Hitler's bath
Location: Hitler's Apartment, Munich, Germany
Date: 1945
Photographer: Lee Miller with David E. Scherman
Negative Number: 79-19R6
Notes: FF-VN
Credit Line: © Lee Miller Archives, England. All rights reserved.

lee miller
Lee Miller Archives
Photographs by Lee Miller 1907-1977

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Figure 4.1 *Lee Miller in Hitler's Bath* (1945). Photograph by David E. Scherman. Image courtesy of Lee Miller Archives, England 2009.

The photograph invites us to ask: what is being cleaned here? The neo-Grecian idealized statue reminds us of the aesthetic rationale of ethnic cleansing, while Miller wearily bathes away the war in the room where the

dictator, famously obsessive about cleanliness, must often have bathed.[1] This photograph stages much of what is present in Miller's wartime photography: war, beauty, death. Hitler is only just dead, the boots, although clearly Miller's, also serve as metonyms for the many soldiers dead in World War II; the neo-Grecian statue represents the Aryan ideal and its justification of genocide. Miller had posed for Man Ray, Picasso, Steichen, and other artists and by 1945 was renowned in art circles both for her own photographs and for the stunning portraits of her produced by these and other artists. Miller operated on both sides of the camera and this photograph of her in Hitler's bathtub by David E. Scherman manifests many of the strategies she deployed in her own photographs.

Burgeoning interest in Miller's images is apparent in the wide attention centenary exhibitions at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and other venues have received.[2] These exhibits in major museums indicate that Miller's work, which was only shown in one artistic venue while she was alive—at the Julien Levy Gallery in New York—has been accepted into the contemporary photographic canon.[3] Yet, because she fascinates as a person, and because her many biographies read like novels, most of the writing on her has chronicled her engaging life but left her photographs to speak for themselves. This is changing rapidly. Many new studies are now emerging, including work by Annalisa Zox-Weaver, Amy Lyford, Jean Gallagher, and others that analyze her work theoretically.[4] In this chapter I argue that Miller's wartime images illuminate the tensions between aesthetic and documentary approaches, between an artistic eye and the bleak horror of war, via a political *and* aestheticized vision. Miller's airing of these tensions turns crucially on gender, challenging the perceived legacy of surrealist sexual practices; but while these nuances infuse her war photography, she also moves beyond surrealist photography to open up the postwar aesthetic landscape. Critics have often categorized Miller's work as surrealist, and while traces of surrealism certainly surface, especially in her prewar photography, her wartime work evinces a particular sensibility that cannot be understood only as surreal. Indeed, a certain strain in her wartime photography powerfully resists surrealist defamiliarization.

Miller's work exemplifies the representation of war by a photographer forging what would later become the landscape of Holocaust postmemory. Working as she was in the immediate postwar period, the term "postmemory" may seem out of place here. And yet it is crucial in understanding Miller's work to grasp that while many of her powerful images were published in *Vogue* and thus widely circulated in the 1940s, an enormous number of her wartime images were only made available after her son, Antony Penrose, discovered her photographic collections in the late 1970s. Thus, while she flourished during the war era, her images circulated, were exhibited, and have been discussed mostly posthumously and during the emergence of postmemorial discourse.

When I started working on Miller several years ago I was trying to locate in her wartime photography a surrealist sensibility that, I then thought, would help me to articulate the uniqueness of her vision. But as I perused more and more of her wartime photographs I realized that something else was at stake in determining her relationship to surrealism and that, in fact, I want to resist labeling her wartime work "surrealist" because this implies an element of fantasy and defamiliarization to what became a politically charged muckraking of Nazi crimes. I borrow the subtitle of this chapter, "No Stasis" from Susan Suleiman's examination of how some women artists say "yes, but" to the often misogynist work of the male surrealist artists with whom they are in implicit dialogue. Miller's work maintains no stasis as it shifts contextually, aesthetically, and in terms of subject matter. It is surrealist but. Perhaps even with a capital "BUT" because Miller's wartime work resisted the defamiliarizations and makings strange that characterized much surrealist photography (see Suleiman, "Contemporary Women"). Miller charted new paths, socially and sexually, for women in her generation in much the same way as she helped to alter the aesthetic landscape of war photography. In both "journalistic" and "high art" work she employed the ideals of surrealist conduct while discarding its de facto, if not de jure, gender bias, and recorded the war and its aftermath through a sensitive lens that effectively altered representations of catastrophe. Her work offers a certain aesthetification of horror that paradoxically moves away from surrealist defamiliarization despite her connection to surrealist circles.

In *Unwanted Beauty* I made a case for the occasional power of aestheticized images of catastrophe. Miller's postwar work imparts a multivalent approach to the aesthetics of catastrophe that draws on but is not reducible to surrealism, that is highly influenced by Picasso, and that often offers an emotional immediacy that challenges both traditional photojournalism and surrealism. Miller's wartime and postwar images, appearing primarily in British and American *Vogue*, range in subject and in aesthetic valence. Some of her earliest wartime photographs chronicled British women wearing protective eye shields and masks, air raid preparations for war, and the bombing of London.[5] Later publications in *Vogue* depict former concentration camp inmates trying to cope with the madness of liberation and the confusion of survival. Others portray dead Nazis who had taken their own lives or been beaten to death by their former prisoners. Some of her images, such as the one of her in Hitler's bathtub, are highly staged, and others, such as one she took of German citizens forced to witness a concentration camp at liberation (see Chapter 5) are snapshots recording the moment, unposed.[6] But all of her wartime and postwar photographs maintain an odd status in the landscape of postmemorial Holocaust art for several reasons.

This odd status in the postmemorial artistic landscape stems in part from the designation of her works as "surrealist" without fully interrogating the aesthetics or the politics of this term. But it also stems from the fact that the most famous of her photographs were published in *Vogue* from

1944 to 1945; indeed, those with whom I discuss Miller's wartime images are always surprised that a magazine like *Vogue* would have broadcast such photos. And yet, there were many other contributors to the magazine who wrote about the war, and many other photographers and avant-garde artists whose work was published in this venue. John Groth, who spent five weeks in Germany as a correspondent, wrote and illustrated an article in *Vogue* entitled "American Soldiers in Germany."[7] Other *Vogue* articles, not surprisingly, had fluffier titles such as "Great Art in Four California Houses" (1 February 1945) or "Women and the Airborne World" (15 February 1945). Indeed, perusing British and American *Vogue* from 1944 to 1945 one encounters glossy advertisements for stockings opposite Miller's gripping images. Miller was initially unsure whether or not *Vogue* would publish her most difficult to see work and she prefaced her images with: "I usually don't take pictures of horrors. But don't think that every town and area isn't rich with them. I hope you will feel that it [i.e., *Vogue*] can publish these pictures" (qtd. in C. Hall 45). Obviously the magazine did. But as Antony Penrose observes, "The grim skeletal corpses of Buchenwald are separated by a few thicknesses of paper from delightful recipes to be prepared by beautiful women dressed in sumptuous gowns" (*Lives* 205). Penrose also notes that "when they ran her [Miller's] reports from the battlefields of Europe, the layouts were unwittingly surreal in the juxtaposition of images of death and destruction with *soignée* women dressed in the latest modes" (*Home* 52). These jarring juxtapositions no doubt contribute to the understanding of Miller's work as surrealist.

These curious and unexpected couplings of fashion advertisements with artistic images of survival, death, victimization, suicide, and other aftereffects of war were preceded by a burgeoning spillover of surrealist and modernist sensibilities into popular magazines. Thus, as early as 1933 George J. Cox, in a discussion of how modern art had enlivened other spheres, noted, "a dilute solution of cubism, expressionism, and surréalisme now saturates a large part of our everyday art. . . . Without question there is a more lively and intelligent pictorial consciousness about our advertisements . . . and, at several removes, the misunderstood modernist has transformed our magazines, or at least the more progressive" (187). A few years before Miller started publishing in *Vogue*, then, popular magazines had already begun adopting some of this "dilute solution" of modernist aesthetics. Just as Miller's photography was becoming widely circulated, surrealism as a movement was waning.[8] Indeed, also writing in *Vogue* in July 1945 Jean-Paul Sartre noted: "The war has dispersed the *surréalistes* . . . properly speaking there is no longer, at the moment, a *surréaliste* movement in France" ("New" 84). This no doubt left room for Miller to develop a distinct sensibility in her wartime and immediate postwar photojournalism that combined documentary with modernist approaches and that charted a course for Holocaust postmemory via a complex aesthetic that blurred traditional dictates.

Viewing Miller's images displayed on the walls at the Philadelphia Museum of Art made clear the aesthetic changes in her perceptions from her earlier surrealist inflected work to her quite different wartime photography. The day I was there the gallery was crowded and a tour guide led a group of awestruck women through Miller's life, pausing on the key photographs and retelling the photographer's adventurous, compelling narrative. The women nodded in recognition, exclaiming that Miller was "an extraordinary, extraordinary woman." As the tour guide proceeded, the biographical predominated over the aesthetic contemplation of her images—"Wait, how many times was Miller married?" one woman interrupted to ask. The guide paused at a portrait of the boxer Gene Tunney and pointed to the frankness, the "classical" nature of the image. The photograph, she opined, "looks like it wants to jump out of the glass." As I wandered past the familiar images, photographs I have studied for years but had never seen on the walls of a museum, I stopped before an arresting sculptural nude. *Nude* (1930) was one of the most aesthetically compelling images in the exhibition: a sensual, delicate body rendered almost abstract, surreal. The background is midnight blue. The nude lies on her side, also in a defamiliarizing gesture, she appears upside down, her head evaporated into darkness, her fingers barely visible, slowly emerging from the shadow into which her head has disappeared. The line between her side and her leg is negligible, as she curls up away from the camera but in repose, resting; soft focus obscures her spine, enhancing the marbleized effect of the image. One shoulder blade comes up, leaving a faint darkness, a tiny shadow on the smooth plane of this woman's gorgeous back. The indentation formed by her bottom at the end, a heart-shaped spot, sharply contrasts with the dark absence of her head on the other side. The top shoulder, uncomfortably torqued, threatens to disrupt the peaceful image of repose. A mole appears near the top shoulder—her skin's only blemish—as the dark blue background conveys a sense that the woman is alone in the galaxy, amid the vast expanse.

This striking nude exhibiting Miller's early surrealist sensibility that later gave way to other wartime aesthetics, was paired with another, *Nude Bent Forward* (1930), and the two works were framed in the exhibition by two images of stones, reinforcing the sculptural quality of the nudes as the nudes underscored the sensuous nature of the stones. In an utterly different context that nonetheless uncannily replicates Miller's nudes, two of the images in Glenn Ligon's "Notes in the Margin of The Black Book" (1991–1993) are framed similarly (see Enwezor). A structure echoing Miller's dominated the framing of Ligon's work in which he deconstructs Robert Mapplethorpe's *The Black Book* (1986) by juxtaposing reproductions of the images in that book with commentary, written on small placards and displayed slightly out of line with the photographs, by artists and thinkers such as Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Toni Morrison, bell hooks, Judith Butler, Richard Dyer, James Baldwin, Roland Barthes, Isaac Julien, and Kobena Mercer. While the model, the gaze, the expected/intended viewer, and the context

are utterly different in Ligon's/Mapplethorpe's and Miller's nudes, the resonance of the fascination with the nude, the abstraction of the corporeal, and the confusion of the gaze suggests what is at play in Miller's projects. In commenting on Mapplethorpe's work, and as cited on a placard displayed by Ligon, Judith Butler notes, "the insistence that the picture enforces an identification with victimization might be understood not only as a refusal to identify—even in fantasy—with aggression, but, further, as a displacement of that refused aggression onto the picture which then . . . takes on a personified status as an active agent."[9] Like the images in the Miller retrospective, two similar photographs frame one of Mapplethorpe's abstract nudes—this time, though, the abstracted shapes are not stones but rather shapely rear ends. Mapplethorpe was probably not quoting Miller when he asked black gay male models to assume poses similar to those of Miller's white women models; but Ligon's and the comments he gathered combined objections to the representation of the men in Mapplethorpe's *Black Book* shed light on how the sculptural nudes in Miller's oeuvre function. As David Hopkins notes, this image (*Nude Bent Forward*) is "remarkable for the way in which Miller appropriated Man Ray's objectifying male viewpoint while producing an image equal to any of his in terms of formal elegance" (584). Amy Lyford suggests that "Miller possibly conceived *Untitled (nude, bending forward)* as a response to Man Ray's codification of the female body. She frames and lights her figure so that potential energy and motion are stored within the amorphous structure of the body. . . . Miller's nude is awash in confusion" (129).[10]

Because Miller's photography varies from subjects like these delicate nudes to the grimmest scenes of war, it compels but resists being pinned down aesthetically. Just as Mapplethorpe was, on the one hand, outside "dominant culture" because of his queerness, because he insisted on blurring the line between pornography and high art, he was also inside it to the extent that the white objectifying gaze in the *Black Book* reinscribes him into its mode of looking. Miller, too, worked from a position at once outside and inside dominant modes of looking, seeing, and representing, and was thus able to contribute a groundbreaking vision to the aesthetics of catastrophe.

A précis of Miller's life sounds like a who's who tour of the coolest twentieth-century cats: Picasso, Salvador Dalì, Dora Maar, Man Ray, Cocteau, Ed Murrow, Audrey Withers, Paul and Nusch Eluard, Max Ernst, Leonora Carrington, Julien Levy, Colette, William Shirer, and more were part of her extended circle. Miller was raised in Poughkeepsie, New York, where she was born in 1907, and where she was highly influenced by her father, Theodore, an amateur photographer who photographed his daughter (often in the nude, including yet another one of Miller in a bathtub) until his death.[11] After several incompatible schools, including a too-stuffy experience in an art school, Miller went to New York City, where in 1926 she was "discovered" through being saved from an oncoming taxi by none other than Condé Nast; after this novelistic encounter her image graced

Vogue many times. Emigrating to Europe, she lived in Paris with Man Ray for several years wherein, as "Madame Man Ray" she became immersed in the surrealist world and closely collaborated with Ray. After this, upon returning to New York, she set up a photographic studio with her brother Eric but then ditched it to move to Egypt with Aziz Eloui Bey, her first husband. After living in Egypt for some time, and though taking stunning photographs including one that inspired a Magritte painting, she became bored with the wealthy exile set so she began traveling back to Europe for surrealist house parties.[12] At one of these she met Roland Penrose, a British painter who would much later become her second husband and the father of her only son, Antony Penrose, who has devoted his life to the legacy of his mother (he has written much about her and maintains the Lee Miller Archives in England).

In London and in Paris Miller lived either alternately in the same space or sometimes at the same time with Roland Penrose, and/or with the young *Life* photographer David E. Scherman. As a testament to her uniqueness, in Athens, Miller came to a party nude (Burke, *Lee Miller* 186). During the Second World War, and because of her connections with the magazine as a former model, Miller became one of the few women photographers and journalists for *Vogue* who were able to cover the war at close range—first from London, then Brussels, Paris, and various points in Germany and elsewhere. After the war Miller traveled around Eastern Europe, especially Romania, documenting the aftereffects of war, before returning to England, where she remained. There, she and Penrose wed (she had remained married to Bey until after the war), bought Farley Farm in Sussex (where the Lee Miller Archives are housed today), raised Antony, and began cooking and often entertaining guests including Picasso and other global luminaries. Friends, doctors, and commentators generally agree that her experiences documenting the war were in equal measure exhilarating and taxing to her. When, after complaining to him of depression, her doctor reproached her with, "we cannot keep the world permanently at war just to provide you with entertainment" (qtd. in Burke, *Lee Miller* 311–312), he may have failed to register the profundity of the experience of not only witnessing but recording for mass circulation scenes of indelible atrocity and violence. Lee Miller died in 1977.[13]

Two years before Europe erupted in war, in the summer of 1937, Miller was part of a house party on the Truro River in Cornwall at the farmhouse of Roland Penrose's brother Beacus. This surrealist gathering included Max Ernst and Leonora Carrington, and would remain a highly charged memory of Roland Penrose's early time with Miller. One of the guests, the British surrealist painter and photographer (whose work Penrose included in his 1936 surrealist exhibition), Eileen Agar, remembered, "It was a delightful Surrealist house party, with Roland taking the lead, ready to turn the slightest encounter into an orgy. I remember going off to watch Lee taking a bubble bath, but there was not quite enough room in

the tub for all of us" (qtd. in Burke, *Lee Miller* 164). Miller energetically participated in surrealist practices, gleefully upsetting the assumptions of the male-dominated surrealist group. As Antony Penrose noted, "The doctrine of free love [in which the surrealists took part] had largely been constructed from a male standpoint. Lee exposed the hypocrisy of its double standards, to the chagrin and bewilderment of the men around her" (Penrose, *Lives* 23). Echoing this, Agar felt that "despite Surrealism's liberatory stance, women did not enjoy equal status" (qtd. in Burke, *Lee Miller* 166). Of his parents' first meeting, Antony Penrose opined, "For Roland, meeting Lee at the Rochas Bal Masqué induced what he later described as *le coup de foudre*. Here, was his own version of the Surrealist dream woman incarnate—beautiful beyond belief, intelligent, creative and original with an acerbic wit that often took the form of a New York wisecrack. She was not the kind of Surrealist muse that was content to be admired and possessed. She asserted her own rights and determined her own path through life" (A. Penrose, *Picasso en privado* 180; R. Penrose uses the phrase "coup de foudre" in *Scrapbook* 104). Miller would emphatically not fit Mary Ann Caws's poetic description of most surrealist muses, "Surrealist woman, problematic and imprisoned, for the other eyes" (*Surrealist Look* 54).[14]

Just as her phenomenological insertion into the vanquished spaces of war, including Hitler's bathtub, disrupted the divide between sides of the war, Miller ruptured the double standard embedded in surrealist practices, behaving as scandalously as any of the surrealist men; while double standards dictated men's and women's behavior, many of the doctrines of surrealism insist on a somewhat surprising (given this obvious double standard) gender inclusivity. For example, in *Point du jour* (1934) André Breton argues:

> Le propre du surréalisme est d'avoir proclamé l'égalité totale de tous les êtres humains normaux devant le message subliminal, d'avoir constamment soutenu que ce message constitue un patrimoine commun dont il ne tient qu'à chacun de revendiquer sa part et qui doit à tout prix cesser très prochainement d'être tenu pour l'apanage de quelques-uns. Tous les hommes, dis-je, toutes les femmes méritent de se convaincre de l'absolue possibilité pour eux-mêmes de recourir à volonté à ce langage qui n'a rien de surnaturel et qui est le véhicule même, pour tous et pour chacun, de la révélation. (241–242)

> Surrealism's distinctive feature is to have proclaimed the total equality of all normal human beings before the subliminal message, to have constantly maintained that this message constitutes a common patrimony, of which everyone is entitled to a share, and which must very soon, and at all costs, stop being seen as the prerogative of the chosen few. I say that every man and every woman deserves to be convinced of

> their ability to tap into this language at will, which has nothing supernatural about it and which, for each and every one of us, is *the* vehicle of revelation. (163)

If women as well as men are encouraged to access and act on their subliminal drives, then this complicates considerably the understanding that Miller bucked against the surrealist social trend—though she certainly confounded the traditional societal dictates around women's behavior; if Breton argues here that this access to the subliminal—and the attendant actions—form a fundament of the surrealist vision and if both traditionally constructed genders can be enfolded within this vision, then Miller adheres to something like the surrealist ideal even while that ideal would always have been thwarted by the conventions of "normal" (i.e., patriarchal) life.

In *Subversive Intent* Susan Suleiman offers a wonderful précis of the history of women in surrealism and discusses the way in which many surrealists who were women were involved with surrealist men. Rather than reducing their artistic endeavors to outcroppings of their boyfriends' work, though, Suleiman argues:

> In Bakhtinian terms, we can speak of the women's work as dialogically related to the men's, often with an element of internal polemic. I would suggest that such internal dialogue is to be found not only in the work of women directly involved with male Surrealists to whose work they were specifically responding, but was a general strategy adopted, in individual ways, by women wishing to insert themselves as subjects into Surrealism. (27)

By understanding the women surrealists' dialogic relationship to their partners as a strategy for access to surrealism as a movement, Suleiman opens up possibilities for interpreting their aesthetic contributions as at once in connection with, but also forging a new aesthetic concurrently with the artistic production of the surrealist men.[15] In expanding the argument cited here, Suleiman adds that "the contemporary women artists who trace connections to the Surrealists *share* some of the latter's aspirations even while criticizing them on other grounds; whence dialogue—or, in a somewhat different register, double allegiance" ("Contemporary Women" 131). This "double allegiance" can be seen in Miller's double take on surrealism, at once incorporating surrealist aesthetics *but* also subverting them, transforming them into something more fitting the horror that shrouded postwar Europe.

In her much-cited article, "Corpus Delicti," Rosalind Krauss notes: "Surrealism can be said to have explored the possibility of a sexuality that is not grounded in an idea of human nature, or the natural, but instead, woven of fantasy and representation" (95). Surrealism, beyond its artistic

innovations, was also a way of life in which "[t]he men were expected to be very free sexually, but when a woman like Lee Miller adopted the same attitude, the hypocritical upset was tremendous" (Agar qtd. in Burke, *Lee Miller* 167). Of course, many other women in Miller's milieu were quite free and must also have suffered this "hypocritical upset." Carolyn Burke claims that one of the reasons why this double standard was particular to surrealist practice was that surrealist men often traded their women as "tokens of affection among men whose feelings for each other could not be expressed otherwise" (*Lee Miller* 170). Whether stemming from repressed homoerotic desire or a more quotidian machismo, then, a clear gender divide separated the expectations of how surrealist men and women were to adopt the doctrine of free love laid out by Breton and other forgers of the movement, even though the archive of surrealism pays homage to a superficial inclusivity.

A charged example of surrealist homoeroticism can be found in a shocking passage that rebuked the generally antifascist politics of the surrealist movement, wherein Salvador Dalí explains at length how a certain nexus of fascination with Hitler and desire feels:

> J'étais fasciné par le dos tendre et dodu d'Hitler toujours si bien sanglé dans son uniforme. Chaque fois que je commençais à peindre la bretelle de cuir qui, partant de sa ceinture, passait sur son épaule opposeé, la mollesse de cette chair hitlérienne comprimée sous la tunique militaire créait en moi un état d'extase gustatif, laiteux, nutritif et wagnérien qui faisait violemment battre mon coeur, émotion très rare que je n'éprouvais même pas en faisant l'amour. La chair dodue d'Hitler que j'imaginais comme la plus divine chair d'une femme à la peau blanchissime me fascinait. (29–30)

> I was fascinated by Hitler's soft, round back, always so tightly encased in his uniform. Every time I started painting the leather strap that ran from his belt across the opposite shoulder, the softness of the Hitlerian flesh, squeezed into the military tunic brought me into a state of ecstasy that was simultaneously gustatory, milky, nutritive and Wagnerian, and made my heart beat violently, a rare emotion I don't experience even when I'm making love. Hitler's chubby flesh, which I imagined to be like the most opulent feminine flesh with the whitest skin, fascinated me. (27)

Dalí's disturbing comments capture many of the problematics at play in the world of surrealism and by extension that of Miller. Homoerotic desire displaced onto a feminized dictator overlays Dalí's accurately but curiously documented fascination with Hitler, which was part of what Miller deconstructed as a woman in the surrealist climate. Just like the triangulations of the gazes and elbows in the image of Miller in Hitler's tub, Dalí here

points to the encasing strap diagonally across Hitler's uniform that then "fascinates" him. In a sense Dalí captures the strange desire that propelled the Hitler myth and thus effectively enabled the Nazi genocide.

Dalí himself was only nominally part of Miller's world; for a time, they shared a gallerist in Julien Levy (see Naumann). Miller met Dalí several times, he was associated with one of her interwar partners, Man Ray, and her second husband, Roland Penrose, collected his work and was with him at the surrealism exhibit he organized in 1936 in London. Antony Penrose records that "[i]t was the hottest day of the year, and Dalí, who attempted to give a lecture dressed in a diving suit, nearly collapsed from heat and suffocation" (*Home* 20). In one issue of *Vogue* (15 April 1946, 120–123), a painting of Dalí's entitled *Bread*, accompanied by a text addressing post-war hunger, was juxtaposed with a photograph of Miller's featuring two hungry-looking children staring at the camera. The credit line noted that Miller had taken the image in Hungary but there was no discussion of either Dalí's painting or her photograph within the text. Dalí's still life features a half loaf in a basket and Miller's photograph seems unusually frank and politicized for her, almost as if it were intended to elicit aid to the ragged children it portrays.[16] *Vogue* oddly paired these and it further indicates that Miller and Dalí's work sometimes circulated in the same venues and thus sheds light on what may have been Miller's reaction to Dalí's flirtation with fascism.[17]

Dalí's startling comments on Hitler were preceded by a long argument with the surrealist circle, especially with André Breton and Paul Eluard, about the painter's fascination with the German dictator. Eluard (whose first wife left him for Dalí and became the famous Gala Dalí) was very close to both Miller and Penrose and both he and his second wife, Nusch Eluard, often socialized with them. In a much reproduced image, Miller captured Penrose, Paul and Nusch Eluard, and others in various states of undress at a picnic in Mougins in 1937. This image, *Picnic at Mougins, France* (1937), was taken near the Hotel Vaste Horizon, overlooking the bay at Cannes, which Paul and Nusch Eluard had found and had invited Roland Penrose to as early as 1936. As Penrose notes, "It [the Hotel Vaste Horizon] had been chosen by Eluard as a secluded unpretentious retreat near the coast where he could spend the summer with Picasso and friends such as . . . Man Ray" (*Scrapbook* 80). Thus Miller would have no doubt been aware of Eluard's reaction to Dalí's provocative response to Hitler.[18] Indeed, regarding Dalí's other pro-fascist allegiances, Miller noted that Picasso "was shocked at the behavior of Dalí with his Spanish collaborationist activities" (A. Penrose, *Lee Miller's War* 73).

In 1934 Breton had condemned Dalí for his fascist sympathies, and Paul Eluard wrote to Dalí's wife Gala: "I won't hide … the almost insuperable difficulties which will come about if Dalí persists in his hitlerian-paranoic attitude. It is absolutely necessary that Dalí find another object of delirium" (qtd. in Greeley 466). In 1939 Dalí painted *The Enigma of Hitler*, in which

Hitler's portrait features postage-size under a huge dripped and distorted phone that symbolized the means by which the famous and historically disastrous meeting with Chamberlain was set up. Robin Adèle Greeley reads this representation of the German Chancellor as Dalí's transformation of Hitler from a "stern, all-powerful dictator into a helpless, savoury delight" (477). The tension in Dalí's stubborn take in both his diary entry and in the painting of Hitler speaks to the seductions and dangers of one of the surrealist views on gender and sexuality that was so much a part of Miller's life experience and work. Dalí here certainly expresses what Lyford terms an "anxiety about masculinity" (13) through exploring a homoerotic attachment to evil. It is entirely likely that Paul Eluard would have mentioned to Miller both Dalí's diary entry and his vehement (and justified!) disregard for it. If so, Miller's location of herself in Hitler's bathtub may well refer to this moment when a surrealist heroine flirts with the corporeal intimacy of a violent dictator.

In a reading of surrealist photography, Hal Foster finds that a group of nudes, including some of Miller's (such as *Nude Bent Forward*, described earlier), "reshape the female body in fetishistic form. . . . The subject is clearly a woman, but she is more phallic than fetishistic; in some sense she is woman *as* phallus" (216). And later Foster claims that "these photographs allow a perfect misrecognition of feminine beauty as phallic plenitude" (221). Strikingly, this phrase could apply very well to Miller herself as much as to her work—a "misrecognition of feminine beauty as phallic plenitude" provides a shorthand for how Miller was able to reconfigure both surrealist sexual and aesthetic practices through her wartime photography. Jean Gallagher investigates Miller's wartime photography and notes that "Miller's representations of bodies and spaces during the war evoke, dismantle, and rearrange the specular subject–object relations central to surrealist, fashion, and combat photography and, in more extreme and physically threatening form, to fascist ideology" (69). Part of Gallagher's argument rests on this triangulation among surrealist, fashion, and combat photography, arguing that Miller's take "dismantles" the relations of what she calls correspondences between subjects and objects in this photography. Miller's approach also puts surrealist and documentary views into tension via a politicized aesthetic that works sensitively to meditate on the war, witnessing, and gender.

But when applied to Miller's wartime work in general, the term "surrealist" can sometimes be problematic. Something disturbs when these disjointed fragments of bodies, or the confusing, uncanny detritus after a bombing can be viewed as "surrealist" because that implies both an *unreality* of this reality and also that something subconsciously desires it. In her study, *Surrealist Masculinities*, Lyford locates in interwar surrealism a trace of the dismembered bodies of those returning to France after the Great War. She finds in surrealism a "protest against the state's effacement of wartime trauma" and a critique of the "state's efforts to

paper over the horrors that they and others had endured" (7). In this formulation then, rather than a problematic representation of a nonreality or a subconscious manifestation of desire, the odd juxtapositions in Miller's work could be seen as carrying the revolutionary impulses of the post–World War I surrealist circle into the next war. Lyford's work might encourage a rethinking of my desire to shrink away from the label "surrealist" in defining Miller's aesthetic. However, the trace of the dismembered Great War veteran that Lyford locates in early surrealism would not have been intelligible to the post–Second World War milieu, and, in fact, precisely because the Nazi regime inaugurated genocide on a scale and with an efficiency previously unseen, the new and grotesque displays of multiple bodies would have registered much differently than the breathing bodies of soldiers deformed during combat. I would even go so far as to suggest that the atrocities of the Second World War made a certain kind of surrealist display distasteful precisely because, quite suddenly, what had previously been in the realm of the unreal or even in some cases the fantastical had become an all too real part of world history. The surreal juxtapositions having become reality, it made sense that Miller would need to rework a surrealist aesthetic at the end of the war. The conundrums of Miller's juxtapositions speak volumes about how we deal with trauma—on the one hand, the banal and quotidian presence of a bathtub; on the other hand, the numbing implications of bathing in Hitler's bathtub. On the one hand, advertisements for stockings in *Vogue*; on the other hand, scenes from the aftermath of the death camps.[19]

A potential danger lurks in delimiting Miller's aesthetic to a surrealism that could exploit the real trauma suffered by Nazism's victims for the sake of experiment in bizarre aesthetic juxtapositions or defamiliarizations. Antony Penrose recorded that, while photographing scenes of the blitz, Miller's "surrealist eye immediately engaged with the many *images trouvées* she encountered daily in the wasteland of bomb damage" (*Home* 50). Roland Penrose found that "[Miller's] eye for a surrealist mixture of humor and horror was wide open" (*Scrapbook* 128). Richard Woodward noted, "As she stared through her viewfinder at human beings piled up like cordwood, it must have crossed her mind that she was watching the death-haunted art of Salvador Dalí and Max Ernst manifest as ghastly history" (D6). Here, in the imagination of the reviewer at least, victims become surreal, their agony transformed, ironically enough, into Dalí paintings. Naomi Rosenblum suggests that the "surreal terrain of her [Miller's] imagination coincided with the horrors of the real world" (133). Similarly, Katherine Slusher notes that "Miller supplemented her day job as a fashion photographer with her ironic and surrealistic view of the destruction that surrounded her during the bombing of London" (A. Penrose, *Picasso en privado* 185). By aligning surrealism with irony here, Slusher indicates a certain emotional distance from the destruction

in Miller's work.[20] Carolyn Burke's commentary also argues that Miller's wartime photographs were influenced by surrealism:

> To a Surrealist, the laws of blast were not as much unfathomable as liberating. By wrecking some targets and sparing others, the bombs created wonders in the midst of chaos—as if Magritte or Dalí had remade the landscape. Lee was in her element. By day, odd juxtapositions in the wreckage spoke to her; at night the tension of air raids energized her. There was no reason to be bored with such strangely beautiful sights occurring daily: silver barrage balloons gleaming in the sunset, the stars visible in the dark sky, London spread out like an enormous stage in the moonlight. (*Lee Miller* 205)

In Burke's somewhat chilling formulation the war was a force for refiguring the landscape to fit a surrealist sensibility. The idea that Miller would have viewed the destruction of the war through a surrealist lens indicates an emotional distance and an aesthetic overlay in Miller's planning, plotting, and capturing of wartime images. But many of these images display an emotional immediacy more in tune with her later, lesser known postwar work than with her earlier, surrealist images.

The sensibility in her *Working Guests* series (published in *Vogue* in the early 1950s) represents this postwar mixing of the quotidian with the spectacular—Picasso appears, not painting, but rather doing odd jobs at the farm in Sussex that would later become the Lee Miller Archives, the vernacular is intimate with memories of the spectacular or traumatic. Further, the odd juxtapositions in some of Miller's work resonate with the dialectic between beauty and horror that characterized much of Picasso's painting. Neither Miller's son, Antony Penrose, who discovered an attic full of his mother's negatives, photos, and notebooks after her death in 1977 and who then set out to reconstruct much of her wartime experience and life in general, nor scholars interested in both Picasso and Miller have determined exactly when Miller first met Picasso. But a general consensus prevails that they met sometime in the late 1930s and that Roland Penrose was one of the foremost early champions of Picasso's work. Elizabeth Cowling notes, "Picasso had been smitten by [Miller] during their first encounter and she continued to attract, intrigue and amuse him as they both grew older" (14). Indeed, Picasso painted several portraits of Miller and she took thousands of photographs of Picasso. Miller and other photographers, including Dora Maar, Robert Capa, Edward Quinn, Cecil Beaton, and Penrose himself, richly illustrated Penrose's *Portrait of Picasso* (1971). Miller's images of the painter betray an intimacy and a comfort with her subject and thus present a sensitive body of work.

It had been in the context of the 1936 International Surrealist Exhibition that Roland Penrose organized in London that he first met Picasso—Picasso had eleven paintings in the exhibit and, as Mary Ann Caws explains,

"Although Picasso permitted his works to be presented by the Surrealists in their exhibitions. . . . he remained independent of this and every movement he had not created" (*Pablo Picasso* 113).[21] Indeed, many commentators on Picasso, including Gertrude Stein and John Golding, agree that while he had many affinities with surrealism he never aligned himself fully with the surrealist movement and his work could not as a whole be termed surrealist.[22] But another aspect of Picasso's paintings was crucial for Penrose and resonates with many of Miller's images. As Penrose succinctly concludes: "We learn from Picasso that there is no beauty without ugliness, no ugliness without beauty" (R. Penrose and Golding, *Picasso in Retrospect* 124). Penrose further elaborates, "It is as though we were in need of horror and ugliness, not only as a foil to the tranquility and well-being of beauty but as a condition of its presence. Ugliness can, like beauty, be captivating and the fear it can cause can stimulate the whole of our being whether its presence is real or imaginary" (*Picasso in Retrospect* 103). Like much of Picasso's work then, Miller's wartime photographs manifest a tension between beauty and horror that echoes the sensibility captured most forcefully in *Guernica* but is also present in much of Picasso's other work.

Justifiably Picasso's most important painting, *Guernica* protests fascism. Roland Penrose remarked, of the memorable summer he spent in Cornwall with Miller, "It was the same summer that Picasso in Paris was painting *Guernica* and in Cornwall Eluard completed one of his most moving poems *La Victoire de Guernica*, inspired by the same crime" (*Scrapbook* 107).[23] Eluard and Picasso were great friends and the painter painted portraits of the poet just as the poet composed poetry inspired by the painting.[24] For Penrose, *Guernica* in painting and poetry formed the emotional and political backdrop to this trip. German bombers, in support of the Spanish fascists, bombed the town after which Picasso named the painting. The huge, stunning painting that resulted from the bombing has understandably influenced the aesthetics of catastrophe to an enormous degree. In a typically brilliant Steinism, written in 1938 in her short book about Picasso (of whom she was an early champion and collector) and uttered in light of the fact that Picasso had not painted for about two years before *Guernica*, Stein maintained, "Picasso a maintenant trouvé sa couleur, sa vraie couleur 1937 [Picasso has now found his color, his true color 1937]" (160). By making Picasso's "true color" the year of the fascist attack and his response to it, Stein highlights the importance of this political turn in the painter's work. With all her Picassian juxtapositions of beauty and horror, Miller's true color was 1945.

Miller was under *Guernica*'s spell in much the same way as she understood Picasso's mesmerism: "If Picasso were here to-night, to greet you and shake your hand, you would experience his touch, what in the 18th Century Dr. Mesmer called 'animal magnetism.' His flashing black eyes have fascinated everyone who has even only seen Picasso but those who meet him feel thrown into an exciting new equilibrium by the personality of this small,

warm, friendly man whose name means modern painting" (cited in A. Penrose, *Picasso en privado* 189). Picasso was quite literally Miller's turning point when she became one of the earliest American witnesses to the Nazi genocide. Elizabeth Cowling notes that "Miller entered Paris with the troops and made her way immediately to the very studio in which *Guernica* had been painted" (A. Penrose, *Picasso en privado* 193). It was in this studio that Picasso greeted her with, according to Antony Penrose, "'This is marvellous,' he [Picasso] cried, 'the first allied soldier I should see, and it's you!'" (A. Penrose, *Picasso en privado* 181). Miller remembers, "Picasso and I fell into each other's arms and between laughter and tears and having my bottom pinched and my hair mussed we exchanged news . . . By some devious means he has hot water in the studio (the only I've heard of in Paris) so he made me wash my neck. I promised to come back for a bath" (A. Penrose, *Lee Miller's War* 73). A wonderful image of Miller in her military outfit, looking tired but relieved and towering over Picasso, was published in *Vogue* in the fall of 1944 to document this welcome homecoming. Thus, as she began to travel around recently liberated Europe and to document the immediate aftereffects of the war, her launching point was this reunion with Picasso.

That Miller was keenly aware of the politics of the aesthetic can be gleaned from her comments from "Brussels" (*Vogue*, March 1945):

> The first thing I did in Brussels was to get in touch with friends like Norine and Gustave van Hecke. Gustave—who is better known by his nickname 'Tatav'—had been the editor and publisher of the famous 'Varieties,' one of the first magazines to deal with Surrealism. He had been an early appreciator of Tanguy and Max Ernst. . . . As a publisher of books on modern painters, he was well known to have a collection of fine 'degenerate' pictures in his house. But the Gestapo didn't seem to think of them, or care. When they came to his house to question him on other matters, they looked curiously at the pictures, and asked him to explain what he thought was pretty about them. Tatav gave them a little lecture on art and imagination while the interrogator waited. He's still wondering if his lunacy or his lucidity saved him from a jail sentence. (134)

This passage underscores Miller's involvement with the surrealist circle at the same time as it indicates the arbitrary nature of Nazi decisions about art's degeneracy and those who collect said art. For the Nazi interrogator pictured in this little scene, the pictures, falling outside the dictates of fascist aesthetics, are objects of curiosity but are also multiply interpretable. Miller's conclusion that it could equally have been Tatav's "lunacy or lucidity" that saved him underlines the ambivalent status all determinations of degenerate art held—especially late in the war.

Moving on from Brussels to Germany, as Miller talked to more and more German civilians, she became increasingly enraged: everyone, it seemed to

her, suddenly laid claim to a Jewish grandmother, had helped refugees, had only joined the Nazi Party because they felt pressured, had never believed in Hitler's vision. Floored by the "schizophrenic" nature of German civilians, Miller set out to record Nazi atrocities unflinchingly. She asks, "From what kind of escape zones in the unventilated alleys of their brains are they able to conjure up the idea that they are a liberated, not a conquered people?" ("Germans" 102i). In the context of the immediate postwar experience, while Miller and Scherman were photographing at the end of the war, Miller became, much to the surprise of her fellow journalists and photographers, "viscerally anti-German" (Burke, *Lee Miller* 249).[25] The profundity of her hatred seemed to exceed professional limits and it may be worth mentioning that at least three of the important people in her life, Julien Levy, Man Ray, and David Scherman, were Jewish (Man Ray's original name was Emmanuel Radnitsky). Burke links the role of Miller's "Aryan" looks to her American family's having descended from blonde-haired, blue-eyed Germans; whether this hereditary connection increased her natural and profound emotions under the circumstances remains unclear. Miller, however, is often compared to Margaret Bourke-White, another woman journalist who photographed the horror of the camps and was on hand to document the end of the war. But Bourke-White's photographs are usually interpreted as having been shot through an emotional veil or haze that protected her from the sharp anger Miller experienced.[26] The empathic intensity of her portraits of dead Nazis such as the man floating in the canal (see Figure 4.3) tempers this intense anger. These portraits evince a sensitivity to the subjects that reflects neither this epic anger nor the distancing effects many viewers find in her other images. Thus while she was clearly part of surrealism's ether, her wartime work resisted the defamiliarization usually associated with surrealist aesthetics and moved towards a complex intermingling of beauty and horror that forcefully resonates with later work memorializing the Holocaust.

These tensions are apparent in a series of "portraits" taken at the end of the war; I put scare quotes around this word because I am not sure if these photographs can rightly be deemed "portraits" because their subjects are dead. As Butler notes in the context of the Abu Ghraib photographs, "Although we might want to see, the photograph tells us clearly that the dead do not care whether we see" ("Torture" 966). The first image records a member of a family of Hitler supporters from Leipzig who ended their own lives, as many did, at the end of the war.[27] In a photograph published in the June 1945 edition of *Vogue*, *The Bürgermeister's Daughter*, Miller captures a Nazi daughter in an almost sensual pose, reclining, recently dead.

Miller's commentary on the image draws attention to the woman's white teeth, thus further accentuating the sensual quality of the photo. The plush leather couch has been left large in the image to emphasize the relative comfort in which this family lived and to offer a stark contrast with the familiar images of starvation and suffering of survivors on both sides of the conflict in 1945. Charles Darwent notes, "The girl, blonde and beautiful,

lies back with a kind of ecstatic abandon. Miller, herself blonde and beautiful, captioned the picture not with a homily on the wastefulness of war or the monstrosity of Nazism, but with an appraising look at her subject's face" (41). Miller's commentary on this woman's suicide and that also of her parents and another man reveals her sensitivity:

Title: The Bürgermeister's daughter
Location: Town Hall, Leipzig, Germany
Date: April 1945
Photographer: Lee Miller
Negative Number: 58-77
Notes: VN, CR 1
Credit Line: © Lee Miller Archives, England. All rights reserved.

lee miller
Lee Miller Archives
Photographs by Lee Miller 1907-1977

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Tel: ++44 (0) 1825 - 872 691 Fax: ++44 (0) 1825 - 872 733
E-mail: archives@leemiller.co.uk

Figure 4.2 *The Bürgermeister's Daughter* (April 1945). Lee Miller. Image courtesy of Lee Miller Archives, England 2009.

> In one of the offices is a gray haired man with his head bowed on his crossed hands on the desk. Opposite him, sprawled back in a chair is a faded woman eyes open . . . and a trickle of blood dried on her chin. Leaning back on the sofa is a girl with extraordinarily pretty teeth, she is waxen and dusty. Her nurses' uniform is sprinkled with plaster from the battle for the city hall which raged outside after their deaths. In the next room a monstrous dummy of a man lies on his back in the uniform of a Wolksturm general. There was another family group in the third reception room. In the basement two SS officers had drunk brandy seated at the table and suicided. (qtd. in Menzel-Ahr 145)

Miller's version of this suicide offers a stark contrast with that of at least two other photographers who captured the same scene. Indeed, Miller wryly notes of this moment in Leipzig that "[t]here was a terrible rat race of photographers on" (qtd. in Menzel-Ahr 145). Bourke-White photographed the room where the young woman lies dead on the couch from a high vantage point (it almost looks as though she were standing on a ladder) and this reveals that, in contrast to the apparent solitude of Miller's image, the Bürgermeister's daughter killed herself in the company of her parents. In Bourke-White's photo the mother lies dead in a chair adjacent to the couch, the father lies slumped over his desk, looking as though he might fall off.[28] Other images of the same scene taken by J. Malan Heslop betray a much grittier view of the same space (both figuratively and literally grittier as the room was covered in the dust created by allied bombing).[29] Comparing Miller's with Bourke-White's and Heslop's images underscores how Miller's approach brought out the subjectivity of the suicided woman, unmasking an empathic view that complicates the simple divide between victim and perpetrator. The perpetrator is a victim at her own hand. A deeply empathic image, this photograph disrupts a surrealist and defamiliarized representation of a dead perpetrator.

Another photograph that Miller took of a Leipzig suicide, *Suicided Member of the Bürgermeister's Staff, Leipzig, Germany, 1945* (reprinted in Livingston, *Exhibition* 93) differs markedly from *The Bürgermeister's Daughter*. Here a Nazi staff member lies on the floor, dead, and beside his right hand a portrait of Hitler is propped awkwardly against the wall, the dictator's face torn out. This defaced image of the dictator starkly contrasts the photograph perched on his Munich bathtub featured in Figure 4.1, but it was apparently very common to destroy likenesses of the dictator at the end of the war. For example, in her memoir about growing up on the Obersalzberg, Irmgard Hunt remembers her mother, on 3 May 1945, removing a portrait of Hitler that had hung on the wall since 1933 and melting it down so that "Hitler's face dissolved like a mirage at the bottom of the hot aluminum pan" (206). Scattered on the floor beside the body of the suicided Nazi in Miller's image are five small framed images, the two closest to the body are portraits of two young Nazis, the glass of

the portraits shattered and flung across the floor inevitably reminding one of Kristallnacht. In fact, incongruously in this setting, are two images on the wall: one of a serene snowy town, the other of the mountains framed by trees as though to indicate that while the Thousand Year Reich has so disastrously ended, the German idyll persists. Outside the window one sees a classical Grecian statue, seemingly saluting the ruined city below. Thus, as with the portrait of Miller in Hitler's bathtub, a Grecian statue juxtaposes an image of the dictator. However, in this grim scene, the statue remains and the dictator's image has been eradicated, possibly in a fit of rage at the failures of the Reich.

Miller developed a vehement disregard not only for perpetrators, but also for ordinary German civilians who could have resisted the Nazi movement and might have aided Nazi victims but did not. She explains, "I drove through Germany encased in a wall of hate and disgust" ("Denmark" 138). Or, as Burke notes, "In later life Miller spoke rarely of her experience in Germany, but when she did, it was with inconsolable anger" ("Lee Miller in Hitler's Bathtub" 154). Despite her vocal disdain, both *The Bürgermeister's Daughter* and the photograph *SS Guard in Canal* reveal sympathy for these dead Nazis.

This latter image particularly arrests because the man looks so peaceful, resting below the water with its glossy and smooth surface and gentle light. Miller has underscored the natural beauty of the guard's surroundings by including the ferns on the shore. These peaceful images sharply contrast with others Miller took and published of dead Nazis in gruesome scenes of murder or suicide. Indeed, the tranquil quality of these two dead Nazis did not figure in all of Miller's postwar Nazi images. These two photographs work against Miller's pronounced distaste for "Germans" and her widely circulated images of both victims and perpetrators in violent, blood-soaked deathly postures.[30]

Another photograph, from Buchenwald, *Cremation Ovens* (published in the June 1945 edition of *Vogue*), is a still life of the recently halted cremation of prisoners at the camp.[31] There are three oven doors, all made for the shape of a human being, domed on top, flat on the bottom. It may take (as it did for me) a magnifying glass to see it—in the third oven a partially cremated body emerges, its eye sockets looking up and out into the room. In the first oven one can see human bones. Because the door to the middle oven remains shut, one cannot determine what lies within. Miller also took a different shot of a crematorium, entitled *Human Remains in a Crematorium Furnace, 1945* (Livingston, *Exhibition* 80), an enlarged image of a dead person inside an oven. This photograph offers stark documentary evidence of genocide and was designed by Miller as part of her campaign to make the readers of *Vogue* believe that the rumors that had circulated during the war were in fact accurate. These images of burnt corpses also resonate with how Miller brought out another little seen aspect of the aftereffects of war, the way she

Title: SS guard in canal
Location: Dachau, Germany
Date: 1945
Photographer: Lee Miller
Negative Number: 76-91
Credit Line: © Lee Miller Archives, England. All rights reserved.

Figure 4.3 *SS Guard in Canal* (1945). Lee Miller. Image courtesy of Lee Miller Archives, England 2009.

represented survivors as subjects rather than as a mass of anonymous victims, even if her captions did not always record details about the people she photographed.[32]

Title: Fire Masks
Location: London, England
Date: 1941
Photographer: Lee Miller
Negative Number: 3840-8
Notes: MP (600 dpi)
Credit Line: © Lee Miller Archives, England. All rights reserved.

Figure 4.4 *Fire Masks* (1941). Lee Miller. Image courtesy of Lee Miller Archives, England 2009.

Two other images both underscore interesting elements of Miller's work. The first was taken during the war and before the violent revelations of Miller's liberation images, *Fire Masks* (1941) taken at Downshire Hill, London.

Title: David E. Scherman, Equipped for War
Location: London, England
Date: 1943
Photographer: Lee Miller
Negative Number: NC0051-11
Credit Line: © Lee Miller Archives, England. All rights reserved.

lee miller
Lee Miller Archives
Photographs by Lee Miller 1907-1977

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E-mail: archives@leemiller.co.uk

Figure 4.5 David E. Scherman, Equipped for War (1943). Lee Miller. Image courtesy of Lee Miller Archives, England 2009.

In this photograph two women look quizzically at Miller from behind masks and in front of an air raid shelter. The woman on the right holds a whistle casually slung over her hand, as though it were a set of car keys.

Remembering Miller's history on both sides of the fashion camera's lens, one finds here echoes of *Vogue*'s stylized portraits, yet the direct address the women offer to the camera thwarts this effect. Their masks, obfuscating their faces but allowing us to glimpse their bemused expressions and gestures, have seemingly sealed their eyes with crosses as though they were playing dead. The lively poses of the women and their facing the camera so forthrightly seem to mock the fearful component of war that the masks, the whistle, and the air raid shelter would have us engage with. Haworth-Booth notes of this image, "No other photographer of the Phoney War and the Blitz seems to have produced an image quite like this portrait of the double deformity of war" (153).

In *David E. Scherman Equipped for War*, also featuring a mask, Miller has captured Scherman: his face, made scary by the mask but simultaneously and in tension with this fearfulness made somewhat comical by the umbrella, is completely covered. The eye sockets of the gas mask resonate with the eye of the camera, the lens, so that the experience of seeing the world is literalized as seeing the world at war through one of the necessary parts of that war, the gas mask. The mask blocks access to Scherman's emotions about documenting the horror of war, but his hand stands ready at the trigger of the camera to continue recording what his eye sees. The flesh of this hand stands out as the sole proof of Scherman's humanity amid his martial attire. It is striking that this adheres as the iconic image Miller produced of Scherman during the war while Miller in Hitler's bathtub (Figure 4.1) remains the iconic image Scherman took of her during the war because Scherman is completely covered up, except for his hand, whereas Miller is almost completely uncovered. Scherman's emotions are unreadable in the photo, whereas Miller's face opens to multiple interpretations. Scherman is shot with his camera in hand; Miller is shot as though she were still a model. Yet especially when viewed in a large collection, the power of her images and the way her wartime work broke from earlier, more surrealist images become apparent.

Because Miller spent some time in Hitler's apartment in Munich (while the dictator was living out his final days in the Berlin bunker) she can offer a jarring statement such as: "I was living in Hitler's private apartment in Munich when his death was announced" (A. Penrose, *Lee Miller's War* 191).[33] Scherman, who was then working for *Life*, used Miller's camera to take the photograph of Miller in Hitler's bathtub; the two photographers often exchanged cameras, blurring the authorship of their images. His were published under her name and vice versa. Another, much less well-known and certainly less reproduced image of Scherman in Hitler's tub depicts the photographer, face scrunched up in a comedic grimace, skinny chest visible, shampooing his hair. The image has a completely different resonance than the, as it were, reverse shot (Scherman in Hitler's bathtub is reproduced in Menzel-Ahr 210). There was a great deal of overlap in what Scherman and Miller shot though distinct sensibilities registered in their work. The staged image of Miller in

the bathtub (the photograph of Hitler and the statue were placed to frame her) has become one of the more memorable Scherman portraits. Scherman was influenced by Bourke-White's "exact instant" (Burke, *Lee Miller* 211) approach to photography, and he discussed with Miller the possibility of re-creating the instant if it had already passed (think of Jeff Wall's endlessly careful framings and stagings of images). They sought out "odd juxtapositions" (Burke, *Lee Miller* 216) such as Miller in Hitler's bathtub.

In a letter to *Vogue*'s editor, Audrey Withers, in which Miller discussed her presence in Hitler's spaces, she noted that the dictator "had never really been alive for me until today. He's been an evil machine-monster all these years, until I visited the places he made famous . . . and ate and slept in his house. He became less fabulous and therefore more terrible, along with a little evidence of his having some almost human habits" (A. Penrose, *Lee Miller's War* 188). Ona Munson (the actress who played Rhett Butler's mistress in *Gone with the Wind*), in a postwar interview, questioned Miller's presence in Hitler's bathtub. Miller responded by speaking of her long-held fascination with the dictator: "I even washed the dirt of Dachau off in his tub" (qtd. in Burke, *Lee Miller* 298). About a year after the war, Miller reportedly mumbled to Roland Penrose during a foot massage, "if only someone had massaged Hitler's feet like that there would have been no massacres" (qtd. in Burke, *Lee Miller* 288). This anecdote resonates with her presence in Hitler's bathtub because it provides another example of an imagination that makes material in a creepy way the body of the dictator and it evinces an uncanny, sensual approach to the Hitler myth.

In a fascinating study of this and other of Miller's wartime images, Annalisa Zox-Weaver suggests, "The chiastic interplay of victim and agent is hyperbolized in this image [of Miller in Hitler's bathtub], willing a confusion of subjectivities and featuring a highly art-directed and suggestively positivistic quality" ("War" 156). The stylized and manipulated image, then, works through the relationships among victor and perpetrator. In commenting on the boots placed in front of the tub, Antony Penrose notes, "The combat boots stamping the dust of Dachau into the pristine bath mat gives an indication of the pleasure they took in violating the space of their former archenemy . . . It is for us, years later, to read the poetry of this sequence of shots, and to realize that in their unconscious actions of making the set-up, Miller and Scherman were more revelatory than they could have known at the time" (from a 2002 letter from Penrose to Zox-Weaver, cited in "War" 161). Fascinatingly, Penrose here figures the dirt of Dachau being brought to the "pristine bath mat" rather than the dirt of Dachau being washed off in Hitler's tub. Miller was keenly aware, as evidenced in her wartime commentary published in *Vogue* (including Picasso offering a bath) of the dirt of her boots, of her person billeted as she was with ordinary American soldiers. For example, several months before the image in Hitler's bathtub was taken, Miller was in Luxemburg and was for the first time billeted with a civilian family. As she entered their villa she felt self-

conscious about her boots and wrote "my boots were muddying the perfect floor of their modern villa and I felt a great oaf" ("Luxemburg Front" 94). Similarly, in "Brussels" Miller notes that "our 'soldier's' boots left imprints on the black marble floor" (162). Burke suggests that, after photographing Dachau, the images of atrocity "must have returned [to Miller] as she sank into the long-awaited pleasure of a bath—a ritual now contaminated by the obvious associations with the camps" ("Lee Miller in Hitler's Bathtub" 151). The image of Miller in Hitler's bathtub performs both the dirtying of the pristine Nazi space and the simultaneous cleansing of the victor, both the realization of the correspondence between an Aryan idealized statue and the figure of Miller herself and the vast difference between her surrealist-inflected life and ideals and that of the Grecian statue as well as the uncanny resemblance to the "extreme vulnerability" (Zox-Weaver, "War" 156) of Jewish women forced to "bathe" in showers that were not.[34]

Leaving Hitler's apartment, Miller went on to investigate Eva Braun's Munich house, recording that "I took a nap on Eva's bed and tried the telephones which were marked Berlin, Berchtesgaden, Wachenfeld . . . it was macabre to . . . doze on the pillow of a girl and man who were now dead, and to be glad they were dead, if it was true" (A. Penrose, *Lee Miller's War* 199). For Miller, in April 1945, Hitler was not yet a figure so monstrous that the landscapes of his presence could not be touched; while Miller states that it is macabre to sleep on Eva Braun's bed, she does not delve at length on what she feels as she bathes in Hitler's tub. The dark comedy of the photograph marks the difference wrought by the past sixty years of "Hitler Studies" (to borrow Don DeLillo's phrase from *White Noise*). For Miller and the U.S. troops among whom she was embedded, taking over Hitler's and Braun's living quarters was merely a normal part of war, the victors enjoying the hard-won spoils of conquest and, to boot, a journalistic coup. Antony Penrose, in response to the question, "Which were her most favourite war photos?" replied, "I think she liked the one of herself sitting in Hitler's bath the best. It gave her a sense of victory over an evil man."[35] For the second and third postmemorial generations of literal and figurative descendants of perpetrators and victims of the war and the Holocaust, the idea of taking a bath where Hitler bathed might be utterly repugnant. But in the Scherman photograph of Miller, curiosity—rather than revulsion—conquers. What is so riveting about the photograph of Miller in Hitler's tub is precisely that she disavows the fascination Hitler exerted by inhabiting his space like a victor rather than a sycophant or a neo-Nazi, or even a perversely fascinated victim.[36]

Miller's taking over of Hitler's bathtub is the ultimate, if curious, gesture of the victor who demonstrates that the quiet interior spaces of the Nazi elite were not innocent. Miller inserting her own, much desired nude body into the most intimate physical space of the dictator rewrites the surrealist fascination with Hitler and replaces the German fascist idealized/mythologized/fetishized body of the dictator with the increasingly visible,

exhibited and analyzed body of Miller herself. Zox-Weaver develops an interesting argument about how Miller inserted her body into the photographs, either literally or figuratively, through the medium of the commentary on her wartime images that accompanied their appearance in *Vogue*: "Miller theorizes her own body as a medium for integrating and introjecting the physiological experiences of war's victims and sustains a complex empathic relation to those whose suffering may otherwise be detachedly received as *de rigueur* subject matter of wartime documentation" ("War" 133). Because of what we might term a phenomenological empathy, then, Miller's vision of the war and its victims opened up the immediate postwar landscape of Holocaust memory to a more complex interplay between victor and vanquished, victim and perpetrator.

Miller was influenced by and at times had affinities for a surrealist sensibility but the very movement in her work between different approaches and genres indicates that the more important influence or affinity in her work was a sensibility that at once depicts the traumatic and the quotidian, the beautiful and the horrible. Miller contributed to the mapping of a new aesthetic terrain for war photography. She viewed the war through a complex lens that injected a fascination with both the political and the aestheticized particle with the surrealist penchant for the sharp inhalation induced by the odd juxtaposition. Miller thus opened up the confines of how horror could be viewed, interpreted, and understood. She drew from surrealist photography a keen sense of stark juxtaposition but also from Picasso and others a nuanced attunement to the proximity of beauty and horror. By drawing out her subjects—dead, alive, or inanimate—her work offers an empathic view of the wartime landscape that contributes to the rich archive of Holocaust art.

5 Susan Silas's *Helmbrechts Walk*

> The past is irrecoverable and the past is not past; the past is a resource for the future and the future is the redemption of the past; loss must be marked and it cannot be represented.
>
> —Judith Butler

> Surfaces of the present collapse into the horrors of the past without any attempt at reconstruction.
>
> —Sander Gilman

In a Holocaust context, landscape photographs take on entirely different meanings: what may have seemed an innocent constellation of trees can quickly turn into a signifier of lost witnessing, an agent of amnesia covering crimes, or a sinister cluster of branches obfuscating evidence of genocide. Indeed, the relationship between landscape and memory is always unstable: how much do we know about the history of certain places? How will natural growth change the topography of traumatic sites? In the absence of memorials, what traces of the past remain? How can we read spaces decades after a traumatic event? As I argued in the first part of this book, the landscape of a place like the Obersalzberg offers an unstable series of memory possibilities. This chapter examines the tensions between space and violence, amnesia and memorialization, and the uses of the forest by examining Susan Silas's *Helmbrechts Walk*. Her compelling photographs contribute to the work of geographers, historians, landscape architects, literary critics, and others concerned with the connection between space and memory by bringing the past into the present. In discussing the arresting, abstracted photographs Alan Cohen took of Dachau, Auschwitz, the Berlin Wall, and other traumatic spaces, Jonathan Bordo notes, "these photographs offer themselves as the vicarious bearers of these traumatic traces; and as viewers, merely by looking at them, we might consider ourselves to be memory-bearers" (95).[1] Silas's photographs engage with a habitation of such spaces and have the capacity sometimes to turn viewers into memory-bearers.

Silas's *Helmbrechts Walk* (1998) captures a melancholy landscape: fog, gray, dismal towns, sorry forests, empty roads, rust-caked train tracks leading nowhere. These photographs record the path of a death march taken in the spring of 1945 by 580 Jewish women from many places in occupied Europe. Fifty-three years after the event, Silas, with a camera, retraced the women's steps, walking the same distance on a daily basis. *Helmbrechts*

Walk tells the story of this march but juxtaposes that story with gripping, violent news accounts from the same period in 1998 to create a multilayered analysis of the wreckage of twentieth-century history. By entering the landscape where hundreds of women walked, Silas inserts a living Jewess into the woods where historically Jewish people were seen, in their urban, wandering, stereotypical guises, as anathema. Silas's art exposes violence, fights amnesia, insists on the presence of the past, demands memorialization; she teaches us about this death march while grappling with the marchers' traumatic experiences.

In an influential article about post-Holocaust photography, Ulrich Baer claims that precisely because the photographs that interest him do not contain "documentary information" they nonetheless "*tell the truth*" ("Give" 50). Baer argues that truth is achieved through the aesthetic that highlights the "unbridgeable gap between, on the one hand, philosophical efforts of understanding and historicist attempts at explanation and, on the other hand, the actual event of extermination" ("Give" 42–43). Thus Baer posits that the aesthetic, through its effects on the representation of traumatic landscapes, approaches a reckoning between history and experience. Baer further argues that the landscape tradition, by which he means the tradition defined by European Romanticism in which "the environment that had once been ground to build on, plow, defend, or conquer came to be seen as an aesthetic entity to be contemplated by an enraptured subject in a process of introspection and increasing self-awareness," is "particularly well-suited to addressing the Holocaust as the historical event that calls into question that entire tradition" ("Give" 43). In other words, in linking the Romantic sensibility of the subject's relation to place with the disruption of the very concept of subjectivity that the Holocaust enacted, Baer opens up an analysis of how landscape and memory are working for and against each other through representations of landscapes that are inflected with Holocaust history.

A long, well-documented, and close connection binds the wooded landscape to German fascism. As one commentator on an exhibit of Silas's work succinctly put it, "For German culture—from Tacitus's *Germania* to Heidegger's descriptions of the Black Forest, from the landscapes of Caspar David Friedrich to the paintings of Anslem Kiefer—the landscape has been a significant leitmotif for German nationalism. For Jews, the landscape (and trees in particular) is a symbol of life and renewal."[2] By placing Jewish people in the woods—both those dead whose history Silas wants to commemorate and her own second-generation survivor's body—Silas refuses not only amnesia about the death march but also the claim made by National Socialism on the wooded landscapes of Europe. Benno Fischer, who was on a similar death march to the one Silas retraced, noted, in thanking his American liberators, that they "gave me my freedom, by cutting off our deadly march, which would surely end in massacre of the 500 or 600 +/- Jews left in the forest" (34). Fischer closes his testimony with these words and they underscore the tensions manifest in the symbolizations of

the forest as the scene of actual and projected deaths and as the symbolization of nationalism. According to Gunnar Brands, "the untouched landscape [functioned as] a symbol of the rebirth of the German nation" (222). Similarly, Malcolm Andrews notes, "the spiritual purity of a nation is . . . imagined in its landscapes" (159). Thus a close connection binds the image of the wooded landscape to the fascist glorification of the fatherland while the shadow of Jewish deaths (and that of many other victims of the Nazi genocide) haunts the forest.

As Simon Schama contends, German glory was heralded through the woods from which Jews were excluded until they were murdered among the trees. In detailing how crucial the forests were to German folk myth, Schama also describes the banishment of the figure of the Jew from this sacred forest: "the rootless Jew was the purveyor of this corrupted, citified society, the forester was his antithesis—the embodiment of ethnic authenticity, rooted like his trees in the ancient earth of the fatherland" (114; see also Harrison, *Forests*). Cliff Spargo discusses this question of the landscape as witness and locates an "elegiac precedent whereby the natural world approximates the function of an otherwise absent witness" (226). But the witness cannot hold, things fall apart (as Yeats would have it), and "the natural world incorporates the violence it has beheld and quite literally upheld, as if the forest itself remembered the atrocities committed there" (227).

After the war, the woods were reappropriated by Israel as a symbol of the masculinization of the stereotype of the pale, wan, Jewish man and a rewriting of the Palestinian landscape—a literal overwriting of Palestinian history through remaking Palestinian topography into Jewish topography. These trees had practical purposes of creating both fruit and timber but they were also overlaid with symbolic significance. Diaspora Jews were encouraged to sponsor the planting of trees in Israel and therefore to take over the fascist appropriation of the forest at the same time as they were removing local trees from the Palestinian landscape and creating necessary materials for Israeli settlement.[3] In framing a wooded landscape (see Figure 5.5) so that it simultaneously invites and repels, Silas engages with the traumatic history of the death march as well as with larger questions about the history and iconography of the forest. While the beauty of Silas's images draws us in and opens up a dialogue between history and experience, these images also uncover the literal and metaphorical violence of these landscapes, resist the impulse toward erasure that the landscape always threatens, and refuse the pollution of the landscape tradition by fascist ideology.

Susan Silas was born in the U.S. in 1953 to Jewish-Hungarian Holocaust survivors; she now lives and works in New York, and continues to be deeply interested in the Holocaust, producing, among many other works, photographs of former concentration camps, response pieces to the German artist Anselm Kiefer, and a series entitled *Re unifications* that juxtaposes photographs from the Olympic Stadium in former West Berlin with images of the Jewish Cemetery Weißensee in former East Berlin. *Helmbrechts*

Walk consists of forty-eight thirteen-by-nineteen-inch unbound archival color plates; uncaptioned photographs on the left pair with right-hand photographs framed by typed journal entries and news clips from the same day in 1998. Also contained within the linen-covered clamshell box are a map of the death march and an epilogue. The work was exhibited at the Koffler Centre for the Arts in Toronto in the fall of 2005 and at Hebrew Union College, New York City, in fall 2009 through summer 2010.[4] The photographs are also available online in a different format; as one scrolls over the recto image the text that appears as captions in the original emerges over the photograph, leaving the image as a ghostly presence under the text.[5] *Helmbrechts Walk* can be considered in the context of other innovative artworks, most prominently those of Richard Long (whom Silas cites as an influence), that pose the question "how does a walk function as an artwork at all?" (Moorhouse and Long 8; also see Chatwin). Or one might note with Paul Moorhouse, in reference to Long, "the walk itself may have no lasting physical attributes but the work could not exist if the walk had not happened" (13). In a very different register, Silas's retracing of these steps overlaps with those group marches sponsored by March of the Living that move through Eastern European landscapes as though en route to Israel (see Stier). The analysis of Silas's walk that follows considers not only the photographic "evidence" of the walk but the ephemeral act of walking through this loaded topography as a crucial aspect of her project.

From 13 April to 4 May 1998 and three years after a fiftieth anniversary of survivors of the Helmbrechts death march took place in Volary, Silas walked 225 miles in twenty-two days in order to retrace the steps that a group of predominantly Eastern European Jewish women had been commanded to take in 1945. A student assistant/driver accompanied Silas via car from a distance. The death march route/Silas's route began in Helmbrechts, Germany (near Hof and northeast of Nuremberg), and ended in Volary, Czech Republic (near the Austrian/German/Czech meeting point and just southwest of Česke Budějovice). Because they were offered neither adequate food nor shelter, and because they were beaten en route, many women did not survive the march. Silas reconstructed the route of the march from the trial transcript of Alois Dörr (Helmbrechts camp commandant), from maps at the New York Public Library, from details offered by Klaus Rauh (a student who completed a project about the death march), and from the historian Daniel Jonah Goldhagen's research on Helmbrechts.

Silas first encountered the Helmbrechts death march through Goldhagen's controversial *Hitler's Willing Executioners*; while the "Goldhagen controversy" has at last subsided, when the book first appeared in 1997 an enormous amount of debate ensued over the defensibility of Goldhagen's central argument that German anti-Semitism was ubiquitous and laid claim to an exceedingly long historical reach.[6] The debate notwithstanding, Goldhagen nonetheless supplies a detailed account, mostly drawn from Dörr's

trial transcripts, of the Helmbrechts march (see also Blatman 209–212). Dörr was tried in Hof, near Helmbrechts, in 1969 after an eight-year investigation. Although the presiding judge had a Nazi background, he acted justly and listened to the testimony of some of Dörr's former prisoners, including Mina Rypsztajn (see Figure 5.1), who came from Israel to testify against Dörr. The villagers in the small hamlet to which Dörr had returned after the war signed a testament to his good character under slightly suspicious conditions before his trial. Dörr was regarded by the survivors as a sadistic and brutal man who had ostensibly defied orders to mitigate possible American postwar punishment by ceasing to shoot prisoners. Judge Kormann sentenced Dörr to life in prison; he was released after ten years due to ill health and died shortly thereafter.[7]

Helmbrechts, a small satellite unit of the Flossenbürg camp, initially housed primarily non-Jewish women prisoners who worked in a nearby armaments firm.[8] The camp opened on 19 July 1944 and then had a population of approximately seven hundred non-Jewish inmates and fifty-four SS guards; on 6 March 1945, 621 Jewish prisoners arrived by foot from Grünberg after undergoing transportation from Auschwitz (see Rauh). Thus many of the women who were to set out from Helmbrechts had already suffered a traumatic transport, march, and concentration camp imprisonment. In order to evacuate before American troops appeared, on 13 April 1945 (four days before U.S. forces arrived at the deserted camp) the Helmbrechts death march began; 580 Jewish women prisoners and 590 non-Jewish prisoners set out with forty-seven German guards. The non-Jewish prisoners were either deposited at other camps or were forced to assist the guards to ensure that the Jewish inmates did not try to escape. Between the end of the march on 4 May 1945, and the American army's gaining control of the area on 6 May, some of the survivors were shot, some died of starvation, some went over the border into Czechoslovakia, and others were liberated at Volary (see Goldhagen 342–371). One of the U.S. soldiers noted upon discovery of the survivors, "It was in Volary that the Fifth Division unearthed one of the most senseless examples of German bestiality ever found" (qtd. in *Reichmanns* 42). Those killed along the march were initially buried hastily but many were disinterred and reburied by former Nazi sympathizers after the war. One survivor, Anna Kotlicki (née Keller), returned to Germany from Israel for Dörr's trial and when she "reached the point in her testimony where she told of leading American officers back over some 65 miles of the death march route to exhume the bodies she had buried, she began to weep and the judge declared an interval in deference to the witness" (Moor).

The Helmbrechts death march particularly interests Goldhagen because it epitomizes his claims about the eliminationist anti-Semitism of ordinary Germans. Goldhagen finds that there was absolutely no political or military sense in the death marches and that, often despite orders from Himmler or other high-ranking Nazis to treat the Jewish prisoners humanely at

the end of the war and thus reduce sentencing at future trials, the guards continued to use excessively cruel treatment. Martin Gilbert claims that the death marches were a necessary preservation of slave labor at a bitter point in the war when the German army desperately needed road, railway, and bridge repairs whereas Goldhagen argues that the Nazis only used non-Jews for slave labor by this time, and that the brutal treatment of the Jews made them unfit for work (Gilbert, *Holocaust* 189). A survivor of a different death march, one that left Auschwitz in the winter of 1945, Fela Ravett, offers a clear idea of the purpose of the death marches. In a film entitled *The March*, her son, filmmaker Abraham Ravett, questions her about the food they were or were not given en route and she replies: "You asking me if they give us to eat? They didn't give us to eat . . . the whole purpose of that march was to finish with us."[9] Due to chaos at the end of the war, destruction of documents, and the diminishing pool of survivors and perpetrators, a reliable picture of the logic behind the Helmbrechts death march may never emerge; but certainly the German guards on this death march were sadistically cruel to the Jewish women who were their prisoners and the march had little purpose other than murdering more prisoners and escaping the Allies for a few more days.

Many survivors of this and other death marches marvel at their own ability to withstand and then be alive to bear witness to this level of atrocity, deprivation, and dehumanization. Fela Ravett muses about "how a person was able to overcome that . . . is unbelievable" (Ravett) and Benno Fischer asks, "How to apply human standards to these twisted minds? How did I endure this march? I do not know. Call it a miracle" (24–25). The sense that this march epitomized the illogical, chaotic nature of the Holocaust made Silas want to retrace these Jewish women's steps in order to visualize in a new way the turbulent close of the war. Silas feels that these marches are particularly compelling because the Nazis' "impulse to take the prisoners along once the war was clearly lost defies logic for me and it makes the innocent protests of those who claimed not to know anything of such things seem especially ludicrous" (letter).

Indeed, Helmbrechts march went directly through many small villages where townspeople often tried to help the starving marchers only to be threatened with death by the Nazi guards. In Washington, D.C., at the USHMM, under an image of a death march that started in Dachau and went through Bavaria, one finds the following caption: "German civilians secretly photographed several death marches. . . . Few civilians gave aid to the prisoners on death marches. April 25–30, 1945." Of course, some survivors do remember that a few villagers tried to help them only to be sternly prohibited by the guards. The image at the USHMM serves as a witness to both the marches and, in effect, to the failure of most of the German populace to succor its government's victims. Interestingly, Halina Kleiner, who survived Helmbrechts march, distinguishes sharply between German and Czech civilians. In her video testimony she remembers entering a small

Czech village and being greeted by locals who threw food at the starving marchers:

> People were lined in their native dress, which is beautiful, you know the colorful native dress, not civilian clothes, but with the [here she gestures to indicate a hat or scarf] hats and the colorful skirts. Maybe it was a Sunday or a holiday, I don't know, and they threw food at us. They threw, literally food at us. They threw bread and meat and you name it, whatever was throwable, not soup but solids. And the Germans, the SS, were so flabbergasted that they almost couldn't do anything to prevent this because it was such an enormous thing. It was the whole village, women and children, men old and young. (Testimony, 23 July 1987)

Kleiner's memory of this almost jubilant scene quickly turns elegiac as the memory of the sometimes deadly results, for the starving women, of eating food in any quantity emerges. Thus by engaging with these questions of witnessing and its failures, Silas's project grapples with the questions: why the death marches? How much and when did the surrounding populace know about the death camps in their midst? In Kleiner's memory the villagers knew exactly what was going on. Several times in her narration she recounts moments when she was separated from the group of Jews among whom she had been imprisoned and was aided by peasants who, even though she never said as much, knew unquestionably that she was Jewish. There was no doubt, as the image taken by a witness and on display at the USHMM confirms, that the populace understood who these emaciated people were.

For Silas, the impulse to undertake the route of a punishing death march also stemmed from a lifelong investment in what the Holocaust means, how its memory continues in the face of the decreasing numbers of the living who remember it, and more personally, how it affected her family. Silas's father, who passed away in 1963, had been in the Hungarian army and was then forced into slave labor; he walked from the Soviet Union back to Hungary from whence he was sent to another labor camp in Yugoslavia. Silas's mother survived the war in the Jewish ghetto in Budapest. After emigrating to the U.S., her parents' circle of friends consisted almost entirely of Hungarian Jews, many of them survivors, who discussed the Holocaust only when the children were not supposed to be listening—Silas learned a lot about their experiences by eavesdropping from the stairs. As a child she had fantasies about how she would have behaved; "Would I be brave," she wondered, "what would I have done?" (interview). No longer content to read about or view films about the Holocaust, Silas decided to embark on this retracing of lost steps.

Silas described her presence in Germany and Czechoslovakia in terms of witnessing: "the artwork was my physical presence there—what was

important with respect to the marchers and my feelings about them was putting my body in that physical space—the images are a tertiary witness to that act. My occupying space and time I wouldn't have occupied had they not been there before me—that was most significant" (interview). Silas was profoundly connected with this walk because all the marchers—those who had been there before her—were women; thus a sense of gendered empathy informs Silas's project.[10] As she walked, Silas felt what Cathy Caruth terms an "uncanny return of the dead" ("Claims" 422) for she imagined that one of the victims of the death march—a teenager who initially survived but shortly afterwards died of starvation—was acting as a kind of guardian angel to her (letter; see also Harrison, *Dominion*). This connection speaks to how second-generation survivors or indeed many people invested in the Holocaust often experience a sort of identification with its victims. These identifications are sometimes institutionally supported as at the USHMM where visitors are greeted with ID cards of victims or survivors and invited to identify with one of these people.

The end of the march at Volary was heavily documented, mostly by U.S. soldiers who arrived there and set up a temporary hospital to house the survivors. As early as 9 May 1945 Lt. Col. Robert F. Bates ordered "water analysis reports" and requested "clinical records of each patient now in the hospital and, if possible, case histories" (13). Bates also requested that any photographs taken of the survivors be "developed, identified, and used as an exhibit" (14). The overwhelming majority of the photos document starving, skeletal women who look out at the viewer from deep sockets while lying in makeshift "hospital" beds. Some of these images are accompanied by notes telling the viewer that the person portrayed passed away a short time after the photo was taken thus contributing the chilling sensation that surviving the brutalities of a death march does not constitute surviving the Holocaust. Among these devastating photographs of the aftermath of the Helmbrechts death march the USHMM houses some images that rupture the flow of excruciating skeletal victims. One, of Sabina Szeps, conveys the impression that despite the incredible trauma she has just endured, she has maintained her inner life and all of its mysteries. She looks away from the camera, into the shadows, shielded and clothed and closed to the stringent gaze of the camera.

Another arresting image, taken in June 1945 by Morris Rosen, depicts Mina Rypsztajn. Here Rypsztajn faces the camera, wearing a U.S. soldier's helmet and carrying a rifle—obviously and strikingly contrasting the images of starving, disempowered women taken a month earlier at the moment of liberation. Similarly, in *The Reichmanns of Bielitz*, Amalie Reichmann, one of the survivors of the Helmbrechts march, tells the story of her incarceration and survival through her testimony and documentary sources, including photographs, military reports, Fifth Infantry Division newspapers, and reproductions of liberation passes in four languages. Among these a photograph, taken between July and September 1945 (i.e., only a few months after

Figure 5.1 Mina Rypsztajn. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Image courtesy of Morris Rosen.

the end of the march), features three survivors wearing, like Mina Rypsztajn, U.S. military helmets and pointing rifles directly at the camera. Everyone laughs and smiles and the group blends Jewish women survivors with U.S. soldiers.

While I was a fellow at the USHMM I was able to interview Morris Rosen, the photographer who took not only the photo of Mina Rypsztajn but many of the photos in *The Reichmanns of Bielitz*. Morris recounted how he came to be in Volary, the only boy (he was about nineteen by the end of the war, "boy" is his term for himself) among the women recuperating in the makeshift U.S. Army hospital after surviving the Helmbrechts death march. Morris stressed at the beginning of his testimony that it was because he worked for the highest SS officials that he was able to survive the war. Concretely, this work for high officials afforded him with special passes that meant his movements were less restricted than other Jewish people living in Poland. But, more importantly, this work came with the benefit of food. Morris worked in a leather factory and one morning at l'appel (the daily line up of prisoners to ensure that all were accounted for) an SS guard of whom everyone was terrified, Hans Ludwig, asked if anyone was a painter. Morris replied that he was a good painter to which Ludwig responded by giving him a bloody nose. Ludwig nonetheless employed him to paint his mistress's apartment. The wager was that if Morris did not paint the three rooms of her apartment in three days he would be shot. Morris

was about sixteen or seventeen at the time. He completed the project and did such a fine job that Ludwig fed him. Thereafter he became for a short time a sort of combined maid and handyman to Ludwig's mistress, schlepping coal, cleaning, refinishing the floors. In exchange Ludwig promised to send him to a labor camp instead of to Auschwitz. But Morris requested that he be sent to Grünberg, a women's camp, so that he could see his sister Bluma. So before he arrived in Volary and became the only man among women he had already requested this transfer to a women's camp.

He spent nine months in Grünberg, surviving by working again as a painter and also as a cleaner for a woman who worked in an office and who gave him the food that he shared with his sister. In March 1944 Ludwig appeared at roll call and asked "Wo ist mein Maler?" (Where is my painter?) and then instructed the head of the camp to give Morris hot soup and bread—which he was also able to share with his sister. After this Morris was moved to many places, including Buchenwald, which he at first delicately glosses over with "not the best" but then adds that this was the first time he witnessed cannibalism. He remembered that, rather than harping on the present, with the other inmates one discussed books, movies, girls, anything but food; he was "all the time like historian, to catch for history what I could." In April 1945, while everything was on fire, Morris arrived in Theresienstadt where he was given clothes, bread, and soup but where he had to jump out of a window to avoid being infected with the typhus epidemic that was killing people who remained. He was liberated by Czech and Russian soldiers who invited him into their tank and plied him with sardines and wine. Because the Red Cross announced nightly the names of survivors on the radio, Morris's brother-in-law was able to find him at Theresienstadt and take him to a hotel in Prague. Here, Morris says, he finally knew he was human and not the wounded animal he had been. To be seated at a table spread with a white cloth and to sleep in clean sheets seemed incredible to him. He planned to go home to see who was alive but there was no point—his home had been taken over by the Russians and "Stalin is not any better than Hitler." So he went to the American side, to Volary, where he had heard there were Jewish women who had survived.

When Morris got to Volary, Sheva Szeps (I think this must be the same person as Sabina Szeps, whose photo I discussed earlier, but I am not sure) was so overjoyed to see him that she almost killed him by knocking him down. Morris became close friends with many of the girls who survived Helmbrechts. There were love stories, broken hearts, requited and unrequited loves. Because Morris was in relatively good health he was put to work by the U.S. army chaplain—first in the hospital but as soon as he saw an injection, he fainted; after all he had been through, he fainted at the sight of a needle. So they put him to work in the kitchen where he was dismayed at the amount of waste and thus tried to salvage some of it for the girls in the hospital. Noticing this sneaking of food, a soldier took him to the PX where he was plied with whatever he wanted.

It was a U.S. soldier who gave an Agfa camera to Morris—along with some good boots taken off the feet of an SS POW. And so Morris began photographing everyone there. The images of girls in U.S. Army helmets and sporting rifles were staged at the prompting of the soldiers. The army's pride in the care it was taking of these extremely fragile survivors manifests in accounts in military newspapers. Horribly, many survivors were killed by food given in too much bulk and too rapidly. Morris reports that the Russians tended to give survivors heavy food, the British none, and the Americans baby amounts. Vast differences in medical knowledge among liberating troops clearly existed, but strikingly at Volary an intense camaraderie between these women and the soldiers developed—a playfulness recorded by Morris's lens that seems different than other scenes of liberation and its aftereffects. The care Lt. Col. Bates took to examine the water, chart case histories, seek out perpetrators, and retain photographic evidence of genocide strongly supports this. A newsletter entitled "Diamond Dust," published by the Fifth Infantry Division, reprints a letter written by Gerda Weissman (who went on to marry one of her liberators and thus affix "Klein" as her last name; see her testimony, *All But My Life* and the film based on it, *One Survivor Remembers*). The following caveat introduces her letter: "This letter is printed here because it is an unusually powerful letter and because it explains partially why we Americans fought this war and why we have to stay here [to] occupy" (*Reichmanns* 44). Not surprisingly, the Fifth Infantry included Klein's letter in their newspaper because it offers feasible justification for all that the soldiers had undergone to reach the end of the war and to be in a position to take such good care of the survivors.

I asked Morris whether the survivors in Volary discussed what they had just been through. He told me that none of them started talking about it until later, until there were reunions in Israel and, on the fiftieth anniversary, in Volary itself. Morris did not talk to his children about his experiences until neo-Nazis threatened to march in Skokie, Illinois, in the late 1970s. At the fiftieth anniversary, three years before Silas's project, Morris asked the mayor of Volary why there were ninety-five graves because when he had left there were only forty. The mayor told him that they had found some victims in the woods and that they had reburied them here, complete with new monuments. Morris told me that the landscape around Volary looked the same but not the same. Just as many survivors experience a sensation of precise memories that do not always corroborate with reality.

In addition to the portraits of women at Volary, the USHMM also houses many images of German civilians who were forced by U.S. soldiers to exhume the bodies of some of the Helmbrechts victims who had been unceremoniously dumped into mass graves. The German civilians were charged with the task of reburying the victims in proper graves. Many of these images, some taken by J.P. Musae, depict the grim but determined faces of the German civilians as they are forced to witness—forced to come

to terms with what had been happening all around them. One of the U.S. soldiers, Harry H. Morgan, writing (by hand) to Miles Lerman, Chairman, International Relations Committee of the USHMM, closed his 1981 letter with the following: "P.S. we arranged a funeral for the women who died in Wallern [Volary] the night of our liberation, and forced the local populace to witness the result of their or their brothers' inhumanity." Fascinatingly, this moment of forced witnessing precedes the period of "amnesia" described by theorists and historians who chart when and how the Holocaust became a topic of such widespread and intense interest. Forced to witness and yet not, perhaps, forced to see and understand? And in the forcing we see how the resistance forms—these civilians were not invited to rebury the dead, they were forced.

Lee Miller (see Chapter 4) also took a photograph of forced witnessing. In this image an American soldier stands to the right, ever so slightly out of focus, while behind him German civilians walk toward the entrance of Buchenwald. The caption reads "Buchenwald—civilians on forced tour of camp, 1945." But the examples of forced witnessing are legion. From the U.S. military perspective, as well, there was a sense that soldiers needed to see the horror of the concentrationary universe in order to understand fully the reason for their battles, thus further explaining the impulse to publish Klein's letter. After U.S. troops had seen Ohrdruf, Eisenhower ordered all nearby troops to witness, noting, "We are told that the American soldier does not know what he is fighting for. Now, at least, he will know what he is fighting against" (qtd. in Abzug 30 and Chéroux 107).

Thus the use of filmic evidence (both still and moving) was crucial to both America's desire to make its soldiers feel keenly the moral righteousness of their collective sacrifice and to the postwar denazification process in Germany:

> Signal Corps photographic teams were directed to collect visual documentation of concentration and prisoner-of-war camps for use in prosecuting Nazi war criminals. This documentation, literally more shocking than eyewitness reports could hope to be, turned out to be the most significant use of film in the occupation of Germany. Most significant because it proved the most compelling evidence in the War Crimes trials held in Nuremberg, 20 November 1945, to 1 October 1946, and most compelling because parts of the most grisly footage were shown to every German civilian as part of the denazification process. (Culbert 176)

Here David Culbert points to the importance of filmic evidence in the legal consequences of the war and also to the forced witnessing not only in person, as happened to the civilians who were forced to rebury Nazi victims or the civilians Miller captured en route to a forced witnessing at Buchenwald, but a forced filmic witnessing. As if a direct correlation between the

grisliness of the image and the degree to which a German civilian could understand the atrocities committed in the name of Germany emerges.

When, in 1998, Silas became dedicated to retracing the steps of this death march she would already have imbibed, as we all have, a massive amount of visual evidence; however, she was confronted with a cleaned-up landscape, a space of atrocity that could barely bear witness to the crimes against humanity perpetrated there more than half a century previously. There was a gap, an abyss between past and present and an uncertainty about what space reveals about the past. Thus, despite feeling curious connections with some of the victims, Silas experienced a "monumental failure of the imagination," and felt that even being in the space where these women suffered did not make it possible to grasp the nature of what they went through (interview). This failure of the imagination even in the space of trauma calls into question the effect that space can have on memory. On the one hand, retracing the steps of these victims allowed Silas to feel an identification that she might not have otherwise felt; on the other hand, that identification was limited by the understanding that even there, where this horrid march happened, an unbridgeable gap remained between experience and interpretation.

The written diary (in the upper captions) of Silas's retracing the steps of the death march eloquently describes this failure of the imagination; that these upper captions contain quotes from Holocaust survivors such as Primo Levi and Jorge Semprun along with mention of modern artists such as Joseph Beuys speaks to Silas's combination of testimonial/historical Holocaust knowledge with a sensitive artistic sensibility. In these captions we find the "long dead busts of various antlered beats, eyes glazed over" or a "sad sack paranoia"; the melancholy memory of the marchers and their buried past touches everything Silas sees. But the short news reports that form the captions beneath the image bring the present into our consciousness. Through news of Pol Pot's death, murder among beloveds, racial violence in South Africa, genocide in Rwanda, the rise of the far right in postwar Germany, clashes in Albania, Indonesian student movements, concentration camp guards on trial, Iraqi deaths under Hussein, and other bleak tales, we are reminded that violence continues unabated and we begin to think about our own status as the silent witnesses to violence around us; in our "global village" are we turning a blind eye to suffering? Like the villagers in the towns through which the women marched, are we complicit?

In choosing to embark on such a physically and emotionally trying project Silas wanted to see in order to empathize, to approach the Holocaust from beyond the comfort of her chair; she was fascinated by what traces of this traumatic past she might find and what absences of the past might be equally invisible. The landscape photographs she has produced perform absence in powerful ways. "At first the landscape was pretty devoid of life," Silas reports, "but after a time I was conscious of creating an empty frame to achieve a certain stillness in the images" (letter). The stillness of these

images of empty train tracks, empty villages, empty forests, empty roads, and gnarled trees enshrouded in fog ask us to reflect on what the "shapeless" and "dismal" German/Czech topography conceals. Silas conceived of the "landscape . . . in a weird way as a witness" (interview). In other words, rather than amnesia, the landscape could also be read in terms of memorialization. But, as Kleiner describes in the epilogue to *Helmbrechts Walk*, witnesses do not necessarily remember the spaces through which they moved. Silas met Kleiner in 1998 and inquired about what she remembered of her surrounds during the march. "You mean the scenery?" Kleiner clarified. And Silas recounts that Kleiner could not conjure up "a visual memory of the landscape or her immediate surroundings. Perhaps under such conditions it is not possible to look too far." Interestingly, at other times, Kleiner remembered, very near the end of the war: "We were marching in Czechoslovakia, it was, it must have been in the black woods, the Schwarzwald area, the countryside was like the story of Heidi, you know, exactly. As depreciated as we were I must say for myself and for Lily [her friend who survived with her] that we were still able to observe where we are and to look around us and to see the nature around us" (Testimony, 23 July 1987). There are so many moments like this, where memories collide and testimonies do not converge; these slippages and differences underscore the variability, flexibility, and complexity of memory. I was very taken with Kleiner's description of the Schwarzwald as a storybook countryside and equally struck by her noting that she had trouble conjuring up visual memories of the landscape. Throughout her entire video testimony there are many moments when Kleiner states quite emphatically that she does not remember exactly, that dates are confused in her memory; she also reminds her listeners that she was starving. Her memory struggles against her emaciated past self.

By walking through these traumatic places, by recording the route of this march photographically, Silas brings out the violence hidden in the landscape, refuses to allow the space to become a scene of erasure, and insists that the landscape tradition, the interaction between space and subject, be salvaged from its pollution by fascist ideology. As an illustration of Silas's treatment of the landscape tradition, consider an image of train tracks from *Helmbrechts Walk* entitled "Day 11, Thursday 23 April, 1998, Nova Hospoda to Straz (Neustadtl)." In this melancholy photograph, tracks curve away to the right, melting into the distance and becoming increasingly overgrown as they recede from view. Towards the thick right rear of the photograph the tracks almost appear to merge with the roots of the trees, thus heightening the metaphorical merging of the Holocaust with the surrounds. For one cannot see train tracks in this context without thinking of the deportations that may well have occurred along these same pieces of iron. One recalls Claude Lanzmann's film *Shoah* (1985) in which the camera traces the path of deportation train tracks; indeed, no one who has witnessed the more than ten-hour-long film can forget the endless repetition

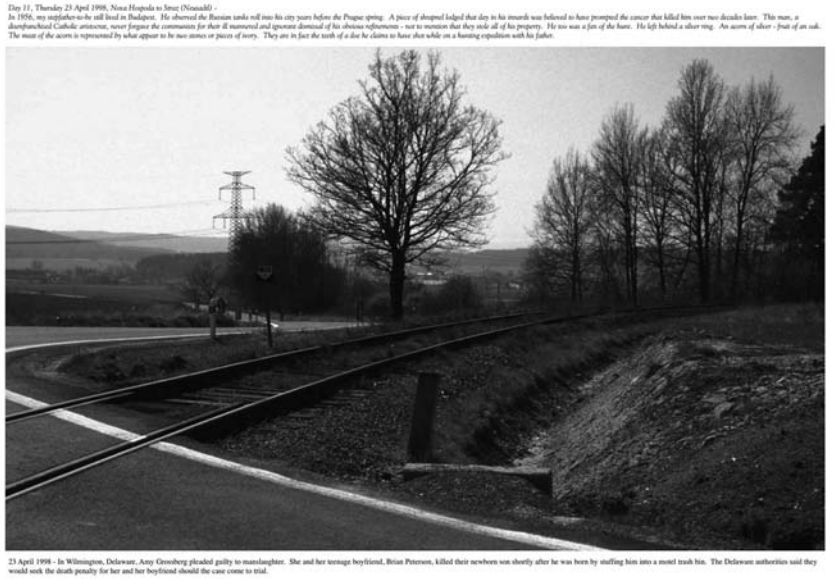

Figure 5.2 Helmbrechts Walk, 1998–2003, Day 11. Susan Silas. Image courtesy of Susan Silas.

of the sound and image of moving across desolate landscapes on a bleak train.[11] Sander Gilman notes that Lanzmann "eschew[s] the visual archive of the Shoah and the pitfall of easy identification. [He] insist[s] that we struggle to remember precisely from the ground on which we stand" (6). Silas's image of train tracks does include evidence of industry (power lines and newly paved road) and the overall tone paints a desolate space.

Silas's photograph can be compared with a startling image of train tracks in the late German writer W.G. Sebald's *The Emigrants* (published in German in 1992 and in English, translated by Michael Hulse, in 1996); this novel, like most of Sebald's work, makes fascinating and sometimes startling use of photography. Sebald remarked, "We're living exactly on the borderline between the natural world from which we are being driven out . . . and that other world which is generated by our brain cells. And so clearly that fault line runs right through our physical and emotional makeup. And probably where these tectonic plates rub against each other is where the sources of pain are. Memory is one of those phenomena" (Schwartz 56). Sebald imagines pain along a metaphorics of landscape and the subterranean space of the earthquake, analogizing an archaeology of psychological pain derived from geological transformation. Sebald's novels feature long rambles through natural landscapes that lead his characters to reflect on environmental decline alongside psychological ruination. These diverse uses of landscape tropes underscore the spatial nature of Holocaust

discourse and its apocalyptic hues prefigure the instability of our delicate global landscape.

The Emigrants recounts the stories of four emigrants, each bearing the scars of trying tales of exile and transformation. Three of the main characters are Jewish (or partly Jewish), and while *The Emigrants* is by no means a straightforward Holocaust novel, the catastrophe affects the lives of two of the Jewish emigrants directly and haunts the story of another as well.[12] The second tale, about Paul Bereyter, begins with a striking image of a train track. The photograph is shot from a claustrophobically close angle and this blurring of the left side of the track highlights this impression of closeness. Toward the center and back of the image the tracks recede and turn to the right, away from the blurred intensity of the close-up that dominates the left side of the image. Even before we know that Bereyter's life was profoundly changed by the Holocaust, this image of the empty landscape of the train tracks recalls mass deportations. We learn in the opening paragraph of the section on Bereyter that it was on a train track such as this one that the hero decided to end his life: "In January 1984 the news reached me from S that on the evening of the 30th of December, a week after his seventy-fourth birthday, Paul Bereyter, who had been my teacher at primary school, had put an end to his life. A short distance from S, where the railway track curves out of a willow copse into the open fields, he had lain himself down in front of a train" (27). In the context of *The Emigrants*, then, the opening shot of the landscape filled with train tracks refers both to Paul's suicide and to deaths resulting from deportations along train tracks during the Holocaust. By opening this chapter with this image, Sebald suggests that, beyond the specificity of his character's story, the Holocaust takes over, disrupts and possibly even blurs our image of the future as represented by the horizon at the back of the image of the train tracks receding into the distance. At first we might assume that the narrator has photographed the very spot where Paul took his life; however, the location cited above ("where the railway track curves out of a willow copse into the open fields") does not match the image. Possibly, at the location of the photograph, the track had come out of a willow copse, yet the track continues through forest on the left rather than going into open fields. The photograph in Sebald's novel thus does not depict the site of Bereyter's death; by including a location that differs from the description Sebald encourages us to read the significance of the railroad track beyond Bereyter's story as an allegory at once of the Holocaust and of traumatic suffering that can lead to suicide.

The photography in Sebald's work is very interesting and also, like memory, very flexible. As Ernestine Schlant notes, "photographs [in Sebald's texts] are blurred, or downright unreliable—some are shown to be forgeries" (225). *The Rings of Saturn* (published in German in 1995 and in English, translated by Michael Hulse, in 1998), for example, contains an image of Bergen Belsen that remains utterly undiscussed in the novel. A brilliant,

meandering reading of the complex interconnections between colonialism and Nazism, *The Rings of Saturn* is Sebald's most powerful work and one whose insights remain to be fully examined. The image of Belsen arrives startlingly in the midst of a discussion of herring and the following introduces it:

> Perhaps it was that darkening that called to my mind an article I had clipped from the *Eastern Daily Press* several months before, on the death of Major George Wyndham Le Strange, whose great stone manor house in Henstead stood beyond the lake. During the last War, the report read, Le Strange served in the anti-tank regiment that liberated the camp at Bergen Belsen on the 14th of April 1945 [here Sebald inserts the photograph], but immediately after VE-Day returned home from Germany to manage his great uncle's estates in Suffolk. . . . Le Strange employed [a] housekeeper, a simple young woman from Beccles by the name of Florence Barnes, on the explicit condition that she take the meals she prepared together with him, but in absolute silence. (59–62)

I e-mailed the librarian at the *Eastern Daily Press* to try to ascertain whether there ever was such an article in their paper or whether the "photocopy" of the article Sebald included in *The Rings of Saturn* (63) was a fabrication. Here is the response from the newspaper, which I received on 27 October 2004:

> Dear Professor Kaplan
>
> Your email has led to an intriguing hunt amongst our archives. I myself have the novel and thought I could decipher the date to 1992 but an exhaustive search of our cuttings files, plus many conversations with long-standing members of staff who work/worked in the area, reveals a blank.
>
> I'm of the opinion that this is not so much a fiction as an imaginative reworking or conflation of several local stories. The details sound plausible and there is of course a place called Henstead near Beccles but no-one of that name and no sale of the house. For what it's worth, I couldn't find Florence Barnes on the electoral register either.
>
> Regards
>
> Rosemary Dixon
> Library Manager Eastern Daily Press/Evening News Norwich

The unnamed, unmentioned photograph of Bergen Belsen in *The Rings of Saturn* spans two full pages. The image, it turns out, is from the same perspective and records the same victims as a photograph taken by George Rodger and published on 20 April 1945 by Time-Life.[13] The Rodger photograph is much clearer and the depth of field much deeper than the image

reproduced by Sebald but unmistakably the same forest full of bodies appears. The silence in the text surrounding the image at once echoes the silence imposed on Ms. Barnes and the postwar silence about the victims of the Nazi genocide. In this context there are two national silences at play: German and English. Sebald was (as I discussed in Chapter 2) a second-generation German who was born at the end of the war and thus inherited a legacy of guilt and shame from the generation of his parents. But he was also an émigré who chose to settle in England and who would have been keenly aware of the stiff-upper-lip self-imposed silence of many of the British soldiers who returned from the war and were culturally and socially discouraged from discussing and thus processing the trauma they had been among the first to witness.

Silas's imagery echoes the photographs that illustrate Sebald's novels for these texts share a melancholy emptiness that often pervades the image, and they reflect on the intersection of landscape and memory. In contrast to the very close framing of the train track photograph in Sebald's *Emigrants*, however, Silas framed *Day 11* (see Figure 5.2) from a distance to include more of the landscape. The railroad tracks that crisscross this part of the landscape in Germany/Czechoslovakia are silent memorials to the deportations that moved Jews and others across vast distances during the genocide. The inclusion of train cars and train tracks among the artifacts and architecture of Holocaust museums, such as the USHMM and the new Illinois Holocaust Museum, testifies to their status as icons of the Nazi genocide. The captions accompanying Silas's image reinforce the sensation of lingering memory and its sinister implications because Silas here remembers of her stepfather, a "disenfranchised Catholic aristocrat," that "a piece of shrapnel lodged that day [in 1956] in his innards was believed to have prompted the cancer that killed him over two decades later." The festering shrapnel left as a residue of the Soviet takeover of Budapest would take twenty years to kill him; the train tracks below the image are implicitly compared with the festering, lingering wounds, the tracks cutting across the landscape like a scar.

But the scars that Silas uncovers are created through her memorialization project, not symbols apparent on the actual landscape; along the death march route Silas found no memorials to the women who died there, only at the end of the march did she encounter a tiny museum in Volary that served as a memorial. Survivors of the march and historians report that some small memorial markers were placed within cemeteries in some of the small towns in which women who had been killed and hastily buried were disinterred and then buried properly either at the urging of U.S. forces or for other reasons. Of course, if all death marches were marked, many European roads would bear endless signs memorializing traumatic events. However, as revealed in "Day 16, Tuesday 28 April, Deplowice to Jeseni," other markers and memorials graced the side of the road yet with only scant explanation.

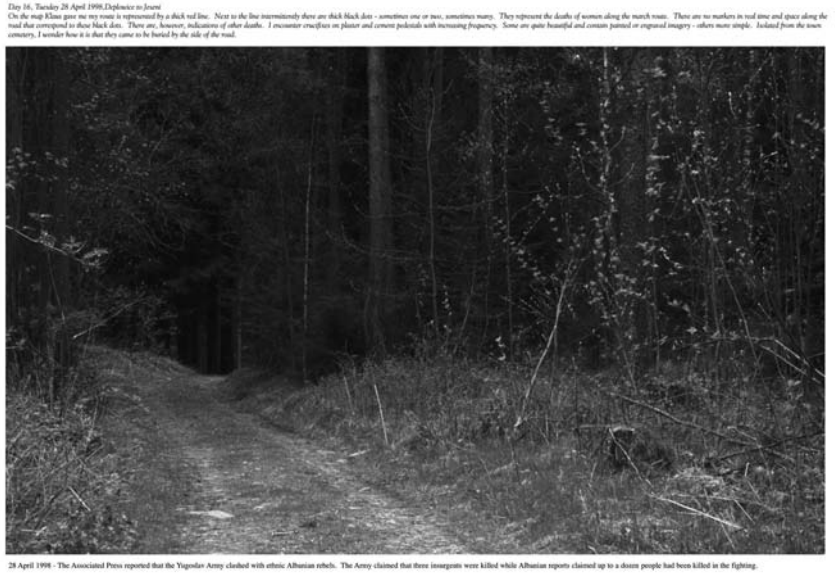

Figure 5.3 Helmbrechts Walk, 1998–2003, Day 16. Susan Silas. Image courtesy of Susan Silas.

As Silas notes in the caption, she found that some gravestones were "quite beautiful and contain[ed] painted or engraved imagery—others more simple. Isolated from the town cemetery, I wonder how it is that they came to be buried by the side of the road." On first glance at the photograph *Day 16*, it would be easy to miss the gravestone thickly embedded in overgrown weeds and surrounded by a dense forest. Silas framed the gravestone in the lower right of the image so that the dirt road stretches away from it, carrying the viewer's eye toward the left background of the photograph. But the buried tombstone reminds us again of the missing markers to the marchers; and, as do the captions of violent news clips from 1998, remind us that other tragedies befall us—both in the space where these women suffered in the past and globally in the present. In contrast to the many Holocaust memorials that pepper the early twenty-first-century European landscape (and are legion in the U.S.) the almost complete lack of memorialization of the Helmbrechts death march is striking and highlights the recovery project Silas was intent on achieving.[14] In Volary, Silas finally encountered one burial area, created at the Allies' insistence, for the death march victims; the town planted a row of trees along the edge of the area so it now appears that the ninety-five women buried there are interred in a separate space than the local dead. Silas discusses this cemetery at the end of *Helmbrechts Walk* but the accompanying photo does not portray the graves. As

if peering through the screen erected by these trees, Silas's beautiful photographs resist this separation and forgetting.

While these were the only graves for the women who underwent the march, the detritus of war could still be found in the topography through which Silas moved. The bunker captured in "Day 6, Sunday 18 April 1998, Zwodau" rises out of bedraggled sparse trees as a testament to the war. Descending into the bunker, Silas feels the darkness and dankness almost as if walking into a grave; the news clip from 1998 heightens this sensation by beginning: "18 April 1998—Pol Pot's body is cremated." The upper caption includes the following: "Behind the camp barracks—still there—a small cement bunker that at a distance resembles a discarded party hat. . . . Descending a set of stairs off to the side I find myself inside a small dank space. I am paralyzed in there." Thus, close to the former camp barracks, a bunker designed to protect Nazis against the Allies, and where prisoners were possibly tortured, remains as an open crypt; meanwhile, a genocidal dictator's body becomes ash. This powerful juxtaposition of World War II era traumas with then (1998) contemporary violence forces us to recognize, precisely through landscape photography, the eruption of violence both in the past and the present. While the landscape might grope toward amnesia, Silas's photographs and her performative project of retracing the steps of these women insist on memorialization and contribute to salvaging the landscape tradition from the taint of fascist ideology.

Figure 5.4 Helmbrechts Walk, 1998–2003, Day 6. Susan Silas. Image courtesy of Susan Silas.

Another illustration of Silas's conversation with the landscape tradition and also with the supreme importance of the woods for fascist ideology can be seen in the uncaptioned image *Day 12*. This photograph evokes the panoramic but subverts it by cropping trees on top thus confounding completion, resolution, and also the grandeur of the panoramic shot. This photograph resonates forcefully with some post-Holocaust photographs of former concentration camp sites taken by Dirk Reinartz and Mikael Levin; like those images, Silas's forest, in Ulrich Baer's words, "uncannily stage[s]—without resolving—the tension between the sense of being drawn into this site . . . and the sense of being excluded from it" ("Give" 54). In capturing the woods as Silas does in *Day 12*, she represents them paradoxically as at once forbidding and inviting; they are forbidding as a dark mass in the background of the photograph but also enticing as the trees' spindly girth allows one to imagine wandering among them.

The penultimate image of *Helmbrechts Walk*, a self-portrait followed only by the epilogue describing Kleiner's memories of the death march, is the only self-portrait in the work. The photograph features a decaying house, a darkening sky, and, in the center, a traffic mirror reflecting a tiny image of Silas donning a yellow rain slicker and distorted by the fun-house effect of the mirror. The lines of the drab building against which Silas is framed are also distorted and made wavy by the mirror. The desolate house and cracked fence behind the mirror offer testimony to the forgotten quality of the topography of the march. Because she represents herself in this way, so that her tiny figure almost corresponds with the exact center of the image yet the raincoat and camera hide her from view and the mirror distorts her, Silas indicates at once how marginal and how central she is to the performance of retracing these women's steps. The self-portrait thus reflects how the artist relates to history as contradictorily crucial and peripheral.

Twenty-two stones, one collected on each day of her enterprise, were exhibited with *Helmbrechts Walk* at Hebrew Union College (2009–2010). These stones are pieces of the landscape of the old world transported to the new world; they echo Jewish memorial stones yet they cannot find graves on which to repose; they offer mute witness to historical atrocity and indelible marks of continuity. The carefully framed, bleak images that Silas has created tell stories all on their own; inserted into the context of a World War II death march and combined with the captions offering a contemporary catalogue of catastrophes from the news of 1998, they tell a rich, complex story about memory, forgetting, witnessing, and trauma that offers a unique contribution to Holocaust art; her images expose the violence of the landscape, resist the erasure of memory, and reappropriate a landscape tradition made suspect by fascist use of it. I have demonstrated how Silas's project represents landscapes potentially lost to trauma and fascist pollution. By meditating on the possibility of recovering and reusing these lost topographies Silas opens up the landscape of Holocaust postmemory through her literal, concrete, physical presence in the actual landscape of

Figure 5.5 *Helmbrechts Walk, 1998–2003, Day 12*. Susan Silas. Image courtesy of Susan Silas.

Figure 5.6 Helmbrechts Walk, 1998–2003. Epilogue. Susan Silas. Image courtesy of Susan Silas.

trauma and through her imaginative employment of contemporary traumas to connect the two geographically distant but emotionally connected temporal zones. No wonder the effects of *Helmbrechts Walk* remain undecidable. But what we learn by witnessing this artist's intervention is that the horrific, unimaginable experience of these forced marchers has not been forgotten, even if the landscape through which they moved continues to bear unstable witness to their traumatic experience.

6 Collier Schorr
Reenacting Nazis

> Photographs can capture the shrapnel of traumatic time.
>
> —Ulrich Baer

> The wilderness is thus a deliberate sign for human absence, and it aspires, however paradoxically, to be a landscape without a witness.
>
> —Jonathan Bordo

Young, handsome, German men posing, often against a lush German landscape some sixty years after the end of World War II in Nazi uniforms.[1] What do these photos perform? How do we read them? And how do we contextualize them both within Collier Schorr's other work and within the landscape of Holocaust postmemory? This work produces curious results and forces the viewer to confront his or her own position vis-à-vis the enduring presence of the past within the present; for the images appear as though, in Schorr's words, a "soldier rose up [from the landscape] with that helmet," as though the past were still visibly with us. Schorr describes the thickly embedded palimpsest of the current German topography as "filled with relics and memories. So many things are buried in the landscape in Germany" that, for Schorr, "the landscape feels so loaded" (*art:21*). Concurrently with the Nazi images, Schorr had been working on a text that rewrites the American painter Andrew Wyeth's Helga series. In that context Wyeth had declared, "I've had people say, why paint American landscapes? There's no depth in it—you have got to go to Europe before you can get any depth. To me that's inane. If you want something profound, the American countryside is exactly the place" (Wilmerding 90).

My interpretation of Schorr's work has colored over time. When I first encountered Schorr's faux Nazis I was put off by them, finding them fashionable to a fault and provocative for the sake of being provocative, yet not able to offer substantial reflections on enduring questions of how we approach memories of trauma. Within the context of Schorr's other work these photographs now feel like explorations of what is embedded in the history of people born roughly in the 1980s and growing up in the German landscape. Through triangulation with Schorr's reimaging of Wyeth's Helga series, the post-Nazi portraits read as making material the haunting that these young men no doubt experience. The images with all their gravitas serve as meditations on the phenomenology of being German and

male in this space and time. Schorr's photographs perhaps problematically resonate with Sybille Knauss's literary imagination of what a young Nazi felt during the war (see Chapter 2) and implicitly with the general ethos of the films that I discuss under the rubric of "the year of the good Nazi" (see Chapter 9). But they also, and in a different vein, resonate with Lee Miller's raw images of actual, often dead, defeated Nazis that betray an immediacy that could only have been captured while embroiled in the immediate aftermath of the war. Susan Silas's images from the late 1990s (see Chapter 5) preserve something of the sacred about the landscape where the death march occurred but are clearly mediated by the photographer's strong sense that the traces she seeks have been physically, if not emotionally, eroded by time. Schorr, in the early part of the new century, refigures the landscape and inserts into it reenactors, young German men no doubt well educated in Holocaust history yet dressed in Nazi uniforms. It is as though a distorted mirror transformed the Obersalzberg as the scene of Nazi politics, of fiction, and then an overlaid commercial space (see Part One). The reflection in Schorr's photographs similarly demonstrates what particular path the march of time takes—from the engaged present to a reflective and mediated space, to a contemporary troubling of the past. Schorr is relatively young, part of a generation of artists who are chronologically and emotionally distanced from the era and thus feel free to engage with the past through aesthetic choices that may have previously seemed taboo.

Collier Schorr was born in New York City in 1963 and currently splits her time between Brooklyn and Schwäbisch Gmünd, Germany. Like Berchtesgaden, Schwäbisch Gmünd housed the U.S. Army—although in this case the 56th Field Artillery Brigade from 1963 until 1991, and not, as was the case in Berchtesgaden, an Army Recreation Center. In both locations, though, the U.S. Army's presence begs the question of the differences between militarizations. Because Schorr's art consistently revolves around gender and its malleability, military culture provides a fitting location for her explorations.[2] Her work also implicitly explores whiteness. In commenting on Inez van Lamsweerde's compelling, strange, constructed portraits, Schorr noted, "It cannot be a coincidence that all of Van Lamsweerde's models appear 'Aryan.' How permissible is it for white artists to comment on the oppressiveness of the white esthetic? Unfortunately, not very" ("Inez" 214). And of her own work Schorr said, "I had been uncomfortable for some time by the whiteness in my work, the whiteness in the majority of white photographer's work, but unsure how to insert this dilemma in what has been very autobiographical" (*Freeway* 9).[3] Indeed, the evocation of "Nazi" soldiers demands that the models be white; but one cannot say this of models dressed in U.S. uniform. Earlier I discussed an image of Lee Miller's of an American soldier overseeing the forced witnessing of Buchenwald. The black soldier stands in the foreground, insisting on a witnessing of an historical trauma that will become later highly politicized and often cast as a struggle between the

Jewish trauma of the Holocaust and the black traumas of racism and slavery.[4] Keenly aware of these tensions, Schorr notes that during the Vietnam War, "The real American melting pot spilled overseas, where whites from Astoria, raised to be racists, were sitting in mess tents with Southern blacks" (*Freeway* 14). Whitness, then, appears in the "Nazi" images against an obviously highly charged context of race and its troubling hierarchizations.

Schorr's other works include *Wrestlers Love America* (2004), a series of photographs of male wrestlers captured in poses of defeat, frustration, victory, or erotic charge, *Jens F./Helga* (2005), a scrapbook reproducing Wyeth's paintings and substituting a male model posed in the garb and postures of the painter's female muse. In 2007, and as a testament to her growing status as a photographer, her arresting images of cowboys were commissioned by and featured in the *New York Times Magazine* to illustrate an essay about jeans ("Branded"). She has recently published a memorial, almost a *Yizker* book to "Astoria Chas," a drag racer from her childhood Queens neighborhood who lost his life as a soldier in the Vietnam War (*There I Was*).[5] Schorr has also written many articles (in *frieze* and elsewhere) and introductions about fellow artists, including Jannis Kounellis, Lukas Duwenhögger, Bas Jan Ader, Boris Mikhailov, Liza May Post, Laurie Simmons, Inez van Lamsweerde, and James Turrell. She occasionally curates; one of her most interesting projects, *Freeway Balconies*, exhibited at Deutsche Guggenheim in 2008.

While the art market seeks Schorr's work, and critics often highly regard it, reviews are nonetheless varied. Massimiliano Gioni gushes that Schorr's images are "sacred" and that their "beauty is never polished: it's rather genuine, almost naïve." Ken Johnson, on the other hand, finds the *Forests and Fields* series "disappointing" and complains that "pat conceptualism mixes with the airless look of fashion photography" (E32). Gilda Williams notes that "Schorr's pictures are sculptural, emotionally charged," and Eleanor Heartney argues of *Forests and Fields*, "The echoes of Nazi propaganda art remind us that the work of artists acceptable to the Third Reich was effective in part because it appealed to a basic human longing for innocence and simplicity" (148).[6] Rhonda Lieberman quipped, "we don't want to be victim-identified here, but must we go the extra mile and embrace our inner Nazi?" Leslie Camhi echoes this sentiment when she wonders whether it was "worth breaching this particular taboo [against Nazi imagery] for what seemed a private fantasy?"[7] These remarks rightly address the problematic nature of Schorr's project. By breaking taboos against Nazis, by posing beautiful young men against gorgeous German landscapes, does she fetishize fascist ideals? Or deconstruct them? Both, perhaps?

The results of Schorr's projects are that, through questioning gender, she also examines the viewers' investments in certain ways of knowing and ways of seeing. The *Forests and Fields* series, insofar as it explores masculinity, shares a reflection on gender with Schorr's other work, but specifically focuses on the intersections of landscape and memory in Germany today.[8] Schorr would thus agree with Dianne Harris's argument: "Landscapes and

the artifacts related to them shape history; they are active agents in the formation of culture" (2), for Schorr expects the landscapes that frame her portraits to become active agents. Schorr notes, "If gender contradictions were the focus in the late eighties, presently it is about how the character moves, not what their make-up is. I'm more interested in national than sexual identity, particularly in the case of Germans and Jews" (Schorr et al., "Contemporary Feminism" 26). Arguably Schorr's photographs compel because they analyze gender and national identity simultaneously. Indeed, the combination of *Jens F.* and the *Forests and Fields* series yields a complex reflection on how gender and national identity work through and within one another.

The *Forests and Fields* series, including photographs of young German men posing in Nazi and Wehrmacht uniforms framed against beautiful German landscapes, issued its first volume, *Neighbors/Nachbarn*, in November 2006; the second volume, *Blumen*, is expected in March 2010. While at the time of writing *Blumen* had not yet appeared, it seems that this second volume eschews portraiture in favor of still life; flora in place of politicized human imagery. The very title of the first volume, offered in both English and German, reminds us of both the succor and betrayal that occurred between German neighbors during the war and also what may have happened between East German neighbors during the Stasi era when citizens were forced to look over their shoulders. The first frame in the collection, of a picket fence, announces the precarious nature of the relations among neighbors by presenting a close-up of an unpainted, unstable fence. This fence notwithstanding, almost all the images in *Neighbors* are portraits, some of them in landscapes. Schorr spent a great deal of time in the company of the families whose young men and women became the models in various uniforms and guises; some of them are her German girlfriend's nephews, and many of the other models are friends, often scouted by family members as interesting faces for Schorr's lens. Some photographs feature young men in United States G.I. uniforms (occasionally holding an oversized U.S. flag) that are popularly sold for a song at flea markets across Germany. Reminding us of the Field Artillery Brigade stationed in Schwäbisch Gmünd, it is nonetheless quite a different project to imagine early twenty-first-century German youth in American uniforms or to see them bearing the all-too-familiar Swastikas and other insignia of Nazi uniforms. Because these are still illegal in Germany, her models were anxious about being photographed wearing replicas of Nazi outfits.[9] According to Schorr, the images of young men in Nazi uniforms emerged from her observations of the stereotypically young male preoccupation with war games rather than from a long-range plan to capture them in Nazi garb:

> The first soldier pictures I took were of Herbert and his friends. They all collected army stuff and they would go on campouts, play army, and raid each other's bunks. I was really surprised to find that all the

> army stuff was American and that they were dressing up as Americans, in a territory that was in fact occupied by American soldiers. So my first pictures were really to put them in their German landscape and have them play out this occupation that I was watching from afar. (*art:21* [text] 102)

By stressing the word "occupation" here Schorr no doubt self-consciously conjures up Anselm Kiefer's *Occupations* series wherein the German artist posed in the *Sieg Heil* gesture against various imperialist statues thus begging the question of the difference between Nazi and other European imperialisms (on Kiefer see Kaplan, *Unwanted Beauty*). So in a sort of reversal of Kiefer's occupying imperialist space—and Schorr demonstrates her familiarity with Kiefer by citing his work explicitly in *Jens F.* and elsewhere—the German men occupy their own hometown, initially taking on the garb of the American occupiers.

Germans wearing U.S. military uniforms at play offers an interesting intertext to Schorr's *There I Was* (2008), a mournful book about "Astoria Chas," a young drag racer, profiled by Schorr's father in car-racing magazines. *There I Was* represents a departure for Schorr because it combines sketches with photography to evoke something of the life of this young man who was killed in Vietnam in the late 1960s. Two of his friends remembered, "No one wanted to go [to Vietnam], but if you were from Astoria, you just plain went. Joan Baez wasn't playing on the local juke box" (qtd. in *There*). This memorial book makes explicit the links between sports and military cultures by representing Chas's motion from one to the other and by juxtaposing the profiles of racers with those of soldiers. But whereas the young Germans play at being American, Schorr's text about Chas exhibits a dense and mournful sensibility for an actual victim of war.

Whereas Schorr framed most of her constructed soldiers against the landscape, *Relic* (2003) features a young man in Nazi uniform in a spare garage. His shadow stands out crisply behind him and his expression remains unfocused. The presence of contemporary items including a light fixture, paint cans, and a stack of tires make it clear that the image was not taken during the war. While the portraits framed against the natural surrounds have a timeless quality this portrait highlights its status as a construction. Despite his well-polished boots and crisp uniform the "Nazi" is lost, alone, out of place, and out of time, fortunately an irrecoverable relic. Two interesting intertexts for Schorr's fabricated "Nazi" images are Christian Boltanski's *Sans Souci* (1991), which collects archival images of Nazis at play, and the archival footage of Nazis culled by Paul Garson in his *Album of the Damned* (2008).[10] A photograph from *Album of the Damned* of an SS man staring straight into the camera bears the caption: "Waffen-SS Man—A member of the Waffen-SS seems to glare unhappily at the camera" (222). The garb, pose, and facial expression of this actual Nazi bear a striking resemblance to the character being played in Schorr's

Relic. Both figures stand with their hands behind their backs, their helmets over their ears, and their faces set in grim determination. Looking at these photographs juxtaposed forces us to question the limits of what can be read in an image. The real Nazi whose image Garson has reproduced would no doubt have been intimate with violence; the young man posing as a Nazi in a garage is most likely innocent of violence on a wartime scale. And yet their expressions look so similar that we question the difference between authenticity and reproduction, history and spectacle.

According to Schorr, the process of capturing these men dressed as Nazis had to do with her wanting to see from the other, non-Jewish side of the German landscape: "Germany has such a hold when you're a Jew and you walk around in Germany. . . . I always saw it from the side of the Jew who felt victimized, or the Jew who felt oppressed. And I was very comfortable in that role for many years. But being in Germany for a longer amount of time, my experience changed and my relationship changed to the country. And my curiosity about what it was like from the other side opened me up" (*art:21* [film]). In another context she noted that *Forest and Fields* was a way for her to "separate being Jewish from the Holocaust," and she claimed that it was "healing" to reflect on the Holocaust through a German point of view ("Interview" *Harvard* 3). While when we see Lee Miller in Hitler's bathtub (see Figure 4.1) we may experience a shock when we realize that the photograph was taken very close to the time of the dictator's death, the authenticity of the image cannot be denied. But it is also highly constructed, framed, and thus transformed. The camera can appear to change time.

Precisely because the figures in Schorr's work are often framed against the natural landscape, and heightened by the fact that many of them were shot in black and white, they exhibit a timeless quality that makes it hard to determine whether these are current or wartime images, whether they embrace or critique the beautiful Nazi soldier. Maiken Umbach has argued that "the postmodern preoccupation with memory inspired a new approach to the problem of the passage of time itself . . . [in which time itself became] the medium of subjective experience" (26). And of course it cannot be stressed enough that photography itself is often seen as a medium particularly prone to wide political application. As Richard Bolton summarizes:

> It seems that wherever we look in photography, we find contradictory impulses and opposing aims. The wide range of photographic applications raises the possibility that photography has no governing characteristics at all save adaptability. Here is a medium that has been used repressively (e.g. police photography), honorifically (portrait photography), as a means of contest and revolution (in constructivism and dada), as a marketing device (advertising photography), and as a means of both liberal governmental reform (as in the photography of the Farm Security Administration). Certain practices preserve the status quo and others strive to overthrow it; it is possible to find in

> the medium contributions to both the domination and the liberation of social life. (xi)

While one might make the same claims for painting, literature, sculpture, etc., interestingly critics often single out photography as one of the most politically flexible media even though it has the potential to reflect reality accurately.

In discussing the particular relationship between time and photography, Ulrich Baer argues that photographs "confront us with the possibility that time consists of singular bursts and explosions and that the continuity of time-as-river is another myth. . . . The suddenness of the punctuating flashbulb is always coupled with an equally strong emphasis on that instant's pastness" (*Spectral* 7). Similarly, in her blurring of time zones, Schorr achieves both the unnerving sense that the Nazis are still embedded in the contemporary German landscape and the realization that Nazi soldiers were, to use Christopher Browning's phrase, "ordinary men." Indeed, Schorr maintains that the "soldier" appears as "just a guy who fought, just a guy who died. Just a guy who killed someone" (*art:21* [film]); she also claims that she does not want to turn the series into a "gigantic mourning session" ("Interview" *Harvard* 3). The aggressive masculinity we might associate with many photographs of soldiers (whether real or posed) is absent from the *Forests and Fields* series. Indeed, the boys have, as did the model in *Relic*, a somewhat bewildered expression. In these images "soldiers" stand or recline in clearings in the woods wearing distant, lost expressions, as though unsure of what brings them to this tainted, memory-drenched forest. In one untitled photograph a reclining "soldier" casually fondles a rifle, as if more concerned with a point in the dreamy distance than with the technology of war. Behind him ripe fruit trees represent the landscape as a fertile space far from war. In another, similar photo the sun emerging over the trees lends the image an eerie religiosity. The sense of distanciation in these pictures results no doubt quite simply from the fact that the boys are not Wehrmacht soldiers and that even their fathers were born after the war; their grandfathers may have served in the Third Reich's army but the models would be keenly aware of the Nazi genocide not as victims or culprits but as products of the contemporary German pedagogical system that rigorously educates its students about the perils and legacies of the Holocaust.

When Schorr poses these models in the woods she self-consciously comments on German fascism's fascination with the forest; as she notes, "I was interested in the tradition of photographing the landscape, and finding a way to insert more tension into it. . . . If the tree, if the forest is the pride of Germany. . . . I wanted to bring to the surface a lot of what made it so important. What made it so important was the violence" (*art:21* [film]). By inserting her models into a German landscape riddled with traumatic memory, Schorr recoups the fascist tainting of the landscape tradition and appropriates it for a Jewish, antifascist sensibility.

Schorr implicitly explores this violence from the American and German "sides" of the war by posing her models in uniforms from both countries. In *Apples and Gun* (2004) the same model who had donned Wehrmacht garb sits peacefully under a tree, dappled in the shadow of its leaves, "U.S." visible on his shoulder strap over his bare chest. As an accent to his at oneness with the natural surrounds, some of the apples from the tree are gathered in his helmet. But neither the gun nor the apples hold the "soldier's" interest. Aloof from war as much as from the effort of collecting apples, the soldier stares fixedly away from these objects, away from the photographer

Figure 6.1 *Untitled*. Collier Schorr. Image courtesy of 303 Gallery.

and into a point in the distance. The focal point of the image does not, as in so many other Schorr portraits, pay his viewer any mind. As with the figure in Nazi uniform beneath another tree, the gun, the symbolic representative of the violence of war, appears almost incidental to the peace of being in the landscape.

In *Helmet Kindling and Deer Feed (Winter) Durlangen* (2000) Schorr combined still life with landscape and posed another helmet, overflowing with pinecones; but in this image a sparse tree stands sentinel behind the helmet. On the one hand, this photograph highlights the violence of the landscape because where in this curious still life/landscape mélange we might expect a peaceful image, the military presence of the helmet disrupts the calm; on the other hand, the helmet's use as an innocuous carrier of apples renders it nonviolent and peaceful. Thus, while the reminder of literal and metaphorical military memories in this piece puncture the screening of violence that the landscape might allow, the simultaneous mitigation of that recovered violence complicates this rupture. Whereas the trees in the previous two images, of a "Nazi" and a U.S. "soldier," are lush and ripe with fruit, the tree in *Helmet Kindling* does not seem capable of producing the lavish spread of apples that lie below it.

Figure 6.2 Helnet Kindling and Deer Feed (Winter) Durlangen, 2000. Collier Schorr. Image courtesy of 303 Gallery.

Jens F. resonates richly with the *Forests and Fields* series; Schorr placed a model named Jens F. in many of the poses represented in Wyeth's notorious Helga paintings. Although Wyeth was still alive when *Jens F.* was published I have not been able to find any response he may well have had to Schorr's occupation. Wyeth is an interesting choice on Schorr's part not least because she is so quintessentially cool and Wyeth so quintessentially uncool. Schorr seems to have taken up an interest in uncool art. She wrote, for example, *The Essential Norman Rockwell* (1999), in which she notes that it is not "cool for 'true' art lovers to show enthusiasm for Norman Rockwell" (14). Against the general tenor of academic writing that relegates Rockwell to the "ranks of low-end nostalgia" (15) Schorr finds that Rockwell was in fact "painting socially conscious themes with sublime sensitivity" (17). One of these socially conscious paintings, Rockwell's *Rosie the Riveter*, graced the cover of the *Saturday Evening Post* on 29 May 1943. In this painting Rosie takes a lunch break, her muscled arms holding a sandwich while her feet trample a copy of *Mein Kampf*. Rockwell's painting, in fact, puts into play the central themes of Schorr's work: gender and the Nazi regime. When Schorr, several years later, devoted her time to transforming Wyeth's Helga paintings, she was thus continuing her engagement with uncool painters whose work, like her cooler versions, touches on gender and national identity. In establishing the uncoolness of Wyeth's work, one unsympathetic critic argued that his paintings depict a "nostalgic, bucolic, sentimental past that never existed" (qtd. in Wilmerding 31). Adam Weinberg elaborates that "few artists have made the blood of so many critics boil as Andrew Wyeth" (15). But by transforming Wyeth's paintings of Helga into palimpsest collages that have something of the scrapbook about them, Schorr uses the source, this nostalgic, nonexistent past, to explore how a different past, the traumatic past of the Holocaust, embeds in the landscapes of our vision.

Wyeth (1917–2009), had established his reputation in 1948 with *Christina's World*, a haunting painting depicting a woman in a field striving seemingly impossibly toward a lonely cabin in the distance. In 1986 a huge stir erupted when a trove of upwards of 240 paintings were found of Helga Testorf, a German immigrant, the housekeeper of Wyeth's sister and helper for his neighbor Karl Kuerner. Between 1971 and 1986 Wyeth had been obsessively painting Helga—a secret that he elected to disclose to a reporter from *Art & Antiques* magazine (September 1985), which then led to Helga's portrait memorably gracing the cover of *Time* (18 August 1986). When asked why her husband might have painted these images Wyeth's wife, Betsy, to whom he had been married since 1940, famously offered the reason as "love." As a point of clarification Wyeth reported to *Time* that, rather than sexual love, what the word referred to was a "love of warmth, of finding something precious. It's like a wonderful animal, a dog that will come up and sit in your lap" (Corliss 57). Some of the Helga pictures, under the heading "With Nell," include images

of Helga, naked, with Wyeth's dog. As we will see in Chapter 9, J.M. Coetzee also puts a lot of stress on the word "love" in *Disgrace*—in that context to explain the main character's decision to kill dogs—dogs not unlike those in Wyeth's evocation perhaps. It makes sense that Schorr should have found Wyeth's Helga paintings a compelling place to begin an exploration of gender and German national memory. *Jens F.* stresses throughout that Wyeth's model, like Schorr's, was German. Helga Testorf was born in Prussia and emigrated to the U.S., working for another German émigré, Karl Kuerner. Before the media frenzy over the Helga portraits, Betsy Wyeth had written a book entitled *Wyeth at Kuerners* (1976) in which she describes Karl's emigration to Wyeth's hometown of Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania, in 1923 and his subsequently being able to bring over his wife and infant child. But according to Betsy Wyeth's account, Anna Kuerner thereafter lived in a depressed state of perpetual nostalgia for Germany. Andrew Wyeth painted Karl Kuerner, a World War I veteran, wearing his German helmet and great coat in a painting, *The German* (1975), that prefigures Schorr's *Relic* and the uncannily similar portrait in Garson's *Album*. As in this photograph, Wyeth's painting captures a soldier in a helmet wearing a cold and resigned expression. As Anne Knutson notes, Helga looked after Kuerner shortly after his portrait had been painted while he, "bedridden and dying, was hallucinating about his experiences fighting with the Germans in World War I" (61). Knutson continues, "Wyeth's enduring fascination with World War I battles and all things German fueled the intensity of his portrayals of Karl Kuerner" (69) and stresses that N.C. Wyeth, Andrew's father, an illustrator, collected detritus of the Great War including "helmets, a canteen, and a gas mask" (69). But Kuerner is an old man in *The German*, looking out over the snowy American landscape as though seeing therein scenes of battle from the Great War in Europe. Indeed, Betsy Wyeth describes Kuerner's time in Germany before and after the First World War through a series of photos that move from proud scenes of Kuerner on the eve of war to images when the "war is over and lost" (3) and Kuerner looks similarly over and lost. Thus the sensation of the discovery of the Helga photographs is backshadowed (in Michael André Bernstein's phrase) not only by Testorf's own emigration from Germany but by this story of nostalgia and loss that her fellow émigrés bore with them to Chadds Ford.

After the Wyeth secret was revealed Testorf generally shied away from publicity and declined to comment, even though she did appear clad in a snowy white gown topped by a tiara at the opening of a retrospective at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, "Andrew Wyeth: Memory and Magic" (29 March–16 July 2006). While the main thrust of Schorr's occupation of Wyeth is clearly an exploration of gender and its performativity, a powerful theme that runs throughout the entire work is how Holocaust postmemories haunt the landscapes of artistic vision. Indeed, *Jens F.* sheds light on the *Forests and Fields* series because it offers the backstory to Schorr's daring

portraits of young men in Nazi attire. *Jens F.*, by placing a young man in the space of a woman, calls attention to the performativity of gender. As Judith Butler notes, "To the extent that gender is an assignment, it is an assignment which is never quite carried out according to expectation, whose addressee never quite inhabits the ideal s/he is compelled to approximate" (*Bodies* 231). Indeed insofar as Jens's femininity is explored through comparison with Helga, the inverse is also true. *Jens F.* is a palimpsest: Schorr's images are pasted over reproductions of Wyeth's paintings and her handwritten notes accompany the visuals. Schorr uses the Helga paintings as they appeared in John Wilmerding's *Andrew Wyeth: The Helga Pictures* (1987) and the paginations in *Jens F.* as well as citations from Wyeth are taken from that text. Some prefigure the *Forests and Fields* series visually by consisting of Jens, wearing camouflage, naked torso, reclining in the forest, dappled light and shadow on his white chest. Others resonate with the more explicitly World War II–related *Forests* verbally. For example, below a photograph of Jens's sister, Lena, who resembles closely Helga's daughter, Carmen (who also posed for Wyeth), Schorr wrote "to look at Lena is to look at Helga and understand how representative of something supremely German she was. Wyeth was trying to conjure some German past" (56). Helga and Lena are both blonde, wearing braids, and looking diagonally across the image. The German landscape frames Lena whereas Helga's background in the painting remains indistinct. Lena looks from over her shoulder at the camera whereas Helga's diametrically opposed gaze looks as if its focus were inside the painting itself. In another compilation, Schorr covers the top of Helga's face with two portraits above the handwritten caption "with the Prussian he conjures up a dark teutonic history that he longs for" (72). Helga was Wyeth's secret, and the huge coverage the press afforded him upon the disclosure of this secret resonates with how Schorr materializes the repressed Nazi past by picturing young men sporting Nazi uniforms.

In another collage in *Jens F.* Schorr uses as the centerpiece a portrait of Helga, in her braids, with her back to the viewer and her gaze looking through a shadowy window; directly on top of as well as above and below the painting Schorr pasted images of Jens staring through a brightly lit window. The handwritten caption reveals that "the view from Herbert's room a sheep meadow. According to Jens it is where his grandfather buried his uniform after WW II" (85). This is particularly striking because, as we see in *Forests*, Herbert Molner poses as a Nazi in a uniform perhaps not dissimilar to that of his grandfather, buried in the German landscape like Wyeth's secret. Indeed, Wyeth literally "placed some watercolors in metal tubes and buried them" (Corliss 56) thus further intensifying the resonance between the buried Nazi past and the buried secret of Helga's portraits and all that they summon in terms of the haunting of Germans by German nostalgia and the American landscape by post–World War I and II émigrés. On another page of *Jens F.* four images of male models with their backs turned are haunted by a sketch of the back of Helga's braided head while

the caption explains, "I took a picture of an old truck . . . I could hear two people talking 'warum,' why is she taking that picture. I thought it was obvious seeing that there was a giant Mengele sign on the back end" (70). While Schorr does not reproduce the photo of the old truck, the sense that the Holocaust haunts consciousness in ways invisible to the local populace could not be more lucid.

Indeed, Schorr picked Jens because he bore a striking resemblance to Helga, but the means through which she introduces him are telling. The penultimate page of the text begins thusly: "I met Jens F. on a train. The train was old and hot and the cloth covered benches conjured restless thighs and cigarettes. I was reading Primo Levi's *Survival in Auschwitz*, which was my self-imposed punishment and seemed a fair compromise after reading Cynthia Ozick's essay 'Why I will never go to Germany.' Jens has reddish blond hair" (n. pag.). Holocaust narratives cut in two the story of Jens and Schorr's meeting. Reading Primo Levi on a train in Germany while scouting for a model to pose as Helga. The secrecy of Wyeth, quietly painting for years this German transplant to America, the secrecy of Herbert's grandfather, burying his Wehrmacht uniform in the ground, choosing to forget the Nazi past while an American comes to Germany and asks his grandson to put on a Nazi uniform and look beautiful against the German landscape.

With the resonance of the *Forest and Fields* series in mind, Helga conjures up the hidden, secretive pasts that Schorr found haunting the Germany she came to know so well. Whether or not Helga Testorf's family were avid Nazis, being born in the 1930s and emigrating to the U.S. sometime after the war, her family's German past would have been a sensitive subject for Wyeth's model. By posing Jens F. as Helga, Schorr underscores the sense of the merging of American and German stories in much the same way as both she and Wyeth blur the boundaries between landscape and portraiture. As Wilmerding notes of Wyeth, "His frequent wish to fuse figure and landscape is often achieved by a similarity of stroke and surface applied alternatively to field grasses, animal fur, and human skin and hair. . . . one also feels a certain subliminal association of vibrant human life with an earthy animal nature" (23). So the secrets double. The "sensational" secret of Wyeth's having painted Helga hundreds of times, Helga's obscured German past, meld into the American landscape.

People who live in formerly German-occupied Europe now are no doubt familiar with the sight of Jewish-American tourists, most likely in multigenerational clumps, visiting sites of prewar family life, ghettos, concentration camps. These "memory tourists," to use James Young's term, try to find in space something of memory—struggle to find from memories something of place. This often surreal and jarring exposure to quotidian daily life in the present confronting the wealth of traumatic memory encapsulates the necessary problematic between space and time. As Marianne Hirsch and Leo Spitzer's trip to Czernowitz with Marianne's parents in 1998 conveys,

while they listened again to familiar stories, they found that place changed memory: "On site, their memories gained relief, dimensionality, texture and color" ("Generations of Nostalgia" 271). They continue to record that "as we walked about this landscape of memory, the streets became animated with the presence of people from that past" ("Generations of Nostalgia" 271). But they also discovered that, in the face of place, "conflicting memories" ruptured the ossified narrative ("Generations of Nostalgia" 273). While they knew the stories their parents had told them, the space in which the stories were re- re-counted altered the outcome of the memory. Hirsch and Spitzer's journey, recounted in rich detail in their recent *Ghosts of Home* (2010), offers remarkable testimony to how being in the space of traumatic pasts opens up new memories, changes sedimented stories, and allows the dead to become visible, even if fleetingly, to the living. Hirsch and Spitzer's voyage to Czernowitz, while very different, shares with Schorr's and Silas's (see Chapter 5) fascinating projects the sense of return to a landscape lost to the past, the sense shared by both photographers—if with divergent valences—that something that is missing or lost is sought.

These photographic projects evoke questions. One might consider, for example, Silas's retracing of the steps of a death march in the context of other reenactments such as popular World War II rallies that are held today or the reenactors of the Civil War that Tony Horowitz so scrupulously studied in his widely read account, *Confederates in the Attic* (1998). In America, World War II reenactment has been steadily gaining popularity since 1975 and reenactments can draw twenty thousand participants and spectators (Smesler and Davies 224; Sokol 1). This "busy landscape of reenacting" draws adherents who adore German uniforms, and who often keep their reenacting activities secret lest anyone assume they are Nazi sympathizers; the word "reenactor" is sometimes anathema in those circles—"living historian" is often favored (Smesler and Davies 226–229). The World War II reenactors are generally keen to stress that they are interested in the experience of the common soldier, "we are not Nazi soldiers," one reenactor asserts. "We are portraying regular German soldiers" (qtd. in Sokol 2). Jenny Thompson observes that reenactors "are well aware of the criticism and even outrage they can evoke, especially in response to their portrayals of Nazis" (xv). The World War II "living historians" yearn to reverse the trend in popular culture toward focalizing this war around the Holocaust. One of the organizers of reenactment events stressed, "We leave the politics at home" (qtd. in Sokol 3) and Smesler and Davies note that "larger issues of morality [and] culpability" are also left at home (229). The fantasy in this culture of World War II reenacting is to have the war without the Holocaust; to restore the dignity of the "regular German soldier" whose image has obviously (and with good reason!) been sullied. I am not suggesting that Schorr's models reenact in the same way as these history buffs. But we can think of her project alongside reenactment and wonder if the artist too participates in a fantasy of a good Nazi.

Needless to say, huge differences separate the two kinds of association with the past: the modern World War II and Civil War reenactors are engaged in sport and they seek respite from ordinary lives through supposedly getting back to "simpler times." Consider the following description of Civil War reenactors (many of whom are also World War II reenactors) from Tony Horowitz: "They sought absolute fidelity to the 1860s: its homespun clothing, antique speech patterns, sparse diet and simple utensils. Adhered to properly, this fundamentalism produced a time-travel high, or what hardcores called a 'period rush'" (7). Silas's experience could only be described, in contrast to Horowitz's Civil War heroes, as a "period low," for it must have been very disturbing to replicate this immensely painful journey. As Edward Linenthal puts it, "reenactors seek imaginative entry into the heroic past, re-creating the total environment of the time of the battle" (5). Silas made no attempt to re-create the "total environment" of the past; on the contrary, she was at every step acutely aware of the abyss between past and present. Silas wanted to get a better sense of the terrain, wanted to see in order to empathize, and wanted to engage with the topography in a more intimate manner. As the daughter of survivors, the Holocaust has been indelibly woven into Silas's life and this retracing is more exploratory, more open, than the approach to the past of battle reenactors.

It might also be possible to see Silas's retracing of a death march and Schorr's posing of German men in Nazi uniform through the lens of what Gary Weissman calls "fantasies of witnessing." While Weissman is concerned in this engaging text about fantasies of being victimized, I wonder if something like a fantasy of being witness to persecution might be at play in what Schorr evokes. Arguing compellingly about empathic desires to understand the place of the victim, Weissman's text ends by turning to Benjamin Wilkomirski, the Swiss writer who published *Fragments* under the guise of a Holocaust testimony that ultimately was discovered to have been entirely fictional; Weissman uses Wilkomirski as an exemplar of a fantasy of witnessing (or, in this case, experiencing) the genocide.[11] But neither Silas's performance nor Schorr's project would adhere to the rubric of Weissman's fantasy of witnessing; through conjuring up contemporary mock Nazis from the landscape, Schorr imagines a repressed portion of history walking and breathing.

Rather than exhibiting a fantasy of perpetrating, Schorr can be seen as participating in a new, playful approach to the Holocaust. Chronologically if not emotionally distant from the Nazi genocide, a new generation of artists, writers, architects, and others explore the perpetrators with less trepidation and with less of a sense of taboo than earlier generations of artists; this irreverence was visible in the Jewish Museum New York's bold and controversial exhibit "Mirroring Evil" (2002) in which artists imagined being Eva Braun (and being intimate with Hitler), filled rooms with famous actors playing Nazis, and added Hitler mustaches to toys (see Kleeblatt). This irreverent approach is also visible in Maurizio Cattelan's *Him* (2001),

in which a boy-sized wax figure appears to be praying; as the gallery-goer enters the room from behind, there is a shock as she/he realizes that the face of the seeming-boy is that of a man-aged Hitler (see Bonami et al.). Schorr's work was included among a group of young Jewish artists at the inaugural exhibit at the recently redesigned Spertus Museum in Chicago. The exhibit's title, "The New Authentics: Artists of the Post-Jewish Generation," indicates a generational divide between traditional, authentic Jewishness (with the echo of Sartre's book-length meditation on authenticity and Jewishness in postwar France, *Réflexions sur la question juive*) and what comes after, post-Jewishness. Many of the artists in this important exhibition display an irreverent—sometimes wonderfully so—approach to Jewishness and the Holocaust. These examples represent a mere smattering of the many more legion irreverent post-Holocaust artworks being produced now. Schorr explores, in a performative, irreverent way, not the experience of the perpetrators but rather our twenty-first-century relationship to the perpetrators. We are surrounded by images of Nazis whether in films, newspapers, porn, high art, low art, everywhere. By exploring gender and national identities through her refashioning of Helga and Nazis Schorr encourages us to meditate on how the landscape of Holocaust postmemory morphs.

Part III

Burning Silence

The Uncanny Presence of the Holocaust in the Work of J.M. Coetzee

7 Life & Times

> He looked like someone out of Dachau.
>
> —*Life & Times of Michael K*

> I, as a person, as a personality, am overwhelmed . . . my thinking is thrown into confusion and helplessness, by the fact of suffering in the world, and not only human suffering.
>
> —J.M. Coetzee

This project moves from explorations of space, through photography, to literature haunted by genocide. Ranbir Kaleka's *Consider* (2007), a riveting installation piece commissioned by the Spertus Museum in Chicago as a Holocaust memorial, captures beautifully the landscape of Holocaust postmemory that this book sets out to describe. Through a layer of glass and across a long courtyard one watches a video screened behind a still painting of a girl in plaits; behind her still image films of her daily life in India focalized around doing her hair are broadcast. While daily life seemingly gaily proceeds, voices from different nations read out testimonies. It is surprising, dissonant, and utterly engrossing to find an Indian family and the landscape that surrounds them overlaid with this soundtrack of memories from Holocaust survivors. The film unnerves. Hair as its central metaphor becomes at once the quotidian practice of combing and arranging hair that many young girls perform and the industrial and disgusting use of hair during the Nazi genocide. While the argument of the film remains indeterminate—is Kaleka suggesting that trauma underlies all daily life?—the questions it raises resonate powerfully for the artist forcefully brings out the synergies of international responses to this European genocide.

I conclude *Landscapes* with a section on J.M. Coetzee because this South African author engages with the Holocaust to demonstrate subtly the workings of global complicity. I do not mean to imply that Coetzee prioritizes this European event over South African racism, but rather to argue that the rich resonance of the Nazi genocide throughout his oeuvre speaks volumes about the global nature of the landscape of Holocaust postmemory. As Kaleka's mesmerizing film exemplifies, the Holocaust has become a text, a shorthand for "the worst evil," a representative of the genocide that effectively applied modern industrial techniques for the mass production of ethnic cleansing. By implicitly comparing the colonial and then Nazi-inflected project of apartheid with the Holocaust while at the same time interrogating the difference between the slaughter of animals for consumption and the slaughter of people for ethnic cleansing, Coetzee's work offers an

important contribution to understanding how the aftereffects of the Nazi genocide fuel our understanding of trauma.

J.M. Coetzee has received many accolades, including the Booker Prize (1983, 1999), the Jerusalem Prize (1987), and the Nobel Prize in Literature (2003); he is ranked a Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres. He was born in Cape Town in 1940 to a British mother and Afrikaner father; in the 1960s he moved to England where, as he recounts in the second volume of his autobiography, *Youth* (2002), he was a miserable computer programmer reckoning with an internally ballooning but externally invisible literary spirit bucking against the soul-destroying world of IBM drones. Coetzee then studied English and Linguistics at the University of Texas, Austin, writing a dissertation in 1969 on Samuel Beckett.[1] He taught at SUNY Buffalo, Johns Hopkins, Harvard, and other U.S. institutions before returning to South Africa, where, in 1984, he became a professor of English Literature at the University of Cape Town. He has also been a Distinguished Service Professor in the Committee on Social Thought at the University of Chicago (where he spent the fall quarter each year). In 2002 he moved to Australia, where he continues to serve as an Honorary Visiting Research Fellow at the University of Adelaide. While maintaining what he calls a "perfectly reasonable dislike for public appearances and a perfectly justifiable distaste for media hype," Coetzee lectures widely and regularly contributes to the *New York Review of Books*, often on Jewish and/or Holocaust authors.[2]

Coetzee's works of fiction, literary criticism, and autobiography include *Dusklands* (1974), *In the Heart of the Country* (1977), *Waiting for the Barbarians* (1980), *Life & Times of Michael K* (1983), *Foe* (1986), *White Writing* (1988), *Age of Iron* (1990), *The Master of Petersburg* (1994), *Giving Offense* (1996), *Boyhood* (1997), *Disgrace* (1999), *The Lives of Animals* (1999), *Stranger Shores* (2001), *Youth* (2002), *Elizabeth Costello* (2003), *Slow Man* (2005), *Inner Workings* (2007), *Diary of a Bad Year* (2007), and *Summertime* (2009). Formally diverse, his novels play with the epistolary, the aphoristic, and other disjunctive forms. A bleak aesthetic in which the sentimental, the romantic, and the hopeful find no room characterizes his work. His central characters, whether men or, as is often the case, women, tend to be solitary types who have a great deal of trouble connecting in meaningful ways to other people. While sexual encounters are abundant in his work, most are loveless, mechanical, and increase rather than decrease loneliness. His characters almost always dream and these dreams carry significant weight in the novels. Paternity and maternity are equally characterized as highly problematic ventures, either in their presence or in their absence. A consistent fascination with the status of the storyteller and the always troubled relationship between the event and the story endures. A host of recurring themes and metaphors reappear with intense regularity; these include complicity, culpability, witnessing, isolation, iron, dust, ghosts, ashes, angels, shame, disgrace, memory, love, reconciliation, forgetting, and history. In addition to these themes a startling number of references to

both animals and fire/burning mark the texts and culminate in *Disgrace* wherein animals are incinerated after being mercifully killed to save them from a life of deprivation. The turmoil of apartheid and then postapartheid South Africa intensely interweaves with the inner turmoil suffered by Coetzee's characters, but the range of historical traumas explored includes colonialism, slavery, the emergence of communist Russia, totalitarianism, the Holocaust, the Vietnam War, and contemporary terrorism.

Coetzee's novels often interrogate the strains on kinship structures during traumatic historical upheavals and/or personal transformations. *Foe*'s Susan Barton searches the globe for her abducted daughter only to be presented with a false child and to then build kinship with a mute slave. *Life & Times of Michael K* tells the story of a son rescuing his mother from a death in oblivion despite the mother's rejection of him and abandonment to an orphanage. *Age of Iron*'s Mrs. Curren writes a novel-length letter, probably undelivered, to her daughter in America and, in the absence of blood kin, forms a bond with Verceuil, a homeless man who becomes her family. *Disgrace*'s David Lurie retreats to his daughter's farm in disgrace, fails to save her from a far graver, more violent disgrace, and ultimately finds kinship in the company of unwanted dogs. Set in 1869, *The Master of Petersburg* tells the story of a fictional Dostoyevsky and his search to locate the truth behind the death of his son, Pavel. *In the Heart of the Country* features violence and sexuality within the family drama that becomes the violence and sexuality of the colonial enterprise as Magda, possibly having murdered her father, rewrites kinship with those who served the feared patriarch she imagines burying. The magistrate in *Waiting for the Barbarians* makes kin with a "barbarian" who had been tortured but who he then painstakingly and sensually returns to health. Rewritings of kinship structures when blood kin fail are legion in Coetzee's work.

In her riveting text on Sophocles's play *Antigone*, which ends up being largely a discussion of structures of kinship, Judith Butler argues:

> Antigone represents not kinship in its ideal form but its deformation and displacement, one that puts the reigning regimes of representation into crisis and raises the question of what the conditions of intelligibility could have been that would have made her life possible, indeed, what sustaining web of relations makes our lives possible, those of us who confound kinship in the rearticulation of its terms? (24) [3]

All of the characters in the novels mentioned in the preceding exist within "sustaining web[s] of relations" that have altered their lives; these lives are not, to be sure, idealized in any way. But Coetzee's novels tell stories about how kinship in the "rearticulation of its terms" can be rewritten in evocative (in this case) literary ways that illuminate the restructuring of blood and skin—historically the most trenchant means of division and subjugation in South Africa and, indeed, everywhere.

Throughout the rich variety of Coetzee's novels' national and historical locations, from Russia to South Africa to America to Australia, and ranging from the eighteenth through the twenty-first centuries, his fiction has carefully depicted the landscape. The violent colonial excess carried out by Jacobus Coetzee against an alternately lush and dangerously dusty, forlorn, unexplored eighteenth-century landscape in his first novel, *Dusklands* (1974): "For years now we have attacked the earth, explicitly in the defoliation of crops and jungle, implicitly in aleatoric shelling and bombing. . . . Let us show the enemy that he stands naked in a dying landscape" (29). The melancholy, strangely beautiful landscape of the lonely veld in *In the Heart of the Country* (1977): "Is that why I have never left the farm, foreign to townslife, preferring to immerse myself in a landscape of symbol where simple passions can spin and fume around their own centres, in limitless space, in endless time, working out their own forms of damnation?" (12). The intense connection Michael K feels to the landscape of the Karoo in *Life & Times of Michael K* (1983): "In this flat landscape of scrub and stone there was nowhere one could hide" (45); "From horizon to horizon the landscape was empty" (46); "In the evening he was delirious again. He was trying to cross an arid landscape that tilted and threatened to tip him over its edge. He lay flat, dug his fingers into the earth, and felt himself swooping through darkness" (57). The combusting urban landscapes of Cape Town in *Age of Iron* (1990): "A child of the times, at home in this landscape of violence. . . . A landscape of scorched earth, blackened trees" (92). The conflicted pull of the landscape of the Karoo in *Summertime* (2009): "Isn't it beautiful. It touches one's soul, this landscape. . . . This landscape, this *kontrei*—it has taken over her heart" (129).

Coetzee's *White Writing* (1988) theorizes the interest in landscape manifest in his novels. Coetzee examines the transformation, within the European imaginary, of the South African landscape and the struggles that British landscape scholars such as William Burchell had defining the specificities of the South African landscape against the concepts of sublime, beautiful, and picturesque that had such currency in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century European discourse.[4] Benita Parry argues, interestingly, that the Coetzean landscapes are voided: "It is these connections between landscape and the legitimizing narrative of the white nation which the novels sever by ostentatiously failing to register any signs of splendour in the very scenery that has inspired rhapsody" (161).[5] However, while Coetzee *sometimes* depicts the landscape bleakly many instances can be found—including some examples cited earlier—where adoration, if not outright rhapsodic description, of the South African landscape more accurately reflects what is going on in these novels. The landscape itself is important to Coetzee within a South African context (see Loflin). But what becomes clear through reading his work is that this landscape, geographically distant from the landscapes of the Nazi genocide, is a space overlaid with Holocaust postmemory.

Diary of a Bad Year (2007) reflects on the Third Reich, World War II, and the Holocaust. The narrator claims at one point that in our sleep the state subjects us, its ubiquity means that we barely feel the hold it has on us, and the only way to opt out of the choices offered by the state is "the way of quietism, of willed obscurity, of inner emigration" (22). Although not quite using this word here (he uses it elsewhere in *Diary*), Coetzee expands on a theory of complicity that has always been a central theme in his work and that is forcefully focalized through his career-long interest in the Holocaust. In this recent work, Coetzee moves the discussion of complicity into the abstract, philosophical realm of state formation à la Hobbes, Machiavelli, La Boétie, and others. Before the emergence of this particular political/philosophical voice in his writing, though, Coetzee had been demonstrating and exposing—if not necessarily offering a hopeful solution to—the profound depth of our global complicities. Indeed, the appearances of the Holocaust in Coetzee's texts underscore the urgent need for us to recognize our own complicity in the evils of the world.

Coetzee's use of the Holocaust might be seen as an example of what Geoffrey Hartman terms the "longest shadow" of the reach of the event. Or in Susan Suleiman's words, it can be seen as an example of how "the Holocaust has become a template for collective memory in areas of the world that had nothing to do with those events but that have known other collective traumas" (*Crises* 2). This is not to say that Coetzee mobilizes a simple comparison between the two "collective traumas" of the apartheid era and the Nazi genocide; but rather, that finding the Holocaust so consistently in his work highlights the global nature of the landscape of Holocaust memory. This chapter discusses the uncanny hauntings by the Holocaust in *Life & Times of Michael K* (1983), a novel that explores what it means to refuse to partake in the violence inherent in repressive regimes. Chapter 8 examines *Foe* (1986), a novel about storytelling and unstable witnessing that obliquely evokes the Holocaust. Chapter 9 examines *Elizabeth Costello* (2003) and *Disgrace* (1999). The eponymous character in *Elizabeth Costello* voices her disapproval of the killing of animals by explicitly comparing them to the murder of people during the Nazi genocide. Arguably Coetzee's most noted novel, *Disgrace* explores how silence, complicity, crime, and murder work in the postapartheid era but also contemplates what it means to inherit traumatic legacies such as the Holocaust and apartheid. My readings of these novels are augmented by references to the frequent turns to both Jewish and Holocaust themes in all of Coetzee's work—of fiction, memoir, and literary criticism. This section, "Burning Silence," addresses a gap in the vast extant secondary literature on Coetzee because it tackles head on the many appearances—from oblique to outright—of the Holocaust in his oeuvre. Coetzee's commentators have generally overlooked the Holocaust as a central, if often implicit theme in his work. On occasion, scholars might note that Elizabeth Costello compares the killing of animals to the Nazi genocide; but the implications of this shocking comparison

are neither treated at length nor drawn out. Sometimes Coetzee's readers, especially in considering the treatment of animals in *Disgrace*, mention philosophers and writers who are Jewish, might even note their Holocaust experiences and the intersections they find between animals and the Holocaust, but still do not flesh out Coetzee's profound interest in the Holocaust and Jewishness.[6]

Why critics have generally been silent about this important aspect of his texts is manifold: first, most obviously, the bulk of scholars who read him do so from a postcolonial rather than a Jewish studies perspective and thus are perhaps not attuned to the overwhelming number of appearances of Jewish and Holocaust themes. Secondly, there are Holocaust references without a clear reason as to why this event figures so largely in Coetzee's oeuvre. Thirdly, there may well be a reticence to address directly the appearances of the Holocaust because there is a resistance to seeing the deep connection between this European event and racism in apartheid era South Africa. A larger cultural and political stake drives uncovering this particular set of allusions in Coetzee's oeuvre.

That the landscape of South Africa is overlaid with the landscape of Nazi genocide in Coetzee's work is not accidental for the early architects of apartheid spent a great deal of time learning from the Third Reich. As Allister Sparks, Patrick Furlong, Howard Simson, Annie Coombes, and many other historians of South Africa note, the designers of apartheid traveled to German universities and, upon their returns, imported fascist ideals into South African legislation.[7] The historical impression of Nazism on apartheid clarifies Coetzee's investments in Holocaust and Jewish themes. Sparks captures the sense of excitement felt by some Afrikaners as they experienced 1930s Hitlerian Germany: "From the humdrum remoteness of the South African veld [the Afrikaner intellectuals] were pitched into the dazzling power and excitement of great rallies and orations, a new idea on the rise that was maybe going to sweep the world and that was echoing the themes they felt deep in their own bosoms—the apocalyptic themes of national death and redemption" (148; see also Coombes 87). But Sparks also notes that the extent of the influence Nazi Germany had on apartheid has been, since the end of World War II, "heavily downplayed" (161) and only now fully comes to light. Sparks sums up this connection by noting that "the influence of Nazi Germany on the minds of those who fashioned apartheid was very great" (162). This influence extended not only into the mechanics of racist legislation, but also into the realm of the spectacular with many Afrikaner nationalists adopting a Nuremburg rally aesthetic (Sparks 171; Coombes 26). Not only did the German propaganda ministry appreciatively recognize their South African devotees (Sparks 172), but the influence may have worked in the other direction as well. During the South African War (1899–1902), for example, the British set up concentration camps for the many homeless Boer women and children who were displaced by the war. Helen Dampier notes, "By the end of the war, some

22,000 Boer children (particularly those under five) and 5,000 women had died in the camps" (203). While the "evidence" as to whether these concentration camps were models for the German concentration camps is under debate—Liz Stanley, for example, argues that there is no relationship (7)—there may be a connection between these camps and the camp depicted in *Life & Times of Michael K*. Susan VanZanten Gallagher notes: "The myth of Afrikaner suffering is even more clearly recast in the depiction of the relocation camp at Jakkalsdrif (jackals' ford)" (154). Gallagher goes on to compare sections from *Michael K* with eyewitness accounts from the Boer camps and concludes, "The implication of this part [i.e., his time in the camp] of Michael K's story is practically blasphemous to the Afrikaner mind" (155) because it equates the pain endured by the homeless and outcast with the "holy suffering of the Boer women and children at the hands of the cruel British administrators" (156). The Boer camps resonate with the concentration camps of the Third Reich yet in transforming the sufferers in the camps from Boers to homeless (in Michael K's case "coloured" homeless to boot) Coetzee in effect transforms victims into perpetrators. The debates about the historical influence of the Boer camps on the concentration camps aside, the influence of German fascism on apartheid has been firmly established, and comparisons in many registers between apartheid and the Third Reich abound. Coetzee compares them in an essay on torture in South African writing where he notes:

> The Nuremberg trials and, later, the trial of Adolf Eichmann in Jerusalem presented us with a paradox in morality: a stupefying disproportion between the pygmy stature of the men on trial and the enormity of the crimes they had committed. Hints of the same paradox have surfaced at the two inquests in South Africa (those on Steve Biko and Neil Aggett) at which members of the security police have briefly emerged from their native darkness into the public gaze. (*Doubling* 364)

In juxtaposing the South African inquests with the Nazi trials at Nuremberg (1946) and Jerusalem (1961), Coetzee implicitly compares the Nazi genocide with the apartheid regime, both "enormous" crimes.

In an essay on Coetzee in the context of the transition to the "new" South Africa, Vilashini Cooppan outlines the instability inherent in the transformation from the apartheid era into what has come next:

> If you listen enough times, as all South Africans who lived through 1990s did, to the phrase "the 'new' South Africa," you cannot help but hear in it a deep and abiding anxiety, a rhetorical disavowal of the unspoken yet ubiquitous presence of the old. Perhaps we may speak then of "postapartheid" in a similar sense to that in which we speak of "postcolonial" or "postnational," that is, advisedly and with reservation, ever aware of the difficulties and ironies of a prefixed "post"

> that prematurely announces the passing of a system of domination that actually remains, albeit in residual, reconfigured forms. (348)

Cooppan synthesizes the intractability of the de jure end of apartheid.

Since the collapse of the apartheid regime, many theorists who treat the commemorative practices of postapartheid South Africa stress the commonalities between these modes of commemoration and global efforts to commemorate the Holocaust. For example, in *History after Apartheid* Coombes notes, "a relationship between the twin atrocities of the Holocaust and apartheid was flagged early on in the contest over public memory in South Africa" (86). John Banville observes that "Coetzee's claim on despair is impeccable: South Africa, after all, where he was born and lives and writes, was until very recently [Banville wrote this in 1997] a working, indeed thriving, model of Hitler's Germany" ("Life" 24). Coetzee implicitly compares second-generation guilt of white South Africans with the guilt of the German second generation in *Diary of a Bad Year*, where his main character, Señor C, notes: "The generation of white South Africans to which I belong, and the next generation, and perhaps the generations after that too, will go bowed under the shame of the crimes that were committed in their name" (44). A few pages later Coetzee's character reflects upon the shamelessness of the Bush administration and also the struggle with the shameful past suffered by second-generation Germans:

> In the outrages he and his servants perform, notably the outrage of torture, and in his hubristic claim to be above the law, the younger Bush challenges the gods, and by the very shamelessness of that challenge ensures that the gods will visit punishment upon the children and grandchildren of his house.
>
> The case is not unique, even in our times. Young Germans protest, *We have no blood on our hands, so why are we looked on as racists and murderers?* The answer: *Because you have the misfortune to be the grandchildren of your grandparents; because you carry a curse.* (50; italics in original)

Señor C links the shame of the second-generation white inheritors of the legacy of apartheid with second-generation Germans struggling with the legacy of the Nazi genocide and the shocking shamelessness of the former Bush administration. Unsurprisingly, given the influence of Nazism on apartheid and the apt comparisons among atrocities, Coetzee evinces a profound interest in Holocaust themes.

Coetzee's sustained interest in the Holocaust (and there are references in virtually all of his novels to the Holocaust) implicitly reflects on the historical proximity of German fascism and the apartheid mentality and also registers his recognition that, like postwar Germany, South Africa would have to reckon with the intractable legacy of apartheid, and was already

grappling with the disturbing and violent history of colonialism in which Coetzee, as a Boer descendant, saw himself figured. Coetzee has consistently quoted, echoed, remembered, and referred to Jewish writers, including Kafka, Benjamin, Derrida, Freud, and perhaps most importantly the survivor and Holocaust poet Paul Celan.[8] Coetzee makes frequent reference to other canonical Western writers, and, in discussing his immersion in and turns toward the Western literary tradition, David Attwell notes that Coetzee's "relationship with the European canon entails an accusation of complicity in a history of domination" (*J.M. Coetzee* 4).[9] Like white South Africans, European Jewish writers bear an uncomfortable relationship both to canonicity and to the Western subject when conceived as Christian. Indeed, the diasporic and displacement themes so prevalent in much Jewish writing might well have informed a writer living in a country divided by racial tension and unable to reconcile the historical legacies of colonialism and then apartheid with this "complicity in a history of domination."

Speaking of himself in the third person, Coetzee describes this sense of alienation:

> A sense of being alien goes far back in his memories. But to certain intensifications of that sense I, writing in 1991, can put a date. His years in rural Worcester (1948–1951) as a child from Afrikaans background attending English-medium classes, at a time of raging Afrikaner nationalism, a time when laws were being concocted to prevent people of Afrikaans descent from bringing up their children to speak English, provoke in him uneasy dreams of being hunted down and accused; by the age of twelve he has a well-developed sense of social marginality. (*Doubling* 393)

This alienation and sense of social marginality resonates profoundly with the experience of many Jewish writers. Alienated either by diasporic dislocation, religious minority status, outright anti-Semitism, or for a host of other reasons, this writing from the margins echoes much Jewish experience. Coetzee continues to explain:

> Sympathetic to the human concerns of the left, he is alienated, when the crunch comes, by its language—by all political language, in fact. As far back as he can see he has been ill at ease with language that lays down the law, that is not provisional, that does not as one of its habitual motions glance back skeptically at its premises. Masses of people wake in him something close to panic. He cannot or will not, cannot and will not, join, shout, sing: his throat tenses up, he revolts. (*Doubling* 394)

In these remarks, uttered in conversation with Attwell, Coetzee conjures up the image of Nazi mass rallies but also the image of leftist mass movements and again describes his alienation from the crowd (I cannot help being reminded of Pound's "faces in the crowd, petals on a wet black bough" with all of its

ironies given Pound's problematic political proclivities). Kafka's quintessential figure of alienation is the transformation into a bug and it is no accident that alienation and the animal are thought together in Coetzee's writing.

The figure of the animal in Coetzee's work is not only crucial for understanding his texts but is also centrally involved in his returns to the Holocaust. It was precisely the animalization of the Jew that psychologically enabled the Nazi regime to perpetrate genocide. Goebbels, on his visit to the Lodz ghetto: "Those are no longer human beings. They are animals" (qtd. in Kershaw, *Nemesis* 249). Höss, on Russian prisoners of war: "They were no longer men, they'd turned into beasts" (qtd. in Todorov 160). As Roth and Berenbaum summarize: "German propaganda described Jews as parasites, vermin, beasts of prey—in a word, subhuman" (xvii). Legions of Holocaust historians have demonstrated that by consistently designating Jews and other victims as animals, the Nazi regime rationalized murder.[10] The perpetrators "saw"—chose willfully to see—their victims as animals fit for slaughter. Thus Coetzee's consistent return to the figure of the animal is part of his investment in the Holocaust and its attendant questions of alienation, silence, complicity, and guilt.

Before turning to *Life & Times of Michael K* (1983) I look briefly at some of Coetzee's earlier turns to Holocaust stories to grapple with the question of complicity and the difference between animal and human. Coetzee's first novel, *Dusklands* (1974), for example, contains some striking references. *Dusklands* is a novel in two distinct and seemingly unconnected parts: part one details the story of Eugene Dawn, a thirty-three-year-old American "mythographer" and military historian living in California and working on a project about the Vietnam War for one "Coetzee" of whom he thinks none too highly. Although the character shares the name with the author, other resemblances remain scant. For example, the fictional Coetzee is described as "a hearty man, the kind that eats steak daily" (2) whereas the author Coetzee is a tall, slender vegetarian. Eugene Dawn details abducting and then nearly fatally stabbing his own son Martin via first-person narration. Eugene recounts both the Vietnam project and his growing doubts about his wife, a former swimsuit model he suspects of cheating on him, although the one time he tries to catch her in the act he only succeeds in finding her reading a magazine. Eugene ends up in a mental institution where, while using a slightly different vocabulary, the doctors determine that he suffers from secondary post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) brought on by his intimate knowledge of military matters.

In describing the returnees from interrogations in Vietnam, Coetzee's description is rich enough to encompass other traumas, including the Holocaust:

> They are ghosts or absences of themselves: where they had once been is now only a black hole through which they have been sucked . . . Their memory is numb . . . They know only that there was a rupture in time, in space. . . . These poisoned bodies, mad floating people of the camps

> . . . like everything else, they withered before us. We bathed them in seas of fire, praying for a miracle. In the heart of the flame their bodies glowed with heavenly light; in our ears their voices rang; but when the fire died they were only ash. We lined them up in ditches. (17)

In one sense this could be anywhere, be about anything, but in another sense these words, appearing as they do in a novel not about the Holocaust but about other traumas, other massacres, other guilt, evokes Holocaust themes through the "mad floating people of the camps" the burning bodies, the ditches. This moment in *Dusklands* inaugurates what will become a central theme for Coetzee: fire. Burning takes on a vast array of complex and varied valences in his work. Like Elizabeth Costello, Mrs. Curren, and David Lurie, Eugene Dawn is a character who is on fire: "He [i.e., the fictional "Coetzee" of *Dusklands*] cannot understand a man who experiences himself as an envelope holding his body-parts together while inside it he burns and burns" (32).[11]

The second part of *Dusklands* details the gory adventures of a Boer colonizer penetrating the little-explored (by Europeans) Hottentot areas north of Cape Town in 1760. Coetzee indicates his part in the legacy of colonialism by naming the colonizer Jacobus Coetzee. Like the first part of the novel, "The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee" is narrated in the first person, once again making us uncomfortable by forcing us to share our perspective with a violent man who takes pleasure in murdering Hottentots and who condones the rape of young Hottentot girls. In *Dusklands* Coetzee argues that violence reproduces—whether through the legacies of generations or through an immersion that can then only subsequently self-perpetuate. This novel anticipates the discussion in *Elizabeth Costello*, some thirty years later, about the effects of the examination of evil. In the early part of the novel, before we know that Eugene will stab his five-year-old son, we are told that his wife and her friends "believe that everyone who approaches the innermost mechanism of the war suffers a vision of horror which depraves him utterly" (10). This turns out to be the case.

Coetzee's second novel, *In the Heart of the Country* (1977), recounts an incredible, grim family drama and gestures toward the Nazi genocide obliquely but in ways that prefigure some of the central concerns of Coetzee's subsequent work. The main character, Magda, a self-described spinster referred to until almost the end of the novel merely as "Miss," lives in the lonely veld with her unyielding father. Narrated in the first person and presented in 266 numbered sections that vary greatly in length, the narrative is written and then rewritten several times so we never quite know what "really" (within the context of the fiction) happened or what Magda invents. For example, early in the novel she tells us she gruesomely murdered her father and stepmother; later she possibly murders her father; by the close of the novel her aged and decaying father likely outlives his daughter. We never know which of the last two possibilities can be taken

for "real" within the fiction. Coetzee has been consistently interested in the fictionality of his characters, in the way the author has endless reign over their actions and outcomes. This interest culminates in the suggestion, in Coetzee's *Slow Man* (2005), that the character Elizabeth Costello (who featured in both *The Lives of Animals* and the novel that carries many of the same speeches as that text, *Elizabeth Costello*) wrote the character Paul Rayment, that he is a figment of her (rather than of Coetzee's) imagination. But for the purposes of *In the Heart of the Country* it matters less what "actually" (fictionally) happened than that the violence and sexuality within the family drama reflects the violence and sexuality of the colonial enterprise. Coetzee's consistent refashioning of violent scenes offers a literary space for working through and magnifying the traumas inherent in repressive regimes at the familial and state levels.

Early in the novel the Nazi regime surfaces in a comparison between Nazi and colonial violence:

> A mind mad enough for parricide and pseudo-matricide and who knows what other atrocities can surely encompass an epileptic Führer and the march of a band of overweening serfs on a country town from whose silver roofs the sunfire winks and from whose windows they are idly shot to pieces. They lie in the dust, sons and daughters of the Hottentots, flies crawl in their wounds, they are carted off and buried in a heap. (10)

Magda's reproach anticipates Coetzee's later turns to Freud's "Father, can't you see I'm burning?", which in turn, as I discuss in Chapter 9, can sometimes resonate with the guilt of survival. Magda: "My father pays no attention to my absence. To my father I have been an absence all my life. Therefore instead of being the womanly warmth at the heart of this house I have been a zero, null, a vacuum towards which all collapses inward, a turbulence, muffled, grey, like a chill draft eddying through the corridors, neglected, vengeful" (2). Instead of being warm, burning, noticed, even if too late, by the father, Magda finds herself "like a chill," the draft that extinguishes the flame. Then, "Wooed when we were little by our masterful fathers, we are bitter vestals, spoiled for life" (3). The OED definition of vestal includes, "virgin consecrated to [Roman goddess] Vesta, vowed to chastity, who shared charge of the sacred fire perpetually burning on the altar." Thus the image of the bitter burning virgin appears charged with eternally guarding a flame—the very flame that Magda feels her father's indifference denies her. Metaphors and "actual" instances of burning are everywhere in this novel, which could be read as one long plea, "Father, can't you see I'm burning?" Magda's untapped, unseen passions cause her the most anguish.

Magda's father, although never described this way, is the quintessential Boer farmer. Wearing big boots and manifesting an insatiable sexual

appetite that Magda credits with killing her mother (2), he stomps about the house bellowing at the servants and ignoring his daughter. The novel begins when this man brings home a second wife, instantly hated by Magda thereby inaugurating the Freudian family drama. But Magda imagines killing both of them, not just the stepmother. The family's long-toiling servant, Hendrik, also shortly thereafter brings home a new wife, a young, beautiful wife with whom the master (Magda's father) very soon begins an affair. Magda shoots her father, he dies (or at least we think he does) a slow, painful death, Magda buries him, Hendrik and Anna move into the big house, and Magda becomes Hendrik's "second woman," receiving from him nightly, pleasureless visits designed to subdue Magda and reverse power relations between white and black, mistress and servant.

Indeed, *In the Heart of the Country* is indebted to Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* (1807) for its numbered structure, for the dialectic between master and slave he so famously explored, and for the reflections on what Coetzee calls an "uneasy consciousness" (3). (Hegel, in A.V. Miller's translation uses the phrase "unhappy consciousness"). Coetzee's unflagged nod to section 192 from the *Phenomenology*: "It is the slave's consciousness that constitutes the master's certainty of his own truth. But the slave's consciousness is a dependent consciousness. So the master is not sure of the truth of his autonomy. His truth lies in an inessential consciousness and its inessential acts" (130).

Compare this to Hegel:

> In this recognition the unessential consciousness is for the lord the object, which constitutes the *truth* of his certainty of himself. But it is clear that this object does not correspond to its Notion, but rather that the object in which the lord has achieved his lordship has in reality turned out to be something quite different from an independent consciousness. What now really confronts him is not an independent consciousness, but a dependent one. He is, therefore, not certain of *being-for-self* as the truth of himself. On the contrary, his truth is in reality the unessential consciousness and its unessential action. (116–117)

Because *In the Heart of the Country* is a novel-length exploration of the interdependence of master and slave it prefigures the exploration of the relationship between Friday and Cruso in *Foe* (see Chapter 8) as well as the "uneasy consciousness" of Michael K in *Life & Times of Michael K* and the muddying of guilt and innocence in *Disgrace* (see Chapter 9). But it also forms an inherent part of the connections Coetzee makes between the different "frames of war" (to use the phrase that titles Judith Butler's recent book). The colonial frame, as the structure of *Dusklands* made clear, interweaves with the trauma-producing frame of the Vietnam War, which in turn cleaves to the same devaluation of life that is the condition of possibility for genocide.

LIFE & TIMES OF MICHAEL K (1983)

Life & Times of Michael K tells the story of Michael K, a gardener, and his mother, Anna K, a domestic who lives in Sea Point, Cape Town. *Michael K* shares with Coetzee's other work a fascination with the becoming animal of the human, the filament-thin line between the human and the animal. Animalistic metaphors refer to Michael K not as a form of denigration but as part and parcel of one of the central questions in virtually all of Coetzee's work: will future generations regard our (human) murder and consumption of animals in the same way we (twentieth century, enlightened, antiracist folks) regard slavery and colonialism? For Coetzee then, the Holocaust becomes a recognized location in which to investigate the process through which a modern totalitarian state used the discourse of the animal to enslave and perpetrate genocide against an entire people who were no longer privileged as "human." Yet in Butler's words, "animality is a precondition of the human, and there is no human who is not a human animal" (*Frames* 19). And as Derek Attridge notes in reference to *Michael K*, Coetzee conveys the "intensity which the bond between human and plant life can acquire" (*Ethics* 53). The novel portrays Michael K very much as a "human animal," and this muddying of the stark divide between human and animal is one of Coetzee's overarching concerns.

From the moment of his birth, a moment during which his mother "shivered to think of what had been growing in her all these months" (3), Michael K has something animal about him. Indeed, the animal embeds visibly on his face in the form of a harelip. The lip that curls like a hare's renders Michael K unpalatable to his mother as a newborn and, later, uninteresting to women—love from whom he quickly gives up all hope of ever receiving. He moves like a snail with his harelip, and later in the novel he is a lizard, a mouse, a stick insect, a bunny, a monkey, and more. And this animalized human is so much more human—or humane—than those humans who are described in terms of power rather than in terms of animals. Michael K wants a hermit's life more than anything else in the world; like the crab who takes his name from the hermit, Michael K longs to retreat from the war into which he has unwittingly stumbled. The war is the realm of the human with their insane squabbling over race, plots of land, realms of control, in short, power. The realm of the animal, on the other hand, among whom Michael K wishes to take his place, is peaceful even if its idylls are still visited by violence. While Anna and Michael K "huddled quiet as mice" "heavy boots stamped past and a hand rattled the locked door" (12). In some ways Michael anticipates *Age of Iron*'s Verceuil—sleeping with his head in a cardboard box, learning to be silent (28).

Like Robinson Crusoe, Michael K is a castaway; he casts himself away and is cast out or away in almost equal measure. And Coetzee heightens the connection to Crusoe by using island tropes: "I let myself believe that this [i.e., the farm] was one of those islands without an owner. Now I am

learning the truth. Now I am learning my lesson" (61). But unlike Crusoe (Defoe) or Cruso (Coetzee) Michael is not white. So whereas the castaways Crusoe and Cruso are white colonizers seeking exploitative capital gain in the name of exploration, Michael's metaphorical solitary island, interpellates him back into the system even from the remotest reaches of withdrawal. The cut lip of Michael K prefigures the absent tongue of Friday in *Foe* (see Chapter 8).

The race of Michael K (whose name obviously refers to Kafka's Herr K) is never given explicitly in the novel (something with which many Coetzee scholars make great hay) but Nadine Gordimer, who can be trusted in these matters, dispatches with any debate about Michael's race by claiming that because his mother works as a domestic in Cape Town, he must be classified as "Coloured" under the racist apartheid classificatory system.[12] Coetzee says of Michael's race, "I'm not sure that Michael K is black, just as I'm not sure that I am white" (cited in Kossew, *Pen and Power* 2). Gordimer also dismisses the assumption that K refers to Kafka. But I disagree with her here. Not only has Coetzee consistently referred to Kafka throughout his oeuvre, but he openly discusses what Attwell, in an interview on Kafka, refers to as the "titular allusion" (*Doubling* 198): "You ask about the impact of Kafka on my own fiction. I acknowledge it, and acknowledge it with what I hope is a proper humility. As a writer I am not worthy to loose the latchet of Kafka's shoe. But I have no regrets about the use of the letter K in *Michael K*, *hubris* though it may seem (*Doubling* 199; italics in original). Coetzee refers to Kafka in a sustained way in *Elizabeth Costello*, so it seems the ambiguity engendered by his initialized name refers to Kafka precisely because Kafka so keenly understood the dehumanization imposed upon us by the state. Butler aptly describes Kafka as a writer who "documented everywhere the radical circumscription of the will by institutions indifferent to human life" ("Editor's Introduction" 3).[13]

Indeed, while waiting for a permit to leave Cape Town, Anna and Michael are subjected to crazy Kafkaesque bureaucracy:

> She pushed the familiar forms towards him. "Fill in the forms and take them to E-5. Have your tickets and reservation slips with you." She glanced over K's shoulder to the man behind him. "Yes?"
>
> "No," said K, struggling to regain her attention, "I already applied for the permit. All I want to know is, has the permit come?"
>
> "Before you can have a permit you must have a reservation!" (19)

In addition to the quintessentially Kafkaesque predicament of waiting for a permit that will never arrive, Michael K's mother suffering from "gross swelling of the legs and arms" and "barely able to breathe" (5), echoes Gregor Samsa's transformation into a large bug in "The Metamorphosis" (1915). Early in Gregor's realization of his becoming animal, Kafka describes Gregor thusly: "However violently he forced himself towards his

right side he always rolled on to his back again. He tried it at least a hundred times, shutting his eyes to keep from seeing his struggling legs, and only desisted when he began to feel in his side a faint dull ache he had never experienced before" (68). (A little later, Gregor recoils from his own metamorphosed leg in terms reminiscent of the feeling Anna K has when her son is born: Gregor "drew back immediately, for the contact made a cold shiver run through him" [68]). So, whereas Gordimer is perhaps sensitive to readings of her compatriot that insist on his rigorous references to the Western canon, the resonances with Kafka in *Life & Times of Michael K* reinforce Coetzee's project of transforming his stories into arguments about silence, complicity, and guilt that run through the thread of the animal and that are explored in this Jewish writer of alienation par excellence.

Life & Times of Michael K is set in a South Africa in the middle of an unidentified war that functions curiously at once as itself and as an allegory for all war-torn racist nations.[14] Because it is the only place from which K's mother, Anna K, has retained pleasant memories, Michael and Anna set out to find the farm near Prince Albert (in the Karoo) where Anna spent her childhood. Because the requisite permits never come, mother and son make a strange spectacle as Michael K pushes the ailing Anna in a reconstructed wheelbarrow. At Stellenbosch his mother falls ill and dies in hospital whereupon her ashes are delivered to Michael K in a brown paper packet. After her death, "He tore a black strip from the lining of his mother's coat and pinned it around his arm. But he did not miss her, he found, except insofar as he had missed her all his life" (34). The mourning strip here of course bears a curious resonance of the Nazi armband, yet the fact that he had always missed her render these acts of mourning useless. He had missed her all his life because she had packed him off to a terrible-sounding institution for "challenged" children (Huis Norenius). Despite this abandonment, Michael carries the ashes dutifully to the farm that he believes hosts the distant scene of his mother's only fond reminiscence.

When Michael K arrives at the farm he finds intense relief at being able to till the ground and plant seeds and make a quiet life for himself away from the war. However, a grandson of the Afrikaner owners of the farm who seeks refuge as an army deserter rudely interrupts this solitude. The grandson mistakes Michael K for a servant, treats him thusly, and precipitates his quitting the farm for the mountains; because Michael K becomes ill there he regretfully tries to return to civilization whereupon he is taken to a camp for the unwanteds of the war, those who labor for a meal but who no one of means desires close by. A character for a brief spell, Robert (Michael's friend for a time in Jakkalsdrif), explains why they keep people alive in the camps: "They prefer it that we live because we look too terrible when we get sick and die. If we just grew thin and turned into paper and then into ash and floated away, they wouldn't give stuff for us. They just don't want to get upset. They want to go to sleep feeling good" (88). Once again, as Robert's words underscore, Coetzee is consistently interested in

the various hypocrisies that allow us to justify our often egregious acts. The builders of the camp wanted labor, the empowered populace living in the surrounds do not want those unmoored by war visible. Michael K "grows thin" and "floats away" thus echoing his mother's fate in evoking a powerful symbol of the Holocaust.

Indeed, Michael's musings often return to the moment when his mother became ash:

> So there is a place for burning, K thought. He imagined the old women from the ward fed one after another, eyes pinched against the heat, lips pinched, hands at their sides, into the fiery furnace. First the hair, in a halo of flame, then after a while everything else, to the last things, burning and crumbling. (32)

The idea of bodies fed one after another into a "fiery furnace" anticipates the mechanized burning of the dogs in *Disgrace* and, along with that image, recalls the industrial killing of people during the Nazi genocide. The "hair in a halo of flame" separates the scene slightly from the Holocaust because in that genocide hair was often removed and put to other use before bodies were placed in the crematoria. But the burning halo of hair is seared into K's memory, a Christlike association with his deeply flawed and never to be resurrected mother. After his mother's death, her "bed was occupied by a strange woman whose head was wrapped in bandages" (30). At another moment, a boy asks Michael: "'Did they burn her up?' . . . K saw the burning halo. 'She didn't feel anything,' he said, 'she was already spirit by then'" (48).

After his time in Jakkalsdrif, Michael returns to the farm of his mother's childhood and once again cultivates the earth, living on insects and pumpkins. Because rebels who hide out in the mountains pass through his farm Michael is mistaken for a rebel and incarcerated again, at this point skeletal and near death. The narration switches from Michael's point of view to a doctor at the hospital where Michael lies refusing food. Michael's preference not to engage with the war, not to eat, not to, infuriates the doctor but also evokes his sympathy (albeit of a condescending stripe). At the close of the novel Michael, wraithlike, has somehow made it back to Sea Point and falls in with a hardscrabble group of those whom the war has left at loose ends. He dreams of returning to the earth but we are never sure whether he does.

K charts the difference between the irrigated earth of Cape Town where he had been a gardener in Wynberg Park and the Karoo:

> When he thought of Wynberg Park he thought of an earth more vegetal than mineral, composed of last year's rotted leaves and the year before's and so on back till the beginning of time. . . . I have lost my love for that kind of earth, he thought, I no longer care to feel that kind

> of earth between my fingers. It is no longer the green and the brown that I want but the yellow and the red; not the wet but the dry; not the dark but the light; not the soft but the hard. I am becoming a different kind of man. (67)

Here the transformation of the landscape from the wet earth of Cape Town to the dry earth of the Karoo transforms him into a different kind of person; by the end of the novel he has lost his connection to the dry Karoo and had to return to the Cape, where he dreams of returning to the Karoo and irrigating the land. But there is no mistaking Coetzee's attention to the landscape and the deep connection Michael feels to it. At one point Michael wonders, "Perhaps I am the stony ground" (48).

On the one hand, Coetzee's descriptions of the camp (Jakkalsdrif) could be imagined as one of the least subtle of the many Holocaust metaphors in Coetzee's work; but on the other hand, the camp is represented as better than other options for the many homeless people in a war-torn landscape. As Coetzee notes in an essay about South African writers, "Certainly there are many lands where prisons are used as dumping-places for people who smell wrong and look unsightly and do not have the decency to hide themselves away" (*Doubling* 361). Something distresses when imagining this camp next to the death camps. There are "happy" moments in Jakkalsdrif—children playing, guitars, people gathered round the fire at night. Yet this slight suggestion of the preference of being enclosed within the camp actually argues the very opposite: how debased are we, Coetzee finally makes us ask, if we are even momentarily convinced that being encaged behind a high-wire fence is preferable to freedom in a war-free landscape. Michael's guide to the ways of Jakkalsdrif, Robert, explains that he had had a job, a family, a stable occupation, but once his job was terminated he was offered a stark choice that was no choice at all: "They said, 'Where would you rather sleep, out in the veld under a bush like an animal or in a camp with a proper bed and running water?' I said, 'Do I get a choice?' They said, 'You get a choice and you choose Jakkalsdrif'" (80). For Michael, the option of sleeping in the veld "like an animal" is indeed preferable to a choiceless life behind barbed wire. Coetzee weaves the question of the animal through the larger argument about complicity, silence, and witnessing. By accepting the "choice" imposed on him, by adopting the logic of the powers that be, i.e., that being offered minimal material comforts without freedom is preferable to being granted freedom while needing to be animalized, Robert chooses incarceration exactly in the name of being human. Indeed, Michael appears to one of the people into whose service he is pressed as: "He's half-dead! They'll be digging up corpses for us next!" (87). When we give up our sovereignty to the state we forfeit our humanity. Just as Kafka represents Gregor's transformation, Coetzee presents *Michael K* always on the filament-thin line between human and animal, life and death, alienation and community.

Indeed, the "happy" moments in the camp are short-lived. Ultimately, in retribution for a fire allegedly set by some men in the camp, army guards come and destroy the whole thing. Coetzee describes the inmates of Jakkalsdrif watching the fire thusly: "For an hour they stood and watched while the fire poured out like a fountain consuming itself and being consumed. There were moments when they were sure they could hear shouts and cries and the roar of the flames across the miles of empty veld" (89–90). This fire had been set by rebels and blamed on the entire camp. Fire is a potent and frequent metaphor for Coetzee. This fire, that takes with it Prince Albert's cultural history museum as well as several other high street spots, represents the turning point in Coetzee's description of Jakkalsdrif. The fire exposes the hypocrisy that holds the camp in place:

> "They are going to starve us," said Robert, loudly enough for others to hear. "That fire was the excuse they were looking for. Now they are going to do what they always wanted—lock us up and wait for us to die."
>
> Standing against the wire looking out over the veld, K brooded on Robert's words. He no longer found it so strange to think of the camp as a place where people were deposited to be forgotten. It no longer seemed an accident that the camp lay out of sight of the town on a road that led nowhere else. But he could not yet believe that the two young men on the guardhouse porch would sit and watch with equanimity, yawning, smoking, going indoors every now and again for a nap, while people were dying before their eyes. When people died they left bodies behind. Even people who died of starvation left bodies behind. Dead bodies could be as offensive as living bodies, if it was true that a living body could be offensive. If these people really wanted to be rid of us, he thought (curiously he watched the thought begin to unfold itself in his head, like a plant growing), if they really wanted to forget us forever, they would have to give us picks and spades and command us to dig; then, when we had exhausted ourselves digging, and had dug a great hole in the middle of the camp, they would have to order us to climb in and lay ourselves down; and when we were lying there, all of us, they would have to break down the huts and tents and tear down the fence and throw the huts and the fence and the tents as well as every last thing we had owned upon us, and cover us with earth, and flatten the earth. *Then,* perhaps, they might begin to forget about us. (94)

Written from Michael's point of view, this passage stylistically betrays the simplicity of Michael's thought processes, growing like plants in his earth-bound animalesque body. Because of the excuse of the fire, the myth of Jakkalsdrif as a safe haven from the threat of an animal existence scratched from the free earth reveals itself; the bare bones of the camp as a place for death emerges. Michael, who has received quite an education in the camp,

nonetheless refuses to believe that the guards could turn a blind eye to death in their midst. This is one of Coetzee's many occasions to notice the refusal to witness, the refusal to intercede, the complicity with evil that he finds everywhere. Michael turns his imagination to a scene of erasure. When Coetzee has Michael fantasize that the guards would then "command us to dig" he references the Jewish poet Paul Celan (whose work Coetzee has been interested in for a long time) who was forced to dig in a labor camp during the war, which he powerfully rendered in his widely read poem, "Todesfuge" (see Kaplan, *Unwanted Beauty)*.

Life & Times of Michael K contains a large section set in a quasi-concentration camp and features a starving man reminiscent of a Holocaust victim; for these reasons it plays out an implicit comparison between a war-torn allegorized South Africa and a war-torn, genocide-afflicted Europe. In addition, because Michael K is a Dostoyevskian "simpleton" floating around in the middle of the war, wanting nothing more than a patch of land and some pumpkin seeds, refusing to engage with the injustices of the war, preferring, much like Melville's Bartleby, not to, his character catalyzes an analysis of the power of refusal. Michael K passively resists the dehumanization of war and Coetzee has him object through both making manifest the animal tropes that describe virtually all of his characters and by placing the landscape of Holocaust postmemory within South Africa.

As part of her analysis of the striking poems created under conditions of duress by prisoners in Guantánamo Bay prison camp, Butler describes these poems in terms of their remarkable survivability; the poems endure, despite all: "Emerging from scenes of extraordinary subjugation, [the poems] remain proof of stubborn life, vulnerable, overwhelmed, their own and not their own, dispossessed, enraged, and perspicacious . . . [They] are critical acts of resistance, insurgent interpretations, incendiary acts that somehow, incredibly, live through the violence they oppose" (*Frames* 62). This powerfully resonates with the figure of Michael K who, opposing the violence into which he finds himself unwillingly thrown, despite all odds survives, his character offering powerful testimony to how "stubborn life" persists. Through its representation of the emaciated, paper-thin remainder of lush life, *Michael K* most intensely reflects on the legacy of the Holocaust.

8 *Foe*

> The virulence—on all sides—of so much discussion of race, genocide, and memory has to do, in other words, partly with the rhetorical and cultural *intimacy* of seemingly opposed traditions of remembrance.
>
> —Michael Rothberg

Discussing J.M. Coetzee's novel *Foe* (1986) in the context of the psychological landscapes of Holocaust postmemory implicitly compares colonialism with genocide. While *Foe*, set in the 1720s, would seem at first glance far from the Nazi killing fields, it in fact offers a series of meditations on the imperial project, including the means of subjugation, the impossibility of conveying trauma, the precarious nature of witnessing, and the interrelations between human and animal central to Coetzee's approach to the Holocaust specifically, and genocide generally. These meditations move through four major intertexts that work in subtle ways to illuminate the novel: Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), the Paul de Man scandal, the story of Philomena and Procne from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and finally the many colonial narratives referred to through Coetzee's turn to a fictional text, *Travels in Abyssinia*. Exploring these four intertexts highlights *Foe*'s implicit claims for a universal complicity in the suppression of witnessing.

Foe is one of the most sensual, richly, delicately, and beautifully wrought of Coetzee's novels. Pervaded by a melancholy sweetness missing from most of his other works, *Foe* recasts *Robinson Crusoe* into the story of Susan Barton—likely named after a character in Defoe's *Roxana* (1724)—a woman cast away on an uncharted island after unsuccessfully searching for her abducted daughter in Bahia, off Brazil. Mr. Cruso, his servant Friday, and many apes occupy the island. The narrative is conveyed through a series of letters Susan Barton writes to Mr. Foe, a gatherer of stories and writer of tall tales. As manifests forcefully in *Age of Iron* (1990) and also some of the letters in *Elizabeth Costello* (2003), a consistent uncertainty lingers as to whether or not letters written arrive (as Derrida discusses in *La carte postale*) at their destinations. At the onset of the novel Barton describes to Foe how she came to be cast away and her impressions of a taciturn, gruff, Cruso and a mute Friday. After a solitary loveless coupling between Cruso and Barton, the three make a humble peace on the island before being rescued and returned to England. Cruso (a relatively minor character in this rewriting) dies en route to Europe whereupon Friday remains the charge of Barton who, lacking funds, resolves to sell her story to Foe.[1] Friday's tongue has been cut out, we think by slave traders (but Cruso also possibly perpetrated this heinous crime) and Barton becomes obsessed with determining how Friday

was severed from his tongue. This unsolved, engrossing enigma underscores the importance in this work of the mute witness to atrocity that the figure of Friday so powerfully represents.

After they return to London, Barton and Friday take refuge in the house that Foe was obliged to abandon in flight from the bailiffs. While they are thus squatting there an imposter, a young woman (presumably some kind of misguided actress) comes to Barton claiming to be her lost and much-missed daughter.[2] The interactions between Barton and this young woman destabilize our sense of reality because we are not initially at all sure whether Barton has lost her mind and refuses to recognize her daughter or whether Foe plays some devious trick (but for what possible reason?). Because we are unsure who tells the truth and who acts, Coetzee's insertion of this unlikely young actress into the scene deepens the novel's meditation on truth versus storytelling.[3] Casting off this false friend, Barton attempts to return Friday to Africa armed with freedom papers. However, a trickster sea captain foils this plan and Barton finds out only in the nick of time that he wishes to enslave Friday. Barton thus remains with Friday, returns to Foe's house, and, finding that Foe (who had been a rather spectral presence in the novel) has reappeared, begins an uneasy affair with him while Friday remains in the background, learning to write. Friday's muteness and his attempt to write connect through the possibility of writing that appears as the only means through which Friday can resolve the mystery of how, why, and when his tongue was severed from him.

Foe's name is doubly ironic: the most obvious is the meaning of foe, enemy, and the way in which Barton's stories may never be told precisely because they are given to this enemy of truth in storytelling. But Foe was also the name of Daniel Defoe's father, James Foe. According to Virginia Woolf, Defoe changed his name at the age of thirty-five because the concocted name sounded "more genteel" (Defoe v); Foe's given name is also Daniel (*Foe* 91). *Foe* revolves around telling stories, the impossibility of speech, the proximity of civilization and barbarism, the failure to witness, and that which remains unsaid. All of these are crucial components in Coetzee's approach to historical traumas and his larger argument, fueled by his frequent turns to the Holocaust, about our global complicity in crimes of genocidal proportions.

ROBINSON CRUSOE

The meta-narrative behind the mistrust of stories that forms a crucial part of *Foe* is *Robinson Crusoe*, which, although entirely fictional reads like (and was mistaken for) a "true" travel narrative. Needless to say, Coetzee is hardly alone in rewriting (or not quite but reimaging, reconfiguring, returning to) Defoe's novel. Among the other interesting interventions into

Crusoe and Friday are Yoysef Vitlin's *Robinzon di geshikhte fun Alter-Leb* (1820), Jean-Richard Bloch's *Le Robinson juif* (1925), Derek Walcott's *Pantomime* (1978), and Michel Tournier's *Vendredi ou les Limbes du Pacifique* (1967).[4] *Robinson Crusoe* tells the story of Crusoe's becoming cast away on a remote island as though he experienced it; and indeed Defoe modeled this novel on travel tales his eighteenth-century readers assumed would be highly embellished. While *Robinson Crusoe* contains many stories that seem far-fetched it also fleshes out a mind-numbingly huge amount of information—in Lewis Nkosi's words, a "relentless, sober accumulation of detail" (151)—about how Crusoe lived on the island, how (exactly) he procured food and built his castles.[5] Thus while *Robinson Crusoe* is fiction, its level of "realistic" detail could lead one to imagine that someone experienced what Crusoe describes. As Dickens phrases it, *Robinson Crusoe* is "the only instance of an universally popular book that could make no one laugh and could make no one cry" (qtd. in Keane 47). For good reason *Robinson Crusoe* has come to embody the colonialist imaginary and this excruciating level of detail serves to mask violence. As Nkosi puts it, "In *Robinson Crusoe* the element of myth regarding the painstaking industry of building a civilization from nothing, *ex nihilo*, is inseparable from the story of colonisation, of subjugation, exploitation, and finally christianisation; just as the violence is inseparable from the enterprise" (154). Nkosi here rightly links Crusoe's level of meticulousness about the construction of castles on the sand with the imperial project. James Joyce, in a lecture delivered in Italian in Trieste in 1912, brilliantly describes how this colonial imaginary works in Defoe's novel. This rather long passage is so rewarding as to be worth quoting in full:

> The story of the shipwrecked sailor who lived on the desert island for four years reveals, as perhaps no other book throughout the long history of English literature does, the wary and heroic instinct of the rational animal and the prophecy of the empire. European criticism has striven for many generations, and with a not entirely friendly insistence, to explain the mystery of the unlimited world conquest accomplished by that mongrel breed which lives a hard life on a small island in the northern sea and was not endowed by nature with the intellect of the Latin, nor with the patience of the Semite, nor with Teutonic zeal, nor with the sensitiveness of the slav. European caricature has amused itself for many years in contemplating, with a gaiety not unmixed with distress, an exaggerated man with the jaws of an ape, checkered clothes that are too short and too tight, and enormous feet; or the traditional John Bull, the corpulent trader with the fatuous, rubicund moonface and the diminutive top hat. Neither of these lay figures would have conquered a handbreath of ground in a thousand ages. The true symbol of the British conquest is Robinson Crusoe, who, cast away on a desert island, with his pocket a knife and a pipe, becomes an architect, a

> carpenter, a knife-grinder, an astronomer, a baker, a shipwright, a potter, a saddler, a farmer, a tailor, an umbrella-maker, and a clergyman. He is the true prototype of the British colonist, as Friday (the trusty savage who arrives on an unlucky day) is the symbol of the subject races. The whole Anglo-Saxon spirit is in Crusoe: the manly independence, the unconscious cruelty; the persistence; the slow yet efficient intelligence; the sexual apathy; the practical, well-balanced religiousness; the calculating taciturnity. . . . Crusoe saw only one marvel in all the fertile creation around him, the print of a naked foot in the virgin sand. (24–25)

I have indulged in this long citation because in ordaining Robinson Crusoe the true figure of the British colonist Joyce captures exactly what Coetzee means to explore through rewriting this iconic colonizer in *Foe*. Unsurprisingly, Joyce is a crucial figure for Coetzee; the main character in *Elizabeth Costello* is a writer who has rewritten Joyce's *Ulysses* in much the same way that Coetzee rewrites *Robinson Crusoe*. Joyce claimed at the start of this discourse on Defoe that until the publication of *Robinson Crusoe* British literature had limped along, squeaking out a series of mock-ups of continental literatures. He avowed, in short, that Defoe was the "father of the English novel" (7), a generally accepted assessment. That this first novel should so clearly embody the colonial imaginary and also be so primary to British letters suggests that the colonial imagination brought the British novel into being. Just as Joyce had compared the various forms of British writing, all derived from continental sources, so here he compares the varieties of British caricatures of other peoples. (Note that Joyce does not forget the "Semite" and endows him with the sole attribute of "patience.") So when Coetzee turns to *Robinson Crusoe* as the source of his fiction he implicitly comments on the colonial imagination and its vagaries. But whereas *Foe* echoes *Robinson Crusoe* it is not a "rewriting" in a strict sense; *Foe* rather takes Defoe's novel as its starting point to explore larger questions about truth, witnessing, atrocity, and complicity.

Gilles Deleuze wryly notes, "Robinson's companion is not Eve, but Friday, docile towards work, happy to be a slave, and too easily disgusted by cannibalism. Any healthy reader would dream of seeing him eat Robinson" (12). *Foe* was Coetzee's chance to create a Friday who would speak back to power—who would rewrite Defoe's racist portrayal of a Friday whose English is broken and who lives to be subjugated. The publication of *Disgrace* (1999), concurrent with the disintegration of apartheid, radically disappointed Coetzee's leftist antiracist readership who felt that he should be subverting rather than replicating tropes of black on white violence (see Chapter 9). Postapartheid literature, even if written by non-utopian authors such as Coetzee, was meant to broadcast the promise of the postapartheid era, projecting something like an emerging unity rather than reinforcing racist stereotypes. It is the same with Friday; Coetzee could have rewritten

the colonialist imaginary in order to empower him. That he did not conjoins his larger elaboration of the complexities inherent in complicity; to get a sense of how Coetzee's version of the character differs without subverting entirely the fantasy of domination on which the original depended, I turn to Defoe's description of Crusoe meeting Friday:

> I beckon'd him again to come to me, and gave him all the Signs of Encouragement that I could think of, and he came nearer and nearer, kneeling down every Ten or Twelve steps in token of acknowledgement for my saving his Life: I smil'd at him, and look'd pleasantly, and beckon'd to him to come still nearer; at length he came close to me, and then he kneel'd down again, kiss'd the Ground, and laid his Head upon the Ground and, taking me by the Foot, set my Foot upon his Head; this it seems was in token of swearing to be my Slave for ever. (188)

This eighteenth-century Friday captured the imagination of legions of readers in the almost three hundred years since the novel was published because he offered a perfect black victim who adores his enslavement. Friday, whose life Crusoe has just saved from cannibals intent on eating him as just desserts for the defeated, moves gingerly towards Crusoe, almost like an animal, and immediately and without qualification offers eternal servitude. Coetzee could well have—might well have—exploded this colonial fantasy in *Foe*.[6] Instead of making his Friday a modern embodiment of black liberation and talking back he makes him not only silent but in fact de-tongued, disfigured, and more mysterious. By not having access to language Coetzee renders his Friday more animal even than Defoe's.

As Nkosi notes of Defoe's novel, "The scenes of 'savages' eating one another is of dubious anthropological value; this was the product of fantasy in the European mind of the period" (153). Indeed, *Robinson Crusoe* pivots when Crusoe famously discovers a footprint after about fifteen years on the island:

> But now I come to a new Scene of my Life. It happen'd one Day about Noon going towards my Boat, I was exceedingly surpriz'd with the Print of a Man's naked Foot on the Shore, which was very plain to be seen in the Sand: I stood like one Thunder-struck, or as if I had seen an Apparition . . . nor is it possible to describe how many various Shapes affrighted Imagination represented Things to me in, how many wild Ideas were found every Moment in my Fancy, and what strange unaccountable Whimsies came into my Thoughts by the Way. (142)

The footprint belongs to a cannibal, a lone record of a group of cannibals who regularly boat over from a larger island in order to cook and eat their enemies. Coetzee has Barton note that if there were cannibals they "left no footprint behind" thereby casting doubt on the imagination evinced in

Robinson Crusoe that the "natives" must of necessity eat each other ritualistically. Coetzee would have been keenly aware of how the appearance of the footprint in the sand elicits in Crusoe wild fearful fantasies. Throughout the earlier part of the novel Crusoe had often remarked on his desire for human company, having been in solitude all these years; but the very moment he finds the footprint, rather than rejoicing he immediately dilates with fear. This episode illuminates the mechanism of the colonial imagination whereby interaction with natives is instantly coded as hostile.

In *Foe*, Barton doubts the appearance of cannibals and thus sheds light on the embellishment practices of colonial exploration writing but also implicitly on the nature of all witnessing. But tellingly doubt is cast upon the very existence of cannibals, for in *Robinson Crusoe* (as in the colonial imaginary) cannibalism starkly marks the difference between civilization and barbarism. As Barton recounts her story to Foe, there are many moments when she points out the often vast difference between the event and the subsequent story that follows it:

> As for cannibals, I am not persuaded, despite Cruso's fears, that there are cannibals in those oceans. You may with right reply that, as we do not expect to see sharks dancing in the waves, so we should not expect to see cannibals dancing on the strand; that cannibals belong to the night as sharks belong to the depths. All I say is: What I saw, I wrote. I saw no cannibals; and if they came after nightfall and fled before the dawn they left no footprint behind. (54)

Through this doubt Coetzee criticizes the colonialist imaginary and how, in *Robinson Crusoe*, this imaginary extends to Crusoe not only converting Friday to Christianity but crucially forcing Friday to renounce cannibalism (194–197). When Barton notes that "as we do not expect to see sharks dancing in the waves, so we should not expect to see cannibals dancing on the strand," she compares the hidden danger of the shark, who one never sees until too late, with the hidden danger of the cannibal, who will not be so bold as to dance on the strand. But she also indicates that the cannibal is likely as not an imaginary figure made precisely to engender fear of the other. The Friday in *Robinson Crusoe* not only has a tongue but speaks—albeit in an unaccountably broken English. Indeed, in Defoe's version Crusoe and not Friday has metaphorically lost his tongue. When Crusoe has taught Friday to speak he rejoices that "in short I began now to have some Use for my Tongue again, which indeed I had very little occasion for before; that is to say, *about Speech*" (197; italics in original). Thus in making *Foe*'s Friday tongueless Coetzee reprises and reverses this moment in *Robinson Crusoe*. Whereas in Defoe's version the master's speech is restored by the slave, in the postcolonial rewriting, because of the permanence of his devastating mutilation, the slave's speech cannot be brought back.

Foe encourages Barton to embellish her tale as much as possible but Barton resists this sort of transformation of the events she experienced or suffered before returning to London. She demurs, "A liveliness is lost in the writing down which must be supplied by art, and I have no art" (40). Barton also muses that "the world expects stories from its adventurers, better stories than tallies of how many stones they moved in fifteen years, and from where, and to where" (34). This is a more complicated statement than it might appear at first blush. Coetzee is versed in the work of the Holocaust survivor and poet Paul Celan who was forced to carry rocks from one place to another while incarcerated during the war for being Jewish. A lot of what those, like Celan, who survived recount involves the incessant slog of often needless labor foisted upon inmates for the sole purpose of slowly killing them.[7] Coetzee has Barton reference Celan via this figure of the stone several more times: "Who would wish to read that there were once two dull fellows on a rock in the sea who filled their time by digging up stones?" (82). Here she notes that Foe would find their true existence on the island not worthy novelistic fare. Coetzee echoes the experience of Celan digging stones in the camp in Transnistria but also how stones and digging stones appear in the poet's work; for one example among many, consider Celan's "Whichever stone you lift—/ you lay bare / those who need the protection of stones: / naked" (71).[8] Again Barton discusses carrying stones: "I believe your master would have had it be a garden of labour; but, lacking a worthy object for his labours, descended to carrying stones, as ants carry grains of sand to and fro for want of better occupation" (86). Thinking of Coetzee's interest in the Holocaust, the reference to Celan here intrigues because the iconic Holocaust image is not carrying stones back and forth "for want of better occupation" but rather as an intensely demoralizing punishment and means of slow death. Shortly after this iteration of the figure of stones, Coetzee compares the needless carrying of stones with the laborious nature of writing:

> You [Friday] thought that carrying stones was the hardest of labours. But when you see me at Mr. Foe's desk making marks with the quill, think of each mark as stone, and think of the paper on the island, and imagine that I must disperse the stones over the face of the island, and when that is done and the taskmaster is not satisfied (was Cruso ever satisfied with your labours?) must pick them up again (which, in the figure, is scoring out the marks) and dispose them according to another scheme, and so forth, day after day; all of this because Mr. Foe has run away from his debts. (87)

Coetzee here has Barton explicitly lay out a figure that analogizes carrying stones to telling stories, thus underscoring the connection between storytelling and the appearance of the Holocaust. Barton tropes the impossible task of the storyteller, the impossibility of conveying the trauma of the experience, the idea (conveyed most famously by Primo Levi) that only true

witnesses are dead through the Celanian image of the endless, needless labor of carrying stones to and fro. As Coetzee explores the nature of storytelling throughout *Foe* it is no coincidence that he has Barton move through a series of metaphors that recall Celan and his evocations of the brutal labor practices imposed by the Third Reich on its victims.

LIKE THE SOUND OF THE SEA DEEP WITHIN A SHELL

The crucial idea in *Foe* about stories not told (repressed) and selves fashioned converge in an uncanny echo between Coetzee's description of Friday and the signature essay regarding the Paul de Man scandal. Several critics have noticed a certain dialogue with poststructuralism evident in Coetzee's work; for example, Denis Donoghue cheekily suggests that the character Foe has "evidently been reading Jacques Derrida's *De la grammatologie*" (26). When I first read *Foe* I had already, several years earlier, written a master's thesis at Sussex on the de Man and Heidegger scandals. Paul de Man, a beloved, influential, and prominent literary critic at Yale, had written anti-Semitic articles in the Belgian journal *Le Soir* during the war. Martin Heidegger, a much-respected and highly influential German philosopher, had been a member of the Nazi party in its early years. My thesis focused on what we (the "we" of Western intellectuals, basically) could or should do with the legacy of this involvement in anti-Semitism and fascism. How, this essay asked, could we continue to rely on the ideas of these thinkers when they were so (possibly) corrupted by that against which we (i.e., the intellectual left) were constantly fighting? In de Man's case the question was always what effect his wartime writing had not only on his work but also on all deconstruction and poststructuralism. The question was asked whether the proclivity for the oblique in these movements was not born of a desire to mask unwanted pasts.

A huge, deeply emotional response erupted upon the discovery of de Man's wartime writings. Unlike Heidegger—it was widely known if not initially widely discussed that he had been a Nazi party member—de Man had remained utterly silent about his early pennings. And it was this silence that was read as betrayal by his many close friends who found confession versus silence, witnessing versus perpetrating, at the heart of the crisis. His anti-Semitic writings were discovered posthumously, in 1987 by Ortwin de Graef, a researcher working on a dissertation about de Man. The politics of the journal de Man contributed to during the war, *Le Soir*, are far from straightforward. It was termed *Le Soir* Volé in light of the fact that the original editorial staff had largely fled, and the journal had come under the control of German military authorities. Indeed, after the war, several writers and editors associated with *Le Soir* during the occupation were executed or incarcerated for their writing or efforts on behalf of the journal; de Man was questioned but he was never charged.[9]

Jacques Derrida wrote a moving response to the discovery of his close friend de Man's collaborationist writings entitled: "Like the Sound of the Sea Deep within a Shell: Paul de Man's War" (January 1988).[10] Now, the resonance with *Foe*, published two years earlier, is deeply uncanny: "It is for us to open Friday's mouth and hear what it holds: silence, perhaps, or a roar, like the roar of a seashell held to the ear" (142); and "I begin to hear the faintest faraway roar: as she said, the roar of waves in a seashell" (154). Coetzee, who would no doubt have followed the de Man scandal closely when it erupted in 1987, could not have read Derrida's response before writing *Foe*. Coetzee discussed de Man in an essay he wrote in 1982–1983: "And, de Man points out, this process of shame and exposure, like the process of confession and qualification, entails a regression to infinity: 'each new stage in the unveiling suggests a deeper shame, a greater impossibility to reveal, and a greater satisfaction in outwitting this impossibility'" (*Doubling* 267; de Man, *Allegories of Reading* 286).[11] Here we find Coetzee commenting on shame and exposure within the context of Rousseau's endless self-revelations of his past shame yet, even though this essay was published with an interview conducted on 28 July 1990, the interview nonetheless does not refer to the de Man scandal.[12]

The phrase from *Foe* ("It is for us to open Friday's mouth and hear what it holds: silence, perhaps, or a roar, like the roar of a seashell held to the ear" [142]), so reminiscent of Derrida's important article, catches one off guard in the context of a novel about silence, complicity, and guilt. When Coetzee suggests that we will find Friday's interiority he offers two contradictory possibilities. When Friday opens his mouth we might hear either "silence" or a "roar." The roar of a seashell held to the ear is an imaginary roar because it reflects the listener's consciousness—we hear what we wish to hear in the shell and when held to our individual ears, we construct meaning from inarticulate noise. Thus this figure of Coetzee's, echoing Derrida's reflection on silence and betrayal, tells us that it is up to us to interpret Friday's silence.

De Man, in evoking the silence of the shell, was quoting a phrase uttered by Henry de Montherlant in his collaborationist treatise *Le Solstice de Juin* (1941): "Les journaux, les revues d'aujourd'hui, quand je les ouvre, j'entends rouler sur eux l'indifférence de l'avenir, comme on entend le bruit de la mer quand on porte à l'oreille certains coquillages (The newspapers, the magazines of today, when I open them I hear rolling over them an indifference to the future, like one hears the sound of the sea when one puts certain shells to the ear)" (163). In one of the essays that fell under detailed scrutiny in the late 1980s and early 1990s, de Man cited Montherlant's phrase that in turn became the title of Derrida's essay, "Like the Sound of the Sea Deep within a Shell." Montherlant, along with de Man's uncle Henri de Man, had been a regular at the Didier Salon—an interwar salon wherein intellectuals of conflicting political stripes nonetheless met. As Richard Golsan argues in a wonderful article about these occupation era connections, de Man and

Montherlant were "equally committed to collaboration and equally seduced by many of the principles the Nazis espoused" (396). Thus when de Man reviewed his fellow collaborationist somewhat negatively, we cannot assume that this was a form of anti-Nazi resistance per se but rather an intellectual-aesthetic difference with Montherlant's writing. But it is striking that the phrase that Derrida used to title his article comes from another Nazi sympathizer. As Andrzej Warminski notes of this oft-repeated citation from Montherlant: "The 'same' words, the 'same' citation, used again and again as a figure to mean one thing and its opposite, or, better, to mean one thing *and* an other need not be an other *of* the same" (Hamacher et al. 387).

Foe is a text about silence. Friday has no tongue and the mystery surrounding how and why he was silenced deepens throughout the novel rather than being solved. But it is heart-stoppingly uncanny that the same figure as Derrida evokes is the one that Montherlant used and the one that Coetzee turns toward to describe Friday. In *Flesh of My Flesh* Kaja Silverman places great weight on the correspondences offered by analogy; thinking through Benjamin she asserts, "the present is connected to the past through unauthored correspondences" (11). I do not know whether Coetzee was explicitly calling up Montherlant, or whether Derrida had read *Foe* before writing his essay on de Man. But the "unauthored correspondence" between the different iterations of the shell and all that it brings in terms of silence, selective hearing, guilt, shame, confession, and violence continue to confound and compel. The rich interplay between these questions of silence helps us to explain how *Foe* shares with Coetzee's other work a reflection on complicity and guilt through gesturing toward Holocaust and war thematics.

Barton notes, "We must cultivate, all of us, a certain ignorance, a certain blindness, or society will not be tolerable" (106). This figure of blindness not only implicitly compares Friday's muteness with the blindness of refusing to witness but also echoes the title of one of de Man's most important works: *Blindness and Insight*. In a brilliant, dense reading of *Foe*, Kwaku Korang takes Coetzee to task for his appropriation of Friday: "even if Coetzee cannot speak for Friday, he nevertheless speaks him and is strangely compelled to do so in a mode of spectacular disfigurement . . . I read Friday, emptied of all interiority in Coetzee's novel, as the spectacular essence, the truth, of black victimage" (192–193).[13] What Korang calls "speaking" happens in the moment when we are invited to read Friday's silence like the roar of a shell—he remains open for interpretation, still the silent black victim to be read and "spoken." Korang's critique of Coetzee echoes the criticisms that Coetzee experienced after *Disgrace* was published (see Chapter 9). But the "spectacular disfigurement" of Friday that Korang describes speaks to how Coetzee centralizes the figure of Friday on the mystery of his lost tongue. As Barton insists, "To tell my story and be silent on Friday's tongue is no better than offering a book for sale with pages in it quietly left empty. Yet the only tongue that can tell Friday's secret is the tongue he has lost!" (67).

One of the many tensions in *Foe* revolves around how stories are transformed in the telling and how these transfigurations of event into story carry an inherent level of mistrust. Coetzee conjures the figure of Benjamin's storyteller through Barton's meditation: "When I reflect on my story I seem to exist only as the one who came, the one who witnessed, the one who longed to be gone: a being without substance, a ghost beside the true body of Cruso. Is that the fate of all storytellers?" (51). Or again through Friday, "Through his ears Friday may yet take in the wealth stored in stories and so learn that the world is not, as the island seemed to teach him, a barren and silent place (is that the secret meaning of the word story, do you think: a storing-place of memories?)" (59). The central figure that epitomizes these uncertainties about the story's veracity and its transformations through the storage of mistrustful memory is the absence of Friday's tongue; without a tongue Friday must remain a mute witness to the trauma of his own mutilation.

A means of communication, a crucial aspect of sensuality, the purveyor of taste to the rest of the body; because of its violent removal, the absent tongue resonates multiply in *Foe*. Barton remains enduringly curious about the story of Friday's lost tongue and inquisitive about his mouth, the materiality of what remains of his tongue. After telling us that she "would give much to hear the truth of how he was captured by the slave-traders and lost his tongue" (57) she then notes that, when trying to teach him new English vocabulary, she thinks of the "root of his tongue closed behind those heavy lips like a toad in eternal winter, and I shiver" (57). The image of Friday's tongue here is first that of an animal, a toad, but then a suffering toad, a toad confined to eternal winter. This metaphor echoes the sharp climactic difference between the warm island and cold England that Friday suffers. Barton, as she does often, reacts bodily to Friday—like the cold toad she shivers at the thought of his mutilated inner mouth. On the island Barton had already associated herself with a difference akin to Friday's. Because the sound of the wind roars so forcefully on the island, Barton would often plug up her abused ears, "So I became deaf, as Friday was mute" (35).[14]

At one point Barton reacts to the absence of Friday's tongue through recognizing the precariousness of the difference between wholeness and mutilation: "An aversion came over me that we feel for all the mutilated. Why is that so, do you think? Because they put us in mind of what we would rather forget: how easily, at the stroke of a sword or a knife, wholeness and beauty are forever undone?" (85). By stressing that the absence of Friday's tongue reminds her of that which she would prefer to forget, Barton highlights the filament-thin line between the able-bodied and the differently able. Barton wonders about the moment of incision and asks whether "your tongue was not cut off but merely split, with a cut as neat as a surgeon's, that drew little blood yet made speech ever afterward impossible" (84). Continuing to speculate on the meanings of Friday's absent tongue, Barton ventures, "The tongue is like the heart, in that way, is it not? Save that we do not die when

a knife pierces the tongue. To that degree we may say the tongue belongs to the world of play, whereas the heart belongs to the world of earnest" (85). The image here of the play of the tongue refers to the way tongues frolic sensually but also to how the "play of the tongue" tropes the flexibility of narratives, the different valences given to a story by the whimsies of speech. Barton continues and qualifies this characterization of the tongue, "Yet it is not the heart but the members of play that elevate us above the beasts: the fingers with which we touch the clavichord or the flute, the tongue with which we jest and lie and seduce" (85). Friday's absent tongue, then, further associates him with the "beasts" as he does not have one of the "members of play" that Barton suggests are one of the differentiating factors between man and beast.

While the long Western philosophical tradition has made much of the distinguishing features between human and animal, as we see with each of Coetzee's novels, a complex and oft-repeated series of animal metaphors describe virtually all of his characters. This is part of Coetzee's consistent if subtle undoing of this stark divide between human and animal. These frequent turns to the animal are also centrally related to Coetzee's multiple references to both the Holocaust and Jews and Jewishness. Not only was it crucial to the entire operation of the Nazi genocide, as the brilliant early historian of the Holocaust Raul Hilberg and others have found, that Jews and other victims be animalized in order to ease the conscience of their murderers, but it is also precisely through exposing the quotidian killing of animals that Coetzee's character Elizabeth Costello first discusses the Holocaust (see Chapter 9).

METAMORPHOSES

The striking and also gruesome silence imposed by Coetzee on his version of Friday, mute because tongueless, has many literary precursors. It makes perfect sense that Coetzee should turn to Ovid's *Metamorphoses* wherein the story of the sisters Philomela and Procne also revolves around a tongueless Philomela. Not only does Coetzee often mine classical sources—in *Disgrace* he turns to Virgil's *Aeneid* and other examples are legion throughout his oeuvre—but Ovid resonates particularly profoundly because throughout *Metamorphoses* humans morph into animals in much the same way that virtually all of Coetzee's characters appear via the guise of various animal tropes. Ovid's Pythagoras, towards the end of *Metamorphoses*, reflecting on all these transformations, delivers a vegetarian manifesto. In much the same way that Elizabeth Costello argues against eating animals, and in much the same way as the insistent animal troping in all of Coetzee's work functions, Pythagoras rails: "What an indecency. . . . / choosing to mangle sad flesh with your cruel teeth . . . / unable ever to placate your stomach's voracious / desires until, at last, you have murdered another!"

(XV 124–132, 524). Thus *Metamorphoses* closes with an argument against eating animals precisely because of the fluidity between man and animal. But an even more pressing connection between Coetzee's work and Ovid's emerges. Coetzee references Kafka both obliquely and directly; Michael K's name comes from Kafka's *The Trial*, Elizabeth Costello cites Kafka multiple times, and Coetzee often turns subtly to this Jewish writer. The title of Kafka's most widely read story, "The Metamorphosis," cites Ovid and moreover details the anguish of being downgraded to animal or, worse, insect status. For all these reasons it is not at all surprising that Coetzee should turn to Ovid's story when constructing Friday.

Ovid placed the tale of Procne and Philomela in Book VI, "Of Praise and Punishment." Procne, married to Tereus, misses her sister and so requests from Tereus and King Pandion, their father, that Philomela come to visit. As soon as he sees her, Tereus is consumed (note the fire metaphors here) by passion for Philomela and abducts her to a wooded hut where he rapes her. When Philomela informs him that she will tell the world of his crime, he cuts out her tongue and tells Procne that her sister is dead. Meanwhile, Philomela produces a tapestry depicting the crime and has a slave bring it to Procne, who subsequently summons Philomela to the palace secretly. There, the sisters together murder Procne's son, cook him in a broth, and serve him to Tereus (his father) for dinner.

> Philomela, / for whom the sword had given hope of death, / eagerly offers him her throat, but he, / with a pair of pincers, takes her tongue instead, / which calls (as though protesting his offense) / her father's name out in a garbled voice, / before the tyrant's sword has severed it. / Its stump throbs in her mouth, while the tongue itself / falls to the black earth trembling and murmuring, / and twitching as it flings itself about, / just as a serpent's severed tail will do; and with what little life is left it, seeks / its mistress's feet. And even after this—/ one scarcely can believe it, but they say / that even after this, the man continued to violate her mutilated body. (VI 796–811, 213)
>
> And now the Sun has journeyed through one year; / what can poor Philomela do? A guard / is set upon her to prevent escape, / a wall of solid stone surrounds her hut; / her speechless lips cannot address the wrongs that have been done her. (VI 824–828, 213–214)

Ovid's grim description warrants pause. After being brutally raped by Tereus, Philomela prefers death to continuing to live with the pain of the trauma inscribed in her body. But instead of killing her, Tereus silences her by, as was also the case with Friday, cutting out her tongue. After this disfiguration the tongue continues to have agency, continues to feel and move and even seeks to return to its mistress. Ovid describes the tongue via the metaphor of a serpent whose tail continues flailing after being separated from the snake. After her tongue has been removed, Tereus,

undeterred by her spectacular disfigurement (in Korang's words) continues to violate her. This violation indicates the degree to which Philomela's subjectivity is utterly ignored in much the same way as Friday's subjectivity is never given license to bloom. That the revenge that Procne and Philomela take on Tereus involves murdering the son of one of the sisters in order to serve the child to the father for dinner indicates the degree to which Procne identifies with her sister—an identification trumping maternal love.

By referencing Ovid here, Coetzee located in the bizarre, distressing ending of Procne and Philomela's tale the very cannibalism that is in question in *Robinson Crusoe* and that he throws into question in *Foe*. The concern with the cannibal is precisely the concern with eating animals for if the overwhelming metaphoric for the majority of Coetzee's characters is animalistic, then this attenuates the difference between animal and human. This no doubt thickens Coetzee's reference to Ovid's Philomela and Procne where the violence of the rape and its consequent suppression in effect produce cannibalism; *Robinson Crusoe* creates cannibals on the beach precisely in order to subjugate them, the masculinist violence against women that Philomela suffers engenders a brutal interfamilial cannibalism that not only fundamentally disrupts one of the most basic tenets of "civilization" but also destroys crucial kinship structures. Further, the image of Philomela's severed tongue writhing snakelike cannot but evoke Barton's rebuke to Foe that she should most assuredly recognize her own daughter because she is not like a snake: "Do you think women drop children and forget them as snakes lay eggs?" (75).

Thus the figure of Friday without tongue resonates with the impossible witness to atrocity that forms a central part of Coetzee's various turns toward the Holocaust. And in recalling the story of Philomela and Procne Coetzee galvanizes the hypocrisy of our (i.e., "civilized") approach toward cannibalism. It is precisely in describing as cannibalistic our daily consumption of animals that Elizabeth Costello argues, with Pythagoras, against eating meat. And it is no coincidence that her comparison between killing animals and murdering people moves through the Holocaust. But in evoking the specious nature of the appearance of the cannibals in *Robinson Crusoe* Coetzee comments searingly on our trenchant hypocrisies regarding the treatment of people.

Coetzee links Friday's tongue being cut out with the Jewish ritual of circumcising infant boys. "Who, after all, was to say he did not lose his tongue at the age when boy-children among the Jews are cut; and, if so, how could he remember the loss?" (69). Speculation (left open, never resolved) lingers that rather than the slave-masters cutting out Friday's tongue it may have been Cruso himself. Long before the reference to de Man, the connection is forged between the inability to tell stories and the cut, the circumcision that traditionally marks Jewish male children eight days after birth. There are some disturbing implications in following this too far. Indeed, as Barton

watches Friday dance in Foe's robes she muses as to whether the cut of his tongue might mask another, more disturbing cut:

> I confess I wondered whether he [Cruso] might not be employing a figure, for the sake of delicacy: whether the lost tongue might stand not only for itself but for a more atrocious mutilation; whether by a dumb slave I was to understand a slave unmanned . . . I gaped without shame at what had hitherto been veiled from me . . . I saw and believed I had seen, though afterwards I remembered Thomas, who also saw, but could not be brought to believe till he had put his hand in the wound. I do not know how these matters can be written of in a book unless they are covered up again in figures . . . I will say in plain terms what can be said and leave unsaid what cannot. (119–120)

Barton suspects (or discovers, we're never sure) that the story about the tongue may have been a figure for a castration, which begs the question of how circumcision and castration are being thought next to each other. The repetition of "figure" here is telling: in the first iteration, the "figure" stands for Barton's suspicion that Friday's mutilated mouth at once represents itself and an even more horrific mutilation in the possibility that he has also been "unmanned." But what falls between these two iterations of the figure is the image of Thomas, one of the apostles, who appears after Jesus's resurrection and has to touch Jesus's wound in order to believe that he has come back from the dead.

Barton, in deciding which aspects of her story of being cast away with Cruso and Friday would be most interesting to Foe, notes:

> I could tell you about the life we lived: how we kept the fire smouldering day and night; how we made salt; how, lacking soap, we cleaned ourselves with ash. Once I asked Cruso whether he knew no way of fashioning a lamp or a candle so that we should not have to retire when darkness fell, like brutes. Cruso responded in the following words: "Which is easier: to learn to see in the dark, or to kill a whale and seethe it down for the sake of a candle?" There were many tart retorts I might have made; but, remembering my vow, I held my tongue. (26–27)

There are several striking features of this remarkable passage. The figure of fire smoldering day and night is very rich in Coetzee's work. In this passage, on a literal level, while being stranded on a desert isle it is obviously important to have a continual fire. But fire also appears metaphorically in *Foe* (and indeed in all of Coetzee's work) in a number of ways beyond these practical appearances. The continual fire, it turns out, ends up being a source of cleansing via ash. While it is not necessarily the case here that Coetzee intended a Holocaust reference with this use of ash, fashioning a

lamp from whale blubber appearing so close to the evocation of ash recalls the horrific lamps made from human flesh that have become an inherent part of Holocaust iconography (even if apocryphal) and that appear directly in *Elizabeth Costello* (see Chapter 9). But beyond this Holocaust appearance at the level of metaphor, *Foe* centrally relates to the Holocaust through its development of the nature of silence and witnessing so crucial to post-Holocaust understanding of the event.

In the preceding passage, fire at night, denied to her, would be a marker for Barton of the difference between humans and brutes. When she asks him if they might not have illumination after dark Cruso replies that it is in effect more brutal to murder a whale to make a candle than to be a beast and retire in the dark. When Barton agrees to hold her tongue, this reminds us of the tongue that we know Friday has not. As Cruso dies on the rescue ship, Barton remarks, "with the tip of my tongue I follow the hairy whorl of his ear" (44). By so closely associating Barton with Friday, Coetzee makes an implicit comparison between the absence of freedom for women (particularly seventeenth- and eighteenth-century women) and for slaves. Barton notes that "a woman alone must travel like a hare" (100). While Barton has a tongue and Friday does not, her ability to tell her story the way she wants is heavily circumscribed by the transformations, embellishments, and twists of the plot that Foe will wield against her story. That Barton explicitly associates freedom with her ability to tell her story in her longed for fashion implicitly reflects upon Friday's inability to tell his story in speech or writing: "I am a free woman who asserts her freedom by telling her story according to her own desire" (131). Desire is never to be taken lightly in Coetzee's work; it takes many guises, from the most common usage of desire as sexual desire or lust but also as the desire to explore, to adventure, to be sovereign, to tell stories, to be free. This association of Barton's very freedom with control over her own narrative underscores the crucial importance in *Foe* of the key to freedom being able to access a certain degree of self-fashioning through story—exactly what a person who lacks both a tongue and the ability to write cannot do.

"Is it not possible to manufacture paper and ink and set down what traces remain of these memories, so that they will outlive you; or, failing paper and ink, to burn the story upon wood, or engrave it upon rock?" (17). Here burning becomes a means of preserving rather than destroying memory. And fire and writing, preserving memory appears again in the figure of the muse:

> Do you know the story of the Muse, Mr. Foe? The muse is a woman, a goddess, who visits poets in the night and begets stories upon them. In the accounts they give afterwards, the poets say that she comes in the hour of their deepest despair and touches them with sacred fire, after which their pens, that have been dry, flow. (126)

The obvious sexual overtones here cannot be missed. The muse, in Barton's telling, graces the poets with fire that then makes their pens flow—the phallic figure couldn't be clearer. But this figure particularly engages because the preservation and creation of stories is described in terms of burning and what is often used (and imagined) as a destructive force becomes described here as a force of generation.

Burning appears many, many times in this novel, not least in the opening paragraph: "'At last I could row no further. My hands were blistered, my back was burned, my body ached. With a sigh, making barely a splash, I slipped overboard. With slow strokes, my long hair flowing about me, like a flower of the sea, like an anemone, like a jellyfish of the kind you see in the waters of Brazil" (5; this repeats, with slight variations, a few pages later). Here burning appears as the literal burning of white skin too close to the equator for comfort. Barton describes herself in sensual terms ("slow strokes," "long hair," etc.); but she also self-represents in animal terms, which are always one of the principle tropes Coetzee engages to describe his characters. Barton depicting herself like a "flower of the sea" also connects her very closely with Friday, with his silence like the roar of a seashell while he casts petals (141) into the sea during a private ritual that neither Barton nor Cruso understand.

Barton tells Foe, "'I have a desire to be saved which I must call immoderate,' I said. 'It burns me night and day, I can think of nothing else'" (36). The concept of desire interestingly transforms. As we will see repeatedly in *Disgrace* when Lurie's desire appears in terms of burning, "burning with desire" (as in Ovid) this is usually the immoderate desire described by this metaphor. In *Foe*, the immoderate burning desire is for salvation, and Defoe's Robinson spends a great deal of time contemplating the state of his soul. "Salvation" in that novel has the double valence of being saved from one's own transgressions of the soul and being saved from a solitary life on a remote island; religious passion comes into play when there is an immoderate, burning desire to be saved. At another moment in *Foe*, the figure of burning emerges again when the false child appears to Barton and, despite the obvious ploy she tries to foist on her, insists that she is her daughter. Barton dismisses her thusly: "Burning with anger against her and against you, I turned on my heel and slammed the door behind me" (75). The "you" in this citation is Foe, to whom Barton narrates the story of this unwanted intrusion by a girl who is not her daughter. One can easily imagine how great, how "burning," would be a mother's anger when, missing her lost daughter, an actress confronts her. Here the trope of burning morphs from salvation to anger.

TRAVELS IN ABYSSINIA

Barton, needing funds to travel with Friday to the coast with the idea of exporting him back to Africa, sells, for half a guinea, "Pakenham's *Travels*

in Abyssinia" (107), which she explains to Foe that she had pilfered from his library. Barton glosses her decision to sell the book thusly:

> I found a stationer's and for half a guinea sold him Pakenham's *Travels in Abyssinia*, in quarto, from your library. Though glad to be relieved of so heavy a book, I was sorry too, for I had no time to read in it and learn more of Africa, and so be of greater assistance to Friday in regaining his homeland. Friday is not from Abyssinia, I know. But on the road to Abyssinia the traveller must pass through many kingdoms: why should Friday's kingdom not be one of these? (107)

Now, as far as I can tell from multiple library searches, no such thing as "Pakenham's *Travels in Abyssinia*" exists. A contemporary writer, Thomas Pakenham (b. 1933), has indeed written books on Africa, including *The Boer War* (1979), *The Scramble for Africa* (1991), and most pertinently, *The Mountains of Rasselas: Ethiopian Adventure* (1959). In this last text Pakenham recounts his adventures in 1955 when he went to Ethiopia (formerly Abyssinia) to explore the legends revealed in Samuel Johnson's *Rasselas*. But the text that Barton sells would have been a colonial era document, of which there are many rich and interesting narratives in French, English, and Portuguese bearing the same or similar titles as *Travels in Abyssinia*.[15]

The colonial travel narratives recounting various travels in Abyssinia are replete with conversations and disagreements about the different treatments of animals between Europe and Africa. These travel narratives, written before and after *Robinson Crusoe*, argue with each other about the veracity of their tales. Henry Salt's *A Voyage to Abyssinia* (1814) is among the most interesting of these texts. Salt describes a "barbarous" act that his colleague Mr. Pearce witnessed himself but that resembles an account given by another colonial travel writer, Mr. Bruce, whose veracity has often been questioned.[16] The story that Salt recounts from Mr. Pearce's experiences is this: Pearce was among a group who went out in search of cattle; being hungry on the return trip, the locals engaged in a practice termed "cutting out the shulada," which involves cutting chunks of meat from the still living cow, eating them, and then forcing the cow to march all the way home, where she is slaughtered and the rest of her consumed. Salt notes that while he has noticed "on several other occasions, his [Bruce's] unfortunate deviations from the truth" (296) he has to conclude that, since Mr. Pearce witnessed this shulada exercise, Bruce must not be in error on this account.

Indeed, Bruce's own narration, which includes a grizzly report of a butchery of a live cow whose flesh is eaten raw—a tradition he attributes to "the ancient Greek, the Jews, and other eastern nations" (359)—contains the following description of the live animal being devoured:

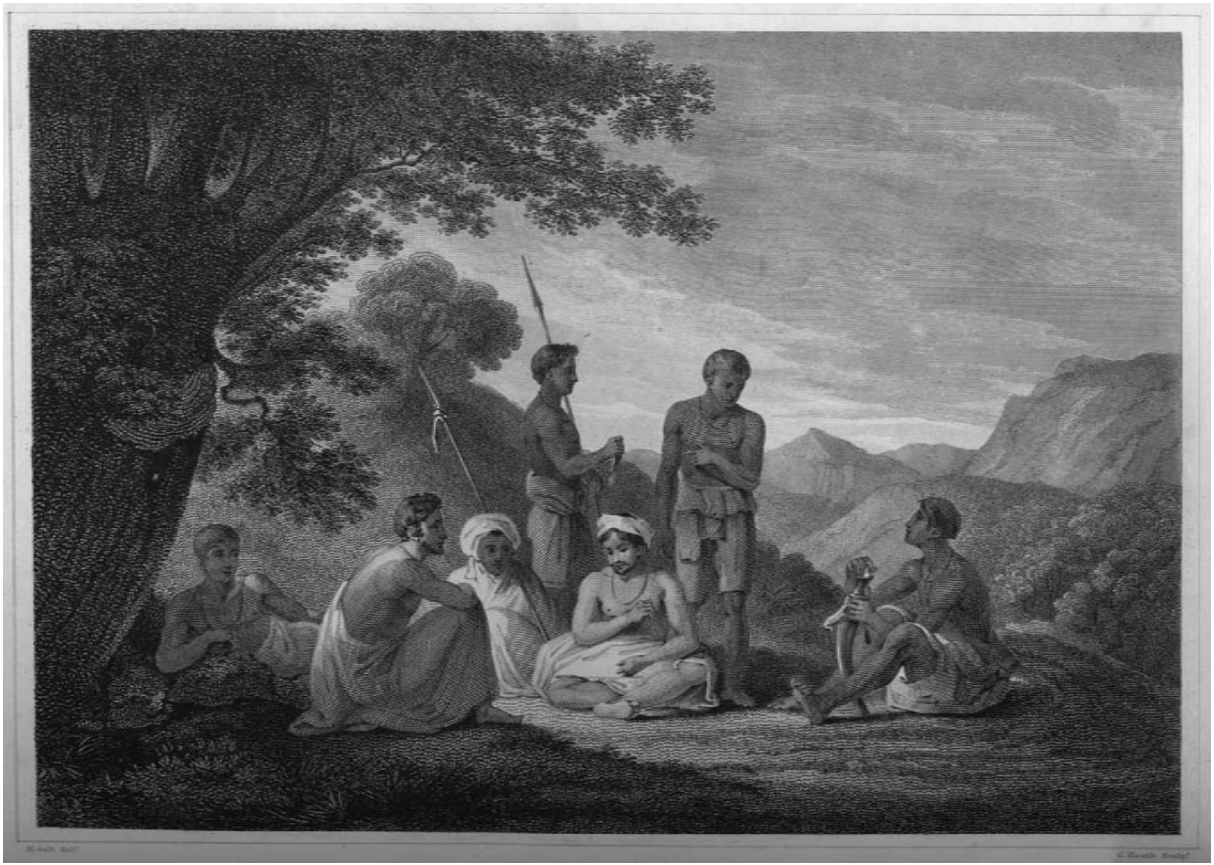

Figure 8.1 "Abyssinians Reposing," *A Voyage to Abyssinia*. Henry Salt. Image courtesy of Newberry Library.

> All this time the unfortunate victim at the door is bleeding indeed, but bleeding little. As long as they can cut off the flesh from his bones, they do not meddle with the thighs, or the parts where the great arteries are. At last they fall upon the thighs likewise; and soon after the cannibals, who have the rest of it to eat, find very hard work to separate the flesh from the bones with their teeth like dogs. (362)[17]

After summarizing Bruce's account and Pearce's witnessing, Salt adds a very telling footnote:

> The greatest objection against Mr. Bruce's story appears to be the barbarity of the action, but I am, at this moment, intimately acquainted with two gentlemen who personally witnessed the fact, in England, of a butcher's boy dragging along the grass a Newfoundland dog, which he had previously skinned, down to a river side, (while the animal was yet alive,) for the purpose of drowning it, with a degree of indifference that could have scarcely been expected from the rudest barbarian. (296)

Salt's footnote speaks to the heart of the effort in many of Coetzee's works to meditate upon our own hypocrisies—that we refuse to recognize our own (Western) barbarity when we allocate barbarism to the African, Caribbean, anyone outside the European purview; that we fail to understand the connections between our barbarous treatments of animals and the barbarity of modern genocide of human against human. It is fascinating that in his reluctant admittance that at least part of Bruce's account was accurate, Salt found it necessary to compare British barbarity against animals with that of the Abyssinians. Coetzee refers often to Montaigne, whose essay "On the Cannibals" offers an analysis of precisely the hypocrisy that Coetzee so carefully uncovers via this reference to colonial travel narratives, especially those pertaining to Abyssinia. Montaigne avows:

> Je ne suis pas marry que nous remerquons l'horreur barbaresque qu'il y a en une telle action, mais ouy bien dequoy, jugeans bien de leurs fautes, nous soyons si aveuglez aux nostres. (266)
>
> It does not sadden me that we should note the horrible barbarity in a practice such as theirs: what does sadden me is that, while judging correctly of their wrong-doings we should be so blind to our own. (235)

Another important colonial narrative about Abyssinia is a French version of a Portuguese text entitled *Voyage Historique d'Abissinie* by Jerome Lobo, translated by M. Le Grand and published in 1728; it was this text that Samuel Johnson used for his translation that was published as *A Voyage to Abyssinia* in 1735 (or possibly late in 1734). This translation was the impetus behind Johnson's novella *Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia*. There is much discussion in the many seventeenth- and eighteenth-century travel narratives

detailing voyages to Abyssinia about the religion of Abyssinians because they were perceived as a Christian enclave in the midst of Asia. Abyssinians trace their lineage to Solomon after the Queen of Sheba gave birth to their first king, Menelik I; the Abyssinians then converted to Christianity in the fourth century. Yet, despite this conversion, they retained many Jewish practices, including circumcision. Lobo, a Portuguese explorer and missionary who was in Abyssinia for nine years from 1624 to 1633, describes in great detail his voyage, the governing structures, dress, and habits of the people he encounters there, and the vast quantities of animals, including large monkeys, lions, tigers, elephants, etc. Barton's comment about passing through many kingdoms echoes Lobo's experience exactly: "Cette Côte eft peuplée de plufiers nations differentes, chaque nation à fon Roy particulier, & j'en comptai jufqu'à dix ou douze en moins de quatre lieuës (this coast is peopled with many different nations, each nation has its own special King, and I counted ten or twelve in less than four places)" (19).[18] Thus, whereas Coetzee renders the title of the made-up text that Barton sells as *Travels in Abyssinia*, this title echoes Johnson's translation of Lobo's text as *A Voyage to Abyssinia* (which Salt then also referenced in his title). In *Rasselas*, the editor notes of Johnson, "He now commenced his literary career: his first work was a translation and abridgement of Lobo's *Voyage to Abyssinia*, for which he received five guineas" (215). The resonance between Barton selling her copy of the made-up Pakenham volume for half a guinea and Johnson having received his five guineas for his first work is unmistakable. Johnson's *Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia*, written in 1759 and influenced by his 1735 translation of Lobo's text, tells the story of the prince who lives in the happy valley and yet who is made miserable while wondering what separates him from the animals. "'What,' said he, 'makes the difference between man and all the rest of the animal creation?'" (224). Another character responds, "It has been the opinion of antiquity, said Imlac, that human reason borrowed many arts from the instinct of animals" (257).[19] Coetzee, as we saw earlier, suggests that Friday's tongueless state might well have come from an unknown ritual similar to circumcision among his people. Fascinatingly, Lobo recounts in a section entitled "Dissertation, de la circoncision" that circumcision was practiced in Abyssinia:

> Quelques-uns néanmoins tiennent qu'elle a été reçûë en Ethiopie longtems auparavant, & que Moyfe fuyant d'Egypte s'étoit retiré chés les Ethiopiens, & avoit été leur premier Legiflateur; mais foit que la Religion Juive ait été établie en Ethiopie par Moyfe ou par Menelech fils de Salomon, foit que les Abiffins euffent reçu la Circonciſion par quelqu'un de la poſterité d'Abraham, dès le tems qu'ils paſſerent de l'Arabie en Afrique, il eſt toûjours certain qu'ils croyent que cette pratique leur eſt venuë des Juifs. (273)
>
> Some nevertheless maintain that this religion was long before received in Aethiopia, and affirm, that Moses, when he fled out of Egypt,

> retreated to the Aethiopians, and was their first lawgiver: this is certain, that whether they received this institution from Menelech the son of Solomon, or from Moses, or whether they learn'd circumcision from some descendant of Abraham, when they chang'd their place of habitation and went out of Asia into Africk, their firm persuasion is that they received this practise from the Jews. (234; Johnson's translation)[20]

After this declaration Lobo engages in a long discourse, including several interlocutors, over whether or not the presence of circumcision in Abyssinia must necessarily mean that the source of the circumcision is Jewish. He notes that "Si les Abiffins font attaché à la Circoncifion, ils font encore rigides obfervateurs du Sabbat (The Abyssinians were attached to circumcision and were strict observers of the Sabbath)" (280). And further that "Les Abiffins ont encore beaucoup d'autres pratiques & ceremonies des Juifs (The Abyssinians had many Jewish practices and ceremonies)" (281).[21]

Another text with a title exceedingly close to the one Barton sold in order to free Friday is the French poet Arthur Rimbaud's *Travels in Abyssinia and the Harar*. Rimbaud stopped writing poetry as a young man and then spent a great deal of time in Abyssinia.[22] Enid Starkie explains, "The poet died to literature at the age of nineteen when he wrote the last line of *La Saison en Enfer*. In Aden he only appears as the hard-bitten trader whom no one had ever suspected of having dabbled in literature, or having dreamt of becoming a prophet and of changing the world" (10). Starkie describes Rimbaud as forever impatient with Africa but simultaneously forever disdainful of returning to France, a Rimbaud who, having forgotten poetry, always schemes to make money and almost always fails in this endeavor. Rimbaud eventually turns to gunrunning and slave-trading as moneymaking schemes. But he does not succeed at either and dies, bitter and having lost a leg, in a hospital in Marseilles.

Something resonates very tangibly in this story about a poet who lost his poetry in favor of colonial schemes involving gunrunning and slave-trading. In evoking the title of Rimbaud's work in *Foe*, Coetzee implicitly reflects on the squalid side of art. What we have inherited from Rimbaud he could never know—he died, as so many whose fame was posthumous, in utter obscurity, even failing to have made a name for himself as he could have—as a writer of difference, especially because he was fluent in many of the native languages. He could have richly described life in Abyssinia and the Harar in the tradition of the European observers/explorers/colonizers and even and more admirably have complicated the imperial impulse of these narratives by speaking back. But his investment in the commercial life there and the ever-elusive possibilities for gain offered an enticement more compelling than continuing to write poetry or embarking on a travel narrative that disrupted the racist tenor of most colonial travel literature. It is an irony that would not have been lost on Coetzee that an artist who demonstrated such potential and whose name is now regarded among the

canonical French poets, his influence cited continually, ceased art and became absorbed in nothing loftier than colonial African trading.

Thus Coetzee's mention of this nonexistent book, "Pakenham's *Travels in Abyssinia*," performs multiply in *Foe*. It registers the colonial imaginary's tendency to collapse the specificities of Africa into generic terms: Friday hails not from Abyssinia, yet Barton imagines that a reading of this work would enrich her understanding of him. Traveler's tales such as these and Defoe's novel—as we saw with the many doubts Salt and others expressed about Bruce's narrative—are prone to hyperbole, especially of the sort that makes the indigenous peoples they visit appear more barbaric. By requesting that Barton discuss her experience with cannibals—an experience she never had—Foe encourages her to feed the colonial imaginary about what a desert island might be like. By resisting, Barton demonstrates her unwillingness to concoct stories that make more barbaric Friday and others. *Foe* is an incredibly rich and dense text about which much remains to be said. But this novel's exploration of the nature of complicity has surfaced through these twists and turns. Like Sebald's *The Rings of Saturn*, *Foe* meditates on the echoes between colonialism and Nazism. In Coetzee's corpus of writing on Jewishness and the Holocaust *Foe* follows from *Life & Times of Michael K* with its allegorization of a war-torn landscape and the displaced who are forced to remain in camps. By exploring the figure of the animal, *Foe* anticipates the complex reflections of *Elizabeth Costello* and *Disgrace*.

9 *Elizabeth Costello* and *Disgrace*

> One midnight at high tide a ship bringing in a cargo of Ebo (Ibo) men landed at Dunbar Creek on the Island of St. Simons. But the men refused to be sold into slavery; joining hands together they turned back toward the water, chanting, "the water brought us, the water will take us away." They all drowned, but to this day when the breeze sighs over the marshes and through the trees, you can hear the clank of chains and echo of their chant at Ebo landing.
>
> —Carrie Mae Weems

Jacques Derrida's last text, compiled from a series of lectures delivered in 1997 and published posthumously in translation as *The Animal That Therefore I Am* (2008), points to a persistent metaphorics of the animal in his own work from the beginning to the end. This "visitation of the innumerable critters that now overpopulate my texts" (37) includes hedgehogs, silkworms (which are also crucial in Sebald's *The Rings of Saturn*), spiders, serpents, wolves, horses, and others besides. Derrida is concerned in *Animal* with the "*unprecedented* . . . subjection of the animal" (25; italics in original), and, in terms that strongly resonate with questions posed in Coetzee's novel *Elizabeth Costello* (2003), Derrida asks us to recognize that our (human) dominion over other animals is suspect:

> No one can deny seriously any more, or for very long, that men do all they can in order to dissimulate this cruelty or to hide it from themselves; in order to organize on a global scale the forgetting or misunderstanding of this violence, which some would compare to the worst cases of genocide. . . . the annihilation of certain species is indeed in process, but it is occurring through the organization and exploitation of an artificial, infernal, virtually interminable survival, in conditions that previous generations would have judged monstrous. . . . As if, for example, instead of throwing a people into ovens and gas chambers (let's say Nazi) doctors and geneticists had decided to organize the overproduction and overgeneration of Jews, gypsies and homosexuals by means of artificial insemination, so that, being continually more numerous and better fed, they could be destined in always increasing numbers for the same hell, that of the imposition of genetic experimentation, or extermination by gas or by fire. In the same abattoirs. (25–26)

Derrida here starkly places within the purview of the Nazi genocide our treatment of animals. Coetzee's vegetarian, dogmatically anti-the-killing-of-animals character Elizabeth Costello similarly makes the connection between these deaths and the Nazi genocide:

> Let me say it openly: we are surrounded by an enterprise of degradation, cruelty and killing which rivals anything that the Third Reich was capable of, indeed dwarfs it, in that ours is an enterprise without end, self-regenerating, bringing rabbits, rats, poultry, livestock ceaselessly into the world for the purpose of killing them. And to split hairs, to claim that there is no comparison, that Treblinka was so to speak a metaphysical enterprise dedicated to nothing but death and annihilation while the meat industry is ultimately devoted to life (once its victims are dead, after all, it does not burn them to ash or bury them but on the contrary cuts them up and refrigerates and packs them so that they can be consumed in the comfort of our home) is as little consolation to those victims as it would have been—pardon the tastelessness of the following—to ask the dead of Treblinka to excuse their killers because their body fat was needed to make soap and their hair to stuff mattresses with. (65–66)

Both Derrida and Coetzee would agree that we are under the sway of what Donna Haraway aptly terms the "culturally normal fantasy of human exceptionalism" (11). (Haraway disagrees with how Derrida approaches the animal, but that is the subject of another book.) And for both Derrida and Coetzee the Holocaust aptly analogizes the depth of the wrongs we commit against animals.

While, as I have been arguing throughout this section, Coetzee consistently turns to Holocaust effects, *Elizabeth Costello* offers the longest reflection on the genocide in his corpus. A novel composed of eight lessons and a postscript, some of which are actual lectures Coetzee gave (including one I attended at Berkeley in 1998), *Elizabeth Costello*, in a nonlinear manner, traces the travels, thoughts, and experiences of an ageing writer, a leather-shoe-wearing vegetarian who, as her life draws to a close, has devoted her powers of persuasion to railing against the evils of consuming animals.[1] Beyond the important question of animal rights, the novel covers the terrain of good versus evil, the place of Africa in the early twenty-first century, and the question of belief. The character Elizabeth Costello also appears in Coetzee's *Slow Man* (2005), where, despite having waited in purgatory to pass through the gates of heaven at the end of *Elizabeth Costello*, she plays the role of a writer writing the character into whose life we have become absorbed, Paul Rayment.[2]

In the third chapter of *Elizabeth Costello*, entitled "The Lives of Animals," based around a lecture the title character gives at Appleton College, the fictional institution in Massachusetts where her son (named, as is

Coetzee, "John") is a professor of physics and astronomy, Costello tells her audience that, whereas she would like to be cool and philosophical regarding the killing of animals, she finds herself instead burning with passion and grasping at the Holocaust analogy as a way to make sense of the passivity of all of us who participate in and/or silently witness this atrocity. This is the first mention of the Holocaust in the novel (it precedes the passage cited earlier) and it comes curiously after Costello reassures her audience that she will omit detailing the horrors undergone by the animals. Then, in a cool tone, she begins, "Between 1942 and 1945 several million people were put to death in the concentration camps of the Third Reich" (63), and she then goes on to discuss the silent witnesses around Treblinka who, although signs were obvious, refused to recognize fully what went on beyond Treblinka's gates (64). When pressed by her son to define the point of talking about animals in this extreme way to mostly literary academic types, Costello replies that she does not know if she has any effect, but that she doesn't "want to sit silent" (104), that she refuses the role of mute witness.

During this lecture Costello frequently refers to Kafka's short story "A Report to an Academy" (1917) in which an ape recounts how he became human.[3] Coetzee's reliance on Kafka has been read metaphorically by Neil Lazarus as expressing the "specificity of contemporary white South African literature," which consists in its "concretization of the metaphysical predicament expressed by Kafka in these words: 'There is an infinite amount of hope, but not for us'" ("Modernism" 148). Coetzee anticipates and makes allowances for the obviously justified response that Costello might receive in comparing the slaughter of Jews to the slaughter of animals by creating a protest launched by a Jewish poet, Abraham Stern, who refuses to dine with Costello and who, on the day following her lecture, writes a handwritten note including the following lines: "If Jews were treated like cattle, it does not follow that cattle are treated like Jews. The inversion insults the memory of the dead. It also trades on the horrors of the camps in a cheap way" (94). Through the character of Stern, Coetzee invokes a just critique of Costello's analogies between the killing of animals and the Nazi genocide. But Coetzee also allows Costello to demonstrate forcefully how the complicity in the one can be compared to the complicity of the other, and by extension, apartheid and other atrocities. Complicity maddens Elizabeth Costello:

> Is it possible, I ask myself, that all of them [i.e., everyone around her] are participants in a crime of stupefying proportions? Am I fantasizing it all? . . . It is as if I were to visit friends, and to make some polite remark about the lamp in their living room, and they were to say, "Yes, it's nice isn't it? Polish-Jewish skin it's made of, we find that's best, the skins of young Polish-Jewish virgins." And then I go to the bathroom and the soap wrapper says, "Treblinka—100% human stearate." Am I dreaming, I say to myself? (115)

Here Costello offers a powerful example of our bland and unthinking complicity in the slaughter of animals that makes us most sympathetic to her struggle to convey to the world the madness she sees around her. For Costello, the Holocaust functions as the most potent metaphor possible to make a dulled world wake up to the horror in its midst—to arouse her audience out of this shameful complicity and into a visceral understanding of the evil in which we all participate.

In the sixth lesson of *Elizabeth Costello*, entitled "The Problem of Evil," Costello gives a lecture in Amsterdam during which she discusses a book (an actual book) by Paul West entitled *The Very Rich Hours of Count von Stauffenberg* (1989). Costello does not say this, but the novel, it turns out, is quite a dreadful, florid affair that would seem not to merit so much attention. In *The Very Rich Hours of Count von Stauffenberg* West traces the story of von Stauffenberg, including a grim scene that Costello focuses on wherein Hitler's executioner murders the conspirators who tried to kill the dictator. Indeed, Colonel Claus Schenk Graf von Stauffenberg attempted to take Hitler's life during a crucial moment in Nazi history. On 20 July 1944, after lengthy planning and several unsuccessful attempts to assassinate the German Chancellor, von Stauffenberg detonated a bomb at a military briefing at the Wolf's Lair, Hitler's wartime military headquarters in what was then East Prussia and is now a tourist site in Poland. Amazingly, Hitler escaped with minor injuries while three others were killed and several were wounded. In treating the conspirators, Hitler decided to forgo the usual Nazi execution tactic of beheading because he wanted the 20 July plotters, as Ian Kershaw, in his massive biography of Hitler, notes: "hanged, hung up like meat-carcasses" (*Nemesis* 693). Further, "the executions were to be filmed and photographed . . . the macabre scene was illuminated with bright lights, like a film studio" (*Nemesis* 693). Kershaw reports that Albert Speer, architect and armaments minister, later remembered seeing some execution photographs on Hitler's map table; the film was shown to some SS men and civilians. After the failed assassination attempt, five thousand people, including the families of some of the plotters, were arrested; according to Kershaw, Hitler quipped: "We wiped out the class struggle on the Left, but unfortunately forgot to finish off the class struggle on the Right" (*Nemesis* 691). In other words, Hitler wished the conservative aristocrats such as von Stauffenberg had been wiped out along with the communists.

Valkyrie (2008), a big budget Hollywood film starring Tom Cruise as von Stauffenberg, and framed as having been "based on a true story," traces the 20 July plot. In the imaginary presented in this film and broadcast in what could be termed Hollywood's "year of the good Nazi"—I am thinking of *The Reader* (2008) and *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* (2008), both of which feature sympathetic Nazis—von Stauffenberg's motivation for assassinating Hitler was strictly moral. In contrast to the historical record, the "civilian deaths, the murder of Jews" upsets Tom Cruise's Nazi and he thus vows to eradicate the concentration camps. The close of the film cites

a German resistance memorial. It is not surprising that, at this particular juncture, a film should be released that so carefully distorts von Stauffenberg's motivations and creates a fantasy of a good Nazi whose conscience could not bear the thought of the camps. However, the film glibly overlooks the fact that von Stauffenberg and his circle were committed Nazis who wanted a different Nazi Germany, one without, it is true, Hitler, but one that maintained most of the goals of the Third Reich (see Picaber; Jones).

West's version of the story of the 20 July plot interests Costello because it highlights how we as readers (and her as a reader of West's book) suffer through the brush with evil with which the experience of the execution room has left her. Coetzee has Costello focus on a moment when Nazis were murdering other Nazis rather than Jews or other innocent victims as an example of the problem of evil, a representative of what she calls the "darker territories of the soul" (160). West's novel is a distinctly curious choice on Coetzee's part because it does not focus on Nazis killing Jews but rather on Nazis murdering each other. The conspirators had been, until immediately before their assassination attempt, high-ranking Nazis and believers in Hitler's vision. They did not try to kill Hitler because he murdered Jews; rather, they tried to kill Hitler because they sought a post-Hitlerian Germany where aristocrats like von Stauffenberg were in charge. West's novel thus supremely exemplifies the muddying of innocence and guilt that epitomizes the relationship between victim and perpetrator in *Disgrace*, and that, at a larger level, reflects on the difficult problem of degrees of complicity that Coetzee develops. The guilty murdering the guilty. There is no room here for a simple distribution of guilt and innocence; innocence and guilt do not change places (I'm thinking here of Melville's "Billy Budd") because there is no possibility for innocence. *Elizabeth Costello* discusses the Holocaust through the problematic voice of Costello, who is justifiably critiqued for her comparison of slaughterhouses to concentration camps. Perhaps not surprisingly it is in the subtler Holocaust references embedded in *Disgrace* that Coetzee argues for an understanding of our complicity, to varying degrees, in evil on many scales.

DISGRACE

> In what distant deeps or skies
> Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
> On what wings dare he aspire?
> What the hand, dare seize the fire?
>
> —William Blake

Disgrace (1999) appeared in postapartheid South Africa after the 29 October 1998 report of the Amnesty Committee was handed to then President Mandela (see Mandela). *Disgrace* was written at the height of the Truth

and Reconciliation Commission's laudable efforts to exchange truth for amnesty, when there was confusion over the "future of the South African adversarial imagination" (Nixon 69). [4] Because of the timing of its writing and publication, *Disgrace* would have been expected to project a fantasy of a hopeful transformation in postapartheid South Africa. Indeed, this expectation aligns with the hopes pinned on what Lazarus terms the "emancipatory potential of independence" (*Resistance* 23). In the 1960s a body of African literature was written that, precisely because the potentiality of independence was overestimated, reflected an "obsession with loss and failure and betrayal" (*Resistance* 23). Because there is a trial in *Disgrace*, because the protagonist precisely declines to offer truth in exchange for amnesty, and because the novel features black perpetrators Coetzee was charged within South Africa with reproducing stereotypes about black South Africans.[5]

Indeed, as Rosemary Jolly notes, "Within the African National Congress, *Disgrace* was rejected outright as racist" (149). Derek Attridge asks if "this novel, as one of the most widely disseminated and forceful representations of post-apartheid South Africa, impedes the difficult enterprise of rebuilding the country?" (*Ethics* 164). Peter McDonald notes that the "ANC used *Disgrace* as an historical witness to the persistence of racism among white South Africans" (323). As Isidore Diala puts it in reference to *Disgrace*, "Coetzee's black characters are perhaps too deprived, brutalized, and aggrieved to inspire hopes of racial harmony" (68).[6] Coetzee was charged, in essence, with failing adequately to distinguish between the innocent and the guilty, victim and perpetrator. The bleak close of the novel finds that the protagonist, David Lurie, who shows almost no compassion for anyone, has bonded with a mangy dog (who limps à la Byron); Lurie gives this dog up to the fatal needles of Bev Shaw, the unlikely messiah of South Africa and mercy killer of unwanted animals. By establishing that the gruesome euthanasia project he and Bev carry out—putting hundreds of ill and unwanted dogs to sleep—bears the confusing name of "love," Coetzee merges love and death into a quagmire that makes the novel's close simultaneously compelling and maddening. In this backwards world, murder becomes love and salvation, leaving one to wonder about the state of postapartheid South Africa, where this final means of escape is a better option than continuing to live in the complicated present. Just as this killing of dogs is mostly described in loving terms, all victims and perpetrators are woven together, so that guilt, innocence, confession, forgiveness, and reconciliation are impossible to determine.

In discussing the geographical setting of the rural sections of *Disgrace*, Gareth Cornwell argues that choosing Salem was part of Coetzee's reflection on the fraught politics of land use in South African history:

> [T]he fundamental *casus belli* [in the Eastern Cape] was the question of land, and the history of the region known to this day as "the border"

> (or just "Border") is a history of strife that is everywhere inscribed in the landscape. . . . Will it ever be (or was it ever) possible, Coetzee seems to be asking, for a white South African to express a love for the land uncontaminated by the guilt of colonial conquest and dispossession? . . . And in Coetzee's case, this response includes a fierce attachment to the South African landscape and the simple beauty of farm life. ("*Disgrace*land" 43, 47)

Postcolonial landscapes reflect both the trauma of the strife enacted on them but also become sites of deep attachment; by inserting into the South African landscape a series of engrossing and mystifying Holocaust metaphors Coetzee continues to explore the connections between imperialism and Nazism.

Disgrace is told from the viewpoint of David Lurie, a possibly Jewish professor at the University of Cape Town, and an expert on the Romantic poets (he models himself on and creates an opera about Byron); Lurie has an affair with a student who denounces him, thus "disgracing" him, whereupon he seeks refuge on his daughter's farm in the Eastern Cape.[7] Virtually all of the characters highlight the absence of innocence, but especially Lurie's white daughter, Lucy, who insists on seeing herself in historical rather than personal terms. Shortly after Lurie retreats to Lucy's farm, three black youths attack them, burning Lurie, raping Lucy, and robbing the house. Petrus, Lucy's neighbor, seems to have vacated his house during the attack and is related to one of the attackers, thus indicating his complicity. We are given to understand that Petrus either allowed the attack to happen or planned it in order to subjugate Lucy. Instead of telling the police about the most violent part of the siege—her rape—Lucy merely reports the material property loss. Lurie fails to understand his daughter's reticence until Lucy explains her self-consciousness as historically emplotted in South African history. As white, she feels she must suffer to make up for the sins of her white brethren. Because Lurie's point of view focalizes the entire novel, his character filters our understanding of Lucy's thoughts so that we do not have direct access to her consciousness. In explaining that it was "history speaking through them," Lurie tries to assuage his daughter's sense that the perpetrators attacked her with "personal hatred" (156). When Lucy refuses to testify about the most brutal aspect of the attack Lurie beseeches her: "You want to make up for the wrongs of the past, but this is not the way to do it" (133). And again: "You wish to humble yourself before history. But the road you are following is the wrong one" (160). Coetzee thus represents the overwhelming sense of his characters' entrapment in historical strictures. This echoes a moment in *Age of Iron* where Mrs. Curren recognizes the legacy of guilt into which she was born: "A crime was committed long ago . . . So long ago that I was born into it. It is part of my inheritance. It is part of me, I am part of it" (164). While, on the one hand, Lucy sees the attack as deriving from personal hatred, on the

other hand, she clings to the larger historical understanding of the attack as revenge for the violence of white perpetrators against blacks during the apartheid and colonial eras.

Indeed, *Disgrace* functions along a series of reversals that muddy the terrain between innocence and guilt. Lurie, who is initially questioned by his colleagues over his affair but who resists confession, in turn tries to force a confession from Lucy. Petrus, who in "olden days" would have been a mere helper, in the terms of the novel a "dog-man," becomes the master and Lurie the helper. Lurie, who had been the perpetrator in his scandalous affair with an undergraduate, Melanie Isaacs, becomes a victim who suffers physically and emotionally due to the siege. It is this series of reversals that makes the novel's argument about complicity so hard to fathom. Because the innocent refuse innocence, because victim and perpetrator live in close proximity, help each other out, and need each other, reconciliation is severely compromised and all are complicit. While the novel can be seen, but only in the beginning, as critiquing the aim of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, to forge a new South Africa out of the honesty required to tell painful stories, the discourse associated with this confessional mode eventually entices Lurie and he becomes immersed in the world of the Animal Welfare League—the representative of what he had previously dismissed as "New Age mumbo jumbo" (84). Thus, while the novel offers no easy reconciliation, Lurie's immersion in the world he initially mocked highlights how humbled he has become in order to face the limited options for reconciliation in the postapartheid era.

It is through the Animal Welfare League that Lurie participates in the incineration of the dogs Bev Shaw has euthanized with her needles. Jacqueline Rose suggests that *Disgrace* asks, "How do you get from dissociation—a consciously or unconsciously willed refusal to connect to the horrors going on around you, a drastic failure of historical imagination . . . to empathy with, to being able to think yourself into the being of, a dog?" (193). In her reading of *Disgrace*, Gayatri Spivak connects the dogs to Kafka's metaphor at the close of *The Trial*: "'Like a dog!' he said; it was as if the shame of it must outlive him."[8] Further intensifying the echo with Kafka, the word Lurie uses for killing the dogs is *Lösung* (142, 218). Coetzee, who is fluent in German, French, Dutch, Afrikaans, and likely Italian, translates *Lösung* as "sublimation," with the parenthetical caveat that "(German [is] always to hand with an appropriately blank abstraction)" (142). But *Lösung* forcefully resonates with the Final Solution, *Endlösung*, first used on 20 May 1941 to refer to the Nazi genocide (Gilbert, *The Holocaust* 152). As Anke Pinkert eloquently phrases it, "As *Disgrace* took me to the unfamiliar terrain of post-apartheid South Africa, the German words scattered throughout the novel had an uncanny presence. First seemingly harmless—*ländlich* (rural), *eingewurzelt* (rooted), and then there it was: *lösen, Lösung* (solution—final solution?), loudly echoing in the South African landscape the German atrocities committed in the name of racial purity" (1; see also

McDonald 329). Pinkert, from an East German perspective, underlines the deep connection between *Lösung* and the Shoah.

These Holocaust references in *Disgrace* intensify when Lurie takes it upon himself to bring the dogs to the hospital's incinerator; workers at the incinerator stand ready to convey the dogs to the fire, but Lurie finds that they do not perform this task with the necessary respect for the dead animals. So he does it: "For his idea of the world, a world in which men do not use shovels to beat corpses into a more convenient shape for processing" (146). When he leaves Lucy's farm for a brief period to return to Cape Town he wonders if reconciliation will ever be granted him for neglecting this duty: "the dogs released from life within the walls of the clinic will be tossed into the fire unmarked, unmourned. For that betrayal, will he ever be forgiven?" (178). These Holocaust allusions are part of Coetzee's long-standing interest in complicity that is the condition of possibility for genocide globally. Minimal and local as it is, Lurie *acts* (as in political action) when he refuses to let the dogs be treated carelessly. In this way, he refuses to be complicit. By placing the Holocaust here, in South Africa, after the end of apartheid, Coetzee forces us to reckon with our own complicity in evil everywhere.

In Coetzee's texts, everyone, even children, even "innocent" children, are embedded in historically determined guilt. The refrain from the bleak and unforgettable moment in Thomas Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* in which the children, after their murder-suicide, leave the note "*Done because we are too menny*" (405) repeats throughout *Disgrace*. The dogs in *Disgrace* are described as too many (85, 142) several times before Coetzee directly (but without attribution) quotes Hardy (146). The reference to Hardy deepens the corruption of any sense of innocence that victims might have. For the innocent child who will matter most in *Disgrace* is the baby Lucy carries at the close of the novel, the mixed race child conceived when Lucy was raped, the child whose innocence is already disrupted by the violence of her or his coming-into-being. In the historical reversal of the white baas (boss) taking advantage of his black slaves or servants (a situation explored by Coetzee in *Dusklands*, *Waiting for the Barbarians*, and *In the Heart of the Country*) Lucy will bear a child whose mixed race will make him or her "a child of this earth" (216). Thus what Coetzee consistently argues, and what the Holocaust references help him achieve but also severely complicate, is that we are all complicit, albeit to varying degrees, none of us can lay claim to innocence either because of our historical emplotment or because of our refusal to see. Refusing to see, refusing to save, refusing to empathize are all brought to a head in Freud's dream of the burning child, to which Coetzee turns several times.

In *Age of Iron* (1990) Coetzee references, without citation, Freud's dream: "'Father, can't you see I'm burning?' implored the child, standing at his father's bedside. But his father, sleeping on, dreaming, did not see" (110). Indeed, Coetzee notes that "the traces of my dealings with Freud lie

all over my writings" (*Doubling* 245). From Chapter 7 of *The Interpretation of Dreams*, this dream of the burning child has become iconic as an encapsulation of the father's failure to achieve empathy, and as a representative of the guilt we bear even when we are not perpetrators. Freud reports that this dream was recounted to him by a woman who had heard it at a lecture and then redreamed it. Thus, the dream is given to us from an unknown source and through a cloud of mediation. The dream takes place after a devastated father, who had been tending his beloved child, suffers his son's death. He leaves the body of the child, illuminated by candles, in the care of an elderly man and lies down to rest. The father then wakes up and realizes that the elderly watchman had dozed off and that one of the dead child's bandages had been burned by a candle that had somehow fallen on his arm. Freud describes the dream thusly: "After a few hours' sleep, the father had a dream that *his child was standing beside his bed, caught him by the arm and whispered to him reproachfully: 'Father, don't you see I'm burning?'*" (547–548). Freud interprets this dream as the father's fulfilling his wish to have the child alive again, but he does not delve, as do bevies of commentators, from Lacan to Žižek to Cathy Caruth, on the aspect of reproach.[9] In discussing the dream Freud notes that the child would most likely have said to the father "I'm burning" in reference to his fever, and Freud suggests that the other part of the sentence, "Father, don't you see" was most likely uttered during "some other highly emotional situation of which we are in ignorance" (548). So Freud leaves open the possibility as to with what, while living, the child may have reproached the father. The child reproaching the father, who, after all could not prevent his beloved son's death, indicates the father's guilt at not being able to save his child. Coetzee alludes to this reproach when he depicts the father, still sleeping, still dreaming and not seeing. Not seeing, not witnessing, and being blind are powerful and recurrent themes in Coetzee's work that ultimately fuel his argument about complicity and that resonate with the tropes of the failure to witness and, further, to act in resistance that form the heart of much Holocaust discourse.

Within the context of *Disgrace*, the failure of witnessing is focalized on the moment when Lurie failed to save his daughter from being raped. During the attack Lurie was doused with spirits and then set on fire and locked in a toilet. This failure of the father not only to witness but of course more importantly to intervene and save his child is linked to Freud's unknown father's dream of the burning child in several instances. Shortly after being released from the hospital with his burns to care for, Lurie has a vision (which he then describes to Lucy as a dream): "He has had a vision: Lucy has spoken to him; her words—'Come to me, save me!'—still echo in his ears. In the vision she stands, hands outstretched, wet hair combed back, in a field of white light" (103). Freud's imploring child asking the father to save him from burning has been transformed into Lucy, already violated, unable any longer to be saved, begging her father to save her; a field of

white light replaces the burning. Later in the text, as Lurie writes his opera on Byron, "there emerges from the dark another voice" that turns out to be Byron's neglected five-year-old daughter Allegra, burning with fever and dying of malaria while her father gallivants around Italy: "*Why have you left me? Come and fetch me!* calls Allegra. *So hot, so hot, so hot! . . . Why have you forgotten me?*" (186). As Freud had noted in his commentary on the dream, the heat of the child was prefigured before the literal burning of his corpse when the child had told the father he was burning of fever. Thus Coetzee again refers to this dream in both of these moments from *Disgrace* and thereby deepens his argument about the entrenchment of complicity and guilt in almost all interactions.

Coetzee uses the metaphor of burning and the reference to Freud's dream to describe the lack of empathy for the victims that enables complicity and that constitutes the "particular horror" (*Elizabeth Costello* 79) of the Nazi concentration camps. "They [the perpetrators] said, 'It must be the dead who are being burned today, making the air stink and falling in ash on my cabbages.' They did not say, 'How would it be if I were burning?' They did not say, 'I am burning, I am falling in ash'" (*Elizabeth Costello* 79). The resonance with father can't you see I'm burning and the argument there about the failure of seeing interestingly transforms here. Unlike the children (in Freud's dream, Lucy, Allegra) Costello's perpetrators do not say "I am burning" with shame. While perpetrators might try to lay the blame for their actions on the chain of command, they should have no one to reproach but themselves. While there are clearly moments in the Holocaust context when what the survivor Primo Levi has so famously termed the "grey zone" between innocence and guilt comes into play, there are also millions of cases where innocent people were murdered.

Slavoj Žižek directly connects Freud's dream of the burning child with a reproach that a Holocaust survivor might launch who, "unable to save his son from the crematorium, is haunted afterwards by his reproach: "*Vater, siehst du nicht, dass ich verbrenne?*" ("Freud" 3).[10] In another context, Žižek suggests that the "famous Freudian dream of a son who appears to his father and reproaches him with 'Father, can't you see I'm burning?' could be simply translated into '*Father, can't you see I'm enjoying?*'—can't you see I'm alive, burning with enjoyment?" (*Enjoy* 124–125).[11] In commenting on this, Robert Rushing notes that "reflection on enjoyment leads inevitably to a consideration of catastrophe" (127). In this context, we might reverse Rushing's equation and note how reflection on catastrophe leads to consideration of enjoyment. Žižek's and Rushing's reflections hint at the disturbing possibilities (if teased out too far) of the resonances between the Holocaust and the burning of the dogs in *Disgrace*. Lurie, after all, enjoys, feels a certain amount of peace from, the incineration of these impoverished, loveless animals. But Coetzee's references to Freud's dream of the burning child are ultimately more about complicity than enjoyment.

Connecting the appearance in *Age of Iron* of "Father, can't you see I'm burning?" and in *Disgrace* of the father who is burning and therefore cannot prevent the daughter's rape to the perpetrators in *Elizabeth Costello*, the relationship Coetzee makes here among burning and witnessing and the failure of empathy intensifies. By returning repeatedly to the dream of the burning child and by turning multiply to the Holocaust, Coetzee wants us to see everything we daily refuse. By using the Holocaust as a consistent trope in his writing Coetzee demonstrates the breadth of the global reach of the landscapes of Holocaust postmemory; his texts heighten our understanding that complicity with evil is the condition of possibility for genocide. We are all complicit, to radically varying degrees, his bleak texts never cease to remind us; none of us are completely innocent. Almost no unsavory stone remains unturned in his compelling but deeply distressing work; he thus holds up to us a mirror to see the grim face we deny. But the question as to what we do with our complicity is left maddeningly unresolved. Elizabeth Costello, the most politically active of all Coetzee's characters, is also portrayed as a bit of a nut-bar. Her extremes and other characters' impatience with her resonate with our own and interrupt our sympathy for her; we remain ultimately, perhaps, unconvinced by her analogizing between the Holocaust and the killing of animals. David Lurie offers a weak form of action when he, from his state of disgrace, graces the dogs; but the form of euthanasia that this grace takes attenuates it. Thus, while Coetzee brilliantly and powerfully demonstrates our high levels of complicity in evil from minute to enormous, from Russia to Australia to America to South Africa, from the colonial enterprise to the Vietnam War to apartheid to the Holocaust, he refuses to offer a clear-cut call to action. Is it enough for us to recognize that we are all burning with shame? "How," asks *Diary of a Bad Year*'s Señor C, "in the face of this shame to which I am subjected, do I behave? How do I save my honour?" (39).

> "So we've been eating a *Talking* stag."
>
> The discovery didn't have exactly the same effect on all of them. Jill, who was new to that world, was sorry for the poor stag and thought it rotten of the giants to have killed him. Scrubb, who had been in that world before and had at least one Talking beast as his dear friend, felt horrified; as you might feel about a murder. But Puddleglum, who was Narnian born, was sick and faint, and felt as you would feel if you found you had eaten a baby. (113)

In *The Silver Chair*, C.S. Lewis brilliantly brings out some of the hypocrisies that Coetzee also made us aware of. In Lewis's novel, there had been intimations of forthcoming cannibalism as we are given to suspect that Jill and Scrubb will be eaten by the giants who are serving them some rather delicious meat. However, a strict Narnian rule is being broken: Never Eat the Talking Animals. That rule is akin to the injunction against cannibalism

that grounds the colonialist imaginary; eating a Talking animal is rather like eating a (human) baby. This Narnian moment puts into play the very difference between animal and human that Coetzee works through by having Friday's tongue out. Without speech he is more akin to the animals and yet his insistent humanity nonetheless perpetually manifests, especially in the scenes wherein he enacts curious rituals with petals on the sea (Chapter 8). As Michael K moves through the allegorical war-torn South African landscape he is not unlike those displaced during and after World War II who risked a great deal to move through war-torn European landscapes, or indeed, those who were forced on death marches through unknown terrain for an unknown reason to an unknown location (Chapters 5 and 7).

By closing this book with an analysis of a South African writer I examine at once how the Holocaust figures outside the U.S., Israel, and Europe and how colonialism, racism, fascism, speciesism, and genocide are interconnected. I do not intend to make Coetzee "representative" of Holocaust treatment outside the well-trodden American/Israeli/European context. His work is far too complex, varied, engrossing, for that. But I gesture towards the long shadows cast by the Holocaust (in Geoffrey Hartman's phrasing) and the multinational scope of landscapes of Holocaust postmemory. "Burning Silence" tracks shifts in Holocaust representations in Coetzee's work to mirror our changing relationship to this trauma. From the beginning Coetzee has been invested in the Holocaust and its ramifications for the ever-changing South African landscape. In his early works the Holocaust appears as a shadow, as a trembling below the surface, only occasionally bubbling up and becoming visible. In his later works, the Holocaust is powerfully present and is used most often as an analogy convincing enough to convey the horror of killing animals.

In a moving article about the aftereffects of the Rwandan genocide Philip Gourevitch describes his interviews with perpetrators, victims, and bystanders fifteen years after the horrific events that ravaged that country. One of the perpetrators, Girumuhatse, said that he both enjoyed and regretted killing Tutsi, "In 1994 we were just like animals, we could not reason. It was the state that told us the enemy was a Tutsi, and when I killed it was like communal work duty" (40). Girumhatse here touches upon a crucial aspect of Coetzee's project: the place of the animal in genocide. For Coetzee is brilliant at uncovering both how human victims, when perceived as animals, are then perceived as ripe for slaughter and also how, conversely, when we humans dub ourselves animal this offers a magnificent escape clause for immoral behavior. By focusing here on the Holocaust in Coetzee's writing I explore how the event casts its shadow across global landscapes and, conversely, how the traumas of apartheid and postapartheid South Africa are affected by their implicit comparison with the trauma of the Holocaust.

Indeed, animalization is connected to the whole question of space: so many Holocaust survivors recall that not only were they treated like animals

but that they were often housed with animals or in spaces normally allotted to animals such as barns and cattle cars. But it is sometimes through an appreciation of the landscape that prisoners could feel themselves to be human rather than animal.

Indeed, changes in space alter memory. Leo Spitzer, whose parents emigrated to Bolivia in order to escape the Nazi genocide, returned in 1978 to Rechnitz, Austria, to his grandparents' house, which had become a ruin: "only traces of a foundation and decaying wall are visible from the street, and I am suddenly reluctant to get out of the car, walk into the ruin, and make physical contact with these remains" (6). In *Hotel Bolivia* Spitzer recounts a complex layering of nostalgic memory whereby once his parents settled in Bolivia, they to some degree re-created the Austria from which they had been expelled. They sought, in other words, the landscape in which they felt at home, even though that land had ejected them precisely on the grounds that they did not belong; they sought this landscape in the new landscape of Bolivia, which itself was working through layers of colonization, war, and the tension between the erosion and preservation of native cultures. Spitzer remembers that the Austrian club frequented by his parents "connected me . . . to a reconstructed version of Viennese bourgeois culture in particular and to Austro-Germanic *kultur* more generally, a cultural environment and discourse I had never known in its actual setting but encountered only as an already nostalgic reconstruction in a situation of displacement" (150). Many of the characters in *Landscapes of Holocaust Postmemory* have experienced something of this sense of displacement and nostalgia for landscapes that are lost to them or that may never have been home. All three of the photographers discussed in "Burning Images" (Part Two) are Americans who photographed in Europe—with very different approaches, subjects, and outcomes, but all three grappled with this overlaid sense of confusion about home. The characters who populate Coetzee's novels discussed in "Burning Silence" navigate landscapes that are either beset with violence or at least severely complicated by the legacies of colonialism in South Africa or elsewhere.

Concluding Remarks

On 3 August 1942, Emanuel Ringelblum buried thousands of documents in tin boxes and milk cans under the Warsaw Ghetto. He had taken it upon himself to collect stories, poems, diaries, artifacts, and countless other items in an effort to provide a rich and complex time capsule of Jewish life in Poland before the Nazi genocide (see Kassow). In the spring of 1945 Herbert Molner's grandfather buried his Wehrmacht uniform in Southern Germany (Chapter 6); the landscape itself holds an archive of victim, perpetrator, bystander, and other memories. By using landscape metaphorically I hope I have indicated the grounding of types of memory even when space per se is not the issue. Saidiya Hartman captures this in *Lose Your Mother* (2007), which recounts her experience in retracing a slave trade route. Throughout her beautifully written text Hartman grapples with the absence of traces of the trauma of slavery under (or above) the bustle of contemporary life in Ghana:

> Taking in the festival of color and sound before me, what I found troubling was that the scars of slavery were no more apparent in Elmina than in Boston. . . . I scanned the town, hungry for a detail or trace of the hundreds of thousands of persons deported from the Gold Coast . . . [T]here had been no one to see them off and say I love you and we will never forget you. These words were of no use now. (53–54)

Hartman here depicts the unnerving sense that even when seeking memory traces of trauma one may be confronted with the quotidian bustle of the life that came after. It is this jarring disjunction between the Holocaust as it appears in memory and the often utterly transformed landscape that this book has explored.

J.M. Coetzee's observation of a Kafka short story perfectly describes the structure of *Landscapes*: "any putative temporal ordering of events at a detailed level becomes honeycombed with inconsistencies and internal contradictions. There is no smooth course of narrative development that will lead from beginnings to the present moment of narration. Between then and now is always a break" (*Doubling* 229). In other words, this project charted some

chronological changes in how the Holocaust is understood and represented, but it has not followed a straight line; the ineluctable break between then and now remains ever present. Within each section a "honeycombed" chronological change in how the physical or metaphorical landscape of Holocaust postmemory remained visible. "Burning Landscapes" began with a description of a place—a particularly loaded place to be sure—that was transformed from Freud's mushroom hunting grounds to Hitler's holiday retreat to a recreation spot for anyone affluent enough to pay. What these physical changes betray is a transformation in the psychological landscape that enables enough forgetting for a commercial enterprise to flourish. "Burning Images" started in the same landscape, this time through an analysis of Lee Miller capturing the conflagration of the Nazi spiritual home at the close of the war. The transformation we can see moving through the three photographers I discuss in this part echoes the transformation in the landscape of Hitler's holiday retreat discussed in Part One, from the immediacy and madness of the postwar moment to a reflection by the child of survivors to a more distanced playing with the image of the Nazi. While the first two parts commenced with World War II, the third part began in 1974, just before the mass explosion of discourse about the Holocaust in fiction, films, and so on, that is generally dated to 1978, the year when the miniseries *Holocaust* was broadcast on television. Soon thereafter Claude Lanzmann's *Shoah* (1985) was released and an increased attention to Holocaust concerns has continued unabated ever since. In all three parts we can see that by the early 2000s a different sensibility regarding the Holocaust emerges. There is either a sense, as indicated by the presence of the hotel on the Obersalzberg discussed in Part One, of moving on or forgetting, or, as in the work of Collier Schorr (Part Two), a sense that Nazi iconography is ripe for play. Or a sense, as evidenced in Coetzee's work (Part Three), that the Holocaust can be instrumentalized for other causes.

As I finish this book, I am overcome, as I suppose many of us are at the end of a long project, with the weight of all that *could have been*. The beautiful work of so many other artists and writers that take on questions of landscape, memory, trauma; the myriad directions this book *could have* taken, the parallel tracks that I did not pursue. Much remains on the cutting-room floor; much remains to be said. There are, for example, somewhere in Germany trees planted in the shape of a Swastika; they are still there and because they have grown now their bright yellow leaves contrast sharply with the green leaves of the surrounding trees. They offer a landscape embedded with a form of memory that was supposed to be a continuing encomium to the Thousand Year Reich.[1] There are many, many other places, apart from the Obersalzberg, where important Nazi sites have become sites of pleasure or are simply not remembered at all. At Babi Yar, a recent controversy erupted when an announcement was made that a hotel was planned on the space of the 1941 massacre.[2] Walking in Vienna some years ago, to take another example, I sought out one of the places where

Hitler, as a young and failing artist, had lived; I found his apartment only to discover that it had become a hotel with an innocuous, English name such as the Dew Drop Inn. No plaque in a cityscape that chooses to forget, reasonably enough.

As I write we are surrounded by landscapes of catastrophe. The impending doom of global warming and how our planet's environment will change beyond recognition—and in all likelihood beyond the capacity of humans to inhabit it—haunts us.[3] James Hansen, director of NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies and an expert on global warming, argues that those fossil-fuel companies that downplay the obvious dangers of climate change should be "tried for high crimes against humanity and nature" and he equates freight trains that carry coal to "death trains" (Kolbert 39). In a similar vein, but with a comedic edge, the activist group Yes Men brought out the dangers of the apocalyptic landscape by posing as one Florian Osenberg. An engineer at the University of Hanover, the historical personage Werner Osenberg was involved in identifying scientists whose Nazism was fervent enough that the regime could rely on their knowledge to further their war efforts. So when the Yes Men presented to Halliburton a faux suit that could save a human from global warming they implicitly linked experimentations of Nazi science with the planet-destroying effects of global warming.[4] Places, the spaces we inhabit, are in the process of undergoing cataclysmic change at the same time as we struggle to understand how spaces associated with human upon human violence retain the memories of what came before.

Notes

NOTES TO THE INTRODUCTION

1. Susan Suleiman has noted that there is a generation, as it were, between. She terms them the "1.5" generation—those who were children, often in hiding, and who survived but not in camps, as many of the adult survivors did (*Crises* 178–214).

NOTES TO CHAPTER 1

1. There are thousands of instances of public knowledge of Nazi violence in the *New York Times* alone; see, for example, James; Steed; "Jews Seen Doomed"; "Another Stuermer"; "Nazi Control." One of the best historical works on the period before 1939 is Friedländer's *Nazi Germany*; see also Noakes and Pridham; Kershaw, *Nazi Dictatorship*.
2. See Friedländer's classic study, *Reflections on Nazism: An Essay on Kitsch and Death*.
3. *Band of Brothers* (2001) is a ten-part HBO miniseries based on Stephen Ambrose's book by the same name; part ten, *Points*, which covers the capture of the Eagle's Nest, was directed by Mikael Salomon and written by Erik Jendresen and Erik Bork.
4. See Carlyle; for Hitler on Napoleon and Frederick the Great, see Hitler, *Secret* 308–312.
5. Chaussy 65–72, 168; other dispossessed former owners of property on the Obersalzberg have sued the Bavarian government for return of their land (see Boyes, "Hitler's Alpine Lair").
6. James Wilson has reproduced many of these propaganda images in his useful but most unfortunately pro-Nazi book, *Hitler's Alpine Retreat*.
7. From 1960 to 1992 over seven million tourists came to the Eagle's Nest (Beierl 154).
8. On the Duke of Windsor's connections to the Nazi regime, see Allen.
9. See Herzog, *Die Untersbergsage* and *Hymnen und Pamphlete*; Foucart reports that Herzog lived in exile in Switzerland from 1934 until 1939 and that he eventually acquired a visa to the U.S. (with the help of Albert Einstein and Thomas Mann) in 1941 but only arrived there in 1945.
10. See Cassidy 180–195; for Hitler's views on the Passion play at Oberammergau, see Trevor-Roper 563; and Shapiro.
11. Journalists sometimes claim that the Holocaust was planned at the Berghof; see Weigelt who asserts that it was "among the idyllic slopes of the surrounding

mountains that the Holocaust was discussed and planned." Goebbels quoted in Kershaw, *Hubris* 473; the relevant sentence from Goebbels's diary is: "Er [Hitler] hat sich oben in der Einsamkeit der Berge die Situation [i.e., about German Jews] Reiflich überlegt und ist nun zum Entschluß gekommen" (786).

12. Hitler discusses Karl May in *Secret* 257. There is considerable disagreement about Hitler's reading habits; see Ryback and Miskolczy; for a bibliography of Hitler's private library, see Gassert and Mattern.
13. For Hitler's disparaging views of Hanfstanegl's business-oriented approach, see Hitler, *Secret* 458; and Trevor-Roper 564.
14. The Eagle's Nest and the Obersalzberg are often covered in travel sections and other tourist literature; for examples, see Gloin; Thomas; Green; Cook. See also Hanisch.
15. The postwar fate of Martin Bormann has remained an enduring mystery. He was tried and sentenced to death in absentia at Nuremberg, but speculation continues as to whether he may have escaped to South America after the war (see Manning). Bormann, seeing the war going badly for Germany, confiscated a Jewish estate in Schluchsee in the Black Forest and built a similar estate to the one on the Obersalzberg there; he also had many of the valuables from the Bormannhaus transferred to the Black Forest (Geiss 177–178). Bormann's eight children were distributed to various foster homes after the war and his eldest son, also named Martin, remembers that on the Obersalzberg, as he often ferried letters between Hitler and his father, that "whenever Hitler walked into a room, it suddenly felt cold, as though everything in the room was freezing" (Lebert and Lebert 115). But even though Martin Junior became a priest who spoke out against the crimes of the Nazis (while continuing to love his father), the Bavarian government could not offer him a post in that part of Germany because "in Bavaria particularly, the name Bormann still had a nasty ring to it. Not so much because of the crimes of National Socialism . . . but mainly because so many Berchtesgaden farms had been ruthlessly appropriated by Bormann senior" (Lebert and Lebert 116).
16. For rumors that Fegelein was Eva Braun's lover, see "Hitler's Mistress"; for a reading of *Moloch*, see Buck-Morss.
17. Hitler remarks that François-Poncet was a Nazi sympathizer and offers great praise for his intelligence and his flawless German in *Secret* 225–227.
18. Hitler turned his imperial attention toward strategically important Czechoslovakia because the Sudetenland contained three million Germans who Hitler claimed were being suppressed, because Czech President Eduard Beneš was sympathetic to the communists to the east, and also because Czechoslovakia would be a highly strategic base of operations for expanding German interests in the east. The Versailles treaty at the end of the First World War stipulated that France would protect Czechoslovakia and that Britain would help secure French interests. However, neither Britain nor France was anxious to embark on another war. In his megalomaniacal plans to obtain Czechoslovakia, Hitler was relying on this British and French reluctance to engage in war. There is footage of Chamberlain's return from Berchtesgaden; see "March of Time". See also Kershaw, *Nemesis*; and Gilbert and Gott, *The Appeasers*.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 2

1. Another text that looks at the victimization experiences of Germans and that has been widely reviewed is by an anonymous author and is entitled *A Woman in Berlin*; see Annan's review.

2. Jede Beschäftigung mit den wahren Schreckensszenen des Untergangs hat bis heute etwas Illegitimes, beinahe Voyeuristisches, dem auch diese Notizen nicht ganz entgehen konnten. Darum wunderte es mich auch nicht, als mir ein Lehrer in Detmold vor einiger Zeit erzählte, er habe als Junge in den Jahren gleich nach dem Krieg des öfteren mitangesehen, wie unter dem Ladentisch eines Hamburger Buchgeschäfts Fotografien von den nach dem Feuersturm auf den Straβen herumliegenden Leichen befingert und gehandelt wurden wie sonst nur die Erzeugnisee der Pornografie (Sebald, *Luftkrieg und Literatur* 104).
3. "Rev. of *Eva's Cousin*," *Publisher's Weekly*; see also Marsh; Mann.
4. [D]er Leichnam eines Hotelbaus (9).
5. Der Obersalzberg hatte sich in den Un-Ort verwandelt, der er schon immer war. Eine Mondlandschaft. Ein Trümmerfeld. Eine Wüste. Ein Ort nicht mehr von dieser Welt (66).
6. Keine Gedenktafeln, keine Orientierungshilfen. Nichts klärt darüber auf, wo man sich befindet (11).
7. Kershaw places Hitler's last day at the Berghof on 14 July 1944 (*Nemesis* 650), but Knauss has Hitler leave on the thirteenth and Marlene arrive on the fifteenth.
8. Die Frau, die für mich ein Rätsel ist, das ich lösen will. Deren Geheimnis mich interessiert, wie mich die Liebe, die Leidenschaft, das Verbotene daran interessieren. Die Frau, die die Geliebte von Adolf Hitler ist (33).
9. Fremdheit, voller Geheimnisse (36); Überall am Obersalzberg gab es Geheimnisse.Der ganze Berg war ein Geheimnis. Auch ich war ein Teil davon. Unbegreiflich. Geheim. Undurchschaubar (259).
10. [N]euen Gewalttaten (39); Die Berghof-Idee war das Wahre, das Schöne, das für alle Zeit Beständige in der vor unseren Augen zusammenbrechenden (309–310).
11. See Hoffmann. Interestingly, an image of Hitler with a dog taken by Hoffmann, from *Hitler: wie ihn keiner kennt*, is included in the *Homes & Gardens* article I discussed in Chapter 1, where it is attributed to Ignatius Phayre.
12. Hitler, *Secret* 188; for Baldur von Schirach, see Luža; Weyr; Fishman; and Wortmann.
13. Traudl Junge, who was Hitler's secretary from 1942 to 1945, discusses Henriette von Schirach's dismissal in her memoir, written in 1946 and published in Germany in 2002 (88); a film, *Blind Spot*, directed by André Heller in 2002, consists of interviews with Junge conducted by Melissa Müller.
14. Später, als wir nicht wussten, wohin wir gehen sollten, als wir kreuz und quer durch ein Land wanderten, das keine Heimat mehr für uns bot, zerstörte Städte. . . . da trug ich immer noch Evas BH bei mir. . . . Und doch schien es mir eines Tages ein schwerer Ballast, als mir einfiel, von wem es war. Ich wollte es nicht mehr haben. . . . Man stellte damals keine Fragen. . . . Die schwarzen Stiefel, von deren Tritten die Pflaster noch widerhallten, steckten irgendwo im Morast, in den sie Jahr für Jahr tiefer einsanken, bis nichts mehr von ihnen übrig war. Keine Archäologie würde sie ans Licht heben (61–62).
15. Der ganze Sexappeal martialischer Männlichkeit. Und ach, die Stiefel (122); ist es das Fluidum seiner Macht, das in mir einen Anfall sexueller Begehrlichkeit auslöst (318).
16. Das sind keine Menschen wie wir. . . . Ja, sagt er, Träume. Wie du und ich. Von einem Leben in Würde. Größe. Erhabenheit. Stolz. Tapferkeit. Das kennen die alles nicht. Wir schaffen eine Welt der Ideale und Werte (306).
17. [W]ird in ihrem Traum das Wort 'Obersturmbannführer' Gestalt gewinnen, ein ungeheures Wort, ein Wort voll dunkler Gewalt (127).

18. [D]ie sich mit Juden oder mit ausländischen Zwangsarbeitern einließen (30); Knauss (338); die sich schämende Nation (276); for an interesting look at shame, see Probyn.
19. Fünfundfünfzig Lichtjahre von hier entfernt steht Hitlers Berghof noch, rauchen die Schornsteine der Verbrennungsöfen in den Konzentrationslagern, rollen die Panzer, ist der Himmel noch glutrot von den brennenden Städten, liegt noch der Widerhall todbringender Befehle in der Luft (105).
20. Alles ist so weit weg von uns. . . . Wir wissen, dass er uns niemals je erreichen kann. . . . Nicht hier oben dem Berghof (94).
21. Durch Michail lernte ich die andere, die unsichtbare Seite des Obersalzbergs . . . im Licht ihrer ganzen Entsetzlichkeit zeigen (213).

NOTES TO CHAPTER 3

1. Interestingly, Peters uses the exact same image of the main living room from the "Souvenir of Berchtesgaden" album discussed in the following (see Figure 3.2).
2. See Kershaw (both volumes of *Hitler*) and G. Weinberg.
3. Benjamin: "Alle Bemühungen um die Ästhetisierung der Politik gipfeln in einem Punkt. Dieser eine Punkt ist der Krieg" (*Illuminationen* 175). For an extended discussion of the aestheticization of politics, see Kaplan, *Unwanted Beauty*; see also Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy, *Le mythe nazi*.
4. Milton quoted in Hirsch, "Nazi Photographs" 19; see also Didi-Huberman's fascinating study of violent perpetrator photographs and other images.
5. "Without Sanctuary: Lynching Photography in America" was an exhibit at the New York Historical Society from 14 March to 1 October 2000; a book by the same name was published by Twin Palms of Santa Fe, New Mexico, in 2000; also see the website: http://www.withoutsanctuary.org.
6. Its 138 rooms range from €279 to €2,500 ($337–$3,025) per night while spa prices range from €499 to €1,400 ($603–$1,694), depending on services rendered; these calculations were based on exchange rates in the *New York Times* on 9 January 2006 (C10).
7. See "High Finance" on the Bavarian government's reticence to sell rather than lease the land.
8. Now, almost five years later, the hotel seems to be losing money; http://www.earthtimes.org/articles/show/270300,luxury-hotel-at-hitlers-alpine-retreat-loses-money.html.
9. For Hitler on hunting, see Hitler, *Secret* 82. As testament that the hunting spirit is still alive on the Obersalzberg note that a local custom of shooting guns on Christmas Eve was observed as late as 1994 and probably still continues; see Esmarch.
10. Wilkinson compares Berchtesgaden to other genocide/disaster sites such as Pol Pot's house, 9/11's ground zero, the Kigali Genocide museum in Rwanda, and Auschwitz; see also Boyd.
11. The tourist, Irmgard Deich, quoted in A. Hall, "Outrage" 41; also see Fagan. Angela Lambert wrote an article in the *Independent* that claimed that Berchtesgaden needed to "join the present-day multicultural, multiracial, intermarrying reality of 21st century planet Earth" and thus invoked much reader ire ("Germany"); for responses, see letters in the *Independent* by Daniela Strebel, Jeremy Noakes (both 2 September), John Fielder (3 September); Lambert had also published a longer article on Berchtesgaden a year earlier in which she similarly felt the limitations of the locals ("In His Ideal World").

12. Quoted in A. Hall, "Luxury Hotel"; Friedman's response also noted in Losch, "Hotel Construction"; Boyes, "Luxury Spa"; and "Wellness." See also Demetriou; Rising.
13. Not only was the Hotel InterContinental controversial, but the Documentation Center, before it opened, was criticized by both Jewish groups and neo-Nazis; Dr. Samuels found the Documentation Center a "scheme to minimize the horrors of the Third Reich" while neo-Nazis wanted the ruins of the Obersalzberg complex to be disturbed by neither a hotel nor a Documentation Center; see Traynor.
14. See R. Bernstein, "Spa"; for more comments from Falthauser, see Stanaway.
15. See Krüger and Murray and the online United States Holocaust Museum exhibit on the 1936 Olympics: http://www.ushmm.org/museum/exhibit/online/olympics/.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 4

1. For a brilliant argument about the connection between aesthetics and the Nazi regime, see Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean Luc Nancy, *Le mythe nazi*. I also discuss this in my book-in-progress, *The Aesthetic Solution*. The titles of Miller's photographs are in flux. "The Bürgermeister's Daughter" (Fig. 4.2), for example, is often referred to as "Bürgermeister of Leipzig's Daughter Suicided" and "Fire Masks" (Fig. 4.4) is often titled "Women With Firemasks: Downshire Hill, London, 1941." I have endeavored to use the titles as supplied by the Lee Miller Archives.
2. The centenary exhibition, "The Art of Lee Miller" was shown at the following venues: Victoria & Albert Museum, London (15 September 2007–6 January 2008); Philadelphia Museum of Art (26 January–27 April 2008); San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (1 July–21 September 2008); Galerie nationale du Jeu de Paume, Paris (14 October 2008–11 January 2009). Other exhibits include: "The Surrealist and the Photographer," Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art and Dean Gallery, Edinburgh, 19 May–9 September 2001; "Lee Miller," International Center of Photography Midtown, New York 13 April–10 June 1990; "Lee Miller," Taidemuseo Tennispalatsi, Helsinki, 26 February–21 April 2002; "Lee Miller: Photographs, 1930–1970," Kunstmuseum, Wolfsburg, 9 September 2006–21 January 2007; "Lee Miller: Picasso en privat," Barcelona, Museu Picasso, 31 May–16 September 2007.
3. Miller's exhibit was at Levy from 30 December 1932 to 25 January 1933; see Ware and Barberie. Miller's show was reviewed in the *New York Times* on 31 December 1932 and the reviewer felt "her photographic work is singularly free from disconcerting tricks of overstatement, understatement, evasion and palimpsest" (qtd. in Ware and Barberie 79). See also Schnaffner and Jacobs, which has as its frontispiece a photo of Julien and Joella Levy taken by Lee Miller, and notes that Levy purchased Dalí's *The Persistence of Memory* in 1931 (69). Levy was also a fan of Man Ray's and Ray had photographed his future wife, Joella, daughter of Mina Loy; see Burke, "Loy-alism" for an interesting reading of Levy. *Vogue* gushed about the opening of one of Levy's new gallery spaces on 15 March 1938.
4. Since I began researching Miller there have been several dissertations devoted to her work, further testaments to the growing interest in her photography; among these are Caitlin S. Davis, "Lee Miller"; Ana Tavasci, "Lee Miller"; Karen Levine, "Model Protographer." For a breezy account of Miller's war-

time experience in the context of that of other women correspondents and photographers, see Sorel. There is talk of a film version of her life, initially to be played by Nicole Kidman and now, possibly, by Cate Blanchett. See "The Saga of a Wartime Superstar" 31 March 2005 (smh.com.au).

5. For other examples of Miller's wartime images not reproduced here, see 1940s British and American *Vogue* (some of the titles of the articles listed in bibliography); Miller, *Bloody but Unbowed* (which was published as *Grim Glory* in England); and Wheeler, *Britain at War*. In this last text, Miller's photographs are included among those of British journalists without attribution because, in Wheeler's words, "Photography is, in fact, a somewhat anonymous medium" (40). He also added that to the work of British photographers he has added "a few by Miss Lee Miller, an American photographer resident in England" (40).
6. The photograph of German citizens being forced to witness Buchenwald after liberation is included in the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum archives and is reprinted in A. Penrose, *Lee Miller's War* 163.
7. There are other examples of popular magazines publishing unlikely stories and images. For example, as Sara Horowitz notes, Ilona Karmel first published a short story about survival in *Mademoiselle* in August 1950; see Horowitz, "Ilona Karmel."
8. On the same point as Cox's but some forty-six years later, Nancy Hall-Duncan noted, "Ironically, one of the most enduring forms of photographic surrealism during these years was its adaptation in fashion and advertising photography. This was not always to surrealism's advantage, for mass media interpretations were often shallow or misunderstood versions of highly complex surrealist concepts" (11).
9. For Butler's comments on Mapplethorpe, see "Force of Fantasy."
10. Lyford also claims of *Nude Bent Forward* that the "gender [of the subject] is unclear" (129). To me, it is unmistakably a female form, and Lyford seems to admit this when she notes of the same image that it expresses the "instability of the concept of femininity" (131). Lyford suggests, vis-à-vis a series of images she parses of Miller, Ray, and others in various sadomasochistic poses, that by publicly displaying their perversities, they were trying to "secure their surrealist credentials" (149) and that Miller wanted to "gain surrealist status" (123). But both of these phrases indicate a certain insecurity on Miller's and Ray's part about their role in the surrealist circles. It seems rather that surrealism was all around them and that they needn't have been anxious to attain "surrealist status." It is interesting to note that some critics take this collaboration between Ray and Miller and describe it rather condescendingly. For example, Haworth-Booth notes that Miller "showed ingenuity" in choosing to be photographed with a wire mesh over her face and that she "used lights in her master's manner" (43).
11. Slusher includes this image in *Green Memories* 15.
12. Magritte used Miller's photo of a desert near Siwa, *Portrait of Space*, as an inspiration for his 1938 painting *Le Baiser*.
13. This brief précis of Miller's life was culled from Burke, *Lee Miller*; Calvocoressi; Conekin; Haworth-Booth; Livingston, *Lee Miller: Photographer*; A. Penrose, *Lives*.
14. See also Caws et al., *Surrealism and Women* wherein Rudolf Kuenzli asserts that Miller "sought an aesthetic reality rather than a personal identity in Surrealism" (20).
15. Suleiman's historical account moves through the first work on surrealist women, Xavière Gauthier's *Surréalisme et sexualité* (1971), to the special issue of *Obliques* entitled *La Femme Surréaliste* (1977), to Lea Vergine's

L'Autre Moitié de l'avant-garde, to the work of Whitney Chadwick and others (see *Subversive Intent* 11–32; see also Suleiman, *Risking* 125–139).

16. Indeed, Naomi Rosenblum aligns Miller with more explicitly political photographers when she notes, "Many photographers of the 1980s came to believe that photographing the less fortunate exploited them, in contrast to say, Dorothea Lange and Lee Miller, who had believed that photographs of real people in such circumstances would awaken the viewer's conscience and incite action" (209).
17. For a very interesting reading of how a certain fascination with fascism worked for the modernists more generally, see Zox-Weaver, "At Home with Hitler." In her *Pablo Picasso*, Mary Ann Caws charts Dalí's fascination with the (other) Spanish painter (see especially 116–119).
18. Man Ray, of course, was also very interested in Picasso and photographed him and also wrote an amazing prose poem as an homage in *Cahiers d'art* (see his "Dictionanaire Panoramique de Pablo Picasso" and *Photography by Man Ray*). See also Grossman.
19. Many commentators on Miller's photography note the tensions in her work between fashion, surrealism, and documentary. For example, Burke finds that in capturing the Blitz in London, Miller hit a "disquieting note of glamour mixed with dread" (*Lee Miller* 206). Ernestine Carter argues that she had an eye for the "oddities and awesome beauty, as well as the horrors of the Blitz" (qtd. in Burke, *Lee Miller* 206). Alexander Liberman, who did a layout for Miller's shots of death camps in *Vogue* with the headline "Believe It!" noted that "going to the front was a Surrealist gesture" for Miller (qtd. in Burke, *Lee Miller* 294). Whitney Chadwick remarks that the surrealists held that beauty could be "produced through the chance encounter, the unmotivated collision of disparate realities" ("Fetishizing Fashion" 94). Surrealist aesthetics and sexual practices within the surrealist circle intersected with both Miller's work and life as she broke down the borders of gender expectations just as she ruptured the aesthetic line between fashion photography and surrealist art.
20. Elsewhere Slusher argues, "If there is a single element that unites Lee Miller's photographs, it is a pervasive world view that is undeniably Surrealist" (*Green Memories* 29).
21. Slusher noted that "although not generally considered a surrealist, [Picasso's] work had a period in which he was closely linked to members of the group and their ideas and their explorations" (A. Penrose, *Picasso en privado* 183).
22. See Stein's *Picasso* and Golding's essay in R. Penrose and Golding, *Picasso in Retrospect*.
23. "La Victoire de Guernica" appeared in *London Bulletin* on 6 October 1938 in French and in an English translation by Roland Penrose and George Reavey, accompanied by an image of Picasso painting and a photograph of *Guernica*. For a reading of this poem and a more general reading of Eluard see Caws, *Pablo Picasso* (129–135) and her *The Poetry of Dada and Surrealism*. Eluard had been part of the French resistance and Miller, just after liberation, found Eluard in Paris, very hungry, and noted, "Paul had lain in the eaves of the adjoining building while it was being searched" (A. Penrose, *Lee Miller's War* 77); see also R. Penrose, *Picasso*; Blunt; Arnheim.
24. See Caws, "Letters of Mourning" 141–145.
25. Scherman passed away at eighty-one in May 1997. His obituary describes daring feats of both journalistic and military import; see the *New York Times* 7 May 1997.
26. Among the works on Bourke-White, see Goldberg; J. Silverman. Miller photographed Bourke-White in the January 1943 issue of *Vogue* (see Haworth-Booth 166–168 for a description of this).

27. On suicide at the end of the war, see Goeschel, whose book interestingly features Lee Miller's image of the Bürgermeister's daughter as its cover.
28. Francine Prose discusses these images in "Death in Perspective."
29. I am extremely grateful to Stephen Goodell, of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, for both drawing my attention to and e-mailing me J. Malan Heslop's images; these are available at the Brigham Young University collection.
30. For an example of a very different, distinctly unpeaceful photograph, see Miller's image taken at Buchenwald entitled *Guards Beaten by Liberated Prisoners* (April 1945) reprinted in Livingston, *Exhibition* (79) and published in *Vogue*.
31. *Vogue* normally published on the first and the fifteenth of the month but on the cover of the June 1945 issue the following note appears: "Because of wartime emergencies it will be published once a month during June, July."
32. In commenting on Miller's images of camps, Katharina Menzel-Ahr notes, "Contrairement à bon nombre de ses collègues, elle ne présente pas les rescapés comme des victimes passives; elle respecte leur dignité et brosse le portrait de personnes actives, amenant ainsi le spectateur à s'interroger sur leur avenir [Contrary to a number of her colleagues, she does not present survivors as passive victims; she respects their dignity and portrays them as active people, leading the spectator to wonder about their futures]" (Chéroux 128). Menzel-Ahr goes on to argue that Miller's goal was to "arracher chaque mort à l'anonymat engendré par la machine d'extermination et lui rendre ainsi sa dignité [pull each dead person out of the anonymity engendered by the extermination machine and to give him/her back his/her dignity]" (128). Menzel argues that Miller's Buchenwald images were a turning point in her work and that, "Si, durant sa phase surréaliste, elle tendait à mettre en question la crédibilité de la photographie, Lee Miller voit dans les photographies des camps de concentration une pièce à conviction dont le pouvoir dépasse celui des mots [If, during her surrealist phase, she tended to question photographic credibility, Lee Miller saw in the photographs of concentration camps a piece of evidence whose power exceeds those of words]" (128). Menzel-Ahr's comments are interesting because she underscores how Miller approached her subjects empathically and also because she locates Miller's surrealism as a phase rather than as the overriding aesthetic of her work.
33. On the marking of the bunker, see "Marking the Site of the Führer's Bunker," *Spiegel Online* (English Site), 9 June 2006; "Hitler's Bunker Location Marked," *BBC News*, 8 June 2006.
34. In "Bathing with the Enemy," Melody Davis analyzes Miller through a Kristeva analytic frame and argues that what she sees as this jarring comingling of symbolism—the bath becoming the concentration camp shower, the dictator becoming the father, etc.—results from Miller's childhood traumas as well as what Davis calls her emerging "masochistic" personality. This argument, I think, compacts too much and overconfidently performs an analytical reading of a person that flattens much of the complexity of Miller's experience as well as the complexity of her images. Davis argues, "By seeking the horrors of war, Miller recreated the internal horrors of disillusionment, pollution, and abandonment she felt as a victim" (316). Here Davis reduces the multivalent nature of Miller's approach to the "horrors of war" by placing the photographer's decision to record some of what was happening in postwar Europe within the history of her individual trauma rather than within broader ideas about the politics and aesthetics of catastrophe.
35. This question and response are to be found on the Lee Miller web page, http://www.leemiller.co.uk.faq.aspx. At least one viewer of the image finds great exhaustion in Miller's expression. Rob Lowman notes that "the woman

pictured in the bathtub has weary eyes—the look of someone who has seen a lot, perhaps too much" (u4).

36. There have been numerous studies of the fascination with Hitler's body. See Roee Rosen's installation about Eva Braun's attraction to Hitler, at the Jewish Museum's controversial 2002 exhibit "Mirroring Evil" (Kleeblatt); see A. Rosenfeld; Schmölders; Wistrich.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 5

1. See also Bordo, "Picture and Witness at the Site of the Wilderness," in Mitchell, ed. 291–315.
2. Exhibition brochure for a show including Silas, *Performing Judaism*, at the Douglas F. Cooley Memorial Art Gallery, Reed College, Portland, Oregon, 31 January–10 March 2002, curated by Stephanie Snyder and Karen Levitov.
3. On Jewish masculinity and Israel, see Boyarin; on the Palestinian landscape, see Said, "Invention, Memory, and Place," and Mitchell, "Holy Landscape," in Mitchell, ed.
4. The Toronto exhibit, curated by Carolyn Bell Farrell, was on view from 3 November to 18 December 2005 and was accompanied by a brochure I wrote; some of the text from the brochure is reprinted in revised form here. The Hebrew Union College exhibit ran from 8 September 2009 to 30 June 2010. Dora Apel discusses *Helmbrechts Walk* in *Memory Effects*; Silas was interviewed about this project by Caroline Barbour for the BBC, "Three Miles an Hour," in 2002; for a general introduction to Silas's earlier work, see Denson.
5. See http:www.susansilas.com/portfolio/helmbrechts.html; Silas also assembled video material from her march but these were not formalized in the final versions of the project.
6. For some of the treatments of the Goldhagen debate, see Kautz; Eley; Littell.
7. I am grateful to Shaul Ferrero, Head of French and Swiss Registration, Archives Division, Yad Vashem, for sending me hundreds of pages on Helmbrechts, including Klaus Rauh's invaluable research project. Dörr's trial transcript, translated by Bernard Robinson, is reproduced in *The Reichmanns of Bielitz* and contains the following: "The indictment lays upon the accused the blame for a total of 217 individual cases of killing human beings, alone and in common with others, in a gruesome (manner) for the slightest of motives" (144).
8. Of the many testimonies about Flossenbürg, see Montagut; Caen. See Heigl for details of the camp. On 23 April 1995 there were a series of speeches at the cemetery and memorial at Flossenbürg (see "Grand Celebration").
9. See Ravett; for readings of his films, see Levitt.
10. For studies of space and/or landscape and gender, see Kolodny; Massey.
11. For analyses of *Shoah*, see Olin; Felman; LaCapra; Hansen; Robbins.
12. All of Sebald's novels make interesting use of photographs; see Patt et al.
13. This image is reproduced in Chéroux 141. I emailed the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum about this image on 15 December 2004 and received this reply: "This photograph came from the Time/Life Syndication collection, which is now owned by Getty Images. It was taken by George Rodger, between April 15–17, 1945." Thanks to Maren Read for this note.

14. On memorials and monuments, see Young; Wiedmer; Nelson and Olin; and Kaplan, *Unwanted Beauty*.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 6

1. In addition to Figure 6.1, Schorr's portraits of "Nazis" can be found in her *Neighbors*; in Boris, *The New Authentics* (Figures 6 and 105); in my "Exposing Violence" (Figures 10 and 11); and online at http://www.pbs.org/art21; http://www1.modernart.net/artists/collier-schorr/images/191; http://www.papercoffin.com/writing/articles/schorr.html; http://www.hcs.harvard.edu/~hpj/.
2. For Schorr on feminism and gender, in which she notes that she is "swimming in the fantasy of the crisis" (of her relationship to gender) see her "Feminism and Art" and "Contemporary Feminism."
3. Schorr's work has been considered in relation to whiteness; in a review essay of several texts on whiteness, Peter Erickson used Schorr's portrait of a young white man, *Swimming Pool Eyes* (1994) among a series of illustrations of whiteness; see also Schorr's "Ways of Being."
4. Of course the Holocaust was traumatic for many gentiles—but its politicization is often understood as a competition between Jewish groups and the descendents of slaves and/or the victims of other genocides for attention at the institutional level; on comparative traumas see Rothberg, *Multidirectional*.
5. In a review of the wrestler series Barbara Pollack notices that "vulnerability amid controlled violence is part of Schorr's point" (151–2). Schorr is also interested in the sport of car racing; see her "Track Star." Christopher Bedford notes that Schorr develops "an alternative vision of masculinity and sport" (54).
6. Other reviews include: Aletti; Siegel; Valdez; Hainley; Avgikos.
7. Lisa Markwell similarly quotes a student of Schorr's who wonders whether the teacher maintains a "'fetishistic fascination with the oppressor.'"
8. *Forests and Fields* was exhibited at 303 Gallery in New York from 10 November to 21 December 2001.
9. On this ban, Section 86a Strafgesetzbuch (Criminal Code), see Stegbauer; on attempts to make the ban on Nazi imagery European-wide, see McNern and "No EU Ban."
10. Regarding *Sans Souci*, see Boltanski; Kaplan, *Unwanted Beauty*; and van Alphen, "Nazism."
11. Among the many articles on *Fragments*, see Suleiman, "Do Facts Matter in Holocaust Memoirs? Wilkomirski/Wiesel," in *Crises of Memory*; Lappin; and Bernard-Donals 81–98.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 7

1. Attwell cites the conclusion of this dissertation and it is worth noting that Coetzee was then interested in Beckett's experience, during World War II in Rousillon, of "evading the Gestapo" because of his involvement in the French Resistance. The close of Coetzee's dissertation is this: "an Irishman in France [was] recording for all posterity all the permutations which the nouns *door*, *window*, *fire,* and *bed* can undergo" (qtd. in Attwell, *J.M. Coetzee* 9). Here we see Coetzee thinking about the war, but also that the burning bed dream might be some of the possible places where "fire" and "bed" end up. See

Yeoh for an examination of Coetzee and Beckett in which he argues, contra my approach to Coetzee, that "Coetzee's ethics follows less a Levinasian than a Christian model" (345).

2. David Usborne, "Mr. Coetzee is run to earth through cyberspace," http://www-newa.uchicago.edu; on Coetzee's distaste for interviews, see Malan. At a conference Rita Barnard mentioned that, in response to an invitation to a colloquium on Coetzee as a public intellectual, Coetzee claimed that he would not come because he could think of no worse ordeal.
3. *Antigone* was used as a protest against fascism by Jean Anouilh and by Bertolt Brecht, who made Creon into Hitler; see Raji for an excellent discussion of *Antigone*'s political adaptations.
4. Coetzee quotes Burchell: "a landscape, perhaps altogether inimitable . . . which, if put on canvas, would . . . prove to European painters that there exists . . . a species of beauty with which, possibly, they may not yet be sufficiently acquainted" (*White Writing* 39; Burchell 2: 194).
5. But Parry also notes, "In thus estranging and voiding of emotional investment a landscape named as the Cape, Coetzee's narrators effect a distancing from the historic claim to the land celebrated by white settler writing. But does not rendering a locale as null and void repeat that 'literature of empty landscape' which Coetzee has designated a literature of failure" (161–162).
6. Two of the most prominent Coetzee scholars, Derek Attridge and David Attwell, offer rigorous, brilliant readings of Coetzee's work but do not delve into the Holocaust connection. Attwell beautifully sums up the critical consensus on Coetzee (as of 1993): "Coetzee was a philosophical idealist whose fiction graphically portrayed the breakup of the dominating, rationalist subject of colonialism" (*J.M. Coetzee* 1). Other critics seem on the verge of discussing the Holocaust but do not; for example, in his article on animals in *Disgrace*, Tom Herron opens with a story relayed by the Jewish philosopher Emmanuel Levinas, in which a dog managed to achieve what his World War II German captors failed to do: recognize him as human; Herron then relies on Kafka, Buber, and Derrida to draw out Coetzee's arguments about animals. However, even while the Holocaust is offered as an example, and even while relying on the theories of four Jewish thinkers, Herron does not draw any parallels between the incineration of animals in *Disgrace* and the incineration of humans during the Nazi genocide (467–468, 488). Similarly, Kimberly Wedeven Segall develops the idea of the "traumatic sublime" in order to read *Disgrace*, but only mentions the Holocaust in the context of citing Dominick LaCapra's work on trauma. (Segall mentions Freud's "burning" dream but it is interesting that she chose not to cite its appearance in *Age of Iron* [52]; she also quotes Coetzee's [unattributed] citation "because we are too menny" but does not note that Coetzee here refers to the chilling suicide note written by the children in Thomas Hardy's bleak *Jude the Obscure* [405]). A few exceptions can be found in short commentaries that do not flesh out the Holocaust references, but do nonetheless mention them; Harald Leusmann, for instance, notes that "In *Disgrace*, the burning of animals is—though not explicitly stated—described in terms reminiscent of the Holocaust's crematoria" (63). John Bonnell remarks that the scenes in the crematorium are "disturbingly echoic of another holocaust" (94). These are brief references in short pieces; overall it is clear that in the extant scholarship, Coetzee's references to the Holocaust and Jewishness are not discussed in detail. For an interesting take on the question of the human–other relationship, see Slaymaker. See Marais (79), in which he quotes a Holocaust passage from *Elizabeth Costello* without commenting on its Holocaust

content; other critical sources on *Disgrace* include: Banville ("Endgame"); Barnard; Boehmer; Cornwell ("*Digrace*land" and "Realism"); Easton and Farred; Graham; Kissack and Titlestad; Kossew ("Politics" and *Pen and Power*); Nagy; Pechey; Ravitch; Sanders (*Ambiguities* and *Complicities*); Sarvan; Splendore; Stone; Stratton; Swales (which compares *Disgrace* to a Holocaust text); Wright.

7. There is not, of course, a unity of opinion among scholars as to the degree to which Afrikaner nationalists adopted fascist models. Furlong, for example, argues against Simson's characterization that the "Afrikaner nationalist movement is sufficiently similar to the 'classical' fascism of Mussolini and Hitler" (xv), finding instead that because the parliamentary system was more important to Afrikaners than Simson admits, the Afrikaner nationalist movement cannot be so quickly aligned with German and Italian fascism (see Simson). Nevertheless, Furlong devotes his book-length study to uncovering how much influence German fascism had on the rise of apartheid. He notes, for example, that "within months of Hitler's accession to power, a variety of uniformed ultrarightist 'shirt' movements had arisen in South Africa, centering their programs not on antiblack feeling . . . but on a distinctively imported European variety of anti-Semitism" (20). Furlong goes on to argue that post-1933 anti-Semitism in South Africa "owed its tone and substance" to the Nazi regime and that "the Nazis encouraged a climate of virulent anti-Semitism. White South Africans, and especially German speakers, were bombarded with anti-Semitic propaganda from Germany" (26). Thus, while dispute remains as to the details of the nature of the influence, it is safe to say that German fascism to an extreme degree influenced the Afrikaner nationalists who constructed the apartheid regime in 1948.
8. There are, of course, many Jewish South Africans, a community addressed in Coetzee's autobiographies; see Braude; Shimoni.
9. Attwell also cites Coetzee's own thoughts on the continuity between Europe and South Africa: "I'm suspicious of line of division between a European context and a South African context, because I think our experience remains largely colonial" (*J.M. Coetzee* 14). On complicity in South Africa, see Sanders, *Complicities*; see Ruden for an (albeit short) Christian reading of *Disgrace* in which she finds that "those who, like Lurie, are truthful and courageous in losing a mediocre soul can gain a better one" (841).
10. An interesting twist on this dehumanization is the story of a zookeeping couple who used the cages of their zoo to save Jewish victims of the Nazi extermination. Ackerman tells this story in *The Zookeeper's Wife* where she notes: "Nazism hoped, not only to dominate nations and ideologies, but to alter the world's ecosystems by extinguishing some countries' native species of plants and animals (including human beings), while going to great lengths to protect other endangered animals and habitats" (12). See also Patterson and Sax.
11. For a reading of Coetzee's use of the body, see May.
12. In "The Idea of Gardening" Gordimer dismisses the connection between Michael K and Herr K but, in light of Coetzee's frequent returns to Kafka (especially in *Elizabeth Costello* but also in other places) I think it entirely plausible that the Ks are connected. Both Ks are, after all, subject to systems that interpolate them; both Ks are powerless to eject themselves from the systems in which they find themselves unwitting participants. Among the readings of *Michael K* (and also of *Foe*) see Kossew, *Pen and Power*; Franssen.
13. In an interview with Attwell on Kafka, Coetzee opens up *Michael K* to the full range of interpretive possibilities: "I decline, if only because to do so is in my best interest, to take up a position of authority in relation to *Michael*

K. What *Michael K* says, if it says anything, about asserting the freedom of textuality, however meager and marginal that freedom may be, against history (history, as you say, as a society's collective self-interpretation of its own coming-into-being) stands by itself against anything I might say about what it says" (*Doubling* 206).

14. See Gallagher for a brilliant contextualization of *Michael K* within South African politics of the 1980s.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 8

1. For an analysis of Coetzee's Cruso, see Dragunoiu.
2. For an analysis of Barton in the context of gender theory, see P. Morgan.
3. This instability between truth and fiction is explored by D'hoker via the rubric of confession.
4. These and other adaptations (including *Foe*) are discussed in Spaas and Stimpson's collection; for a really interesting reading of Vitlin's Yiddish version of *Robinson Crusoe*, see Garrett.
5. In Mukherjee's words, "*Robinson Crusoe* is a fictional narrative that masqueraded as a historical account and asked to be treated as fact" (544). For a reading of *Foe* in the context of castaway narratives in South Africa, see Titelstad and Kissak. Clowes argues that "*Foe* empties out the colonial message of Defoe's novel" (153). And Dovey situates the intersection of feminism, postcolonialism, and postmodernism through what she terms Coetzee's "criticism-as-fiction." There is obviously no shortage of texts on *Robinson Crusoe*; among these, see Brantlinger; Keane.
6. Kehinde explores *Foe* in the context of other rewritings of canonical works.
7. This drudgery, though, does not satisfy the requirements of much Holocaust cinema. Recently much discussion has emerged about embellishments to Holocaust stories—a spate of highly problematic Holocaust films present the war and the perpetrators through a soft-focus lens. These films can be understood through a desire to transform, and in some cases outright fabricate, Holocaust narratives, ultimately diminishing their historical and ethical significance in favor of superficial catharsis and quasi absolution.
8. Kligerman develops a complex argument about Celan and landscape wherein he asserts, "Key for both Resnais and Celan is the cinematic and poetic destructuring of a landscape, the aesthetic object par excellence of modern painting. Both artists deform this recurrent topos into mere traces" ("Celan's Cinematic" 187; see also Kligerman's *Sites of the Uncanny*).
9. See Hamacher et al. for a detailed chronology of *Le Soir*.
10. "Like the Sound of the Sea" was translated by Peggy Kamuf and published in *Critical Inquiry* 14.3 (Spring 1988) and then reprinted in slightly revised form in Hamacher et al. 127–164.
11. The date of the essay is given as 1985, which must be its date of original publication, but Coetzee mentions that he wrote it in 1982–83 in the interview that precedes the essay.
12. Mark Sanders begins *Complicities* by connecting South Africa and the aftermath of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission with the debates about de Man, thus highlighting the connection between complicity with Nazism and complicity with apartheid. In *Ambiguities of Witnessing* Sanders evokes de Man in the context of describing *Disgrace*'s main character, David Lurie, as a de Manian "allegory of unreadability" (181). Thus a thick and suggestible

web of connections binds the questions of silence, complicity, and witnessing that resonate between the de Man scandal and the reach of *Foe*.

13. Durrant takes a different tack when he argues that "Coetzee's text marks the violence of this act of ventriloquism by representing Friday as always already silenced, as unable to speak because his tongue has been ripped out of his mouth" ("Bearing Witness" 440).
14. Coetzee repeats with some regularity the three monkeys seeing no evil, speaking no evil, hearing no evil. With all these figures of deafness and muteness these monkeys are very present here and they underscore Coetzee's reflections on the willful complicity in evil through refusing to see. Ohnuki-Tierney demonstrates how the Japanese version of the three monkeys emerged from the "Chinese moral code of *santai* … the philosophy that espoused the use of the three senses in making close observations of the observable world" (68). He goes on to trace how the three monkeys were used in shrines, for example, to ensure health for "if one does not see, hear, or speak about the weaknesses of others and evil in the world, one can maintain both peace of mind and physical health" (69). In the early modern period, Ohnuki-Tierney argues, the monkeys encapsulated the inability of the folk to fight back against the evils imposed by the shogunal governments. In contrast to this, Ohnuki-Tierney contends, modern monkeys often appear in inverted form—i.e., saying, seeing, hearing—to symbolize the "'progressive' stance of a new Japan" (73).
15. For two other such narratives, see Burchell; Lichtenstein.
16. Salt admired Abyssinian art and noticed that "[t]he Abyssinians, in their pictures, always strangely exaggerate the dimensions of the eye, and invariably draw their figures with full faces, except when they wish to represent a Jew, to whom they uniformly give a side face, but the reason for this singular distinction I could never justly ascertain" (395).
17. As we saw with Salt's commentary on Bruce, this aspect of Bruce's story has fallen under much suspicion. Parkyns, after remarking on the "reputation poor Bruce got" notes that he firmly believes Bruce's story and that: "I have heard it remarked, that it was scarcely possible to believe human beings capable of such cruelty . . . [the Abyssinian punishments are] a mere shadow of the refinement of savage cruelty practised by our forefathers not many generations ago, and sanctioned by the laws of an enlightened and civilized nation" (2–3).
18. This 1728 edition is housed at the Newberry Library in Chicago and a note in the catalogue reads: "This ed. was used by Samuel Johnson for his Voyage to Abyssinia." In other words, Johnson translated this edition from French (even though it was itself a translation from Portuguese) into English. I have kept the eighteenth-century spelling and unless I note that I am using Johnson's translations, the translations into English are mine.
19. Rasselas, finally having "escaped" the happy valley with the poet Imlac, finds a happy sage:

    > He fixed his eye upon a sage raised above the rest, who discoursed with great energy on the government of the passions . . . He shewed, with great strength of sentiment, and variety of illustration, that human nature is degraded and debased, when the lower faculties predominate over the higher; that when fancy, the parent of passion, usurps the dominion of the mind, nothing ensues but the natural effect of unlawful government, perturbation, and confusion; that she betrays the fortresses of the intellect to rebels, and excites her children to sedition against reason, their lawful sovereign. He compared reason to the sun, of which light is constant, uniform, and lasting; and fancy to a meteor,

> of bright but transitory lustre, irregular in its motion, and delusive in its direction. (268)

This passage points to a distinct resonance between Rasselas and Robinson Crusoe in that both choose to cast aside comfort in favor of adventure. Rasselas chooses to leave the happy valley in order to see the world and Robinson eschews the quiet life that his father had planned out for him:

> Had I continued in the Station I was now in, I had room for all the happy things to have yet befallen me, for which my Father so earnestly recommended a quiet retired Life, and of which he had so sensibly desrib'd the middle Station of Life to be full of; but other things attended me, and I was still to be the wilful Agent of all my own Miseries; and particularly to encrease my Fault and double the Reflections upon my self, which in my future Sorrows I should have leisure to make; all these Miscarriages were procured by my apparent obstinate adhering to my foolish inclination of wandring abroad. (35)

This burning desire to see the world, shared by Robinson and Rasselas, initiates for both a series of adventures, not all of which are happy. It is important to remember that, after this self-remonstrating moment, Robinson finds himself comfortably ensconced on a plantation in Brazil, which he quits for the sole purpose of engaging in the slave trade. Thus while Robinson Crusoe unquestionably both represents and endorses a racist colonial imagination it also contains moments of resistance to this narrative such as placing the blame, so to speak, for Robinson's being cast away squarely on the shoulders of his decision to enter the slave trade (37).

20. Bruce also notes shared practice: "Circumcision and excision are both used by the Abyssinians; but their doctrines of faith are very obscure and perplexed. . . . Nature is often mistaken for person, and person for nature; the same of the human substance. It is monstrous to hear their reasoning upon it" (363).
21. Lobo echoes this with: "On a fait voir en parlant de la Circoncifion qu'il y avoit beaucoup de pratiques & de céremonies Judaïques dans la Religion des Abiffins (One can see in speaking of circumcision that there were many Jewish practices and ceremonies in the religion of the Abyssinians)" (311). Johnson's translation [in Pinkerton]: "their present religion is nothing but a kind of confufed mifcellany of Jewish and Mahometan fuperftitions" (26). "They have some opinions peculiar to themselves about purgatory, the creation of fouls, and fome of our myfteries. They repeat baptifm every year, they retain the practice of circumcifion, they obferve the fabbath, they abftain from all thofe forts of flefh which are forbidden by the law. Brothers efpoufe the wives of their brothers, and, to conclude, they obferve a great number of Jewifh ceremonies" (27). In other travel narratives from Abyssinia, the presence of Jews is remarked upon with the usual anti-Semitic overtones. For example, in his *Life in Abyssinia* Parkyns meets "Angelo the Jew" and describes his first impressions thusly: "On the beach I was accosted by a queer-looking white man . . . [who] addressed me in pretty good Italian, and then I conjectured him to be a European; but in truth he was the oddest looking fish I ever had seen out of water. . . . He could not be a Mussulman—he was too dirty. Could he be a Christian? He decidedly had no appearance of it. Nothing remained then but that he must be an Israelite" (77). After describing his time with Angelo, Parkyns tells us that he donated his remaining articles of European dress to him (so that, we can assume) he may not appear henceforth so very dirty.
22. I could not find a French original—it seems that Rimbaud's written comments were restricted to letters, most of which are included in his *Oeuvres*

Completes but not gathered in French into a separate volume. In English translation there is *Travels in Abyssinia and the Harar*, composed of letters detailing Rimbaud's activities. One passage betrays Rimbaud's racist feelings about the locals: "The Abyssinians entered the city, reduced it to a horrible cesspool, demolishing habitations, ravaging the plantations, tyrannizing the population—as negroes know how to conduct themselves" (14).

NOTES TO CHAPTER 9

1. This lecture was delivered on 11 November 1998 and published as *The Novel in Africa*. Some of Coetzee's critics object to his lecturing using the voice of Costello; David Lodge, for example, complains that the "veils of fiction behind which he had concealed his own position from scrutiny . . . he was putting forward an extreme, intolerant, and accusatory argument without taking full intellectual responsibility for it" (2).
2. Two chapters from *Elizabeth Costello* were published in Coetzee's *The Lives of Animals* (1999), which consists of "The Philosophers and the Animals" and "The Poets and the Animals" (reprinted as lessons three and four of *Elizabeth Costello* but without footnotes). Following these two lectures, which Coetzee gave at Princeton in 1997–1998 are four reflections on animals from scholars in different disciplines (Marjorie Garber, Peter Singer, Wendy Doniger, and Barbara Smuts). In an interesting twist on the comparison between the slaughter of animals and the slaughter of Jews, Peter Singer finds that Elizabeth Costello reminds him of Göring: "When people say we should *only* feel—and at times Costello comes close to that in her lecture—I'm reminded of Göring who said, 'I think with my blood.' See where it led him" (Coetzee, *Lives* 88–89); see Lenta for a reading of Costello.
3. "Report" included in *The Metamorphosis*, 173–184. For an interesting reading of Costello's use of Kafka here, see Hacking.
4. The Promotion of Reconciliation and National Unity Act of 26 July 1995 is online at: http://www.doj.gov.za/trc/; the TRC's report is online at: http://www.info.gov.za/otherdocs/2003/trc/ ; for interesting readings of the TRC, see Christiansë; Eze; and Soyinka.
5. For discussions of how the TRC figures in Coetzee's work, see Sanders; Durrant; for the response in South Africa, see Cowley; Gagiano; Morphet; see also Rushdie, who finds that *Disgrace* fails to illuminate the darkness of the situation in South Africa and claims that it "merely become[s] part of the darkness it describes" (199). See also Saunders.
6. In another vein, Follet disagrees with Coetzee's "defenders [who] say it somehow presents the essential angst of South Africa today. Bollocks. I doubt if any book by a white university professor could do that" (7).
7. Lurie is described as wearing a skullcap and several commentators have suggested he is meant to be Jewish. See for example, Iannone's review in which she notes, "Their names [i.e., Lurie and Isaacs] notwithstanding, these characters are not explicitly identified as Jewish, though the unspoken fact of their Jewishness clearly has something to do with Coetzee's larger symbolic purposes" (63); for a discussion of race in the novel, see Attwell "Race." Much more could be said about Romantic poetry as it figures in the novel; see Wood.
8. Kafka, *The Trial* 231; Spivak 22; see also McDonald 329; Attwell, "Race" 340.
9. For some readings of this dream, see Lacan; Žižek; Caruth; D. Miller; Ragland.

10. Freud's text is only slightly different: "Vater, siehst du denn nicht, daß ich verbrenne" (415). In citing the reproach in German within an English text Žižek at once recalls the German original of Freud's account but also deepens the Holocaust reference by having the reproach uttered within the language of both the perpetrators and many of their victims. For a long analysis of the dream, see Shengold.
11. In yet another of his references to the dream of the burning child, this time in the context of Wagner, where the father and son's roles become reversed, Žižek argues that the "totalitarian subject . . . emerges as a reaction to the paternal authority gone awry, run amok: a humiliated father, a father transformed into the obscene figure of ludic enjoyment, is the *symptom* of the totalitarian subject" ("Sexual" 15).

NOTES TO THE CONCLUDING REMARKS

1. I am grateful to Oren Baruch Stier for pointing these trees out to me.
2. See Danilova; Cashman; "Babi Yar"; Blondy; and "Kiev Scraps."
3. There has been some speculation that animals are trying to inform us of planetary changes. In an article about the gray whales off Baja suddenly turning around from a well-justified fear of humans to a surprising, enigmatic attempt to befriend the fishermen and marine biologists amongst them, Charles Siebert notes, "Human–whale relations have long been defined by this stark dualism: manic swings between mythologizing and massacre; between sublime awe and assiduous annihilation, the testimonies of their slayers often permeated with a deep sense of both remorse and respect for the victims" (33).
4. "During the war, Osenberg was in charge of a special SS research council directly subordinate to Reichsmarschal Herman Göring. Osenberg sent his Gestapo agents to investigate work in progress at scientific institutes and report back on each scientist's political reliability. From those reports and the Gestapo's files, Osenberg compiled a list of fifteen thousand names of scientists in the Third Reich. He wrote comments next to the scientists' names regarding their political affiliations, such as SS membership, and his opinion of their scientific abilities. Of course, those scientists who held fanatic Nazi views and SS membership were also those whom Osenberg considered best qualified" (L. Hunt, 32–33).

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