

GENDER AND GERMANNESS

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Cultural Productions of Nation

Edited by

Patricia Herminghouse and Magda Mueller



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Lorenz Clasen, *Germania auf der Wacht am Rhein*, 1860. Courtesy of the Krefelder Kunstmuseen.

LOOKING FOR GERMANIA

Patricia Herminghouse and Magda Mueller

As Cultural Studies on both sides of the Atlantic have become increasingly preoccupied with questions of national identity and cultural representation, feminist studies have been insisting upon the entanglement of gender with issues of nation, class, and ethnicity. Particularly in the wake of German unification, the editors of the present volume sensed the need for an interdisciplinary, international attempt to reassess the nexus of gender, Germanness, and nationhood by pursuing strands of cultural debate in literature, history, the visual arts, and language from the eighteenth century to the present. Before German unification, such an attempt to examine the connection between gender and concepts of nation might have been considered a curiosity. The dismantling of the highly fortified border between the two German states and the Berlin Wall in particular changed not only the German landscape, but also disrupted the general silence regarding concepts of national identity that had prevailed since the founding of the two German states in 1949. While the inhibitions that surrounded reflections about German nationhood had marginalized the topic to the right of the political spectrum since the end of World War II, a process of re-evaluation was set in motion with the unexpected events of 1989-90.

Situated among feminist debates on gender and critical studies of German culture, the original essays we have selected for this focus on *Gender and Germanness* deal with a wide range of cultural productions, including minority discourses, post-colonial theory, film and cinema studies. Before introducing them, a discussion of certain presuppositions may prove useful. Even at the planning stage, Eva Kaufmann drew

the editors' attention to the problematic nature of that word "German-ness." Faced with the difficult task of rendering it in German, one quickly discovers that it is basically untranslatable. If one were to select *Deutschtum* for "Germanness" one would be caught up in a web of associations and connotations that evoke images of traditional costumes and folk music such as were promulgated during the Nazi dictatorship – or, more recently, the nostalgia in circulation at the political rallies of the so-called *Vertriebenenverbände* (associations of ethnic German exiles from areas belonging to Czechoslovakia, Poland, and the former Soviet Union after World War II). In such contexts, *Deutschtum* conveys a static notion of historic rights for land and a not-yet-resolved longing for a place that one belongs [*Heimat*] that is connected with these claims for ownership. As the present anthology suggests, Germanness so understood is definitely not what the editors had in mind. Should we ever be faced with the task of publishing these essays in German, the title of the volume would certainly have to be changed.

Numerous commentators have noted that within the discourse of unification the German Democratic Republic (GDR) was often caricatured with female images, characterized by naiveté, dependency, and weakness, whereas the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) was depicted as strong, male, and aggressive. The tradition of using female bodies or representations of woman as metaphors and allegories for nations and states is hardly new, however. The allegorical Germania of art, music, and poetry has Latin roots in Tacitus's *Germania* (A.D. 98). The reception of his account of the tribes living on the other side of the *Limes*, the "Wall" of Roman times that marked the border along the Rhine of Tacitus's *Germania*, led to a long tradition of art and literature depicting Germania and Arminius (Hermann, the Cheruscan chief, whom Tacitus called the "liberator of Germany"). Later, in early emblematology, Germania as mother of Germany was represented as one of the twelve daughters of Europe. In her analysis of how the details of representations of the figure and its historical context function to identify her meaning, Kerstin Wilhelms has shown that Germania can be an allegory for a geographic space, a state system, or an ideal (38).¹

1. Wilhelms suggests something of the range of attributes that we will note in the following discussion: "Germanias Kopfbedeckung kann eine Mauerkrone sein, mit der sie z.B. für das Territorium des Hl. Röm. Reiches deutscher Nation steht oder ein Eichenlaubkranz, der sie 'herrschaftsneutral' als Deutsche identifiziert, oder auch die Kaiserkrone ... Herrschaftsinsignien wie Szepter und Reichsapfel, ein Schild mit einem (doppelköpfigem) Adler, ein Schwert oder ein Friedenszweig werden ihr als Accessoires mitgegeben und signalisieren Germanias Beziehung zur Macht und ihre jeweilige 'politische Verfassung.' Häufig erscheint sie als passive in Ketten gefesselte Frau, die zu ihrer Befreiung männlicher Hilfe bedarf; liegen die Ketten am Boden, so waren ihre Befreier erfolgreich" (38).

Given the historical tradition in which she became entangled, however, it is perhaps not surprising that, with few exceptions, feminist artists and critics alike have not been inclined to pay very much attention to Germania in recent decades. The most (in)famous recent interpretation occurs in Heiner Müller's complex drama *Germania Death in Berlin* (*Germania Tod in Berlin*), where "Mama" Germania functions as midwife in a grotesque scene in which Joseph Goebbels gives birth to Hitler's child, a misshapen wolf.² And there is the deconstruction of the word "Germania" that forms the editor's epigraph to *Germania*, a recent anthology of Müller's essays and interviews: "Ger: Spear. [OLD GERMAN] **mania**: A form of insanity characterized by great excitement [*sic*], with or without delusions, and in its acute stage by great violence."

It thus may be worth recalling that allegorical invocations of Germania in connection with hopes for unification of the German nation prior to 1870 reflected emancipatory, not reactionary sentiments.³ In the absence of a political nation, the idea of a cultural nation took on increasing importance within the nineteenth century. Of course, allegories can be employed in the service of various political interests, and representations with an emancipatory intent can be re-interpreted in the service of oppressive and chauvinistic politics. This can be seen, for example, in Heinrich von Kleist's 1809 poem, "Germania an ihre Kinder," (Germania to Her Children) where Germania is a strong, belligerent mother, protecting her children from the Rhine to the Oder River, the Baltic to the Mediterranean Sea, especially in the insistent question of its refrain: "Stehst du auf, Germania? / Ist der Tag der Rache da?" [Germania, will you now arise? / Is the day of vengeance nigh?]. By contrast, in his 1844 *Deutschland. Ein Wintermärchen* (*Germany: A Winter's Tale*) Heine constructs a completely different image of "Die teure, wundersame, / Goldlockigte Jungfrau Germania" [the dear, strange, / golden-haired virgin Germania, Caput XIV] caught in the midst of Barbarossa's bellicose troops.

Numerous critics have traced the subsequent evolution of this image in the visual arts, for example in paintings by Philipp Veit, comparing the Germania panel of his fresco triptych for the Städelsches Kunstinstitut in Frankfurt am Main, *Die Einführung der Künste in Deutschland durch das Christentum* (Christianity Introduces Art to Germany, 1834-1836) to his later *Germania* (March 1848) for the Paulskirche in the same city. In the earlier work Germania is seated under an oak, the holy tree of the Germans,⁴ with the sheathed sword of the empire and the

2. For a useful commentary and interpretation, see Schulz (129-38) and Mieth.

3. See especially the essays in *Trophäe oder Leichenstein*.

4. In the process of national cultural formation, the oak became the sign of Germanness. According to Germanic mythology, the strongest and most beautiful tree (an

Golden Bull in her lap and a shield bearing the imperial eagle in her right hand. She gazes contemplatively at the crown of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation, which had been dissolved in 1806, now lying on the ground next to her. Her regal robe and the coats-of-arms of the seven electors (Kürfürsten, to whom the Bull grants the right to elect the emperor) on the pediment of her throne further enforce the political implications of the image (Hoffmann 123). In the 1848 painting, the same Germania, now displaying the imperial eagle on her gown, is depicted standing erect, looking straight ahead with her unsheathed sword poised and a banner with the national colors held aloft. The crown is missing but a pair of unshackled handcuffs is visible on the ground to her right (129). Most telling, as Lothar Gall has pointed out, is that the setting sun which cast the 1836 Germania in shadow has yielded to the bright light of the rising sun (17). In the Niederwald monument constructed after the war of 1870, depicting Germania with a wreath of oak leaves around her head and the sword in her left hand, the crown of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation is finally displaced by the crown of the new empire held aloft in her right hand.

Still more influential than Veit's depictions of Germania was Lorenz Clasen's 1860 painting "Germania auf der Wacht am Rhein" (Germania on Watch at the Rhine) for the Krefeld town hall. Here Germania, sword drawn, shield at the ready, reconnoiters the Rhine valley from on high in an allusion to German patriotic responses to Louis Adolphe Thiers's claim to the Rhine as the French border in 1840. Even though Germany was not a nation until 1871, the French provocation to national consciousness was reflected in numerous poems and songs of the 1840s, such as "They shall not get it" ("Sie sollen ihn nicht haben") by Nikolaus Becker – also known as "Der deutsche Rhein" (The German Rhine) or just "The Rhine Song" ("Rheinlied") – "Der Rhein" by Robert Prutz or, most enduringly, "Die Wacht am Rhein" (On Watch at the Rhine) by Max Schneckenburger (1840). Schneckenburger's song summoned not only patriots of the Vormärz but also German soldiers of later eras "zum Rhein, zum Rhein, zum deutschen Rhein," with its assertion:

oak) was consecrated to Donar, the God of thunder and lightning. During the period of Christianization, Boniface and other missionaries cut down oaks in the hope of ending pagan rituals, but to no avail: pagan tradition and Christian belief continued to exist side-by-side. Since the time of Klopstock, the oak appears to be increasingly associated with patriotic concepts of freedom and unity (Hürlimann 62 f.). See Hermand for an analysis of the sturdy, gnarled oaks that are a familiar presence in the paintings of Caspar David Friedrich. All of these cultural meanings are contained in the wreath of oak that often adorns Germania.

Solang ein Tröpfchen Blut noch glüht,
Noch eine Faust den Degen zieht,
Und noch ein Arm die Büchse spannt,
Betritt kein Welscher deinen Strand.⁵

“Die Wacht am Rhein” became the most popular song of the nineteenth century. Printed in more than 140 musical versions, it reached the epitome of its popularity in the wars of 1870-71 (Gast 84) and was reappropriated in the National Socialist era. The Rhine controversy is later reflected in the conflicting interpretations of the most famous monument to Germania, known as the Niederwalddenkmal, erected above Rüdesheim on the Rhine in 1883 in commemoration of Bismarck’s 1871 triumph. The debate that erupted as to whether Germania’s gaze was directed hostilely toward the French enemy across the river or benevolently upon the happily united citizens in the valley below continues to this day.

Some critics, such as the historian Lothar Gall, see in Johannes Schilling’s monument a peaceful representation of the politically powerful empire that resulted from Bismarck’s consolidation of the many German states and principalities, with the laurel-entwined sword now rests on the ground as a sign that peace prevails (25).⁶ In large measure, interpretations that assert the bellicose quality of the Germania of the Niederwalddenkmal derive from the hundreds of jingoistic Germania poems that were produced during this period. In her survey of the enormous output of the era, Angelika Menne-Haritz identifies several thematic strands, beginning with the flag-waving patriotism in the vein of Ferdinand Freiligrath’s famous 1870 poem, “Hurrah, Germania.” But even here, Germania also continues in her motherly function: “Auf meine Kinder, alle Mann! / Zum Rhein! Zum Rhein! Zum Rhein! / Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah! / Hurrah, Germania!” [Arise my children, all men arise / To the Rhine! etc., (54)]. As mother of the nation, however, she is often simultaneously a virgin – representing less the ideal of the Virgin Mary than the armored strength of a Joan of Arc or Penthesilea (Menne-Haritz 57).⁷

In a peculiarly mixed metaphor, an article on “Germania” in *Meyers Konversationslexikon* summarizes the interpretation of Germania that

5. “As long as a drop of blood can yet warm our veins, / A fist yet draw a dagger, / An arm yet load a muzzle, / No Frenchy’s foot shall touch thy shore.”

6. In support of his interpretation, Gall cites Schilling’s own 1876 statement: “Nicht dem besiegten Feind, dem deutschen Volk zeigt sie die Krone, die ihr Haupt zu schmücken bestimmt ist ... Der Krieg ist beendet. Germania überschaut das deutsche Vaterland, dessen schönster Vordergrund der gerettete Rheingau ist” (26).

7. See also Pape’s more recent survey.

occurs in the course of the consolidation of German power after 1871: "This Germania is a conjoining of the warrior virgin (Valkyrie) with the German mother who symbolizes the all-embracing fatherland" (402).

The monument at Niederwald, created by Johannes Schilling, was only the most popular of the dozens representations of Germania that proliferated in the wake of national unification in 1871. Among the best known of these were the Germania of Rudolf Siemering's victory monu-



Monument Niederwalddenkmal

ment in Leipzig, R. Henze's marble sculpture on the Altmarkt in Dresden,⁸ and of most interest here, two representations of Germania in the new Reichstag, designed by Paul Wallot in 1882. Both Reinhold Begas's copper sculpture of an equestrian Germania above the main portal of the Reichstag and the enormous stained glass window inside the building now depict Germania wearing the new imperial crown. While, according to Gall, Begas's sculpture alludes to Bismarck's 1867 pronouncement, "Put Germany, so to speak, in the saddle! She will know how to ride," Bismarck himself – who had refused to take part in the dedication ceremonies for the Niederwald monument – abjured the "idolization of the idea of nation" that Germania cult represented. He

also questioned the embodiment of the idea of nation in such a female figure: "A woman (*weibliches Wesen*) with a sword in this aggressive posture is unnatural. Every officer will feel the same way as I do about this" (quoted in Gall 27-29). His reservations, however, appear to have had little effect on the continuing appropriation of the image for nationalistic purposes: Germania entered currency as an adornment to the new 100 Reichsmark bills, replete with crown, sword and shield – but also with plow, anvil, and the ships of the imperial navy in the background. By 1914 she had become the fiercely vengeful warrior against a flaming background in Friedrich August von Kaulbach's *Deutschland – August 1914*.⁹

8. See Bauer, Mosse, and *Wahrzeichen und Denkmäler*.

9. All of these images are reproduced in Gall's fascinating survey of the iconography of Germania.

With Hitler's loss of World War II, Germania – like his plan to rename the capital of Germany after her – seems to have disappeared from the scene. Standing on a forlorn site that was no longer the center of divided Berlin, the ruin of the Reichstag came to symbolize a discredited idea of nation. Following unification in 1990, however, it was not only the plan to restore the building as the seat of German government, but Christo's and Jeanne-Claude's much publicized "Wrapping of the Reichstag" in 1995 that once again focused public attention on its symbolic meaning. The heated political debate in the German Bundestag (25 February 1994) about Christo's plan, dating back to 1971, for veiling the Reichstag culminated in a decision to allow the spectacle. The controversy in the German parliament, which was solemnly pronounced a question of national identity, and the exuberant public reception of Christo's project in the following year were of a different nature.

Magic happened. Christo's present to the citizens of Germany evoked multicultural understanding. A love parade of not only techno freaks and fans but of people from all walks of life and many nationalities, people turning to each other smiling, enjoying each other's company, and re-enacting some of the joy and enthusiasm that existed during the night of 9 November 1989, the fall of wall. Singers, musicians, jugglers, buffoons, illusionists, clowns, and drummers momentarily constructed the new German society as a postnational one in a *fête-champêtre* that utilized the veiled moment of history to drum out the mean spirits of nationalism that still nestled in far-away corners of the run-down, brittle edifice of power. This playful postmodern happening united the multicultural crowd in front of Reichstag, converting the formerly forlorn space into a festive arena of spontaneous communication and human encounter.

An article in *Der Spiegel* covering the veiling of the Reichstag entitled "Germanias Geisterhaus" (Germania's Haunted House) might, however, also serve to evoke associations of this historic symbol of German national ambitions with a haunted house, where she is still spooking around, where the old spirits of nationalism (which still surface from time to time in Germany) have yet to be exorcised. But perhaps during that summer of 1995, something more happened: what the international press referred to as Christo and Jeanne-Claude's "wrapping" of the Reichstag was in fact a veiling of what that edifice had come to stand for. Did its shimmering rainment, alluding as it did to the graceful folds of classical statuary, not somehow feminize that formidable hulk? Would the veiling and unveiling of a monumental statue of Germania ever have had such national and international impact in the past? Why then was this the case with the Reichstag? Had Germania been thus displaced?

Might the Germania who once inhabited the Reichstag, have done as some of the birds there did, and just disappeared under the veil for the interim? Or did she react like that irritated kestrel, who refused to retreat into the special shelter that was installed there for an endangered species? And where is she now?

Christo recycled all the material used for the veiling of the Reichstag and we are tempted to ask whether his art recycled certain perceptions about Germania. In response to a question about what they had learned from the Reichstag project, Christo's partner Jeanne-Claude echoed Bundestag speaker Rita Süßmuth's sentiments that the project symbolized Germany as an open society and an intact democracy when she replied:

We learned that Germany is a truly democratic country. It was the first time in the world that a parliament debated and voted on art. That is democracy. Willy Brandt told us that the Germans would be able to understand who they are in the veiled Reichstag. But everyone sees something different. There will be 80 million different ways of seeing it ("Wann verhüllen Sie").

* * *

Not surprisingly, but indeed indicatively, most contributors to our project focus not on the central national emblems and allegories we have been discussing, but rather on texts from the margins. This for several reasons, one of which is surely the current ascendancy of German Studies and Cultural Studies approaches in the field today. Contributions to this anthology suggest something of the range of possibilities these approaches offer for an examination of cultural constructions of nation.

Although contemporary Anglo-American work on the intersecting discourses of race, class and gender has tended to locate the advent of racism in the Darwinist, antisemitic, and colonialist mentalities of the late nineteenth century, Susanne Zantop argues that closer examination will reveal that the beginnings of biological racism in Germany lie in the previous century. Concentrating on the eighteenth-century philosopher Christoph Meiners, whose speculations on the "nature" of Africans, Asians, and Native Americans link details of anatomy and physiology with conjectures about intelligence and morality, Zantop highlights his conclusions about the superiority of Germans, "the whitest and most beautiful of them all," and suggests that his definition of what is "un-German" helped to lay the groundwork for an understanding of national identity based on difference and exclusion, an identity that supported the idea of a superior (male) German racial identity.

Helga Watt's examination of the striking combination of patriotism and internationalism in the fiction and essays of Sophie La Roche also locates the roots of German patriotic nationalism in an earlier tradition

associated with the names of Klopstock and Lessing. While attacking slavish admiration of all things foreign and attempting to further virtues and customs that she regards as characteristically German, LaRoche also advocated a kind of patriotism that recognized the good qualities of other countries. A Swabian middle-class Protestant married to a French-oriented Catholic in the service of aristocrats and princes of the church in the Rhineland, she also lived between two languages: she started writing in French and had to learn to write in German in her late thirties. In this very lack of a ready-made identity Watt sees the key to LaRoche's unique way of being female and being German.

A character who is female and *not* German, the title figure of Achim von Armin's 1812 novella "Isabella of Egypt" is an orphaned Gypsy princess, who thwarts a Romantic fantasy of German nationhood by spiriting her son, the future heir to the Holy Roman Empire, back to her native Egypt. Reading beyond the traditional emphasis on supernatural and bizarre elements of this tale, Sara Friedrichsmeyer argues that it intends more than the antidote to German rationalism and sterility that Heinrich Heine saw in Isabella. Her analysis of the conflicting interests of the present and future rulers of the empire demonstrates the need for close attention to the ramifications of linking the threat to an ethnically pure German nation not just to Gypsies, but specifically to a Gypsy *woman*.

Demonstrating that there is a place for poetry in German Studies approaches, Russell Berman focuses his analysis on Heinrich Heine's famous poem "Night Thoughts" ("Nachtgedanken"), where he uncovers a dramatic opposition of political criticism and personal anxiety that ultimately structures national identity around gender positions. Thus the exiled speaker, the lyrical ego who has left his home, has also left his mother, and an implied connection and competition between fatherland and mother ensues. Even more important, however, is the contest between the two women, mother and wife, allegories of Germany and France, darkness and light, and the complex web of loyalty and betrayal that characterizes the relationship of the poet to each. In a provocative conclusion, Berman argues that German Studies may have more to learn from exceptional products of German culture, such as Heine's poetry, than through the current vogue for the popular and "the ordinary."

The first section concludes with Brent O. Peterson's essay demonstrating that even while "history" in the nineteenth century was a male preserve, the discourse of "Germanness" articulated in historiographic and fictional texts of that century was predicated on specific models of femininity and family. His analysis examines how gender was encoded in the historical fiction that confronted the exclusion of the private sphere

(love, marriage, family) from academic history (great men, great events). Focusing on representations of German women during the so-called Wars of Liberation (1812-1815), Peterson examines five novels published between 1824 and 1871 in order to challenge conventional wisdom about the liberal, progressive character of early German nationalism. His reading of the complex interdependence between women and the nation demonstrates the constructedness and the gendered underpinnings of the nationalist narrative, where women's relegation to the margins enabled the male center to hold.

* * *

Elke Frederiksen opens the following section on "Rethinking History and Canons" by problematizing assumptions about cultural as well as sexual differences that inform considerations of canon. If the traditional canon of German literature in both Germany and the United States persists in ignoring feminist contributions, she asserts, it runs the risk of being further marginalized in view of the ongoing "feminization of the profession," particularly in the U.S. Within the new feminist canon, however, Frederiksen points to the contradictory tendency to assert the multiplicity of both female and minority writers, on the one hand, and the inclination to set up new figureheads, such as Ingeborg Bachmann and Christa Wolf, on the other. German literary studies, including feminist scholarship, might overcome its present isolation, she suggests, by shifting from its traditional focus on German authors, periods, and genres to a thematic examination of issues that are of greater concern to the international community. In this, gender remains a decisive, although certainly not the sole category of literary and cultural analysis.

Within feminist movements, no issue has given rise to more ambivalence, intellectual and emotional, than ideologies that glorify motherhood as the basis of women's claim to dignity and equality in both the public and private spheres. Ann Taylor Allen's exploration of feminist maternalism as a construct that provided a framework for new forms of self-consciousness and activism challenges tendencies to dismiss it as merely backward and conservative. In its earliest phase, feminist maternalism ascribed an ethical rather than a merely biological function to "spiritual motherhood" by insisting that training for responsible citizenship took place in the mother-child relationship. With advancing industrialization and urbanization, "social motherhood" became the metaphor for the philanthropic but nonetheless hegemonic relationship of middle and upper-class women to the lower classes. In the turn to "eugenic motherhood" at the end of the century, maternalist feminism soon proved itself vulnerable to misogyny and ideologies of biological

determinism. The ensuing National-Socialist mobilization of maternalist discourse in the service of war and genocide continues to overshadow the discussion of motherhood in Germany.

Stefana Lefko examines the ill-fated strategies of the bourgeois women's movement during the Weimar Republic in *Die Frau*, the official magazine of the Bund Deutscher Frauenvereine (BDF). Here, too, questions of nation became entangled with definitions of woman's "essence." Starting from the assumption that the sexes were diametrically opposed in essence, the journal resisted the position of liberal women who believed in equality of the sexes, criticizing their efforts toward women's rights as "mere feminism" and preferring to press claims for women's right to vote and work by pointing to their contributions to the *Volksgemeinschaft* [national community]. By arguing on the basis of their uniquely female capacities to help the entire society, bourgeois women attempted to defend themselves against accusations of selfishness and "unwomanliness," but also created role expectations that would soon be invoked by the National Socialist state to limit their rights.

In the closing essay of the historically oriented section, Patricia Herminhouse analyzes the ways in which the national narrative that sustained the construction of literary histories and the rise of German literary studies as an academic discipline in the nineteenth century also contributed to the exclusion of women writers. In her examination of some influential literary histories of the period, she identifies some of the factors that defined women out of the canon of serious literature and literary history: the rise of national consciousness, the influence of the natural sciences, and the potentially threatening increase in the number of women who were actually engaged in the literary enterprise. The cultural assumptions to which she points in this study persisted well into the latter half of the present century.

* * *

The section devoted to visual culture reflects contemporary tendencies to extend our exploration of "texts" to more than printed documents. In his analysis of the precarious construction of gendered identities and pleasures in Nazi mass culture, Lutz P. Koepnick focuses on the paradoxical promotion of Zarah Leander to star status beginning in 1936 as well as on the representation of the *femme fatale* in the melodramas of Detlef Sierck (later known as Douglas Sirk). In these films, Leander's body became a site at which both the ideological guardians of Nazi culture and cinematic audiences engaged in a complex, albeit mostly unarticulated, discourse about the role of mass culture in Nazi Germany, the question of "Germanness" vis-à-vis the utopian promises of American-

ism, and, most importantly, the meanings of sexual difference and gender identity. Contrary to the intentions of the film industry, Koeppnick argues, Sierck's use of Leander's star appeal indicates the relative failure of German fascism to contain the popular imagination and to forge spectatorial desires into an autonomous German culture industry. Contrary to the intent of Nazi cinema, Sierck's films are shown to stage a curious destabilization of male identity that potentially undermined the Nazi vision of a new man in the service of a new order.

Nazism as *femme fatale* and the resulting contradictory constructions of masculinity in post-World War II cinematic representations of Berlin are the focus of Barton Byg's examination of *film noir* and the various national "new waves." Both have been seen as ways of recuperating masculinity in the wake of the war and the abdication or disgrace of the "fathers." In analyzing why this did not occur, Byg's gendered reading of film movements considers the contradictory cultural and historical situation in East and West Germany compared with *film noir* in the U.S. In the GDR, *film noir* had to be mitigated with the "feminine" voice of socialist optimism, while attempts at a West German new wave were marked by various masculine melancholy obsessions. If the Cold War was partly a war against the "other" as Jew/homosexual/woman, the attempted recuperation of masculinity in postwar film sought the origins of cultural instability and the cinematic means to combat it in images from Weimar Berlin culture.

In her examination of images of madonnas and mourning mothers, Mariatte Denman delineates how concepts of gender and nationhood intersect during Germany's immediate postwar era, and how postwar ideals of femininity trace back to the discourse of womanhood and family of the National-Socialist era, while assigning responsibility for that era to men. Such visual representations of gender, she shows, contributed to a discourse of victimization and to intense debates about women's role in a postwar German society. Focusing particularly on the way in which the discourse of motherhood established the parameters of what Alexander and Margarete Mitscherlich later called Germany's "inability to mourn," Denman asks why and how representations of mourning mothers became so ubiquitous. In Barthes' terms, she suggests, motherhood became a myth, that is, a concept devoid of history, as can be seen in the 1993 staging of the nexus of motherhood and German nation in German Chancellor Helmut Kohl's choice of a Pietá by Käthe Kollwitz for the redesigned war memorial at the Neue Wache in Berlin.

Exploring another one of those untranslatable cultural terms, *Heimat*, and its connection to the Freudian "*unheimlich*," Ingeborg Majer O'Sickey argues that postwar *Heimatfilm* represents a seamless continuity with the genre as it existed in the Nazi era – not only in its

use of the same actors and directors, but in its maintenance of the ideology of an organic, homogenized German culture. Using cinema's frame-up of Bambi as feminine principle in films following the publication of Felix Salten's novel *Bambi: A Life in the Woods* (1926), she analyzes how the culture industry exploited Bambi's qualities as a creature in need of protection to make her into a symbol that satisfies dominant cultural notions of femininity. She shows how a number of *Heimat* films of the 1940s and 1950s as well as the soft porn of the so-called *Lederhosen Sex* films instrumentalized the deer hunt and Bambi myth in order to represent women as sexual prey and men as sexual predators, until the celluloid hunt on women was finally challenged in the *Antiheimat* films of the late 1960s and early 1970s. The essay concludes with a look at Percy Adlon's 1990 *Salmonberries* as a deconstruction and Michael Verhoeven's *The Nasty Girl* of the same year as a reconceptualization of *Heimat*film.

The conflation of nation and female bodies is at the heart of Barbara Kosta's critique of Helke Sander's controversial 1992 documentary *BeFreier und Befreite* (*Liberators Take Liberties*). Sander's attempt to excavate women's long-repressed stories of the mass rapes that occurred in the last days of World War II is shown to be problematic because of her inability to rethink the interrelation of war, nation, and sexual violence. Without denying the need to challenge the silence that has prevented working through the experience of wartime rape, Kosta suggests that Sander's interpretive framework perpetuates the very structure that initially produced it and inhibits its articulation rather than providing new lenses through which these testimonies might be read. Kosta criticizes the narrative of rape that Sander constructs by focusing on its preservation of a political stance that unwittingly resonates with right-wing representations of the mass rape of German women.

* * *

The last major section of the volume focuses on some of the "others" of German self-understanding. Drawing upon Ama Ata Aidoo's 1977 novel, *Our Sister Killjoy*, and Chantal Akerman's 1978 film, *Meetings with Anna*, Barbara Mennel shows how these works reflect questions of identity from specific non-German cultural positions in which the question of Germanness is imbricated on the level of formal, linguistic, literary, and visual devices. Akerman's film portrays a Jewish film-maker traveling through Germany while the main character of *Our Sister Killjoy* is a young Ghanian woman who becomes involved with a married German woman. In the light they shed on the interconnectedness of national and transnational histories and desires, these texts offer a gen-

dered perspective on the nation that entails post-Holocaust and post-colonial experiences of diaspora. Mennel's examination of the complicated relationship of gender, race, and desire in these texts demonstrates their power to highlight issues that are usually silenced and marginalized in cultural representations of the German nation.

Denis Sweet examines the belated way in which the long-silenced gay (male) body entered general public consciousness in the GDR, culminating in Heiner Carow's 1989 film, *Coming Out*. Hitherto a taboo topic in the state-controlled media of the GDR, homosexuality entered into the public realm in 1987 with a spectacular media blitz. In these depictions the gay male was uniformly perceived as endangered – by his own hand – and the public response was pity. The Stasi, however, relied upon a more sinister reading of gay men that had recourse to older constructions of homosexuality as the site of both actual (syphilis, AIDS) and ideological (Western) contagion in order to codify the gay man as a security risk who required systematic surveillance. Self-representations by gay men themselves thus sought to elide difference through representations of bodies that were indistinguishable from the rest of the GDR population: assimilated, proper, and respectable. Whether pitiful, subversive, or adapted, gay bodies were engineered for certain political ends.

The relationship between patterns of consciousness that inform the ideologies of nation and gender is the focus of Karin Bauer's analysis of the prose of Herta Müller, a Rumanian-born German writer. Within Müller's notion of *Heimat*, Bauer explores the taboos and the structures of power through which both the Rumanian state and the conservative German community glorify national and male identity and relegate women's bodies to the realm of reproduction and commodity exchange. Yet while Müller's texts, in their resistance to the conformity and censorship that characterize the collective subject, represent the "Better" characterized by Theodor W. Adorno in his essay "On the Question: What is German?" her narrative strategies tend to reproduce the taboos of the German community. Bauer's analysis opens the question of whether such narrative reproduction of the repression, marginalization, and self-consumption of women perpetuates the cycle of self-destruction or opens up the potential for an Adornoean trace of "the Better."

Tracing the labile character of contemporary German identity to the persistence of unresolved feelings of guilt for the aberrations of National Socialism, Magda Mueller highlights the resultant contradictions in current German responses to two major groups of newcomers to German society: the asylum seekers who were granted specific rights in the German Basic Law of 1949 and the ethnic Germans, who are able to "come back" to Germany because of their German ancestry. She contrasts the

well-intentioned tendency of liberal German women to focus on the dilemma of asylum-seeking women, who are marked by language and skin color as “non-German,” while ignoring the plight of ethnic German women whose anachronistic understanding of their own Germanness, even when they do not know the language, is incompatible with the liberal desire to challenge traditional notions of German identity. The state, on the other hand, seems eager to promote the traditional values of hearth and family that the ethnic German women represent and much more concerned about the “otherness” of foreigners who might further undermine an already weak sense of national identity. Mueller shows how these contradictory concepts ultimately sustain anti-emancipatory discourses by their construction of the “other” as exotic and non-German.

Focusing on the years 1989-1996, Eva Kaufmann examines the role of “Germanness” in the poetry of the younger generation of East German women writers, delineating a changed relationship to “Germany” that has also been inflected by issues of gender in recent years. While for the older generation the question of nation was less central than fundamental social issues, the notion of Germanness in more recent writers was shaped by their own interests in other countries and other nationalities. With the rise of xenophobia since 1989, however, the work of the youngest generation – especially the poets – seems to have entered into a polemic engagement with limiting notions of “Germanness.”

With a provocative comparison of issues of gender and nation in the writings of Franz Schönhuber (founder of the right-wing *Republikaner* party, known for its anti-immigration platform) just prior to unification and in essays of the German feminist Alice Schwarzer, Leslie Adelson sets the stage for a revised look at Aysel Özakin’s novel *Die Preisvergabe* (1982). One of the most frequently reviewed and studied Turkish women authors of German literature, Özakin has consistently rejected both the national (Turkish) and the gendered (female) optics through which virtually all her works have been read by scholars and critics alike. Adelson’s analysis explores what can be gained if, instead of arguing that Özakin denies the obvious, one considers some of the blind spots regarding gender and Germanness that feminist discussions of Turkish-German culture have helped to produce.

* * *

The volume concludes with two brief contributions by the feminist linguist Luise Pusch, who, with her usual combination of sharp wit and apt criticism, reminds us of the gendered nature of the relationship between fatherland and mother tongue. Asserting that the transformation of language introduced by women in the last two decades is the most perva-

sive and significant linguistic change of this century, Pusch points out that this development is not unique to Germany. Nor, she asserts, is it over. Arguing that language determines reality, Pusch demonstrates that the marginalization of women depends on the power of the linguistic structure of German, particularly in its plural forms, to put them under erasure. Women may not yet have access to power, but they do have access to language and in changing it, they affect reality in ways that again change language.

Taking a sharp look at the latest, most controversial official attempt to change language, the German spelling reform, Pusch finds more material for her serious-humorous critique in the authoritative guide to the new rules, the *Rechtschreibungs-Duden* (Spelling Duden) of 1996.

* * *

Unlike Christo and Jeanne-Claude, who hoped to open up one particular artifact of German culture to 80 million different perspectives, our ambitions as editors of this volume are far more modest. But we do hope these attempts to explore some of the problematic connections between *Gender and Germanness* in a wide range of topics will indeed open up some new perspectives on the work that remains to be done.

Note

Unless otherwise indicated, all translations from German are our own.

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Part I

**EIGHTEENTH AND
NINETEENTH CENTURY**

THE BEAUTIFUL, THE UGLY, AND THE GERMAN

Race, Gender, and Nationality in Eighteenth-Century
Anthropological Discourse

Susanne Zantop

The Germans have always been one of the noblest people and were always recognized as such, and they are now undoubtedly the most powerful of all nations which – if it were to unite all its forces, like the Romans, to the detriment of others – could overwhelm the whole world.

(Christoph Meiners, *Briefe über die Schweiz*, 1791)

Stories and theories of race tend to locate biological racism in the second half of the nineteenth century (Appiah). They associate it with names such as Charles Darwin, Arthur Gobineau, or Houston Stewart Chamberlain; with the rise of antisemitism, and the European scramble for colonies. While Philip Curtin or George Mosse have pointed to racism's roots in earlier discourses, even the most recent works on colonialism and race relations repeat the by now conventional wisdom. Thus, in his recent study entitled *Colonial Desire*, Robert Young speaks of “new racial theories based on comparative anatomy and craniometry” *after* 1840 (11, emphasis added). And Anne McClintock, in *Imperial Leather* (1995), locates the conflation of race, class, and gender in Victorian England “*after* 1859 and the advent of social Darwinism” (44, emphasis added). Neither casts more than a fleeting glance at Ger-

many and at earlier expressions of racism. Germany, which did not become a unified nation until 1871 and did not actively engage in colonialism until 1884, does not figure much in postcolonial theory. Not even among German scholars who, under the impact of the Holocaust, have tended to focus on antisemitism and the late nineteenth century rather than on precolonial race theories.¹ Yet a modern, biological concept of race as the “*ultimate, irreducible difference* between cultures, linguistic groups, or adherents of specific belief systems” (Gates 5) emerged in Germany as early as the 1770s and 1780s. Arguably, there are even earlier roots of modern racism in the *pureza de sangre* debate in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spain.² Ironically, however, it is in the anthropological-philosophical discourse on human races developed by Enlightenment philosophers that the supposed links between skin color, physiognomy, and anatomy on the one hand, and moral stature, intelligence, or economic status on the other, were systematically explored and given “scientific” currency. What is more, in their attempt to determine the “nature” of Black, White, Yellow, and Red Skins and their relative positions in cultural hierarchies, some German academics went so far as to speculate on the ultimate, irreducible difference between Germans and all others. In other words, they imbued the national-political category “German” with racial overtones.

One pivotal figure in this process of self-definition in terms of race was the Göttingen professor of philosophy Christoph Meiners (1747-1810). Today virtually unknown, this “ordentlicher Professor der Weltweisheit” (literally, *professor ordinarius of world wisdom*) established his reputation with a slew of studies in cultural history ranging from a *Revision der Philosophie* (Revision of Philosophy, 1772) and a *Grundriß der Geschichte der Menschheit* (Sketch of the History of Mankind, 1785/1786, 1793), to a four-volume *Geschichte des weiblichen Geschlechts* (History of the Female Sex, 1788-1800) – to name just a tiny portion of the mind-boggling production of this academic over-

1. So far, the impulse to study German antisemitism in the context of earlier manifestations of racism has come from outside Germany (see Gilman or Mielke). The recent “resurgence” of racism in Germany and the emergence of minority literatures claiming their own “German” traditions has led to a reexamination of Germany’s racist traditions before colonialism (see Lennox et al.).

2. “Purity of blood” (*pureza de sangre*) had served as metaphor for racial purity since sixteenth-century Spain. While the fear of contamination with Moorish or Jewish blood was pervasive throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, “blood” lost its genealogical/class connotation in the eighteenth, gaining a biological grounding instead – which was then used to confirm cultural or economic superiority (see Kamen). The continuities between the Spanish *pureza de sangre* tradition and German race theories are spelled out in Meiners, “Ueber die Natur der Germanischen”

achiever.³ It was not just Meiners's academic publications, however, that made an impact on the literate public, but the 160 essays in comparative cultural anthropology that he published in the *Göttingisches historisches Magazin*, a journal he founded and co-edited with the historian L. Th. Spittler from 1787 to 1794. Indeed, the journal served as his main vehicle for the propagation of a very special brand of what one might call "national racism."

In his *Grundriß der Geschichte der Menschheit* of 1786 Meiners had divided humankind into two basic races [*Hauptstämme*]: the "Caucasians" and the "Mongols" (Vorrede). Although he subdivided the former, again, into two, namely the so-called Celtic and Slavic peoples, Meiners makes clear that the world is, in fact, constituted by only two kinds of humans: the culturally superior, "beautiful" ones – the Europeans – and all others who are "mongolized" [*mongolisirt*, 32] to varying degrees and hence "ugly" and inferior – Asians, Africans, Americans. All of Meiners's subsequent publications are variations on the same theme. The "monomania" with which he tries to "enlighten" his contemporaries does not extend so much to history, as his biographer Prantl claims (*ADB* 224-26), as to reinforcing over and over again the racial, aesthetic, moral, and cultural boundaries between "us" and "them."

In a series of articles that appeared in 1790, Meiners elaborates on the "natural inferiority" of all peoples of color. The articles' titles and their date of publication establish the context or subtext for his investigations: the slave uprisings in the French colony of St. Domingue, the first serious challenge to European colonial rule.⁴ From references to European conditions, however, it is clear that Meiners's antirevolutionary colonialist discourse also extends to "colonial" relations closer to home.

In his articles, Meiners attempts to link physiology to cultural behavior and political power. After emphatically pronouncing his support for

3. The secondary literature on Meiners is relatively small. Ihle, while critical of Meiners's theories, provides only summaries; Wenzel gives a short introduction to Meiners's tracts on religion; Mühlmann places him as a minor figure among the founders of classical anthropology; only the ethno-anthropologist Britta Rupp-Eisenreich takes a critical look at the long-term implications of Meiners's racial theories and their reappropriation by Nazi anthropology (133). It is not surprising that her article appeared in a French journal: As she suggests, Meiners's theories must have appeared too embarrassing to German intellectual historians, particularly after 1945.

4. These articles, again, constitute only a small selection of the total output. Meiners's obsession with peoples of color is apparent from the journal's inception – already in 1788 he wrote about the particular "irritability" [*Reizbarkeit*] of the "weak peoples," the slave trade, the "peoples of America," the food and drink habits of Mongolian peoples, etc. From 1790 onward, however, his interest in others is directly tied to political developments. For the impact of the Haitian Revolution on German literature, see Zantop, *Colonial Fantasies*, chapter 8.

the “growing enlightenment” [*wachsende Aufklärung*] and the emancipation of Jews and black slaves on the first pages of “On the Nature of the African Negroes, and the Subsequent Liberation or Subjection of Blacks,” he retracts: the revolutionary fervor has gone too far in its demand for equality – an equality that is not just “impossible” but “unjust” (386). Some people are born inferior, he maintains, and the rulers are now called upon to restore the privileges to those with inborn superiority. Meiners’s list of the naturally inferior links blacks with children, women, servants, criminals, and Jews. All these must not, and cannot, he says, aspire to equality with their natural superiors, the white male Christian masters. Clearly, racial difference becomes a metaphor for other power differentials. The supremacy of whites is premised on patriarchy and the alleged natural superiority of the white “race.” In Meiners’s wishful thinking, any challenge to the domestic and international power structure is “un-natural.”

In the subsequent seventy pages of the article, Meiners sets out to “prove” the Africans’ “natural predisposition to slavery” (436) by resorting to the analogy between blacks and animals introduced in 1785 by the anatomist Samuel Thomas Sömmerring. Sömmerring’s observation about similarities between the jawline of a simian and an African skull serves Meiners as positive evidence and as starting point for a whole series of conjectures regarding the Africans’ inborn abject racial character (430). Their insensitivity to beatings and torture, he says, their laziness, cowardice, lack of genius, tendency towards violence and treachery, their irritability, promiscuity, agility – all of which can be explained by their anatomy – require that whites exert tight control over them, Meiners concludes (419).

Meiners’s sources are a few, selected travelogues, eyewitness reports of Caribbean plantation owners, and anatomical studies which he exploits for his own purposes. Theories or observations that contradict his apodictic statements are dismissed⁵ on the grounds that positively described Africans cannot be “real Negroes” – they must be products of miscegenation with Arabs or Indians (441). Often, he resorts to circular reasoning to negotiate his point around opposing arguments. For example, moved by Blumenbach’s caveat (directed at Sömmerring)⁶ that one can-

5. See, for example, the twisted argument with which Meiners tries to counter Blumenbach’s critique of Sömmerring (406-8). He admits that one cannot judge a people by one physical property alone and that one would have to examine many different specimens before making any conjectures. But since this is physically impossible (407), he has to resort to (selected) eyewitness reports by others, all of which support his contentions.

6. The anthropologist/physician Johann Friedrich Blumenbach also taught at Göttingen. Sömmerring, who worked in Mainz, responded to Blumenbach’s cautionary note in the introduction to the second edition of his “Über die körperliche Verschiedenheit.”

not deduce moral character from physical properties, Meiners seemingly dismantles, then rebuilds his own position:

I am not, by any means, adducing the verdicts of the common spirit of observation and of common sense concerning the significance of certain physical characteristics as evidence that the Negroes must be as limited in understanding and inferior in good nature as they are ugly; I merely bring it up in order to show that it is not altogether novel or unheard-of to consider certain general and uniform formations or malformations of entire peoples not merely fortuitous and immaterial matters (408).

He then returns to his original position on natural inferiority, supporting it now not with observations of physical properties, but with observations of cultural differences:

But even if we had no idea that the Negroes are uglier in body and countenance than the Europeans, and that they have smaller skulls, a smaller and less pliant brain and coarser nerves than these, we *would still be bound to conclude from their entire mode of living and acting* that Negroes are significantly less sensitive and more irritable than whites (409, emphasis added).

Although circular reasoning, frequent internal contradictions,⁷ and incessant repetitions disqualify the text in the eyes of any critical reader, these very stylistic strategies enhance its pernicious impact on the general public. Under the guise of science, Meiners reintroduces and reaffirms handed-down observations (often taken out of context), which he constructs into a system of mutually reinforcing racial stereotypes. With rhetorical tricks he manipulates his readers into accepting this construction as truth. The many footnotes and the seeming openness to debate lend scientific credibility and legitimacy to the enterprise, as do references to respected scholars such as Sömmerring, Blumenbach, and Herder. The repetitions and causal/associative chain that link one physical property to all others – physical, moral, aesthetic, and intellectual alike – create an avalanche of determinacy or inevitability. Even on the rhetorical plane, anatomy becomes destiny. After having been repeated over and over again, in one or another constellation, any conjecture turns imperceptibly into “fact.” The initial observation of a similarity of jawlines is used as the foundation for a whole host of analogies with the animal world that assign the African a position not just of inferiority but

7. In one instance, Meiners talks about the Africans’ lack of fear of death (411); in another, he speaks about their fear of death (417); in one, he affirms the women’s lack of motherly love for their offspring – they even eat their children (437) – in another; he claims that their often observed motherly love, a natural instinct, associates them with animals (453).

of natural service, as beast of burden, to “humans,” that is, white Europeans. The purpose of Meiners’s rhetorical tour de force is apparent in the questions and answers with which he closes his article:

Before I continue, I ask those who know mankind and advocate justice whether they believe that such insensitive, excitable and phlegmatic, dumb and evil-minded people as the Negroes should be given such rights and such liberty, for their own good and that of others; that one could entice them with such goals to do good, and keep them under threat of punishment from doing bad; and that one could impose the same duties on them as on Europeans? I would be surprised if there was even one among my readers who would answer this question differently from the way in which all European nations who own slaves and who have slave legislation have answered it. (456)

A similar rhetorical appeal to the public’s judgment opens the article on the nature of the American Indians. Here Meiners is even more defensive and cautious. He does not want to create the impression, he says, that he is out to manipulate his audience. The final decision about the truth of his proposition is up to the readers, he concedes (103) – a proposition that, again, claims to prove “natural” inferiority scientifically.

His first major point addresses the supposed physical uniformity of all Indians. Any observable differences are subsumed into a unified picture of the American: “he” is small or medium-sized; has a weak, plump body, big “shapeless” head, a flat narrow forehead, small eyes, high cheekbones, straight, coarse hair, no beard, and hands that are “either too small or too large” (114). Either way, he exceeds normalcy, that is, European norms established by Meiners.

This exterior supposedly matches and reveals the Americans’ inner qualities. The characteristics that Meiners stresses correspond almost verbatim to those he claims to have discovered among Africans: an insensitivity to pain that “almost” surpasses the insensitivity of European domestic animals or of blacks (114); a high irritability based on weakness that “almost surpasses that of sickly children and hysterical women among the white peoples” (117); a taciturn, melancholy, suicidal personality (116); the ability to ape European customs without understanding them (118); a natural phlegm when it comes to working for Europeans (122), and so forth. On the positive side, Meiners registers the Indians’ agility, manual dexterity, physical endurance, sharpness of senses and acuteness of memory. While Indians may not be able to serve as slaves because of their physical weakness, they might be useful as scouts or as artisans (130), he implies. The red thread in this wholesale condemnation of Native Americans is the insistence on their evasive tactics:

they refuse to be trained, used, abused. They do not reveal their secrets, nor do they obey: they dodge or withdraw. The ultimate sign of their “immense imbecility” is, Meiners asserts, that unlike Blacks or Southern Asians, they do not recognize the superiority of the Europeans ... (154).

As the two articles on Africans and Indians indicate, Meiners’s characterizations of these colonized peoples are solely guided by considerations of their economic use value to Europeans. After having established the natural and permanent inferiority of both “races” vis-à-vis the European “race,” and, implicitly, the right of the latter to use and abuse the former, he focuses exclusively on supposed physical, mental, or moral characteristics that serve or impede colonial exploitation. The Africans’ superior physical strength and resilience “predestine” them to menial work, while their resistance to forced labor and “insensitivity” to corporeal punishment require ever greater brutality to keep them at bay. The physical weakness of the Americans disqualifies them as slaves, but their agility and dexterity, superior hunting and tracking skills “predestine” them to serve whites as guides, scouts, or workers in manufacture. Their resistance, Meiners suggests, has to be met not so much with brutal punishment – the Indians would just die from melancholy – but with greater cunning, for “all Europeans” know that “the more you are on your guard, the kinder and more willing the Americans are to serve you” (156).

Meiners’s articles are all designed to naturalize colonial rule as the right of the racially superior and to legitimize the violent repression of resistance to European dominion. The colonial powers cannot grant emancipation to Indians, blacks, and other peoples, he reasons, because these are biologically incapable of being free – and if they try to emancipate on their own, colonizers must hold them back by force. The theories are thus clearly self-serving: *Weltweisheit*, world wisdom, becomes the handmaiden of *Weltherrschaft*, world dominion.

Meiners’s insistence on racial difference and brutally enforced hierarchies raises a number of questions: Why would a well-established professor in Göttingen in 1790 come up with a justification for colonialism? What is the “German” interest in race theories – when Germany is neither a nation nor a colonizer, nor has any business with Africans or Native Americans? Do the few German planters in the Caribbean need Meiners’s ideological backing? Is it European solidarity that moves him? Is he cozying up to the colonial powers in the hope that Germany, one day, will be given a piece of the pie? Or are there other motives? The next series of articles on race, published in 1791 and 1792, provides us with some tentative answers.⁸

8. Again, the transitions are flowing: Late in 1790, Meiners already began his series on European peoples with “Ueber die Natur der Slawischen Völker in Europa,” which he