

Alan Corkhill

Spaces for Happiness in the Twentieth-Century German Novel

Mann, Kafka, Hesse, Jünger

Peter Lang

This book offers an in-depth study of the rich tapestry of happiness discourses in well-known philosophical novels by Thomas Mann, Franz Kafka, Hermann Hesse and Ernst Jünger, published between 1922 and 1949. The study is prompted, in part, by an awareness that despite the interdisciplinarity of happiness research, Western literary scholarship has paid scant attention to fictionalized constructs of happiness. Each of the four chapters uses extended textual analysis to explore the sites in which happiness (*Glück*) and serenity (*Heiterkeit*) are sought, experienced, narrated, reflected upon and enacted. The author theorizes, with particular reference to Bachelard and Foucault, the interfaces between interior and exterior spaces and states of well-being. In addition to providing new interpretive perspectives on the canonical novels themselves, the book makes a significant contribution to a broader history of the idea of happiness through the appraisal of key intellectual cross-currents and traditions, both Western and Eastern, underpinning the novelists' varied and nuanced conceptualizations and aesthetic representations of happiness.

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Spaces for Happiness
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Contents

Acknowledgements	vii
Introduction	i
CHAPTER ONE	
Thomas Mann: Competing Models of Happiness in <i>Der Zauberberg</i> (1924)	17
CHAPTER TWO	
Franz Kafka: Sites of Happiness and Unhappiness	41
<i>Der Proceß</i> (1925): Existential Unhappiness	41
<i>Das Schloss</i> (1926): Negotiating Room for Happiness	56
CHAPTER THREE	
Hermann Hesse: The Quest for the Happiness of Self-Knowledge	75
<i>Siddhartha</i> (1922): Towards the Joy of Flow	75
<i>Der Steppenwolf</i> (1927): The Pathology of Happy Unhappiness	89
<i>Das Glasperlenspiel</i> (1943): Educating for Happiness	102
CHAPTER FOUR	
Ernst Jünger: The Technologization of Happiness in <i>Heliopolis</i> (1949)	119
Conclusion	147
Notes	159

Bibliography	185
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Index	197
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Introduction

Happiness filled the space of sadness.

— MILAN KUNDERA, 1929—

The Happiness Phenomenon

Happiness has always proven tantalizingly elusive, locatable just beyond human reach, somewhere over the horizon, despite attempts to harness or package it by subjecting it to ethical norms and a raft of social controls. While studies of literary happiness require no special justification, there are far too few of them, especially book-length ones.¹ This is a significant failing in literary criticism when we consider that of all those who have reflected over the centuries on the nature and meaning of happiness, men and women of letters have bequeathed us perhaps the richest, the most variegated and the most imaginative legacy of eminently quotable *bons mots* about happiness.

Although happiness has become an infectiously popular and even fashionable subject of enquiry in many interdisciplinary fields, a growing number of happiness researchers (felicitologists) in the humanities are sceptical about data collated in surveys of subjective well-being (abbreviated as SWB), or for the narrow purpose of quantitative economic analysis. Empirical quality-of-life studies largely ignore the fact that contemporary happiness discourse is embedded in a long and fertile tradition of philosophical thinking about happiness and is additionally informed by a fruitful interplay between “happiness philosophy” and the arts. Surprisingly, among the over 4,000 titles registered in the *World Database of Happiness* (Rotterdam, 1984ff.), some of which are published in the specialist *Journal*

of *Happiness Studies* (Dordrecht, 2000ff.), only a handful are concerned with conceptualizations and representations of happiness in the arts. Indeed, according to leading American philosopher and ethicist Sissela Bok, the social and hard sciences should amplify their happiness research by looking to literature and the arts for pure expressions of happiness and well-being that might escape an experimental survey.²

From a postmodern perspective, we seem to be far removed from the holistic depictions of happiness and well-being inscribed in the encyclopaedic works of the Enlightenment's literary *philosophes*. The nexus between aesthetics and ideas of happiness has equally undergone a plethora of historical metamorphoses since Aristotelian poetics identified catharsis as an aesthetic ploy to render the audience psychologically healthier and thus more susceptible to happiness. The point has been reached where contemporary aesthetic theory largely eschews the equation of *felicitas* with moral beauty as perceived especially by Anthony Ashley-Cooper, the 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury (1671–1713) and the German playwright Friedrich Schiller (1759–1805). Theodor Adorno (1903–1969) in his post-Holocaust critique of art as the “ever-broken promise of happiness”³ threw into serious question the famous axiom of Stendhal (1783–1842), “la beauté n'est que la promesse du bonheur” (beauty is nothing more than the promise of happiness).⁴ However, the Swiss writer Alain de Botton, author of *The Architecture of Happiness* (2006), is one of the few current popular philosophers to resurrect Beyle/Stendhal's dictum by using it as a cornerstone of his own more narrowly defined aesthetics of spatial happiness.⁵

Despite attempts at reconstructive surgery, imaginative literature in the Western canon occupies a particularly undervalued place alongside the cognitive, social and behavioural sciences as a seismograph of the complex ways in which people experience, reflect upon, express or perform happiness and its cognate dispositional traits. Academic writer Mark Kingwell, author of *In Pursuit of Happiness* (2000), has noted in relation to the waning influence and resonance of literary narrativizations of happiness: “Increasingly, this belletristic treatment of the subject of happiness begins to look more like an aberration. In our own day, the responsibility for trying to articulate happiness has largely ... passed to professionals who comfortably assume that people are isolated atomistic individuals.”⁶ Kingwell is not

entirely correct in his prognosis, given that Western consumer societies have witnessed a veritable explosion of marketable popular fiction with “feel-good” titles and storylines.

What, then, are the ingredients of a piece of prose fiction that lend it its uniqueness in the depiction of states of happiness, and what essentially sets it apart from the data extractable from empirical SWB surveys? Firstly, perceptive and sensitive writers of fiction not only document observed behaviour; they also speculate philosophically on subjective states of the mind – what we might call “brain chemistry.” This is not to suggest that the writing fraternity enjoys a distinctive edge over neurobiologists who link happiness to specific patterns of brain activity; except perhaps that fictionists, science-fiction writers in particular, are adept at lending imaginative and futuristic expression to the scientific determinants of happiness. Furthermore, in analogy to psychologists, creative writers function as *de facto* therapists to their own protagonists and the mind games they perform. Literary theorist René Girard hypothesizes that a symbiosis between therapist and patient is transacted at the very moment in which the author exults in “the delight of [his/her] creation” and is thereby effectively liberated from the “anguish and desire”⁷ of the social world.

A second point to consider in this context is that a fictional narrative can be no less an effective catalyst and transmitter of cultural notions of health and happiness than a quality-of-life study or self-report. This point is emphasized by contemporary novelist and critic David Lodge (1935–), for whom intercultural intentionality constitutes a major component of his own literary praxis: “I have used America,” he states, “as a way of exploring the theme of the pursuit of happiness (a very American theme) by bringing my repressed Brits into contact with it.”⁸

A further distinguishing feature is the discursive, didactic and persuasive property of storytelling: the way in which fictional narratives record not merely how happy or serene the protagonists (as equivalents of empirical test subjects) feel at any given time, but frequently convey in addition, whether implicitly or explicitly, how happy they *should* feel. Accordingly, educating for the “happy life” (Plato, 429–327 BCE) is a non-negotiable trope that has firm roots in the pedagogical novels of Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778), Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832) and Gustave Flaubert

(1821–1880). Yet another essential point of divergence is the question of representational form and structure. The sophisticated lexical register of a literary artefact, that is to say, the use of metaphor, symbol and other figures of speech, provides authors with the means of rendering aesthetically subtle variations in experienced and reflective happiness and misfortune.⁹ Here a reciprocal process comes into play. Creative language, inasmuch as it is not just a medium of ideas but equally a potentially powerful shaper of ideas, can, in turn, fashion innovative, non-prescriptive thinking about felicity and well-being.

Yet for all the just deserts of literary happiness just outlined, when it comes to serious *belles lettres* at least, the odds appear to be weighted heavily against happiness as an overarching narrative trope because it has been frequently deemed not to be the stuff of good fiction – even by some of its own practitioners. The Swiss author Robert Walser (1878–1956) summed up the perceived deficiencies thus: “Das Glück ist kein guter Stoff für Dichter. Es ist zu selbstgenügsam. Es braucht keinen Kommentar. Es kann in sich zusammengerollt schlafen wie ein Igel”¹⁰ (Happiness is not good material for writers. It is too self-sufficient. It requires no commentary. It can sleep rolled up into a ball like a hedgehog). This self-defeating and counter-productive authorial pronouncement is not far removed from Honoré de Balzac’s (1799–1850) contention that “le bonheur n’a pas d’histoire”¹¹ (happiness has no story), or from the dictum attributed to Flaubert: “Le bonheur se raconte mal” (happiness narrates itself badly). Consequently, writers of fiction can make a good deal more mileage out of the depiction of adversity and of unhappy states of mind. Indeed, on this note Fyodor Dostoyevsky (1821–1881) has the hero of his novel *Notes from Underground* (1864) pose the vexed question: “Which is better: cheap happiness or sublime suffering?”¹² A serious readership of the time might have been inclined to opt for the latter. These misgivings about the appropriateness of thematizing happiness obviously go deeper: they reflect ideological concerns, emanating especially from the political left, that happiness is simply a bourgeois preoccupation, that the “good life” has not fallen automatically to the lot of the bulk of (suffering) humanity. Critical theory within the Frankfurt School of sociology has, for its part, afforded strong resistance to positivistic notions of an intrinsically happy *condition humaine*. An anti-

capitalistic stance underlies Adorno's objection that, as Christoph Henning puts it, "der Weg zu diesem Glück im Kapitalismus radikal verstellt sei"¹³ (the route to this happiness in capitalism is radically out of alignment). Adorno, who rejected happiness as a fetishized individual and societal aspiration legitimized by a fetishized culture industry, thus concluded: "[W]er sagt, er sei glücklich, lügt"¹⁴ (those whose claim to be happy are liars).

For the litterateurs of the Enlightenment (ca. 1720–ca. 1785) and the Age of Sensibility (ca. 1744–ca. 1798) the worthiness of happiness as a topic for fictional representation never appeared in doubt. The pre-eminence of happiness as a literary/aesthetic discourse was clearly an offshoot of intense intellectual debates in Europe, triggered by the French *philosophes*, on the nature and telos of *felicitas* and *beatitudo*. Voltaire's (1694–1778) cultural tolerance was replicated in the intercultural plurality of attitudes to happiness and of felicitous practices underpinning the universalistic thinking of Johann G. Herder (1744–1803) in his essay *Auch eine Philosophie der Geschichte zur Bildung der Menschheit* (*This Too a Philosophy of History for the Formation of Humanity*, 1774). At the same time, eighteenth-century fiction continued to give special thematic emphasis to the time-honoured socio-political debate on the relationship of the citizen to the state; that is to say, on the desirable balance between the pursuit of individual happiness and the welfare of the collective. In turn, the perceptions of happiness influencing nineteenth-century German writers were largely informed by the political convulsions that anchored happiness discourse in social utopianism, and by the sweeping economic and technological changes in Europe that directed thinking about happiness more concertedly towards its material manifestation, *prosperitas*.¹⁵

The early decades of the new millennium in which the novels of my text corpus were conceived and executed testified to astonishing levels of inventiveness in modern scientific and technological endeavour. They had either the potential or the proven capacity to make people happier by altering the course of European history for the better. A modernist visionary who recognized that town and city living need not be the drab and soulless affair portrayed by H. G. Wells (1866–1946) in *A Modern Utopia* (1905) was the architect Bruno Taut (1880–1938). Drawing much of his inspiration from the stately pleasure domes of Alexander Pope (Twickenham),

George IV (Brighton) and from London's Crystal Palace, Taut designed public and private edifices out of glass in the strong conviction that this translucent material possessed special properties that were highly conducive to the creation of a universal sense of well-being. This idea was "touted" by his associate, the early Expressionist writer/journalist Paul Scheerbart (1863–1915) whose *Glashaus Dictum* for the unique glass pavilion constructed by Bruno Taut as an exhibit at the *Werkbundaussstellung* in Cologne in 1914 opens with the rhyming couplet "Glück ohne Glas – / Wie dumm ist das!" (Happiness without glass – / How crass).¹⁶ Taut set the tone for future civic designers such as Le Corbusier (1887–1965) and Walter Gropius (1883–1969) to enhance cityscapes in aesthetically new and imaginative ways.

Given the bourgeois, if not elitist nature of the pre-1914 revolution in cultural production, even where concern for the public good was paramount, it is hardly surprising that the post-1918 visionary architects of world socialism developed quite different agendas for the welfare of the masses. The readership of Aldous Huxley's (1894–1963) dystopian novel *Brave New World* (1932) soon discovers that the unacceptably high price exacted for collective "salvation" is the forfeiture of individual and civic liberties. In contrast to Communism, National Socialist race theory, privileging as it did the health and happiness of the *Herrenvolk* (Master Race) over the racially impure, tarnished both the "end" as well as the "means." Needless to say, Alexander Dubcek's (1921–1992) reformist call in 1968 for "socialism with a human face" was to be answered not by radiant smiles but by brutal military intervention.

Many social and cultural commentators writing during the Interwar period and its immediate aftermath steered happiness discourse in a direction that took greater stock of the complexity of prevalent socio-economic determinants. The Jewish intellectual Walter Benjamin (1892–1940), whose understanding of *Glückseligkeit* was messianic on the private level yet pragmatic in its encounter with the forces of historical materialism, identified an irreversible shift towards a greater commodification of happiness under capitalism; that is to say, *prosperitas* increasingly beholden to consumerist practices. In his seminal *Passagenwerk* (Arcades Project, 1927/1939), a foray into modernity in nineteenth-century Paris, Benjamin critiques the secular

promesses du bonheur proffered by the bewildering array of consumer goods enticingly displayed in the shop windows of the nineteenth-century Parisian arcade; a veritable “Urlandschaft der Konsumption”¹⁷ (primordial landscape of consumption), as he poignantly calls it. In Kurt Weill’s (1900–1950) and Bertolt Brecht’s (1898–1956) “culinary” opera *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny* (Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny, 1930), intended as an allegory of contemporary life and a satire on the corrupt and predatory aspects of late capitalism beneath the glittering facade of Weimar society, personal happiness (or gratification) is calibrated with whisky consumption, sex and the pursuit of mammon. An offshoot of rising commercialism was Weimar Germany’s nascent advertising industry. Its targeting of young women with a sales pitch linking bourgeois *glücken* (succeeding) to glamour, youth and beauty generated a *kitsch* happiness problematized by Irmgard Keun (1905–1982) in her city novel *Das kunstseidene Mädchen* (The Artificial Silk Girl, 1932).

A further by-product of modernist consumerism tackled by British author, mathematician and philosopher Bertrand Russell (1872–1970) was the felicitous or infelicitous use of the increased leisure time at the disposal of working men and women in industrialized societies such as the United Kingdom. “To be able to fill leisure intelligently,” he noted in the highly readable *The Conquest of Happiness* (1930), “is the last product of civilization, and at present very few people have reached this level.”¹⁸ Adorno and Max Horkheimer (1895–1973) were equally apprehensive on this score, querying the degree of individual freedom in mass cultures to choose between different leisure activities. “The man with leisure,” they write in *Dialektik der Aufklärung* (Dialectic of Enlightenment, 1944), “has to accept what the culture manufacturers offer him,”¹⁹ and the attendant values it imposes on society. “Amusement under late capitalism,” they go on to argue, “is the prolongation of work. It is sought after as an escape from the mechanized work process, and to recruit strength in order to be able to cope with it again. But at the same time mechanization has such power over a man’s leisure and happiness, and ... profoundly determines the manufacture of amusement goods.”²⁰

Texts – Contexts – Approaches

The aim of this book is to illustrate and evaluate through close analysis the modalities and trajectories of *Glück* (happiness) in canonical novels that interrogate some of the above mentioned shifts in early to mid-twentieth-century perceptions of happiness. I focus on Thomas Mann (1875–1955), Franz Kafka (1883–1924), Hermann Hesse (1877–1962) and Ernst Jünger (1895–1998), all of whom afforded considerable latitude to the happiness trope in novels published between 1922 and 1949. I seek to explore the ways in which each author absorbed, processed and lent imaginative expression to a rich tapestry of happiness discourses that are either reflective of the *zeitgeist* or are anchored in more recent or older Occidental and Oriental intellectual traditions. Thus the book should be viewed as a contribution to the history of ideas about happiness, rather than a *posthistoire* deconstructionist critique of happiness aimed at foregrounding its “bourgeois” pretensions or its naïve or optimistic self-assertiveness in light of the radical changes to the world order precipitated by two world wars. Such a reductionist approach would achieve very little, especially as the authors of the study were profoundly wary of socially engineered or culturally constructed promises of happiness and, as a consequence, do not permit private or collective happiness to come easily to their protagonists.

The works under consideration are well-known and extensively commented novels of ideas: Mann’s *Der Zauberberg* (The Magic Mountain); Kafka’s *Der Proceß* (The Trial) and *Das Schloss* (The Castle); Hesse’s *Siddhartha*, *Der Steppenwolf* (Steppenwolf) and *Das Glasperlenspiel* (The Glass Bead Game); and Jünger’s *Heliopolis*. Each refutes Walser’s aforementioned claim that happiness is “not good material for writers.” Of course, Walser’s qualms were entirely reasonable, given the universal suffering inflicted by both world wars and the overall loss of faith in utopian social systems, which left little room, at least in the Western world, for trust in individual or collective happiness. Understandably, then, the four authors grappled in their fictional, discursive and confessional writings with these “false” promises of happiness, seeking to counter them via

alternative paradigms of happiness. Each author could be loosely termed a “conservative modernist,” to replicate the term Richie Robertson applies to Kafka,²¹ in view of their common search for meaning in a world of multiple realities with multiple coordinates in which the individual has lost a secure existential foothold. A unifying thread in the works under review – all classifiable as quest novels, with the possible exception of *Heliopolis* – can be seen in the protagonists’ attempts to define and enact happiness within such deteleologized existential and epistemological spaces.

My study identifies and critically appraises the broad panoply of happiness discourses embedded in the seven novels. These range from philosophical and phenomenological aspects to pedagogical, psychological, spiritual and socio-political facets. At the same time, I focus on the contextual and intertextual significance of these works. In attempting to pinpoint shared ground in the depiction of happiness and to link such convergences to larger trends in conceptualizations of happiness at work in culture and society during the period under review, I am mindful of the difficulties of identifying a cohesive set of positions on happiness since the onset of literary modernism. The post-Nietzschean “re-evaluation of values” and the rapid advances in the behavioural, biological and social sciences gave rise to constructs of *felicitas* that were no longer firmly grounded in conventional universalistic philosophical thinking. By comparison, during the two preceding centuries literary practitioners drew on a more restrictive, systematized and formulaic range of theories, such as the central role of quantitative well-being in the utilitarian thinking of British philosophers Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832) and John Stuart Mill (1806–1873), or the interdependency of *felicitas*, moral duty and virtue. Despite Immanuel Kant’s (1724–1804) famous questioning of this triad,²² within the Western literary canon, narrativizations of happiness coupled to virtue ethics, wedlock and domesticity formed the very staple of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century British, continental and Russian social novel.

Overall, the authors of my study did not advance the sub-genre of the nineteenth-century *Gesellschaftsroman* (social novel). Thomas Mann in his first novel *Die Buddenbrooks* (1901) subverted in no lesser measure than Theodor Fontane (1819–1898) in *Effi Briest* (1895) any cozy certainties about the achievability or even desirability of a *Glück im Winkel* (happiness

of the hearth). This paradigm switch is predicated to a large degree on the recognition by twentieth-century thinkers and writers that the attainment of happiness was no longer an art to be cultivated over a whole lifetime, as Hellenistic philosophers deemed it to be. Rather, the best that could be hoped for in an age no longer characterized by coherent or cohesive eudaimonias was to snatch moments of happiness,²³ either in real time, or through recollected glimpses of previous blissful periods, such as the “scene of remembered happiness”²⁴ to which the protagonist Swann alludes in the celebrated *roman fleuve* of Marcel Proust (1871–1922) *À la recherche du temps perdu* (Remembrance of Things Past, 1913–1927). Nevertheless, of the four selected writers, Hesse, as I will show, was undoubtedly the most optimistic about the ability of his characters to nurture and sustain a happy lifestyle.

The literary mediation of happiness has never been the exclusive preserve of the novel, yet its structural multi-dimensionality since the Enlightenment has enabled it to theorize and depict more comprehensively than other genres the broadest spectrum of happiness constructs; and it is to this genre that the majority of commentators in literary happiness studies (few in number that they are) have largely turned. The eighteenth-century European novel, in particular, has provided literary criticism with fertile ground for addressing philosophical and sociological aspects of happiness such as the (problematic) nexus between happiness and virtue and the role that happiness played in love, marriage and philanthropy, especially within an emerging body of popular women’s writing.²⁵ While shorter prose fiction is manifestly not the locus for the development of complex ideas, it is ideally suited to offer snapshots of the fleetingness of happiness, to which Katharine Mansfield’s (1888–1923) collection *Bliss and Other Stories* (1920) admirably attests. By contrast, the epic breadth of the novel allows for the presence of nuanced and often (dialectically) contrasting views of happiness. Indeed, each of my selected novels presents both different and interlinked focal points for reflection and speculation on the nature, style and limitations of felicitous living either by the protagonists themselves or via the voice of the author/narrator. As far as the medium of drama is concerned, stage plays, too, provide scope for a dialogic treatment of happiness issues. However, theatricalization adds a performative element that is generally

more dynamic and expressive than the language of epic description; that is to say, the facial and gestural externalizations of happy and sad states such as the radiant smile, the glowing countenance or the furrowed brow. They require differing interpretive responses from production to production, depending on the particular script or stage directions.

Whereas the selected novels of the older generation of writers, notably Mann's (Chapter One) and Hesse's (Chapter Three), investigate the interfaces and continuities between both nineteenth-century epistemologies and sociologies of happiness and modernist accretions to the happiness debate, the "unhappiness" tropes of Kafka's two angst-filled novels examined in Chapter Two are linked almost exclusively to the intensifying existential(-ist) crisis of a fragmented spiritual identity peculiar to the new millennium. And for its part, Jünger's *Heliopolis*, treated in Chapter Four, engages with dystopian facets of (un-)happiness that are more aligned to Interwar socio-cultural and ideological directions than to nineteenth-century intellectual practices.

Interwoven with my textual readings are critical considerations of key intellectual influences discernible in each narrative. Quite apart from the influences that are specific to each author and are reflected upon in the book's four main chapters, I identify as a common denominator a marked fascination with, if not an unconditional embrace of Eastern happiness philosophies as a source of inspiration for alternative ways of living. Whereas the active pursuit of happiness, first enshrined in the preamble to the American Declaration of Independence of 1776, was always thought to work best in a culture of materialism, affluence, scientific progress and an insistence on human rights, the Eastern idea of attaining happiness mirrors histories and cultures of suffering and endurance born of poverty, disease and social inequality, thereby focusing on the means of transcending pain and material privation through self-mastery, inner wisdom and spiritual enlightenment.

All four authors were attracted to aspects of Taoist philosophy, which is said to have emerged in the sixth century BCE under the spiritual leadership of Lao Tzu (Lao-tzu; Lao-tze, 571–ca. 490 BCE). German translations of the key Taoist teachings such as the *Tao Te Ching* (*Book of the Way and its Virtue*, ca. 500 BCE) or the *I Ging/Yi Jing* (*Book of Changes*,

ca. 1034 BCE), possibly the oldest book in the world, became readily accessible at the beginning of the twentieth century. Taoism distinguishes between happiness-with-a-cause, that is to say, the pleasures associated with the material content of our unfolding life, and causeless or “eternal” happiness, which is synonymous with what we are at the core of our being.

A central tenet of Taoism to which the authors under review give serious consideration – one that in fact offers an alternative reading of Western notions of action and responsibility – is *wu wei*, the principle of non-doing or, more accurately, of non-action. This principle encapsulates the very paradoxical nature of happiness: the idea that happiness is best achieved by those who do not seek it but pursue other goals instead. *Wu wei* denotes the cultivation of a state of being in which human activity is effortlessly and felicitously aligned with the ebb and flow of the elemental cycles of the natural world. Under the influence of Buddhism, Taoism and the teachings of Confucius, Hesse explored, especially in *Siddhartha* and *Das Glasperlenspiel*, the notion of *Heiterkeit* (serenity/cheerfulness/glee) as a potentially more sustainable type of well-being than the tenuous and fragile perceptions of happiness prevalent throughout Western history. This contemplative as well as facially and gesturally externalized mode of *Glück* was, by the mid-1930s, increasingly dismissed as naively archaic and unworldly. Yet clearly, the intellectual, aesthetic and spiritual dimensions of *Heiterkeit* treated by Hesse in particular bore no resemblance to the surfeit of media images of superficially happy people with forced smiles projected by our contemporary consumer-driven Western culture. John Schumaker aptly describes fake modes of good cheer, such as putting on a “happy face” (even when there is an underlying lack of happiness), as part of today’s “happiness conspiracy.”²⁶

My second approach is to investigate the psychologization of happiness and well-being in the works under review, most notably via a retrospective application of Sigmund Freud’s (1856–1939) groundbreaking pronouncements in *Civilization and its Discontents* (1930). Here Freud reiterated earlier doubts as to the providential role of happiness: “One feels inclined to say that the intention that man should be ‘happy’ is not included in the plan of Creation.”²⁷ Freud adopted this deteleologized stance, especially in light of the disappointments and vexations that would, in his estimation,