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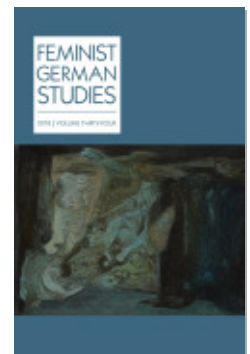
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Transgenerational Holocaust Memory in Anne Weber's *Ahnen* and Esther Kinsky's *Am Fluß*

HELGA DRUXES

As German women writers and translators who lived outside of Germany, Esther Kinsky and Anne Weber engage with the residue of the Holocaust in their memory work. They investigate German anti-Semitism and, in Kinsky's case, the aftereffects of decolonization and racism in Britain during the first decade of the twenty-first century. In her exploratory family memoir, Weber challenges the hagiography that her family constructs about itself—as belonging to an educated elite that is not bound to the norms that govern other people. Kinsky focuses on displaced persons from the Bosnian War of the 1990s on the periphery of London as a neoliberal power center. As global citizens, they are keenly aware of how the Holocaust resonates with more recent genocides and of the need to keep this memory alive. Both texts are aesthetically innovative in their rapid movement among distant eras and geographical locations, mapping new ways of thinking the past side by side with the present.

While since the mid-1990s experts have paid much attention to how Holocaust trauma was passed on to children, grandchildren have also been actively engaged in trying to understand how these silenced or distorted legacies shaped them.¹ During the last ten years Germany and to some extent Austria have witnessed the publication of a large number of transgenerational memory works.² Among these is the prose of Esther Kinsky (b. 1956 in Engelskirchen) and Anne Weber (b. 1964 in Offenbach), two German writers and translators. Both engage with the residue of the Holocaust in their memory work, Kinsky in her autobiographical novel *Am Fluß* (2015; *River*, 2017) and Weber in her family memoir *Ahnen: Ein Zeitreise tagebuch* (2014; *Ancestors: Diary of a journey through time*). Being one generation removed might have made it easier to address the Holocaust's legacy, but this depends on how, according to Jan Assman, "communicative memory" functioned within family collectives spanning three generations.³ Family memory is socially produced and reiterated.

It cements family memories that are not troubling (Welzer et al. 10–11). The Germanist Sigrid Weigel argues that a recount of generations from the perspective of the protesting sons or daughters of perpetrator-fathers “omitted the generation that I will call the concealed first generation, because it established itself after the war as the first authority in questions of politics, truth, and morality” (272). In that case, our authors represent the first two generations to take up questions of family memory and veracity.

Translating the Past into the Present

Kinsky’s and Weber’s work as translators and their long residence outside of Germany created multiple spaces of encounter in France (Weber) and America, the United Kingdom, and Israel (Kinsky) with children of Holocaust survivors who have also turned to translation and writing. As global citizens, they are keenly aware of structural forms of annihilation similar to the Holocaust and the mass killings of subsequent decades, and of the urgency to recognize and name transnational parallels in an effort to raise empathetic understanding for the victims of such actions. As daughters, Kinsky and Weber provide an embodied, located counter-narrative that becomes, in Holocaust scholar Marianne Hirsch’s words, “a reparative ethical and political act of solidarity, and perhaps, agency on behalf of the other” (Hirsch 99). Both texts are aesthetically innovative in their rapid movement among distant eras and geographical locations, achieving a simultaneity of thinking the past along with the present, while also marking the past as something that cannot be completely retrieved. The self-reflexive, meditative form and tone of their accounts constructs a discursive sphere of postmemory that holds up distant or parallel histories to new scrutiny (Hirsch 35).

Artists of the postmemory generations emphasize the ramifications of Holocaust memories in a global setting. Moving against the grain of a depoliticized understanding of the Holocaust’s uniqueness, Kinsky and Weber excavate crosscutting histories of anti-Semitism, colonialism, and racism. The Jewish studies scholar Michael Rothberg proposes the concept of multidirectional memory as a way of “draw[ing] attention to the dynamic transfers that take place between diverse places and times during the act of remembrance” (*Multidirectional Memory* 11). Rothberg goes on to argue that multidirectional memory “helps explain the spiraling interactions that characterize the politics of memory,” resulting in “complex acts of solidarity in which historical memory serves as a

medium for the creation of new communal and political identities” (11). He advocates for a more dynamic engagement with transnational and transgenerational memory as they are affected by processes of decolonization and genocide on a global scale (“Multidirectional Memory” 39). In the texts of Weber and Kinsky, the reverberations of World War II are involute and highly ramified. Kinsky in particular focuses on displaced persons from the Bosnian War of the 1990s on the periphery of London as a center of neoliberal power, and shows how they find acceptance in a Hasidic community. Urban edgelands become the stage for the forced displacement of refugees and the poor as property values increase. She includes polaroids of these landscapes as artifacts that punctuate the narrative and draw attention to factory chimneys, brackish water, mud, and woods. These resistant visual mementos do not reveal graphic horrors; rather, they draw our attention to their layered physical materiality as polysemous or, as Geertz might argue (3–30), *thick* objects, and refer to pervasive themes in this work—namely, seeing, blind spots, and forgetting. Only once does the photographer’s shadow appear in the image; otherwise human beings are absent. The narrator in Kinsky’s *River* invites the reader to share her experience of contemplating these polaroids, stating: “The picture showed something that lay behind the things the lens had focused on, things which, for an imperceptible moment in time, the shutter release must have brushed aside” (28).⁴ The images use a now-outdated technology, which spurs the narrator’s memory, drawing attention to its mediated quality. If the surface layer is not removed quickly, pieces of the image will peel off and reveal a “wounded landscape” in which “a rent would gape in the middle of the grey, fuzzy scenery of the traduced and fragmentary reminiscence, and through this cleft broke a formless world of dull coloring, unmasking the black-and-white surface as a flimsy disguise for a wild variegation that was wholly unconnected to memory” (*R* 28–29). The narrator further refers to these wounded images as “if they were evidence of a trauma” (29). These images allude to what Hirsch in her study on postmemory refers to as “the pastness and the irretrievability of the past” (99), as well as to the violence implicit in the act of forgetting.

Perhaps not surprisingly, both Weber and Kinsky initially chose literary translation as their primary vocation and lived much of their lives outside Germany, possibly in response to the malaise they felt identifying as postwar Germans.⁵ Weber speaks of her desire to hide among (*untertauchen*) the French (*Ahnen* 6). In interviews with the author, both Kinsky

and Weber emphasized their own national border crossing as foundational to their projects.⁶ It seems as if geographical and linguistic distancing create the space for each of them to speak out about past violence. As Kinsky states in her book on the translator's craft, titled *Fremdsprechen*:

The Holocaust is so present as a defining event among many readers globally that one can assume they will recognize both in the original and in its translation the reference to the disappearance of the Jewish population; that what is—the text—can only be accessed through what is not. But how will this story be read in a culture where there is at best a mediated awareness of European history?⁷

Holocaust memory itself is already mediated, and there are experiences or belief sets that one cannot retrospectively inhabit. The challenge of translation, Kinsky argues (*Fremdsprechen* 9), is akin to historical archaeology, unearthing testimonies to acts of genocide in other times and places that resemble the Holocaust. Active correspondence between lives lived then and those lived now is needed to invigorate politicized remembering across generations and nations. Remembering past mass killings and their aftereffects becomes perfunctory if it is not supplemented by a robust understanding of civil rights and activism in our time of increasing privatization and the retreat of the state.⁸ In their essay "Elements of Anti-Semitism," Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno already realized that no group would be immune per se against resentment and homicidal hatred: "[V]ictims are interchangeable depending on the constellation: vagabonds, Jews, Protestants, Catholics, any one of them may take the place of the murderers, in the same blind rage to assault and kill" (140).

In "Education after Auschwitz" Adorno called for "critical self-reflection" (193) against aggressive nationalism and authoritarianism; resisting this call, some members of the postmemory generation of German families—those with no living memory of World War II and lacking a personal connection with those who directly experienced it—came to resent their parents' mantra of "never again." In some instances they even became fascinated by neo-Nazi ideology because such a taboo surrounded it. Why was this the case? Historians Harald Welzer, Sabine Moller, and Karoline Tschuggnall liken emotional knowledge about the Nazi atrocities to a family album and an encyclopedia sitting side by side on a family's bookshelf. Such knowledge inside families and the details pertaining to what family members did or failed to do is, they explain, stored in a different mental archive from the facts, which are amply

documented (Welzer et al. 10). The later generations' difficult task is to interconnect these two disparate strata of knowledge and relate them both backward to the past and outward transnationally through what Rothberg terms "multidirectional memory," triggered by contemporary events that can act as vectors for remembering. Thus, for example, in her memoir, Weber attempts to design a mental software that will not be restricted by any single space, but which will reach out multidirectionally to other sites of knowledge. No longer mutely suffering her proscription from the Rangs, her father's family, which was based on the father's refusal to marry Anne Weber's mother (the reader does not learn her name or more about her) or acknowledge her legally as his daughter, the author investigates the myth of her ancestor as the founder of a line of great men. She puts the work of her great-grandfather Florens Christian Rang (1864–1924) as a school inspector and as a minister in Poland in its German colonial context, and she looks carefully at what she can know about him. She uncovers the different paths his three sons took in Nazi Germany. She publicly tells the good and the bad of these lives, lifting the veil of guilt, shame, and deceit her father had thrown over them. She models for the reader how to construct oneself as an ethical subject, that is, as someone who questions received knowledge and sees one's country of origin not only in the context of one's own national or class background but through specific encounters with residents of former enemy nations. Weber does this by seeking out individuals from France, Britain, and the United States.

Kinsky is similarly interested in troubling dominant narratives about the past. Her narrator lets physical objects speak to her and reclaims herself as a member of a postwar Jewish diaspora. She forges solidarity with others who are in transit—the urban poor, refugees from the Bosnian War, and émigrés—by observing these individuals with empathetic interest. She models an openness to the strange and the particular that allows her to confront anxious memories. While Kinsky's narrator moves laterally through a post-Holocaust landscape establishing analogies, Weber travels back vertically through layers of her German family's past.

The Memory Work of Anne Weber

Weber is keenly aware of the ethical stakes her project raises: her efforts to commemorate her German great-grandfather Florens Christian (F. C.) Rang, his famous German-Jewish friends Walter Benjamin and Martin

Buber, and his Polish connection cannot gloss over millions of unburied Holocaust victims, for whom no such nuanced commemoration exists. Nor is there a direct historical connection between Florens Christian Rang's worldview and the mass murders of the Nazi era that was yet to come. It would be a fallacy to read Rang's lifework exclusively through the lens of the Holocaust, Weber argues, just as it would be morally obtuse to treat it as unconnected. Weber refers to it metaphorically as a sore spot.⁹ She believes the legacy of Auschwitz still constitutes a burden for every German: "No matter which grouping of nations comes together [. . .] a German will always represent *that thing* [. . .]. We carry the history of our country as a sign (the sign of guilt) on our chests. No matter how we twist and turn, this sign always hangs in front."¹⁰ Transgenerational memory means that even the generation of the grandchildren, Weber's generation, has to confront this sign. Weber imagines the Holocaust as a massive pile of dead bodies that obstructs a clear view of the pre-Holocaust past. The abyss between Poles and Germans is bridged by Weber's visit to retrace Rang's life in Poland and with her witnessing All Saints' Day celebrations there in a public cemetery. In an act of personal commemoration, she assembles all the dead on both sides in her consciousness, a universalizing move. She becomes an Orpheus-like figure who calls back to life the unburied dead in her imagination, restoring them to cultural memory: "[T]here is still room in the grave, it widens and widens until it surpasses the eye and our thoughts. Until it embraces them all, the millions and billions of the dead. My ancestors."¹¹ In his recent study of postwar Russian and German generations' difficulties with mourning "uncertain loss," the Slavist Alexander Etkind argues that German culture developed a form of dealing with the Nazi past through "memory hardware in the form of monuments and museums, with a consequent cultural debate over the need to revive and reinspire this memory, to rescue it from complete petrification" (246). Here Weber revives the memory of the dead.

Etkind's conception of the reach of the authoritarian legacy across generations proves useful in understanding the mechanisms of Weber's response to her family history:

Fifty years, or two cultural generations, is how much is needed to make the work of mourning culturally productive. I would speculate that the historical processes of catastrophic scale traumatize the first generation of descendants, and it is their daughters and sons—

the grandchildren of the victims, perpetrators, and onlookers—who produce the work of mourning for their grandparents. (3)

Weber realizes that such markers as the passing of generations are, by themselves, insufficient for any genuine grappling with the Nazi legacy. She undertakes a biographical project in her father's family, a documented journey back in time (the *Zeitreisetagebuch* in the subtitle) to more than a century before, well aware that the individual she is able to exhume from family accounts and his written works is not identical with the man Florens Rang as he lived. F. C. himself invented "Florens" as his new first name to indicate that he felt reborn after he resigned from the ministry and resolved his anguished religious struggle with God. The making and unmaking of his public and inner personae can be traced in his unpublished essays and diary entries. This is why she renames him "Sanderling" (A 7), a calque of the German word *Sonderling* (eccentric) and the sand-piper, a small bird characterized by its abrupt stops and starts.¹²

Weber attempts to solve the riddle Rang presents to today's readers by frequently interconnecting Rang's thoughts with the ideas of his Jewish contemporaries, and with her own doubts about her assertions, what can be retrieved as certain knowledge, and what is conjecture. She acts upon her own desire for revenge, for example, in asking her father about her grandfather, an avowed Nazi (who, of course, minimized this after the war at his mandatory de-Nazification hearing):

Am I not an informer, too, as I publicly denounce a man here as if I had been appointed his judge? Maybe. But I swear: If I had gotten wind of the smallest trace, in a document or through a reported conversation, that he had suffered pangs of conscience, even the tiniest surge of shame, or any candid moment—I swear, I would not ever have disturbed his rest, nor my father's, nor mine.¹³

Ahnen joins a long list of authors' considerations of their family's connections to oppressive regimes, such as Uwe Timm's investigation of the case of his older brother, a Nazi soldier (*Am Beispiel meines Bruders*, 2003; *In My Brother's Shadow*, 2005); Christa Wolf's chronicle of her early childhood in a family of German settlers in Poland (*Kindheitsmuster*, 1976; *Patterns of Childhood*, 1984); Christoph Meckel's critical appraisal of his father's "inner emigration" during the Nazi era (*Suchbild*, 1980; *Image for Investigation: About My Father*, 1987); Ruth Rehmann's memoir about her father, a minister and a Nazi (*Der Mann auf der Kanzel*, 1979; *The Man in*

the Pulpit: Questions for a Father, 1997); Monika Maron's memoir about her Jewish grandfather (*Pawels Briefe*, 1999; *Pavel's Letters*, 2002); W. G. Sebald's stories about displaced persons (*Die Ausgewanderten*, 1992; *The Emigrants*, 1996); or Eugen Ruge's novel about three generations of socialists in the German Democratic Republic (*In Zeiten des abnehmenden Lichts*, 2011; *In Times of Fading Light*, 2013).

What makes Weber's family situation on her father's side more opaque to her is that she and her less educated mother were not acknowledged as members of the Rang family; in fact, Anne's birth certificate does not list her father, Adalbert Rang (b. 1928), a distant authority to whom the young Weber was told to write stilted letters using the honorific form of address with the title "Professor Dr." (A 156), and who would belatedly acknowledge her, but perhaps never truly welcomed her into his family. She was twenty-five before he would invite her to take his family name. In Weber's memoir, her aged father at first angrily rejects his daughter's questioning as an attempt "to insert [herself] into the family."¹⁴ Weber's father is half right: her research does represent a form of insertion, but as much into an imagined landscape of displaced people, as into a particular family's hidden failures rather than its public successes.

Florens C. Rang's Career in Poland

Two poles determine the trajectory of Weber's great-grandfather's memory within twentieth-century German history: Poznań, a Prussian provincial capital on the eastern margins of the German Empire and the departure point for Rang's career as a colonial official and minister; and Auschwitz, the end point of the murderous ideology of the Nazis, an outcome he did not live to see. Using his letters and diaries, Weber tries to intuit what concepts such as authority, religious faith, and physicality might have meant to him in his lived experience. It is also during the first two years in Poznań that Rang has his first love affairs with Polish women, marries a well-off German orphan from Berlin, starts a family, quits his job, and returns to divinity school, only to realize that he is not suited to preaching because he is too uncompromising. Such sudden reversals were unheard of—once a man obtained a coveted post of civil servant (*Beamter*) and had started a family, he would usually stay put, writes Weber (A 51). Rang felt compelled to make drastic changes over and over again, even if his path was highly idiosyncratic and placed financial and emotional burdens on

his family, especially his wife, Emma, who became increasingly dispirited and began to suffer breakdowns.

In 1903 or 1904 Rang accompanied a group of ministers on a survey of local Polish institutions such as the prison, poorhouse, and insane asylum. At that point he voices doubt about the logic of keeping a few disabled people alive rather than delivering much-needed funds to those “truly fit to live and thrive.”¹⁵ Weber is struck by the functionalism of this harsh eugenic attitude, although she also cautions that it represents only a snapshot of his thoughts at that moment. Nonetheless, his sorting of those worth maintaining and those unworthy reflects widespread popular ideas that eventually led to the euthanasia programs of the National Socialists. This is why Weber will return to this moment at several points throughout her narrative to reevaluate it. Weber incorporates Florens Rang’s original notes on his encounter at some length:

I saw the army of government workers, the river of gold that was necessary to maintain all this and those few insane people [. . .] and I said to myself, why don’t you direct your gold, your services, your life’s work toward those that are able to be raised up [. . .]. I asked the young doctor [. . .] why do you not poison these people? The man smiled ironically. His smile meant: why do the Christians forbid it? But how wonderful, a sick person uttered it himself, a magnificent specimen, a Hercules as Rubens would have painted him. Kill me, he shouted at the doctor, as we entered the room. A flood of insults followed and a flood of accusations indicating that he was suffering terribly. Kill me! [. . .] [T]he greatest man I saw today was the crazy Hercules, and I answered in my heart by vowing I do not want to be lesser like you, I do not want to be as puny as the Christian God.¹⁶

In what might seem to be an eerie prefiguration of the fate of the disabled in the Nazi regime, Rang describes “idiot children that had to be fed or glued together cardboard boxes and soiled themselves,”¹⁷ and this image of humans reduced to infantilized bodies that cannot control their own basic functions is contrasted with the potent masculinity of the mad Hercules. Nervous exhaustion and mad outbursts characterize Rang’s own frequent crises of faith and career. His wife mirrors his crises in her own ill health: after bearing four children in quick succession, she is placed in a psychiatric hospital. Upon her release, her husband gives up

his relatively prestigious post as minister to a large German Protestant community. They move to a remote village. There, her near total isolation from other educated people only deepens her depression. Weber comments that Rang speaks of his spouse as if she were a delicate child given to visions and emotional outbursts (A 48).

I argue that the binary gendering of madness into two types—on the one hand, hysterical convulsions coded as feminine and pathological; on the other, a torrent of angry words coded as masculine and heroic—tells us something about Rang's own struggle to embrace masculinity. He briefly alludes to Emma's first pregnancy in an episode when he frightens her with his vision of his deceased sister Luise (A 48). Emma's terrible screams fulfill expected female norms when confronted with the spirit world, but they become almost unstoppable, and so frighten her husband.

In his notes on the hospital visit quoted above, Rang identifies with the aggressive masculinity of the madman who has license to challenge the authorities, a taboo that the minister himself breaks by asking the doctor why he does not poison "these people." As his ally beyond the law of man, the madman becomes the opposite of the feminized and docile health professionals. The minister the reader witnesses at that moment wishes to wield power. Although he is an iconoclast, we are made to understand that his relentless struggle to overcome emotional softness and performance anxiety uncannily prefigures Nazi rhetoric.

One of his four sons, Bernard Rang, would become a career Nazi. Bernard's son, Weber's father, would later try to minimize his father's role as a harmless library director (A 155). Weber soon uncovers the truth: Bernard worked as a Sicherheitsdienst (SD) volunteer in the Nazi security service, and by 1943 he was sent for leadership training at the Reich's elite Security Police School. By 1944 he and his family moved into an expropriated Jewish villa. Despite such damning evidence, his son obfuscates the possibility that his father was nothing more than an opportunist. He admits to Weber that he worried all along that one day someone would publish the truth (A 152). He seems to invite her to do so.

Where Sanderling proves exceptional—and distinct from his son and grandson—is in his earnest struggle to be morally accountable. Sanderling's patriotism and "Dionysian bloodlust"¹⁸ caused two deaths: by 1915 he saw that he goaded his own son to enlist, and that he was also wrong to arrest a pacifist worker, who later committed suicide. In 1924 he published a political tract, *Deutsche Bauhütte* (German building

association), calling on Germans to form volunteer associations to rebuild war-destroyed homes, hospitals, and schools in Belgium and France.

Weber realizes that she would be wrong to retrofit Nazi ideology wholesale into her great-grandfather's thinking. After first embracing religion, then Prussian nationalism, he finally became a pacifist and democrat: "Despite what I had anticipated, I did not arrive at *the* not even *a* source for the killings made in Germany. His final piece of writing opens up a path that would not have led over mangled bodies."¹⁹ Rang demands "a continual opposition against the status quo [. . .] that unsettles the state's sense of accountability [. . .] by holding the conscience of its citizens accountable to it and correcting its directives."²⁰

For Weber, reading his archive is punctuated by revisiting memory sites in Germany and Poland. In a certain sense, her biographical narrative emerges as an archive that reads the genocidal history of World War II alongside his personal trajectory. After visiting Sanderling's last home in Hesse, she realizes it is near Hadamar with its psychiatric clinic (today the memorial NS-Tötungsanstalt Hadamar) where the Nazis first began gassing patients. In the basement of the gas chamber building, Weber enters a bare (*kahl*) room with whitewashed walls and two side openings (A 142). It is forbidden to enter the gas chamber itself. Weber writes: "Doctors supervised the murders by standing at the door [. . .] and watching [. . .] through a peephole how people died slow, agonizing deaths. I remember two people I am close to, who, had they lived a few decades earlier, would have been killed here or somewhere else."²¹ This passage indicates Weber's conviction that German memorial culture is too antiseptic and petrified within formulaic rhetorical markers and needs to be reexperienced by individual Germans. When Weber goes to Hadamar she is the only visitor at the hospital site, in contrast to the chatty waitress in the town, who despite living in the area for a long time, has never made time to go visit the site. Weber adduces court testimony by those who assisted the Nazi perpetrators in their mission to rid Germany of all those deemed unfit. The office for which Sanderling worked, the "Interior Mission" (Innere Mission), in Hitler's time actively supported his euthanasia programs by collecting patients and transporting them to Hadamar and other euthanasia centers to be killed. There are these striking connections, but need there be a profound guilt that is passed down through the generations? Inside Weber's head, an imaginary "chief prosecutor" struggles with her own defense: "All this

is true. Even so, there is no direct line. Let's say from Nietzsche, Darwin, Sanderling to the future murderers. Not even from a father to his son, let alone to his daughter. It is unbelievably more complex and convoluted."²² Weber's effort to speak about her family history is an honest and careful accounting of this involvement.

One of her father's—Adalbert Rang's—brothers wrote an unpublished biographical sketch of Rang (extant in the F. C. Rang archive), which, as Weber discovers once she herself visits Poland, falsified some information to make it seem that Rang had achieved greater material wealth than he had (A 248). A photograph of his purported house turns out to be a fake, of a grand design that had no place in the village of Połajewo where Florens Rang moved the family after his wife's collapse. Weber provides a needed corrective to the hagiographic cult around her ancestor in which the men in her family indulged. The last one of these memory sites is Połajewo, the village backwater where Sanderling held his last post before abjuring God and turning toward economics and back to Germany. His efforts to uplift the country people according to his strict Christian asceticism and moral rigor were doomed to fail. It is interesting that he opposed the official German settlement policy to ban Polish from the schools. However, he himself spoke no Polish and was thus limited to the small German settler community. Sanderling was deeply serious, often ill at ease and restless, unaware of the ironies or humorous aspects of his endeavors to bring God's word to the locals. He was burdened by his own earnestness, but this quality also bestows a radical honesty on him. If he felt he could not condone hypocrisy, he changed course. For example, he became drawn to Catholicism after he saw Protestantism as too lax, and soon left the church altogether because he could not alleviate people's economic misery. By studying his life's work, we arrive along with Weber at the understanding that in speaking so harshly of the mentally ill, he was pushing his thoughts to a limit he would never have overstepped. He was no killer. The only time he agrees to a mercy killing is when the local doctor offers to end the suffering of an elderly farmer with an injection, and he later upbraids himself for agreeing out of weakness (A 65). Like Weber, he is drawn to exploring the hypothetical consequences of his thoughts, but is guided by his conscience.

Weber ponders the desire of Germans like herself, born after the Nazi era, to seek linear connections between Nazi war crimes and prior generations. If these existed as a straightforward concatenation of cause and effect, it would be so much easier to feel righteous. The past, Weber

now surmises, is a history of individuals, not of a collective or even of generations. Her emphasis on the discrete individual bears traces of Rang's own idealistic focus on individual conscience and activism in *Deutsche Bauhütte*, where he calls for a German democratic revival led by conscientious individuals aware of the need to rebuild an international European community, a goal he expresses with the neologism "becoming part of humanity by rebuilding the people."²³ Despite its idealistic and preachy overtones, Rang's political agenda contains two surprisingly modern suggestions: a solidarity contribution to alleviate poverty and to finance the rebuilding of homes and hospitals in France and Belgium, and the call for public science education to be made available across class lines. As recounted in Weber's *Ahnen*, he suggested a common economic development project that would transcend class and nationality, calling for a spiritual rebirth that would restore Germany's good name on the basis of activism and intercultural exchange (A 206).

After the ravages of World War I, the Rang of *Bauhütte* has changed his mind about the urgent rights of the socially weak. He also advocates for the promotion of Jewish Germans to leadership positions within the ranks of the German conservative political establishment. He hopes that Germany could become a mediator toward Russia in a new League of Nations. Rang outs himself as a European, not a nationalist. Weber writes in her foreword to the new edition of *Bauhütte* that this reformed, humane man is one she stands in awe of (Weber, Foreword xi). Rang's call to individually and reciprocally make amends links him to Weber's own convictions.

Weber also works as a literary translator; viewed through this lens, her memoir represents a kind of historiographical translation. In my interview with her, she states that her book is "an essay to approach more closely, one might say, an attempt to translate this past language, their whole worldview, into a current language."²⁴ Memory work is akin to the craft of translation, as both are associated with an act of transformation and yet tethered to place and materiality. Weber's innovation is to comment on her own thought process even as she is piecing together information. This shuttling back and forth creates a more complex view of the past that avoids facile identifications. In *Ahnen*, Weber acknowledges that we cannot fully enter into what God or religion meant to people in F. C. Rang's youth, because our own values have changed so much since the turn of the last century. Weber engages in a sustained dialogue about her family history with several Jewish friends, among them the writers Cécile

Wajsbrot and Pierre Pachet, sharing with them what she finds in the archive (A 88–89). She also states: “My concern is individuals, not entire generations.”²⁵ Weber invites acts of co-witnessing of her family’s troubled history by reaching out to the descendants of French Jews who were victimized by the Nazis. With a detached analytical gaze, Weber models for the reader a diagramming of her own thought processes, pointing out false leads and dead ends as much as productive discoveries. As Hirsch remarks in *The Generation of Postmemory*, “identifications can cross lines of difference” in the multimedia work by postmemory Jewish daughters, with the figure of the daughter “function[ing] as a familial position or identificatory space open to extra-familial, even male, subjects” (87). Or, in the case of Weber, non-German subjects.

Esther Kinsky’s Mapping of Urban Memory

The impetus to show the interrelatedness of past and present in *Ahnen* bears some similarity with a recent novel by another German writer, born a generation earlier, who also spent most of her adult life living outside of Germany: Esther Kinsky. Kinsky recently published a book on her work as a literary translator, *Fremdsprechen*, which she translates as “talking something into foreignness.”²⁶ In her novels, especially in *River* but also in her earlier *Banatsko* (2011), Kinsky is fascinated by natural sites that conserve fragments of the past, such as river mouths and Eastern European floodplains or areas of no-man’s land on the edge of urban settlements. They become collection points for detritus, pieces of past lives and cultures, that a patient observer can rediscover and reanimate by letting these objects speak.

Kinsky positions herself as an inveterate traveler whose entire adult life consists of movement from one country to another. Her fiction pays homage to eccentric migrant characters, losers in a globalized economy, who exude mystery despite their marginal and impoverished position. The elusive figure of an elderly black man in East London, coded as a scarecrow king, is crucial to understanding her narrative in *River*, as the novel begins and ends with him.

In *River*, Kinsky shifts the locale to a palimpsestic East London with its centuries of history of invasion and settlement by diverse cultures—with such varied traces as those of Vikings, Romans, and Anglo-Saxons to Orthodox Eastern European Jews around the turn of the twentieth century to Jamaican postcolonials in the 1950s. At the time of her

writing in the first decade of the twenty-first century, this peripheral zone at the edge of an expanding and gentrifying neoliberal metropolis nonetheless bears a surprising resemblance to low-status rural corners of Eastern Europe and the Global South, because its migrants have created a diasporic community in these marshy borderlands, here contoured by the mouth of the Thames, the River Lea, and the North Sea. The very geographies of Kinsky's marshlands on the periphery of metropolises are being altered or erased by vast urban construction projects driven by rising real estate values. Against this real-life threat of obliteration and forgetting stand the exigencies of the artist's work of world-making and remembering.

The blind girl in Kinsky's novel to whom the book is dedicated, like the illegitimate daughter in Weber's text, is an opaque figure that refuses easy categorization. The frontispiece of the novel offers a sepia photograph of a young girl leaning back against a small table (perhaps a school desk) placed in front of an iron park or garden railing. The photographer and his subject remain anonymous. She holds a cross of x-shaped sticks and a small bouquet of flowers. Her attentive face is tilted upward to the sunlight and the viewer. Her dress and the big white bow in her hair suggest the late 1890s or the turn of the century. Her face and body appear in focus, but her surroundings are blurry, suggesting a pinhole camera exposure. The simultaneity of sharp focus with loss of focus indicates the novel's key themes of seeing, witnessing, and blindness. The epigraph of the novel's original edition in German quotes the contemporary Welsh writer and filmmaker Iain Sinclair (in English): "The ultimate condition of everything is *river*" (Kinsky, *Am Fluß* 4). Sinclair's own walking tours (*Ghost Milk*) document disappearing working-class areas of North and East London as they undergo gentrification in a globalized neoliberal economy of expanding corporate parks, shopping malls, and Olympic sports arenas. The image as found object is bracketed—on the book jacket and its enlarged copy inside—by Kinsky's own polaroid of the Hackney Wick riverscape. We see a small copse and a field in the foreground, with London's gas tanks, warehouses, and the high rises of Tower Hamlets in the distance. Both images draw attention to horizontal layering. Together they establish a visual reference to the palimpsest of history. At the same time, an offscreen observer records visual fragments of changing borderlands that seem utterly ordinary yet bear mute witness to violence.

The nameless narrator soon evokes her childhood by the Rhine. In the foreground we read a realistic description of its riverboats carrying

freight from far-off to faraway destinations and the haptic memory of the feel of skipping stones. Just beneath the benign surface of the children's game hides a symbolic dimension resonant with sinister traces of the Holocaust. The narrator mentions small pebbles, which, in the Jewish tradition, are used as mementos at gravesites. Omnipresent are rail cars and tracks, "so close that the tracks could have passed through our garden" (R 31). In East London, the adult narrator will frequently note railroad tracks that crisscross the river Lea over marshy terrain. These references evoke memories of the Holocaust (R 57–58, 61, 69, 87, 218). River floods leave behind a dark residue that defies easy identification: "[U]nfamiliar filth, dark matter for which we had no name. When the water fell, it left behind a strip of foul-smelling devastation which, depending on the height of the flood, could stretch up the embankment to the tracks themselves" (R 32–33).

The concatenation of "unfamiliar filth, dark matter" with devastation and stink creates an uncanny visual and olfactory effect, pointing to the Holocaust. The Rhine was often used as a synecdoche for the German nation by romantics in the nineteenth century and became instrumentalized as a national icon by the Nazis who adored Wagner's *Rheingold* and other nationalistic operas. Similarly, the Thames became a polyvalent symbol of foreign invasions (by Roman soldiers, Vikings, Normans) and, much later, British imperial conquest. Choosing to meander along the tributaries of the Thames underpins a memory loop to riverscapes in Germany, Israel, Bosnia, Hungary, and other countries with their own genocidal pasts, or those which became new homelands for the Jewish diaspora and refugees of subsequent wars.

Kinsky's narrator repeatedly mentions German suburbanites' efforts to erase or cover up the messy past. Evidence of war is still visible in pilings from ruined bridges across the Rhine, which were destroyed by the Nazis as they were staving off the allied advance from the West: "Blackish-brown stumps, a color like charred rock [. . .], a war relic, a word that haunted us during our childhood. I did not want to see any of it, I kept my eyes hidden whenever I thought the stumps were near, only uncovering them when my father called 'now'" (R 34).

The two colors mirror the Nazi uniform with its brown shirts and black boots. We now realize that the textual blind child is not as distant as the found photograph appeared to suggest: this is a child growing up during the era of the economic miracle, whose father complies with her desire not to see war relics that symbolize defeat and genocide. Observing

evidence of a postwar building boom in the docklands of East London, which were earlier destroyed by Nazi carpet-bombing, the adult narrator remembers and connects these two instances of rebuilding to the forcible removal of the urban poor:

The hasty cobbling together of housing in an effort to remove all trace of what lay underneath had been a major feature of my childhood [. . .]. Buildings were constantly demolished, sites excavated and levelled, and the signs of a past that had gone awry were overlaid with impenetrable crusts. Disintegrating brickwork, in whose nooks and crannies the hair of former residents who had turned to snow still hung in rustling spider webs, was buried under the pale-grey, postwar pressed stone. (R 123–24)

This passage evokes the frantic attempt to erect a new, orderly suburbia to cover up atrocities that linger on in filaments of memory. The image equally alludes to the rag-and-bone trade of the poor East London districts in the nineteenth century, where bones were ground up in factories in Bow to make bone china. These affective triggers add a piercing *punctum* to history as something that obtrudes into our present and demands to be reckoned with, even though we have no personal memory of it.

The adult narrator's decision to visually document her walks in East London by taking polaroids on a camera retrieved from her moving boxes reveals "a memory I did not even know I had" (R 28). The instant gratification of the polaroid is now superseded by digital photos taken on cell phones, but the narrator is fond of the evocative layers of such images, which sometimes peel off in fragments with age. She notes: "These shattered images scared me sometimes as if they were evidence of a trauma" (R 29). These memory aids restore the child's indistinct memories of a German landscape scarred by war. Similarly, the narrator collects Bosnian refugees' cast-off glass bric-a-brac for its ability to refract light. A dell she observes in the marshlands reminds her of a thorny pit near her childhood home that the adults declared off-limits, claiming it was a snake pit. As she remembers more distinctly how this pit was leveled out, replanted, and then made over into a riding school for children, she remembers a comment by her girlfriend Elvira, whose grandparents live nearby, that "they shot some people in the pit" (R 58). Readers may rephrase the vague referent "some" as "which ones?" to imagine possible answers: Jews or forced laborers. The visual snippet of a blonde horsewoman surveying and chatting with the landscapers at work

in the pit (*R* 60), laughing shrilly, may evoke the brutal Majdanek camp guard whom prisoners called “blond Brygida,” the Nazi war criminal Hildegard Lächert, who was never punished for her crimes.²⁷ Memory is encapsulated but can be rendered visible; in the image shards, the narrator can occasionally see what haunts her: her own shadow.

Geographic similarities between British cities devastated by Nazi Doodlebugs and destroyed postwar Germany allow the narrator’s traumatic memories to reemerge (*R* 132). Equally instrumental are her translation work for BBC radio news and her subsequent job for the Jewish Refugee Committee. She researches queries by Eastern European families about the fate of Jewish émigrés who had fled Nazi Germany. These queries produce a hyperawareness of the past, which she expresses thus: “I always took the names of the missing with me” (*R* 66). Much later, in East London, she will rediscover a Jewish diaspora community of Hasidim who celebrate the High Holidays together and shop at the corner store across from her apartment. Greengrocer Katz becomes a kind of touchstone for her; she checks the seasonal wares and comings and goings from her window. She also admires another neighbor, a Croat who runs a goodwill store for Bosnian refugees, for his ease with all the diverse religious denominations in the neighborhood: Jews, Pakistanis, Rastas.

Using this hybrid community as a touchstone, the narrator remembers her journeys to other river settlements: a suburb of Toronto where the father’s sister lived, Tel Aviv, the Oder river in Poland, a town on the coast near Mostar after the Bosnian War, the river Tisza in Hungary, and the Hooghly River in Calcutta. Everywhere she learns rudiments of the local language. She encounters other displaced persons whose confidante she becomes, for example in Israel or Bosnia, by listening to their family stories.

The female narrator visits Bow, where the slaughterhouses produced mountains of bones that in turn helped create the new household product bone china. She asks what became of the bones. The ovens that produced the bone ash were “in constant use, there must have been a stench like burnt horn in the air that lined the noses and mouths of the residents and covered their taste buds with a stale film” (*R* 284). Frequent references to fires and craters left by explosions revive other Holocaust memories. An old box full of extracted gold teeth that the Croat storekeeper and a Jamaican man squabble over reminds us of Nazi atrocities in the camps, but it also gestures to the mass killings of Muslims in the Bosnian War. These mementos constitute horrible shards needing to be acknowledged

before the narrator can move forward on her own journey. She is shown a dented box that resembles a container for a film reel—a possible reference to concentration camp films—whose lid is lifted to reveal a jumble of extracted gold teeth. Inside the store we hear a muffled Neil Young song with the refrain, “tomorrow sees the things that never come today” (*R* 275). Evidentiary objects will come to light in unexpected places, urgently demanding to be witnessed.

The narrator decides to move back to the Continent after her ritual of grieving the past is complete. Her new destination is the Hungarian-Romanian border zone, a region whose Jewish population was annihilated during World War II.²⁸ Perhaps she feels an affinity with this region, because through close observation she can restore it to cultural memory. Throughout the novel, frequent references to stone and sediment draw attention to a base layer of the natural world that is so often relegated to the background in grand political schemes. The stones serve as mute witnesses to past atrocities, unnoticed by local residents but remarkable to the observant narrator, for whom stones become a memory device. Like her, other foreign outcasts assemble in these edgelands, and the narrator befriends several of them.

The range of diaspora eccentrics who reside in this marshy borderland between the city and the North Sea bring together diverse cultural and geographic references. For example, the figure of the ailing king may be an allusion to the Celtic king Brân (Welsh for “raven”), whose head, legend has it, is buried under Tower Hill and thus is said to guarantee the continuation of the British monarchy (Reilly). At the same time, she endows the king with African features. He becomes “a king from a foreign land who was going about his kingly duties here as well as he could” (*R* 357). He shape-shifts into a mix between Icarus and a scarecrow in the novel’s conclusion, leaping up to fly only to crash to the ground. Even though there is something mad about him, he expresses human dignity and ambition. He looks east when the narrator first encounters him in his solitary splendor. According to Ed Glinert, East London since the early eighteenth century had a rich presence of psychics and mystics, from Kabbalah scholars to Swedenborgians (79–81). A dispossessed character like the mad king stands out but also belongs here. Other odd individuals—a German former circus artist; a girl who communes with angels; a Croat rag dealer; and Jackie, the Jewish shop assistant—populate the edgelands. Between them, they create a temporary community of distinctive people on the move.

Their precarious existence reminds the narrator of her Jewish father's urge for foreign lands and languages after his escape from Poland. His inherited "refugee case" (*R* 133) in hand, the narrator travels to Israel, searching for kinship, but this quest fails. She and her family story are too common in this land of Jewish exiles to gain special attention. But it is precisely this compassionate listening, this "cowitnessing," as the Germanist Irene Kacandes calls it, that becomes the reader's province (395). Several decades later, in London, memories of the father as a lover of rivers, maps, and photographs resurface powerfully, so that we can now see his daughter keeping alive his tradition of documenting exile. On her return to East London as a middle-aged woman, she shows some curiosity about Jewish religious rituals. She lights a *Jahrzeit* candle for her father (*R* 155). She notices East London Hasidic Jews celebrating Sukkot, Purim, and Passover (*R* 82, 295, 377). These recurring rituals affirm community and the survival of the Jewish people. While her own sense of Jewishness was attenuated, it is revived through her observation of the resilient Jewish hybrid community of Stamford Hill.

The Jewish subtext suggests itself insistently but needs to be unearthed by the reader. As Hirsch states, "the challenge for the postmemorial artist is precisely to allow the spectator to enter the image, to imagine the disaster 'in one's own body,' yet to evade the transposition that erases distance, creating too available, too direct an access to this particular past" (98). However, such a vast range of locales, experiences, and time levels are interwoven here that these may obscure the novel's intricate design. *River* invites rereading to discern varied interconnections between violent histories, and it is a form of political engagement that asks who is seen and what is outside the frame.

Conclusion: The Grievable Past in Weber and Kinsky

Rereading is also a mandate for Weber's memoir, as Heinrichs and Cammann have noted in their reviews. Perhaps the shortcoming of each approach is the narrator's privileging of individual moral struggle as an antidote to social coercion, even though the group dynamics of genocidal hatred also shored up identities within generational cohorts. Weber's ancestor Florens Rang may have been atypical of his generation insofar as he frequently reflected on his true calling and changed course accordingly. What we, along with Weber, respect is how mightily he struggled to hold himself accountable. The existence of such individuals, however much

they may have been minority voices, grounds Weber's efforts to account for herself within her family history and within her national history in dialogue with Poles, Jews, French, and other Europeans.

While Kinsky and Weber do indeed perform mourning work for their families, they also, as daughters, confront authoritarian father figures. In the end both authors affirm the practice of sustained attention to the past in order to rehabilitate those who were written out of the narrative of belonging, restoring them to the condition of what Judith Butler, in *Frames of War*, terms "grievability [as] a presupposition for the life that matters" (14). Butler argues that "[s]ome power manipulates the terms of appearance and one cannot break out of the frame, one is accused, but also judged in advance without valid evidence, and without any means of redress" (11). As she explains, "[o]pen grieving is bound up with outrage, and outrage in the face of injustice has enormous political potential" (39). In order to grieve traumatic loss, the authors considered here overcome an overt (Weber) or tacit (Kinsky) prohibition on broadcasting their family histories. Kinsky creates what the feminist artist Mira Schor calls an "avatar of self" (Friedman)²⁹ in a found object, the portrait photograph of a blind girl from East London roughly a century ago. She becomes the imaginary addressee for the female observer's narrative. Somewhat analogously, Weber notices on her return voyage to Poznań a monument in the large graveyard at the town's periphery: "A stone girl, still a child, is seated bowing her weather-worn head down to her open palm. In her other bended arm lies an abundantly blooming rose, flaming red out of the gray stone."³⁰ These figures become avatars of grieving and awareness, epitaphs of a past that was marginalized but is now properly attended to through an act of personal remembrance. Weber joins a large crowd of Polish families for their communal outing to family graves. The text further suggests that in this extensive graveyard, Jews and Christians may have been reburied next to each other. The change that happened in the cemetery is analogous to the act of translation: it is a form of dynamic juxtaposition and transposition. It is not a question of one reality replacing another, but of them coexisting. Translation pays attention to the texture of other realities, going back and forth between language systems and dissimilar histories. By translating into languages other than German, their first language, these women writers create possibilities for bringing different life-worlds into contact.

The conclusions of both texts suggest that the impetus to heal can be found through the narrator's palimpsestic vision. This rite is both personal

and communal; it is an “Orphic rite” (Hell 138) of visualizing all the war dead in Weber’s *Ahnen* or witnessing dawn light slowly irradiating the Thames marshlands in Kinsky’s *River*. Weber’s and Kinsky’s final experiences of the sublime bring together fragments of collective trauma. By translating their experiences into visions of makeshift communities—in a Jewish-Catholic cemetery on All Saints’ Day and in the diasporic setting of the River Thames—both Weber and Kinsky invite us to make affective solidarity with strangers and to sensitize ourselves to German and German-Jewish histories by the careful labor of examining shards of the past.

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Notes

1. Examples of these sorts of transgenerational responses can be found in Schneider and Süß’s collection and in Wrochem. The historians Stephanie Bird, Mary Fulbrook, and Jacob Eder have devoted particular attention to this body of writing.
2. Particularly noteworthy among these are the books of Bode, Leo, Petrowskaja, Schirach, Senfft, and Ustorf.
3. For further discussion of Assman’s conception, see Hirsch 32.
4. Quotations from the English translation, *River*, are indicated hereafter with *R*.
5. See Weber, *Ahnen* 6 and “On Such a Journey.”
6. See also Kinsky, *Fremdsprechen* 34–35.
7. “Der Holocaust ist als jahrhundertdefinierendes Ereignis im größten Teil der lesenden Welt so präsent, daß man davon ausgehen kann, daß im Original und Übersetzung der Bezug auf die Abwesenheit, das Verschwinden der jüdischen Bevölkerung erkannt wird; das, was ist—der Text—erschließt sich nur noch durch das, was nicht ist. Doch wie wird sich diese Geschichte in einer Kultur lesen, in der es wenn überhaupt nur vermittelte Kenntnis europäischer Geschichte gibt?” (Kinsky, *Fremdsprechen* 35). Translations are my own where no published English edition exists.
8. The rise of anti-Semitic right populism across Europe and the United States diminishes the importance of the Holocaust. Anxieties about globalization in

Germany produce a widespread climate of de-solidarization with minority groups. See Heitmeyer 13; also Simpson and Druxes 2–7.

9. For example, in the wording “die wunde Stelle, die ich bisher immer versucht habe zu meiden” (the sore spot I have until now always attempted to avoid) (Weber, *Ahnen* 18). This novel is abbreviated hereafter as *A*.

10. “In gleich welcher Nationalitätenrunde [. . .] steht ein Deutscher immer für *das* [. . .]. Wir tragen die unsere [Landesgeschichte] als Schild (Schuldschild) vor der Brust. Wie wir uns auch drehen und verrenken, das Schild hängt immer vorne” (*A* 40).

11. “[I]m Grab ist noch Platz, es weitet sich und weitet sich, bis es Ausmaße erreicht, die weder mit Augen noch mit Gedanken mehr erfasst werden können. Bis es sie alle umfängt, die Millionen und Abermillionen von Toten. Meine Ahnen” (*A* 265).

12. Subsequent to reading Weber’s memoir, I also consulted the Rang papers in the Akademie der Künste in Berlin to form my own opinion of his thought processes by looking at his diaries, letters, and essays. I discovered that Weber does not distort her findings in emphasizing the uncompromising quality of Rang’s moral struggles. In the materials I read, Rang only once makes a slightly anti-Semitic remark about the relative value of Judaism versus Christianity.

13. “Aber bin ich nicht selbst eine Denunziantin, wenn ich einen Mann [. . .] hier an den Pranger stelle, als sei ich zu seiner Richterin berufen? Mag sein. Doch ich schwöre: Wenn ich bei diesem Mann auch nur an einer Stelle [. . .] von einer Gewissensqual Wind bekommen hätte [. . .], ich schwöre, ich hätte weder seine Ruhe noch die meines Vaters noch meine eigene je gestört” (*A* 104–5).

14. “Mir aber erkenne er als einzigen Beweggrund zu, mich in die Familie einschreiben zu wollen” (*A* 152).

15. “[W]irklich Lebenskräftige” (*A* 68).

16. “[I]ch sah das Heer der Beamten, den Strom Goldes, der notwendig war zur Erhaltung von alledem und den paar Geisteskranken und ich fragte mich, warum leitet ihr euer Gold, euere Dienste, euere Lebensarbeit nicht zur Erhöhung des Lebens, das erhöht werden kann [. . .] ich fragte den Assistenzarzt, warum vergiften Sie diese Menschen nicht? Der Mann lächelte ironisch. Sein Lächeln hieß: Warum verbieten es die Christen? Aber wie wunderbar, ein Kranker selber sagte es, ein prachtvoller Mensch, ein Rubens’scher Herkules. Nackt stand er an der Wand seines Saales oder seiner Zelle: Tötet mich, schrie er den Arzt an, als wir eintraten. Eine Flut von Beschimpfungen folgte und eine Flut von Anklagen, aus denen hervorging, daß er qualvoll litt. Tötet mich! [. . .] [D]er inwendig höchste Mensch, den ich heute gesehen, das war der wahnsinnige Herkules, und ich quittierte ihm in meinem Herzen, indem ich mir gelobte, ich will nicht kleiner sein wie du, ich will nicht so klein sein wie der Christengott” (*A* 69). When quoting Rang, Weber does not provide page numbers.

17. “[D]a saßen sie noch, die idiotischen Kinder, und ließen sich füttern oder leimten Pappschachteln und verunreinigten sich” (*A* 68).

18. “Rausch der dionysischen Todesleidenschaft” (*A* 175).

19. “Anders als ich gedacht oder gefürchtet hatte, bin ich nicht zu *dem*, noch nicht einmal zu *einem* Ursprung des Made-in-Germany-Mordes vorgedrungen. [. . .] Der Weg, den seine letzte Schrift weist, hätte nicht über Leichen geführt” (*A* 203).

20. "[E]ine andauernde Opposition gegen das Zuständliche, eine andauernde Gewissensbeunruhigung, die den Staat dadurch beunruhigt, daß [. . .] das Gewissen von Staatsbürgern ihn beschämt und ergänzt" (A 209).
21. "Die Ermordung wurde von Ärzten überwacht, die [. . .] durch ein Guckloch zusahen, wie die Menschen langsam und qualvoll starben. Ich denke an zwei mir nahestehende Menschen, die, hätten sie ein paar Jahrzehnte früher gelebt, vermutlich hier oder anderswo ermordet worden wären" (A 141).
22. "All das ist richtig. Trotzdem verläuft da kein direkter Weg. Etwa von Nietzsche, Darwin, Sanderling zu den Mördern von später. Noch nicht einmal von einem Vater zu seinem Sohn, geschweige denn zu seiner Tochter. Es ist unfassbar viel komplizierter und verschlungener" (A 147).
23. "Menschheitlichung durch Aufbau der Völker" (Rang, Autobiographisches 63).
24. Compare the full sentence: "Tatsächlich ist das Buch ein Versuch, eine Annäherung, man könnte vielleicht auch sagen, der Versuch, diese Sprache von früher, die ganze Sicht der Welt in eine heutige Sprache zu übersetzen" (Weber, "On Such a Journey").
25. "Ich verkehre nur mit Menschen, nicht mit Generationen" (A 72).
26. Kinsky also commented on her approach to translation in the radio feature "Künstler an der Sprache."
27. For a discussion of Lächert, "die blonde Brygida," see Das Gupta.
28. See Gessen's discussion of the Soviet plan to resettle Jews from this area to the autonomous region of Birobidzhanin (47–55).
29. Schor uses the phrase to describe "the coexistence of figure, landscape, and language without any need for the niceties of representational rendering" (Friedman).
30. "Ein steinernes Mädchen, ein Kind noch, neigt sitzend den verwitterten Kopf in die offene Hand. In der Beuge des anderen Arms [. . .] liegt eine übertoll aufgeblühte flammend rot aus dem grauen Stein herausleuchtende Rose" (A 263).

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