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## The Genocidal Gaze

Elizabeth R. Baer

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### THREE



## Uwe Timm's Critique of the Genocidal Gaze in *Morenga* and *In My Brother's Shadow*



For me this is not the age of “post-modernism,” it is the post-Holocaust age. That is the salient marker of our present world.

SANDER GILMAN | “Why and How I Study the German”

Memory is treacherous, as distinct from history as emotion from form.

Every war is fought over memory. Violent nationalism  
is revived memory manipulated as revealed truth.

ROGER COHEN | *The Girl from Human Street*

As we move from Gustav Frenssen's *Peter Moor* to a consideration of two texts by contemporary German writer Uwe Timm, his colonial novel *Morenga*<sup>1</sup> and his memoir *In My Brother's Shadow*,<sup>2</sup> this observation by David Kenosian serves as a useful comparison and hence transition:

In a certain sense, a counterversion to the history of the uprising of the Africans appears in Uwe Timm's novel *Morenga*. . . . In contrast to Frenssen's *Peter Moor*, Timm's work historicizes the European, and especially the German efforts to exploit the peoples of Southwest Africa. In *Morenga*, the Germans initiate the cycle of violence that gripped the colony and thus the rebellion of the Africans is portrayed as a response to their brutal subjugation at the hands of the Germans. (195n42)

Kenosian invites us here to grasp the difference in the portrayal of the genocidal gaze by Frenssen and Timm: while the former *inadvertently conveyed* to the reader, in a smug and satisfied manner, the genocidal gaze of the Germans in

GSWA, the latter *intentionally critiqued* the immoral and deadly genocidal gaze as it infected the Schutztruppe.

Uwe Timm's *Morenga* was a revolutionary book upon its release in Germany in 1978 (and subsequently in English in 2003), and it remains so. In writing the novel, Timm inevitably looked back at colonial genocide through the lens of World War II and the Holocaust. Timm's own gaze is cast back against his nation, a critical gaze that sees the harm of colonialism, the tragedy of genocide, and the guilt as falling to the Germans, whose excessive militarism, racism, and violence are depicted in chilling ways in the two texts we will examine in this chapter. Further, these two texts enable the reader to continue to trace the links between imperial genocide and the Nazi Holocaust.

In the 1970s, Germans remained in the thrall of colonial amnesia, which is to say that either they forgot about the brief period of imperialism in their history or they remembered it in glorified fashion, as it had typically been depicted in colonial fiction. How does colonial amnesia (or colonial aphasia, as Ann Laura Stoler has aptly named it), silence about genocide, the failure to remember, to mourn, engender other genocides? How does imperialism itself lead to genocide? These are key questions asked by Uwe Timm in *Morenga*, which examines the genocide of the Herero and Nama people in 1904–7 in GSWA. Using fiction as well as excerpts from actual military reports, soldiers' diaries, and the real diary of the eponymous Morenga, a historical figure who served as leader of the Nama, Timm interrogates the ways in which nineteenth-century Germans perceived Africans, how this contributed to the genocide, and how that genocide compared to, and contributed to, the Nazi Holocaust. "As recently as the 1960's, many Germans did not even realize that their country had once conquered considerable parts of Africa. Only a handful of experts and historians were interested in the subject."<sup>3</sup> Little exists in Namibia today to memorialize the victims.<sup>4</sup> General Lothar von Trotha issued his infamous extermination proclamation in October 1904 after defeating the Herero at the Battle of Waterberg: "I, the great General of the German soldiers, send this letter to the Herero people. The Herero are no longer German subjects. . . . The Herero nation . . . must leave the country. If they do not leave, I will force them out with the *Groot Rohr* (cannon). Every Herero, armed or unarmed, will be shot within the German borders. I will no longer accept women and children, but will force them back to their people or shoot at them" (Steinmetz, "The First Genocide").

German colonial amnesia, or aphasia, is not the only willful forgetting on the part of the German people of the atrocities committed in Africa. The subsequent secrecy surrounding the colonial archives also occluded history; these archives,

of the reports, documents, letters, and so forth sent to and from Southwest Africa during the German colonial period there from 1884 to 1918, were closed, unavailable to scholars or the general public during the era of colonialism and subsequently.<sup>5</sup> When the Nazis came to power, they, too, kept the archives closed; during World War II, about 50 percent of the archives were lost to fire and bombs, and a significant portion was taken by the victorious Russian soldiers back to Russia. The files were returned only in the mid-1950s and at that time stored in Potsdam, which was located in the GDR, the communist German Democratic Republic.

One of the first scholars given access to the files was Horst Drechsler, a graduate student who had been trained in East Germany as a Marxist historian. Unlike earlier historians and novelists who had written histories that valorized Germany's colonial era, or similarly self-congratulatory memoirs written by German military leaders after their return to the Fatherland, Drechsler had no problem being critical of Germany and liked to remind his readers that Lenin had written a book defining imperialism as the "highest stage of capitalism" (Drechsler, 3). Drechsler painstakingly reviewed hundreds of documents in the archives, completing his dissertation and then publishing it as a book in 1966 titled *Südwestafrika unter deutscher Kolonialherrschaft. Band 1: Der Kampf der Herero und Nama gegen den deutschen Imperialismus [1884–1915]*; it appeared in English in 1980 as "*Let Us Die Fighting*," a phrase used by Herero leader Samuel Maherero to spur on his troops in their tragic fight against the Germans. "*Let Us Die Fighting*" would have been one of the few counternarratives available to Uwe Timm as he began his own research for his novel *Morenga* in the 1970s. Indeed, textual evidence suggests that he did avail himself of Drechsler's history as some rather obscure anecdotes about German presence in Southwest Africa, reported by Drechsler, are repeated in the novel.<sup>6</sup> He also cites Drechsler's book as a source at the end of a chapter titled "Concept of the Enemy" (32).

## Who Was Uwe Timm and Why Was He Interested in Africa?

Timm was born into a middle-class family in Hamburg in March 1940, as World War II was getting underway. Hamburg, the port city from which steamers to Africa departed, has always had a heightened awareness of German colonies and the city figures in Timm's novel. In an interview, Timm talked about his preparation for writing *Morenga*:

My father was an officer, and I heard many stories at home of this completely strange and different world, about Africa and its totally different customs. . . . And I always read about Africa and attended lectures about it, about ethnology . . . I studied the documentary evidence in detail. I visited what was then still South West Africa, Namibia today,<sup>7</sup> worked in the archives, and even interviewed people who had taken part in the uprising, very old people I met personally.<sup>8</sup>

Perhaps most significant, for the analysis that follows, is the fact that Timm's older brother, sixteen years his senior, had volunteered for the Waffen SS and died in a field hospital in Ukraine in 1943. Almost immediately, a kind of apotheosis occurred: his brother became the family hero, eventually leading Timm to write one of his most widely read books, *Am Beispiel meines Bruders*, in 2003, which appeared in English as *In My Brother's Shadow: A Life and Death in the SS* (2005). From the age of three, Timm indeed lived under this shadow. We will turn to this text after our reading of *Morenga*.

Timm's father, also a Nazi soldier, returned from a British POW camp in 1946 and opened a furrier business in which Timm later worked, breaking off his education prior to completing his *abitur*. Eventually he completed the PhD in 1971, writing his dissertation, "The Problem of Absurdity in Albert Camus." As a student, he was politically active, taking part in the radical student movement in Germany in the 1960s. His is the generation that began to ask the question, "What did you do in the war, Daddy?" in the face of the silence surrounding the war and the Holocaust. "Particularly for the generation of '68 the Holocaust became *the* symbol of a negative history of the German nation state."<sup>9</sup> Many writers of this generation and since have engaged in what the Germans named *vergangenheitsbewältigung*, a term coined in the aftermath of the Holocaust that, loosely translated, means "coming to terms with the past."

## The Genocidal Gaze in *Morenga*: Timm's Embodied Critique

The other, the new: the Jumping Bean Tree. Its exact opposite: clicking your heels.  
Clack. Standing at attention. The German eagle. The abstract. Asking no questions.  
Saying yes, sir. The love of law and order. Isn't it telling, after all, that we  
Germans always say: *Geht in Ordnung* when we mean that's fine.

*Morenga* | Gottschalk's diary, 7 September 1905

In the intriguing interview conducted by Rainer Schulte with both Uwe Timm and Breon Mitchell, the translator of *Morenga*, Timm is prompted to talk in very specific terms about his motives, his work process, and his goals for the novel. He describes at some length his attention to detail in research and in the writing, wanting to capture, as far as possible, the mind-set of various German characters in 1904–7. Both Timm and his translator read documents and diaries of that era in order to replicate the differences among the languages of the military, of missionaries, of traders, and of adventurers. In one of the most revealing passages of the interview, Timm talks explicitly about whose gaze he is representing; he also makes absolutely clear his intention to link the genocides of the Herero and Nama and of the eleven million victims of the Holocaust:

It's a matter of learning about states of consciousness. . . . First of all I don't have the experience to write about Africans, there isn't a single place in the novel where an African is portrayed from within, through some sort of aesthetics of empathy. I would find that inadmissible and naïve, it simply wouldn't do. It's a matter of learning something from the language of the time, of discovering how people came to humiliate others back then, to hold them in such low esteem, to kill other human beings. *It truly resembles a plan for later genocide, one that finds its culmination in Auschwitz, this destruction of the Hereros.* (emphasis mine, Schulte, 4)

In other words, for Timm, the effort of the writer must be to make apparent to the reader how the German mind-set about imperialism and genocide can be traced from GSWA to the Nazis. This must be accomplished through language and what it reveals about perspectives, about the genocidal gaze on the Other. The only representation of African perspective in the novel is the inclusion of short, actual diary entries made by Morenga himself in a notebook he took from a dead German soldier. Even the notebook has now disappeared and Timm relied upon photographs of the handwritten entries included in a German history text for his inclusion of this text in the novel. Timm's unwillingness to create a fictional African mind-set emerges from respect and his reluctance to imagine that for which he has so little knowledge. And this is precisely why it is so important to reclaim authentic African voices such as that of Hendrik Witbooi.

Thus, given both his family history and his generation's history, Timm turned to the subject of genocide for his second novel, *Morenga*, using fiction to look at the history of German genocides, presenting the genocide of the Herero and Nama as a precursor to the Holocaust. *Morenga*, the first full-scale historical novel about GSWA in the post-Holocaust era, anticipated the year 2004, the

centenary of the genocide.<sup>10</sup> That centenary was marked in Germany by a major museum exhibition and by a reawakened interest in German colonialism “in an attempt to reinscribe colonialism in German cultural memory and to reflect on its legacy in the postcolonial world of the twenty-first century” (Göttsche, 63). Timm’s “reinscription,” unlike its early twentieth-century predecessors, is a profoundly critical one.

In order to write the novel, Timm unearthed photographs, letters, military documents, and invaluable diaries. *Morenga* is a pastiche of these documents, creating a postmodern, post-Holocaust, and postcolonial take on the first genocide of the twentieth century, a century in which 170,000,000 people died in a genocide; most of these deaths, as was the case in GSWA and the Holocaust, were perpetrated by their own government.

Let me begin by reviewing the contours of this sprawling, complex, and challenging novel, to be followed by a more complete analysis. The reader is introduced to Veterinary Lieutenant Gottschalk, who arrives in Southwest Africa on 7 October 1904; this is after the decisive Battle of Waterberg on 11 August and the flight of the Herero into the Omaheke Desert. Concentration camps and a death camp are being set up for the remaining Herero. Hendrik Witbooi has just declared, on 1 October, that he is no longer adhering to the Protection Treaty he signed; he will go to war with the Germans as he fears that what happened to the Herero can happen to the Nama people. Gottschalk arrives in Africa with the imperial gaze intact; he grows increasingly eccentric as the novel progresses and his peers take exception to his behavior. He is eventually discharged. Yet, to the reader, he is asking the right questions about what the German military is doing, and he attempts to treat the Nama humanely in spite of the orders he is given. Hence, he embodies Timm’s critique of the German genocidal gaze. Timm confirms in his interview with Schulte that “Gottschalk is a fictional character” (1).

Both Theodor Leutwein and Lothar von Trotha, historical figures who played key roles in the colony, are also characters in the novel, thus affording Timm the opportunity to differentiate between their military strategies and theories. While Leutwein favored efforts at getting treaties signed, rather than waging war, to achieve German ends, von Trotha, as we have seen, openly favored annihilation. But lest one think Leutwein was thus a more humane officer, keep in mind that his motive for avoiding destruction of the indigenous people was to save them to serve as a labor force, or rather as forced labor.

This is only one of several links between the Herero and Nama genocide and the Nazi Holocaust in Timm’s novel: the use of the victims to further the ends of the

Germans. Timm makes these links vivid. For example, he mentions Shark Island, which was established as a death camp for survivors of the genocide between 1905 and 1907 on an island off the coast. Prisoners were given inadequate clothing, intentionally starved and worked to death, and subjected to medical experiments. Women were systematically raped. It is estimated that 4,000 or more prisoners died there, and this death rate differed significantly from that of the concentration camps inland, prompting historians to note that the Nazi differentiation between concentration and death camps was indeed established in GSWA.<sup>11</sup> Another link can be found in the animal imagery that is rife in the novel. Various German characters perceive the Nama and Herero as animals, a mind-set they shared with the Nazis, who persistently depicted the Jews in propaganda films and cartoons as parasites, diseased rats, and insects, thus justifying their extermination; eventually Gottschalk perceives the Germans themselves as animals.

Despite the title of the novel, Morenga, who was the Nama leader following Hendrik Witbooi's death, appears infrequently in the text. He is referred to as "the Black Napoleon" by the Germans because of his successful guerilla tactics and refuses to be bought off by the increasingly dominant colonizers. Brief excerpts from his actual diary are included in the text; they recount the battles between an indigenous group named the Bondelswarts and the Germans. Morenga's death is described in the closing pages of the novel. "The very fact that Morenga, the symbol of African resistance, provides the novel's title reflects Timm's anticolonial and anti-Eurocentric perspective" (Göttsche, 74). Thus Morenga himself becomes yet another vehicle to carry Timm's critique of German imperialism: the double use of genocide as a "solution" in the twentieth century by Germany and the silence of colonial aphasia in the aftermath.

With that overview, I turn to a close reading of this novel, with an emphasis on the ways in which Timm embodies his critique of the genocidal gaze: through the dissenting hero Gottschalk; in the use of intertextuality in the novel; with the hybridity of narrative technique and textual content; in the deployment of animal imagery as an aspect of the genocidal gaze; and, finally, in the depiction of Morenga.

#### GOTTSCHALK RECOGNIZES GENOCIDAL INTENT

"Civilization is unthinkable without sacrifices."

OFFICER HARING | quoted in Gottschalk's diary (19)

The novel opens with a chapter titled "Warning Signs." Thirteen brief paragraphs, written as if they are news flashes, alert the reader to indigenous attacks

on German settlers, introduce Morenga, and briefly outline the beginning of actual hostilities between the Germans and the Witbooi on 4 October 1904. Immediately following this dry yet rather alarming opening that paints the settlers as victims, Veterinary Lieutenant Gottschalk is introduced as he arrives on African soil. Through a series of flashbacks, the reader learns about his childhood: his father owned a store on the outskirts of Hamburg that sold colonial goods, hence Gottschalk's heightened awareness of, and curiosity about, Africa. His voyage on the *Gertrude Woerman* steamer is sketched, during which he makes the acquaintance of N.C.O. Veterinarian Wenstrup, who is as avid a reader as Gottschalk himself. It is Wenstrup who one day during the crossing announces to Gottschalk that "I think it was the great Moltke who once said: the Prussian army has no room for Jews or dreamers" (12). This proves prescient as we have already been told about Gottschalk's "recurrent dream since childhood: there was no summer" (5). That Gottschalk is a dreamer, recounts his dreams, and becomes a dreamy inventor leads to his eventual discharge from the army.

Gottschalk is a devoted diarist and the reader is given the opportunity to read some of his entries; they provide a window to his consciousness, one of Timm's goals in writing the novel. As Gottschalk is a scientist, many entries simply delineate weather conditions or flora and fauna. Occasionally, however, they provide glimpses of the profound impact that Africa has on him and the profound changes in his values which result. Shortly after his arrival, Gottschalk uses his diary to sketch the exterior and interior of a farmhouse he hopes to construct in GSWA someday. Gottschalk, we are told, is thirty-four years old and, as yet, unmarried. Nonetheless, he engages in reveries about the floor plan of the farmhouse, the rooms it will have, the musical evenings he and his family will enjoy. Nowhere in these reveries is there a hint of concern about who *now* owns the land that Gottschalk intends to acquire. These dreams of the future serve as a kind of baseline: Gottschalk's imperial gaze upon the indigenous people and their rights will morph very soon. On the troop train toward Windhoek, Gottschalk records in his diary what a comrade has told him: "the entire Herero region will be annexed by the crown, i.e.—opened for settlement. The best land in South West Africa supposedly, good pastures and relatively abundant water. It's a fine thought that at some point there will be eyes in this wilderness reading Goethe, ears listening to Mozart" (16). At this point, Gottschalk still adheres to the paradigm of colonialism bringing civilization to the savages. His gaze is imperial: he brings with him the view of the indigenous people inculcated in him through his education and socialization.

But Gottschalk's arrival in Windhoek, today the capital of Namibia and then the location of the central German military fort, will be the first experience that erodes this paradigm. He notes in his diary that "the natives, black (Hereros) and brown (Hottentots [Nama]), as well as numerous half-breeds, called Bastards, look like short, ragged Europeans, only black" (16). So, are the indigenous people savage barbarians? Apparently not. Unlike Peter Moor, who can find no grounds for a relationship with the Herero he meets, and kills, Gottschalk does see resemblance with Europeans. His attitude here is still Eurocentric, but it is evolving.

What Gottschalk next encounters is a kraal (enclosure for animals) built to keep "the cattle, sheep and goats taken from the conquered Hereros" (17). As a veterinarian, he is concerned about the emaciated state of these animals and the number of dead cattle scattered about. "The stench of carrion filled the air" (17). Right next to the kraal, another kraal has been built, this one for "something half way between humans and skeletons. They huddled together, mostly naked, in the piercingly hot sun" (17). His companion proudly announces: "That's our concentration camp . . . a new innovation based on the English experience of the Boer war" (17). "But those are women and children," objects Gottschalk (17).

Later, Gottschalk recounts this experience to Wenstrup, who becomes a kind of mentor to him. The people enclosed in barbed wire, Gottschalk says, die "from dysentery, typhus, and undernourishment. They starve to death" (18). Wenstrup corrects this naiveté: "No, . . . they let them starve to death. That's a subtle but crucial distinction . . . part of a systematic plan. . . . The extermination of the natives. They want the land for settlement" (18). Here, Timm introduces the reader to a definition of the genocidal gaze. Despite Wenstrup's astute comments, Gottschalk persists in believing that the starvation of the prisoners is simply an administrative oversight. He devises a plan: use the dead animals to feed the imprisoned women and children. But when he approaches his superior to propose this plan, he is shouted out of the office with a single retort: "Jungle fever!" (21). Thus, Gottschalk is accused of having lost his sanity to the heat and "savagery" of the jungle. His disenchantment has begun; dawning on him is the reality of the military ideology, the genocidal gaze, of which he has become a part by enlisting. His romantic notions of the Spice Islands, based on his yearning as a child in his father's store for goods forbidden to him, and of the sweet farmhouse he hoped to build in GSWA are dashed. His own imperial gaze begins to change to a harsh critique of the genocidal gaze he perceives in the Schutztruppe. Gottschalk is given orders to proceed south from Windhoek with troops headed "through rebel Hottentot territory" (21).

Together with Wenstrup, Gottschalk is headed into the combat zone of the Nama, led at this moment by the redoubtable Hendrik Witbooi. Wenstrup's behavior is at times odd: he makes noises on the march (yodeling, among other things!), which causes 2nd Lt. Schwanebach to write him up for dereliction of duty and insubordination: "If I understood him correctly, the veterinarian regards imagination and spontaneity as positive values. He compared German civilization to a clubfoot" (48). Whereas Schwanebach declares Wenstrup insane, the reader increasingly sees Wenstrup as completely sane. He takes actions that suggest empathy for the Nama, such as applying for a "bambuse," an indigenous boy, Jakobus, to employ him as a language teacher.<sup>12</sup> Soon Gottschalk joins in the lessons; learning the language of the enemy serves as a recognition of the culture of, and rapprochement with, the Nama. The two men become friends, and discuss government and politics: "It must have dawned on Gottschalk for the first time on this trek that Wenstrup was not as he had thought, a partisan of the Social Democrats, but instead something truly unusual—probably the sole anarchist veterinarian in the German army" (49).

Arriving in Keetmanshoop, the troops prepare to celebrate Christmas, and "Wenstrup surprised everyone by sporting a gray chapeau claque [a top hat that can be collapsed] with a sprig of tamarisk. He was gradually coming to resemble those he had been sent to fight" (53). This sprig features in a dream that Gottschalk subsequently has; it will be described in what follows. Shortly thereafter, Wenstrup disappears; what happened to him is never revealed. But he has left his mark on Gottschalk.

By the midpoint of the novel, Gottschalk "no longer asked himself if the war was unjust. He was now convinced it was, and there were times when he felt it like a physical pain. In his diary he called the war a terrible injustice. Whenever a native was flogged . . . his stomach lurched with the urge to vomit. . . . It gradually became clear to Gottschalk that these people were fighting for their survival as human beings" (195–96). Gottschalk's perception of the genocidal gaze in his fellow soldiers causes physical illness. At this juncture, Gottschalk needs a new horse and selects a powerful white one from the kraal; subsequently, this horse is identified as having belonged to Morenga. Symbolically, this creates a kind of identification between the two, just as Wenstrup is moving in this direction. Gottschalk, thinking back to the battle in which he recently participated, recalls "the brief moment when he'd had the mad notion of joining the enemy" instead of "helping maintain the circulatory system of force and terror" (208). Shortly after this, Dr. Otto examines him because Gottschalk is experiencing stomach pains. Dr. Otto's diagnosis: Gottschalk suffers from "an exaggerated

interest in the Hottentots” and “excessive compassion for the fate of this tribe” as well as from “his attempt to learn the highly complex Nama language” (211). His increasingly eccentric behavior is duly noted.

In his role as veterinarian, Gottschalk is asked to experiment with camels as possible beasts of burden for the troops themselves and their military supplies; the ability of camels to go for long periods without water is a distinct advantage in the desert. At first, he considers refusing; he wants no complicity with the unjust war. Reconsidering, he decides that perhaps his experiments will benefit the Nama. Immediately upon his taking this decision, the narrator dryly announces: “Three years later, in 1908, the last rebels were tracked down and defeated in the Kalahari with the help of a German camel corps led by Captain von Erckert” (259). Translation: there is no way to participate in the military without being part of the death machine and the resulting guilt. On his own, Gottschalk is also experimenting with a dental device to give to cows who have lost teeth; this would permit them to continue to chew and produce milk. He imagines this may be helpful to the Herero and Nama as cattle are essential to their culture and survival. Such efforts on his part contribute to his image, in the eyes of his comrades, as a dreamer and too weird to continue to serve in the Schutztruppe. He is called Don Quixote by one of his peers (286).

In August 1905, Gottschalk is assigned to ride his camel with a wagon train bringing supplies south to Ukamas in preparation for a final assault on Morenga and his diminished forces. When the oxen are circled for the evening rest, Gottschalk takes out his diary and makes a brief entry, ending with the ominous “Death: a logic outside us.” The narrator then tells us: “That is Gottschalk’s last entry in the oilcloth notebook, which was found a year and a half later on one of Morenga’s fallen cornets” (297). (Here, “cornet” indicates a military rank no longer in use; it is the equivalent of today’s second lieutenant.) The reader rightly senses that the denouement is about to occur. It is a dramatic one, indeed. The wagon train comes under attack by Morenga and his men; Gottschalk’s camel is shot out from under him and he remains lying where he fell. In a report he subsequently submits to the military, Gottschalk describes his encounter with Morenga, who finally steps out of the shadows into full view of the reader: “Later I was taken to a man standing off to the side by a wagon, leafing through captured files and maps. It was Morenga. He was strikingly tall and wore a civilian coat with an ammunition belt over it. He asked me where the convoy was headed. . . . He appeared well informed about our troop movements” (300). After Gottschalk informs Morenga that he is a veterinarian, “Morenga asked me to examine him, saying a bullet had lodged in his right hip months earlier. . . . The wound was

badly infected . . . I did what I could, painted the wound with iodine, treated it with antiseptic salve, then bandaged it . . . I asked Morenga why he didn't make peace with us . . . Morenga emphasized that he would keep fighting to the last man. And when I asked why, he offered the surprising answer: So that *you and we* can remain human" (emphasis in the original, 300–301). Here is Morenga's acknowledgment of and resistance to the genocidal gaze: he will die fighting rather than succumb to the gaze of the Germans that attempts to render him as a subhuman, confine him to a camp in which he must do forced labor, or exterminate him. He will die on his own terms; the Jewish resistance in the Warsaw ghetto and elsewhere manifested this same resolve.

The novel begins to wind down. We are told of Hendrik Witbooi's death in battle on 29 September 1905,<sup>13</sup> the day after Gottschalk meets Morenga (306). We learn that Morenga was also wounded in battle, six months later, shot in the neck and head (304). He subsequently turned himself into English police and was jailed in South Africa, where he was safe from the Germans. In a chapter titled "The End," comprised of an abstract military report, we are told of the pursuit of Morenga to his death, a joint venture of the British and Germans, after he had returned to GSWA. The report concludes with this chilling observation: "The natives of South Africa will now realize they're not fighting the Germans, or the English, or the Dutch, but that *now the entire white race stands united against the black*. The blacks have lost their most important hero, the man they set their hopes on" (emphasis in the original, 337). This passage echoes history: von Trotha wrote to General von Schlieffen, Chief of the General Staff, two days after issuing his infamous extermination order on 2 October 1904: "This uprising is and remains the beginning of a racial war" (Totten and Parsons, 29). The genocide of the Herero and Nama was indeed a racial war, informed by the genocidal gaze, as the Holocaust, to follow in less than three decades, will be.

Our hero—or antihero—Gottschalk turns his attention to meteorology and to inventions as a way to fight the boredom of being a German soldier and to live an alternative life to the violence of imperialism. Having lost his diary in the struggle with Morenga and his troops, Gottschalk begins a new diary, entirely devoted to observations of "the direction and speed of the wind . . . precipitation, sunrise and sunset, cloud cover and cloud formations. These descriptions fill the pocket calendar in a small script, and most incredible is the way in which the clouds are described" (317). It is worth recalling here that early in the novel, as Gottschalk is learning to speak Nama, he inquires, "What lies beyond the stars? Jakobus [the bambuse teaching him Nama] translated the word infinite as cloud" (50). Timm again uses the vehicle of Gottschalk's

diary to give the reader a glimpse of his inner self, his consciousness. We are told by the narrator that only twice did Gottschalk deviate from the regular recording of daily weather: once to include “a sketch for the construction of a free balloon, steered by means of dragropes and a balloon sail,” and a second time to enter the following: “Learn to understand our inner self as a geological formation. A geology of the soul with its fissures, displacements, sediments, deposits, and erosions” (318).

Gottschalk decides to petition the Schutztruppe for a discharge, which is eventually granted. He ponders what he might do after his return to Germany: he imagines being a country veterinarian, or perhaps pursuing research at a university (315). He travels to the coast of GSWA by camel and one evening, racing the camel, he smiles to himself and chants, “So come! Let us gaze into open spaces, Seeking something our own, no matter how far” (326). On 18 September 1907, having been in GSWA for three years, he boards a ship and heads homeward. His final view is of the death camp, Shark Island.

Our final glimpse of Gottschalk in the epilogue is a potentially baffling one. We see him in a balloon, riding over “the brightly-coloured rag rug of gently folding hills and valleys” of Germany (339). His name is mentioned only once in these three pages; the pilot of the balloon is one Lüdemann. Timm invites several readings of this conclusion. In the preceding few paragraphs, I have endeavored to cite passages that may presage this ending: Gottschalk’s growing obsession with meteorology, his sketch of a balloon, his desire for self-understanding and open spaces. Lüdemann calls him “Professor,” so perhaps he has chosen the university route of which he dreamed. The narrator tells us: “balloon flight is an art, a work of art in which the pilot, the balloon, the wind and the weather, and the landscape as well, unite. There is no exploitation. . . . No living creature is tormented or mistreated” (338). Perhaps Gottschalk’s engagement with balloons is the ultimate escape from his experiences in GSWA, the ultimate expression of his musing there, of the influence of Kropotkin’s *Mutual Aid* (about which I include more in the section on intertextuality). Reaching a bit further, we may speculate that Lüdemann’s name comes from the Latin *ludens*, “playing.” J. Huizinga’s well-regarded book, *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play-Element in Culture* (1944), concludes: “Real civilization cannot exist in the absence of a certain play-element, for civilization presupposes limitations and mastery of the self. . . . True play knows no propaganda; its aim is in itself, and its familiar spirit is happy inspiration.”<sup>14</sup> As readers, we may wish this “happy ending” for Gottschalk.

But in a darker mode, we may decide Gottschalk has genuinely lost his sanity due to the horrendous treatment of the Herero and Nama he observed in GSWA;

he returns home with a form of PTSD, having seen the heinous crimes of which humanity is capable. Or worse still, perhaps he embodies here “colonial aphasia”: after his return home, he occupies himself in a dream world, imagining fanciful creations, forgetting the horror of the genocidal gaze, doing nothing to prevent a repeat of genocide. Perhaps the epigram that Timm chose for *In My Brother's Shadow* from William Carlos Williams sheds light on the ending of *Morenga*:

above the battle's fury—  
clouds and trees and grass—

#### INTERTEXTUALITY AS CRITIQUE IN *MORENGA*

Of all of the Germans in the text, only Dr. Gottschalk questions the scientific justification of the oppressive social relations in the colony. He develops an alternative notion of social development from reading a book on mutual cooperation in nature, Petr Alekseevich Kropotkin's *Gegenseitige Hilfe in der Entwicklung*.

KENOSIAN | “The Colonial Body Politic”

As a literary device, intertextuality is frequently deployed as a strategy for critiquing an earlier text, for revising or correcting it to suit the more recent zeitgeist. Julia Kristeva, the critic credited with coining the term, claims “intertextuality is perhaps the most global concept possible for signifying the modern experience of writing.”<sup>15</sup> Intertextuality is seen as a specifically postmodern device and is, according to Sue Vice, the most common literary method in Holocaust fiction.<sup>16</sup> By its very nature, intertextuality illuminates the act of storytelling and makes the reader aware of the author as part of a network of writers. Intertextuality creates metafiction: it is fiction about fiction. For example, fairy tales are often revised as a way to demonstrate that earlier versions were sexist or conveyed inappropriate ideas about class.<sup>17</sup> In fact, Timm devotes an entire chapter in *Morenga* to a text, written by Gottschalk as a report to the German military, with insertions/marginalia/corrections composed of wry and sarcastic remarks by the reader of that report, thus modeling intertextuality. Marginalia also feature in the copy of *Mutual Aid* that Gottschalk reads throughout the novel.

Timm uses intertextuality generously and in several directions in *Morenga*. The novel references external, earlier texts, such as Frenssen's *Peter Moor*, to offer a stinging critique. Timm also includes a kind of internal intertextuality by telling us what books his characters are reading; in doing so, he invites readers to consider the impact of books on individuals and societies. Also internal is the intertextuality among the various narratives, Gottschalk's diary, and his

dreams. Finally, we can speak of the intertextual relationship between *Morenga* and Timm's memoir, *In My Brother's Shadow*, written thirty years later, which is discussed later in this chapter.<sup>18</sup>

A comparison of the opening pages of *Peter Moor* and *Morenga* reveals many similarities: they both present an account of the departure from family in Germany in dreary weather, stowing gear in the ship, seasickness, a stop in Liberia, taking on black crew, arrival in Swakopmund in the fog, being ferried to a shore that appears to be barren wasteland, boarding the train for Windhoek, seeing devastated stations along the way where Hereros had attacked, arrival in Windhoek. Both Moor and Gottschalk have enlisted; both eagerly anticipate arrival in this exotic place called Africa. Only time separates their experiences: Moor departs Germany in mid-January 1904, just after the war has begun; Gottschalk departs on 28 September 1904, nine months later, and, significantly, after the Battle of Waterberg has already occurred. Thus, Moor fights in the conflict with the Herero and Gottschalk with the Nama. But, while Gottschalk will dramatically change his attitude about Africa, Africans, and especially about the German military while there, becoming profoundly critical, Moor's experience in the Schutztruppe transforms the imperial gaze with which he arrived into an acceptance of the genocidal gaze.

An incident that occurs in *Peter Moor* and is recapitulated in *Morenga* provides another example of how intertextuality functions as critique. Near the conclusion of *Peter Moor*, a guardsman toys with a Herero man, taking him into captivity and then telling him to run, to escape. As the man does so, the guardsman shoots him in cold blood and he dies before Peter Moor's eyes. Moor offers no objection to this incident except to grumble that the noise of the shot might have alerted "hostile tribes" to their whereabouts.<sup>19</sup> Frenssen is content to present the killing of indigenous people with impunity. A very similar incident occurs in *Morenga* (pages 38–43) but with a very different outcome: the suggestion is that this disturbing incident was one of the causes of Wenstrup's desertion.

Perhaps, when he did his research, Timm also read a memoir by Margarethe von Eckenbrecher based on her experiences as an immigrant to GSWA with her husband; they were part of the settler colony. They departed from Hamburg in dreary weather in late April 1902, and her account of their voyage shares much with that of Frenssen and Timm. She, like Gottschalk, sails on a boat in the Woerman line, is seasick, and stops in Liberia to take on what she calls "Kruboys" (the black men who will assist the passengers in disembarking). Her arrival in Swakopmund happens in the fog, and her "adventure" getting from ship to land in rough seas is quite similar to that recounted by Moor and Gottschalk.

With her husband, she, too, boards a train for Windhoek, stopping along the way at Karibib in order to head to Okombahe, where they hope to acquire land. Eckenbrecher left GSWA with her son, born in Africa, just as the war with the Hereros began. She published her memoir in Germany in 1907 where it became a best seller; she returned to Windhoek in May 1914, a divorcée, with her two sons, where she wrote a second memoir in 1936. It was published in Germany in 1940.<sup>20</sup> So both of these volumes would have been available to Uwe Timm when writing, and though von Eckenbrecher shares some of the Schutztruppe's attitude toward indigenous people, her perspective is that of a woman and a settler, very different from Moor and Gottschalk.

Two symbolically important texts serve as the reading material of Gottschalk and Wenstrup en route to GSWA; both are significant as intertexts. We are told that Gottschalk “brought along three books for the crossing. . . . A text book on immunology, a South African botany, and a novel by Fontane, *Die [sic] Stechlin*” (6). Peter Bowman calls *Der Stechlin* “a novel of extraordinary thematic breadth, treating of the political process, social change, the role of nobility, ideas of nationhood, the position of women, the nature of charity and aspects of artistic life. Above all, though, it is a novel about language.”<sup>21</sup> The novel was the final book written by Theodor Fontane; it was published in 1898 so would have been a relatively new novel packed in Gottschalk's bag as he departed Germany in 1904. Bowman further elucidates: “The all-important lake in *Der Stechlin* symbolizes the interconnections between old and new, local and global, and through this it informs the central ‘idea’ of the novel: *the harmonious coexistence of different discourses and the rejection of dogmatism*” (emphasis mine, 877). Clearly these themes are shared by *Morenga* as well as by the text Wenstrup reads onboard.

That book is Peter Kropotkin's *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution*. Kropotkin, a Russian prince and an anarchist, published this work in London in 1902, so this book would also have been new as Gottschalk and Wenstrup sailed from Hamburg. *Mutual Aid* proposes just that: cooperation among groups as a natural state, rather than competition. Kropotkin opens the book with observations about cooperation among animals he studied in Siberia: “even in those few spots where animal life teemed in abundance, I failed to find—although I was eagerly looking for it—that bitter struggle for the means of existence, *among animals belonging to the same species*, which was considered by most Darwinists . . . as the dominant characteristic of struggle for life, and the main factor of evolution” (emphasis in the original).<sup>22</sup> Kropotkin's analysis continues with chapters devoted to mutual aid among “primitive” peoples, in the medieval city, and in the concluding two chapters, “mutual aid among ourselves”: “The mutual aid tendency in man has

so remote an origin, and is so deeply interwoven with all the past evolution of the human race, that it has been maintained by mankind up to the present time, notwithstanding the vicissitudes of history” (223).

Shortly before his mysterious disappearance, Wenstrup gives the book to Gottschalk as a Christmas gift. Gottschalk has been curious about the text that has consumed so much of Wenstrup’s time, and he begins to study it carefully. In it, he finds a theory that contradicts the struggle for existence said to be endemic to theories propounded by Social Darwinists, as well as prolific marginalia by Wenstrup. Its appeal to Gottschalk is immediate: it stands in flagrant opposition to the thrust of the Schutztruppe presence in GSWA. The text gives him language for the growing uneasiness he is experiencing about the treatment of the indigenous people of GSWA, about the genocidal gaze of his colleagues. Timm here invites the reader to consider the influence of books on their readers and on society as a whole. The books on German colonialism in 1978, with the exception of that by Horst Drechsler, had failed to provide the critique required, had failed to note the profound power and damage of the genocidal gaze. Timm’s aim in *Morenga* is to do just that.

We are told: “Gottschalk always carried this book with him, wrapped in a page of the *Vossische News* . . . whenever he left his room in Warmbad, he stuck the book in the pocket of his uniform” (122). Timm includes examples of Wenstrup’s marginalia in *Mutual Aid*, which fascinate and puzzle Gottschalk. Here is one example: “The only good Herero is not a dead Herero (the butcher Trotha is mistaken there), but one who works for free. The goal of native policy is a well-nourished slave. First iron around the neck, then—a most elegant solution—through the head. The final goal: a slave who affirms his slavery” (122). Wenstrup is writing satirically here, of course, and in doing so, he captures neatly an aspect of the imperial gaze, as well as the conflict between Leutwein and von Trotha. The Germans did thrust the Herero into irons and work them as slaves after the Battle of Waterberg: colonization of the mind was achieved. Practice for the Holocaust, as yet unimagined, occurred.

On patrol, the Germans shoot a Nama man found crouching in the bushes. The following day, Gottschalk experiences a revelation about himself: “They shot a man and all I thought was, I hope no one hears it. What’s happened to you, thought Gottschalk, still staring into the mirror shard” he had used to shave (125). “A cold feeling of alienation submerged everything in a clear, bright light: his shock of feeling nothing when he thought about the incident. Shock at his own failure to be shocked, at an indifference that should not be indifferent” (125–26). Gottschalk fears that he, too, is becoming inured to killing with impunity. His

roommate, Lt. Haring, notices “with some concern the strange alteration in his roommate Gottschalk” (129): he saves half his rations and surreptitiously feeds the Nama enclosed in barbed wire; he spends “more time with brown riffraff, talking with the kitchen hands and ox-boys” (129); he resumes his language study; and he “was seen several times with a Hottentot named Katharina. . . . That was always the first sign someone was going native” (129). The next entry we are given in Gottschalk’s diary reveals the impact of *Mutual Aid*: “Happily enough, competition is not the rule either in the animal world or mankind. . . . Better conditions are created by the elimination of competition by means of mutual aid (Kropotkin)” (131). Not only Lt. Haring notes the changes in Gottschalk: “Soon even men from the lower ranks were openly tapping their heads when Gottschalk walked by” (131).

Gottschalk continues to consult Kropotkin throughout the novel. Once he reaches Keetmanshoop, in late March 1905, when he recognizes that he is moving toward pacifism, he also recognizes that his continuing interest (in *Mutual Aid*) “focused on how his predecessor had read the book, on Wenstrup’s marginalia and the passages he had underlined in various colors” (211). For example, Wenstrup has underlined the following passage in red: “One of the greatest pleasures of the Hottentots certainly lies in their gifts and good offices to one another. The integrity of the Hottentots, their strictness and celerity in the exercise of justice, and their chastity, are things in which they surpass all or most nations in the world” (211–12). Thus *Mutual Aid* functions as a counternarrative to the genocidal gaze that Gottschalk has begun to recognize and resist. Wenstrup’s trail through the text acts as an affirmation of Gottschalk’s growing identification with “the enemy.”

Another kind of intertextuality used quite frequently in the novel is the disclosure of Gottschalk’s dreams; these dreams are recorded in his diary and serve several functions: they provide a kind of surreal reading of a recent event in Gottschalk’s life; they also reveal his unconscious mind-set. As with Gottschalk’s reactions to Kropotkin, the dreams become an additional pathway in the text for Timm to signal his critique. Here is the full text of a dream Gottschalk recorded on 19 January 1905, en route to Warmbad:

Dreamed I had lost my way in the desert. The strange thing was that as I wandered about, I didn’t know I’d lost my way, but at the same time I knew, from the outside as it were, that I didn’t know it. So I walked on without worrying, but dead tired, climbing sand dunes that stretched away like waves into the interior of the country. Only after seeing a rider in the distance, and then seeing him again drawing nearer,

did I realize I'd lost my way. I felt the sand trickling down into my boots, filling in tightly around my feet, and it was harder and harder to walk. Suddenly, crossing the crest of a dune, I stood before the rider, who wore a German Colonial Guard uniform. I asked him the way, but my questions bounced off him like a wall. Finally he lifted his head. Nothing can be seen beneath the shadowy brim of his hat but a scar: no eyes, no nose, no mouth. A faceless face. On his hat, in place of the black, white and red cockade, he wears a white marguerite. The horse replies in Nama, but in a dialect I can't understand. (80–81)

The dream invites several interpretations. At this point in the novel, *Gottschalk is genuinely lost*, not so much physically as emotionally and intellectually. The assumptions with which he arrived in Africa—the romanticism of colonialism derived from the goods in his father's store, the supposed purity of military motives, the imperial gaze upon the Nama—have been dashed by his experience of Schwanebach and others, by his reading of Kropotkin, and by his friendship with Wenstrup. He is becoming paralyzed by his doubts in the desert of how he should proceed; his walk is slowing. Who is the rider he encounters? The rider is wearing a German uniform and perhaps is thus a figure of death, of the genocidal gaze; but the Herero and Nama would often don the uniforms of slain Germans, so the figure could represent those the Germans are intent on killing; the fact that the horse speaks Nama suggests the rider may be Nama. Yet another reading of this ambiguous dream is that the rider represents Wenstrup. It has been about two weeks since Wenstrup disappeared. In chapter 6, "Wenstrup's Disappearance," we are told he sported a tamarisk sprig in his hat on Christmas Day (53); the figure of death sports a marguerite, a variety of daisy.

Once Gottschalk has admitted to himself and others that he believes the war is unjust, he has another powerful dream of death, dated 25 May 1905, Keetmanshoop. Gottschalk has now been in GSWA for eight months: "Toward morning I woke from a dream: I lay in one of those zinc coffins used to transport corpses back to Germany. But I was not dead. The coffin was screwed down tight and soldered, as usual, to prevent the lid from warping under the pressure of decomposition gases" (259). The coffin is loaded on a ship and during the voyage, Gottschalk is able to converse with bodies in other coffins, including Lt. Schwanebach. Upon arrival in Germany, his coffin is loaded onto a gun carriage. "My zinc coffin bounced and clanged about on the gun carriage until it finally crashed to the ground and sprang open. I woke up" (259). By this time, Gottschalk is making mysterious entries in his journal, which could be interpreted as mathematical calculations needed to plan his escape over the border

to English territory (the route Morenga will take). This dream is clearly a dream about his profound need to escape, to leave behind the genocidal gaze of the Schutztruppe. His diary entry for 12 July 1905: “The career officer has his motto: *der Berufsstand zum Tode*—our profession unto death” (266).

Timm deftly uses intertextuality in *Morenga* as one of several vehicles for conveying his critique of the violence of the genocidal gaze as well as for revealing the gradations of Gottschalk’s disillusionment with the colonial project. Whether it be citing the books his characters are reading, inviting the reader to peer into Gottschalk’s diary, or recounting Gottschalk’s dreams, Timm’s use of intertextuality calls the reader’s attention to the power of words and story to create reality, or change it. Gottschalk’s texts and those he reads are part of a network of many texts, versions of German imperialism and its impact on the Schutztruppe, the Africans, and the Germans back home in the Fatherland.

#### HYBRIDITY OF NARRATIVE TECHNIQUE, TEXTUAL CONTENT, AND FORMAT

It’s a historical novel, based on facts . . .

I wanted to write a book that also took a fictional approach to the material.

It was precisely the combination of fact and fiction that interested me.

UWE TIMM | 2003 interview

*Morenga* is comprised of twenty-seven chapters and an epilogue. The majority of the chapters are written in omniscient, third-person narration, largely focalized through Gottschalk. Nine of the chapters are printed in a smaller font, thus breaking the narration in various ways and interrupting Gottschalk’s tale.<sup>23</sup> Some chapters are given titles that represent a sharp change in voice and content. “Battle Report 1,” 2, and 3 are such chapters: they report military strategy, battles, and activities of individual soldiers and officers; they are for the most part drawn from the Colonial Archives and can be said to represent the genocidal gaze. “Regional Studies 1” and 2 present flashbacks of supposedly historical men, such as missionary Gorth and trader Klügge, both of whom are surreal and grotesque characters who endeavor to perpetrate hoaxes and scams on the Herero and Nama. “Regional Studies 3: Theodolite or the Usefulness of Sardine Oil” provides the reader with a brief history of the German colonization of GSWA. Timm emphasizes the venal motives for colonization: “the economic sector had finally lived up to its patriotic duty to civilize an underdeveloped and backward land. It was . . . one of the noblest tasks of the country of poets and

thinkers to civilize the savages” (214). In other words, the racial hierarchy at the center of the genocidal gaze informs the project from the outset.

And some chapters are given titles that suggest academic essays, such as “Concerning the Milder, More Humane, Yet More Lasting Pedagogical Effects of the Rope,” which presents a series of letters debating the usefulness and appropriateness of whipping the indigenous people (chapter 12). Even the chapters that are printed in regular font, and open in the usual narrative style, contain inserted documents in smaller font such as Gottschalk’s often heartrending diary entries, letters from a range of authors (including one from Hendrik Witbooi, dated 27 July 1905), military circulars and regulations, the texts of a telegram and a doctor’s report, and so forth. The pastiche thus created by Timm allows for wide swings in tone and content: from realistic fiction to apparently authentic military reports, from apocryphal stories about missionaries and wildly inventive stories about traders to abstract, heartless texts that reveal the genocidal gaze of the Schutztruppe.

Following the introduction to Gottschalk in the first twenty pages, Timm inserts a two-page chapter titled “Two Positions.” It is comprised of six quotations, in the smaller font, taken from texts in the German Colonial Archives, and attributed to von Trotha, Leutwein, Imperial Chancellor von Bülow, and Colonel-General Count Schlieffen. These texts briefly outline the dispute between von Trotha and Leutwein regarding the disposition of the indigenous people. Von Trotha’s belief that “the nation as such must be destroyed” prevailed. The chapter ends with this stark announcement in regular font: “Of approximately 80,000 Hereros, 15,130 survived” (23).

Before the reader is returned to the story of Gottschalk, two more chapters, written in blunt, abstract military language, intervene. The first, “General Situation,” further details von Trotha’s triumph over Leutwein. It recounts von Trotha’s choice of Colonel Deimling (another historical figure) to lead the onslaught against the Nama in the south. Called the White Snake by the Nama, Deimling “didn’t intend just to free the encircled villages, he would surround the Witboois and annihilate them. Deimling’s typical vocabulary for skirmishes and battles: crush, shatter, smash. Colonel Deimling’s plan: to smash the Witboois. Then to march south and smash Morenga and his men too” (26). Timm continues to build, for the reader, an understanding of the genocidal gaze and how endemic it was in the military.

Immediately following is “Concept of the Enemy,” a chapter comprised of various quotations from German sources, several of which convey the German

perceptions of Morenga: “Jakob Morenga, a Herero Bastard from a small tribe living in the midst of the Hottentots . . . attained a not inconsiderable education for a black . . . he has abstained from the usual bestial atrocities practiced by his northern tribesmen. . . . His unusual importance can be seen in the very fact that although he is a black man, he plays a leading role among the lighter-skinned Hottentots” (28). This racialized description of Morenga, from the Colonial Archives, underscores the centrality of racist hierarchies in the genocidal gaze. Another quotation, attributed to a Cavalry Colonial Guard, continues this racist discourse: “The Hottentots are naturally warlike and have developed a great facility for guerilla warfare. It’s true that their most important general—Morenga—was black. Basically, they are all bandits and cattle thieves” (29). These two chapters again reveal that the gaze of the Schutztruppe upon the Herero and Nama is deadly; the enemy is not recognized as human but rather categorized by skin color and slated for destruction.

What is Timm’s writerly purpose in mixing fiction, some of it fantastic (for example, when the oxen speak to share with the reader the creation story of both the Nama and of the ox as a beast of burden in chapter 11, “Regional Studies 1”), with such quotations from historical documents and accounts of historical events? If we return to the notion of *Morenga* as a postmodern, postcolonial, and post-Holocaust novel, then one must recall Theodore Adorno’s dictum: “To write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric.”<sup>24</sup> Though Adorno subsequently retracted this taboo, controversy remains among Holocaust Studies scholars about the use of the imagination in writing post-Holocaust literature. A Jewish American writer who has considered this dilemma extensively, and who has also written imaginative texts about the Holocaust, is Cynthia Ozick. In a series of essays and presentations during the 1980s, Ozick worked out a formula that allowed for the kind of hybridity Timm is using in post-Holocaust fiction. But she holds such hybridity to a higher standard: “What is permissible to the playfully ingenious author of *Robinson Crusoe*—fiction masking as chronicle—is not permitted to those who touch on the destruction of six million souls, and on the extirpation of their millennial civilization of Europe” (Baer, *The Golem Redux*, 154).

Instead, asserts Ozick: “When a novel comes to us with the claim that it is directed consciously toward history, that the divide between history and the imagination is being purposefully bridged, that the bridging is the very point, and that the design of the novel is to put human flesh on historical notation, then the argument for fictional autonomy collapses, and the rights of history can begin to urge their own force” (Baer, *The Golem Redux*, 154). In other words, a writer must not toy with the facts of a genocide. Ozick criticizes both William

Styron's *Sophie's Choice* and Bernhard Schlink's *The Reader* for having done so.<sup>25</sup> Though Timm wrote *Morenga* before Ozick made these pronouncements, his extensive research in military records, colonial reports, photographs, and the archives in Namibia indicates his desire for authenticity in his use of history. The importation into the text of excerpts from military correspondence, a letter from Hendrik Witbooi, and the pages of Morenga's diary all demonstrate his recognition that "the rights of history" must have their say. In the face of German colonial aphasia, Timm asserts the crucial importance of historical accuracy, with particular attention to the language used by the various forces in conflict with each other—the missionaries, the traders, the Schutztruppe, the Boers, the settlers, and the Africans themselves.

In describing the richness of the hybridity in the novel, Breon Mitchell, who translated *Morenga* into English, notes that such hybridity enables the novel to function on three levels: the first level "recreates the history of the German colonial experience in the war against the Hottentots; . . . there is a second level that is unavoidable: the whole question of genocide and the *Konzentrationslager*. . . . You cannot help but think of what happened during the Nazi period to the Jews; . . . a third level as well: we know there are *Gastarbeiter* [guest workers], Turks and others, in Germany now, and that the country is having a great deal of difficulty in dealing with this" (Schulte, 6).

#### ANIMAL IMAGERY AS AN ASPECT OF THE GENOCIDAL GAZE

"How can we expect to colonize a land if we don't take the trouble to understand the natives?" Gottschalk once asked. . . . "With the aid of an interpreter and a hippo-hide whip," Lieutenant Schwanebach replied." (82)

The first forty pages of the novel are rife with German soldiers' references to the Herero and Nama as animals. Here are a few examples of this dominant trope. When the physician onboard is ordered to examine the "natives" who had boarded in Liberia, Schwanebach jokes, "That's a task for our two veterinarians. . . . Everyone laughed" (10). Captain Moll describes the Nama women to Gottschalk as he arrives in Windhoek: "The women are fantastic . . . completely immoral, total animals, but unfortunately syphilitic" (17). As Gottschalk marches toward Rehoboth, a lieutenant who had been in Africa for six years explains: "The Hottentots were much more dangerous than the Hereros. They let themselves be slaughtered in battle, but had few scruples when it came to prisoners. They stuffed a dead man's mouth with his own severed genitals. Ani-

mals,' Schwanebach said" (37). To which the lieutenant replies, "It was probably because the German troops had raped and mistreated the Herero women during their advance" (37). Yet another incident with Lt. Schwanebach involves his command to Gottschalk to "make sure the baboon [a Nama man] was dead" (40). Gottschalk at first is tempted to demur by saying he was only a veterinarian. "But he . . . said nothing, afraid that Schwanebach might reply, exactly, that's just the point" (40). This pattern of the Schutztruppe not only referring to the Herero and Nama as bestial but actually placing them at the bottom of the racial hierarchy, as less than human, continues throughout the novel. Such language characterizes the imperial gaze and sets up the Schutztruppe for the transition to the genocidal gaze. Viewing other human beings as animals, as unworthy of life, becomes yet another justification of genocide, and another link to the Nazis and their characterization of Jews as subhuman, as parasites.

Schwanebach is often the mouthpiece of the genocidal gaze. Behind his back, he is called Schwinebelly by Gottschalk and others, with the pun carrying heavy irony. Then comes a surreal moment in the novel when Schwanebach reveals himself to be quite "bestial." Unusual rain has arrived in GSWA and the men run outside naked to bathe. "Schwinebelly was seen naked for the first time. They stared at him in shock. He was incredibly hairy, like a black monkey" (52). A joke begins to make the rounds of the officers' mess: Schwinebelly's fourth child went missing at her baptismal ceremony and was found perched on the curtain rod: "There sits the little one, black and hairy as a monkey. And she has prehensile feet" (54). Timm turns the tables on Schwanebach, demonstrating that arraying humans on a racist hierarchy is not only offensive but inaccurate. No distinctions exist between the Germans and the Nama, at least as far as biology is concerned.

When Gottschalk reaches a crucial turning point, acknowledging that he "no longer asked himself if the war was unjust. He was now convinced it was" (195), he also begins to see the Germans as animals, a reversal of the genocidal gaze. He sees Captain Koppay "with his little drunken tapir eyes" while all the officers "break into whinnies of laughter" (192). In a dream, he sees that his own fingers have turned into fish (200). After the battle in the Great Karas Mountains, Gottschalk observes a number of atrocities, including four soldiers raping a Nama woman, and he decides he must "take some action against this human torture" (202). He considers shooting one officer "with his bird-dog face" and another "who also resembled an animal" (202). Finally, Gottschalk begins to voice his doubts aloud: "In Warmbad, Gottschalk once told Doctor Haring he didn't want to be complicit in this war's inhumanity. He wouldn't take an active part in fighting or shooting

any Hottentots” (253). So he is assigned a new task: “to test the feasibility of camels as pack animals in German South West Africa” (257). As improbable as this may sound, the Germans actually did import camels for this purpose and, eventually, for the soldiers to ride. Entries in Gottschalk’s diary become increasingly cryptic and philosophical. He references the distance to the “English frontier,” which would be his destination if he deserts. He tells of dreams about white worms escaping from pine cones and jumping beans with larvae inside.

Timm’s use of animal imagery enables him to trace Gottschalk’s “conversion” from arriving in GSWA with the imperial gaze to critiquing German values of violence. He begins to see the Germans as engaging in genocidal violence, behaving in a stereotypically “bestial” manner. The use of animal imagery also has a wide referential resonance, signaling the links between the GSWA genocide and the Holocaust. It is a subtle reminder to the reader of the continuity thesis.

#### THE DEPICTION OF MORENGA: A HEROIC SUBHUMAN?

It was in Keetmanshoop that Gottschalk first heard the name Morenga. (55)

But the reader has already met Morenga, who gives his name to the novel.<sup>26</sup> On page 2, in the first chapter, “Warning Signs,” a brief paragraph tells of a “band of armed Hottentots” attacking isolated farms in southwestern GSWA. “The leader of the band is a man named Morenga.” “Who is Morenga?” an anonymous voice inquires. Following that query, two paragraphs provide both facts and myths about this heroic leader, suggesting perhaps both the abstract, rational view of Morenga from the military perspective and his heroic stature from the African perspective, which is being ridiculed here in this German report:

Information provided by the District Office in Gibeon: A Hottentot Bastard (father: Herero, mother: Hottentot). Took part in the Bondelswart Rebellion in 1903. Said to have been reared in a missionary school. The name of school is unknown. Last employed in the copper mines of O’okiep in the northern part of the Cape Colony [now South Africa].

Morenga rides a white horse that can go four days without water. Only a glass bullet polished by an African can kill him. He can see in the dark. He can shoot a hen’s egg from a man’s hand at a hundred meters. He wants to drive the Germans out. He can make rain. He turns into a zebra finch and spies on German soldiers. (2)

As we have seen, Morenga is also one of the subjects in the chapter titled “Concept of the Enemy.” But, considering that his name serves as the title of

the novel, Morenga appears relatively infrequently in the novel. His elusiveness is perhaps symbolic of his elusiveness in real life, one of his successful strategies as a guerilla fighter. It is also a function of Timm's unwillingness to enter the consciousness of African characters; he sees this as a kind of neocolonialism.

An account of Morenga's exploits is included in "Battle Report 2: The Siege of Warmbad." Warmbad is located in the very southernmost tip of GSWA. The chapter opens with a complimentary evaluation of Morenga as a soldier, extracted from the German Colonial Archives: "Morenga planned to exploit the German weakness at Warmbad and take the village by storm. He had accurately assessed the town's importance, with its extensive supplies and large prisoner-of-war camps, and as a base for communication with the Cape Colony. As always he set his plan in motion with remarkable speed, energy, and stealth" (75). After five pages of detailed military strategy, the report concludes that "the murderous onslaught of the Hottentots" had failed, thus saving "German prestige" (79). While this report, written in November 1904, acknowledges Morenga's successful guerilla tactics, in the end it valorizes the German military and underscores the German right to steal the land from the Nama.

One hundred pages elapse before any significant coverage of Morenga appears again. "Battle Report 3: Colonel Deimling's Offensive Against Morenga in the Great Karas Mountains, March 1905" informs the reader that Morenga has "been quiet from December to March" as "he lacked ammunition" (177). The account of this siege tracks very closely with that provided by Drechsler (see pages 186–90 of Drechsler), again suggesting Timm's use of "*Let Us Die Fighting*." While the Germans were ultimately the victors, the chapter makes clear the savvy and valiant fighting of Morenga and his wildly outnumbered troops. We learn that Morenga was shot in the hip in one of the skirmishes. We are also given a description of an undated photograph of Morenga with his lieutenants. They are wearing captured Colonial Guard clothing—hats, jackets, shirts, and ammunition belts—and have propped their guns—also captured from the Germans—on the ground. This description does not fit any of the photos that Timm includes in his collection of colonial photographs, *Deutsche Kolonien*, which he put together for publication as a result of his research for *Morenga*.<sup>27</sup> However, a photo taken in 1907 with Morenga and eleven of his followers is similar and does appear in *Deutsche Kolonien* (83).

This chapter also includes the crucially important passage with excerpts from Morenga's diary, the only moment in the novel when we see through African eyes. The reader is told that Morenga captured a chest belonging to the "fallen Lieutenant Edward Fürbringer" (187), which contains a notebook with Für-

bringer's diary entries. Morenga appropriates the notebook and uses it to write his own diary.

We know from an interview with Timm that such a diary written by Morenga did exist and is now lost. The novel includes the unpunctuated texts of four entries, with the following dates: "10th [1905] . . . 12th . . . 13.2.1905 . . . Kactchanas 10.3.05" (187–88). These passages detail practical matters: the tribute of a salute and food the Bondels give to Morenga; the inventive use of door nails to shod horses; the Veltshoons (shoes) being made by the Bondels; the capture of cattle and a Boer by a patrol that also yields a cache of ammunition; and an account of a skirmish between the Bondels and the Germans.

The narrator tells us that Morenga's diary was confiscated by the Cape police when he crossed the English frontier to escape and the notebook was later given to the fallen lieutenant's father; from there, all traces disappeared. "Only a few pages reproduced photographically in 1910 have come down to us" (188). The story of these few pages is intriguing. When Timm found them doing research for the novel, he determined to include them in the novel but had to translate them into German for the first edition of the novel. When Breon Mitchell translated *Morenga* into English for the 2003 publication, author and translator decided to use Morenga's original English in reproducing the text (Schulte, 3). While doing research at the Universitätsbibliothek Johann Christian Senckenberg in Frankfurt in December 2015, I discovered the photocopies of Morenga's diary, written in his own hand, tipped into *Deutsche Reiter im Südwest* by Friederich von Dincklage-Camp (Berlin: Bong, 1908) between pages 152 and 153. They carry the title: "Aus dem Notizbuche Morengas" (From the Notebook of Morenga) and read almost identically to the passages in the novel. *Deutsche Reiter* is a big (12" x 8"), glossy book with many plates, rather like a travel book; the illustrations include both drawings and paintings of battles and photographs of soldiers engaged in various activities as well as some who have died. The subtitle of the book describes it well: *Selbsterlebnisse aus den Kämpfen in Deutsch Südwest* (Personal Experiences/Adventures of Struggle in German Southwest). Like many other texts about German colonialism from this era, the book valorizes German military behavior and the genocidal gaze.<sup>28</sup>

The chapter "Battle Report 3" closes with a German account of "a remarkable meeting between a titled German officer and a rebel Kaffir" (189), that is to say between Captain von Kopyy and Morenga himself. Von Kopyy comes to the Nama camp to propose conditions for Morenga's surrender and advises him that he will be "defeated in the long run, and that further resistance would only worsen the situation" (190). Morenga replies that "he knew perfectly well that

the Hottentots would perish in the struggle” but the decision is not his alone and he must confer with the Bondels. Subsequently, Morenga does confer but then breaks camp and disappears.

So much of this rich, dense, and sprawling novel remains unexplored here. Timm pokes fun at German proclivities and pretensions: for an obsession with cleanliness (Treptow in chapter 17), with maintaining the purity of the German language (243), and for a compulsive preoccupation with order, “Ordnung muss sein,” which is demonstrated throughout the novel. Timm occasionally uses mordant humor to lighten the darkness of his critique. For example, a brief anecdote tells of the invention of the “tropical,” which is a vehicle intended for use in the desert. An early model, however, gets stuck in the sand “where it remains as a monument to this day, nicknamed Luther by the locals: Here I stand, I can’t do otherwise” (241)!!! We are given brief glimpses of “fat-handed” Heinrich Göring, Hermann Göring’s father (223, 228), and of “the cold deadly nights on Shark Island” (216). A Professor Brunkhorst arrives in GSWA to “measure the heads of the various Nama tribes” (265) and build “an ethnological collection concentrating on Nama and Bushman cultures [including] interesting examples of Hottentot skulls” (267). In these last three references—to a key Nazi henchman, to death camps, and to eugenics—Timm foreshadows the Nazis. Timm even slips in a paragraph referencing his own heady days of rebellion against his father’s generation, the generation that initiated and fought World War II and carried out the Holocaust. He depicts a scene in a basement in Hamburg, eighty years after GSWA, in which a conversation about “the use of force against property” ensues, resulting in a decision to “toss into the consulate of the Vietnam murderers” a Molotov cocktail (237). A consistent critique of capitalism is found across the novel, with an inherent accusation of financial gain being the true motive of colonialism.

In reflecting back on the impact of *Morenga*, Timm names three things that have “always pleased me. . . . When this novel appeared, Morenga was rediscovered in Namibia. He had been totally forgotten . . . erased. Historians started studying his life.” Timm is equally pleased that *Morenga* “helped open up a discussion in Germany [about] Germany’s repressed past” and also helped “to advance a little our sense of the consequences it had, the foreign, the Other, always looked down upon and seen as inferior. Those are the roots buried in this novel” (Schulte, 5).

## The Genocidal Gaze: Timm's *In My Brother's Shadow*

Why do we kill? How can men shoot or hang each other?  
And how can others look on like they're at a fair? Why this indifference  
in the midst of terrible hate? Perhaps there's something they hate in themselves,  
some un-lived part of their lives. What kills compassion?

GOTTSCHALK'S DIARY | 25 September 1905

These existential queries, which Gottschalk confides in his diary after his profound disillusionment with the German colonial project, are also the queries Timm inscribes in his novel *Morenga* and, quite likely, are the queries raised in the minds of his readers. Twenty-five years after writing his critique of the German genocidal gaze upon the Herero and Nama and its horrifying results, Uwe Timm turned to another writing task, one he had consciously waited to undertake until his parents and his older sister had died. Their deaths gave him the freedom to ask questions about his family's behavior during and after the Third Reich and to domesticate his critical gaze. *In My Brother's Shadow* purports to be a memoir of Timm's brother, Karl-Heinz, a Waffen SS soldier who died on the Eastern Front in 1943, after wounds to both legs necessitated a double amputation. And the book does serve in that way, as Timm imports excerpts from his brother's minimalist diary and analyzes them, trying desperately to learn more about this brother he hardly knew; Timm was only three when Karl-Heinz enlisted.

But *In My Brother's Shadow*, though a slender 147 pages, is about much more. Timm asks difficult questions about the values held high by the German nation, particularly nationalism, militarism, and their ensuing violence. He wonders aloud if his brother has been involved in the crimes committed by Nazis on the Eastern Front. He interrogates the impact of all this on himself. *In My Brother's Shadow* looks both backward and forward from World War II and Nazism. Timm investigates "the values of his family background and the various ways in which they were shaped by the social and political history of Germany, and the effects which this process of socialization had on his own values and attitudes."<sup>29</sup> Inevitably, given the work he did on *Morenga*, this backward glance includes German imperialism and its tragic consequences: the history of the genocidal gaze in GSWA. Looking forward from World War II, Timm also investigates "the transfer of authoritarian values from Nazism into the postwar family as a consequence of the public humiliation of these values, portraying the postwar family as a site of containment for the fathers' damaged selves, as well as a sphere of control, latent depression, and violence."<sup>30</sup>

Thus Timm probes his father's life and values, giving credence to use of the label of *Väterliteratur* for the text. "*Väterliteratur* relies on the concept of history as a discourse experienced in the family . . . the father is seen as the representative of the history in the family, the parent that transmits the memory of the Third Reich to the child."<sup>31</sup> Though the title of his memoir would suggest otherwise, Timm in fact focuses on the legacy of violence, denial, and silence in his childhood household; his father is at the center of that legacy; his mother represents the counterexample, the parent by whom Timm hopes he has been most influenced. His brother, given his decision to volunteer for the elite SS Death's Head Division, functions in a shadowy manner as a second father, a second synecdoche for Nazi authoritarian values, a second purveyor of the genocidal gaze, but also as an example of the impact the horrendously misguided German values can have on an individual. In its capacity as *Väterliteratur*, *In My Brother's Shadow* is frequently compared to another popular example of the genre, Bernhard Schlink's *The Reader*.

If *Morenga* demonstrates to the reader the appalling acceptance among the German settlers and military of violence against the indigenous people, if it reveals how the racial hierarchies implicit in the genocidal gaze are used as a justification for genocide, then *In My Brother's Shadow* functions as a kind of sequel. The latter text conveys "the extraordinary conditioning which made the Holocaust possible . . . highlighting the way in which a set of social values can be so internalized, so pervasive, that alternative choices become unthinkable. . . . The normality of the brother's perception of war is clearly presented as the product of a conditioning through his upbringing and army training" (Williams, 76–77). *In My Brother's Shadow* demonstrates the way in which genocide is normalized by the genocidal gaze and how it is transmitted from generation to generation.

*In My Brother's Shadow*, in fact, is very much like *Morenga*: both texts use a pastiche of other texts, including dreams, in a metatextual way, to call attention to the power of stories to carry cultural ideologies or to critique them. Both books required intensive research on Timm's part: for *Morenga*, he traveled to Namibia, the former GSWA, and used the archives there; for *Shadow*, he followed his brother's route into Russia and read many highly regarded books about the Holocaust as well as German military records. Both books call the reader's attention to how destructive the excesses of German militarism have been: the genocidal gaze is the subject of scrutiny in both books. The story of a soldier under fire who keeps a diary is a focus of each text: the similarities between Karl-Heinz and Gottschalk are compelling. Language, too, is a central concern for Timm as he

plumbs the differences among the discourses of the military, settlers, missionaries, and traders in *Morenga* and recalls the way language hid or transmogrified the Nazi past during his childhood while simultaneously creating the apotheosis of his brother. Curiously, despite the many articles written about *In My Brother's Shadow* in English, none has called attention to these connections. The fiction that Timm wrote in the intervening twenty-five years was variously political and comical, with a focus on other themes; it even included some lighthearted children's literature.

Timm had often picked up his brother's diary, returned to the family in a box with other effects after his death, to read. But he could never bring himself to read beyond the entry of 21 March 1943, written in Ukraine:

Donez

Bridgehead on the Donez

75 m away Ivan smoking cigarettes, fodder for my MG. (12)

Timm feared learning about atrocities his brother may have committed: "It was only with my decision to write about my brother, and thus about myself too, to unleash memory, that I felt free to look closely at what he had recorded there" (12). Timm refers to himself in the text as "the boy" or even as "the afterthought," a way of both distancing himself and revealing how he perceived himself to be positioned in the family drama. His older sister, the firstborn, was also relegated to the periphery. It was Karl-Heinz who held center stage, both during his boyhood and after his death at age nineteen.<sup>32</sup> Timm links his profession as a writer to his father's postwar behavior: "For my father, the end of the war, the Nazi period that ended with unconditional surrender, was not an occasion for grief . . . instead, he reacted with an attitude of morose injury and opinionated carping . . . he put forward arguments to the effect that the Allies were guilty too. . . . An attempt to make the guilt relative, to shift our own guilt to the victors, to make them guilty too. . . . Perhaps that is the deeper reason why the boy, no longer a child now, resisted his father's outrage and started writing" (122–23). Such sharp condemnation of the perpetrator generation, their denial and silence, is a key feature of *Väterliteratur*.

Let us look more closely at these parallels in the two texts. Both texts are characterized by hybridity, by a composition of varying texts that rub up against each other in an intertextual manner and require the reader to compare, to integrate, to judge. Here is a comprehensive list of the kinds of texts found in *In My Brother's Shadow*:

first hand memories, letters from the brother to the father and vice versa, reflections by the narrator from the perspective of the present, interpolated fairy stories, a number of dreams, reflections triggered by photographs or drawings, memories mediated through familiar narratives, the outcome of the narrator's own historical research, the brother's actual diary entries, general reflections on language and its limited capacity to express a reality which is beyond comprehension and hence beyond expression, thoughts prompted by everyday objects, and references to other literary and philosophical texts. (Williams, 75)

The brother's diary entries bear an uncanny resemblance to those of Gottschalk. Both are spare and provide little information about the activity of the war itself, and both diaries form the backbone of the narrative.

One of the earliest intertexts in the memoir is the fairy tale "Bluebeard." Timm confesses to his inability as a child to listen to the grisly details of this tale; he would ask his mother to stop reading at "the moment when Bluebeard's wife tries to enter the locked room after he has gone away, in spite of his prohibition" because this moment was "so sinister" (5). He then includes the passage itself, a paragraph-long quotation from the Brothers Grimm. Just as he cannot bring himself to read beyond the promise of violence in his brother's diary, he could not get beyond the "fearful reluctance" he felt when his mother read "Bluebeard" to him. The theme of hiding, at the heart of "Bluebeard" as he has locked his murdered former wives into a "bloody chamber" in the castle, is also crucial to Timm's memoir. So much is hidden: his brother used to hide in a window seat as a child where his mother could not find him; Karl-Heinz also hides in a cupboard when he comes home on leave and jumps out to surprise his little brother Uwe. More significantly, Timm wonders about the brief diary entries: "What exactly do the words conceal? Armaments?" (11). In glossing the copy of the letter included in the text that his parents received in the box with his brother's effects, Timm muses: "The files, the reports, and the books of the time are full of abbreviations, unintelligible and mysterious sets of letters, usually capitals. Both concealing and revealing the bureaucratic threat of the hierarchical system" (27). Such encryption was endemic in the realm of the Nazis. "They had a keen sense," Timm claims, "of right and wrong and consequently did everything possible to conceal what they had done" (53). Timm cites the example of the 33,771 people killed at Babi Yar: as the Red Army approaches the ravine where they had been shot, the SS used prisoners to dig up the bodies and burn them; then they shot the POWs in order to preserve the sordid secret (53). "The bureaucracy of death" (53), Timm remarks. Similarly, as we know, the

Nazis tried to destroy as many files as possible at the death camps before they fled. Nazi language was full of euphemisms for the tactics of genocide: deported to the East, the Final Solution.

Dreams, too, carry important freight as intertexts, as they did in *Morenga*. Here, they are mostly Timm's dreams; in *Morenga*, the dreamer was Gottschalk. Timm tells us that he dreams of his brother "now and then" and, early in the memoir, he recounts one of these dreams: it is a threatening dream of someone trying to break into his home, a "faceless figure," who is "dark, dirty and covered in mud." Timm braces himself against the door, forcing the man back. "I know for certain [he] is my brother. At last I manage to push the door shut and bolt it. But to my horror I am holding a rough, ragged jacket in my hands" (6). His brother represents threats of various kinds: to the sanctity of his adult home, to his parents' love for him as a child, to the postwar pieties of his father about the Germans as victims. But Timm holds his jacket—evidence of his existence, of his contribution to the war effort as an SS soldier. In another dream, his brother calls out from the end of a passageway. Timm runs along the passage into a garden: "My brother is standing there, black-faced, his suit—or a uniform—light colored" (130). Like the first dream, this one projects an image of a faceless person, which is also reminiscent of one of Gottschalk's dreams. His brother asks him to sing, throws Timm a pear, and "then his voice speaks to me . . . Flower aid, he says" (130). A surreal vision, to be sure, but again like the previous dream, one in which his brother is somewhat hidden from view. Timm's efforts at research and writing fail to re-create his brother's face, his identity: "He mentions no dreams in his diary," no disclosures of wishes or secrets (23).

One of Timm's mother's dreams is also described: "My mother dreamed of a parcel that came by post. When she opened it, it contained bandages, and when she unwrapped them, those long, long white strips of bandaging, a bunch of violets fell out. She really did have that dream on the night he was wounded" (25). A powerful dream that foreshadows death, though days would go by before the family received official notification of Karl-Heinz's wounds. In another dream, Timm finds himself in a bunker with his father, who explains to him how to dive off a ten-meter board; this is one of the feats Karl-Heinz achieved as a child, a source of great pride for his father (136). The final dream recounted in the memoir occurs after Timm's father dies: "I had a recurrent dream," states Timm. "It went like this. The bell on the shop door rings [Timm had taken over his father's furrier business] and he comes in, a tall, shadowy figure. I feel horror. He was only pretending to be dead" (145). This ominous dream conflates the brother and the father as a faceless, threatening figure who returns, a kind

of revenant. It also resurfaces the theme of hiding, deception. It encapsulates the tension and hatred between father and son, a central issue in *Väterliteratur*.

Yet another kind of intertext is represented by the more than fifteen “verbal” photographs, inserted in the text as if with black corners in a photo album, in an almost Sebaldian fashion.<sup>33</sup> Most often, these become a prompt for reflection, a spur to a realization about family members. As with the use of dreams, the pattern of photos in the narrative begins almost immediately when Timm describes the photo of his brother, “probably around the time he volunteered for the Waffen SS” (7), which Timm keeps near his desk as he writes the memoir. Other photos are of Karl-Heinz and his father in various playful poses (see, for example, page 6), inciting some jealousy on the part of Timm, who never experienced this kind of close father-son relationship; his father served in the Luftwaffe during World War II and was then a British POW, not returning home until 1946. Many prewar photos of his father are included—in the Freikorps unit in the Baltic in 1919, at a party in a hussar’s uniform, a slender ladies’ man. Timm’s mother kept photos of a postwar trip she took in an album; his sister hid a photo of her fiancé, killed in the war, in a box of mementos; photos of his maternal grandparents’ fashionable home are described as well as a portrait of an uncle who declared that “there was nothing wrong with what was happening to the Jews” (121). All of these photos render the memoir itself a family album. But, and this juxtaposition is exactly the point, Timm also includes Lee Miller’s postwar photo taken in Dachau of an “SS man drowned in a stream by inmates . . . Lee Miller captioned her photo “The Evil” (55). Similarly, gruesome renderings of photos taken by a German photographer of the massacre at Babi Yar are included (129). Despite his father’s denials and recriminations, the Holocaust has forcefully entered the family home; Timm gradually comes to recognize it for what it is and to grasp the deceit that has hidden it. The juxtaposition of the photographs—family photos and Holocaust photos—as with the juxtaposition of various texts in *Morenga* demands that the reader grasp the family story in the wider context. This, in turn, reveals what is hidden, what has been the subject of deceit and amnesia. The final photograph, “its surface cracked and brown,” shows his father standing outside a peasant’s cottage in his army uniform, laughing. “There is a curious likeness to my son and me, at least in this small photograph and from the perspective of the camera,” Timm confesses (145–46). It is unlikely that this similarity pleases Timm.

Salted throughout the text are Timm’s indictments of German beliefs and values, Nazi ideology, the concept of the Aryan race, the proclivity for violence. Taken together, these passages present as complete a delineation as possible of the

genocidal gaze, although, of course, Timm does not use that phrase. I have chosen three to include here as the conclusion of this chapter. The first significant such passage is a somewhat lengthy quotation from a speech Himmler gave in Stettin on 13 July 1941, just prior to the invasion of the USSR, in which Karl-Heinz will die: “*We are involved in a conflict of ideologies and races. In this conflict National Socialism, an ideology based on the value of our Germanic, Nordic blood, stands on the one side, stands for a world as we envisage it—good, decent, socially just. . . . On the other side stands a nation numbering 180 million, a mixture of races and peoples even whose names are unpronounceable, and whose nature allows them to be shot down without mercy or compunction*” (emphasis in the original, 29). Here is the concept of racial hierarchy justifying genocide. In another passage, after quoting a letter written by his brother in July 1943 about a fierce tank battle in which he was involved, Timm returns to the fact that his brother enlisted in an “elite” unit for which he had to prove his “pure Aryan descent” (52). He continues by further explicating the genocidal gaze: “The chosen ones were to be defined by race, by membership of the nation and not of a social class; as in the nobility, blood was the criterion, not blue but Aryan, German blood, the master race with a vocation to rule . . . Otto Ohlendorf, a qualified economist, head of Special Action Group D and an expert on statistics, justified the killing of ninety thousand men, women, and children by comparing it to the Children of Israel’s annihilation of their enemies in the Bible. The master race” (52–53). Ohlendorf’s work as head of Einsatzgruppen D, a mobile killing squad, was responsible for 90,000 deaths in southern Ukraine and Crimea. He was convicted at the Nuremberg Trials and hung in 1951.

After another passage from Karl-Heinz’s diary, in which he writes, “*We’re demolishing the stoves in Russian houses to build roads*” (83), Timm muses about his brother’s inability to see the connections between such destruction of homes in Russia and the Allied bombing of German cities; in fact, Timm’s family had been bombed out of their apartment in Hamburg on 25 July 1943. “In Russia,” Timm writes, trying to understand his brother’s failure to make this connection, “the killing of civilians is normal, everyday work, not even worth mentioning; at home it is murder” (84). The genocidal gaze normalizes such mass killing. “I have now read other diaries and letters of the time; [they] speak of killing civilians—Jews and Russians alike—as the most natural thing in the world. The language they’ve been taught makes killing easier: inferior human beings, parasites, vermin whose lives are dirty, degenerate, brutish. Smoking them out is a hygienic measure. I find no express justification of killing in my brother’s diary, nothing resembling the ideological instruction given to the SS. It is just a *normal* view of daily life in war” (emphasis in the original, 85).

Near the close of the memoir, Timm ramps up his critique, making accusations about Germans in general, not just Nazis. The theme is violence imbued in the mores of the nation. He begins by recalling a beating his father gave him with a leather belt for forgetting something he was supposed to buy. “Violence was *normal*. Children were beaten everywhere, out of aggression, out of conviction, for educational purposes, at school, at home, in the street” (emphasis in the original, 137). Instances of violence become a chorus (he speaks of himself in the third person here, “the boy”): “A cyclist came past and hit him in the face. . . . Violence at school. . . . He also experienced having to learn to write as violence. . . . Violence at home and in the street was licensed by the violence of the state, by political readiness to use violence. *Readiness for war*” (emphasis in the original, 137–38). The repetition becomes almost a verbal violence, form makes content, Timm convincing the reader of this habit of mind in Germany that informs the genocidal gaze.

In one of the passages most specifically alluding to *Väterliteratur*, Timm writes: “My father’s generation, the generation of perpetrators, lived by either talking about it or saying nothing at all. There seemed to be only those two options: either you kept discussing it or you never mentioned it, depending on how oppressive and disturbing you felt your memories to be” (93). Timm ends the memoir with the last line of his brother’s diary which, in turn, becomes the last line of his book, and which reveals the choice his brother made with regard to disturbing memories: “*I close my diary here, because I don’t see any point in recording the cruel things that sometimes happen*” (emphasis in the original, 147). But Timm has made the opposite choice in this astonishing memoir: human beings must talk about the genocidal gaze in order to stem the tide of genocide.