INTRODUCTION: “WHY ONLY NOW?”

With this opening line of his 2002 novel Im Krebsgang, Günter Grass seemingly sparked a new discussion about the sufferings of Germans in World War II. Though the Nobel laureate was perhaps the most influential figure to weigh in on this issue, he was not the first to spearhead this debate. W. G. Sebald argued in his 1997 lecture Literatur und Bombenkrieg that there was a taboo against writing about the bombings of German cities. With a similar view of breaking inhibitions, Eine Frau in Berlin (1959), an eyewitness account describing the rape of German women at the onset of Soviet occupation, was reedited in 2002 and turned into a large-budget movie in 2008. Quick to pick up on the notion of neglect of Germans’ wartime agonies, Der Spiegel featured a series entitled “Germans as Victims” in spring 2002. Although these debates focused on civilians, the defeated soldier at the end of the war and as prisoner of war (POW) is also included in today’s victim discourse, often indiscriminately with civilians. Guido Knopp’s television documentaries
Stalingrad: Das Drama (2002) and Die Gefangenen (2003) showed the sufferings of German soldiers at war and in captivity but almost ignored the army’s participation in war crimes, described by the Wehrmacht exhibitions in 1995 and 2002 and in 2011 in soldiers’ own words through the discovery of wiretappings of German POWs in American captivity. In this supposedly novel discourse about the miseries at home and on the front lines, four topics become evident: flight and expulsion from the eastern parts of the former Reich, the bombings, the rape of German women by Soviet troops, and war as well as prisoners of war. One wonders why Germans, having long integrated refugees from the East, rebuilt cities, and seemingly overcome losses and injuries, at the turn of the millennium were still haunted by the ordeals of past generations with such intensity, almost sixty years later. Striking, too, is the idea of breaking a taboo, as if—as Günter Grass puts it—the German crimes had overshadowed injustices committed against Germans or rendered it impossible to look at the victimization of Germans with empathy. In this chapter I argue that this debate suggests a highly compartmentalized memory of World War II and the Holocaust, strictly divided between a learned discourse on German crimes and a continuous family and public narrative of German victimization since the 1950s. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, Germans failed to establish a profound connection between these discourses, as the narrative on Germans as victims still relied on highly apologetic discourse patterns. The heightened awareness of the past as a result of generational changes and the passage of the past from collective to cultural memory in the young Berliner Republik did not reconcile this rift in memory, and Germans missed the opportunity that these changes provided for telling the story of their ancestors with empathy and understanding while casting no doubt on their collective failure. I claim that Germans at this time seemed to oscillate ever more rapidly between commemorative works in both realms, which are amplified by a highly engaged media as well as literature and popular films. Indeed, Germans at the beginning of the century and to a significant extent today are prisoners of apologetic discourse patterns that neither do justice to the sufferings of Germans during and after World War II nor allow for a meaningful understanding of their relationship to the German crimes.

INCOMPATIBLE MEMORIES: VICTIMS OF GERMANY AND GERMAN VICTIMS

Contrary to the alleged originality of the discourse on Germans as victims, Robert Moeller and others have argued that the discussion at the start of this century drew from a discursive tradition of victimization already established in the 1950s. Only in the 1960s, as awareness of the Nazi crimes finally grew, was the notion of devoting
attention to Germans as victims seen as scandalously ignoring the victims of genocide and war crimes. Yet the discourse on coming to terms with the past did not overshadow the self-perceptions of many older Germans as victims or completely silence the family narratives that supported them. Not surprisingly, the victim discourse thus reemerged during Helmut Kohl’s long tenure as chancellor from 1982 to 1998. His inability to establish a meaningful relationship to the discourse on German crimes was most obviously revealed in the ambiguous dedication of the Neue Wache Memorial in Berlin to commemorate all victims of war and tyranny without distinction between victims of Germany and German victims—a gross failure that Kohl only corrected by consenting to the erection of the Berlin Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe. Just as in the 1950s, the renewed debate on German sufferings was thus not only an attempt to come to terms with the traumas of loss and suffering; it also served to use the dialectic of victims and perpetrators to redefine ordinary Germans as victims and not as tacit accomplices of the Nazis or worse. This collective exculpation also reinforced narratives on the family level, where complex stories of involvement, complicity, and guilt were woven into simplistic narratives of innocence and victimization. As a result, Germans developed two largely disconnected memory realms dominated by the learned cultural memory of the Holocaust and other crimes and the family and public narratives of German victimization. With regard to children as well as grandchildren of the war generation, Harald Welzer, for example, demonstrated that in the emotional context of the family both cohorts tend to unquestioningly accept the stories of almost heroic though futile resistance to the regime and victimization of the eyewitness generation. Thus, the blueprint of a decades-old discourse on Germans as victims crucially influenced their perception of their fathers’ or grandfathers’ past even though they had all gratuitously encountered the Holocaust in public commemoration, in print, on TV, or in school. Even outside the family narrative, Germans at the turn of the millennium encountered a public debate structured along highly apologetic discourse patterns. Although the two issues are intimately related, the discourse on German sufferings thus continues to be divorced from that of Nazi crimes, betraying a fundamental lack of coming to terms with the terrors portrayed in both.

**APOLOGETIC DISCOURSE PATTERNS IN GERMANY AROUND THE TURN OF THE CENTURY**

Widely used discourse patterns such as universalizing or relativizing the sufferings of Germans against German crimes, lack of contextualization, and distancing ordinary Germans from the heinous Nazi crimes pervaded the debate around 2000.
Universalization of suffering that blurs the lines of responsibility and causality frequently occurs in popular infotainment history programs, most notably those produced by ZDF, Germany’s second largest public television channel. These programs often present German and Soviet soldiers as equally suffering in a war that seemingly knows neither aggressor nor perpetrators but only equal victims. Although soliciting a sense of empathy among Germans towards Soviet POWs might be considered a step forward, such universalization veils German responsibility for the war. Worse still, sufferings of Germans are often used to relativize German war crimes. Jörg Friedrich’s best-selling books, for example, argue that a “war of annihilation” was waged against the German populace by bombing German cities. Consciously employing language reminiscent of the Holocaust, Friedrich describes how bombing victims were gassed, burned, or simply consumed by the raging firestorms. Even though Friedrich carefully avoided the term war crimes, the point of this work was not only to highlight the horrors of the bombings but to weigh German crimes against German sufferings caused by the Allies. Adding to an already rich iconography and established name (Dresden!) and number symbolism, Friedrich also published an illustrated volume that spared no gruesome detail of the slaughter in German cities. Often, however, the rich pictorial memory of Germans fails to problematize that many of its images and figures come directly from Joseph Goebbels’s propaganda ministry. Thus, the arranged images of the victims of rape and murder in the East Prussian village of Nemmersdorf fail to do justice to the actual victims whose bodies were shamelessly used by Goebbels to spur on more futile resistance in defense of the Nazi tyranny. Surely these images should not be reproduced uncritically. What is more, they are also almost exclusively presented in isolation from a discussion on sexual violence committed by German soldiers in the Soviet Union, still a taboo topic in Germany.

A tendency to ignore the context of complicity in which German sufferings could be embedded can also be observed in the way the last months of the war are depicted as a period of unnecessary revenge and retaliation on the part of the Allies against essentially beaten and helpless Germans. Especially the February 1945 bombing of Dresden is taken as a prime example of a militarily pointless act of destruction. However, in the eyes of the Allies the Germans were neither defeated nor defenseless in February 1945. Thomas Childers stresses the casualties American forces still suffered, especially in the Battle of the Bulge, which dragged on to mid-January 1945. German cities contributed to the war effort to the very day they were conquered. These cities also helped produce the bombs and planes that had brought destruction over the entire continent. Frederick Taylor thus concludes that the loss of human life in Dresden, “most of it by normal standards classifiable as innocent,” was indeed tragic, “even if the city itself was not.”

Germany’s biggest cinema productions since the 1990s are also marred by a remarkable lack of contextualization. Strikingly, the stories told in these movies focus on the
encirclement and death and not on the murderous march of the 6th Army to Stalingrad (e.g., *Stalingrad*, 1993). Another film recounts the rape of a woman in Berlin but fails to contextualize that the author of the book was not just a random woman in Berlin but had previously been employed in Goebbels’s propaganda ministry (*Eine Frau in Berlin*, 2008). Arguably the most widely known production of the early 2000s focuses on Adolf Hitler’s and his entourage’s pathetic last days, not their crimes beforehand (*Der Untergang*, 2004). Horrible as the sufferings of Germans were, they must be evaluated in the framework of the war that Germany unleashed in order to establish due context, chronology, and responsibility. Yet even when deliberate suppression of context is not the case, the discourse on German sufferings often attempts to *distance* German victims from German crimes. Already in 1946, Karl Jaspers dissociated ordinary Germans from “moral, metaphysical or a criminal” responsibility for the atrocities by arguing that Germans were only in a political sense guilty of having allowed the Nazis to come to power. Average Germans thus could distance themselves from the wrongs seemingly committed only by their leaders. Furthermore, the crimes were falsely placed in a spatial dimension far away from where these ordinary Germans were; the crimes allegedly happened only behind the men fighting on the front lines and also far away from the home front. The discourse on German sufferings, however, is not distant from collective memories. It talks about immediate, familiar, and ordinary places and people. It stresses Heimat even as it is lost, homes destroyed by bombs, ordinary German men—who often as involuntary draftees or seduced teenagers became soldiers—and POWs, who after years of captivity finally come home. These are narratives that are in some way present in any given German family. Adding to the perception of average Germans as victims of a history greater than themselves, the contemporary discourse on Germans as victims also tends to focus on the near, the emotional, and the individual account. Sönke Wortmann’s movie *Das Wunder von Bern* (2003) thus tells the sentimental story of a returned soldier, whose tale of rising above his problems to integrate into society is linked to Germany’s victory in the 1954 Soccer World Cup. The protagonist’s sufferings as a returning POW, his wife’s survival in bombed Germany, his children’s hardships growing up without a father, and above all the way they overcome all of these problems, are taken as an archetypal pars pro toto for all Germans. This type of mythology helps viewers to identify with the sufferings and unexpected recovery of ordinary Germans and simultaneously distances those ordinary Germans, the alleged vast majority, from those few who perpetrated the heinous Nazi, not German, crimes.

While commemoration of the suffering of Germans during and after World War II is a vital part of the country’s identity, discourse patterns such as universalization, relativization, lack of context, and distancing Germans from the crimes prevent a meaningful relationship between the two discourses on German crimes and German suffering and thus compartmentalize society’s understanding even more.
THE BERLINER REPUBLIK: INCREASED MOMENTUM OF MEMORY WARS AT THE TURN OF THE MILLENNIUM

Due to the continuing use of the aforementioned apologetic discourse patterns, the memory debates came to the fore in the Berliner Republik at the turn of the century with great force. Generational changes, the passage from communicative to cultural memory, and the renegotiation of German identity after unification caused these debates to increase in momentum. This new rigor stood in marked contrast to the voices that called for bridging the divide between the two discourses, albeit often in the same relativizing manner as before. To its credit, German society also continued and still continues to commit to the ongoing commemoration of German crimes and engage the recent scholarly debate around the complicity of ordinary Germans. Thus, the Wehrmacht exhibitions drew crowds in all major German cities, even sparking a parliamentary debate. The public also engaged in controversial scholarship on Aryanization, arguing that ordinary German civilians were willing beneficiaries of the expulsion and murder of the Jews, and German audiences now discuss the discovery of wiretappings of German POWs, which reveal the widespread autotelic and sexual violence exercised by ordinary Germans. Yet as I showed earlier, Germans delved with equal rigor into literature, scholarship, and media with apologetic undertones portraying Germans as victims. For some commentators the appeal to commemorate German sufferings from Grass and others just continued to be a means of gradually substituting German perpetrators for German victims. Others, however, hinted at a necessity to work through this allegedly denied part of the German past in much the same way that Germans had come to terms with the Holocaust. As a result, Germans at this crucial moment were presented “as simultaneously guilty and suffering in proportions still very much open to dispute.”

As the debate sought to settle this score with renewed passion, generational fault lines played an important role in shaping the discourse on Germans as victims. Since both the cohort that gave birth to most of the perpetrators and the war generation had largely passed away, the generation shaping the discourse on German sufferings around 2000 was made up of those who were children and teenagers in 1945. Naturally they perceived themselves as victims seduced and exploited by the regime as air defense helpers (Flakhelfer) or child soldiers (Kindersoldaten). Their urge to overcome long-buried personal traumas was met with a growing interest from oral historians and the media. On the occasion of the May 8 commemoration in 2005, Der Spiegel and the Süddeutsche Zeitung both published a series of eyewitness accounts mostly from this generation. Not surprisingly, these featured above all their horrific experiences at the war’s end. With perpetrators and soldiers, and even those whose only fault might have been voting for Hitler in 1932, having passed away, the lone voice from the past
then was one of German victims. What is more, even the first postwar generation, which had challenged the culture of denial before 1968, seemed to have developed a new interest in German sufferings. In 2004 Chancellor Gerhard Schröder made no secret of his very first visit to his father’s grave in Romania, where he was killed in action in 1944. Many authors, such as W. G. Sebald, Jörg Friedrich, and Helke Sanders, who spearheaded the discourse on German sufferings, hail from the so-labeled 68er generation. Their contemporary books on German sufferings were often preceded by extensive work on Nazi crimes, as if, as Herman Beyersdorf suggests, they felt a moral obligation to address the crimes first to overcome their ideological qualms about writing on German suffering. It is thus not surprising that the idea of breaking a self-imposed taboo against writing about German sufferings was prominent among former 68ers.

In addition to generational shifts, a renewed search for national identity after unification in 1990 triggered a “process of internal introspection” with respect to the past that accelerated the memory debates in Germany. Having overcome a second dictatorship on German soil, and building on decades of Vergangenheitsbewältigung, the Federal Republic gained legitimacy internationally and sought to establish greater ease toward its past. As a country that wanted be seen as having learned its lesson from history, the Berliner Republik even used the discourse on the Holocaust and that on German sufferings to support the moral obligation for or the moral reserve against intervention on foreign soil. While Germans thus seem to draw on both discourses to finally be on the morally right side of history, countries terrorized by Germany during World War II began to question their established historical master narratives of resistance and noncollaboration under German occupation. After long and painful debate, the Paris Shoah Memorial of 2005 acknowledged French assistance to the Holocaust under German pressure. The Polish Institute of National Remembrance largely concurred with Jan T. Gross’s assertions that the Jews had been murdered by their Polish neighbors, albeit at the instigation of the German occupiers, which sparked an intense debate about antisemitism in Poland. As a result, Germany’s former victims underwent a painful process of facing the past around 2000, which allowed Germany, now equipped with a sense of having mastered its past, to become part of a European-wide commemoration of a universally burdened past.

Applying the terms of Jan Assmann, this decade also saw a change from a communicative memory to a cultural memory of the past, which together with the aforementioned generational shift and changes in German identity added to the increased momentum of the debate. In order to preserve the communicative memory as our cultural heritage, the new millennium saw an enormous increase in eyewitness accounts and biographical data, encouraged by the “biographical turn” in research and literature and the aforementioned generational shifts. In this context, one might think of Steven Spielberg’s Shoah Foundation or Walter Kempowski’s Echolot (1993) as much-needed
attempts to keep the voices of the past alive. Yet the audience in Germany had much less exposure to communicative memory of the Holocaust, because Germans were by and large children and grandchildren of those who were deemed racially and politically acceptable to the Nazi regime. Thus, they were well attuned to the communicative memory of German sufferings, while their perceptions of German crimes stemmed from an accepted but learned discourse on German crimes. This discrepancy becomes apparent when considering the acclaim for Martin Walser’s autobiographical novel *Ein springender Brunnen* (1998). In essence, Walser sought to dissociate his childhood memories of Nazi Germany from the context of German crimes, to which he did not refer at all. Following the familiar discourse pattern of distancing near personal memories from historical context, he thus perpetuated it for a younger audience. He claimed that the story of ordinary Germans can and should be seen in isolation from the learned cultural memory of the German crimes. What became evident from this debate was that the relationship between the discourses on the Holocaust and on German sufferings can be seen as a clash between learned cultural memory of the Holocaust and narrations on German sufferings handed down from generation to generation. While the contemporary discussion of German sufferings around the year 2000 easily fit into long-established family traditions and thus was likely to be passed on to future generations, it remained largely disconnected from the learned heritage of the Holocaust. It was in this debate that gradual transition to cultural memory was negotiated. Given the predominance of the discourse patterns that separate the two discourses, this division was firmly cemented into a future understanding of the past in Germany.

**MEMORY COMPARTMENTALIZATION TODAY**

The turn of the millennium as a moment when discourses on the past clashed with renewed rigor also informs memory discourses today. A look at contemporary miniseries about the war suggests that ordinary Germans, in productions such as *Unsere Mütter, unsere Väter* (2013), *Tannbach* (2015), *Das Boot* (2018), and *Charité im Krieg* (2019), are much more likely to be portrayed as complicit in the regime’s crimes, yet they also remain victims of an all-powerful regime and an all-consuming war. While the filmmakers’ interest in problematizing the dichotomy between victims and perpetrators and expanding the categories of investigation to men and women is admirable, apologetic narratives similar to those explored here still cushion the realization that Germans’ ancestors were often all too willing accomplices. **Universalization** to blur the lines of responsibility and causality can be observed in *Unsere Mütter, unsere Väter*. In the first part, a group of Wehrmacht soldiers led by the protagonists force Russian civilians to walk ahead of them to clear a path through a
minefield. Three times the soldiers are reminded that their current position is untenable and that they have to move through the minefield to reach safety. After taking casualties themselves, they decide to force the Russian civilians to go in front of them. One of the protagonists even declares that the losses that are sure to result from crossing the minefield would not have to come from their own. In this scene, the soldiers are seemingly responding to the pressures of war to justify the inhumanity of their actions. The protagonist even underscores this notion by saying: “The war will only bring out the worst in us,” as viewers hear German soldiers yelling orders at the civilians and exploding mines killing them. The crime against the civilians is thus relativized as part of the horrors of war, whose agency—not the soldiers’—is marshalled to cushion their responsibility.

Relativization of German crimes plays a role in the more recent Sky production Das Boot. The film is a sequel to Wolfgang Petersen’s blockbuster movie Das Boot from 1981, based on Lothar-Günther Buchheim’s novel by the same name. While the earlier Das Boot film and the book focused on the experience of the crew at sea, the new Sky series makes considerable efforts to link the front in the Atlantic Ocean with the home front in occupied France. No longer avoiding any discussion of complicity of sailors in crimes committed on German submarine bases in France, the new Sky series, for example, discusses brutal German reprisals against the civilian population for acts of sabotage by the French resistance. Even sexual violence by German sailors—still a taboo topic in Germany—is shown. Yet German crimes are relativized in the character of Samuel Greenwood, an American businessman who claims that his family financed Hitler’s rearmament policies in the 1930s.49 Even though American companies such as Ford and IBM, through their German affiliates, indeed made money in Germany even after 1939, the German rearmament boom was financed almost primarily by German businesses, which profited handsomely.50 Through this false claim in an absurd twist of the plot, German responsibility is relativized by suggesting an American co-responsibility, and German heroes, however tainted they may be, are confronted with the evils of American capitalism, represented by Greenwood.

Embedding stories of German suffering into the context of complicity of ordinary Germans is what recent films have set out to accomplish. Indeed, contemporary German films problematize this complicity of their protagonists like never before. In Tannbach, for example, not only do viewers see Graf von Striesow as a victim of Soviet postwar dispossession, but the film also reveals him to be a war criminal who ordered the shooting of civilians as reprisal for partisan attacks in the Soviet Union. Yet Striesow’s complicity is wrapped into apologia to humanize him to viewers today. Confessing to his later wife, he argues that it was cowardice, not conviction, that forced him to order the shooting. What is more, his confession and acknowledgment of guilt redeem him in the eyes of viewers today: “I did not have the strength; I did not have the courage. There is no excuse. Time does not heal wounds. . . . What remains is guilt.”51
Finally, distancing Germans from the wrongs seemingly only committed by their leaders can be observed in *Charité*. In the last gasp of the Third Reich in 1944–45, Nobel Prize laureate Ferdinand Sauerbruch is shown as a tireless physician helping hundreds of war casualties regardless of their station in the Nazi regime. The film, however, also distances him from the complicity of many physicians in Nazi crimes by neglecting to problematize his knowledge and support of human experiments conducted by the likes of Josef Mengele and Karl Gebhardt. As Robert Jütte has argued, Sauerbruch, in his capacity as a member of the Reich Research Council, had favorably reviewed a proposal by Mengele to conduct human experiments at Auschwitz. He had also heard Gebhardt speak about experiments on captured Soviet partisans. By failing to explore Sauerbruch’s knowledge of the inhumanity of so many members of his profession, the film distances him from the crimes.

**CONCLUSION: COMPARTMENTALIZED MEMORY IN THE BERLINER REPUBLIK**

At the turn of the millennium, German memory of war and genocide was still highly compartmentalized. Its main tenets—the public discourse on coming to terms with the Nazi past through remembrance of its victims and the private and public memory of Germans as victims of bombs, expulsions, rape, and Soviet captivity—remained largely divorced from each other. The continuing use of apologetic discourse patterns like universalizing suffering, relativizing German crimes, failure to render German sufferings in context, and distancing German victims from German crimes prevented a meaningful engagement with both discourses. What is more, the heated memory debates of the Berliner Republik, amplified by the media, literature, and film, seemed to oscillate ever more rapidly between these poles, making it more difficult to overcome this compartmentalization. The compartmentalization of memory around the turn of the millennium and the apologetic discourse patterns that emerged from it also shape representations of the Nazi past in film today. Unable to speak about the complicity of ordinary Germans without wrapping it in apologia, portrayals of the Nazi past at the turn of the millennium, like their contemporary variants, remain hollow despite their professed novelty in showing ordinary Germans as co-perpetrators. As a result, their attempts to show empathy with German suffering remain equally shallow and divorced from an engagement with Germans as beneficiaries and accomplices of the regime’s crimes.
NOTES


10. See, for example, Werner Hassel’s account—“A large number of people really didn’t know anything,—in Eric A. Johnson and Karl-Heinz Reuband, *What We Knew: Terror, Mass Murder, and Everyday Life in Germany; An Oral History* (New York: Basic Books, 2005), 180–84.

11. Harald Welzer, Sabine Moller, and Karoline Tschuggnall, “*Opa war kein Nazi*”: *Nationalsozialismus und Holocaust im Familiengedächtnis* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer-Verlag, 2002).


16. Popular films such as *Der Untergang*, directed by Oliver Hirschbiegel and starring Bruno Ganz, Corinna Harfouch, Ulrich Matthes, and Alexandra Maria Lara (Constantin Film, 2004, 155min.) and *Anonyma: Eine Frau in Berlin*, directed by Max Färberböck and starring Nina Hoss and Eugeny Sidikhin (Constantin Film, 2008, 132 min.), use or even minutely reconstruct images from Goebbels’s propaganda units, yet they fail to put them in context and perspective. See also Volker Benkert, “Kein ‘Untergang’ der Geschichtskultur, Aber auch keine Bereicherung,” *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht* 56, no. 7 (2005): 414–19.


20. *Stalingrad*, directed by Joseph Vilsmaier and starring Dominique Horwitz, Thomas Kretschmann, Jochen Nickel, Sylvester Groth, Martin Benrath, and Dana Vávrová (Senator Film, 1993, 134 min.).


22. *Der Untergang*.

23. *Das Wunder von Bern*, directed by Sönke Wortmann and starring Louis Klamroth and Peter Lohmeyer (Constantin Film 2003, 113 min.).

24. For example, Horst Köhler, “Rede zum 8. Mai 2005 vor dem deutschen Bundestag,” *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, September 5, 2005: “Wir trauern um alle Opfer Deutschlands — um die Opfer der Gewalt, die von Deutschland ausging, und um die Opfer der Gewalt, die auf Deutschland zurückschlug. Wir trauern um alle Opfer, weil wir gerecht gegen alle Völker sein wollen, auch gegen unser eigenes” (“We mourn for all those victimized by Germany — for the victims of violence starting in Germany and for the victims of violence that returned to Germany. We mourn for all victims, because we want to do justice to all peoples, including our own”; trans. V.B.).


34. “Changing Legacy of 1945 in Germany,” 520.


36. See especially the debates on NATO-led bombings to stop ethnic cleansing and murder in Bosnia in 1995, which were supported by analogies to the Holocaust. Likewise, the bombings to stop ethnic cleansing in Kosovo 1999 were accompanied by invoking the expulsions of Germans.

published in French in 1987.


44. Heinz-Peter Preusser, *Krieg in den Medien* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2005), 496.

45. One notable exception from this compartmentalization of the past can be seen in the Stolpersteine project in German cities. These “stumbling blocks” are small makers of the displacement or murder of Jewish Germans in front of the houses in which they last lived. This brings the discourse on the Holocaust into everyday life in contemporary Germany.

46. *Unsere Mütter, unsere Väter*, directed by Philipp Kadelbach and starring Volker Bruch, Tom Schilling, Katharina Schüttler, Ludwig Trepte, and Miriam Stein (ZDF, 2013, 90 min.), DVD (distributed in the US by Music Box as *Generation War*); *Tannbach*, Dir. Alexander Diesbach, with Heiner Lauterbach, Natalia Wörner, Henriette Confurius and Ludwig Trepte (ZDF, 2015, 115 min.) DVD; *Das Boot*, directed by Andreas Prochaska and starring Rick Okon, Vicky Krieps, and Leonard Scheicher (Bavaria Films, Sky and Sonar Entertainment, 2018, 60 min.); and *Charité im Krieg*, directed by Anno Saul and starring Ulrich Noethen, Mala Emde, Jannik Schümann, and Luise Wolfram (UFA, 2019, 90 min.).


48. On rape by German soldiers, see Mühlhäuser, *Eroberungen*, 140.


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