

CHAPTER 3

BERLIN IN THE THIRD REICH

In contrast to the prototypical flaneur of the Weimar era who had regarded urban streets as mysterious texts to be deciphered, the National Socialists viewed them as arenas for imposing political ideology. After lining them with gigantic flags and banners, they populated them with aggressively marching SA and SS men. These “soldiers of Hitler,” dressed in brown uniforms complemented by swastika armbands, stifled the natural sounds of street life with “Sieg Heil” roars and their own sound of music: battle songs such as the particularly popular one about heads rolling and Jews howling (*Köpfe rollen, Juden heulen*). Imbued with Hitler’s incessantly repeated message “Ein Volk, ein Reich, ein Führer“, the marchers propagated Germany’s mission to carry out the will of Hitler, who not only represented the nation but was its personification. Treating the streets as parade grounds, they paraded their unity, strength, and sense of purpose (“heute Deutschland, morgen die ganze Welt”). Compared to Hitler’s purpose-driven soldiers, the purposeless flaneur, haphazardly lingering over attractions of the street—window displays, traffic, advertisements, faces—looked like a suspicious loiterer. He could not help but feel personally addressed as the streets resounded with the aggressive Nazi battle cry “Straße frei!”.

And that is precisely what Berliners did on the first evening of Hitler’s chancellorship (January 30th, 1933): they cleared the streets to make room for the SA and the SS, who marched through the Brandenburg Gate before heading to the Wilhelmstraße (B,5), the government district soon to be turned into the center of Nazi power. But, rather than the Wilhelmstraße, it is the Brandenburg Gate (B,5) that is associated with the start of the Nazi era, just as Joseph Goebbels, the organizer of the parade had intended. The “brown hordes” entering the center of Berlin through the Brandenburg Gate signified the Nazi-takeover of Berlin, much as Napoleon and his troops marching into Berlin in 1806 through the Brandenburg Gate—after their victory over the Prussian army in the Battle of Jena-Auerstedt—had represented the French takeover. Due to its symbolic import for the beginning of the Third Reich, we will thus first convene at the Brandenburg Gate. (Please refer to the map preceding chapter 2). Reflecting on the triumphant seven-hour Nazi parade, we need to remember that Goebbels—the future Minister of Enlightenment and Propaganda—had started it late in the evening so that the thousands of marchers could carry torches, a fail-safe ploy to mesmerize spectators. Like so much that later became representative of the Nazi government, the duration, dimensions, and aura of the superbly organized parade exceeded all normal parameters in order to overwhelm and to arouse strong emotions at the expense of reason.

The Brandenburg Gate is a suitable setting for recalling how quickly and radically Hitler changed Germany in his first five months as chancellor. On the day after the parade, he convinced President Hindenburg to disband the Reichstag (B,4/5) and to call for new elections on March 5th (meant to increase the number of Nazi representatives in the Reichstag to a majority). Losing no time drumming up support, Hitler held the first of his many radio addresses on February 1st. In apocalyptic terms, he stressed that the cultural decline of Germany could be halted only by eliminating the Communist Party. Instead of curtailing the SA and SS street terror against communists (and to a lesser extent against Social Democrats) that ensued in the wake of the speech, Nazi Cabinet member Hermann Göring, in charge of the Prussian police system, fueled it by replacing thousands of policemen with the SS and the SA. The Reichstag fire of Feb. 27th, which the Nazis attributed to the communists, was used as an excuse to accomplish the rest: to limit civil liberties and to expel the communists from the Reichstag. Yet, on March 5th the Nazis received only 34% of the Berlin vote. Even on the national level they managed a majority only by allying themselves with the conservative Zentrum Party. Still, by eliminating the communist opposition, Hitler attained the total control he had wanted: the Reichstag voted for the *Ermächtigungsgesetz*. It granted Hitler the power to pass and implement

laws without the approval of the Reichstag. Soon the National Socialists were the only legal party left. In the inexorable march toward *Gleichschaltung*—the synchronization of all institutions, organizations—indeed, of speech and thought—Hitler was helped even by the German universities and their students, as the May 10th countrywide book burnings underscored.

Now heading to the Opernplatz (B,6), the site of Berlin's infamous book burnings, we will walk on the left side of the avenue Unter den Linden (B,6) until we come to the statues of the erudite Humboldt brothers, the one a famous scientist and explorer, the other a linguist, ambassador, and head of Prussia's Ministry of Education. These statues have flanked the main entrance to the Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität since 1883 (B,6). Because they face the opera square (directly across the street from them), the brothers were forced to watch, so to speak, as over 20,000 books were thrown into a fire. Moreover, under the motto "Against the un-German Spirit," the book burnings were initiated and carried out by students of the university they had once infused with the spirit of critical inquiry. By the time Goebbels gave his midnight speech, the hundreds of enthusiastic bystanders were in a frenzy. But, they grasped its main message: the outer purification represented by the book burnings was to be followed by inner purification: cleansing from intellectualism and "Jewish Bolshevism." The old era, in other words, was to be replaced by cultural renewal based solely on the "true German spirit."

Hitler, who believed that the "true German spirit" could best be reflected in architecture, was convinced that cultural renewal entailed new architecture. From the opera plaza we can easily walk to the Werderscher Markt, the location of the Reichsbank (A/B,6), the first Nazi government structure built (now, with a modern extension, it is the Federal Foreign Office). Hitler himself chose the architect. It is of course a huge building, for Hitler believed that massive buildings expressed the healthy self-confidence of a nation. Moreover, since Hitler regarded clarity as the most characteristic trait of Germans, buildings needed to express clarity. In practice, this meant that they were devoid of excessive decorative elements. Thus the Reichsbank, like most other Hitler-sanctioned buildings, has a very stark façade that is by no means softened by its four extensive rows of identically sized windows with deep frames. To the contrary—the shallow windows make the building seem like an impenetrable fortress. Our next stop, Göring's Air Ministry, spans an entire block of the Wilhelmstraße and continues into the Leipziger Straße. Several of the Air Ministry's Prussian eagles—the eagle as ubiquitous in and on Nazi buildings as the swastikas—can be viewed on the website titled Third Reich Ruins.

Architecture consists of words made into stone, Hitler liked to say. It expresses a nation's people just as its people express themselves in architecture. In Germany, both were to evoke adjectives such as the following: firm, solid, orderly, harmonious, clear, stable, dependable, and healthy. When, in addition, both reflect a common will rather than divisive individualism, they become bold, beautiful, and powerful. These are the qualities Hitler also wanted to express in his redesigned, monumental Olympic Stadium (not on map, in Charlottenburg), our next stop. Although the website of the Olympia Stadium offers a large array of photos—these enabling us to be stationary flaneurs whose eyes do the walking—it is still worthwhile to experience the stadium in person, for this is where Hitler convinced the world (at the Summer Olympic Games of 1936) not only that all was well in Germany but that Germany was beyond reproach. There is much that is impressive at the stadium: its hand textured slabs of natural stone, the shell limestone on its pillars, the 42-kilometer-length of all its benches combined (the length of classical marathons), the huge parade grounds added to the sports field, and the fire dish on the Altar above the tunnel where the Olympic fire burned. The last of these reminds us that the "tradition" of the Olympic Torch Relay was initiated by director Leni Riefenstahl for the Berlin Olympic Games—specifically, for her technically and aesthetically astounding film *Olympia* (completed in 1938). Riefenstahl's joining of the Greek Olympia with Berlin was applauded by Hitler, for it matched his own intentions of linking Berlin to a Greek heritage. Hitler retained,

however, one major objection to the Olympic stadium and its grounds: like the Brandenburg Gate and the Reichstag, they were too small for him.

In 1939, however, Hitler's megalomaniac dreams were nearly fulfilled with the new Reich Chancellery that Albert Speer, his main architect, designed for him, extending the old chancellery on the Wilhelmstraße to a large part of the Voßstrasse (B,5). Particularly its long (approximately two city blocks) marble gallery and its slippery floor pleased him. By the time foreign dignitaries slid through it on the way to his office (there was no other way to reach it), they were thoroughly awed and intimidated. Yet Hitler's most megalomaniac architectural plans were never realized: his buildings for Germania, the capital of the world into which he intended to turn Berlin. Its great hall alone, to be built at one end of the north/south axis he was planning (planned for B,4/5), was to accommodate up to 250,000 people. But, since Hitler did largely complete his projected east/west axis, its main site will be our last stop of the day. From the Olympic Stadium we will proceed to the Grosser Stern (B,3) on the Charlottenburger Chaussee (B,3/4). This is to be the site of the Siegessäule (with the goddess Victoria on its top), whose weight and height increased on Hitler's orders after he had it transplanted from the Königsplatz in front of the Reichstag (B,4/5). It is fitting that we will reach this site only in the evening, for then the street lamps, designed by Albert Speer, will "illuminate" our way.

The final outcome of Nazi megalomania was Auschwitz. But the extermination of Jews and the persecution of others considered "impure" and un-German and therefore ill-suited for Germania (for example, gypsies and homosexuals) did not occur overnight. In particular, the intended elimination of Jews was predicated on a meticulously planned process of several stages, best expressed by the wording crafted in Berlin-Schöneberg to describe what the Holocaust Memorial in its Bayerisches Viertel crystallizes: "marginalization, deprivation of rights, expulsion, deportation, and murder." Despite the exponential increase of ordinances against Jews—for example, their exclusion from sports groups (1933), literary activities (1935), opening veterinary clinics (1936), receiving academic degrees (1937), many Jews did not want to face the extent of the persecution against them. This changed on November 9, 1938, when the windows of at least 7,500 Jewish stores in the German Reich were smashed (merchandise was plundered or destroyed) and when most synagogues were set on fire.

We will thus start our second day with visits to two of the major synagogue sites in Third Reich Berlin—first to the one on the Fasanenstraße in Berlin-Charlottenburg, where the synagogue (B/C,1) burned down and then to the New Synagogue on the Oranienburger Straße in Berlin-Mitte (A,5). Because a brave police officer held SS men at bay with a pistol while the firemen he had called extinguished the budding fire, it was one of the few not to burn down. Our next stop is close by: No. 26 of the Große Hamburgerstraße (A,6), one of the largest assembly sites for the mass deportations of Jews that started in October 1941 and largely ended by May 1943, when Berlin was proclaimed *judenfrei*. Five minutes away, at Rosenthaler Straße No. 12 (A, 6/7), we will walk through the Blindenwerkstatt Otto Weidt, a refuge not only for blind Jews (please see this chapter's discussion on Inge Deutschkron). Our next stop, also nearby, is the Rosenstraße (A,6/7), the site of Germany's only public protest against the deportations (early 1943). Surprisingly, it succeeded: the hundreds of "Aryan" women who protested the likely deportations of their Jewish husbands did get them back.

None of the above places in Berlin-Mitte is far from the Wilhelmstraße area and its numerous perpetrator sites, such as the Gestapo building on the Prinz-Albrecht Straße (B,5) and next to it the building that housed the SS leadership. Today's Topography of Terror exhibit at this location, which treats the Third Reich's perpetrator crimes with painstaking detail through photos and texts, merits a visit in Berlin. This chapter's final stop will, however, be a building less well-known to the general public: the Jewish Hospital in Berlin-Wedding (not on map, north of A,4/5), the only Jewish institution in Germany not shut down during the Nazi era (the

reason for this remains a mystery). Its checkered Third Reich past is almost as astonishing. From October 1941, when the mass deportations began, the Jewish hospital received a continuous stream of new patients: people who had tried to commit suicide and those too ill to be deported. Both groups had to be healed for their deportation and extermination! Once the influx of patients diminished, the hospital turned into an assembly site for the deportations of the doctors—except for those needed to treat Aryans injured in bombing raids. To supervise deportations the Gestapo moved into the hospital. Despite their presence, approximately 800 Jews went into hiding in the hospital and on its grounds. In sum, the hospital was an unruly hybrid site defying easy categorization. Yet precisely its contradictory histories have turned it into the kind of multilayered public site that is most representative of Berlin.

LION FEUCHTWANGER, *DIE GESCHWISTER OPPERMANN* (1933)

Soon after publishing *Erfolg* (1930), the first novel of his *Waiting Room Trilogy*, Feuchtwanger told a journalist that Hitler's rise to power would mean that Berlin was full of future exiles. Yet Feuchtwanger did not believe in the likelihood of his own exile. This became apparent in the kind of proverbial action that speaks louder than words: not long afterward, he and his wife Marta bought a villa in Berlin's decidedly upscale Grunewald area. Moreover, in November 1932, upon arriving in the United States for a lecture tour, Feuchtwanger confidently asserted that "Hitler is over."

But Hitler was not "over"; instead, it was Feuchtwanger's life in Berlin—for that matter, in Germany—that was over. Warned not to return to Germany when Hitler became its chancellor (January 30, 1933), Feuchtwanger went to southern France to "wait and see" how everything would develop. As he was waiting, the SA destroyed Feuchtwanger's unfinished manuscripts and most of his cherished library of 10,000 books. His own publications were confiscated from bookstores and libraries for the May 1933 book burnings. For sadistic good measure, his doctoral degree and German citizenship were revoked in the summer.

Resolved to inform both the suspecting and the unsuspecting of the brutal Nazi persecution of Jews—moreover, as quickly as possible—Feuchtwanger wrote *Die Geschwister Oppermann* (1933), the second work of his *Waiting Room Trilogy* (in 1940, the novel *Exil* completed it). The weaknesses of the novel—among them its stylistic imperfections and haphazard shifts between fictional development and documentary news reporting—are largely attributable to the speed with which Feuchtwanger worked (he completed it in September 1933). Yet the feverish pace of his writing contributed, at least in part, to the immediacy he brought to the events occurring in Germany from November 1932 to the summer of 1933. For the thousands of readers in many languages, the novel became an unqualified page turner.

Divided into three sections—"Yesterday," "Today," "Tomorrow"—*Die Geschwister Oppermann* is the first exile novel to expose the barbaric repercussions of National Socialism's anti-Semitic ideology. Its descriptions of torture in concentration camps are laser-sharp predictions of what was to occur and its analyses of the constricting Nazi mentality far ahead of the times. At a stage when most foreign governments, as well as German Jews, were still downplaying the potential harm of government sponsored anti-Semitism, Feuchtwanger shows that the hope for appeasement is nothing more than a pipedream.

There are four Oppermann siblings: Gustav (the oldest), an independent scholar; Martin, head of the family's furniture firm; Edgar, a renowned professor and surgeon; Klara, a traditional wife and mother, married to Jacques Lavendel, an East European Jew with American citizenship also involved in the business activities of the Oppermann firm. Unmarried, Gustav has no children. The other three Oppermann siblings each have one child: Berthold, Martin's

son, excels in school; Ruth, Edgar's headstrong daughter, is a firm Zionist and Heinrich, Klara's son, an outstanding, popular football player. Though the novel's various narrative strands give all Oppermanns their due, Gustav is the main protagonist. Extracted from the beginning of the novel, the first excerpt in *Berliner Spaziergänge* focuses on him, the second on Martin. While these selections comprise only small portions of the ample novel, they are important ones, for they resolutely situate the Oppermanns and their firm—both spatially and conceptually—in the context of Berlin and of Germany.

In keeping with the many ways Feuchtwanger assigns Gustav his own characteristics and details from his own life, he places Gustav in the house at the edge of the Grunewald forest that used to be his own. After waking up in the early morning hours of his fiftieth birthday, Gustav surveys his house and from its balcony his extensive forested property, thereby experiencing the same contentment as always. He feels that everything—each piece of his house, each tree, the small lake, and the ungravelled street—is a part of him. Though firmly anchored in his bucolic setting, he also feels connected to urban Berlin, for the Gedächtniskirche, the icon of western Berlin, is only five kilometers away. His self-confidence rooted in his surroundings, Gustav is fortunate in other aspects: he enjoys professional respect and does not lack money; he has warm ties to the other members of his family, close friends, and, yes—as many women as he wants, including one with whom he has a deeper relationship. Yet, Gustav is not in a truly good mood on his fiftieth birthday. Something—he doesn't know what—is gnawing at him. Quite likely, however, this something is connected to Germany's political situation, which he ignores.

The segment introducing Martin in *Berliner Spaziergänge* also emphasizes spatial rootedness. The headquarters of the Oppermann furniture firm are located on the Gertraudenstraße (Gertraudenstraße on the map) in the center of Alt-Cölln, the twin town of Alt-Berlin in the Middle Ages. The Oppermann firm is therefore intimately connected with Berlin's oldest history and traditions. In a section not included in *Berliner Spaziergänge*, Feuchtwanger stresses, in addition, that Immanuel Oppermann (the grandfather of the siblings and founder of the firm) had contributed many supplies to the Prussian army and, due to his immense popularity with Berliners, had strongly furthered the assimilation of Jews in Germany.

As highlighted in the second excerpt in *Berliner Spaziergänge*, by 1932, the Oppermann firm had expanded substantially, first by adding branches in Berlin-Steglitz and on the Potsdamer Straße (this street spans the districts Berlin-Schoeneberg and Berlin-Mitte), then in another part of Berlin, and later in five outlying locations. The name Oppermann, a household word in Berlin, came to be recognized even in the most remote areas of Germany. All over the country, Germans ate meals from Oppermann tables and slept in Oppermann beds. Yet, with the rise of fascism, it was precisely the name Oppermann—associated with a Jewish firm—that had to be sacrificed if the firm hoped to remain productive. Not wishing to face this truth, the Oppermanns delayed merging their firm with that of the non-Jewish Wels as long as possible—too long, they find out. The Oppermanns do not heed warning signals even with Berthold, who commits suicide rather than follow their advice to apologize for the rational, humanistic paper he had presented on a historical figure that his Nazi teacher, along with other National Socialists, had elevated into a national hero meant to be gushingly admired.

By the end of the novel, the Oppermann firm has disappeared. No longer spatially anchored in their *Heimat* (homeland), not allowed to practice their professions, and forbidden to consider themselves German, the Oppermanns disperse, immigrating to various countries (England, France, Palestine, and Switzerland). Once the Lessing scholar Gustav fully acknowledges the horrors occurring in Germany, he returns to Germany—though not to Berlin—under an alias and with a forged passport. In the southern part of Germany, he records attitudes toward the Nazi regime. After publicly voicing his opinions, he is thrown into a concentration camp.

Though influential friends eventually secure his release, he soon dies in a Swiss hospital from the concentration camp's repercussions on his health. A friend carries out his dying request: to hand over the notes he had taken in southern Germany to his nephew Heinrich in Switzerland.

At first, Heinrich seems a poor choice. After a single act of resistance, which had led nowhere, Heinrich no longer believes in its value. But, like Feuchtwanger a fervent believer in the power of the written word, Gustav is convinced that the Talmudic saying on the postcard sent with the notes would change Heinrich's mind and heart: "We are called to labor on our task, but not destined to complete it." When Gustav crosses out his own name on the postcard, replacing it with Heinrich's, it becomes clear that this is the same postcard Gustav had once sent to himself and that its Talmudic saying had served as the steadfast beacon of hope in his own unmoored life.

ERICH KÄSTNER, SCHWIERIGKEITEN, EIN HELD ZU SEIN (1966)

Unlike most other famous or reasonably well-known anti-Nazi authors living in Germany at the outset of 1933, Erich Kästner refused to emigrate. Even the May 1933 book burnings did not change his mind (he was one of a small group of "dangerous" authors mentioned by name). Yet, despite remaining in Germany, Kästner did not conform to the ideological demands of the Third Reich. Though his writings were banned, he was allowed to publish abroad and to write under various pseudonyms until 1943. In 1942, Propaganda Minister Goebbels even commissioned him—under a pseudonym—to write the script for *Münchhausen*, the fantasy film produced for the UFA film studio's 25th anniversary. When Hitler found out, however, that it was Kästner who had provided the script for the Third Reich's most lavish showcase production, he was outraged. After that, Kästner was no longer allowed to write.

Why, then, did Kästner stay, particularly when he could have remained abroad on one of his several trips to his publisher in Switzerland? This was the question he was asked, again and again, after the war—most frequently by the American occupying forces. As Kästner admits in a January 1946 article, not all American interrogators believed the answer he always gave: during especially bad times, it is the duty of writers to remain in their homeland in order to provide written testimony in the future.

Where, then, is Kästner's grand testimony, some not so well-meaning emigrants and exiled authors wanted to know. The fact that he did not produce a long, inclusive account, Kästner responded, is by no means proof that he had not wanted to provide it. His intent had been to write a novel, a panorama of the entire period. But, he had simply been incapable of writing it and would not be able to produce it in the future either. In an article entitled "Aus der Perspektive einer denkenden Ameise" (1945), Kästner concludes that the Third Reich does not lend itself to a novel, neither to a "comédie humaine" nor a "comédie inhumaine" (the reference is to Honoré de Balzac's *La Comédie humaine*, a magnum opus of approximately 100 interlinked works on 19th century French society). The Third Reich's continuously swelling lists of millions of victims and perpetrators and its floods of statistics on ever more atrocities cannot be compressed into a novel or into the framework of any other literary form. Conceding that segments of the Third Reich can be cast into various literary genres, Kästner nonetheless fears that representation difficulties can arise even then, for—as the Biblical Lot's wife has shown—it is difficult to look back without becoming paralyzed.

Though unable to write the sweeping novel of the Nazi era that he had envisioned, Kästner by no means abdicated what he continued to perceive as his responsibility: to provide testimony. He limited himself to smaller forms, writing short articles and giving talks on what he had

personally experienced. *Berliner Spaziergänge* excerpts passages from one of these: the speech he gave in Hamburg at the 1958 PEN-Kongress (a writer's conference), held to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Nazi book burnings. Kästner embeds the Berlin book burnings in the context of the entire Nazi era, which was also characterized by fire. He stresses that the Third Reich began and concluded with fire, as two alternate starting and end points illustrate: the Reichstag fire (February 1933) and the blazing Reich Chancellery (April 1945); the burning torches (of the marchers at the Brandenburg Gate on January 30th) and the removal of Hitler by fire (a reference to the burning of Hitler's corpse after he committed suicide).

Considering fire as the devil's métier, Kästner associates a "devil" with the book burnings: Joseph Goebbels, Minister of Enlightenment and Propaganda. In Kästner's view, even Goebbels's appearance betrays him as the devil (like many devils in folklore, Goebbels walked with a limp). Still, however suited Goebbels may have been for the role of the devil, Kästner mistakenly attributes the well-organized book burnings to him. They were actually initiated and carried out by a Nazi student organization (Deutscher Studentenbund). At the Berlin book burnings, Goebbels did, however, hold an incendiary midnight speech. It stressed that Germans were no longer willing to tolerate un-German, cosmopolitan, individualistic thinking. The removal of impure books, Goebbels shouted, signified cleansing the noble German soul of the disfiguring impurities that had been forced into it by outsiders. Of the "outsiders" whose books were burned, Kästner was the only one present at the book burning.

In sections of the speech not included in *Berliner Spaziergänge*, Kästner continues to assail the perfidious Goebbels for his supposed instigation of the book burnings. He is particularly appalled because of Goebbels's doctorate and his background in literature studies with Professor Friedrich Gundolf, the foremost German literary scholar of Goebbels's university years (Gundolf happened to be Jewish). How could Goebbels have ordained the murder of the German mind that the book burnings represented? As further proof that the German mind had indeed been "murdered," Kästner turns to Martin Heidegger, considered by many the most brilliant German philosopher of the 20th century. He focuses on Heidegger's infamous first speech during his one-year as rector of the University of Freiburg—the speech in which Heidegger told students to discard ideas as guiding principles in favor of following the *Führer*. Though not mentioning them by name, Kästner uses both Goebbels and Heidegger, as well as their university connections, to deride what was for him one of the most outrageous aspects of the Berlin book burnings: that they took place on the plaza opposite the university, supposedly the bastion of knowledge, and that students—with their backs to the university and the statues of the learned Humboldt brothers—were the ones who stood guard at the book burnings, assuring that they were carried out smoothly. For him, this Berlin site remains irreparably sullied.

Kästner is troubled by yet another matter: did he too abet the crimes against humanism by not protesting publicly at the Berlin book burning? Reluctantly he confesses that he does not have the mettle of a hero. He wants to convey this, Kästner stresses to his fellow writers at the PEN-conference, because it is impossible to predict who will be capable of the necessary courage when unexpectedly confronted with a test of this courage. Yet this truth should by no means be used to excuse inaction or the abdication of responsibility in the present and the future, for no one—no nation and no individual—can count on others materializing as heroes in moments of need.

RUTH ANDREAS-FRIEDRICH, *DER SCHATTENMANN* (1947)

In 1946, Ruth Andreas-Friedrich's Berlin diary, starting with September 1938 and ending with April 28th 1945, was published in the U.S. under the title *Berlin Underground, 1938--1945*. But, in 1946, when the horrific images from the liberated concentration camps were still fresh in American minds and when the Western Allies were concerned with instilling a sense of collective guilt in Germans as a precondition for reeducating them to collective responsibility, Andreas-Friedrich's main concerns were not welcome.

The intent of *Berlin Underground* was to show that not all Germans who had remained in the Third Reich were guilty—moreover, that the Jews still alive in Germany at the end of WWII, regardless of how limited their numbers, were alive only because of the Germans who had helped them, generally at high risk to their own lives. Conversely, Andreas-Friedrich points out, blame for the deaths of many Jewish Germans needs to be shared by countries that appeased Hitler far too long and by those who rejected Jewish asylum seekers even after the November 1938 pogroms unequivocally demonstrated how brutally they were being persecuted in Germany. Still, Andreas-Friedrich by no means wishes to whitewash German crimes, for she knows all too well that Germans did not rid themselves of Hitler and National Socialism on their own. By disseminating instances of courageous humanitarian deeds, she merely hopes to raise estimation of Germans “a tiny bit.”

As her diary amply shows, Andreas-Friedrich (a journalist), the conductor Leo Borchard (her “partner for life”), the medical doctor Walter Seitz and approximately eight of their friends—all professionals committed to humanist principles—did indeed help in countless ways. Though they came to be known as the resistance organization “Onkel Emil” (their code for warnings), they never constituted an official group. Andreas-Friedrich stresses that their work was “Einzelarbeit” (the work of individuals). But the vast majority of Germans did not want to know about Germans who had helped extensively without having been discovered. Thus it is not surprising that *Der Schattenmann* was largely ignored in 1947, the year of its German publication. It did, however, garner a large readership when it was republished in 1983 to coincide with the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the start of the Nazi era. At that time it was acclaimed as an invaluable historical source, for it is the only published German diary written during the Nazi era (rather than a diary constructed afterward) by a non-Jewish German citizen who had remained in Germany.

At the outset, Andreas-Friedrich states that her book is not meant to be a literary work but “the truth.” Her understanding of “the truth” is capacious. She does not equate it with rendering accurate facts. To convey an authentic sense of the Nazi era, she retains perceptions based on the innuendos and rumors, however inaccurate or misleading they may have been, that were the hallmark of the twelve years in which Germans were completely cut off from reliable information. The aliases she gave her friends, invented to protect them in case the Nazis discovered the diary, also remain unchanged (for example, her partner Leo Borchard, the conductor of the Berlin Philharmonic in the immediate postwar period, appears as Andrik). Still, because Andreas-Friedrich often jotted down only phrases, the highly polished writing in her published diary resulted from revisions and amplifications.

It is, moreover, likely that the first of the three excerpts from *Der Schattenmann* included in *Berliner Spaziergänge* is a postwar addition to the diary. Dated September 27, 1938, it precedes the so-called *Reichskristallnacht* of November 9th, which—according to Andreas-Friedrich—had prompted her to start writing. But, opening the diary with this September entry seems wise, for it situates her in Berlin's architecturally determined political topography. After work, when she and a friend stroll to the center of Berlin, they encounter only tense faces in “the land of smiles”

(a Goebbels-phrase). Reaching the Wilhelmstraße, the seat of Nazi power, they feel the air becoming harsh and prickly. At the plaza in front of the (old) Chancellery, they join a crowd of approximately 200 people—by Berlin crowd standards, a paltry number. They cannot possibly be tourists from the provinces, for none of them seems elated at the prospect of seeing Hitler on the balcony that had been added to the Chancellery in 1935 because Hitler preferred to communicate with the masses from a balcony. He could then best intoxicate himself with the raised, enraptured faces and *Heil Hitler*-arms below him. This time, though, is different—despite the customary, endless stream of stiff soldiers rigidly marching down the Wilhelmstraße. Remaining eerily quiet, the ill-humored Berlin crowd barely acknowledges Hitler when he appears on his balcony. Still, Andreas-Friedrich is not proud of her own public resistance to Hitler at this event, for it is merely passive resistance.

In many episodes of the diary, Andreas-Friedrich draws comfort from the anti-Hitler solidarity she feels among herself and many strangers. One of these is depicted in the next excerpt of *Berliner Spaziergänge*. Boarding a bus to Berlin-Mitte, where her publishing firm is located, she is still deeply distressed at the open hatred displayed on November 10th, the morning after the main pogrom night, toward the Jewish lawyer Dr. Weißman, who had sought refuge in her small semi-apartment. But, as the bus moves through Berlin-Charlottenburg's devastated streets—shards of glass from Jewish storefronts and mutilated merchandise scattered all over them—the passengers in the bus seem to be just as ashamed as she is. One time, though, she must have miscalculated the degree of like-mindedness among others: she was called to the Gestapo, who wanted to hold her accountable for a disparaging statement she had made about Hitler in a crowd setting. This was, however, her only direct brush with Nazi authorities.

Our last excerpt underlines the severely inhospitable conditions under which Andreas-Friedrich and thousands of others did their best to help persecuted Jewish Germans. Two examples of concrete assistance are mentioned: securing bread stamps for gravely starving Jews and providing lodging. Both forms of help were very difficult. In the second half of the Nazi era, food stamps were given only to those with "Aryan" identification cards. Providing lodging was difficult for another reason: all too many heeded the constant exhortations to denounce those who harbored Jews. Thus Jews had to be passed from one lodging to another (on the average, a single Jew needed approximately thirty helpers in order to survive).

The "Uncle Emil" group also produced many forged passports and identity cards. Again and again, they provided clothing, soap, and desperately needed medicine. They helped those allowed to emigrate with packing their belongings, took care of their money matters, and regularly visited the old or ailing relatives they had to leave behind. Once Andreas-Friedrich and Borchard even went to Paris, loaded down with German sausages and other kinds of "typical German food" high on the wish list of Jewish exiles! Not once did they get caught—not when disseminating a leaflet of the resistance fighters Sophie and Hans Scholl after the two were executed and not during the now famous "Nein-Aktion." Two weeks before the war ended, they protested the senseless order Hitler had given to all German combatants: to fight until they died. In the middle of the night, covering each of Berlin's districts, they painted so many *Neins* on facades of key buildings that only a large army of city workers was able to remove them. In contrast to the time when she had only "thought" her *Nein*, Andreas-Friedrich felt elated after her action-packed *Nein*. Significantly, she had even wanted to title her book *Nein*.

For the 750th anniversary of Berlin, the City of Berlin placed a plaque honoring Andreas-Friedrich and Borchard at the outside entrance to Hühnensteig 6 in Berlin-Steglitz, the building where they had lived and conducted so many clandestine activities. It is not far from Am Fichtenberg 10, the location of the Ruth-Andreas-Friedrich-Park. In 2005—the 60th anniversary of the end of WWII—a *taz*-newspaper series highlighted the Andreas-Friedrich/Borchard

building as one of its ten sites of change. In the same year, the diametrically different newspapers *taz* and *Die Welt* regularly printed excerpts from Andreas-Friedrich's diary—in fact, it was the diary most often quoted that year.

INGE DEUTSCHKRON, ICH TRUG DEN GELBEN STERN (1978)

Because she needed to distance herself from her experiences—both spatially and temporally—Inge Deutschkron wrote her autobiographical account of the Nazi era—*Ich trug den gelben Stern* (*Outcast. A Jewish Girl in wartime Berlin*)—in Israel, where she had become a citizen in 1966, and published it in 1978, more than 30 years later than originally intended. Yet its vivid, unpretentious writing and remarkably informative depiction of the Nazi era convey the impression that she had forgotten nothing.

Deutschkron starts her reminiscences with the first episode that marred her happy childhood: suddenly her parents, informing her for the first time that she was Jewish, no longer allow her to play with other children in her neighborhood. The ten-year old Inge, raised in a non-religious, Socialist household in a working class neighborhood of Prenzlauer Berg, does not know what the word “Jewish” means but resents its negative implication for her own life. By contrast, she has strong political convictions. They match those of her parents, but she developed them based on color preferences. She is drawn to the red flags of the communists but more so to the black-red-gold flags of the Social Democrats. Predictably perhaps, she reacts negatively to brown, the color of the uniforms worn by the National Socialists who either march down the main streets in rigidly orchestrated columns or initiate violent street battles with the communists. The peaceful side street where she lives (Hufelandstraße) provides the needed refuge from them. But, when a stone is thrown at an SPD poster displayed on the window of the family apartment—on March 5th, 1933, the date of the first and last free elections in Nazi Germany—she senses that the violence is about to enter her own life. How right she was became evident on April 1st, 1933, when Berliners boycotted Jewish stores. By then, the streets had been taken over spatially by the marching men in their signature brown uniforms and acoustically with their sinister songs, such as the one about Jewish blood sprouting from (Aryan) knives. From this point forward, the city streets are no longer sources of attractions but sites of both manifest and lurking dangers.

Soon the Deutschkron family moves to an area of Berlin perceived as safer territory: the Uhlandstraße in Berlin-Charlottenburg. But there too they feel the repercussions of national ideology—first directed mainly against political opponents of the Nazis (communists and Social Democrats) and then against the so-called racially impure Jews. To support his family, Inge's father, a dismissed teacher, repeatedly learns new occupations for which he has no talent, and Inge, frequently weighed down by courses toward which she has no inclination, is driven from school to school. With the closing of the last Jewish school, there are none left for her to attend. Yet, despite the escalating regulations constricting their lives, the Deutschkrons regularly encounter Nazi opponents, among them the numerous grocery store owners who provided Jews with more than the allowed rations of food during and after the 1938 November pogroms. In Deutschkron's view, they kept much of Berlin's Jewish population alive.

There were many ways to express solidarity, Deutschkron stresses. The police officer who measures her left ear to determine whether she was Jewish clearly finds his task even more distasteful than she does (supposedly Jews were recognizable by the shape of their left ears). Since non-Jewish friends warn him in time, Inge's father evades arrest during the November pogroms and therefore also one of the three German concentration camps to which Jewish men less lucky than he were taken at that time (Buchenwald, Dachau, and Sachsenhausen). Still, the Nazis continue to harass him, a fact underlined when the Gestapo demands that he adopt the

last name of one of his grandmothers, since no Jew was entitled to have the word “Deutsch” in his name. Before there was time to officially replace “Deutschkron” with “Besser” (the irony of the new name was lost on the Gestapo), Inge’s father immigrated to England (April 1939). Inge and her mother were to join him in the fall, a plan thwarted by the start of WWII in September 1939.

The following years in Berlin were of course harrowing for Inge and her mother. They move from lodging to lodging (in the Charlottenburg, Schöneberg, and Tiergarten districts) until they too end up in the cramped quarters of the infamous *Jüdisches Haus*, Bamberger Straße 22, in Berlin-Schöneberg—a lodging from which deportations after October 1941 were only a matter of time. A major part of their lives consists of following ordinances designed to marginalize Jews. They go through the cumbersome procedures to adopt the name Sara as their middle name (for Jewish men, the required name was Israel), submit a list of everything they owned to city authorities, relinquish their telephone and radio, and do not stray into urban areas forbidden to them (much of the government district). The list could go on and on, and in 1942 and 1943 it did go on and on: Jews can use public transportation only to and from work; they are allowed to go shopping only between 4:00 and 5:00 P.M.; they are barred from buying soap, cakes, books, eggs, meat, pets, and fresh milk. Of all the marginalizing directives, the worst was the one commanding all Jews, starting with age six, to wear a yellow star—the size of the palm of one’s hand—on their exterior clothing at all times, even in their homes. By distinctly dividing the population into Jews and non-Jews, the yellow star greatly increased Jewish isolation and fears. The heightened fear was justified. One month after the wearing of the yellow star became law (September 1941), the deportations started. They soon extended to the last of Inge’s Berlin relatives. The section of the diary describing their expulsion from Berlin—carried out for the Gestapo by Jews with yellow stars—is the first of the two Deutschkron-excerpts in *Berliner Spaziergänge*. Implicitly, Inge and her mother already sense the worst that is to come, even though they feign incredulity when they first hear about the gas chambers as they clandestinely listen to a BBC program in November 1941. Yet soon afterward they decide to go underground. In essence this meant that they would escape from the *Jüdisches Haus* and would not wear a yellow star when moving about in Berlin. To escape recognition, they would, however, avoid public spaces as much as possible.

Fortunately, Inge and her mother do not need to plead for help. For a considerable period, Inge is able to continue her secretarial work for the remarkable Otto Weidt, whose Blindenwerkstatt (workshop of the blind), located at Rosenthaler Straße 39 in Berlin-Mitte, employed mainly the blind, ostensibly to produce brushes needed by the German army but in reality to protect them from Nazi persecution. The last selection from Deutschkron’s diary in *Berliner Spaziergänge* shows how very committed Weidt was to do everything within his power to rescue his employees. With nationalistically-phrased indignation and sophisticated bribery, he secures their release after they had already been taken to Berlin’s largest assembly site for deportations, located at the nearby Große Hamburger Straße. Elsewhere in the diary, Deutschkron writes of Weidt’s subsequent visit to the Auschwitz concentration camp in an attempt to obtain the release of a deported, former employee.

Despite several setbacks, luck prevails with housing as well. Though Inge and her mother have to move from their first hiding place because of suspicious neighbors, there are always others to take them in—at least until their neighbors too become suspicious. In the last months of the war, they even live in Berlin legally, for they succeed in passing themselves off as refugees from Guben who had lost their papers in their last minute flight from the advancing Russians.

Again living in Berlin (since 2001), Deutschkron has done much to shape its remembrance culture. She tirelessly visits schools, publishes books and articles, and gives talks. She was the driving force behind the Museum Blindenwerkstatt Otto Weidt, which opened to the public in

2006 at exactly the same location where Otto Weidt's workshop was during the Nazi era. As a consultant, Deutschkron participated actively in the Technical University of Berlin's project on *Stille Helden* (Silent Heroes), which resulted, in November 2008, in the first German memorial to honor the silent rescuers of the Nazi era. Documenting their life stories and those of the people they helped, it attempts to untangle garbled versions of personal and national history. Fittingly, it is housed in the Otto Weidt Museum.

TRAUDL JUNGE, BIS ZUR LETZTEN STUNDE (2002)

Though Traudl Junge wrote her memoir of her experiences in Hitler's inner circle in 1947, it languished in a drawer until she read Melissa Müller's 1998 biography on Anne Frank (troubled about her naiveté and manipulability in the past, Junge voraciously read publications about the Nazi era). On a whim, she sent Müller her own manuscript. Immediately recognizing its value, Müller contacted the filmmaker André Heller, who subsequently interviewed Junge for more than ten hours. This resulted in the documentary *Im toten Winkel*, which garnered high praise when it premiered at the 2002 Berlinale (Berlin's annual film festival), more or less in tandem with the publication *Bis zur letzten Stunde*. In addition to Junge's memoir and her own introduction, the book contains two sections written by Müller: the first a biographical account of Junge's youth in the Third Reich, the second, placed at the end, the chronology of Junge's "Schuldverarbeitung" (attempts to come to grips with guilt), dated 2001. The 81-year old Junge died a few hours after the film premiered but not before she told Heller that life was letting go of her now that she has let go of her story and has started to forgive herself.

When Müller meticulously traces Junge's family background and the experiences that might have predisposed her to National Socialism, she discovers a number of important channels through which Nazi ideology may have infected Junge, among them her membership in the Bund deutscher Mädler and in Glaube und Schönheit (belief and beauty)—both NS-organizations, the first for girls, the latter for 18 to 21 year-old women. Taught to believe unconditionally in Germany and its *Führer* and to cultivate a healthy body, mind, and soul in order to serve her nation as effectively as possible, Junge clearly internalized subservient behavior. Not recognizing or even suspecting ideological conditioning, she was oblivious to the darker implications of Nazi aesthetics as reflected in the elaborately staged spectacles that drew her full admiration: "The Night of the Amazons" and the Munich procession celebrating "2000 Years of German Culture." It is thus not surprising to read, at the outset of her memoir, that ideological reasons had nothing to do with her becoming Hitler's secretary. But, her assertion that she obtained the position because of wanting to be a dancer is startling.

Already trained in secretarial skills, Junge received extensive dance instruction in Munich. After passing rigorous dance exams, she moved to Berlin to live with her sister, a dancer at Berlin's Deutsche Tanzbühne. Once in Berlin, Junge merely sorted mail in Hitler's Reich Chancellery (a position arranged by a Nazi acquaintance of her sister) while continuing to dream of a dancing career. When Hitler needed a new secretary, he wanted to select one from the pool of women already working in the Reich Chancellery. Sailing through the first tests, Junge was one of ten invited to compete in the next stage of the hiring process, which took place in East Prussia at the Wolfsschanze (Wolf's Lair), a huge bunker complex that functioned as Hitler's main headquarters between September 1941 and late November 1944. Housed in a luxuriously furnished train at the edge of the complex, the women waited for one month before Hitler called them for the next test. Since this occurred in the middle of the night, Junge was immediately introduced to Hitler's nocturnal habits. To her own surprise, she received the position—in part because she was from Munich (as she writes, she often had to translate "from Bavarian into German"). Strangely, Junge never again refers to her dream of becoming a dancer.

Most of the time, Junge did not need to work much. But she was required to join Hitler at all his meals with his officers and visitors (toward the end of his life, he allowed no one other than the secretaries and his mistress Eva Braun to eat with him). And her presence was also expected at the evening tea sessions. Political discussions were off limits. There were, on the other hand, ample discussions about Blondi, Hitler's dog. Hitler loved to show off Blondi's "singing" talents (when asked to "sing" like the popular film actress Zarah Leander, she would howl in a particularly deep tone). As a whole, Junge provides many vignettes on Hitler and the people around him, but only a minor number is more revealing than those available through other sources. For our purposes, a rather interesting one is a comment that draws attention to Hitler's suppressed flaneur instincts. At one point, he wishes he could take walks on city streets and in department stores without being recognized, and he muses about how pleasant it would be to sit in a café and observe people.

There is, however, no known instance of Hitler succumbing to the temptations of his inner flaneur. Instead, his habits, as Junge amply shows, were predicated on the repetitions antithetical to the life of a flaneur. Without fail, he ate the same unimaginative meals, wore the same style of clothing, insisted that Eva Braun retain the same hairdo, availed himself of the same huffing and puffing physician, and adhered to the same rigid beliefs he had for years. He tried to impose sameness on Berlin as well—architectural sameness. Rather than suffer at the wartime devastations of German cities, Junge notes, Hitler became animated by them. In the midst of the most horrific bombings, he avidly designed new monumental buildings for his "world capital." Still, in the excerpted sections of *Berliner Spaziergänge*—all from the final section of Junge's memoir—the monotony that had come to characterize Junge's life in the vicinity of Hitler no longer prevails. Moving desperately and repeatedly into and outside of Hitler's bunker, she notes the vast differences between the unreal, suspended life on the inside (the fairytale world of the Goebbels children is part of this) and the raging, unstoppable destruction on the outside. Instead of the cavalry officers who had once crossed the Wilhelmsplatz, a symbol of Nazi power in the center of Nazi power, Junge now registers a dead horse. Yet Junge loses her conceptual bearings most when Hitler utters the kind of devastating verdict on Germany that refutes everything he had always professed. At this point of the reading selection, it should be remembered that in the waning years of the Third Reich any defeatist comment on Germany or the war was a crime punishable by death.

Though it is common knowledge that Hitler spent very little time in Berlin after the German defeat in the Battle of Stalingrad (1942-1943), Junge's memoir turns this fact from a level of abstraction into a palpable reality. Page after page, readers experience her in the idyllic setting of Wolf's Lair or in the spectacular one of the Obersalzberg in the Berchtesgaden area of Bavaria. Junge barely sees anything in Berlin other than what she perceives as the frightening labyrinth of the humongous complex containing two huge Reich Chancelleries. Catching glimpses of the street battles when she ventures from Hitler's bunker during the last days of the Third Reich, the young woman who had once hoped to dance on Berlin's stages encounters instead the stage of violence Hitler unleashed over the entire city. She at least faces the devastation. Hitler, however, shields himself from the destruction to the very end. Not once did he look closely at the ruins of any German city—least of all at those of Berlin, the city he had reshaped in ways entirely different from the new architectural forms he was still creating hours before his suicide.

QUESTIONS AND TOPICS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. In Lion Feuchtwanger's *Die Geschwister Oppermann* Gustav Oppermann is a Lessing scholar. Please look up Gotthold Ephraim Lessing. Also inform yourself about his drama *Nathan der Weise*. Why did Feuchtwanger make Gustav into a Lessing scholar? Do you think the study of Lessing helped him in his life or was it irrelevant?
2. The National Socialist education system was very committed to creating heroes for the young rather than merely good role models. How would you interpret the difference between a hero and a role model? And, why would the Nazis have cared so much about the heroic? Though there is not much information on Hermann der Cherusker, the National Socialists elevated him to a hero. Berthold Oppermann had to give a class presentation on him. After you look up Hermann der Cherusker on two websites, suggest two or three thoughts that the teacher might have wanted to hear.
3. Many Berliners agree that one of the most successful of its numerous memorials is the one dedicated to the May 10, 1933 book burnings. Think a few minutes about the characteristics of a memorial capable of creating consensus. What should such a memorial convey and how? AFTER you have jotted down a couple of conjectures, go to the website <http://www.buecherverbrennung33.de/mahnmal.html>. The actual memorial, designed by the architect Micha Ullman, is at the spot where the fire was. What is so special about this memorial?
4. At the same website as above, click on the word "Feuersprüche" on the left. You will see the exact text of nine of the twelve points that were shouted out before the first books were thrown into the fire. Each point criticizes particular aspects about the "un-German" spirit or the "un-German" way of thinking. Some of the items are difficult to understand. Which ones do you more or less understand? On the basis of these, list approximately three opposite qualities—that is, qualities that would have been considered "German" rather than "un-German."
5. YAD VASHEM is Israel's remembrance authority, created to honor those who extended special help to Jews during the time of the Holocaust. The chosen receive the title "Righteous among Nations." Ruth Andreas-Friedrich was honored with this title in 2002, long after her death. Try to find the criteria that make people eligible for the title. Write a paragraph on why Andreas-Friedrich merited the award.
6. Why do you think it mattered so much to Inge Deutschkron that Otto Weidt be remembered in one of Berlin's public spaces? And, later, why did it matter to her that the museum in his honor be situated at the same site where the Blindenwerkstatt was?
7. To gain an even better understanding of why the Wilhelmstraße was the Nazi center of power, please go to the following website <http://www.topographie.de/wilhelmstr>. On the left you will see a diagram of the Wilhelmstraße. The numbers correspond to the addresses. Clicking on the numbers will let you see the buildings located at them. Why do you think the government passed an ordinance in 1938 that made it a crime for Jews to enter this street?
8. Of her first week wearing the yellow star, Inge Deutschkron said that people responded in various different ways. Name four possible reactions/responses.