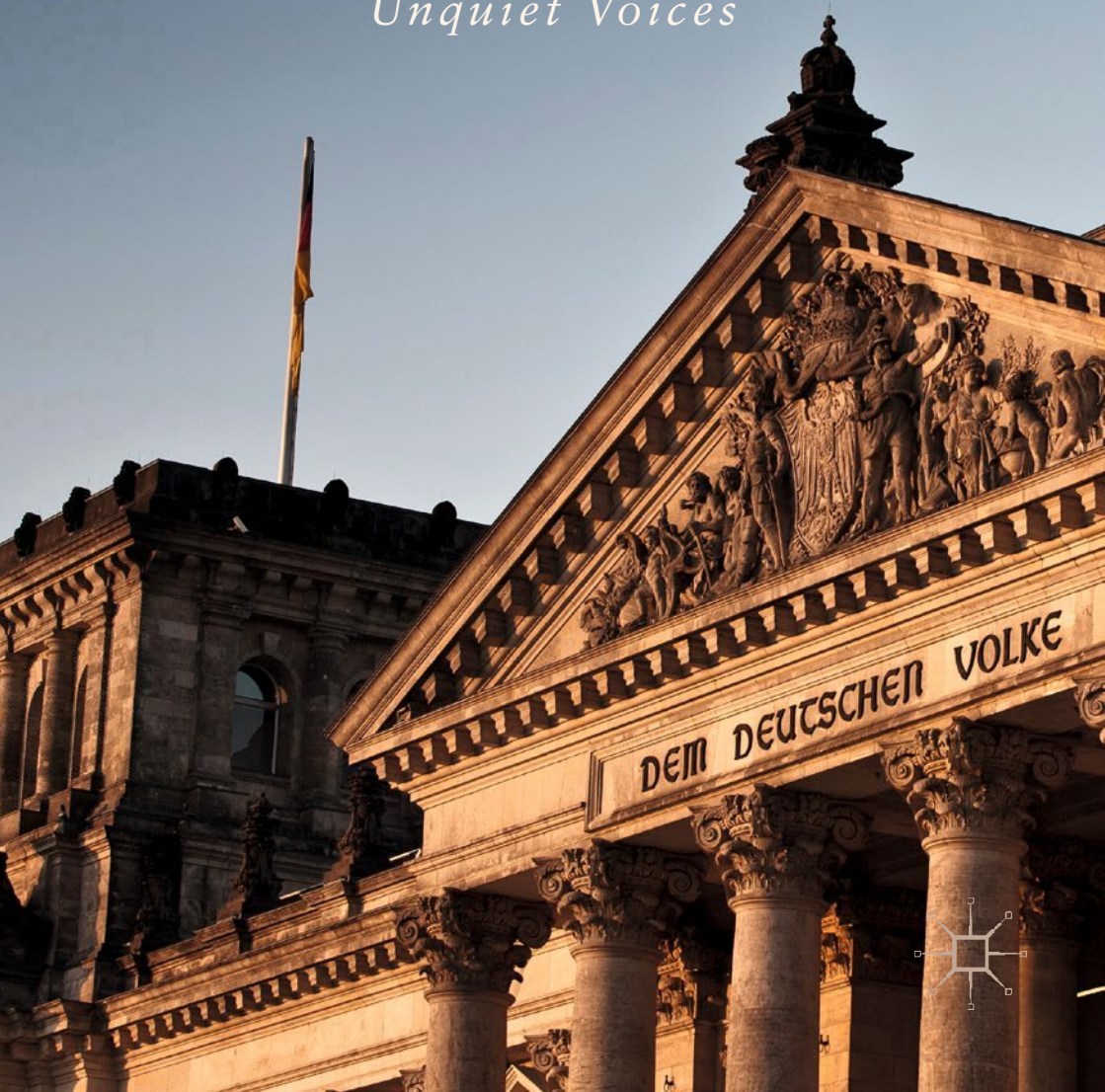
W J DODD

National Socialism & German Discourse

Unquiet Voices



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In memory of
Peter von Polenz

Note on the Front Cover Image

The inscription "DEM DEUTSCHEN VOLKE" ("for the German 'Volk'") on the architrave of the REICHSTAG building, was inscribed in 1916 after two decades of debate using the winning font design by Peter Behrens and Anna Simons. The letters were created by melting down two canons captured in the Napoleonic 'War of Liberation' (1813–1815). This work was carried out by the Loevy foundry (a Jewish firm). The font is an Uncial Blackletter (Broken) Bastarda, a modernized Gothic script ('deutsche Schrift') distinguished by rounded letter shapes replacing traditional angular designs. For a fuller account, see Chap. 3.

In 2000, following the relocation of the BUNDESTAG to the refurbished REICHSTAG building, Hans Haacke's art installation "DER BEVÖLKERUNG" ("for the population") was installed in the north inner courtyard. The wording of the inscription, agreed by the Bundestag, takes up Bertolt Brecht's words in 1934: "Wer in unserer Zeit statt *Volk Bevölkerung* und statt *Boden Landbesitz* sagt, unterstützt schon viele Lügen nicht. Er nimmt den Wörtern ihre faule Mystik". ("Whoever in our time says *population* instead of *Volk*, and *land ownership* instead of *soil*, has already ceased to support many lies. He deprives the words of their foul mysticism.") For a fuller account, see Chap. 4.

Preface

This study is intended for a wide range of readers, including those who have little or no expertise in German. English translations are given for German terms and texts. I have incurred many debts in researching and writing it. The first and greatest of these is to my wife Kath for her understanding and support, especially since my 'retirement', when work on the book intensified. The long gestation of the book was made possible by a Leverhulme Trust Major Research Fellowship, grants by the British Academy and the University of Birmingham, and a Senior Fellowship of the Alfried Krupp Wissenschaftskolleg, Greifswald.

I would like to acknowledge a particular debt of gratitude to the late Professor Peter von Polenz, who gave generously of his time to discuss my research and his own life and work. His influence and that of the many other scholars on whose work I have drawn will be evident throughout. As always, any shortcomings are entirely those of the author. I would like to thank Professor Jürgen Schiewe and Professor John Klapper for reading and commenting on the manuscript; and Caroline Cabarth, Professor Günther Gillessen, Sybil Oldfield, Professor Ritchie Robertson and Professor Wolfgang Teubert for reading and commenting on individual chapters. I am indebted to Dr Heidrun Ehrke-Rotermund and Professor Erwin Rotermund for generously sharing their knowledge of the discourses and politics of German 'inner emigration', to the late Professor Klaus Landfried and the Dolf Sternberger Gesellschaft for permission to

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Introduction: Towards a Discourse History of National Socialism

The three focal points of this study are National Socialism, discourse, and language criticism. Language is conceived here as language-in-use, as discourse. From this perspective, 'the German language' is understood not so much in terms of the combinatorial rules of grammar and vocabulary, but rather in terms of the uses to which they are and have been put by German speakers in their social interactions. The 'power of language' is a common axiom in many of the commentaries reviewed in this study, and it is possible to overstate this power. The National Socialists did not acquire and hold on to power solely by means of rhetoric, nor were they defeated by an opposing discourse, but—in both cases—by dint of physical force. But this does not mean that 'language' can be pushed to the margins in a discussion of National Socialism, as "only words". As Michael Townson (1992, p. 135) observes, "the brutalisation through language was a necessary prerequisite for the physical brutality which was to follow" in the 'Third Reich'.

The discourse practices of National Socialism are at the centre of this study, but so, too, are the testimonies of contemporary German speakers who found themselves in a kind of exile from their speech community, even while remaining in Germany. The experiences, observations and

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commentaries of these 'unquiet voices', the mental and linguistic resilience of their private and public counter-discourses, occupy the central chapters of this study. Finally, building on the strengths but also on the shortcomings of these first critics of 'Nazi language', this book traces the development of a peculiarly German academic tradition of political discourse analysis, informed as perhaps in no other country by the urgent need to understand a nation's shame by asking how National Socialism could acquire not just political power but the active or passive support of millions of Germans.

Discourse and Discourse History

There are many definitions of discourse, perhaps the most influential in the socio-political field being those centred on the works of Michel Foucault, Pierre Bourdieu, and Antonio Gramsci. All of these are relevant in various ways to the present study, but they will not be explicitly referenced. Instead, a very basic linguistic model of discourse is adopted, as a kind of social conversation about a given topic—sport, food, the weather; gender, ethnicity, the nation. Discourses (fundamentally in the plural) can merge and overlap: a discourse on the state of the language can feed into and be part of a larger discourse on national identity, which can in turn feed into a discourse on ethnicity and migration, or into a discourse on empire. On one view, discourses 'transport' knowledge; on another, they actually create and validate what members of the discourse community regard as knowledge, and truth. Discourses have a historical as well as a synchronic dimension, indeed the power of a discourse at a given point in time may be difficult to understand without appreciating the historical impetus of the discourse traditions—grand narratives—on which it draws in shaping and maintaining a system of attitudes, beliefs and values—an ideology. Such discourses thrive on metaphor and stereotypes, shape and confirm identity by creating in- and out-groups, function as affective (emotional) as well as intellectual rallying points and recruiting sergeants and, perhaps most crucially, are fluid and constantly evolving.

The diverse theoretical orientations and practical applications of discourse studies are reflected in recent collections of essays (e.g. Wetherell et al. 2001; Angermuller et al. 2014). The concept of discourse and the principles of analysis and commentary underlying the present study are broadly those set out in the "Bozen Manifesto" (Lanthaler et al. 2003), the main points of which are encapsulated in the following statement by Jürgen Schiewe and Martin Wengeler:

> Sprachkritik ist streng genommen nur als Sprachgebrauchskritik, Wortkritik nur als Wortgebrauchskritik möglich. Es sind die Kontexte, die über die Bedeutung von Wörtern entscheiden, es sind die Diskurse, in denen Wörter ihre semantische Prägung erhalten. | In sprachlichen Diskursen, in der Ordnung der Zeichen und Texte, eignen wir uns psychisch Wirklichkeit an. Eine Kritik der Diskurse, innerhalb derer die Kritik des Wortgebrauchs einen wichtigen Teil ausmacht, vermag aufzuzeigen, dass wir die Wirklichkeit prinzipiell auch anders sehen, erfassen, kategorisieren können. Der Sprachkritik geht es letztlich um die Frage, welche Sicht der Wirklichkeit von wem aus welchen Gründen konstituiert worden ist. (Schiewe and Wengeler 2005, p. 7)
>
> Language criticism, strictly speaking, is possible only as criticism of the use of language, lexical criticism only as the criticism of the use of words. It is the contexts which decide the meaning of a word, it is in discourses that words receive their semantic imprint. | In linguistic discourses, in the arrangement of signs and texts, we acquire reality psychologically. A critique of the discourses, within which the critique of word use plays an important part, has the ability to reveal that in principle we are capable of seeing, comprehending and categorizing reality differently. | Language criticism is in the final analysis concerned with the question of what view of reality has been constructed, by whom, and for what purposes.

Language-as-discourse, then, implies the study of the *use* of language (*parole*) as opposed to the language system (*langue*) as traditionally codified in dictionaries and grammars. This is not to deny the influence of the language system on the way speakers conceptualize the world. Syntax and semantics, for example, already provide cognitive frameworks within which 'reality' is organized, in the latter case by

establishing an inventory of lexicalized concepts. Nevertheless, it is discourse which is held to be ultimately constitutive of our psychological reality: linguistic meaning is fully unfolded not at the level of the word (lexical semantics), or the clause or sentence, or the paragraph, or even the complete text, but at the level of discourse. Schiewe and Wengeler argue that 'Sprachkritik' in the sense of a description of or commentary on discourse should not itself seek to be normative, but to uncover the often conflicting norms encapsulated in particular discourse practices and make them available for rational discussion. This view of 'Sprachkritik' emphasizes its role as an arbitrator in language disputes, and as a potential corrective to the power of hegemonic discourses. A slightly different stance is taken by Teubert (2014, pp. 108, 113), who has argued that whilst traditional 'Sprachkritik' has the potential to contribute to the ideal of a "deliberative democracy" of discursively empowered citizens, it also operates within the discourse community it addresses, and like all such contributions to the discourse, seeks to present a particular view of reality and normality, typically in opposition to powerful established discourses.

As Schiewe and Wengeler point out, a critique of individual lexical items (phrases as well as words) can play an important role in the study of discourse. The present study follows the majority of language commentators reviewed in this book in seeking to access discourses through their keywords. It is not, however, a lexicographical study and makes no claims to be encyclopaedic. More comprehensive lists and categorizations of words and expressions associated with the 'language of Nazism' can be found, for example, in Keller (1978, pp. 603–607, 609–621), Wells (1985, pp. 407–420), the Wikipedia "Glossary of Nazi Germany", and in Brackmann and Birkenhauer (1988). The concept of the keyword adopted here is much broader than that of the (high) cultural keyword analyzed by Raymond Williams (1983). It extends to everyday expressions which have the force of the 'Schlagwort' (literally, 'hit word'), for which the closest English equivalent is the slogan. One of the most trenchant observations on the 'Schlagwort' was given by Karl Jaspers in *Von der Wahrheit* (1947, On Truth), a work conceived in inner exile from National Socialism, when Jaspers and his Jewish wife narrowly avoided 'deportation' to a death camp:

> Worte sind allzu leicht Schlagworte. Wenn ich an Worten hafte, so verlasse ich die Bewegung aus der Offenheit für Bedeutungen und gebe das eigene Wesen preis an eine versimpelnde Starrheit. | So können Worte relativ gleichgültig werden vermöge des Zusammenhangs der Sätze, in denen im Ganzen erst der Sinn aufleuchtet. Andererseits können Worte hinreißen als diese Worte. | Dann werden Worte zu etwas wie Fahne und Symbol. Die Worte sind es, auf die schon ohne Satz der Mensch mit seiner ganzen Leidenschaft reagiert, in ihnen Wahrheit und Falschheit wie weiß und schwarz unterschieden sieht. (Jaspers 1947, p. 409)

> Words all too readily become slogans. When I attach myself to such words I take leave of the possibilities inherent in an openness for meanings und betray my own being to a simplifying rigidity. | Words can be relatively imprecise in meaning due to the context of sentences in which the meaning first lights up as a whole. But in the other case, words as single words can infatuate. | Then words become something like a flag and a symbol. It is to such words that a person reacts with their utmost passion even before they are put in a sentence, seeing truth and falsehood distinguished in them as clear as black and white.

German linguists have developed a range of terms for the ideologically-primed 'Schlagwort' depending on its pragmatic use in a battle for and with words (Klein 1989), some of which are referenced in this study: the 'Fahnenwort' (banner word) acts as a rallying point for supporters, the 'Stigmawort' (stigma word) attacks the integrity of opponents' keywords, the 'Hochwertwort' (prestige word) proclaims a shared value of high importance to the believers, the 'Schimpfwort' (cuss word) and 'Schmähwort' (smear word) hurl insults and slurs. In these metaphors of battle we see the traditional approach to meaning as (lexical) semantics translated into a model of language-in-action, pragmatics. 'Pragmatized' semantics, a theme in the academic debate on language since the 1960s, is the logical correlative of seeing language in socio-pragmatic terms, as discourse. The popularly understood concept of (positive and negative) connotation is clearly relevant here, and it is only a short step from connotation to contestation—the need to define, claim, or defend one's territory against alternative value systems—as the essence of political and ideological discourse. The existence of contestation in a discourse community might be taken as evidence of democratic health, its absence as evidence either of a utopia or of a fully realized regime of terror. Even in Nazi Germany, battles for and with words were not completely suppressed.

The first task of a discourse analysis is to identify the discourse by describing its defining features. Only then does it become available for discussion. This is no simple task, however, since there is no one-to-one relationship between discourses on the one hand, and individual lexical items and texts on the other. A single text can contain features of several and disparate discourses on a topic, indeed this kind of textual hybridity is key to the texts discussed in Chaps. 6 and 7. Conversely, individual lexical expressions are not necessarily the exclusive 'property' of a particular discourse, indeed the same word can acquire very different meanings in different discourses: in National Socialist discourse 'Volk' encapsulates a biological view of nationhood, in Marxist discourse a class-based vision of society. This last example is an illustration of the not uncommon phenomenon of ideological polysemy (Dieckmann 1969, pp. 70–75; Klein 1989).

Discourses are constructed using the linguistic resources of the 'rule-governed' language system (lexis, grammar) and conventions of style (the free choices of speakers to deploy lexis and grammar in an individualized way). Visual and aural factors may also play a role: the conventions of use of 'Gothic' and 'Roman' typefaces in printed texts; the vocal range and tone of the spoken address. As systems of 'knowledge' and 'truth', discourses are also characterized by argumentation strategies used to validate their 'truths', often by seeking to invalidate counter-discourses. In the present study, for example, we find the 'double indemnity' logic of apparently contradictory positions being held to be true, so that the negation of one serves to validate the other ("the 'Aryans' are the natural master-race, but their supremacy is threatened by 'inferior' peoples"). We also find examples of coercive persuasion ("if you said/did/believe A, you have to say/do/believe B"), and of trivializing arguments designed to disarm criticism, as in the 'toothbrush fallacy' encountered in Chap. 9 ("the Nazis used toothbrushes but no one is suggesting that we should ban toothbrushes today"). Such argumentation strategies, patently illogical to outsiders, play an important role in bolstering the emotional and intellectual solidarity of those who subscribe to the value system.

A discourse history has the advantage that it presents words, phrases, and other linguistic items in a dynamic, socio-pragmatic framework, displaying the different ideological networks defining their respective definitions. Amongst the potential disadvantages is the problem of evidence

and representativeness. Outside of specific instances of use, the problem lies in generalizing statements about how typical the identified phenomena are or were of a more general usage. To some extent, this can be addressed by modern techniques in corpus linguistics which allow the researcher to study the first appearance, frequency, and collocational environment of lexical items in large digitized text collections. To this end readers with a knowledge of German are recommended to conduct their own explorations in the on-line resource of the Digitales Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache (dwds.de), and especially the chronological corpus of the Twentieth Century ('Kerncorpus 20'), which is referenced at various points in this study. A related issue is the tension between the general and the particular: a history of discourses can appear as a kind of aggregated abstraction in which individual speaking subjects are marginalized in favour of a generalized characterization of language use. The present study attempts to redress this imbalance by focusing on particular historical subjects, notably the 'unquiet voices' of those rejecting Nazism.

'Unquiet Voices' and Exile

The 'Third Reich' offers a particularly instructive case study of a near-monopolized ('hegemonic') public discourse under dictatorship, and of linguistic and other modes of response to hegemony. The regime's attempts to manage public discourse have their corollary in the language critiques of its beleaguered opponents reviewed in this study—a form of mental opposition, if not of active resistance. These commentaries on 'Nazi language' are grouped in three broad categories reflecting the different circumstances of text production and propagation under the Nazi dictatorship: (a) territorial exile; and inner exile in its (b) private and (c) public manifestations. The existential situations reflected in these categories importantly shape what is experienced, what can be said, and how it can be said. For the categories of inner exile, in particular, the limits of the (safely) sayable are an ever-present consideration.

The concept of inner exile, particularly important in the middle sections of this study, needs some introductory explanation at this point. An instructive text on the existential situation of inner exile is Bertolt Brecht's

"Maßnahmen gegen die Gewalt" (1932, Measures against violence, *Werke*, Bd. 18, p. 13f.), in the figure of Herr Egge, who in his own apartment is made to be the servant of the agent of 'Gewalt' (power, violence). Although Herr Egge serves his powerful master as he is told to, he repeatedly answers the agent's question "Will you serve me?" with silence before finally, after the agent's death, removing his body and uttering the single word "No". The story of Herr Egge is told by another of Brecht's figures, Herr Keuner, to explain his own apparent hypocrisy when confronted by deadly power. In a sense, Brecht's parable captures the extreme point at which, to paraphrase Erving Goffman, it is not a matter of human beings and the situations they create, but of situations and the human beings they create (cf. Goffman 2005, p. 3). Acknowledging Goffman's point about the ethnography of speaking highlights a radical feature of the German discourse community under Nazism, but as Gerhard Bauer (1988, p. 13) observes, it does not absolve individuals of responsibility for their linguistic and non-linguistic actions in such a situation. Nevertheless, the moral ambiguities of such a situation will be apparent, and have understandably dogged the reception of 'inner emigrant' discourse on Nazism in post-1945 Germany. Like Herr Egge, some of the 'unquiet voices' in inner exile discussed in the present study had little choice but to withhold their public "No" until the dictatorship fell. Others went further than Herr Egge and Herr Keuner, venturing into the public arena, subjecting their discourse to the constraints of hegemony whilst probing the limits of the sayable. One of the themes of this book is the perhaps surprising amount of coded public dissent in German print media during the 'Third Reich' and the picture of the National Socialist discourse community as a battlefield ("Kampfplatz") on which, as Bauer (1988, p. 10) observes, "battles were fought with grossly unequal and frequently changing methods, but unceasingly" ("mit äußerst ungleichen, vielfach wechselnden Mitteln, aber unaufhörlich gekämpft wurde").

Overview

The book begins by reviewing the ensemble of precursor discourses on nationhood, language and culture, ethnicity, and empire in the long nineteenth century from which the ideology of National Socialism

emerged after the First World War (Chap. 2). Chapter 3 describes life in the 'co-ordinated' discourse environment of the 'Third Reich' from the perspective of Germans who felt alienated from it. This chapter outlines the 'new normality' imposed by the now near-hegemonic discourse of National Socialism, but also its paradoxes and contradictions. The next four chapters introduce some of the 'unquiet voices' articulating opposition to National Socialism from abroad (Chap. 4) and from positions of inner exile within the 'Reich', in unpublished (Chap. 5) and published critiques of language (Chaps. 6 and 7, the latter devoted to the discourse on language in the *Frankfurter Zeitung* between 1933 and 1943). Chapter 8 reviews the debates on (the language of) National Socialism and 'Nazi language' between 1945 and 1949 under the auspices of a "denazification of the language" sponsored by the Allies and supported by many of these 'unquiet voices'. Chapter 9 reviews the continuing legacy of these debates in two phases, from 1949 to 1989, and in the unified Federal Republic from 1990 to the present day. The retrospective discourse on National Socialism and language reviewed in Chaps. 8 and 9 is characterized by contestations of 'tainted' language, opportunistic instrumentalizations of Nazi comparisons for political advantage, and intense academic debate, particularly in West Germany, surrounding the notion of a 'Nazi language' and the principles for a rigorous analysis of Nazism and its linguistic manifestations. Chapter 9 also briefly considers the question of taboos in contemporary usage which are traceable to the legacy of Nazism, and the discourse practices of resurgent nationalist politics in the unified Germany. A brief Conclusion draws together the main strands of this discourse history as a historical, a retrospective, but also a continuing discourse with contemporary relevance, identifying the principal features of a linguistically informed political language criticism and reflecting on the relevance of these findings for present and future engagement with political discourses. The book is completed by an appendix of texts and text extracts (identified by an asterisk in the body of the book), and an alphabetical index of discourse-relevant expressions identified in the course of this study. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations into English are my own.

A Note on Terms and Typographical Conventions

German terms commonly used in English (such as Reich, Führer, Wehrmacht, Bundestag, Reichstag, Wirtschaftswunder) are not marked in the running text. SMALL CAPITALS indicate that an expression is being viewed as a constituent element of the discourse under investigation. Often, this reflects the analyses of commentators discussed in this study, but in some cases it reflects my own judgment, which of course is open to question. English renditions of expressions relevant to the German discourse are generally enclosed in brackets without further marking. Italics are used for book titles, to indicate emphasis either in an original quotation or added by a commentator, and for expressions derived from a third language, such as *langue*, *parole*, *ad hominem*. Double quotation marks are used for essay titles and for direct quotation of passages or individual expressions extracted from a cited text. Single quotation marks are used (a) to indicate authorial distance from the implications of an expression, as in 'Third Reich' (a legal entity in its time, but with dubious deeper meanings and implications); (b) to render German terms (such as 'Entnazifizierung' (denazification)) which may not be familiar to most speakers of English; (c) to render certain German concepts which play a key role in the discussion and are difficult to translate and cumbersome to paraphrase. The following in particular should be noted:

'Fremdwort': The 'foreign word' is a long-established concept in popular and academic descriptions of German lexical borrowing from other languages. Its coherence and relevance as a descriptive category is increasingly questioned in academic linguistic discourse today.

'Gleichschaltung'/'gleichgeschaltet': The German term, often translated as 'co-ordination'/'co-ordinated', is a metaphor derived from the mechanical switch-gear. By throwing the switch, different sources of energy are made to flow in the same direction.

'Imitat': The German term denotes a text or expression used in ironic imitation of a text or expression belonging to the criticized discourse.

'Resistenz'/'resistent': In German medical discourse, the term (stressed on the final syllable) denotes the body's immunity from/resistance to/rejection of infection. As a political metaphor, it denotes forms of immunity from, and rejection of, Nazi values in linguistic and non-linguistic behaviour short of overt political resistance ('Widerstand'). The distinction between resistance and 'Resistenz' is central to this study.

'sprachlos'/'Sprachlosigkeit': The political metaphor of being 'speechless' means 'being without a voice'. On rare occasions this may include literally not speaking, but usually the situation so described is one in which there are social constraints on what a speaker can say and how s/he can speak (cf. Bauer 1988).

'Unmensch': Often translated as 'monster', this term designates a real or imagined person embodying the polar opposite of the qualities encapsulated in the term 'Mensch' (human being) and its derivations 'menschlich' (human/humane) and 'Menschlichkeit' (humaneness). The contrast here is between human beings and animals.

'Volk': The word carries a wide range of meanings, including the connotationally neutral 'nation' or 'people', and the socialist/Marxist sense of 'working class'. In National Socialist discourse, however, the term carries biological racial inflections.

'völkisch': carries an endorsement of the concept of the racially superior 'Aryan' 'Volk' which is not captured in the English 'folkic'.

'volkhaft': Strictly much closer to 'folkic' in designating attributes of folk or national culture in a non-evaluative way, this word also begins to acquire some of the evaluative meanings of 'völkisch' in the period of Nazi hegemony.

Finally, it should be noted that the word race should ideally be marked as 'race' or RACE throughout as a reminder that it designates a socially constructed, not a scientific concept. The National Socialist discourse on VOLK is predicated on RACE.

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2

The Emergence of National Socialist Discourse

Whilst the year 1933 marks a clear caesura in German political history, the same cannot be said in relation to German discourse history.[1] The discourse practices of National Socialism, a fringe political faction in the German polity of the 1920s, were an amalgam of historical discourses which had gained currency in the long nineteenth century, were reinvigorated in 1914, and intensified after the defeat of 1918. Peter von Polenz describes an intensification of these precursor political discourses after the birth of the German nation state:

> Bald nach der Reichsgründung von 1871 radikalisierte sich politischer Sprachgebrauch in Deutschland und Österreich in verschiedenen konservativen und nationalistischen Gruppen zum Nationalchauvinismus, Imperialismus und Antisemitismus. Dadurch wurde die Entwicklung der Rede- und Schreibweisen der politischen Intoleranz, Menschenverfolgung und Kriegsbegeisterung, über den Ersten Weltkrieg und die Weimarer Zeit bis zur nationalsozialistischen Diktatur, zum Zweiten Weltkrieg und zum Holocaust, zu einem historischen Kontinuum. (von Polenz 1999, p. 523)
>
> Soon after the founding of the Reich in 1871, political language use became radicalized in Germany and Austria in various nationalist and conservative groups towards national chauvinism, imperialism, and anti-semitism. As a

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> result, the modes of expression, in speech and writing, of political intolerance, persecution, and enthusiasm for war formed a historical continuum through the First World War and the Weimar period into the National Socialist dictatorship, the Second World War, and the Holocaust.

The Weimar Republic would carry the blame for humiliated national pride, focused on the terms of the Treaty of Versailles, which fed a revanchist 'Conservative Revolution' against the 'un-German' constitutional parliamentary democracy of Weimar and the narrative of German guilt (and military defeat). These right-wing narratives of Germanness fed on discourses on nationhood, race (specifically the 'Jewish question') and culture which had antecedents in seventeenth-, eighteenth-, and especially early nineteenth-century debates on language, culture, and identity. With the founding of a German nation state in 1871 by dint of (Prussian) militarism, a discourse on empire was added to this ensemble, its main components being the assertion of German commercial and military prowess in competition with France and Britain.

Von Polenz makes an important three-way distinction between the language *of* National Socialism, language *in* National Socialism, and language *leading to* National Socialism ("zum Nationalsozialismus hin", von Polenz 1999, p. 547), and has written a compelling contribution to this last category.[2] From the time of the French occupation of German territories in the early 1800s, extreme anti-French sentiments are found in major writers and thinkers like Kleist and Fichte, whose "An die teutsche Nation", a key tract on language, nationhood and race, was delivered in French-occupied Berlin in 1808. Tellingly, a disproportionately large place is occupied in this discourse history by minor propagandists like Ernst Moritz ("Vater") Arndt (1769–1860) and Friedrich Ludwig ("Turnvater", Father of Gymnastics) Jahn (1778–1852), "marginal men" (Berger 2004, p. 13) who would be commemorated into the twentieth century in the nationalistic pantheon. Jahn was the founder of paramilitary nationalistic gymnastics in the cause of building 'national character', an influential figure in the development of patriotic student fraternities ('Burschenschaften'), and an anti-Semite. His belligerent nationalism and anti-Jewish sentiment converged in a metaphysics of generalized hatred for and denigration of other nations and races: THE (generic)

French, Danes, Slavs, and Jews, as 'Germanness' was elevated to an ersatz religion, often supported by explicit or implicit reference to Tacitus's account of the allegedly autochthonous (ethnically intact) ancient German tribes. Humanität and Kosmopolitismus, Vernunft (reason) and Menschheit, the ideals of a tolerant 'Kulturnation' and of Weimar Classicism, were rejected as if they were forms of treason, and often ascribed to Jews ("jener allweltliche Judensinn", cf. Schulz 1983, p. 3).[3]

These negatively-inflected 'cosmopolitan' values were opposed by positively-inflected terms of the new religion: Nation, Volkstum, Deutschheit. Napoleon's defeat was celebrated in pseudo-religious terms as the Auferstehung (resurrection) of a German Volksgeist (national spirit) and its heilige Landmarken (holy marches[4])—the antiquated geographical and topographical vocabulary making an emotional appeal to a past which was still 'authentically' German. The keywords deutsch and Volk, however, were not yet bound to right-wing politics or the notion of a nation state. Indeed, von Fallersleben's anthemic "Deutschlandlied" ("Deutschland, Deutschland über alles"), with its appeals to Freiheit and Brüderlichkeit (fraternity), was a rallying cry of the (quickly emasculated) revolutionary movement of 1848/1849 for a 'Nationalversammlung' (National Assembly) in Frankfurt to restrain the power of regional monarchs, princes and dukes. The 'Restauration' period from 1815 to 1848 was marked by political repression, censorship, and, in Austria, by Metternich's secret police state. The nation state founded in 1871 promoted a 'conservative turn' which would later undermine the Weimar Republic. Under Bismarck's chancellorship a defining mood of aggressive nationalism ("Abwehr-Nationalismus", von Polenz 1999, p. 538) variously identified cosmopolitan liberals, socialists, Catholics, Jews, and neighbouring populations in disputed territories such as Alsace as Reichsfeinde who were also typically described as vaterlandslos, unpatriotic 'citizens of nowhere'. A conservative critique of civilization often went hand in hand with these concepts, in reaction to the effects of industrialization, mass urbanization, and political organization of labour, but also spawning a racialized discourse, frequently using verbs with the prefix ent- calling for the 'removal' of populations and cultures (entpolonisieren, 'de-polonize'), of 'inferior' fremdvölkisch nations such as the 'flood' or 'hordes' of Slavs (slawische Flut, russische

Horden) who needed to be 'removed' from 'German' territories (von Polenz 1999, p. 28). Against these enemies within and without, a binary network of evaluative concepts set 'authentic' deutsches Wesen (German being) against 'decadent' (entartet) Enlightenment values: Gemeinschaft (community (+)) against Gesellschaft (society (−)), Germanentum (+) against Bourgeoisie (−), Blut (+) against Geist (intellect (−)), Instinkt (+) against Vernunft (reason (−)), (deutsche) Kultur (+) against Zivilisation (−). The Wilhelmine era also echoed Napoleonic nationalism in its bündisch youth associations and paramilitary outdoor sport and athletics clubs in the spirit of "Vater Jahn", with Jahn's Führer: Gefolgschaft (follower) hierarchy, code of Treue (loyalty) and Gehorsam (obedience) and antiquated 'authentic' German vocabulary: Thing (meeting place), Gau (district), Schar (troupe, company) (von Polenz 1999, pp. 467–469). To some extent this bündisch tradition lent itself to adoption by National Socialism.

The intensified anti-Jewish discourse in the new Reich, a consequence of the emancipation of Jews from their geographical and societal ghettos in the middle of the nineteenth century, readily fell back on ancient narratives of Jews as exploiters and traitors.[5] Like other 'Staatsfeinde', but with much greater intensity, Jews were the object of a concerted biologized discourse which pre-dated Darwin but gathered momentum with the popular 'social' reception of Darwin's theories, especially the notion of a "struggle for existence" (Kampf ums Dasein) between and within species. In this discourse environment, biological metaphors inevitably imply sanctioned violence, in 'justified self defence', towards human Parasiten, Krebs (cancer), Bazillen, Polypen, Schädlinge (destructive pests), Ungeziefer (vermin) who were sucking the life out of (aussaugen) the German 'body politic' (Volkskörper), for the 'health' of which they must be expelled (ausscheiden)[6] or exterminated (the verbs used here include vernichten, ausmerzen, ausrotten). Some particularly extreme contributions to this discourse are to be found in the writings of the political philosopher Eugen Dühring (1833–1921)[7]: vertilgen (eradicate), Desinfektion, endgültig lösen (finally resolve [the 'Jewish question']—a precursor of the infamous Endlösung (final solution) of the Wannsee conference in 1942)—and Gift wie Gift behandeln (treat poison as poison), an example of a murderous metaphor waiting to be 'realized'.

Alongside the trope of the outcast 'Wandering Jew' responsible for the murder of Christ (ewiger Jude, Nomade, Mörder Jesu) and the medieval trope of the usurer (Wucherer, Schacher, supplemented by the modern term Plutokrat), assimilating Jews were marked in terms of their professions (Bücher-, Handels-, Zeitungsjude) and confessions (getaufter (baptized) Jude, Reformjude). The family names which most Jews had been obliged to take on as part of their assimilation (e.g. Cohn, Itzig, and names ending in -stein, -heim, -berg, -eles[8]) also marked them out—*nomen est omen*—from 'authentic' Germans. Whilst the most prominent anti-semitic publicist of the mid-century, Arthur de Gobineau (1816–1882), was French, the discursive outcasting of Jews can be found in leading German artists and thinkers, for example in Richard Wagner's "Das Judenthum in der Musik" (1850) and by historian Heinrich von Treitschke (1834–1896), who popularized the slogan Die Juden sind unser Unglück (The Jews are our misfortune), destined to be printed on the front page of Julius Streicher's *Der Stürmer* between 1923 and 1945. The most infamous exemplar of the narrative of a Jewish conspiracy to take over gentile nations, the fabricated *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, originated in Russia in 1903 but played a prominent part in Nazi anti-Jewish propaganda in the 1920s and 1930s, and is referenced in *Mein Kampf* (Hitler 1934, p. 337). The narrative of Jewish 'defilement' of deutsches Blut (itself perhaps a variant on medieval horror stories of Jewish blood lust for Christian children) merged easily with turn-of-the-century discourses and political programmes for 'racial hygiene', epitomized in the narrative of the Volk being reduced to a 'bastardized' Volksbrei (racial soup).[9] The term Arier (Aryan, from the Sanskrit *àrya*: 'noble'), the superordinate concept in this pseudo-scientific discourse on 'race', had entered political discourse in mid-century via the work of comparative (historical) linguists, denoting the 'Indo-Germanic' language family, thought to be traceable to an 'Ursprache' in the Indus Valley. In the discourse of (European, white) racial theorists, it quickly came to denote the allegedly superior (quintessentially Germanic and Nordic) white peoples and cultures of Northern Europe. The power of this concept was so great that in 1933 it provided the unquestioned basis for the Arierparagraph, which legislated for the 'Aryanization' of Jewish businesses, property, and of German professional and public life.[10]

It needs to be stressed that, as von Polenz implies, this account is a retrospective and partial reconstruction of political discourse history, shaped by historical hindsight. Many aspects of German discourse history—for example the discursive legacies of Christianity, the Enlightenment, the rise of Socialism and Marxism, the discourses on education and gender, the use of biological metaphors and racial stereotypes in left-wing discourses—are pushed to the margin, or omitted.[11] The compressed account offered above should not be taken in support of the teleological fallacy that Hitler was inevitable or that, in Daniel Goldhagen's thesis, most Germans possessed an "eliminationist mindset" (Goldhagen 1996, p. 69). A more nuanced analysis is offered by Ritchie Robertson in his study of Jewish emancipation "and its discontents" from the middle of the eighteenth century. Robertson (1999, p. 184f.) points out, for example, that techniques of discursive 'othering' remain largely constant while their targets change: "Herder associated language and creativity; Fichte maintained that the French were debarred from creativity by their superficial language; and Wagner transferred this stigma to the Jews". Anti-semitism was actually not the defining feature of German life before 1933, Robertson finds, it tended rather to be "part, and not necessarily a prominent part, of a wider world-view" or "cultural code", in Shulamit Volkov's phrase, which bundled together diverse fears about the direction and pace of change in an accelerating modernity.[12] Robertson (1999, p. 182) also points out the existence of "a succession of overlapping varieties of anti-semitism: völkisch, racial, and cultural anti-semitism. When one variety becomes untenable, another, more immune to disproof, takes its place". Similarly, one can perhaps identify three main types of political action against Jews: (social) exclusion, (territorial) deportation, and (physical) elimination. These also overlap discursively in a graduated continuum of violence. The contradictions in this narrative on race, and indeed across the whole narrative of German essentialism—'Aryan' Germans are the natural masters of the world, but their culture and existence are under threat—are no impediment to its discursive power, as Robertson observes in respect of arguably the most influential anti-semitic tract at the turn of the century, Houston Stewart Chamberlain's *Die Grundlagen des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts* (1899, *The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*, 1911),

"because events that seem to threaten one part of the fantasy, such as Germany's defeat in 1918, can be taken to support the other part" (Robertson 1999, p. 185).

1914: The Great War as a Discourse Event

In Germany, as in Britain, some welcomed war as an opportunity for spiritual renewal—"like swimmers into cleanness leaping | Glad from a world grown old and cold and weary", in the words of Rupert Brooke's early war poem "Peace".[13] The continuities in German discourse between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries are evident in the German and Austrian imperial proclamations which launched the war, in which an Emperor addresses His people(s) in the capitalized first person to appeal to their sense of Pflicht (duty), Treue (loyalty) and Ehre (honour) in defence of the Vaterland/Deutschland against scheming foreigners.[14] With hindsight, invoking past military glories through the trope of taking up the sword (zum Schwerte greifen) in both documents, and of fighting to the last breath of man and steed ("Mann und Roß") in the German proclamation, betrays a naivety about or cold disregard for the mechanized slaughter about to be unleashed. Undaunted, Emperor Franz Joseph gave a solemn assurance:

> In dieser ernsten Stunde bin Ich Mir der ganzen Tragweite Meines Entschlusses und Meiner Verantwortung bewußt. | Ich habe alles geprüft und erwogen. | Mit ruhigem Gewissen betrete ich den Weg, den die Pflicht Mir weist.
>
> In this momentous hour I am aware of the magnitude of My decision and My responsibility. | I have examined and weighed everything. | With a clear conscience I start out on the path to which duty directs Me.

Franz Joseph blamed the thwarting of his peaceful rule on providence (Vorsehung, unusually carrying a negative connotation). Kaiser Wilhelm II, however, was clear about God's allegiance: "Vorwärts mit Gott, der mit uns sein wird, wie er mit den Vätern war" ("Forward with God, who will be with us just as he was with our fathers"). The German document

is particularly revealing of industrial and colonial rivalry as an underlying cause of the war: "Aber die Gegner neiden uns den Erfolg unserer Arbeit" ("But our opponents envy us the success of our work"). War, moreover, is viewed in all-or-nothing metaphysical terms as an existential moment in the history of "German being", to be fought "um Sein oder Nichtsein deutscher Macht und deutschen Wesens" ("for the existence or non-existence of German power and German being"). The popular enthusiasm for mobilization saw the internationalism of the Social Democrats in Germany crumble under the sheer weight of the "ideas of 1914", summarized in the slogan Gott, Kaiser, Vaterland. War was embraced not only by government and military officials, but by whole sections of society, including artists and intellectuals, ninety three of whom signed the "Aufruf an die Kulturwelt!" (Appeal to the Cultural World!) on 4 October.[15] The document is notable for rejecting the (mainly true) accusations with the six-times-repeated phrase "Es ist nicht wahr, daß …" (e.g. "… wir freventlich die Neutralität Belgiens verletzt haben" ("It is not true that … we wantonly violated Belgium's neutrality")). Alongside references to the Daseinskampf (existential struggle) and the Selbstaufopferung (self-sacrifice) of German soldiers, to atrocities committed by russische Horden (Russian hordes), the narrative of a long-suffering, peace-loving Germany surrounded by scheming and brutal enemies also enlists racist discourse:

> Sich als Verteidiger europäischer Zivilisation zu gebärden, haben die am wenigsten Recht, die sich mit Russen und Serben verbünden und der Welt das schmachvolle Schauspiel bieten, Mongolen und Neger auf die weiße Rasse zu hetzen.
>
> Those who ally with Serbs and Russians and offer the world the shameful spectacle of setting Mongols and Negroes on the white race, have the least right to present themselves as the defenders of European civilization.

The reference to "Mongols and Negroes" and the weisse Rasse presumably reflects encounters on the western front with soldiers from French and British colonies, and on the eastern front with 'Asiatic' Russian troops, revealing a sub-text of colonial envy. Of particular interest here is the importance of Kultur in this narrative of national identity. The