

HEINRICH BÖLL'S EARLY PROSE:
A DISCOURSE OF WAR-DAMAGED BODIES

by

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ABSTRACT

Using insights drawn from research in a variety of disciplines into theories of the body, this dissertation investigates Heinrich Böll's (1917-1985) early prose (1936-1955) as a discourse of war damaged bodies. The "new" texts discussed appeared in Germany between 1982 and 1995. The thesis represents the first attempt to analyse Böll's work from the perspective of the human body.

Chapter I briefly outlines the influence sociology has had for a better understanding of the role of the human body in society. This chapter demonstrates that the body can be fruitfully used both as a critical tool and as an interpretative device in discussing literary texts. An elucidation of the methodology and theoretical approach used concludes the chapter.

The thesis explores Böll's use of the body not only as aspects of the narrative and also for its ethical implication. According to him, an author's temporality ("Zeitlichkeit") is the first thing to be communicated before embarking on an analysis or interpretation of his work. Chapter II investigates the "Aryan/Nazi" body and refers to other contemporary body discourses. Chapter III, investigating the "Writer's" body, provides insights into Böll's biography. Both chapters shed considerable light on Germany's cultural, social, internal, and external political situation.

Chapter IV describes the soldier's 'closed,' "disciplined" body as portrayed in texts such as Das Vermächtnis. Colonel Bressen, a key character in Wo warst du, Adam?, epitomises the "mirroring" body in Chapter V. More "Schein" than "Sein," it reflects an intentionally internalised and acquired "habitus." In Chapter VI, Böll's war story "Der blasse Hund," provides a striking example of a "dominating" body which seeks to preserve its power and to control its fears through committing violent acts against its helpless victims. In contrast, however, a "communicative" body such as Käte Bogner's in Und sagte kein einziges Wort, examined in Chapter VII, is 'open' and caring.

Throughout his early prose, Böll's careful use of body language reveals the multi-layered nature of reality. Chapter VIII summarises the thesis and presents its major findings upon which further critical work on the significance of the human body in Böll's later writings might be based.

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PREFACE

A comment made by the British Böll scholar Frank Finlay also holds true for me. He writes: “Many students of German have, like the present author, made their first association with German literature through the works of Heinrich Böll” (Finlay, *Rationality* 240). Twelve years ago, I spent much of two years in an isolated gold mining operation run by my husband in the Costa Rican jungle. Armed with barely more than a beginner’s command of the German language and vocabulary, I slowly made my way through Heinrich Böll’s short novel *Der Zug war pünktlich*, a text that I had come across when on a trip to Austria. The themes dealt with in this text and other early writings motivated me to later write a dissertation on Heinrich Böll. It was a goal that would require me to find out more about Germany’s literature, people, culture, and role in the Second World War and in the restoration years.

Heinrich Böll, of course, is still a towering, internationally recognised figure in post-war German literature. Two recent comments clearly illuminate Böll’s literary influence. On January 5, 2000, an interview entitled: “Nenapodobuj můj osud” [“Do not imitate my Fate”] appeared in the Cultural Political Weekly, *Literární noviny*. It was a talk with the well-known Czech writer, Alexandr Kliment (1929-) conducted by Jakub Patočka. In it, the writer said that he had been influenced by Chekhov, Camus and Böll. In remembering when Böll’s novel *Und sagte kein einziges Wort* appeared in Prague in 1960, Alexandr Kliment described it as being: “úžasná věc” [“a magnificent work”].¹

Böll’s name is also mentioned in a January 22, 2000, newspaper article in *The Vancouver Sun* written by the European columnist Stan Persky. In his review of *My Century* by Günter Grass, Persky writes that the author, after hearing that he had won the 1999 Nobel Prize for literature, “[. . .] wondered what Heinrich would have thought.” According to Persky, Grass modestly answered his own question by saying: “I think he would have approved” (Persky, “Reflections” 23). Grass, according to Persky, was clearly referring to his old friend and colleague Heinrich Böll, the last German writer to win the Nobel Prize (1972) before Grass.

Almost a decade and a half after his death, the resonance of Böll’s literary voice in Germany is undeniable. In addition, his international following also continues to identify his prose as a valued part of the canon. The posthumous publication of several of his early works, especially of his novel *Der Engel schwiege* (1992), has done much to keep his memory and his convictions alive. Moreover, the devastating ethnic cleansing and wars that dominated the last decade, and continue on into the new century, have also made his writings into an integral part of the contemporary literary scene.

Describing the efforts of an international community of scholars who are currently engaged in making Böll’s writings even more available to present day and future readers provides a good preface with which to contextualise my dissertation which investigates his early works. In 1996, six international editors were chosen by the Heinrich Böll Archive in Cologne to participate in bringing out, over the next twelve years, a new edition of Böll’s collected works, with commentary, in twenty-five volumes.² The editors are James H. Reid, and Frank Finlay from England; Arpad Bernath from Hungary; Viktor Böll, Karl Heiner Busse, Herbert Hoven,

¹ Kliment, “Nenapodobuj můj osud” 7.

² Robert C. Conard, e-mail to the author, Dec. 11, 1996.

and Hans Joachim Bernhard from Germany; and Robert C. Conard from the United States of America. In addition, special editors will likely be chosen for special volumes.³

If financial support continues for the project, the plan would be to publish the first two volumes by 2000.⁴ However, due to Holtzbrink's take over of the publishing firm Kiepenheuer & Witsch, the opening of subscriptions to the Große Kölner kommentierte Ausgabe, scheduled during the December 1998 meeting of the editorial board in Cologne, had to be postponed until March. During the meeting, however, impending contract details were defined. In addition, most of the work and individual responsibilities for the new edition of twenty-four volumes, three volumes of interviews, and one volume for the register, were assigned.⁵

After successful negotiations between the "Erben" and the publishers, contracts have finally been signed, and planning for the new edition continues. If all goes well, three volumes should appear by Böll's birthday on December 17, 2000. A new Böll biography and long-awaited collection of war letters, all edited by Heinrich Vormweg, as well as a volume of essays written by the editor are also expected to appear at that time.⁶ The Böll editorial board is scheduled to meet again in May 2000.⁷ History has shown that many of the issues that Böll passionately supported in his writings, for example, the preservation of human dignity and the undisputed right of each and every individual to self-determination, remain important topics of discussion even today. It is essential, therefore, that scholarship into his prodigious writings continue on all levels. In today's global society, Böll's voice is too important to be allowed to fall silent.

³ Robert C. Conard, e-mail to the author, Dec. 19, 1996.

⁴ Robert C. Conard, e-mail to the author, Mar. 24, 1997.

⁵ Robert C. Conard, e-mail to the author, Dec. 16, 1998.

⁶ Robert C. Conard, e-mail to the author, Nov. 8, 1999.

⁷ Robert C. Conard, e-mail to the author, Mar. 29, 2000.

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CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

It was a cold November day, and the year was 1945. Germany was a defeated and devastated country. Heinrich Böll (1917-1985), the soldier, had survived the carnage and deprivation of the Second World War. It is ironic that on that same day he barely escaped being pushed off the slippery Deutz bridge into the Rhine by an English tank. Now as a civilian, Heinrich Böll held his wife close and wept as he surveyed the scene before him. Cologne, the city of his birth, lay in ruins (G. Hoffmann, Heinrich Böll 77). In the closing months of the catastrophic international conflict, Böll had deserted the German army. However, the extreme danger that had marked his life as a deserter caused him once again to put on his hated soldier's uniform, and shortly thereafter he was captured by the allies. Although his body had been damaged, his spirit had remained strong and full of hope. In fact, his sense of what it meant to be human seemed intact. After enduring several humiliating months in various POW camps, he was released back into society. Clinging desperately to one of his few remaining possessions, his loving family, the sick, hungry, and exhausted Böll was finally heading home.

Böll's main desire now seemed to be to get well and write about all that he had seen and experienced during the Nazi regime, the war, and its aftermath. All too fresh in his mind were the unspeakable human degradation and suffering. For Böll, the returning soldier, the utter devastation of his country, and the horrific and often fatal injuries visited upon his fellow German citizens by the war, were almost impossible to fully understand. Nor did the end of the war bring much relief to the collective suffering of the people. They still had to forage, almost like animals, for food and shelter among the piles of smouldering rubble and twisted metal. As his health improved, Böll devoted himself to writing about the Second World War and the restoration of a defeated country and people. Through his writings, Böll was able to bring literature's awareness of these events to a peak. In 1972, the German post-war writer and four times wounded war veteran, Heinrich Böll, was awarded the Nobel Prize for his contribution to German literature.

My thesis will investigate the presence and significance of the body in Böll's early prose. It is an aspect of his writings that, in my opinion, has neither been fully recognised nor investigated by critics. For me, Böll's literary oeuvre is a discourse of war-damaged bodies. His work, viewed from this perspective, reveals moments when the goodness of human nature during and in the aftermath of the pervasive inhumanity of Hitler's National Socialist regime still manages to survive. In his writings, Böll seeks to strengthen our understanding of, and our belief in, human dignity, even in the midst of widespread brutality and atrocities perpetrated by the Nazis in the darkest, most tragic period in modern German history. From his work, therefore, emerges his unswerving conviction that it is the undisputed right of each individual to live in peace, love, and harmony in a fair and just society.

However, neither Böll the writer nor the human body as a literary theme can be discussed in a vacuum. The challenge, therefore, is to find a theoretical approach for my dissertation that would be productive for identifying and interpreting the roles of the body in Böll's literature. Within the last few decades the body has become a major and expanding theme in literary discourses.⁸ However, apart from the two published studies that deal with the treatment of

⁸ See, for example, works such as: Sigrid Weigel, Bilder des kulturellen Gedächtnisses: Beiträge zur Gegenwartsliteratur (Dülmen-Hiddingsel: tende, 1994). Helena Michie, The Flesh Made Word: Female Figures and Women's Bodies (New York: Oxford UP, 1987). Burkhardt Krause, ed., Fremdkörper – Fremde Körper –

scatology⁹ in Böll's works, and a few others that briefly explore his use of the senses,¹⁰ all of which only treat the physical body indirectly, Böll's prose has been conspicuously excluded from the current discourse of the body. Similarly, although many other disciplines had long since recognised the importance of the body for a better understanding of their discourses, sociology did not do so until more recently.¹¹

According to the French social scientist, Jean Starobinski: "[. . .] the most fruitful generalisations are those arising from fairly precise studies of limited topics" ("Bodily Sensation" 353). With these thoughts in mind, I have limited myself in the present study to the topic of the damaged body and Böll's use of body language in his early works. In addition, the generalisations regarding the social sciences that I have arrived at and expressed in my argument have all been made after careful consideration and have been based on extensive reading that goes beyond my bibliography. Works that I found most useful I have integrated into my argument.

In recent years, the growing awareness of the body in sociology has led to the development of social theories of the body. Since some literature and sociology focus on human beings and society, it seems logical to develop a critical approach to literary interpretation that was informed by aspects of social theories of the body. As a result, my methodology evolves out of sociological theories of the body. In investigating a selection of Böll's early writings, I will argue that they show the development of Böll's awareness of the role of the human body in German society before, during, and after the war.

Böll's prose, in helping to define what it means to be human in more bodily terms, increases our awareness of the "damaged" bodies that surround us. I will also argue that as Böll became more and more aware of the Nazis' callous misuse of the human body, he began to feel the pressing need for a new ethics of the body in modern society. In my opinion, this is what he sets out to do and successfully accomplishes in his writings. Although this may at first seem out of place in a literary study, a brief review of the body in sociology will in fact provide many important insights for an investigation of the important role that the body plays in Böll's early literary oeuvre, a role that, until now, has gone unnoticed.

The Emergence of the Body in Sociology

In the past decade and a half, writers such as Feher, Frank, O'Neill, and Turner have demonstrated a profound interest in a sociology of the body. Their social theories of the body have been shaped by the theoretical perspectives of thinkers and researchers such as Foucault, Nietzsche, Elias, Douglas, Mauss, Bourdieu, Baudrillard, Goffman, as well as Bynum, Héritier-Augé, Martin and other feminist theorists, some of whom will be discussed below. The body's

Körperfremde: Kultur – und literaturgeschichtliche Studien zum Körperthema (Stuttgart: Helfant, 1992). Lindsey Tucker, Stephen and Bloom at Life's Feast: Alimentary Symbolism and the Creative Process in James Joyce's "Ulysses" (Columbus: Ohio State UP, 1984). Anthony Purdy, ed., Literature and The Body (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1992). Jae Num Lee, Swift and Scatological Satire (Albuquerque: U of New Mexico P, 1971).

⁹ See Rollfinke 1986, 1993.

¹⁰ See, for example, Prodanuk 1979; and Beckert 1970.

¹¹ See Bryan S. Turner, Regulating Bodies: Essays in Medical Sociology (London: Routledge, 1992), and his article "Recent Developments in the Theory of the Body." The Body: Social Process and Cultural Theory, edited by Mike Featherstone, Mike Hepworth, and Bryan S. Turner (London: Sage, 1991) 1-35.

importance for sociology has therefore been stimulated, first and foremost, by the body studies of other disciplines.

With the progressive development of the discipline of anthropology along philosophical, and especially cultural lines of thought, the role of the body became more and more privileged. Although cultural discourses now play a significant role in both anthropology and sociology, it was anthropology and not sociology that first established a theory of the body. Beginning with pre-modern societies, the body's surface has always acted as a type of bulletin board for displaying important social messages: "Status markers and insignia on the body have indicated diverse aspects of age, sex and prestige" (Knauff, "Bodily Images" 200). Also, as the sociologist John O'Neill notes, practices such as "body painting, scarification, adornment, ... covering and concealing various bodily parts" help to make "the way people appear constituent features of social reality." In his opinion, "a good deal of the information we need in order to be properly oriented in the social settings in which we find ourselves is visually available in the form of *body advertisements*" (O'Neill, Five Bodies 24).

Sociology, in its formative years, focused more on the economic production of goods than on the "making" of bodies. Unlike anthropology, sociology did not at first seek to understand the relationship between human beings, nature and culture. It ignored the role of the body in history and focused instead on how societies engaged in history and on what conditions caused changes to occur in social systems. With the development of an anthropology of knowledge came the use of the body as a means of symbolically classifying human beings. In fact, it is the body's great potential for classification that has made it the most frequently encountered metaphorical and natural source of order and disorder in both social and political systems world-wide.¹² For anthropologists like Mary Douglas, body orifices are important "natural symbols" since they point to the entering into, and the departure from society (Natural Symbols 11-18). Other important human classificatory features are the body processes that produce several types of fluids and excretions.

Beginning with the scholarship of Emile Durkheim and Marcel Mauss the idea of the body as a method of classification began to emerge. It would later be continued through the notable work of Durkheim's student, Robert Hertz.¹³ "In contemporary societies," Bryan S. Turner notes: "Righthandedness is associated with worthiness, dexterity, rectitude and beauty. In general, the hand is the basis of many ideas which embrace value judgements: handy; handsome; handicap; handful; high-handed. Traditionally a bargain (a hand-sale) was always sealed by a handshake" (Regulating Bodies 109-110). Over the centuries, right-handedness came to symbolise human values and human moral superiority.

In addition, the hand's connection with gesture and communication, for example with speech and thought, assumed great importance in many societies. According to the social psychologist, George H. Mead, for whom the hand is a pivotal aspect in a human being's ability to think and communicate, "Speech and the hand go along together in the development of the social human being" (Mind, Self and Society 237). My study will a narrow aspect of Martin Heidegger's extensive life's work, namely, his thoughts on the "hand." The hand as a motif in Böll's early writings will be discussed below in Chapter VII. However, suffice to say at this

¹² See the works of the anthropologist Mary Douglas (Purity and Danger 1966; Natural Symbols 1978) that showcases the body as a symbolic system.

¹³ The right side of the body was culturally classified to distinguish between good and evil. For example, while Christ sat on the right-hand of God, evil spirits were relegated to the left side.

point that for Heidegger, the hand, gesture, and speech work together to help define a thinking human being.

Even in antiquity the hand, with its potential to communicate varying degrees of meaning and emotions, was recognised as an organ of speech:

As to the hands, without the aid of which all delivery would be deficient and weak, it can scarcely be told of what a variety of motions they are susceptible, since they almost equal in expression the powers of language itself; [. . .] With our hands we ask, promise, call persons to us and send them away, threaten, supplicate, intimate dislike or fear; with our hands we signify joy, grief, doubt, acknowledgement, penitence, and indicate measure, quantity, number and time. Have not our hands the power of exciting, of restraining, of beseeching, of testifying approbation, admiration, and shame? Do they not, in pointing out places and persons, discharge the duty of adverbs and pronouns? So that amidst the great diversity of tongues pervading all nations and people, the language of the hands appear to be a language common to all men. (Quintilian Institutio oratoria XI. 3.85-7)

The hand, with its unique capabilities, is an important aspect of man's mental and physical capacities that clearly separates human beings from animals.

For the sociologist Georg Simmel, however, the face is also an important area of the human body since it symbolises spirituality and personality. In his essay "The Aesthetic Significance of the Face" (1959), Georg Simmel suggests that the unity lying within the face reveals its "aesthetic." For this reason, its harmonious proportions may easily be destroyed if any hint of disfigurement is present in the face. This aspect of the face will be discussed below in relation to one of Böll's characters. These theoretical thoughts on the connection between the hand, eye, and language are important for human communication to occur successfully.

In contrast, however, sociology of knowledge used social stratification rather than the body to classify society into classes. This was achieved by interpreting metaphoric realities of social life in terms of spatial metaphors of rank. More recently, feminist theory made social classification more and more visible and understandable. Consequently, sociologists finally began to recognise that how the body was seen in social space dictated its social status. Thus via the influence of anthropological and other discourses, a sociology of the body emerged in which the interrelatedness of nature, society, and culture was finally acknowledged and investigated. In Bryan S. Turner's opinion, the "recent social, cultural and technological changes have made the body central to modern politics, because the conventional boundaries between the natural and the social are constantly eroded and changed" (Regulating Bodies 61).

Philosophical and religious traditions have long been aware of the importance of human corporeality. Nietzsche's views on the body provided fertile ground in which the mainly German tradition of philosophical anthropology could take hold. In Regulating Bodies, Bryan S. Turner suggests that Nietzsche considered human beings as incomplete animals who needed cultural training and social institutions for their completion, protection and assurance of social continuity. Turner also argues that Nietzsche rejected the German view that stability and serenity were the most important values handed down from antiquity. For him, Nietzsche believed that aesthetic experience was not the result of reasoning but rather of the body's unrestrained response to eroticism and sensuality. In Turner's opinion, Nietzsche believed that the emergence of a healthy German society was only possible if the principles of Dionysus (irrationality) and Apollo

(rationality) were successfully united (Regulating Bodies 38-40). Nietzsche's views on the body will be discussed further in the following chapter.

The civilised, cultured human being is shaped by bodily constraints, both self-administered and externally imposed by other individuals and the institutions they represent. French social theory treated the body as a symbol of protest against all that was rational and regulated. For example, the writings of Georges Bataille (1897-1962) on eroticism not only expressed a glorification of human sensuality, transgression, and excess, but also a protest against work and regulations. For the contemporary French theorist Pierre Bourdieu, whose implicit sociology of the body grew out of his interest in habitus and practice, the taste and values of a person's class were reflected in his habitus.¹⁴ Through the internalisation and natural demonstration of taste, the body became a form of natural and physical "capital" with which class, distinction, and power could be "purchased." The sense of "the body" that this study focuses on is its potential to be many different things, in other words, its ambiguous quality.

The human body became the surface on which the cultural practices of diverse social classes were inscribed. The German sociologist, Norbert Elias (1897-1990), also understood that, with the passing of time, body techniques changed in order to keep up with the inevitable changes in social manners and etiquette. In his sociological studies of the civilisation process, Elias recognised that a person's habitus required the internalisation of broad social processes. However, he also noted that for the most favourable development of human beings in society, both controls and the expression of human emotions were essential (Elias, Civilising I).

Generally speaking, however, Western thought has maintained the body/soul, and nature/culture dichotomies.¹⁵ With the growing interest in the body, a great variety of books have appeared. Nonetheless, the recent privileging of the body in social theory has also been influenced by important social changes signalled by the unprecedented post-war explosion of consumer culture, the influence of postmodernism on the arts, the feminist movement, and what Foucault terms "bio-politics" and "bio-power."¹⁶ Moreover, as sexuality became more openly expressed, a newly emerging general cult of the body expanded to meet the needs of a more and more consumer oriented society.

The Response of Social Theorists to Feminist Issues

As mentioned above, changes in gender relations during the past decades made social theorists more sensitive to feminist issues. For example, "constructionist" feminists¹⁷ like Rosemarie Tong (Feminist Thought 1989), Adrienne Rich ("Compulsory" 1980), Jean Bethke Elshtain (Public Man, Private Woman 1981), and Donna Haraway ("Manifesto" 1990) believed that gender differences were socially constructed and therefore should be erased to allow equality between the sexes. Gillian Rose, a social and cultural geographer and feminist, writes that the

¹⁴ This theme is developed by Pierre Bourdieu in his text La distinction: critique sociale du jugement (1979).

¹⁵ See Turner, "Regulating Bodies" 32.

¹⁶ For Foucault, the seventeenth century ushered in the development of power over life in two basic forms, namely, the body as a machine (i.e. harnessing the body's power through disciplines leads to an anatomo-politics of the human body) and regulations of the population (i.e. supervision and regulation of the body via controls). Together they gave rise to a bio-politics of the population. The emergence of the age of "bio-power" is, therefore, stamped with a flood of techniques for not only making bodies subservient but also for regulating populations. See Foucault "Right of Death" 262.

¹⁷ For "constructionist" feminists, bodies are socially and culturally constructed.

main cause of “women’s oppression is the ideological construction of femininity as domestic, caring, relational and maternal, because of the labour this identity makes such women perform in the family.” She goes on to say that “essentialist”¹⁸ feminists like Jane Gallop (*Thinking* 1988) “suggest that to deny the body is to echo the masculinist repression of the bodily” (Rose, “Notes” 1995: 73-74). The feminist, Rosi Braidotti, also suggests that the recent advances in medical and reproductive technology, herald “the final chapter in a long history of fantasy of self-generation by and for the men themselves.” For her, as soon as “reproduction becomes the pure result of mental efforts, the appropriation of the feminine is complete” (Braidotti, “Mothers” 71). These factors place an enormous ethical, political, and financial strain on individuals and social institutions. However, Elliot and Mandell insist that for “radical feminists, the state is an instrument ensuring male control of women’s sexuality” (“Feminist Theories” 16).¹⁹

Foucault’s Influence on Sociologists

Foucault’s philosophical and genealogical writings on power and knowledge, during the 1970s, including his discourses of the body and sexuality, have all had a profound influence on the development of a sociology of the body. With its wide ranging social and political ideas, Foucault’s work has demonstrated that power over life and death could be traced in society, that is, in institutions such as the military, churches, schools, hospitals, factories, as well as in family households. The present study will focus mainly on Foucault’s concept of discipline and power relations. According to Foucault, three basic tools: hierarchical observation, a process of normalisation, and examinations, ensure the successful implementation of disciplinary power.

Foucault’s concept of disciplinary technology showed how the standardised use of drills, body training, and actions, in a controlled space like that of Bentham’s panopticon, produced a “docile” body.²⁰ Discipline also resulted from the careful examination and recording of details. Not only did such seemingly insignificant details provide the perfect political tool for controlling human beings in schools, barracks, hospitals, and work places, they also gave birth to “the man of modern humanism” (Foucault, “Docile” 185). For Foucault, therefore, the body was the institutionalised product of “a network of writing,”²¹ in other words, power was derived from the accumulation of documentary details, rather than of the phenomenological tradition of the body as a lived experience.

Social Theories of the Body

John O’Neill’s lament of 1985 that: “We are no longer reflected in our work, our institutions, or our environment ... people ... today must think systems and structures without

¹⁸ For the basis of Rose’s understanding of the difference between constructionist and essentialist feminism, see her note 23 re. D. Fuss.

¹⁹ While most feminist reject psychoanalytic theory, interest in it is growing. According to Elliot and Mandell, even though “psychoanalytic” feminists may also be occupied with “the deconstruction of myths about women’s nature and the construction of theory by and about women, ... [They are also particularly concerned with a] particular kind of inquiry into the nature and functioning of women’s oppression, an inquiry that engages us in a rethinking of what it means to be a gendered subject. The aim is to develop a critique of gendered subjectivity which produces a hierarchy of masculine over feminine subjects, a hierarchy in which women are made subordinate” (Elliot and Mandell “Feminist Theories” 19).

²⁰ See Foucault “Docile Bodies” 179-187, and Foucault “Panopticism” 206-213.

²¹ See Foucault “The Means of Correct Training.” 201.

embodied subjects,” is alarming (Five Bodies 26-27). In this regard, the social theories of the body put forward by sociologists such as Bryan S. Turner,²² Michel Feher,²³ and Arthur W. Frank²⁴ offer valuable insights. The term “human embodiment” technically refers to humanity as an evolutionary species being. Humans are warm-blooded mammals with specific needs for survival in this world. Human beings participate in basic social processes from the moment of their conception through their development and eventual death that require familiar social practices and rituals such as christenings, weddings, funerals, and wakes.

Every human action involves human corporeality that is reflected, for example, in his birth, suffering, pain, joy, death (Turner, Regulating Bodies 35-36). For Bryan Turner, therefore, the bodily nature of human beings is evidenced by the daily need to eat, eliminate, and sleep, as well as to be clean, tidy, and clothed. Re-stating Hobbes’s concept of order, Bryan Turner calls this care of the body a form of “government of the body.” Society too has obligations to meet if it is to establish and maintain social order among the bodies that comprise it. It must reproduce populations in time and regulate bodies in space. In addition, it must restrain the ‘interior’ body (via disciplines that control sexuality, desire, passion and need, for the sake of social organisation and stability), and represent the ‘exterior’ body in social space (i.e., in relation to personality and identity).²⁵

Michel Feher’s presentation of the history of the human body introduces a historical and pragmatic approach that is not only directional, i.e., vertical, and horizontal, but one that is also influenced by the age-old notion of organ and function.²⁶ Whether functioning as metaphors or as organic models, the question to be answered is: does our understanding of organs, bodily substances, and fluids imply or challenge the body’s function in society? Michel Feher’s three-

²² The work of Bryan Turner, a Professor of Sociology, is a much needed contribution to the exciting fledgling area of study known as the sociology of the body. His aim is to eventually achieve a synthesis of medical sociology and the sociology of the religion that would provide new insights into the disciplines of sociology, philosophy and feminist theory.

²³ As Michel Feher, the editor of the three volume work Fragments declares in its introduction, “the history of the body is not so much the history of its representations as of its modes of construction” (11). It is this interpretation of the body that is important for sociologists working on the sociology of the body.

²⁴ Arthur W. Frank is a Professor of Sociology. In his 1991 article “For a Sociology of the Body: An Analytical Review,” Frank incorporates the literature he compiled in his previous article “Bringing Bodies Back In: A Decade Review” (1990). Now, however, he discusses, as he puts it, “the literature within a theoretical framework which is both original and analytical, presented as complementary to Turner’s (1984) typology [of the body]” (“Sociology” 37).

²⁵ See Turner Body and Society 1984: 2.

²⁶ The essays in Fragments not only document where life and thought intersect, but also produce a sketch of the contemporary body. According to Feher, however, each of the three parts pursues a definite research method:

The first approach can be called vertical since what is explored here is the human body’s relationship to the divine, to the bestial and to the machines that imitate or simulate it. The second approach covers the various junctures between the body’s “outside” and “inside” [and is] ... a “psychosomatic” approach, studying the manifestation - or production - of the soul and the expression of the emotions through the body’s attitudes, and, on another level, the speculations inspired by cenesthesia, pain and death. Finally, the third approach, ... brings into play the classical opposition between organ and function by showing how a certain organ or bodily substance can be used to justify or challenge the way human society functions and, reciprocally, how a certain political or social function tends to make the body of the person filling that function the organ of a larger body - the social body or the universe as a whole. (Fragments Part Three 11)

part approach suggests that the body is a hermeneutic process whose polarities (e.g., super-human/sub-human; internal/external; mind/body; male/female) are never fixed.

Expanding on Bryan Turner's and Michel Feher's insights, Arthur W. Frank, whose typology of the body emerges from that of Turner's, argues that the body's "visibility" is both the cause and effect of its own social actions. In fact, he locates what he calls "the body" in "the intersection of an equilateral triangle the points of which are *institutions*, *discourses*, and *corporeality*" ("Sociology" 49). While discourses provide guidelines for social practices, institutions provide the context and location for these activities. These observations become the basis for his creative approach to a theoretical typology of the body. It is one which showcases four styles of body usage in action: the disciplined body, the mirroring body, the dominating body, and the communicative body. For him, the actions of human beings not only dictate these body styles but also prescribe their social environment. Neither can be explained without reference to the other.

However, before I turn my attention to the literary component of my theoretical approach to the body in literature, I would like to refer to another comment by John O'Neill. It is one that reminds me of my own discomfort with abstract theories that either completely erase or marginalize the social, living human body. John O'Neill pondered if literary systems were doing the work of artists who must now use, "the official language which subordinates social life to bureaucratic systems" (*Five Bodies* 27). The fact is, however, that discourse and institutions cannot exist without the recognition and actions of the "whole," living human body.

An understanding of Helmuth Plessner's²⁷ differentiation between the meaning of the German words "der Leib" and "der Körper" will make it easier to recognise the body as it exists in its various forms in the world. While "Leib" describes the body as interior, living, animated, subjective and experiential, "Körper" indicates the body as exterior, objective, and institutionalised. The ambiguity of the human body is reflected, therefore, in its potential to be both objective and subjective, social and natural, or personal and impersonal.

Influenced by Cartesian dualism, sociologists, with few exceptions, that is, until recently, have not approached the human body as both "Leib" and "Körper." For them the body had been seen as "Körper," that is, as an impersonal object to be measured with the use of codes, numbers, lines, signs, and indexes, or worse yet, simply as a corpse. This, then, is an important point of departure for a literary analysis based on the body. A critical interpretation would have to recognise the body as an integrated whole, that is, as both a subjective, lived, shared experience and as an alienated object constructed through documented details and training.

Critical Theory and Interpretation of Literary Text

An interdisciplinary framework is essential for dealing with the body. Sociology offers important classifications of the body that can be adapted for a study and analysis of the body in literary texts. My search for a compatible theoretical and methodological approach to interpreting the body in literature, and in particular in the early works of Heinrich Böll, has brought me to consider systems or codes that make it possible for human beings to see events or entities as signs bearing meaning. Since codes are elements of human culture, they are also governed by biological and physical constraints. Generic codes and language not only produce and interpret the literary text but work together to shape and control the "natural" human body. In other words, they help to uncover the "invisible" codes that affect our perception and behaviour in everyday

²⁷ See H. Plessner's, *Gesammelte Schriften VIII Conditio humana* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1983) 136-217.

life, and to shape a critical methodology for analysing the literary text. The meaning of a text is therefore never established solely by the writer, or for that matter, the reader. As cultural beings, both present an uneven blend of public and private, and of conscious and unconscious components. Taken together, however, they can provide a secure base upon which to establish textual interpretation.

Body Language in Literature: Toward a Critical Framework

Another recent approach to the interpretation of the literary text, to which my study is indebted, is Barbara Korte's timely study of body language in literature. Her research is enhanced by her adaptation of aspects of Robert Scholes's semiotic approach to literary studies. In fact, for her, body language in literature is profoundly informed by conscious and unconscious codes and conventions. Barbara Korte defines body language as "non-verbal behaviour (movements and postures, facial expression, glances and eye contact, automatic reactions, spatial and touching behaviour) which is 'meaningful' in both natural and fictional communication" (Body Language 3-4). In other words, all non-verbal behaviour displayed by fictional characters that can be decoded by a receiver, whether consciously or unconsciously, intentionally or unintentionally, can be defined, in her opinion, as non-verbal communication (NVC) or body language.

A basic competence in NVC, therefore, facilitates the interpretation of literary body language. According to Barbara Korte, the growing interest in body language since the sixties (reflected in popular handbooks, literature, theatre, art exhibits, health clubs, ever-increasing cosmetic surgery, organ transplants, artificial reproductive technology, etc.) explains the re-birth of the body in many areas of everyday life and academic fields of study (Body Language 4). Aside from its topicality, the body's presence in literature emerges as an important signifying system. Both the writer and the reader must, therefore, acquire the necessary competence to make use of such a system. As Barbara Korte further argues: "Contrary to its occurrence in real life, non-verbal behaviour in literature is *always*²⁸ 'significant': it is integral to the text's artistic design even when it cannot be read as a sign with a clearly defined meaning" (Body Language 5).

Many works dealing with the presence, significance, and use of body language in literature and the arts which began in the eighteenth century are related to contemporary NVC research. Studies of gesture in narrative literature, such as Karl Sittl's Die Gebärden der Griechen und Römer (1890) began in Germany and were profoundly influenced by cultural history. They complemented the cultural gestures of the Greeks and Romans, and of Medieval Europeans being compiled concurrently in folklore, folk psychology, and comparative linguistics. When the emotions of literary characters are expressed through body language, they reveal more clearly their importance to the portrayal of etiquette and ceremony in medieval society. In more recent times, namely, prior to the Second World War, a racist ideology marked various German studies on cultural aspects of body language.²⁹

In fact, the interdisciplinary NVC research of psychology, sociology, anthropology, and linguistics has opened up more detailed categories for interpreting natural body language than had been the case in the research carried out in rhetoric or expression psychology. With the collapse of Germany in 1945 the marked decrease in German studies of literary body language

²⁸ The emphasis is mine.

²⁹ See Korte, Body Language 18ff.

was due, of course, to a direct reaction to the racist writings produced before and especially during the Third Reich. As the disciplines of sociology and social psychology continued to develop in the seventies, modern NVC research in North America and Britain also began to carve out its own terminology. A decade later, however, NVC terminology began to gain acceptance in German literary criticism, thereby gradually displacing its former dependence on the traditional and rather vague usage of “gesture” and “posture.”

All the same, NVC research into human interaction has inspired several useful approaches for a fruitful investigation of body language in literature. Although body language had previously been studied mainly as an expression of feeling, NVC research now highlights the importance of non-verbal interaction between characters in a fictional text. Previously unrecognised forms of NVC have now moved out from under the vague term “gesture” into the sights and the awareness of the literary critic. It could even be argued that the recognition of the role of haptic (touching behaviour such as kissing, embracing, caressing, hand holding, hitting etc., that suggest body movement and physical closeness) and proxemic (a general decoding of human use, perception, and conception of space, especially spatial conduct) behaviour is useful for interpreting certain literary works.³⁰ With the increasing awareness of fictional space, proxemics has become recognised for its interpretative potential in literary criticism, especially regarding the interpersonal relationships dealt with in the respective texts.³¹

The analysis of literary body language, grounded on ordinary non-verbal competence, demands specific categories. NVC classification systems, while useful, need to be adapted for literary interpretation and criticism. In social life, the majority of human interaction and communication occurs non-verbally. NVC research has also benefited enormously from sociological and social-psychological studies. These have shown the role of non-verbal behaviour in human interaction is potentially multi-layered. In literature, the non-verbal behaviour described by the author enables the reader to arrive at conclusions regarding the thoughts, feelings, personal characteristics, and attitudes of the characters in a fictional text. Their social status and the social roles they perform are not only revealed but offer insights into the power relations that exist between them. Even the slightest hint of attraction and repulsion between fictional characters are revealed through an author’s description of their non-verbal behaviour. Verbal utterances are also regulated by NVC. In fact, the verbal message can be contradicted, complemented, or even substituted by the reaction of the observer of the speaker’s body language.

Korte has provided a useful classification framework for recognising NVC forms and roles of body language in literature. In relation to the situation in which it takes place, these forms of body language also require what Korte calls a special “functional class” indicative of its literary effectiveness. The aim of defining various classes of NVC in the literary text is significant because of its ability to intensify meaning and to convey messages. Moreover, if Marcel Mauss is correct, “techniques of the body,”³² such as the learned everyday actions of walking, standing, sitting, or eating, are culture-specific. Korte also includes touching, spatial relationships, and body movements (gestures such as nodding, raising a hand, waving an arm,

³⁰ See, for example, Margaret Atwood’s utopian novel *The Handmaid’s Tale* (1987) in which the lack of touch is portrayed as unbearable and isolating.

³¹ See Barbara Korte’s critical review of several novels that make use of haptics and proxemics (*Body Language in Literature* 65-77). Also see Moshe Barasch’s study of body language in Giotto’s paintings.

³² See Marcel Mauss, “Body Techniques.” *Sociology and Psychology: Essays* (London: Routledge, 1979 [1936]).

and practical actions such as body techniques), body postures, facial expression, eye behaviour, and automatic physiological and physio-chemical reactions such as trembling, involuntary change of skin colour, perspiring etc. in this form of bodily activity.

The “functional” classification embraces bodily activities that Korte defines as displays of emotion, “externalizers,” “illustrators,” “emblems,” and “regulators.”³³ These two categories of ordinary non-verbal competence, namely, form and role classifications, especially in conjunction with situational frame conditions such as conscious/unconscious, intentional/unintentional, speech, etc., are indispensable tools for understanding the role, meaning, and effect of the way an author describes the body language of his or her characters.

Korte complements these two categories which are heavily dependent on the ordinary non-verbal competence of the reader, with an open catalogue of questions. These questions help to provide a more satisfactory and balanced interpretation of the body’s presence in the narrative text. Barbara Korte identifies three areas with questions that deal with the presentation, and the literary functions and effects of body language in the narrative text. Two other areas dealing with the writer’s concept of body language, in relation to genre, author, and period, as well as the three mentioned above, will now be briefly summarised.

Firstly, Korte asks: What is the frequency and distribution of body language within the text? What is the semantic content, and the semantic clarity or vagueness of the non-verbal signified? What is the distinctiveness of the non-verbal signifier? Secondly, how is an example of body language “filtered” through language and narrative transmission. Is it foregrounded via linguistic means, narrative mode, the structure of narrative transmission, or visual perspectivization? Thirdly, what role does body language as an element in the action, as an indication of mental states, as an indication of interpersonal relationships, as a means of character definition and identification, authentication, or dramatisation, play in the constitution of fictional reality? Is the body used as an image, or in the development of a theme? Does body language in the narrative text, in the process of narrative transmission, establish contrasts or correspondences among characters? Does it establish textual coherence, or perhaps a technical and/or structural function? Is body language intended to achieve a particular effect in the reader? Fourthly, is the use of body language determined by a specific concept? Fifthly, to what extent is the use of body language determined by genre, author, or period? Korte’s critical framework focuses, therefore, on the usefulness of body language not only as a signifying system for the literary text, but also as a means of enhancing, in a myriad of ways, its meaning and effects. It fills a need since previous analyses of this sort have not been completely successful in relating body language to literature.

Korte’s critical approach serves as a much needed efficacious tool for critical literary analysis. Moreover, it reveals body language and its meaning in literature by opening up and describing an area of the literary narrative which may have previously been neglected. Body language, once decoded, has the potential to provide new insights into familiar texts. These new insights may even contradict the meanings transmitted in words and other signalling systems within the narrative. It is this potential that makes it a very promising theoretical approach for interpreting the role and significance of war-damaged bodies in Böll’s early writings. The question before me now is two-pronged: Can a social theory of the body be fruitfully applied to Böll’s early writings? If so, will it, with the use of body language as an analytical tool provide deeper insights into these works?

³³ Korte, *Body Language* 39-55.

Applying Body Theories to Böll's Early Prose

Almost every scholar since Böll delivered his 1964 "Frankfurter Vorlesungen," has referred to what he termed his "Ästhetik des Humanen." My own studies confirm that almost every aspect of Böll's early writings, including his "Ästhetik des Humanen" is, first and foremost, based on the contemporary discourses of the body and of its "language." Many of Böll's early works that I will analyse are either set in, or have flashbacks to the Nazi era and the immediate post-war decade. I will also try to explain why Böll's references to the human body are often in direct contrast to those promulgated by Hitler and the Nazis. Many people have asked me, rather quizzically, if Böll wrote about the body³⁴ or for that matter, much about the Jews. My answer is an unequivocal yes to both these questions. For me, the human body as both a subjective, "lived," shared experience, and as an alienated object is ever present in Böll's writings. He appears to have presented his views on the body for close analysis on almost every page of his prose. Yet, very few critics have either recognised them or found them worthy of an extensive discussion. How is this possible? Perhaps, in the light of the German people's weariness of Nazi body propaganda, Böll's attempt to present his views on the subjective, lived human body was at times too subtle. What is indisputable, however, is that Böll's concept of the body and what it means to be human is a complete rejection of that promoted by the Nazis.

More than three decades after the war, in a 1977 interview with the journalist Hans-Peter Riese, Böll himself suggests that his views on what it truly means to be human is still waiting to be discovered among the words of his narrative prose: "[...] egal was [ich schreibe] [...] mein Selbstverständnis ist ausgedrückt [...] und ich habe den Eindruck, daß man da einen Humanismusbegriff herausfinden kann" (Böll/Riese, "Schriftsteller" 15). Earlier, in a 1972 interview with Marcus Ronner of Zürich's *Die Weltwoche*, Böll had also admitted: "Ich setze immer zuviel voraus; es widerstrebt mir, [...] das Selbstverständliche auszudrücken, und dadurch entstehen sehr viele Mißverständnisse" (*Interviews* 218). It is possible, therefore, that Böll may have taken the underlying importance of the human body in his work for granted, expecting that his readers with a little imagination would recognise it. If so, has the body been too well hidden?

In my opinion, however, the opposite is true. Böll's attention to all aspects of the lived human body is so obvious that it has effectively escaped detection. Whichever proves to be the correct explanation, the role of the body in Böll's work is too important to ignore. Perhaps Böll did not see the need to continually spell out the role of the body in Nazi ideology. However, for readers today, more than six and a half decades after Hitler seized power, the multi-faceted contemporary discussions of the ideal German/Aryan body may not be so obvious.

Of course, all forms of Expressionist art depicting the "open" imperfect body were in complete contrast to the Nazi writings on the "closed" perfect body. This will be more fully developed in the next chapter. If, in fact, the discourse of the body, and therefore his views on humanity, seemed to Böll simply too obvious to have to "spell them out," then the task before me is to reveal them and their importance for a better understanding of his works. The most effective tool for this task must provide interpretations to the numerous bodily signs and codes in his narratives. It is for this reason that I will employ the theory of literary body language as an indispensable analytical tool.

³⁴ For example, the first question was put to me by Dr. Dieter Wellershoff, Böll's editor in the seventies, at his home in Cologne, during an interview which he kindly granted me on August 13, 1996.

Böll and his family were very politically aware and defiant in their stance against Hitler and his regime of terror. For example, Böll recounts that even when his mother was warned in 1940, in the midst of the victory and splendour of the Third Reich, to tone down her negative rhetoric, she continued to defiantly fight with her eyes: “Sie sprach nur noch mit Blicken [sic], und ihre großen, dunklen Augen sprachen wohl noch deutlicher als ihr Mund” (Briefe aus 55). Another example of the profound importance of body language for Böll goes back to his school days. Böll writes: “Wenn da einer sein erbärmliches Griechisch oder Latein einmal - was selten vorkam – mit seiner Uniform ausgleichen wollte, blickte mich der Studienrat Bauer an (ich hatte ihn von Sexta bis Oberprima) - es bedurfte keiner Ausdrücklichkeit zwischen uns; er war ein Demokrat, Humanist, keineswegs kriegsversessen” (Was soll 64). In these two examples taken from his personal life and experiences, Böll shows that he fully recognised the potential of non-verbal behaviour to speak volumes, and he would introduce many such incidents of NVC into his prose.

This obvious reliance on body language to convey the “real” story beneath illusory words, actions, and events shows why it is so important to locate and then analyse it in Böll’s work. Not to do so, may be to miss half if not the whole story. His intense feelings about the war, the Nazi regime, and the suffering and injustice they brought upon human beings are all present in his early writings. Following Nietzsche, Hugo von Hofmannsthal advises that one must hide the intensity: “Aber wo?” he asks, “An der Oberfläche!” (qtd. in H. Hoffmann 65). Böll, too, has long since been aware of this old adage. In his 1974 review of Carl Amery’s Das Königsprojekt, Böll writes: “Was las ich doch vor knapp vierzig Jahren bei Chesterton und fand es im Königsprojekt als Zitat wieder? ‘Wo verbirgt der Weise ein Blatt? Im Walde’” (Man muß 157). This again drives home the importance of Böll’s at times too well “concealed” use of body language in his writings .

The decision to deal with Heinrich Böll’s early fictional work opened up the opportunity for me to take advantage of “new” works which, although written in the forties and early fifties, were finally published only in the eighties and nineties. Another advantage is the opportunity to understand better why these posthumous works were not published when they were first written. More than just the fact that they treat the topic of the Second World War, these works present Böll’s perhaps more outspoken views regarding Hitler, the Nazis, the Jews, anti-Semitism, acts of treason, insubordination, cruelty, desertion and cowardice. In addition, such works also focus on the destroyed and damaged bodies left in the aftermath of the war. With the German currency reform of 1948, Germany was on the rise again, economically, industrially, and socially. The Nuremberg War-Crimes Trials were over and the “denazification” program was in full swing. It is therefore understandable that relatively few Germans wanted to remember or to be reminded about how it had been back then in the Third Reich.

Using what he called his “X-ray” eyes, Böll reported what he saw during that infamous era. The reader must also make the effort to look beneath the surface of events and “superficial” descriptions of individuals in his texts in order to arrive at the reality Böll is trying to convey. The sign posts are everywhere. To read and interpret them, we must pay close attention to the “bodies,” whole or damaged, that appear with great frequency on the pages of his texts. It is a task that will be made easier if we first familiarise ourselves with the political and social atmosphere that pervaded the period before, during and after the Third Reich.

Heinrich Böll, even as late as 1985, expressed similar sentiments in an interview with Herbert Hoven:

Mir fällt auf, daß die meisten einen Autor, ob der Goethe heißt oder Fontane oder ein Gegenwartsautor ist, nicht aus der Zeit heraus kommentieren, in der er seine

Bücher geschrieben hat. Die Zurückversetzung in der Zeit der Entstehung, in die politische, gesellschaftliche, weltpolitische und innenpolitische Situation geschieht sehr selten. Die Zeitlichkeit eines Autors [. . .] müßte aber das Erste sein, das man zu vermitteln versucht, bevor man anfängt ihn auszulegen, zu interpretieren. ("In Leserbriefen" 111)

For Böll, it was of the utmost importance to understand the contemporary environment in which the author writes. The ubiquitous presence and pall of the Third Reich and its consequences fill the author's writings, especially his earlier works, some of which were only first published from the Böll archive in the last two decades.

Böll's comment in a written interview published in the Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger (May 08. 1985), in which he declared that most of his contemporary writers avoided writing about the touchy subject of the National Socialist era, while perhaps a little exaggerated is still important:

Die Tatsache, daß die Konzentrationslager, Hitler und alles, was mit diesem Namen verbindet, kaum oder nur selten zum literarischen "Stoff" wurden, läßt sich einfach begründen: gegen die Dokumentationen – etwa Kogons "SS-Staat" und andere Schriften – hätte eine "fiktive" Beschäftigung mit diesem "Stoff" nur lächerlich ausfallen können. ("Herausforderung" 10)

In fact, Böll's review of Edgar Hilsenrath's Der Nazi und der Friseur (1977) registers his amazement at, and approval of finding an author with the courage and the ability to realistically portray the horror of that era in his fiction:

Das Gruselspiel war ja kein Spiel, es ist durch Hilsenrath wirklich geworden, und es hat sie ja wohl doch gegeben – oder? – diese Nazis, die getan haben, wovon keiner gewußt, was keiner gewollt, und wenn man alles vergessen sollte: die Goldzähne und die, die sie einmal getragen haben, vergißt man nicht, wenn Schultz-Finkelstein da im Wald der sechs Millionen spazieren geht. ("Hans im Glück" 79)

As Böll remarks: "Wahrscheinlich ist es gut, daß Hilsenraths Buch erst *jetzt* erscheint, wo die Versachlichung der Nazizeit an so vielen *Sachen* vorbeisieht" ("Hans im Glück" 78). Timing, according to Böll, is often everything. With regard to familiar texts and his more recently appearing unpublished earlier works, perhaps now³⁵ is the ideal time to revisit that painful era with, if you will, fresh, scrutinising, "X-ray" eyes. It is essential, therefore, in order to achieve a fair analysis of Böll's own writings, that the author and his early prose be carefully studied in the context of the Third Reich and the restoration years.

The contemporary discourse of the body provides a fascinating point of departure for such an investigation of Böll's early prose as a discourse of war-damaged bodies. This is particularly important since, as Anne Geddes Bailey declares: "Fascism defines beauty in terms of strength rather than fragility, under fascism, for example, the human body became beautiful, not in juxtaposition to violence which crippled it, but through genetic and racial purification."

³⁵ The last few years have seen agreements struck to return stolen art works, to open up records, and to "unfreeze" bank accounts of Jews in Swiss financial institutions. On 14 December 1999, after a year of negotiations, an agreement between surviving victims and German industry and government has finally been reached to compensate survivors in the amount of 5.2 billion dollars for their slave labour for the Nazi war machine in factories, and labour and concentration camps. For more details on the agreement, see cnn.com/1999/WORLD/europe/12/14/nazi.laborers/index.html.

She further argues: "Representations of violence which reveal beauty in crippled and broken forms evoke an emotional, human response. In contrast, violence in fascism was used, literally and figuratively, to 'cleanse' humanity of the crippled and broken, in order to make an abstract and metaphoric perfection real" (Bailey, *Aesthetics of Fascism* 9).

The discussion of Heinrich Böll's early prose, in the present study, will be based on selections made from the following list of works which includes their date of publication and date of origin. They are: *Der Zug war pünktlich* (1949), *Wanderer kommst du nach Spa ...: Erzählungen* (1950; 1947-1950), *Wo warst du, Adam?* (1951), *Und sagte kein einziges Wort* (1953), *Haus ohne Hüter* (1954); *Das Brot des frühen Jahre* (1955), *Das Vermächtnis* (1982; 1949); *Die Verwundung und andere Erzählungen* (1983; 1947 - 1951), "Der General stand auf einem Hügel ..." (1991; 1946), "Mit diesen Händen" (1992; 1947), *Der Engel schwieg* (1992; 1949-1951), and *Der blasse Hund: Erzählungen* (1995; 1936/37 - 1950-51). I have chosen these texts since they all deal either directly or indirectly with Nazism and Böll's reaction to it.

The Structure of the Thesis

The thesis will consist of eight chapters. Chapter I introduces the present study. Although freely borrowing from my research on sociological theories of the body, I will not be bound by them. The underlying theoretical premise of my study will be the recognition of the role of institutions, discourses and the nature of the physical body in "shaping" and/or re-forming the human body. Chapter II, which showcases the Aryan/Nazi body, will provide a brief historical look at the classical concept of beauty with its inherent dignity of all men, and its wilful distortion by the National Socialist regime which culminated in devastating warfare, and human atrocities perpetrated in Auschwitz and other concentration/death camps.

Chapter III will focus on Böll's early biography, especially as it unfolds during the Third Reich and reflects or rejects the contemporary discourses on the body. In addition, I will adapt the four categories: disciplined, mirroring, dominating, and communicative used by the sociologist Arthur W. Frank in his typology of the body in action,³⁶ as convenient titles for Chapters IV through VII of my thesis. Each of these chapters, with the help of the theoretical tool of body language, will analyse selected works and characters drawn from Böll's early prose (i.e., his writings up to 1955). It is a process that will be aimed at identifying the indicated body type and revealing its importance for Böll's views on humanity. Chapter VIII will summarise the findings of the dissertation and point to future areas of study and scholarship.

Chapter II, "The Aryan/Nazi Body," will provide both a diachronic and synchronic general survey of the discourses of the body from the Classical period through the collapse of the Third Reich and up to the mid-fifties in restoration Germany. Investigated from several perspectives, a rich tapestry of the contemporary narrative discourse of the body will emerge that will serve as an indispensable foundation for an analysis of the role of the body in Böll's writings. These perspectives will shed light on the various discourses on the human body in the first half of the twentieth century by reflecting changes in the political systems, as well as those that followed the Industrial Revolution and its aftermath, the labour movements, and the job market, the economy, financial institutions, issues of health, culture, and education, the predominance of science, (especially biology and genetics) and the military.

In addition, the National Socialist's revival of duelling, the impact of wars, the growing women's movement, various art forms (sculpture, and architecture; literature, and films), sports,

³⁶ See Frank "Sociology of the Body" 54 ff.

sport cults, the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games, the nature of propaganda, and perhaps most importantly, the Nazi “Schönheitsideal” which embraces all of the preceding, will be reviewed. Although none of these can be discussed at great length, it is hoped that a sense of the times, that is, in which Heinrich Böll lived as a student, soldier and citizen, and its effect on him and his contemporary society will emerge and inform his writings.

All these streams of body discourses eventually empty into the insatiable, fanatic desire for the perfect Aryan body and the Nazis’ claim of the birth of a superior race which, at the same time, denounced everything else as unworthy of life. In addition, relevant aspects of Böll’s biography will be discussed in Chapter III in the light of this, as well as its role in shaping his own view of humanity. This is essential since during the first thirty-two years of his life, Böll witnessed Germany’s ruling government change from a monarchy to a republic, to a totalitarian dictatorship, to occupations by the allies, and finally to a divided Germany. In this regard, the concept of the body politic, that is, of the body as metaphor and metonym, will provide relevant insights for my discussion of the political and societal milieu which form the backdrop for Böll’s early works.

In Chapter IV, “Disciplined Bodies,” I will focus on the disciplined body of the German soldier in the Second World War. I will also search out the submissive, “docile” bodies demanded by Hitler and his military personnel. My research and analysis will also investigate the theme of discipline from the perspective of Böll, both as narrator and soldier. The soldier’s disciplined body is of necessity one which either freely, or through coercion, submits itself to the will and orders of another who is a representative of an institution. The bodies of soldiers, sports figures (both professional and amateur), workers, students, religious enthusiasts, entertainers, all shaped and re-shaped through the rigorous practice of specific body regimes and drills, whether self-inflicted or inflicted on them by others, are just some examples of disciplined, controlled bodies.

Foucault’s theoretical writings on the disciplined body will be a useful analytical tool. According to Foucault: “Discipline ‘makes’ individuals; it is the specific technique of a power that regards individuals both as objects and as instruments of its exercise” (“Means of Correct Training” 188). In addition to the strict body regimes, however, individuals are also subjugated through the power of writing. As he explains:

To be looked at, observed, described in detail, [. . .] was [once] a privilege . . . part of the rituals of his power. The disciplinary methods reversed this relation, lowered the threshold of describable individuality, and made of this description a means of control and a method of domination. It is no longer a monument for future memory, but a document for possible use. [. . .] This turning of real lives into writing is no longer a procedure of heroization; it functions as a procedure of objectification and subjection. (Foucault, “Means of Correct Training” 203-204)

The three works I plan to investigate in Chapter IV are Böll’s Wo warst du, Adam?, Das Vermächtnis, and “Der General stand auf einem Hügel . . .” . By focusing on the disciplined body of the soldier and Böll’s use of body language, I expect to reveal Böll’s emphasis on the importance of the role of the body and his sustained demand for the dignity of human beings under any circumstances.

During Hitler’s rule, the everyday existence of German citizens became highly orchestrated. Through his use of propaganda and the staging of numerous festivals and sporting events Hitler skilfully created an artificial world that looked extraordinarily real to Germans from

all walks of life. The “mirroring” bodies discussed in Chapter V are reflections of this deceptive world of make believe. For example, Colonel Bressen, a character in Böll’s war novel Wo warst du, Adam?, displays many of the characteristics that this study associates with the mirroring body, particularly those based on what Bourdieu calls *habitus*. In other words, the Colonel’s physical appearance and behaviour reflect the tastes and values of the class to which he aspires. However, it is a class that only exists in the “Scheinwelt” of the Third Reich. It simply does not exist in his contemporary world. The Colonel assures himself of satisfaction by “seeing” his desires already fulfilled in everything he observes and does. His mirroring body is therefore a closed, self-centred body. Böll’s treatment of body language, especially noses, in Wo warst du, Adam? and “Todesursache: Hakennase” reveals that the Nazis’ understanding of the “perfect” Aryan body is more often a case of “Schein” rather than “Sein.”

The “new man,” that is, the Aryan representative of the noble northern race of peoples that the Nazis tried to create, is also a fiction. It was this image of an elite race that increasingly came to dominate the German world of economics and politics. In the decades leading up to and including the duration of the Third Reich, those who believed in this racial ideology showed nothing but contempt for mankind. In this regime, nakedness became an outward symbol of the god-like superiority and “Schönheitsideal” that must be aimed for, and for which, real, living men had to sacrifice their bodies. In a macabre twist of fate, the political history of the body is here intricately tied to the intellectual history of the body. The focus of Chapter VI will be on “Dominating Bodies.” For example, in an effort to quell their fears and retain their personal sense of supremacy dominating individuals in Böll’s Der blasse Hund, Wo warst du, Adam?, and Der Engel schwieg exert their will on others through the use of force and/or violence.

In his writings, Heinrich Böll’s choice of narrative themes are: “Ehe, die Familie, Freundschaft, Religion, das Essen, die Kleidung, das Geld, die Arbeit, die Zeit, [...] die Liebe” (“Frankfurter” 73). These themes demonstrate the importance of community and communication for him and his fellow Germans in a world shattered by the war. In Chapter VII, I will identify and investigate “Communicative Bodies” in terms of discourses, institutions, and the physical nature of the body. In contrast to the closed, dissociated, “disciplined” and “mirroring” bodies, and the negatively associated dominating body, the “communicative” body is positive, open, and willing to associate and share itself with others.

As Böll comments: “Ich gehe von der Voraussetzung aus, daß Sprache, Liebe, Gebundenheit den Menschen zum Menschen machen, daß sie den Menschen zu sich selbst, zu anderen, zu Gott in Beziehung setzen [. . .]” (“Frankfurter” 33). For him: “Die Deutschen [. . .] warten auf Gebundenheit, finden aber nur Gesellschaft, kein Vertrauen” (“Frankfurter” 35). In this series of lectures at the University of Frankfurt, Böll clearly makes the distinction between the words “Gebundenheit,” i.e., an experience of a sense of community and belonging, and “Gesellschaft,” i.e., a form of sociality that is more contractual than physical in nature. For Frank Finlay, any consideration of Böll’s legacy for contemporary literature must recognise that he:

always eschews the lofty detachment of the ivory tower; all his utterances emanate from a sense of co-responsibility for the fate of the society to which he belongs. Böll, [. . .] uses the term *Gebundenheit* to refer to his being involved, committed, tied to the historical events of his generation. [. . .] Böll’s own biography is of particular importance in this context. (Rationality 236-237)

An understanding of this difference between his use of the words “Gesellschaft” and “Gebundenheit,” therefore, is important for a better understanding of the pre-war, war, and post-war era that Böll captures in his writings.

Communicative bodies share lived experiences and refuse to be contained within either artificial or real boundaries. Moreover, because they need recognition in one form or another, regardless of their current condition, they remain open to all possibilities, and have the right to be flexible and spontaneous. Among the Böll texts to be consulted will be “Die Brennenden,” “Der blasse Hund,” “Mit diesen Händen,” Der Zug war pünktlich, Und sagte kein einziges Wort, Haus ohne Hüter, and Das Brot des frühen Jahres. In these works, the communicative nature of Böll’s characters is revealed through his use of literary body language, and the motifs of “Zärtlichkeit”/“Gebundenheit” and of the hand. This chapter provides a good opportunity to reflect upon the centrality of the hand in Böll’s writing, an aspect which has not yet been fully recognised or explored by many Böll scholars.

In Chapter VIII, I will summarise the findings of my thesis and suggest directions for further research stemming from the work begun here. The aim of my dissertation, therefore, is to bring Böll’s writings into the current discourse of the body. In fact, in Böll’s early prose we can trace the changing fortunes of the supposedly new, perfect, beautiful, and inviolable human beings that the Nazis tried at all costs to create and to present to the German nation and to the world. Böll also portrays their horribly mutilated bodies as they lie wounded, dying or dead in their own blood, or rather in “Führerblut.”³⁷ In his writings, Böll often depicts his fellow German soldiers as starving, thirsty, filthy, covered in lice and excrement, and foul smelling in trenches and in field campaigns.

In addition, Böll describes their mutilated, suffering, and lonely bodies lying in field hospitals, and also as cowards and deserters fleeing from the enemy and their own military police. His images are a far cry from those spewed out by the tireless Nazi propaganda machine. When the Third Reich bubble finally burst at the end of the war, civilians and soldiers who survived the carnage, returned home without fanfare and glory to widespread devastation. Böll reached out to his fellow Germans, with their physically and/or mentally damaged bodies, with deep compassion, love, and understanding. In the face of the cruel taunts and mistreatment at the hands of the allies in a POW camp, Böll, the “Rheinländer/Kölner,” considered himself for the first time “Deutscher.” The significance of my work lies in recognising the importance of the body images in early Böll. His ability to criticise his fellow Germans not only emphasises his ambiguous relationship with them but also allows him to show his deep affection for his fellow men.

³⁷ Walter Buch (the Supreme NSDAP Judge) used this term in his September 1938 speech in which he denounced what he called the squandering of the Führer’s blood precisely at a time when Germany’s entire future was dependent on every good and healthy drop (see Ute Frevert Ehrenmänner chapter 7, n. 102).

CHAPTER II. THE ARYAN/NAZI BODY

Die Summe der gesunden Körper konstituiert den gesunden Volkskörper, ein Politikum der obersten NS-Kategorie. (Hilmar Hoffmann)

Die heutige Zeit arbeitet an einem neuen Menschentyp, ungeheure Anstrengungen werden ... vollbracht, um das Volk zu heben, um unsere Männer, Knaben, Jünglinge, die Mädchen und Frauen gesünder und damit kraftvoller und schöner zu gestalten. (Adolf Hitler)

The “myth” of the Aryan/Nazi body is a compelling tale. It is one that begins with sublime ideals of beauty and the dignity of man in the German Classical Period, only to degenerate into unspeakable acts of man’s inhumanity to man in the Third Reich. But it is precisely this story, with all its twists and turns, as well as all its high and low points, that becomes both background and thematic material for Heinrich Böll’s early prose. It is a tale, therefore, that must be told. The story of the Aryan/Nazi body is the culmination of the discourses of the body of many disciplines and institutions that range from the sublime to the ridiculous.

Although this chapter aims to provide a comprehensive look at the concept of this body, one that could simultaneously engender both fascination and violence, it can in no measure presume to be exhaustive in its scope. A brief introduction of Hitler’s interpretation of the body politic will lead off the discussion. A concise, historical review of relevant body discourses, gleaned from analyses of selected portions of relevant speeches, writings, and Nazi sport films, will help to define a physical and mental image of the Aryan/Nazi body. In addition, it will facilitate a better understanding of Böll’s early prose as a discourse of war-damaged bodies.

Hitler’s Drive to Reconstitute Germany’s “Body”

Chapter II’s first epigraph, “Die Summe der gesunden Körper konstituiert den gesunden Volkskörper, ein Politikum der obersten NS-Kategorie,” will be a useful point of departure for a discussion of how Hitler and his part members viewed the role of the individual body in relation to the body politics of a new, whole Germany. For the Nazis, therefore, the most important political issue was that all healthy bodies of the new state should collectively constitute the healthy national body. In the national propaganda of a twentieth century Germany ruled by Hitler’s National Socialist regime, the concept of the body of the individual was therefore represented as being synonymous with Germany’s body. Individuals constituted the body of the German warrior state.³⁸

In fact, the German writer, Klaus Theweleit,³⁹ suggested that almost every written description of Germany’s political situation after the First World War depicted Germany as a

³⁸ In *Mein Kampf*, Hitler referred to Germany as a “German warrior” under attack in the First World War on all sides by its enemies: “Fast vier Jahre lang war man gegen den deutschen Recken angerannt und konnte ihn nicht zum Stürze bringen; [. . .] Man fürchtete ihn [. . .] denn endlich mußte ja doch der russische Riese in der Überzahl seiner Menschen Sieger bleiben, Deutschland aber an Verblutung niederbrechen” (214-215). Hitler and others blamed the eventual defeat of the German warrior on a stab in the back administered by revolutionaries, Jews and striking women on the home front.

³⁹ The East Prussian born writer and publicist, Klaus Theweleit (1942-), first burst onto the public scene with his publication of his two volume work *Männerphantasien 1/2* (1980). It is still considered to be a classic about the fascist consciousness *per se*.

dismembered body that had to be made whole once again (Das Land 19). Hitler, who felt that he had the political mandate and the foolproof plan to accomplish this job, embraced Richard Walther Darré's "Blut und Boden"⁴⁰ policy. This policy, specifically aimed as it was at creating a pure-blooded, healthy racial breed of superior German/Aryans, required an unprecedented, ruthless program of land expansion at the expense of other nations and peoples.⁴¹

After seizing power in 1933, Hitler, with the use of intimidation and force, methodically set about the monumental task of reconstructing and "healing" the German body. After a successful plebiscite, the Saar region was officially turned over to the Third Reich on March 1, 1935. On September 29, 1938, the Third Reich, in agreement with the Czech government, acquired 10,000 square miles of Sudetenland, and thereby immediately increased its population by three and a half million. On March 12, 1938, through annexation, Austria became a part of the Third Reich, and on March 15, 1939, military forces of the Third Reich occupied the Czech part of Czechoslovakia. Bohemia and Moravia were then declared German protectorates. By 1941, Hitler's expansion plan was well underway. Germany had successively subjugated Poland, Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, France, Yugoslavia, and Greece. Klaus Theweleit summed up Hitler's drive to heal and reassemble Germany's dismembered body in this way:

Österreich mußte "angeschlossen" werden, angenäht, und nun los auf den Osten, Böhmen, die Tschechoslowakei, Polen ... Körper-Protectorate, beherrscht von "Schutz-Staffeln" ... Deutschland beginnt seinen schützenden Krieg ... der Körper Großdeutschland war nicht mehr zu stoppen in seinem heilbringenden Wachstum, [. . .] immer größer, stärker, unverletzlicher wurde damit auch der einzelne *eigene* Körper, die "individuelle" großdeutsche soldatische Eiche, ein Fels von einem Körperballon. (Das Land 19-20)

According to Klaus Theweleit, because of the Nazis' "Unverletzlichkeitsphantasie" propaganda, millions upon millions of Germans allowed themselves to be driven into the Second World War conflict (Das Land 20). However, the beautiful "Schein" of invulnerability soon became the horrific "Sein" of the vulnerable flesh and blood of members of Hitler's "super-race" as they lay injured, mutilated and rotting on battlefields and in towns and villages reduced to rubble.

Hitler, in soundly rejecting the Weimar democratic system of government, proposed a folkish state that would be completely free of the parliamentary principle of majority rule. He proposed instead a state in which the "Persönlichkeitsprinzip" would take precedence. For him, "der völkische Staat" should only have advisory bodies standing at the side of the elected leader

⁴⁰ Richard Walther Darré, a close friend of Himmler from his student days in the League of Artamanen, was the proponent of "Blut und Boden" (blood and soil) mysticism. As the author of several publications on biological determinism which gained him the reputation as an expert in "human breeding," he eventually became the head of the "SS Rasse und Siedlungs Hauptamt" in 1931. Darré glorified German farmers as the remnant of the true Nordic race, seeing them as the future source of Germany's racial elite (See Ziegler, Aristocracy 52-53. See also Jensen, "Blut und Boden" 399-400.).

⁴¹ Hitler expressed himself in this regard in Mein Kampf as follows: "Was in der Geschichte nutzbringend germanisiert wurde, war der Boden, den unsere Vorfahren mit dem Schwert erwarben und mit deutschen Bauern besiedelten. Soweit sie dabei unserem Volkskörper fremdes Blut zuführten, wirkten sie mit an jener unseligen Zersplitterung unseres inneren Wesens, die sich in dem – leider vielfach sogar noch gepriesenen – deutschen Überindividualismus auswirkt" (430). It was Hitler's intention, therefore, to right these wrongs through the vigorous implementation of R.W.Darré's racial policy of "Blut und Boden," one that would purify the German race and restore lost land, add new land, and also create more space in which the "new" race could flourish.

to do his bidding. That all decision-making was to be the exclusive privilege of the responsible leader was based upon Hitler's understanding of the Prussian army's winning principle: "Autorität jedes Führers nach unten und Verantwortlichkeit nach oben" (Kampf 501). Moreover, Hitler demanded that the National Socialist movement immediately reflect these ideas within its own organisation and also be prepared to place the perfected body of the state at its service.

In other words, the body politic, with Hitler as the head and everyone else serving him, expected complete authority and blind obedience from its "subjects." Hitler's suicide was the final straw that broke the back of the German "Leviathan" whose disintegration had long since been underway. After its unconditional surrender, Germany's "master race body" was again dismembered, first into sectors and zones, and then, in 1949, into the two large political blocks of West (Federal Republic of Germany) and East (German Democratic Republic) Germany. Unification would not officially occur until 1990.

Defining German Identity in the Third Reich

In his book Extreme Mittellage: Eine Reise durch das deutsche Nationalgefühl (1990), the German writer Peter Schneider cynically explained how Romanian or Russian Germans could prove their German identity. His pertinent comments are uncomfortable reminders of the race and body discourses of the Third Reich. For example, Peter Schneider writes:

Eine Freundin aus Rumänien, die fließend Deutsch spricht und mehrfach als Dissidentin verhaftet worden war, konnte den zuständigen deutschen Beamten nicht von ihrem Deutschtum überzeugen. In hellem Zorn fragte sie, ob sie sich etwa darauf berufen müsse, daß ihr Vater der SS angehörte und ihr Onkel als Mitglied der SS gefallen sei. Ein solcher Nachweis wäre hilfreich, erhielt sie kühl zur Antwort, Die Nazi-Vergangenheit eines Verwandten, die man in jedem anderen Land der Welt lieber verschweigen würde, ist offenbar in der Bundesrepublik immer noch für Privilegien gut. (Mittellage 163-164)

Hitler, himself, made his views on "Deutschtum" very clear. It is obvious that he clearly believed that a Germanisation process based on linguistic integration would be catastrophic. In Mein Kampf which became the "Nazi Bible," Hitler scoffed:

[E]in fremdrassiges Volk, in deutscher Sprache seine fremden Gedanken ausdrückend, die Höhe und Würde unseres eigenen Volkstums durch seine eigene Minderwertigkeit kompromittierend.

Wie entsetzlich [. . .], daß das deutsch mauschelnde Judentum [. . .] infolge der Unkenntnis vieler Amerikaner auf unser deutsches Konto geschrieben wird! Es wird aber doch niemand einfallen, in der rein äußerlichen Tatsache, daß diese verlauste Völkerwanderung aus dem Osten meistens deutsch spricht, den Beweis für ihre deutsche Abstammung und Volkszugehörigkeit zu erblicken. (430)

In the light of Hitler's comments, therefore, being able to speak German was no proof of citizenship. What then determined a person's claim to his or her "Deutschtum?"

In Hitler's regime, a subject, a status only acquired by birth, was not automatically a German citizen. The "Volksstaat" or people's state reserved the right to determine the race and nationality of every subject. According to Hitler, the "Staatsbürgerrecht" could only be solemnly bestowed upon a male German subject after he had been racially educated and had had his blood purity (as an Aryan) confirmed, and had also completed his physical education and his

compulsory military service.⁴² In the case of Peter Schneider's female friend, if her father had indeed been an SS man then her "Deutschtum" had to be acknowledged. In Hitler's Third Reich, the German SS man was unquestionably a proven German citizen.⁴³ Chapter VI of this study will provide a more thorough discussion of the demanded racial purity of the SS man, and his role in Hitler's new German state.

Origin of The Aryan/Nazi body

The Aryan/Nazi body has a fascinating history, one that is well documented in many sources. For the present study, however, especially informative and rich in well-documented sources is Klaus Wolbert's Die Nackten und die Toten des "Dritten Reiches" (1982). His historical and political insights into the nude sculptures of the Third Reich provide a useful introduction to the German brand of fascism. Klaus Wolbert's research shows how the classical body ideal historically becomes altered and appropriated by the National Socialist regime. The eighteenth-century German classical archaeologist and art historian J. J. Winckelmann, in contemplating "new" directions for architecture and sculptures, called for the imitation of the Greek standard of beauty. In an era in which intellectuals, the nobility, and emerging upper classes yearned for a return to Hellas, the recently excavated Roman copies of Greek sculptures and art had instilled in him a sense of simple nobility and subdued majesty. J.J. Winckelmann rejected late Baroque and Rococo sculptures as being too sensuous. For him, although beauty was received through the senses, it was only through reason that it became recognised and understood.

In tracing the reaction of other eighteenth-century German intellectuals to the Greek ideal of beauty, Klaus Wolbert pointed out that in Laokoon (1766), Lessing also argued that nothing surpasses the beauty of the naked human form. In addition, he noted that although Goethe acknowledged the dignity of human beings as incontestable, he also favoured an autonomous image of humanity. Schiller, according to Klaus Wolbert, understood the concept of "Schönheit" to be the means by which the sensual man arrived at form and thinking. In the classical aesthetic, beauty and nudity were synonymous (Nackten 121-128).

Also writing in that era, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, the naked human body was no longer a condition of the classical ideal. Rather, arms, hands, and the position of the legs, to the exclusion of the organs necessary for the maintenance of the body, e.g. the "Verdauung," were all that were needed to convey spirituality. Moreover, for him, naked sculptures have no claim to a higher sense of beauty, or for that matter, to a greater sense of moral freedom and purity.

⁴² See Kampf 490-491.

⁴³ In May, 1999, Germany's new laws on citizenship was passed in the Lower House by 365 to 184 votes. The law will allow immigrant children to hold dual nationality till the age of twenty-three at which time they must decide which passport they will keep. According to a BBC's Berlin correspondent, Caroline Wyatt, the new law "should help counter racism and help integration, giving the children of immigrants a real stake in Germany's future." She also notes that for its supporters, especially for the two million members of Germany's Turkish community, the law which will come into effect from January 2000 is "a big step forward in accepting that Germany has become a multi-cultural society." (See Caroline Wyatt, [Berlin] "New Laws on German Citizenship." BBC News: Europe, 07 May 1999: n.pag. Online. Internet. 03 Nov. 1999. In addition, it is also available FTP: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/world/europe/>). Under Germany's current citizenship law, dating back to 1913, children born to foreigners in Germany are not eligible to become German citizens. This status can only be acquired according to the "jus sanguinis" (blood law). At the moment, foreigners may apply for a German passport only after living in Germany for over 12 years. However, they must then agree to give up their present citizenship.

Members of the upper classes used these figures, but often in a “kitschified” way. However, desiring that their social status project a sense of higher purpose, the ruling classes of the last five decades of the nineteenth century began to decorate their institutions with sculptured, symbolic figures of godly ideals in Hellenistic settings (Wolbert, *Nackten* 128-134).

Beginning in the eighteenth century, the rise of the gymnastics movement had reawakened interest in the ancient ideal of beauty. The “Körperkultur” movement of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, like the gymnastics movement, was also based on the naked human body. According to Klaus Wolbert, in 1931, Karl Simon, an author close to the George Circle, argued that the cultural shift to Classicism heralded the start of a “männliches Zeitalter” of active, naked, male bodies. Karl Simon saw nakedness as a male affair that presented itself, from an aesthetic point of view, in heroic themes that dealt with weapons, war, battle, and blood. Although the original classical humanist content was ignored, its inherent sense of superiority, powerful genius and heroic nature were still emphasised. Wolbert, however, suggests that although contemporary literature after 1933 continued to discuss nude sculptures in terms of the art theories of German Classicism and Idealism, it did so without referring to the original classical ideal and all that that entailed (*Nackten* 148-150). The Nazis and their literature, however, clearly considered the great male body to be “dignified.”

Nietzsche and the Body

Beginning in the eighteenth century, however, the Industrial Revolution provided great wealth and comfort to many members of the emerging upper classes. Both in the city and in the country, however, many industrial workers became physically harmed and deformed in their respective work environments. Their damaged bodies, therefore, failed to meet the high standards of the “new” aesthetic body ideal. Consequently, the “inferior” man soon became associated with ugliness, and the “superior” man with the ideal of beauty. The Nazis twisted the concepts and ideals of the German philosopher, Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900), regarding the beautiful, victorious and agreeable human body to suit their purposes. However, the idea of “inferiority,” especially with regard to Slavs and the Jews, was already in the ideology. All these factors would later have devastating consequences for millions of “inferior” people under the Third Reich regime’s brand of fascism.

Nietzsche’s role in the story of both the renewal of the body and the aesthetic of the body, according to Klaus Wolbert, was that of a powerful transformer. He lashed out at his contemporaries who despised the body. For him, it was imperative that they learn to recognise the importance of the entire casuistry of egoism, and the seemingly trivial details of nourishment, place, climate, and relaxation. Nietzsche’s observations served as inspiration for generations of “Körperkult-Anhänger,” life reformers, light and fresh air activists, vegetarians, physical fitness advocates etc. His body aesthetics, and his views on the “Übermensch” which, however, eventually drifted into the irrational, all stem from this “new”⁴⁴ way of thinking.

For Klaus Wolbert, Nietzsche’s writings called for total physical vigour and a transfigured body, and registered his abhorrence for the social illnesses of his time: decadence, nihilism, and cultural decline. Yet, in spite of his views on the human condition, and his recognition that man’s intellectual ability was firmly bound to the earthly and to reality,

⁴⁴ Other thinkers before him had already voiced their observations on the theme of man’s naked animalistic existence. Nietzsche borrowed, for example, Schopenhauer’s idea that man was not a winged angel’s head without a body.

Nietzsche remained an idealist. Happiness of the people took second place to his desire for a genius derived from a higher cultural-spiritual and bodily development. In addition, he rejected the human characteristics that seemed to hint at the weaknesses of the "Great." For Nietzsche, therefore, only a full blown "Körper-Ästhetik" mirrored in radiant, corporeal splendour could possibly lead to human perfection (Wolbert, Nackten 152-154).

Like many others before him, Nietzsche could not imagine a beautiful soul in a misshapen body. For him, man's intellect, will, soul, strength, reason, and inspiration, were all functions of his human body. Through Zarathustra he declared: "Leib bin ich und Seele ... Ich gehe nicht euren Weg, ihr Verächter des Leibes! Ihr seid mir keine Brücken zum Übermenschen!" (Nietzsche, Zarathustra 27, 29). For Nietzsche, both the body and the mind are essential for the well-being of the whole human being. According to Klaus Wolbert, Nietzsche's interest went beyond the exterior forms of Greek art and sculpture. For him, the inner body was just as important as the external body: "[Nietzsche] wollte das Strömen und Rauschen unter der Haut ... die anbrandenden Wogen des 'Willens zur Macht,' welche das Muskelrelief von innen her mit drängender Explosivkraft ausfüllen" (Nackten 156). However, Nietzsche's vision of a superman, one whose most decisive characteristic must be egoism, was an aesthetic fiction. It was a vision that was too heavily burdened by excessive physical and mental power to be within the reach of mortal human beings (Wolbert, Nackten 157-158).

Around and after the turn of the century, Nietzsche's views on the body influenced in varying degrees the work of sculptors such as Johannes Bossard, Max Klinger, Georg Kolbes, Josef Thorak, and Arno Breker.⁴⁵ Several of their male statues will be briefly discussed below. The writings of the George Circle, a group of writers who ardently believed in their own intellectual superiority and in the inferiority and ugliness of the "masses," also seemed to indicate the presence of Nietzsche's ideas in educated circles. Klaus Wolbert maintained that Nietzsche's discourses of the body do, in fact, contain the seeds of the Nazi aesthetic of the body:

Doch daß in seinem Werk Gedanken zusammenfaßt wurden, die aus der hoffärtigen Distanzierung gegenüber dem Sozialismus erst ihre radikale Form erhielten, daß diese inhumanen Gedanken als Gemeingut elitärer Bildungszirkel sich ausbreiteten und schließlich auch zum Bewußtsein der Faschisten über Mensch und Kunst beitrugen, kann nicht im Ernst geleugnet werden. Es wird nicht behauptet, daß bei Nietzsche selbst dieser Geist den Faschismus bereits beinhaltet hätte, dessen Genese hatte keine geistigen, sondern konkrete sozio-ökonomische Gründe, aber in solchem Geist hat er sich geäußert. (Nackten 159)

In contrast to the George Circle, the National Socialist regime embraced the masses. Allegedly constituted from healthy, beautiful, pure-blooded, obedient Aryan individuals who could easily be subjugated, the masses were an indispensable tool of the Third Reich. Of course, the Nazis did not really tolerate "ugliness." Rather, they simply rid the state of anyone who did not meet their standards of health, corporeal beauty, and intellect.

Body Culture/Cults and the Question of Beauty, Health, and Racial Purity

In a broad sense, the many forms of body culture that sprang up in Germany in the decades before and after the First World War were cultish in nature and aimed at solving the

⁴⁵ These sculptors who emphasised masculinity in their works either offered their services to the Third Reich or were mentioned in National Socialist literature as forerunners.

mysteries of health. These body culture groups practised an alternative, improved life style through the adoption of health therapies that offered greater harmony in life, body, soul, and existence.⁴⁶ Problems regarding sexual prudery, musty and damaging clothing conventions, artificial foods, and a lack of proper upbringing had never before been dealt with by the social community at large.⁴⁷ The body cults wanted to escape the ills of a progressive civilisation as exemplified by technology, the big city, conflicts of economic competition, and other social pressures by going back to what was considered a more natural way of life. Allotment gardens, artist colonies, nature healing, hiking, youth movements, vegetarianism, air, light, and sun worship, and the flourishing of nudist culture pointed to the growing desire to go back to nature. Corsets and potbellies were also understood as negative signs of city life and of “deformed” human bodies.

Beginning around the turn of the century, and gaining greater momentum in the twenties, other groups practised total body movement activities such as gymnastics, dance, and rhythmic exercises. They promised cures for bodies suffering from the ill effects of modern civilisation through muscle training, breathing, posture and agility exercises. Nudity, however, was optional. The common denominator in all of these groups was an aggressive German national, “völkisch,” and racist content. Body culture, in all of its forms, not only provided the union with the elemental, it also marked the turn to the forces of “Blut und Boden,” and the racist ideal of “Schönheit.” Any deviation from this beauty norm was classified as a sign of social inferiority. Male and female workers whose bodies were marked and physically damaged by accidents or illnesses, either due to their jobs or to their living conditions, were seen as inferior, servile, bowed, and “ugly” (Wolbert, Nackten 172-173).

Body culture would eventually come to signify more than simply active physical training and strength. An aesthetic, mythical ideal of beauty, as well as specific physical characteristics were openly sought after. In fact, anything that was culturally valuable was automatically credited to the Aryan race. As Hitler himself claimed:

Was wir heute an menschlicher Kultur, an Ergebnissen von Kunst, Wissenschaft und Technik vor uns sehen, ist nahezu ausschließlich schöpferisches Produkt des Ariers.... Er ist der Prometheus der Menschheit, aus dessen lichter Stirne der göttliche Funke des Genius zu allen Zeiten hervorsprang, immer von neuen jenes Feuer entzündend, das als Erkenntnis die Nacht der schweigenden Geheimnisse aufhellte und den Menschen so den Weg zum Beherrscher der anderen Wesen dieser Erde emporsteigen ließ. Man schalte ihn aus – und tiefe Dunkelheit wird vielleicht schon nach wenigen Jahrtausenden sich abermals auf die Erde senken, die menschliche Kultur würde vergehen und die Welt veröden. (Kampf 317-318)

⁴⁶ In the first decades of the twentieth century, German magazines like Die Schönheit, and Kraft und Schönheit: Zeitschrift für vernünftige Leibeszuht celebrated the naked, healthy, beautiful body, and promoted the light, air and sun culture based on nudity.

⁴⁷ For Hitler, clothing fashions for Germany’s youth must further the aims of the state: “Gerade bei der Jugend muß auch die Kleidung in den Dienst der Erziehung gestellt werde. ... Nicht die Eitelkeit muß herangezogen werden, auf schöne Kleider, die sich nicht jeder kaufen kann, sondern die Eitelkeit auf einen schönen, wohlgeformten Körper, den jeder mithelfen kann zu bilden. ... Das Mädchen soll seinen Ritter kennenlernen. ... Auch dies ist im Interesse der Nation, daß sich die schönsten Körper finden und so mithelfen, dem Volkstum neue Schönheit zu schenken” (Kampf 457-458).

This concept of superiority was mirrored and perpetuated, for example, in the nude statues of Prometheus produced by several Nazi sculptors such as Josef Thorak and Arno Breker.⁴⁸

In the majority of German discourses of the body in the period leading up to, and including the Third Reich, the Aryan was presented as the artistic ideal of all times, the symbol of everything superior, noble, and moral. For Hitler, the adjective “northern” also included the peoples of America and Europe. However, some inhabitants of supposedly “northern” countries could more accurately be described as swarthy, “pyknisch” types. Therefore, in seeking to strictly define who was truly a German, the Nazis needed to be far more specific, indeed “scientific,” in defining an Aryan. This was very important for the exclusionary racial policies of Hitler and his followers who saw themselves as members of a superior Aryan race.

Hans Surén, an important propagandist of German gymnastics and of an explicit national racist culture for the young NSDAP and its ideology, vigorously promoted the views and doctrines of Richard Walther Darré,⁴⁹ Adolf Hitler, and Alfred Rosenberg.⁵⁰ Following these Nazi “literary” writers, Hans Surén also strongly believed that blood was a symbol of genetic make-up and of the beauty of the northern people (*Mensch und Sonne* 131). For him, therefore, the northern idea of nudity was the foundation of racial breeding and the myth of race: “Bei der Nordischen Rasse galt der nackte Leib als vornehmstes Erziehungsmittel und diente als Ansporn beim Streben nach denkbar höchstem Rassenideal” (Surén, *Mensch und Sonne* 91).

The outdoor activities offered by Hans Surén’s “Körperschule” and “Schwunggymnastik” program promised not only to toughen the bodies of his followers, including “working people,” but also to give them back their strength and beauty. His aim was also to instil in them a fighting spirit and readiness for battle. It was Surén’s intention, therefore, that “Nacktheit” become, as it were, a substitute for alcohol, cigarettes, and the other sensuous pleasures of the body that allegedly drained away the energy of the “Volk.”

Nude statues, especially bronze statues, became the models for the physically trained body and vice-versa. As Hans Surén explained: “Der braune Leib - gleich einer Statue von

⁴⁸ In 1993, the former GDR two-time Olympic champion ice skater, Katarina Witt, voiced her comments about the Nazi statues of Arno Breker: “So groß, so überformt, so stramm, sind sie keine echten Menschen, keine Athleten. ... So wie die Breker-Figuren sind wir nicht. Eher sehen wir die längste Zeit unseres Lebens aus, wie die sogenannten entarteten Künstler den Menschen sahen” (“Stellungnahmen” 206). To her, Breker’s statues, which celebrate intellectual superiority, seemed to emit something threatening and violent. In her opinion, artists in the Third Reich created undamaged, imperious statues against which to contrast the downgraded, humiliated, and broken people in the “old” German state. The ice skater seemed convinced that there was something inhuman about glorifying the undamaged human: “Der Mensch mit all seinen Schwächen und auch Beschädigungen ist doch viel wirklicher als sein glattes, makelloes Ideal, dem etwas Monströses anhaftet. Der Fetisch von der Jugendlichkeit durchtrainierter, idealistischer Körper dient in einer Welt voller Beschädigungen als Zuflucht.” For her, therefore, the contradictions that exist in harmony need to be revealed in order to give people the courage to live with their weaknesses and imperfections (“Stellungnahmen” 207). We might draw here a parallel to Böll, whose aesthetic of the human is present in all aspects of his life and work, and who also recognised and insisted in acknowledging the beauty and value that exists even in damaged bodies.

⁴⁹ As put forward in *Odal*, a “Blut und Boden” magazine.

⁵⁰ Alfred Rosenberg, born in 1893 in Estonia was the editor of the fledgling Nazi Party newspaper *Völkischer Beobachter*, drew on the racist ideas of the Englishman, Houston Stewart Chamberlain and on a fabricated nineteenth century protocol dealing with a supposed Jewish plot for world domination. In *Der Mythos des 20. Jahrhunderts: Eine Wertung der seelisch-geistigen Gestaltenkämpfe unserer Zeit* (Munich, 1934), Rosenberg tediously explored the racial purity of Germans. Rosenberg’s anti-Semitism and desire fed Hitler’s own violent prejudices of “Nordic” conquests. He was executed as a war criminal in Nürnberg in 1946.

Bronze - bannt das Auge zu reiner Bewunderung und begeistert zu dem Entschluß, alles daran zu setzen, um gleiche Schönheit zu erringen”(Mensch und Sonne 172). For him: “Die Nordische Freikörperkultur kann und wird nur die Elite des deutschen Volkes aufnehmen” (85-86). Surén called on men and women from all sectors of society to be partners in a new Germanic era: “Schadet nicht eurem nordischen Blut und eurer rassischen Art! Seid unbeugsam im Willen, doch seelenfein in Ritterlichkeit und Edelmut! Ihr könnt es, wenn ihr wollt - ihr Männer und Mädchen -, denn ihr seid Nordischer Rasse. Der Arier vollbringt alles was er will!” (Mensch und Sonne 151).

In full agreement with the contemporary “Blut und Boden” ideology, Hans Surén exhorted both men and women to keep in mind Richard Walther Darré’s three-pronged definition of “Schönheit” when they chose a marriage partner: “Blut,” “Gesundheit,” and “Tauglichkeit” (Mensch und Sonne 127 ff). The Nazis used this definition to evaluate and select those who would be suitable for populating the “new” German Empire that they wanted to create. In essence, it was a “perception” that was physical, moral and obliquely political.

Germans were expected to be healthy, to keep their blood pure by refraining from procreating with non-Aryans (especially Jews), to be fit, and to be ready to sacrifice themselves for the good of the community and/or state.⁵¹ For the Nazis, these three characteristics guaranteed that a man would be able to defend his property and his country against all enemies. This definition of beauty also ensured that a woman would be both mentally and physically capable of being a wife, and mother of perfect, healthy Aryans. She would be the source of soldiers for Hitler’s coming wars of expansion.

In a pseudo-lyrical way, the contemporary Nazi writer, Hans F. K. Günther, summed up the image of the ideal German as a Nazi, and as a member of the Aryan, northern races, as follows:

Nicht nur der begabteste, auch der schönste Mensch ist der Mensch nordischer Rasse. Da steht die schlanke Gestalt des Mannes aufgerichtet zu siegreichem Ausdruck des Knochen- und Muskelbaus, zu herrlichen Ausmaß der breiten, kräftigen Schultern, der weiten Brust und der schmalgefestigten Hüften. Da blüht der Wuchs des Weibes auf mit schmalen gerundeten Schultern und breiter geschwungenen Hüften, aber immer in Schlankheit zu holdester Anmut. Beim Manne das härter geschnittene Gesicht, beim Weibe das zarte Gesicht, bei beiden die leuchtend-durchblutete Haut, die blonden Haare, die hellen siegreichen Augen, bei beiden die vollendete Bewegung eines vollendeten Leibes! (Ritter 181)

However, this ideal of beauty and perfection which was more often than not more utopian than real, gave rise to ironic jingles.⁵² The anti-Semite, Alfred Rosenberg, explained the apparent inconsistency by arguing that these surmised features of a new, yet ancient type of human being were those of a racial northern ideal of beauty which rightfully belonged to Germans. It therefore

⁵¹ Hitler spells out what differentiates the Aryan from Jew: “Der Selbsterhaltungstrieb hat bei ihn [dem Arier] die edelste Form erreicht, indem er das eigene Ich dem Leben der Gesamtheit willig unterordnet und, wenn die Stunde es erfordert, auch zum Opfer bringt” (Kampf 326). However, according to Hitler the reverse is true of the Jew: “Der Aufopferungswille im jüdischen Volke geht über den nackten Selbsterhaltungstrieb des einzelnen nicht hinaus” (Kampf 330).

⁵² “Wie sieht der ideale Deutsche aus? / Blond wie Hitler, / groß wie Goebbels, / schlank wie Göring und / keusch wie Röhm” (qtd. in H. Hoffmann 129).

was an ideal that had to be aimed for through a stringent breeding program (Rosenberg, *Mythus* 531, 596).

It is ironic that in his scientific publication in *Zeitschrift für Tierpsychologie* (1943) the Vienna-born scientist Konrad Lorenz chose to illustrate the superior Aryan body with Arno Breker's statue of Dionysus (1940). The statue's exaggerated proportions gave him no cause for concern. Instead, they enhanced his "scientific" findings. Lorenz writes:

Abb. 11 [Brekers "Dionysus"] zeigt eine das Maß des wirklich möglichen Verhältnisses zwischen breiten Schultern und schmalen Hüften gewaltig übertreibende Plastik, die dennoch durchaus harmonisch wirkt. ("Die angeborenen Formen" 289)

Lorenz's inability to illustrate his article with a flesh and blood image appears to demonstrate that the racial ideal of the beautiful Aryan - Nazi body was completely unrealistic.

Sander Gilman, in his book *Making the Body Beautiful* (1999), under the caption "The scale of the female body," includes a remarkable photograph of eight numbered and racially identified naked women with an inscription which in part reads: "Die Unterschiede in dem Körperbau (dem Wuchs) verschiedener Rassen. (Nach Photographien.) [. . .]"⁵³ What is interesting for me is that No. 5 and No. 8 appear to be photographs of statues: "Griechische Idealfigur," and "Mädchen aus Wien," respectively. The other six, however, appear to be photographs of "real" women, three from three different African countries, and one each from Samoa, Australia, Borneo.⁵⁴ The ideal Aryan body seems incapable of being "produced" in flesh and bones. It was Hitler's ambition to create the perfect German Aryan body. However, he too, would have to resort to statues to fulfil his dreams of a beautiful master race.

The nudist movement was banned in March 1933 and the "Freikörperkultur," like all other associations and clubs, was brought under the complete control of the NSDAP. The nude culture club, with fewer than 1000 members, now became known as the "Bund für deutsche Leibesucht" and was brought into step with the organised orientation of all aspects of the Nazi state. Clearly, the Third Reich wanted no eccentrics. Members now pledged loyalty to the Party ideology, and swore to contribute in the creation of a great, strong and healthy Germany. What first began in the middle class sector as "Körperkultur," now became the Third Reich's practice of "Leibesucht" whose goals were very specific:

Enge Verbindung und Liebe zur Natur – naturgemäße Lebensweise – Vertiefung der Heimatliebe – Pflege von Kameradschaft und Gemeinschaftsgeist – Pflege alles Artgemäßen wie Volkslied, Volkstanz, Musik u.a. – Ertüchtigung und Abhärtung des Körpers – Erziehung zur Ausdauer und kämpferischem Einsatz – Erhöhung der Lebensfreude und aller Gottesschöpfung – Hinführen vom Oberflächlichen zum Wesentlichen – Bildung eines starken, freien, aufrechten und edlen Menschentums. (Sahr, "Daseinsberechtigung" 78)

⁵³ Sander Gilman references the illustration as follows: "The scale of the female body. From Heinrich Ploss and Max Barthel, *Das Weib in der Natur- und Völkerkunde*, 9th ed., 2 vols. (Leipzig: Th. Grieben, 1908). (Chicago: private collection)" (Gilman *Beautiful* xiv).

⁵⁴ See Gilman *Beautiful* 223.

These goals became the blueprint, as it were, for all National Socialist organizations,⁵⁵ and were meant to shape and create the new Aryan body and Nazi state.

In the Third Reich, therefore, beauty became a political tool with which to exclude and destroy the anomalous: “Die Schönheit, welche ursprünglich als eine humanistisch positive Bestimmung in der idealen Nacktheit zur sinnlichen Anschauung kam, hatte nun allein die Funktion, das durch sie als häßlich relativierte reale Leben zu negieren” (Wolbert, Nackten 241). Purity became the catchword that would spell life or death for millions when its character was perverted into this deadly ideology. The Nürnberg Racial Laws (1935) were designed to protect German blood and honour. Therefore, those who could not provide proof of Aryan ancestors were sent off to labour and/or death camps since they were considered inferior and unworthy of survival

The Nazi View of Women in Life, Art, and Science

The Nazis tolerated no counter image of their “new human being.” For example, the depiction of tortured, imperfect human bodies created by Expressionist artists was denounced as degenerate art. The works of artists like Käthe Kollwitz, Ernst Barlach, and Emil Nolde were used as counter images to the unbroken, smooth, undamaged, and therefore “beautiful” appearance of the Nazi depictions of “synthetic”⁵⁶ Aryan bodies. The idealised inner lifelessness of Nazi female statues displayed no semblance of decadent eroticism and individuality. Eroticism was only to be aimed at procreation, not at the sheer pleasure of it.

Konrad Lorenz’s remarks concerning the aesthetic “Beziehungsschemata” of the female body in this regard, are also notable:

Sehen wir von den Merkmalen ab, die im Schönheitsideal beider Geschlechter übereinstimmen (Skelettlänge, gerade, lange Beine, Schädelbasislänge usw.), so sind fast alle am angeborenen Schema des weiblichen Idealskörpers beteiligten auslösenden Merkmale unmittelbare Indikatoren der hormonalen Geschlechtsfunktionen und damit der tatsächlichen Fortpflanzungsfähigkeit des als schön empfundenen Individuums. (Lorenz, “Die angeborenen Formen” 288)

The role of women in the Third Reich was therefore clearly reflected in every aspect of German society. Writing almost four decades later, Susan Sontag’s comment on this aspect of the fascist ideal appear to confirm Konrad’s views of the role women played in the Third Reich. According to Sontag, Hitler’s regime sought to create “a society in which women are merely breeders and helpers, excluded from all ceremonial functions, and represent a threat to the integrity and strength of men” (Sontag, “Fascinating” 90).

Udo Pini,⁵⁷ in his book Leibes kult und Liebes kitsch: Erotik, vividly exposed how the “Herrenmenschen” and their double moral standards encouraged artists in the Third Reich to portray women in fascist allegories of humility and subjugation while supposedly praising their beauty. Following Udo Pini’s discussion, Hilmar Hoffmann further explained:

⁵⁵ After 1933, all clubs and associations had been forced to follow the NSDAP “Gleichschaltung” policies. Those who refused were forced to disband. In this way, Hitler had complete control over all institutions and discourses, and was therefore able to orchestrate the training and indoctrination of all of his “loyal” subjects.

⁵⁶ Synthetic, since for many people it was an unrealistic, artificial goal.

⁵⁷ Udo Pini’s photo-journalistic book is a study of Germany’s body cult and its artistic portrayal.

Die idealisierten Frauenstatuen seien durch die monumentale Leblosigkeit ihrer "natürlichen" Posen aller dekadenten Erotik und subversiven Individualität enthoben. Das "verkameradschaftliche" und aufgenordete deutsche Frauenbild sollte dem sinnenfreudigen, ausschweifenden Weibebild der Weimarer Republik widersprechen, das mit seiner entsittlichenden Liberalität und seinen chaotisierenden Emanzipationsbemühungen der Gesellschaft den Keim des moralischen Zerfalls eingepflanzt habe. (Mythos 105)

In addition, for Hilmar Hoffmann, the National Socialist propaganda machine exploited what it saw as negative examples of women depicted in degenerate and decadent art by contrasting them with its own positive examples of the pure German wife and mother.

In other words, Nazi art works were ideologically determined. The naked statues of gods, goddesses, Titans and other representative figures of the mythological, fictional world reinforced the Nazis' belief that they were members of the chosen Aryan races. As a result of its ideology, the imaginary ideal world of the National Socialist regime abounded in nude statues symbolising fertility, and eroticism (e.g., Breker's "Flora," "Eos," "Psyche," "Anmut," "Dionysus," and "Wager"); the god of light and death, Apollo (e.g., Breker's "Apollo-Gespann") and the Titans (e.g., Breker's "Prometheus").

Other statues favoured by the regime were ones that proclaimed and represented an imitation of the ideal world of the Ancients.⁵⁸ These also illustrated key themes of Nazi ideology, like fertility, heroic stances, camaraderie,⁵⁹ and expressions of strong will. Similarly, many female statues illustrated the explicitly biological and sexual role assigned to women. They were entitled, for example, "Hingebung," "Erbblühen," "Erwachen," "Keuschheit," "Zuneigung," "Entfaltung," "Erwartung," "Hingabe," "Auserwählte," "Hüterin." In 1981, the Historical Museum in Frankfurt mounted a documentary exhibition of women in which artistic images were used. In it, Nazi images were consciously used to epitomise the "NS-Frauenideal:" "als vom Mann erwählte Schönheit, als gebärende Natur, als Hüterin von Heim und Herd" (H. Hoffmann, Mythos 177).

After the war started, male statues mainly depicting victory and war were also named in the spirit of Nazi mythology: Breker's "Der Sieger," "Künder," "Der Herold," "Entschlossener," "Berufung," "Bereitschaft," Thorak's "Fahnenträger," "Schwertträger," Kolbe's "Großer Kämpfer," Wamper's "Ehrenmal" (Wolbert, Nackten 56-57). The male and female viewers were expected to recognize the role of the German male in the new state, namely, as the protector of the Fatherland. A Nazi analysis of Adolf Wamper's statue "Genius des Sieges" (1940) praised it in glowing terms for its presentation of the Nazi body as being:

[E]ine noch im Faltenwurf fast stahlstarre gereckte Gestalt mit mächtig ausladender Bewegung von der den Boden berührenden Zehenspitze bis in die in eine unsichtbare Wolke vorstoßende Schwertschuppe, jeder Muskel der Wade, des Schenkels, des Leibes, des Armes genau durchgebildet und gesteigert durch die Darstellung der Bänder und Sehnen – das Ganze ein Ruf, ein Anruf, ein mitreißender Befehl, der in metallener Härte den Sieg nicht nur verkündet,

⁵⁸ In his diary entry for March 03, 1939, Goebbels recorded his emotional response upon seeing the Parthenon: "Auf der Akropolis. Oh, diese erschütternde Schau! Die Wiege der arischen Kultur" (Die Tagebücher von Joseph Goebbels, vol. 3 (Munich, 1987) 586).

⁵⁹ See, for example, Josef Thorak's "Kameradschaft" (1936-1937).

sondern schon enthält ... Wenn man den aus der Schulter sich reckenden rechten Arm, die wie einen (sic!) Panzer wirkende Brust, den gedrungenen und doch hoch aufschießenden Hals anschaut, so drängt sich die genaue Zeichnung fast schmerzhaft deutlich auf. [. . .] Man wird es aus der Ferne betrachten, und es wird wirken, wie der Sieg des strahlenden deutschen Geistes über die dumpfe Erde des Ostens. (Tank, Plastik 83)

First honoured in the Third Reich's sports arenas, these "perfect" bodies later became victims of the regime that spawned them on the battlefields of Europe. Ironically, while millions of "ideal" living human bodies fell in the carnage of the Second World War, most of the naked Nazi statues survived intact. As Klaus Wolbert puts it: "[. . .] niemals zuvor konnten einige wenige für die Durchsetzung ihrer egoistischen Ziele sich der lebendigen Körper so vieler Menschen bemächtigen" (Nackten 7). Basically dedicated to death and sacrifice, the mortal bodies of human beings were superimposed by the Nazis with larger than life, stone and bronze bodies of immortal statues. Clearly, as Susan Sontag remarks: "Fascist art glorifies surrender, it exalts mindlessness, it glamorises death" (Sontag, "Fascinating" 91).

The Disease/Race Connection

During the Third Reich, the imagery of disease was used in a telling way. The Nazis dubbed anyone who was racially mixed as being a syphilitic. Hitler frequently employed the metaphors of syphilis⁶⁰ and cancer, diseases that were considered as life-threatening unless excised, to describe the Jews in Germany and Europe. In 1919, in his first vitriolic political attack on the Jews, Hitler used another pathological metaphor, that of tuberculosis: "[Des Juden] Macht ist die Macht des Geldes, das sich in Form des Zinses in seinen Händen mühe- und endlos vermehrt, ... Sein Wirken wird in seinen Folgen zur Rasantuberkulose der Völker." However, as Susan Sontag points out: "The use of cancer in political discourse encourages fatalism and justifies 'severe' measures – as well as strongly reinforcing the widespread notion that the disease is necessarily fatal" (Illness 84). Clearly, for Sontag: "The imagery of cancer for the Nazis prescribes 'radical' treatment, in contrast to the 'soft' treatment thought appropriate for TB [tuberculosis] – the difference between sanatoria (that is, exile) and surgery (that is, crematoria)" (Illness 83-84).

Hitler continued to express his deep concerns for the rapidly worsening "health" of Germany's beleaguered national body in strong pathological terms:

Parallel der politischen, sittlichen und moralischen Verseuchung des Volkes lief schon seit vielen Jahren eine nicht minder entsetzliche gesundheitliche Vergiftung des Volkskörpers. Die Syphilis begann besonders in den Großstädten immer mehr zu grassieren, während die Tuberkulose gleichmäßig fast im ganzen Lande ihre Todesernte hielt. (Kampf 269)

For Hitler, therefore, the "Jewification" of Germany's spiritual life was the cause of the weakening and destruction of the national body.

According to Sander Gilman, "the general risk of the Jews as the carriers of syphilis and the generalised fear that such disease would undermine the strength of the body politic," was also a much discussed topic in the literature of the nineteenth century (Jew's Body 96). For him, "it is Jewishness which is the central category of 'racial' difference [. . .] [at] the turn of the century"

⁶⁰ See Sander Gilman The Jew's Body 96 ff.

(*Jew's Body* 96). The increasing invisibility of Jews in Germany made their association "with socially stigmatising diseases which bore specific visible 'signs and symptoms' especially appropriate" (Gilman, *Jew's Body* 97).

As mentioned above, Susan Sontag described cancer as a political metaphor for expressing fatalism and for the justification of atrocious acts against fellow human beings deemed a danger to the "new" German society (*Illness* 84). It is a mentality that also existed in scientific discourse. Konrad Lorenz's observations in this regard are chilling:

[Die] biologische Leistung der ästhetischen und ethischen Beziehungsschemata des Menschen ist also die eines Richters, der zwischen gut und böse, zwischen gesund und krank zu entscheiden hat. Gleich dem Chirurgen, der bei Entfernung einer wuchernden Krebsgeschwulst mit einiger Willkür und 'Ungerechtigkeit' irgendwo durch seinen Schnitt die scharfe Grenze zwischen zu Entfernendem und zu Erhaltendem zieht, ja sogar bewußt lieber gesundes Gewebe mit entfernt als krankes stehen läßt, so muß sich auch apriorische Werturteil zur Festlegung einer Grenzlinie, eines Umschlagpunktes zwischen plus und minus entschließen. ("Die angeborenen Formen" 309)

Konrad Lorenz appeared to believe that any human being who did not meet the state prescribed standard of beauty should be excised like a cancerous tumor. In his pursuit of beauty, Konrad Lorenz's scientific views technically supported the murder of innocents. While one's "beauty" was viewed as the key to health and success in life, another's "ugliness" was automatically interpreted as symptoms of a fatal disease which had to be cut out.

Duelling, Masculinity, Blood, and Honour in the Third Reich

Ute Frevert's research into the historical discourses of the body in relation to duelling provided some interesting facts that may also help to define the Aryan/Nazi body. She argued that on account of its masculine image, duelling was held in high esteem by students, officers, professors, civil servants, and other academics. For many men, typical male characteristics of courage, strength of will, cold-bloodedness, decisiveness, self-control, independence, and the desire for freedom found their full expression in duelling. The common consensus was that as long as men continued to duel they would remain real men, and bring honour to their sex. Ute Frevert also observed that at the turn of the century, while women were still expected to be content to look after their husbands and children in the home, men were expected to find their place of honour in society through their public activities (*Ehrenmänner* 267-268).

Nazi interest in duelling was closely tied to the desire to build and maintain its own tradition of honour, masculine characteristics, and even more importantly, its own gender politics. Duelling by its very nature is a blood "sport." The building blocks that emerged from the virile symbolism in the social convention of duelling helped to shape the intensive efforts of Nazi ideologists to devise a strong, military, masculine image. This male image was then set up in opposition to a crassly stylised, modest, and domestic feminine image. For the Nazis, only men who were prepared to make the ultimate sacrifice for their country or for their personal or family honour, could be considered as "real" men. As Hitler himself commented: "Wer leben will, der kämpfe also, und wer nicht streiten will in dieser Welt des ewigen Ringens, verdient das Leben nicht" (*Kampf* 257).

In this male-oriented system, it became imperative and exceedingly popular to display visual insignias of heroic masculinity both on one's physical body and on the uniform that adorned that body. For the dueller, his "damaged," scarred face⁶¹ was his visible sign of honour, bravery, courage, and dependability. According to Ute Frevert: "Anerkannt und verpflichtend war das Duell im 'Dritten Reich' nicht nur für Studenten, SA- und SS-Männer, sondern auch für die Offiziere der wieder aufgerüsteten Wehrmacht" (Frevert, Ehrenmänner 320). This was possible since duelling under the National Socialist regime was not restricted by any form of social grading.

Hitler, himself, was undecided about the value of resurrecting the custom of duelling. In fact, after the 1937 death of his most prominent war correspondent for the Völkischer Beobachter "Rittmeister a. D." and "SS-Hauptsturmführer" Roland Strunk, he ruled that no duel could take place without his permission (Frevert, Ehrenmänner 322-323). By the start of the Second World War, duelling, in spite of its virile symbolism, had virtually ceased to exist. However, its bloody legacy lived on: "Übrig blieb das hohle Pathos einer Blut- und Männlichkeitsmystik, die sich in den Gewaltexzessen des NS-Terrors und Vernichtungskrieges jedoch sehr viel direkter und wirkungsvoller ausleben konnte als in der steifen Förmlichkeit eines Duells" (Frevert Ehrenmänner 325).

The goal of the German soldier, however, was first and foremost to maintain an unblemished body, since invulnerability was stressed as a characteristic of the Nazi body. Only if a soldier's body had been damaged while defending the fatherland would it be honoured. The ideal, uniformed body of the Nazi soldier was decorated with medals, crosses, braid, and other forms of insignia that told the story of their bravery. Military decorations were visual proof that the German soldier was a man whose character and personality were housed in the disciplined Aryan body. In the eyes of the Nazis, the manly activities and the ingrained sense of blood and honour of the army and the duelling fraternities separated the irrational, weak, and feminine from the strong and masculine image of humanity.

Competitive sports also played an important role in defining the Aryan/Nazi body. According to the political scientist Peter Reichel, sport mobilised the masses. From the twenties onwards, particularly among the younger generation, health and vitality began to assume great significance. The intoxication of speed and the spectacle of competition added further impetus to the sports movement which often created national heroes of the victors overnight (Schein 255-256). Under the influence of the NSDAP, sport became unavoidably commercialised and politicised: "Sport wurde hier folglich als eine Art Vorschule der Nation verstanden, als Instrument zur 'völkischen Gesundung' und zur Erneuerung der 'Wehrkraft,' also als vormilitärische Ausbildung" (Reichel, Schein 256).

The new Nazi state believed that it "possessed" the body of every German (male and female), and that it was its duty to train it to be submissive. In this regard, Hitler was adamant: "Die körperliche Ertüchtigung ist daher im völkischen Staat nicht eine Sache des einzelnen, auch nicht eine Angelegenheit, die in erster Linie die Eltern angeht, ..." (Kampf 453). During the Third Reich, therefore, Nazi sport and sport politics increasingly became synonymous with the primacy of a politically and militarily trained and fearless body.

⁶¹ Above all, scars ("Schmisse") marked the dueller as worthy of satisfaction ("satisfaktionsfähig"), and as an equal. A duelling scar was eagerly sought after since it brought its bearer in from the margins and into an exclusive fold of society. Special treatment of the duel wound ensured the best quality scarring (Gilman Jew's Body 181-183).

Hitler described what he expected of the youth of his day in a conversation with Hermann Rauschning:

[. . .] Meine Pädagogik ist hart. Das Schwache muß weggehämmert werden. [. . .] Eine gewalttätige, herrische, unerschrockene, grausame Jugend will ich. [. . .] Schmerzen muß sie ertragen. Es darf nichts Schwaches und Zärtliches an ihr sein. [. . .] Stark und schön will ich meine Jugend. [. . .] Ich will eine athletische Jugend. Das ist das Erste und das Wichtigste. [. . .] Ich will keine intellektuelle Erziehung. Mit Wissen verderbe ich mir die Jugend. . . . Aber Beherrschung müssen sie lernen. Sie sollen mir in den schwierigsten Proben die Todesfurcht besiegen lernen. Das ist die Stufe der heroischen Jugend. Aus ihr wächst die Stufe [. . .] des schaffenden Menschen, des Gottmenschen.(qtd. in Wolbert: 70)⁶²

As the body became more and more of a political issue, gymnastics became less of an individual sport and more of a synchronised muscular activity.

As discussed above, an ideology of racist norms, mainly in the form of visual and external physical beauty was already present at the turn of the century. Considered then, as they are even today, ideal body measurements for shoulders, breasts and hips were closely tied to the Nazi concept of northern "Schönheit." Body measurements therefore dictated whether a particular limb or even the entire body should either be accepted or rejected by the state, or for that matter, by the individual. In the extreme, the Nazis sat in judgement as to who should live and who should die. At the 1935 Party convention, Hitler's description of Germany's future "new man" left no doubt as to his expectations. For him, they must be: "Flink wie Windhunde, zäh wie Leder und hart wie Kruppstahl" (Hitler, *Kampf* 392). With the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games, the Nazi military and racial aspirations became inextricably interwoven. Those who did not fit the ideal image were cynically considered, in crass Nazi terminology, to be "lebensunwertes Menschenmaterial."

"Cultural," Sport and Propaganda Films Aimed at "Shaping" the German Body

As early as 1925, the "auspicious" year in which Hitler's *Mein Kampf* appeared, a documentary film *Wege zu Kraft und Schönheit: Die antiken Griechen und die modernen Zeiten* was made. It appeared to embrace both Nazi racial ideology and the contemporary body culture, and would later turn out to be the forerunner of Leni Riefenstahl's NSDAP propaganda documentaries. The film, directed by Nicholas Kaufmann and Wilhelm Prager, took "Turnvater Jahn's"⁶³ reinstatement of the Latin motto: "Mens sana in corpore sano" (a healthy mind in a healthy body), and his dream of a fully integrated mind and body, and made it a highly aesthetic project. In it they sought to promote a new and "correct" life style that could be subsumed under the rubric "Körperkultur," and which could be ideologized and directed at the national body.

⁶² See also Rauschning, *Hitler Speaks* 247.

⁶³ Friedrich Ludwig Jahn (1778-1852) was a pedagogical reformer and fervent nationalist who known as the "father of gymnastics," or "Turnvater," and founder of the "Turnverein" (gymnastic club) movement. In 1811 he opened his first "Turnverein" in Berlin. Following Germany's humiliating defeat by Napoleon, Jahn promoted gymnastics as a means of boosting the morale of his fellow countrymen. He argued for a renewal of the ancient Teutonic civilisation and a sentimental glorification of the German people. Jahn was a vocal democrat and a rugged eccentric. In 1819 his activities were curtailed, his gymnasium closed and he was detained for six years. Upon his acquittal, he received the Iron Cross (1840) and in 1848 was elected to the German national parliament.

The following excerpt from the summary which accompanied the film's premiere⁶⁴ revealed and supported the contemporary body discourses in the Weimar "Systemzeit."⁶⁵

Dieser Kulturfilm will in unserem Zeitalter [. . .] aufrufen zur Pflege des Leibes und will zeigen, wie wichtig für jeden die Erhaltung und Durchbildung eines gesunden Körpers ist. [. . .] Vor dem Kriege wurde fast allein durch die militärische Erziehung unsere männliche Jugend körperlich durchgebildet, der weiblichen Jugend ermangelte eine solche Durchbildung leider völlig. [. . .] Die Wege zu diesem Ziel will uns dieser Film zeigen. Kraft ist hier gleichbedeutend mit Schönheit. Diesen Ansätzen moderner Körperkultur, [. . .] wird vergleichsweise die Körperkultur der Antike an die Seite gestellt. (Reichsfilmblatt 36)

The film's vivid contrast of the neglected body of the crooked-backed bookworm with the well-formed body of the physically trained athlete clearly was a reflection of Hitler's own opinions on the subject.⁶⁶ Prior to 1933, such films were known simply as cultural films. However, after 1935, the Nazi sport films of Leni Riefenstahl, Hans Wüstemann, and Gösta Nordhaus and others directly promoted the regime's ideology with regard to the body. The films and documentaries with their larger than life images of youthful, well-trained male and female naked bodies actively involved in sports of all types, were screened throughout Germany.

The cinema became Germany's watchful "eye" with which to supervise and mould its captive viewers. The administrative arm of the Nazi state reached deep into the lives of the German people forcing them to adapt themselves to a prescribed, exaggerated shaping of their bodies and personal life styles. It was for this reason that cultural and fascist sport films, and all other spheres of public activities, came under the propaganda of a Foucauldian "bio-politics."

Documentary films in the Third Reich, according to Hilmar Hoffmann, which were usually shown prior to feature films, fall roughly into the following categories. Their ideological codes are obvious:

Führermythos, Deutschtum, Brauchtum, Blut und Boden, Erntedank, Deutscher Wald, Volksgesundheit, Sport, Kunst, Kultur und 'Kraft durch Freude,' Reichsparteitage, Erfolge der Partei, die verschiedenen NS-Organisationen, Hitlerjugend, Bund Deutscher Mädel, vormilitärische Ausbildung, Rüstung, der deutsche Soldat in Frieden, Manöver, Krieg, 'Volk ohne Raum,' Weltfeinde, Volksfeinde, Antisemitismus, Erbkrankheiten, Euthanasie, späte Siege über Versailles, Hitlers Feldzüge, NS-Totenkult (55)

⁶⁴ Excerpt from Reichsfilmblatt, Berlin, 12 (1925): 36.

⁶⁵ A liberal democratic concept promoted in the Weimar Republic, which recognised that everyone could do what he liked with his own body. However, when Hitler seized power in 1933, he dissolved the Republic and set up a totalitarian government of the Third Reich in which the bodies of his "subjects" all belonged to him, and therefore to the state.

⁶⁶ Hitler, like many others before him, noted: "Ein verfallener Körper wird durch einen strahlenden Geist nicht im geringsten ästhetischer gemacht, ja, es ließe sich höchste Geistesbildung gar nicht rechtfertigen, wenn ihre Träger gleichzeitig körperlich verkommene und verkrüppelte, im Charakter willensschwache, schwankende und feige Subjekte waren. Was das griechische Schönheitsideal unsterblich sein läßt, ist die wundervolle Verbindung herrlichster körperlicher Schönheit mit strahlendem Geist und edelster Seele" (Kampf 453).

Hoffmann maintained that in each and every one of these instances, the sanctioned way of life in the new state, as well as its counter image, was presented to the German people. Bombarded with images of the erect, beautiful, healthy, quasi-divine image of the Aryan, they were expected to keep in mind the opposing stereotyped image of the stooped, flat-footed, long-nosed, cultural, “non-athletic,” diseased Jew, and other “deviants.” The Nazi government, like any modern totalitarian regime, claimed to look after the people’s welfare in the sense of taking their concerns upon itself. In this way, it gained complete control and power over every aspect of their lives, essentially robbing them of their personal independence and human dignity.

Leni Riefenstahl’s *Olympia*, was the official film of the XI Olympic Games, Berlin 1936. It consisted of two parts, “Fest der Völker” and “Fest der Schönheit.” The “Prologue” was made later and served as an introduction to Part I. The completed film was premiered on Hitler’s birthday in 1938. Leni Riefenstahl’s personal comments about the film throw some light on how Nazi propaganda defined the Aryan/Nazi body:

Alles war schön: die Olympische Idee, der Fackelläufer, das Stadion – und die Athleten: [. . .] Als die Finnen im 10.000-Meter-Lauf den Japaner Murakoso zermürbten, als sie wie eine zu einem Block geschmolzene Mannschaft in unheimlichem Rhythmus Mann für Mann überrundeten, waren sie das vollendete Symbol einer ebenso stark geistigen wie körperlichen Schönheit. (qtd. in H. Hoffmann *Mythos* 147)⁶⁷

For Leni Riefenstahl, the Berlin Olympic Games, especially the bodies of the athletes, were “schön.” Like her films, Leni Riefenstahl’s words continued to advance the Nazi racial, cultural, and physical body ideology. For her, the German and Finnish athletes obviously symbolised the raw power and beauty of the superior northern Aryan races. Her portrayal of the block movement of the Finnish team was also a quasi-symbol of the Nazi masses in which no eccentric behaviour was ever to be tolerated. However, in spite of the years of hard training of the Germans, and the impressive victory of the Finns, it was the star performance of the American track and field athletes that stole the show. Jesse Owens and his four gold medals particularly seemed to knock the wind out of the Nazi dignitaries and their dream of Aryan superiority.

In the film, however, Leni Riefenstahl focused on Jesse Owens’ well-tuned, powerful body. To her, he was neither an African American nor a member of a minority nor inferior race. Rather, Leni Riefenstahl and all the other Germans who rose to their feet as one to applaud Jesse Owens’ Olympic record, probably saw him as a man with a distinctive profile, an exceptional phenomenon, and an aberration of nature which, even among non-Aryans, was possible. This “exception to the rule” theory was so successful that Jesse Owens himself felt more welcome in Hitler’s Germany than in the land of apartheid, South Africa (H. Hoffmann, *Mythos* 118).

In the opening scenes of Part II of her *Olympic* film, Leni Riefenstahl contrasted close-ups of nature, and of male athletes whose beautiful, steel-hard, nude bodies seemed more sculpted than alive. As the sweat beaded up on their muscular bodies from the steam of the Finnish sauna, Riefenstahl turned her viewers into unwitting voyeurs of the almost homo-erotically-charged scene. According to Hilmar Hoffmann, even the radio announcers seemed filled with ecstasy as they reported live the success of the German athletes: “Die Radioreporter

⁶⁷ According to Hilmar Hoffmann, Leni Riefenstahl made this comment in her introduction to *Schönheit im Olympischen Kampf*. Berlin: n.p., 1937. N.pag.

[. . .] belfern im Jargon von Kriegsberichterstattem; auch in anderen Passagen möchten sie mit verbalem Muskelspiel zu den Siegern gehören" (Mythos 150-151).

While Leni Riefenstahl's film images also captured, for example, Jesse Owens' face muscles and his unshakeable physical and mental concentration, the German sport commentators filled their vocabulary with militant words and phrases like "decisive struggle," "victory," and "great battle" to characterise the successes of the German athletes (Hoffmann Mythos 150-151). Riefenstahl's cameras also captured Hitler's body language which mirrored his fluctuating expressions of great exuberance, nervousness, or disgust, depending on the fortunes of his athletes. Indeed, the cameras also caught Hitler leaving the stadium to avoid having to congratulate Jessie Owens.

The "New" Breed of German

In summary, therefore, in the Third Reich each German man, woman, and child was expected to be an awe-inspiring member of the Aryan, northern races. Like the Aryan, Germans should be the most talented and beautiful human beings. German males should be characterised by their tall, erect stature, slender build, and elongated heads. Their bone and muscle structure should exude an expression of victory, success, and superiority, and their shoulders should be wide and powerful with broad chests and narrow firm hips. German women should also possess a slender figure, small rounded shoulders, wide hips, and fair beauty. While the man's facial features should be hard and sharply delineated, the woman's should be soft. Both should have skin that is well supplied with "pure" blood, blond hair, and triumphant blue eyes. Male and females should display the smooth and harmonious movements of their perfect bodies. For the Nazis, therefore, the ideal German body, like that of the Aryan, should mirror health, strength, and a well-developed, beautiful and well-proportioned, erect body. Above all, however, the blood coursing through the ideal German body must be pure.

For the National Socialists, therefore, the German male must always be convinced of his superiority, invulnerability, and of his own strength. His noble character traits must include loyalty, spirit of sacrifice, and discretion. In addition, the "perfect" German should reflect the Greek ideal of beauty which for the Nazis is founded on the harmonious blend of a splendid physical beauty and prowess, a sharp mind, and a noble soul. All of these physical, mental and ideological characteristics are based on a healthy body and mind.

While the German male's task must be to defend his family and the fatherland, the ideal German woman must dedicate herself to being a future mother. As Irmgard Weyrather explained: "Das Nationalsozialistische Frauenbild war im Grunde kein Frauen-, sondern ein Mutterbild" (Muttertag und Mutterkreuz 9). For eugenicists of the Third Reich, the human body was only the temporary husk of the human essence: "[D]ie geehrten Mütter wurden [im Nazi-Mutterkult] nicht nur als Frauen, die Kinder geboren hatten, angesprochen, sondern gleichzeitig als Trägerinnen des 'Erbstroms' oder 'Bluts' der 'deutschen Rasse'" (Weyrather, Muttertag 13). Nazi propaganda promoted the "holiness" of this valuable blood in pseudo-religious slogans such as: "Heilig soll uns sein jede Mutter deutschen Blutes" (Weyrather, Muttertag 14).

During the Hitler dictatorship, however, not all Germans allowed themselves to be swallowed up in the mindless behaviour of the masses. One such individual was Heinrich Böll whose last four years of high school (1933-1937), compulsory duty in the Labour Service (1938), and participation in the Second World War (1939-1945) coincided with the birth, duration, and demise of Hitler's Third Reich. Never a member of the Nazi Party, Böll refused, whenever possible, to be caught up in the mass hysteria of their fascist regime. After his return to civilian life, and in his capacity as a German war veteran and post-war writer, Heinrich Böll set out to

publicly denounce the NSDAP's complete disregard for the rights of the individual, and to provide a more realistic portrayal of the beauty and dignity of the human body in his writings.

The aim of this second chapter has been to discuss the individual Nazi body and its relationship both to the body of the nation and to that of the masses. According to Klaus Theweleit the term "masses" clearly has two opposing definitions: "Die gefeierte Masse ist immer eine formierte, in Dammsysteme gegossene. Ein Führer ragt aus ihr heraus. Die verachtete erscheint dagegen immer unter den Attributen des Flüssigen, Schleimigen, Wimmelnden" (Männerphantasien 2: 8; ch.3). Böll, for whom the idea of the individual was indispensable, detested the Nazi hordes. They seemed to be everywhere: first in the streets of Cologne and later on the battlefields of Europe. By celebrating the masses and not the individual as the measure of humanity the Nazis lost touch with the classical idea of humanity which they allegedly aspired to.

In the third chapter, particular attention will be paid to the exploration of fundamental differences between the racist theories of the Nazis and Heinrich Böll's perception and experience of his own body and what it truly means to be human. In this regard, Böll's health and bodily structure as a school boy, young adult, soldier, deserter, a POW, and finally as a civilian in post-war occupied Germany, will be discussed. What is the connection, if any, between Böll's health problems and his obvious disgust for the cultish male atmosphere that surrounded the Nazis and their athletic organisations? Keeping these questions in mind, a close study of Heinrich Böll's biography will provide important insights into his early writings and his philosophy of life, a view which completely rejected everything about Hitler's male-oriented, racist regime.

CHAPTER III. THE WRITER'S BODY: AUTO/BIOGRAPHICAL ASPECTS

Körperbeschaffenheit: Breit und groß, doch wenig leistungsfähig, durch häufiges Kranksein vom Turnen auf Grund eines ärztlichen Attestes befreit und in seiner körperlichen Ausbildung stark gehemmt.[. . .]. Charakter: Schwerblütig, verträglich, vielleicht nicht energisch genug. Fügt sich anscheinend mit Gelassenheit in seine dürftigen Verhältnisse, die er durch eigenes Verdienen zu bessern sucht.[. . .] (Kollegium des Kaiser Wilhelm-Gymnasiums)

Ich glaube [. . .] die Autobiographie eines Autors verbirgt sich in seinem Gesamtwerk. (Heinrich Böll)

Although Böll's physique is described in this chapter's first epigraph⁶⁸ as being broad and tall, his frequent illnesses prevented him from participating in sporting activities, severely stymieing his physical training and education. In it he is also described as having a needy but "[g]eordnetes Familienleben," and of being "gut begabt." Although Böll's academic progress is deemed to be satisfactory, according to the report, his successes could be even greater: "Daß sie nicht durchweg gut sind, ist wohl auf Krankheit und häufiges Fehlen zurückzuführen." Illness is again listed as the reason for him not being "organisiert." Böll's character is then described as follows: "Charakter: Schwerblütig, verträglich, vielleicht nicht energisch genug. Fügt sich anscheinend mit Gelassenheit in seine dürftigen Verhältnisse, die er durch eigenes Verdienen zu bessern sucht." These characteristics show him to be well-adjusted, serious, and sociable in spite of his family's limited financial resources. The school assessment finally suggests that Böll is well suited for a career in publishing due to his deep appreciation of literature. These documented details remind us of Foucault's definition of the body as the institutionalised product of "a network of writing"⁶⁹ which is designed to provide the school with power over an individual.

An examination of Böll's auto/biography, in the light of the various contemporary discourses of the body previously discussed, will provide valuable insights into both the man himself and his fictional work. In addition, such an approach will benefit from an analysis of the theme of damaged bodies in Böll's early writings. Böll's disclaimer in Was soll aus dem Jungen bloß werden? (1981), an autobiographical account of his school days (1933-1937), clearly states his negative feelings about the Nazis and all that they stood for:

Meine unüberwindliche (und bis heute unüberwundene) Abneigung gegen die Nazis war kein Widerstand, sie *widerstanden* mir, waren mir widerwärtig auf allen Ebenen meiner Existenz; bewußt *und* instinktiv, ästhetisch *und* politisch, bis heute habe ich keine unterhaltende, erst recht keine ästhetische Dimension an den Nazis und ihrer Zeit entdecken können, und das macht mich grausen bei gewissen Film- und Theaterinszenierungen. In die HJ *konnte* ich einfach nicht gehen und ging nicht rein, und das war's. (Jungen 8-9; ch. 1)

The National Socialist Party's irrational love affair with the perfect, beautiful human body is completely rejected by Böll. For this reason, his writings seem to focus on the physically and

⁶⁸ The general physical assessment of the sixth Form student Heinrich Böll, as provided by his high school's administration records, is published in Viktor Böll, ed., Heinrich Böll und Köln (Cologne: Emons, 1990) 49.

⁶⁹ See Foucault, "Means of Correct Training" 201.

mentally damaged “imperfect” bodies of his fellow Germans, as well as on the beauty that exists even in these and other imperfections.

Böll’s rejection of the Nazis and their regime will be investigated as a complete negation of a Nazi aesthetic and politics of the body. In *Was soll aus dem Jungen bloß werden?* Böll provided several examples of his distrust and repudiation of anything that smacked of Nazism. In every instance, the body that the Nazis tried to “create” had been shaped and trained by what the sociologist Arthur W. Frank identifies as “institutions, discourses, and corporeality” (“Sociology of the Body” 49). Böll, however, in keeping with Helmuth Plessener’s thoughts on the human body, refused when- and wherever possible to allow his own “Körper” and “Leib” to be either regulated or disciplined by any discourses or institutions that reflected the Nazi ideology. Even when he could not fully escape the institution of school, “Reichsarbeitsdienst,” or the army, Böll tried to remain distanced from the Nazi propaganda and rhetoric that for him seemed to be completely aimed at trying to rob him of his human dignity.

Böll’s Family Background

In his informative book *Böll und Köln*, Viktor Böll⁷⁰ described the only documented fact about the prehistory of Böll’s family as being “ein topographisches Faktum” (7). According to him, the original family home had been built in 1720 in Xanten on the Lower Rhine by Böll’s father’s Catholic family. Originally from the British Isles, they chose to emigrate rather than subject themselves to the state religion of Henry VIII. They had apparently travelled as “Schiffszimmerleute” from Holland up the Rhine. However, seeming to prefer city life, and being so far from the ocean, they became cabinet-makers.

Böll’s ancestors on his mother’s side were farmers and brewers whose family fortunes, depending on the generation, fluctuated between wealth and impoverishment. Böll’s grandfather, Heinrich, who was born in 1829 in Xanten, became a cabinetmaker by trade and moved to Essen in 1850 where one of his sons, Viktor, was born in 1870. Viktor, the future father of Heinrich Böll, the writer, moved to Köln in 1896. In 1906, Viktor married for the second time. His new wife, Maria Hermanns from Düren, bore him six children. The youngest, Heinrich Böll, born on December 21, 1917, was destined to earn the 1972 Nobel Prize for Literature.

Viktor Böll’s business flourished even beyond World War I. In fact, in 1923 Böll’s father constructed a large house for his family at number 49 Kreuznach Street in what was still at that time the country-like suburb of Raderberg. The house was located directly opposite from Vorgebirgspark where the young Heinrich spent a great part of his childhood. Viktor often took his children to the museums and there explained to them the development of painting. Böll would later admit to his interviewer, René Wintzen, that not only these museum visits and Köln’s special architecture but also: “[A]ll das was ich auf der Straße gesehen, gerochen, gehört habe, hat mich beeinflußt” (*Erinnerung* 32). An important aspect of young Heinrich’s life experience in the Raderberg neighbourhood was the existence of two social classes. While Böll and his family belonged to the bourgeois, that is, “better” or upper class people, the “red” socialist workers were seen by their professional neighbours as being members of the lower class. However, Böll’s family were tolerant and brought their children up to respect all people regardless of their social status. In fact, according to Böll:

⁷⁰ Viktor Böll is the author’s nephew and the head of the Heinrich Böll Archive in Cologne.

Ich habe nie, bis heute nicht begriffen, was an den besseren Leuten besser gewesen wäre oder hätte sein können. Mich zog's immer in die Siedlung, die wie unsere neu gebaut war, in der Arbeiter, Partei- Gewerkschaftssekretäre wohnten; dort gab es die meisten Kinder und die besten Spielgenossen, [. . .] Meine Eltern [. . .] wären nie auf den Gedanken gekommen, zu tun, was die Professoren, Prokuristen, Architekten, Bankdirektoren taten: die verboten ihren Kindern, mit den "Roten" zu spielen. ("Raderberg" 119-120)

In 1930, the Böll family's economic situation changed radically. The crash of the 1929 Stock Market had far-reaching repercussions. Unable to pay his guarantee at a small bank for handworkers, Böll's father was forced to sell the family home. With this act, Böll's secure childhood years came to an abrupt end. This was truly a socially, materially defining, and unforgettable moment in the life of the young Heinrich Böll. According to him: "Die Ursache meiner Rebellion hing mit der total undefinierbaren gesellschaftlichen Stellung zusammen, in der wir uns befanden: wirtschaftliche Schwierigkeiten der krassesten Art, hatten sie uns nur deklassiert oder klassenlos gemacht?" In addition, as Böll writes: "[D]as Wort "bürgerlich" war eins unserer klassischen Schimpfworte geworden; die Elemente jener drei Klassen, zu deren keiner wir recht gehörten, hatten uns das, was man "bürgerliches" [. . .] Christentum nennt, absolut unerträglich gemacht (Jungen 26-27; ch. 4).

When the family moved back to the city, life became a deadly serious matter for many Germans:

Es war nicht ganz, aber fast ganz aus mit dem Spielen. Es wurde ernster. Schwierigkeiten. Wechsel- und Pfandhaus- und Gerichtsvollzieherjahre, [. . .] Schießereien auf der Straße. [. . .] Später lasen wir in der Zeitung, daß einer, mit dem wir draußen oft 'gepöhl't hatten, von seinem Vater erschlagen worden war: er war Kommunist, radikal, bitter, intelligent - sein Vater Sozialist. (Böll, "Raderberg" 123)

This anxiety indirectly helped to preserve Böll's relationship with his family: "Ich glaube zwar, [. . .] diese Wirtschaftliche Krise in ihrer krassesten Form, hat mir den wahrscheinlich üblichen oder normalen Bruch mit den Eltern erspart. [. . .] Es war ein richtiger Clan, der [. . .] eine gewisse Arroganz entwickelte, die mich [. . .] inzwischen auch literarisch beschäftigt" (Böll, "Drei" 365).

With each subsequent move that the family had to make the court bailiff and the beggars seemed to have no difficulty finding their "new" doorstep. His mother turned no one away. Her resolve to uphold the dignity of all human beings was strictly against the current Nazi race ideology. Despite the family's chronic shortage of money and the resulting moves, Böll still managed to thrive intellectually and physically. This was mainly due to the loving, caring, and liberal relationship that the family enjoyed.

At home Böll enjoyed the freedom of speech denied or ill-advised on the outside. In his household, all signs of authoritarian conduct, including that of the church, were frowned upon. As Böll emphatically told his interviewer: "Ich habe mich nie tyrannisiert gefühlt" (Wintzen, Erinnerung 42). There were no tyrannical displays or power struggles at home. Moreover, Böll credited his father with instilling in him and his siblings a hatred of war: "Er hat uns auch ganz bewußt anti-preußisch und anti-militärisch erzogen. [. . .] Also, mein Vater hat dieses Fronterlebnis ... nie gehabt und uns auch nicht davon erzählen können" (Wintzen, Erinnerung 127). His father's ability to simulate a "Blinddarmentzündung" fortunately kept him out of the

frontlines. Böll's mother's fearless use of body language not only expressed her obvious hatred of Hitler and his murderous regime but also influenced her son's attitude to war.

Early Signs of Rejection of Nazism

Böll's writings suggest that the preservation of humane values was still possible in any environment. In his autobiographical account of his schooldays, Böll remarked that his teacher, Bauer, clearly signalled his refusal to be intimidated by a uniformed student with his body language: "Es bedurfte keiner Ausdrücklichkeit zwischen uns" (Jungen 64; ch. 9). In addition, through Bauer, Böll became acquainted with Juvenal whose satirical writings were noticeably topical. To him: "[Bauer] war ein Demokrat, Humanist, keineswegs kriegsversessen, wies uns auf das auch Aktuell-Parodistische der griechischen Komödie⁷¹ hin [. . .]" (Böll, Jungen 64; ch. 9).

Böll credits his German teacher Schmitz with preparing him for his future career as an editor and literary critic. Schmitz, who wanted his students to acquire skills in condensing the works of wordy authors, assigned them the daunting task of reducing four pages of Hitler's Mein Kampf to one and a half to two pages. According to Böll:

Ich las also "Mein Kampf" genau - und auch diese Lektüre erhöhte meinen Respekt vor den Nazis nicht um den Bruchteil eines Millimeters. Immerhin verdanke ich dem Autor Adolf Hitler ein paar Zweien in Deutsch, die ich gut gebrauchen konnte, verdanke ich ihm auch - und hätte damit in der Schule auch fürs Leben gelernt - möglicherweise eine gewisse Eignung zum Lektor und Neigung zur Kürze. (Jungen 57; ch. 8)

Although Böll admitted that he forgot most of the German literature he read in school, his compulsory reading of Hitler's Mein Kampf remained fresh in his mind. Böll's early writings clearly reflect his opposition to the racist, body ideology expounded by Hitler in his notorious book. In fact, Böll's prose, especially his early writings, could be interpreted as being a complete repudiation of all that Hitler and his regime stood for.

Böll's understanding of faith, love, and charity, as well as his strong views on human rights, and the dignity of all human beings, unlike those of Hitler's, were all based on traditional Christian values. However, in Hitler's opinion: "[E]s gibt nur ein heiligstes Menschenrecht, und [eine] [. . .] heiligste Verpflichtung, nämlich: dafür zu sorgen, daß das Blut rein erhalten bleibt, um durch die Bewahrung des besten Menschentums die Möglichkeit einer edleren Entwicklung dieser Wesen zu geben" (Hitler Kampf 444; vol. 2, ch. 2). Later, Böll would discuss his own theory of the aesthetic of the humane in his Frankfurter Vorlesungen (1964) in which he elevated "Abfall" to a symbol of the highest worth. However, the present study will show that for decades already Böll had been living and formulating his ideas of human dignity, a common humanity, and the right of each individual to self-determination, ideas that are present in even his earliest writings.

Hitler even went so far as to expect the two Christian churches to encourage parents to adopt a poor, but healthy orphan child if they were at risk of giving birth themselves to a sick child who, in his opinion, would only bring unhappiness and suffering on himself and the rest of the world. In fact, for Hitler: "Was das griechische Schönheitsideal unsterblich sein läßt, ist die wundervolle Verbindung herrlichster körperlicher Schönheit mit strahlendem Geist und edelster

⁷¹ Böll managed to hang on to his second-hand copy past the war, never sacrificing it to the black market.

Seele" (Kampf 453; vol. 2, ch. 2). The German ideal of beauty, therefore, had to be based on that of the Greeks. Böll, however, in soundly rejecting this ideology, treated these topics with great compassion and understanding in works such as Und sagte kein einziges Wort, Der blasse Hund, and "Todesursache: Hakennase." Böll's writings are fundamentally concerned with damaged bodies, a theme he presents time and again in many variations.

In 1933, at a time of widespread hunger in Germany, the sixteen-year-old Böll lay in bed, a victim of the flu epidemic that was also sweeping the country. When a visiting school friend came to the Böll house with the unsettling news that Hitler had become "Reichskanzler,"⁷² Böll's mother immediately responded: "Das bedeutet Krieg" (Böll, "Drei Tage" 367). Time would prove her assumption correct. Böll would later find great wisdom in Saint-Exupéry's comment about war: "But war is not a true adventure. It is a mere ersatz. [. . .] It is a disease. It is like typhus" (Saint-Exupéry, Flight to Arras 81). For Böll, adventure was something one voluntarily went in search of, however, war, like illness, was foisted upon one.

In fact, Böll was convinced that his sinus problem would have begun when Hitler seized power in 1933 and triumphantly announced the "birth" of the Third Reich: "Ich hatte [...] damals chronische Stirnhöhlenvereiterung, [. . .] Manchmal denke ich heute, daß diese Krankheit *nazigen*⁷³ war (mögen Ärzte und Psychologen darüber grübeln, gewiß gibt es politisch- oder systembedingte Krankheiten)" (Jungen 54; ch. 7). Böll also maintained that his sinus problems persisted all through the war⁷⁴ and only cleared after he became a prisoner of war was "liberated" from Hitler's army by the Allies:

Es blieb auch die Krankheit - sie blieb auch im glorreichen Arbeitsdienst, in der ebenso glorreichen Wehrmacht -, aber schon im Gefangenenlager, in diesem merkwürdigen Zustand von Befreiung und Gefangenschaft zugleich, und erst während der Nachkriegszeit und bis heute: keine Spur von ihr! War sie wirklich *nazigen*?⁷⁵ Das mag schon sein, den ich war gegen die Nazis *auch* allergisch.
(Jungen 61; ch. 9)

His illness, therefore, was a metaphor for all that the National Socialist regime represented.

Ever since his childhood days, illness had been Böll's ally. In fact, because his chronic sinus infection gave him headaches and nausea as soon as he tried to lower his head, Böll was often excused from gym. He hated gym: "[D]a roch es immer so nach Männerschweiß und Vater Jahn, nach harter Leistung" (Böll, Jungen 54; ch. 7). But to be excused from gym also automatically meant to be excluded from participating in track and field, and games that he liked. However, with the introduction of National Youth Day everything came to a halt:

Sport und Spiele hatte ich gern betrieben - ach, dieser Männer-Ernst beim Turnen hatte ja auch etwas Lächerliches - Handball, Fußball, Schlagball, Leichtathletik,

⁷² On January 30 1933, the German President, Hindenburg, named the Nazi leader, Hitler, Chancellor of Germany. Hitler took over from Chancellor Franz von Papen. At that time, Hitler, Göring, and Dr. William Frick were the only Nazis in the Cabinet. On March 05 Hitler and Nationalists allies win Reichstag majority, and on March 12 Hindenburg lowers the flag of the German Republic and orders the swastika and empire banner to be flown side by side (Chronicle of the Twentieth Century).

⁷³ The emphasis is mine.

⁷⁴ Böll not only admitted to rejoicing every time that he was wounded during the war, but also to simulating illnesses in order to avoid service at the front.

⁷⁵ The emphasis is mine .

das alles fiel nach der Einführung des Staatsjugendtages aus. [. . .] Inzwischen war es verboten, nicht "organisiert" Sport zu treiben. (Böll, Jungen 55; ch. 7)

Sport, in the Third Reich, became a synchronised mass movement aimed specifically at preparing the German youth for their future role as soldiers in Hitler's armies. Strength and health became synonymous with "Schönheit." However, the Nazi aesthetic of beauty was unacceptable to the young Böll since it excluded much of humanity.

When Alois,⁷⁶ Böll's brother, was briefly arrested for playing soccer, an unorganised sport with some parish friends in a meadow, Böll limited himself to cycling. He became, as he remarked almost a "Reisender ohne Gepäck" (Böll, Jungen 56; ch. 7). In a way, Böll became a sort of "flâneur"⁷⁷ on wheels: "Nur das Fahrrad und das Schulschwänzen rettete mich davor, ein Stubenhocker zu werden" (Jungen 65; ch. 9). In a way, Böll was practising a form of "desertion" when he voluntarily escaped from the streets of Cologne to the peace and quiet of the suburbs. Böll also took refuge from the rowdy Nazi hordes by going to the movies whenever possible. Film as either an escape from, or as a substitute for reality would star prominently in Böll's novel Haus ohne Hüter. The themes of illness and the plight of women whose husbands fell in the war effort will be further explored in Und sagte kein einziges Wort, Der Engel schwieg, and Haus ohne Hüter.

Reaction to the Reign of Terror Begins

Compared to the visible, audible, and tangible barbarous acts of "cleansing" that took place between late January 1933 and the March election, the symbolic act of book "burning" at Böll's school, shortly after Hitler became chancellor,⁷⁸ seemed rather tame:

Die nichtsymbolischen Säuberungen waren sichtbar und hörbar, waren spürbar: Sozialdemokraten verschwanden [. . .] Zentrumspolitiker, Kommunisten ohnehin, und es war kein Geheimnis, daß in den Kasematten rings um den Kölner Militärring von der SA Konzentrationslager eingerichtet wurden: die Wörter "Schutzhaft" und "auf der Flucht erschossen" waren geläufig [. . .] die Nazihorden, brutal und blutrünstig, sorgten dafür, daß der Terror nicht nur Gerücht blieb. (Böll Jungen 19-20; ch. 3)

Shortly after the Reichstag fire and before the March election, many streets were blocked off. Böll experienced the terror that was suffocating the city on his way to school as he walked along streets and through "politically" unsafe places: "[W]elche Frau schrie da im Achtergäßchen, welcher Mann in der Landsberg-, wer in der Rosenstraße? [. . .] *Da* wurde offenbar geprügelt, aus Hausfluren gezerrt" (Jungen 20; ch. 3).

Hitler, however, had not won a majority vote in the Cologne/Aachen region in the March 1933 election. Twenty-six years later, Böll still took pride in the city and its mostly non-fanatical population which had made it uncomfortable for Hitler and his Nazi followers: "Ich habe immer einen Zettel bei mir [. . .] eine Statistik über die Wahlergebnisse bei der ersten Nazi-Wahl 1933

⁷⁶ After a family discussion, Alois was "sacrificed" to the NSDAP. It had been suggested that at least one member of the Böll family had to join the Nazi organisation.

⁷⁷ According to the social scientist, Steve Pile: "'The flâneur' [is] the embodiment of power-infused spatial practices of walking and looking" (Pile The Body and the City 228-229).

⁷⁸ According to Böll, authors like Remarque and Tucholsky were removed from the curriculum.

Bei diesem Wahlergebnis hat der [. . .] Gau Köln-Aachen [. . .] nur 30 Prozent Nazi-Stimmen" (Böll, "Köln gibt's schon" 182).

For Böll, this was remarkable since the election occurred after the Nazis had dispatched their political opponents, namely Social Democrats and Communists, to rapidly expanding concentration camps. Böll, however, still had to admit that the Rheinland had not escaped the Nazi-Terror: "Es hat die Vertreibung und Ermordung unserer jüdischen Mitbürger auch hier gegeben." All the same, the election result offered him a sense of consolation: "Die geringe Anfälligkeit für Demagogie, Mißtrauen gegenüber bombastischer Autorität, das steckt hier drin. Das steckt natürlich auch in Köln und ist ein großer Pluspunkt" (Böll "Köln" 182).

A particularly brutal event, however, left Böll and his fellow citizens petrified and horror-stricken. In November 1933, Göring ordered that seven of the seventeen members of the Red Front Fighters' League, who had been accused of murdering two Storm Troopers, be decapitated with an axe. Such violent, officially sanctioned acts no longer left any doubt in anyone's mind as to the merciless intention of the Nazis to launch into a the strict oppression of all opposition. Böll mocked Göring's "Maskengesicht mit den Morphiumglitzeraugen," his vanity, and his pomposity which he observed during a parade that he and other school children were forced to watch (Jungen 34-38; ch. 5). The strange, shining, exhausted eyes of a fellow student in his black SS uniform after a failed attempt at hunting down some unfortunate "enemy of the state" also remained in Böll's memory (Jungen 10; ch. 1).

Less than a year later, the deadly course that the Nazis had charted for themselves and the country was further revealed. June 30, 1934 became known as the "Night of the Long Knives." Fearing a move to undermine his supreme authority, Hitler ordered a "blood purge," and many prominent Nazis, including Heine und Röhm, were shot. Rumours about increasing criminality and homosexuality among Nazi officials had long been rampant, and Röhm, chief of staff of the storm troopers was a known homosexual. In fact, according to Böll, even before 1933, slogans such as: "SA ARSCH WASCHEN RÖHM KOMMT," had already been appearing on house walls (Böll Jungen 42; ch. 6). The bloody purge symbolised the regime's ruthless drive for total power and control over all of its members. As Böll wrote:

Das war, [. . .] nicht nur die endgültige Machtergreifung, es war auch die letzte Machtprobe, es war die endgültige Entlarvung Papens und Hindenburgs: [. . .] und da muckte offenbar niemand, jedenfalls nicht hörbar, muckte niemand, geschah nichts. Die Ewigkeit des Nazismus brach an. [. . .] der Tag von Potsdam, am 21. März 1933, als Hindenburg einem Herrn im Frack Deutschland überreichte, hat sie wohl alle geblendet. (Jungen 43-44; ch. 6)

Schirach's⁷⁹ weekly National Youth Day, decreed shortly after Hitler seized power, was yet another major symbol of a loss of the freedom and the inevitable militarization of Germany's young people. Böll hated the Hitler Youth shirts and the Storm Troopers' uniforms because of what they stood for. Uniforms were emblematic of authority and hierarchical power, and therefore represented for him, a loss of personal freedom, all of which Böll vehemently resented. From then on, Germany marched inexorably toward war in 1939 and total defeat in 1945.

⁷⁹ Baldur von Schirach was a poet and the leader of the German youth organisations. Böll suggested that Schirach, in his words, as "ein Blatt im Raum," had finally found "seinen Baum" to attach himself to, namely, Hitler. Böll also indignantly commented: "Diese Schirach-Flatsche [sic] verfügte also über die deutsche Jugend, und die deutschen Eltern ließen ihn über ihre Söhne und Töchter verfügen" (Böll Jungen 44-45).

The Young Citizen Considers his "Volk"

It was Böll's opinion that school prepared its students for death rather than life. However, he was determined not to learn for dying, but rather for life. Böll was essentially a truant for most of the last four years of high school. The city streets became his classrooms. As he roamed the streets of old Cologne, supposedly on his way to school, but often minus his schoolbag, Böll absorbed the multiplicity of everyday life situations he encountered. He freely admitted his desire to travel unencumbered:

Schon lange, bevor ich Anouilhs Stück "Der Reisende ohne Gepäck" kannte, war ich gern ein solcher, und es ist bis heute mein (nie erfüllter) Traum, einer zu sein. Hände in der Tasche, Augen auf, Straßenhändler, Trödler, Märkte, Kirchen, auch Museen, [. . .] Huren (an denen in Köln kaum ein Weg vorbeiführte) - Hunde und Katzen, Nonnen und Priester, Mönche - und der Rhein, [. . .] dieser große und graue Rhein, belebt und lebhaft, an dem ich stundenlang sitzen konnte; [. . .].
(Böll Jungen 13; ch. 2)

However, as far as Böll was concerned, the Nazis ruined Cologne's streets as "Heimat." He interpreted the Nazi hordes that flowed through the arteries of the city's body as an illness. Refusing to let himself become infected by these murderous hordes, Böll escaped as often as possible to the countryside. Following Susan Sontag's concept of illness as metaphor, we find that Böll's political views were more tolerant, more traditional, even romantic in comparison to the radical views of the Nazis for whom the Jews were a fatal disease eating away at the body politic.

In his epilogue to Chargesheimer's picture book Unter Krahenbäumen - Bilder aus einer Straße (1958), Böll described his school route as follows:

Viele tausend Male bin ich durch solche Straßen gegangen, aber nie in sie eingedrungen; erst viel später - in der Erinnerung - begriff ich, was Straßen wie diese bedeuten, [. . .] Diese Straßen können nur als Ganzes leben, nicht in Partikeln, sie sind wie Pflanzenkolonien, die sich aus geheimen Wurzeln nähren; in ihnen lebt es noch, uralt, stolz, unnahbar und seinen Gesetzen treu: Volk."
("Straßen" 251, 253)

Böll observed schoolgirls on street corners who seemed to turn into young women the next day, and the day after that into young mothers taking their kids to school: "[W]einend taten sie es, sie wußten, daß geschriebene Gesetze anfangen, wirksam zu werden" ("Straßen" 251). The first day of school marked the beginning of the process set in motion by the institution of government to politically shape the bodies and minds of children, and to restrict their personal freedom. Following Foucault's ideas on the subject, it is a deliberate process by which the institution can exercise its power and control over the individual. Böll resented this power.

For Böll, people were the essence of the streets. They were the "Volk." However, for the Nazis, the term "Volk" was symbolic of a racial unity, a shared history, fate and consciousness, and was played out on the physical human body. The term took on mystical proportions and was used to subordinate individuals to the NSDAP, a party which claimed to represent the people, that is, the "Volk." In addition, the Nazis used the term "Volk" to ostracise and exclude "undesirables" and other "parasites" accused of living off dwindling resources and of infecting the body politic. In order to acquire "Lebensraum" for the German "Volk," Hitler confiscated land owned and operated by "inferior" people. They were then forced to provide slave labour to

help make their former land yield raw materials, and to establish markets for his imperialist drive.

However, Böll freely admitted that he personally did not have the courage to escape the coming war:

Ich war zu feige, eine Verweigerung zu riskieren. Das wußte ich: die stummen, steinern aus KZs Entlassenen, die Vorstellung von möglicher Folter: nein ich war nicht mutig. Dem Krieg zu entgehen, ganz gleich, wo - war außerhalb der Vorstellungsmöglichkeit. ([. . .] natürlich wußten wir, daß Menschen emigriert waren: jüdische Bekannte [. . .] aber [. . .] damals war es einfach weit außerhalb unserer Gedanken; [. . .] und so desertierte ich nach innen: nach Hause). (Jungen 41-42; ch. 6)

From an early age on, however, Böll tried to avoid any type of organised institutional activities or jobs. Consequently, school seemed to offer him a hiding place. He firmly rejected the Church-approved theory that by joining the Nazi organisations one would gain the opportunity to convert them to Christianity. Böll's school principal tried to coerce him into participating in either Schirach's National Youth Day, the Hitler Youth, or the Storm Troopers. However, as outraged as Böll and his family were when the Reich Concordat was signed with the Vatican in 1934,⁸⁰ they refrained from leaving the Church. They did not want any action on their part to be construed as support for the Nazis.

Earlier on, as a member of the Catholic Marian Fellowship, Böll participated in their processions. However, as soon as these began to resemble military manoeuvres, Böll withdrew: "[I]ch trat aus dieser Kongregation aus, als man dort anfing, Exerzierübungen einzuführen, bis hin zu erheblichen 'Schwenkungen' fast in Kompaniebreite" (Jungen 30; 4). With the full support of his family and the help of a sympathetic doctor, Böll was able to avoid joining, or coming into any sustained contact with Nazi associations.

Böll came to associate certain smells with activities and certain spaces and places where people gathered. Church congregations seemed to give off a stale smell of a forced fervour that Böll described as *fug* [sic]. Bureaucracy of any kind smelled. Even outdoor school activities, in spite of the potential for "fresh air," "smelled" of forcible organisation. As previously mentioned, Böll hated gym because he associated it with the smell of male sweat, of strenuous male physical exercise and the male-oriented Nazi regime. Unlike most young Germans, Böll avoided the marching Nazi hordes, thus escaping the need to salute them.

Böll also detested the joint three-week secondary school training camps that housed students in youth hostels. For Böll, the rowdy behaviour of the rapidly emerging Hitler Youth ruined the camp's potential for outdoor hiking, sports and marches, listening to guest speakers, and meeting local people. On one occasion, Böll commented that the writer Johannes Kirchweg seemed uncomfortable with his sudden fame, and the whole Nazi ideology:

In Dudweiler hielt uns der Dichter Johannes Kirchweg eine Lesung; ganz wohl – so schien es mir jedenfalls - war ihm bei der Sache nicht, und mit der "Sache" ist hier der ganze Nazikram und auch das "heim ins Reich" gemeint. [. . .] er traute wohl auch seinem frischen Ruhm nicht so ganz, ahnte wohl schon den Mißbrauch. (Böll, Jungen 91-92; ch. 15)

⁸⁰ This gave the Nazis their first international recognition.

Böll and a friend risked the ire and abuse of the HJ in the youth hostels when they did not join in their triumphant singing. However, he soon lost his nerve (as he often did) and finally went home, once more with a taste of things to come in his mouth.

In 1937, in the midst of Böll's preparations for his final exams at the Kaiser Wilhelm-Gymnasium, the Nazis reduced the nine year high school program to eight years. More than a decade earlier, Hitler had already begun to devise this idea: "Die hierdurch erreichte Kürzung des Lehrplanes und der Stundenzahl kommt der Ausbildung des Körpers, des Charakters, der Willens- und Entschlußkraft zugute" (Kampf 469). For him: "Was wir heute Gymnasium heißt, ist ein Hohn auf das griechische Vorbild. Man hat bei unserer Erziehung vollkommen vergessen, daß auf die Dauer ein gesunder Geist auch nur in einem gesunden Körper zu wohnen vermag" (Hitler, Kampf 469). Hitler regarded the contemporary school training, especially in high schools, as irrelevant. What was needed, he felt, was a better balance in education between mental instruction and physical training.

In the last high school summer, thinking about which Greek texts would appear on his final exams caused Böll to reflect on the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games:

Da gab's ja auch die Olympischen Spiele mit dem enormen, höchst deprimierenden Propagandaerfolg der Nazis im In- und Ausland, und wir sahen in einem "Nachspiel" im Kölner Stadion die absolut ungermanischen Olympiasieger Jesse Owens und Ralph Metcalfe, der sich vor dem Start bekreuzigte! Ein katholischer Sieger und Neger! (Jungen 95; ch. 16)

The irony for Böll must have been acute. In a country so violently ruled by the extreme racial mythology and body beautiful aesthetic of its government, the athletic excellence and religiosity of the non-Aryan Olympic champions must have been a bitter pill for Hitler and his Nazi followers to swallow.

The quotation also demonstrates his disgust at the successful Nazi propaganda employed in the production of the Games. The hypocrisy and the deception evident in the Berlin Olympic Games entailed had obviously made a strong impression on the young Böll. His writings would eventually reflect these apparent paradoxes and ambivalences in various ways. Böll successfully completed his exams, including biology with its compulsory knowledge of Mendelian laws. According to Hitler: "Es soll kein Knabe und kein Mädchen die Schule verlassen, ohne zur letzten Erkenntnis über die Notwendigkeit und das Wesen der Blutreinheit geführt worden zu sein" (Kampf 475-476). Böll was free to be caught up in Hitler's coming war.

New Angles on Women

The clean, fresh country air Böll inhaled on his way to visit his brother, Alfred, starkly contrasted with the stale, sweaty atmosphere in the dark, damp casemates that had been built in 1880 as fortifications. Böll would also later experience these same sweaty, male smells during his active duty as a uniformed foot soldier among other soldiers in Hitler's army, in transport vehicles, waiting rooms, trains, and the trenches. War, as well as many other occupations, showed Böll just how ridiculous men really were: "[. . .] fast alle lächerlich in ihrer Männlichkeit, in ihrer Wichtigtuerei und in ihrem Gerede" (Wintzen, Erinnerung 43). Although Böll had compassion for the men who died or were wounded in war, it was war and its absurdity that made him become a "Verächter des Mannes" (Wintzen, Erinnerung 43).

Böll categorically rejected the myth of masculinity and success. It was a theme that he would return to throughout his life. Böll explains his position on the sexes to Wintzen:

Aber [. . .] nicht nur die Lächerlichkeit, sondern auch die Hilflosigkeit des Mannes im Krieg, dieses Hinundherbewegtwerden wie eine Herde und immer mitmachen, laufen. [. . .] Das könnte ein Grund dafür sein, daß ich so viel über Frauen geschrieben habe. [. . .] Es ist für mich selbstverständlich, daß Frauen mindestens so wichtig sind wie Männer. Jetzt gar nicht nur erotisch, sexuell, und nicht nur als Hausfrauen und Mütterchen, sondern als Existenz, als existentielles Eins. (Wintzen, Erinnerung 43-44)

In fact, Böll seemed to be advocating a feminisation of the all too “male” society that had dominated Germany’s society, especially since the birth of the Third Reich.

Böll considered that women had much more to offer society than just their bodies as sexual objects, or by being housewives and mothers. He wanted to convey this in his writings. Böll’s family home was his refuge. His memories of his mother, her restricted liberty, and the stifled childhood of his parents moved him deeply. But the naturalness of his own wife, Annemarie, and that of other women and young girls that he had known, had also impressed him greatly. Böll was also seemed aware that women were being exploited by the Nazi regime. For example, he knew that the Nazis’ glorification of mothers, and their support of Mother’s Day had very little to do with sentiment.

As the feminist writer Irmgard Weyrather remarked: “Die Nationalsozialisten beanspruchten den Muttertag nicht nur für ihre Ideologie, sondern sie nutzten ihn auch als Feiertag, um bestimmte NS-Organisationen oder Maßnahmen aufzuwerten” (Muttertag 49). The Nazis “honoured” mothers for their selfless service to, and their willingness to sacrifice themselves for the Fatherland.⁸¹ They appropriated women’s bodies for the sole purpose of peopling the Reich. Last but not least, Mother’s Day was a calculated boon to the economy.⁸² According to Feminist writer, Karin Hausen: “Mother’s Day was promoted by florists, other business interests, and public non-profit organisations used by these same interests. [. . .] It served not only to camouflage the real social and economic conditions burdening women but also to promote the idea of a racially pure and healthy *Volk*” (“Mother’s Day” 131-132).

“As we look behind the meaning of Mother’s Day,” comments Karin Hausen, “we begin to notice many phrases, mind sets, and groups that helped to pave the way for, and later found a comfortable home in, Nazi Germany.” She also argues that, “By the time of the Nazi seizure of power, German society had already become used to racial, *völkisch* ideas and language, to moral and clerical conservatism, and to the beginnings of modern propaganda politics, all of which had been promoted by - among others - the Mother’s Day advocates (“Mother’s Day” 132).

Women also play an important role in some of Böll’s early prose in which he investigates their physical beauty, or lack of it, and their fear of losing their bloom in a post-war Germany bent on forgetting the past and restoring its economy. For example, Böll highlights the plight of needy war widows in his portrayal of Frau Brielach in Haus ohne Hüter. In her article “Foucault, Femininity, and Patriarchal Power” Sandra Lee Bartky suggests: “To have a body felt to be ‘feminine’ [. . .] is in most cases crucial to a woman’s sense of herself as female [. . .]” (145). In his novels Der Zug war pünktlich, Und sagte kein einziges Wort, Der Engel schwieg, Haus ohne Hüter, Böll’s women figures try to become independent and liberated, to take charge of their own bodies, and to be the organisers of survival, in other words, to take back their power from men.

⁸¹ See Karin Hausen’s article “Mother’s Day in the Weimar Republic.”

⁸² See Böll’s comments on this topic in Jungen 26, 105.

In the same vein he noted: "Frauen [haben] ein weniger komplexes und weniger kompliziertes und weniger intellektuelles Verhältnis zu sich selber, zu ihrem Körper und zur Natur [. . .]. Und das macht sie freier und befreiungsfähiger" (Wintzen, Erinnerung 43). Böll was convinced that the sensitivity and imaginative resources that women demonstrated needed to be more fully explored. Unlike the contemporary Nazi body discourses,⁸³ Böll appeared to reject in his writings what Wintzen defined as: "Die karikierte, stereotyp durch die berühmten drei K (Kirche, Küche, Kinder) gekennzeichnete deutsche Frau" (Wintzen, Erinnerung 44). However, he also considered that women who stayed at home and prepared meals for their family were every bit as capable of feeling liberated as those who worked outside the home. For Böll: "Das ist ja Unsinn, diese Alternative Küche oder Freiheit" (Wintzen, Erinnerung 44). Böll explores these two spheres of female activities in his early prose through his unvarnished portrayal of women characters such as Käte Bogner and Frau Brielach.

Disagreeing with Wintzen who described his male characters as being either good or bad, strong or weak, or as successful or unsuccessful, Böll comments:

Ich glaube nicht, daß man das so schwarz-weiß sehen kann, wie Sie es zu interpretieren versucht haben, schwache Männer, starke Männer, weiche Männer, erfolglose, erfolgreiche. Ich glaube eher, daß die Generation, die aus dem Krieg kam oder den Krieg noch mitgemacht hat, sehr stark geprägt worden ist von einem gewissen Nihilismus, der mit der völligen Unsicherheit gegenüber Leben und Tod, und daß dieser Typ, der so vom Krieg geprägte Mann, beide Potenzen in sich hat. Die Brutalität oder Härte oder Kälte, die zum Erfolg nötig ist, aber auch die Gleichgültigkeit diesem gegenüber. (Böll, Erinnerung 45)

He further argues: "In dem Sinne, sehe ich diese Menschen, auch [. . .] [als] erfolgreiche Wiederaufbauleute, nicht als Bürger im klassischen Sinne, weil sie alle innerhalb eines gewissen Risikos leben" (Böll, Erinnerung 45).

It was therefore not the suffering of the individuals but the absurdity and difference between planning and reality that made him interpret war as ridiculous. It seemed clear to him that this fact also had a lot to do with the sexuality of men: "Ich glaube schon, daß die Analytiker recht haben, die Zusammenhänge zwischen Krieg und Sexualität des Mannes erkennen" (Wintzen, Erinnerung 47). Böll was also aware that no matter how well planned invasions, battles and attacks may have been in army headquarters, in the heat of battle: "Die Ausführung dieses Plans ist meistens so vielen Zufällen unterworfen, daß man eigentlich nicht mehr von Ordnung sprechen kann" (Wintzen, Erinnerung 46-47). Isolated in a foreign country, soldiers often resorted to violent contacts with other human beings, even with prostitutes. As Böll remarked: "Man konnte kein Mädchen ansprechen, man konnte mit keinem Menschen, mit dem man gerne mal geredet hätte, offen reden. [. . .] Der Hauptkontaktpunkt der Soldaten waren die Bordelle" (Wintzen, Erinnerung 124-125).

Sexuality, for Böll, was an aspect of war, and of everyone's daily life that should not be ignored. It is a topic that is explored in much of his early prose. While Böll reflected on the need for human warmth, companionship, and physical communication, the body discourses in the Third Reich interpreted sexuality quite differently. Long before he seized power, Hitler had railed against contact between Aryans and prostitutes since for him such liaisons would

⁸³ As far as Hitler was concerned: "The goal of female education must invariably be the future mother" (Mein Kampf 414).

inevitably lead to the mixing of good German blood with the dirty blood of “the Other.” He argued that the purity of the German race began its decline during the Thirty Years War when the country borders of the German states were continually being traversed by invading armies of soldiers and mercenaries, and by refugees from other countries.

Hitler fervently believed that early marriage and constant physical exercise would deter young Germans from being corrupted and infected by deviant prostitutes. As Hitler explains: “Nach Beendigung der Heeresdienstleistung sind ihm zwei Dokumente auszustellen: sein Staatsbürgerdiplom als Rechtsurkunde, die ihm nunmehr öffentliche Betätigung gestattet, und sein Gesundheitsattest als Bestätigung körperlicher Gesundheit für die Ehe” (*Kampf* 459). A clean bill of health was essential before marriages could be sanctioned by the state. While German women were to be trained to be future mothers, German soldiers were expected to be ready to spill their certified pure Aryan blood in the service of the Fatherland. Böll speaks out against these and related topics in his early writings in such works as: *Haus ohne Hüter*, *Der Engel schwieg*, *Und sagte kein einziges Wort*, *Das Brot der frühen Jahre*, *Der Zug war pünktlich*, *Der blasse Hund*, *Wanderer kommst du nach Spa...*, *Das Vermächtnis*.

The Soldier

Ich habe immer viel geschimpft auf Militär, Kaserne und so weiter; [. . .] Du mußt es wissen, daß es für mich tatsächlich, wirklich und wahrhaftig, das verkörperte Grauen ist. (Heinrich Böll 1940)

Heinrich Böll, in his autobiographical account of his schooldays, admitted that he lacked the strength and courage to avoid the two uniforms slated for him upon graduation: the uniform of the Labour Service⁸⁴ and that of the military. Courage, of course, was one of the essential characteristics of honourable German men and soldiers that had been promoted by both the duelling fraternities and the military. He described the “Reichsarbeitsdienst” as a pure “Terrororganisation” with “fast KZ-artige Züge [. . .] die schwerste Arbeit unter sehr schweren Bedingungen mit sehr wenig zu essen und kaum Geld” (Wintzen, *Erinnerung* 119). Originally based on a non-Nazi concept by Social Democrats and Christian society people to get the unemployed off the streets, the labour service later became a National Socialist organisation.

For Böll, these seven peacetime months in the labour service organisation did far more to deepen his inherent anti-militarism than the seven years he later spent involved in the war, as an infantryman in the army. All the same, his enrolment in the army in July 1939 was a more pleasant experience for him than his stint in the labour service. As he explained, it was not that he had any love for the German army, on the contrary, he hated it. It was just that before the war broke out there had still been some equality in both its regulations and its routines: “Die preußische Tradition hat ja ihre Ordentlichkeit, und das spürte man sehr deutlich” (Wintzen, *Erinnerung* 120).

When the war broke out, Böll was already stationed at the Osnabrück Barracks. However, since he had not yet completed his military training, he was not among the first German soldiers in 1939 to march off to war. At that time two things stood out in his mind, the obvious lack of enthusiasm among the soldiers, and the improvised look of the equipment they carried. It was not quite the classic picture of the well-oiled Prussian military machine that one would have perhaps

⁸⁴ Enrolment at the university was contingent upon the completion of “voluntary” labour service. However, since war was imminent, Böll’s attendance at the university was at best half-hearted. He often preferred to ride his bike instead through Cologne to a park where he could sit and read, or do some writing.

imagined or expected. The men were mainly reserve soldiers who seemed to be picking up their commission from where they left off at the end of the First World War. This struck him as peculiar: "Weil wir ja alle, [. . .] erzogen worden waren mit den Berichten über diese ungeheure Begeisterung von 1914" (Wintzen, Erinnerung 121).

Böll was later transferred to Poland where he spent about three months in the most awful, ancient Prussian barracks in Bromberg. It was there that he experienced how SS terror tactics of sudden arrests and raids, worked. While in Poland, Böll also became good friends with some Polish people, male and female, whose conversations with him proved to be an invaluable source of material for Der Zug war pünktlich.⁸⁵ According to Böll, after Germany defeated France the mood among Germans became transparent: "[D]as war, [. . .] eigentlich der entscheidende Augenblick, um zu prüfen, wer vom Nazismus infiziert war und wer nicht" (Wintzen, Erinnerung 122). Böll's use of a pathological image reinforces the present study's insistence on the importance of the body in his prose. German nationalism was based on the body.

For Böll, Nazism was a disease which had infected the bodies of the German people and nation. His corporeal language expressed how the institutional life of the military and the barracks affected him physically as a human being and as a soldier. For army Germans, the decisive victory over France seemed to make up in part for the 1918 defeat of the German army. The "Nazi infection" of state officials and other institutions, as well as of many German citizens, rapidly spread to epidemic proportions. When Böll left Poland he went to France as a member of the German occupation troops. However, for German soldiers in defeated France, revenge was not the issue, rather it was a prosperous country in which they could indulge themselves, almost with impunity, in much of its riches.

By contrast, while on duty in France, Böll became ill and was forced to return to Germany where he recuperated in several decrepit garrisons. In his March/April 1941 letter to his wife, Böll writes: "Du glaubst gar nicht, wie entsetzlich es ist, morgens von einem gellenden Pfiff und einem Brüll [sic] geweckt zu werden, und sich dann in einer von 20 Leibern verpesteten Atmosphäre zu finden. Und dann immer mit der Gewißheit, nur eineinhalb Tage lang dasselbe zu tun, was man schon bald zwei Jahre getan hat" (G. Hoffmann, Heinrich Böll 88). Böll again expresses his disgust at everything to do with the war in vivid bodily terms. Here, the filthy, smelly bodies of the soldiers contrast negatively with all the positive Nazi propaganda of cleanliness and purity that had washed over Germans in recent years. The myth of the perfect Aryan/Nazi body continued to disintegrate as the war dragged on.

The tension in the barracks grew. No one wanted to be sent to Russia. Böll was lucky enough to be sent back to France, where he spent more than a year. Seemingly overnight the single word "Stalingrad" appeared on French walls. For Böll, this was a far more powerful display of French sentiment than the imperative "Nazis get out!" Any contacts made by soldiers took place in brothels. Although he enjoyed some pleasant moments of French life, he also worked, in a small way, against the regime. While collecting personal items left behind by his superiors, Böll removed any wanted posters of German deserters.

Böll could have simulated an eye infection in order to avoid going to the Russian front, but he did not. Even though he knew it would disgust him and possibly be fatal, Böll wanted the first hand experience of the battle front with its blend of fascination and violence. As he explained to Wintzen:

⁸⁵ See Wintzen Erinnerung 120-121.

Wie lange war ich Soldat? Fast vier Jahre, hatte noch nie die Front gesehen [. . .]. Aber ich wollte es, das müssen Sie verstehen, man hörte davon, man redet davon, alle diese Heldengeschichten, positiv und negativ, und Schwejk und Remarque und der ganze Krempel, ich dachte, verdammt noch mal, jetzt guckst du dir das mal an. Das mißglückte, ich war nicht schwer verwundet, aber hatte noch Krankheiten, eine Art Malaria, [. . .]. (Wintzen, Erinnerung 128)

The German army's ill-fated march into Russia, however, abruptly quelled Böll's desire to experience at first hand the action at the front.

With the 1942/43 German winter offensive in Russia turning into a complete and deadly disaster, Böll soon found himself trying to cope with his feelings of sheer terror. The French blew up the train in which he was travelling to the Russian Front. Only slightly injured, he continued on and spent three months under fire in a desolate part of the Crimea. There he was again wounded, this time more seriously: "Meine Bedürfnis, meine Neugierde auf das Fronterlebnis war befriedigt" (Wintzen, Erinnerung 128). He was flown back to Odessa, and then slowly made his way back home, making every effort to avoid a return to the front.

However, unable to convince the doctors that he was still not fit for active duty, Böll was sent back to the front in May 1944, to Romania. The huge battle again captured his curiosity and again he expressed this in understated and ironic terms: "Wenn du schon dahin mußt, guck dir den Kram auch an" (Wintzen, Erinnerung 129). The German troops staged a massive advance that lasted three or four days, and the toll it took on his and the bodies of other soldiers was enormous.

In a letter of June 19. 1944, written in Debrecen, Hungary, Böll broke the news to his wife that he was wounded:

Ich habe am Morgen des dritten Tages 20 Meter vor unserer Einbruchsstelle drei Splitter einer russischen Handgranate ins Kreuz bekommen und bin dann, obwohl ich durch dreitägigen Hunger, Durst und gräßliche Hitze schon fast tot war, noch etliche Kilometer getürmt, weil ich mit meiner Verwundung nicht allein liegen bleiben wollte und [. . .] die russischen Panzer schon hinter mir waren. (G. Hoffmann, Heinrich Böll 97-98)

Böll was not impressed with his front-experience in Romania: "Es war schrecklich, physisch schrecklich. Wir hatten nichts zu trinken, kaum etwas zu essen, [. . .] Es mißglückte vollkommen. Ich wurde wieder verwundet, [. . .] Tausende von Soldaten fliehen, fliehen, fliehen. Die Armee war schon völlig demoralisiert, [. . .] diese Kampfkraft oder Kampfmoral, [. . .] war ja nicht da" (Wintzen, Erinnerung 129). The bodily deprivation and suffering that he and the other soldiers endured erased all thoughts of war as an adventure. In the field hospital, infested with lice and angry, Böll finally exploded: "Ich hasse den Krieg und alle die, die ihn lieben!..." (G. Hoffmann, Heinrich Böll 98). Experiences such as these echo loudly throughout his early prose in works like Die Verwundung, Wanderer, kommst du nach Spa..., and Wo warst du, Adam?.

Heinrich Böll, the soldier, had now experienced war at the front. Needless to say, however, the failed German attack had been a terrifying experience for him: "Jeder wollte nur sein Leben retten, möglichst weg, [. . .] das war schon Terror. Ich lief mit zurück und wurde kontrolliert, ob ich wirklich verwundet war, dann gab es einen sogenannten Verwundetenzettel, [. . .] und das war eigentlich die Lebensrettung" (Wintzen, Erinnerung 130). This and many other profound experiences eventually found their way into his early prose, especially his novel fragment entitled "Die Verwundung" which appears in a collection of stories with the same name.

However, some of Böll's colourful experiences of the war were void of danger: During the war, everything was for sale, from a proof-of-being-wounded document to military equipment and clothing. In France, German soldiers of all ranks stole every imaginable item and then sold it on the black market. In chapter six of *Das Vermächtnis*, Böll portrayed an almost unbelievable example of this activity. In it, a French children's camp was being surreptitiously dismantled by several groups of German soldiers and then mailed in small packages to Germany where they would be sold. Later, in his post-war interview with Wintzen, Böll exclaimed: "[W]ie die Tüchtigkeit und auch die kaufmännische Tüchtigkeit der Deutschen nach dem Krieg zu erklären ist, die hat bestimmt eine Wurzel im Krieg" (Wintzen, *Erinnerung* 130).

Böll got an important tip in the Hungarian army hospital: "Wunden heilen sehr schlecht, wenn man viel Alkohol trinkt" (Wintzen, *Erinnerung* 131). Böll made good use of this bodily advice whenever the need arose. Paradoxically, the soldier's body could be preserved by preventing its healing or by causing it to be damaged. One had to risk dying in order to live. Clearly, the perfect body no longer seemed to be such a desirable asset. In fact, the damaged, vulnerable bodies of German soldiers made Hitler's claim of the superiority and invincibility of the "new" Aryan/Nazis body appear hollow. Works such as *Die Verwundung*, *Wanderer, kommst du nach Spa...*, *Der Engel schwieg*, *Und sagte kein einziges Wort*, *Der blasse Hund*, *Der Zug war pünktlich*, *Der General stand auf einem Hügel...*, deal with this important theme.

Avoiding the War

Having had his fill of the front experience, Böll decided to take his destiny into his own hands in order to regain control over his own life and body. He wanted to be free to write. For that, he had to first survive and then be productive. He also wanted to love and be loved, and not to have to ignore the degradation that assaulted his disciplined soldier's body. He did not want to be a soldier: "Ich hatte immer gefälschte Papiere bei mir, die hatte ich auf einen Schreibtische gestohlen, blanko Urlaubsscheine, Dienstfahrt-Ausweise, ich hatte einen Stempel bei mir, den ich mir auch geklaut hatte" (Wintzen, *Erinnerung* 132). Released from hospital, he received "einen Entlassungsschein" for an immediate return to the Romanian front. After talking the secretary into leaving the destination open, Böll changed it to Metz, the most western place where Germans still had control. However, this was an especially dangerous time to be a deserter.⁸⁶ Now deserters were being shot on sight. In addition, soldiers on leave were grabbed off the streets and sent back to the front through an act known as "Heldenklau."

Böll arrived by train in Mainz wrapped up in a red Turkish sofa cover, since only wounded soldiers had coats. He continued to falsify, steal documents, fake various illnesses, as well as retard the healing process of his wounds. Böll, the deserter, now used the very institutional processes and discourses he had tried so hard to resist as an active soldier for his own purposes. He used sick leave, holiday leave, and hospitalisation documents, whichever worked best to keep him out of military service. Böll's efforts to try and change the course of his life finally became too risky. In fact, he was just as restricted and in just as much physical danger as when he was in the army. Almost like an example of Foucault's argument on the rationality of "panopticism,"⁸⁷ Böll had become his own supervisor, and had to constantly keep moving in order to avoid being captured.

⁸⁶ On July 20, 1944, while Bl was still in hospital, the failed assassination attempt on Hitler had taken place, and the terror in the army had become palpable.

⁸⁷ See Foucault, "Panopticism" 206-213.

Using false papers, Böll transferred himself to a nearby stationed German troop. He decided that the army was the safest place for a deserter to wait out the war: "Weil tatsächlich an jeder Straßenecke ein Deserteur erschossen werden konnte" (Wintzen, Erinnerung 133). The bodies of deserters were then hung from trees and posts as a warning to other would-be deserters. Böll's posthumously released works, Der blasse Hund, and Der Engel schwieg treat this topic with deep understanding for the plight of soldiers who become so disgusted with the carnage and the senselessness of war, desert the army.

Back in the army, he was again compelled to carry a heavy machine-gun. Böll, in another futile attempt to make his way back home through the bush, was captured by the Americans. However, on his way to the Brüchemühle concentration camp, he broke loose and re-armed himself with a machine gun. He felt terrorised by the unseen enemy, the Americans, who were systematically firing into the woods. Finally, he was taken captive a second time on April 9, 1945, about one month before Germany's unconditional capitulation on May 8, 1945. Böll spent approximately four months in POW camps in a series of locations in France and Belgium. In them he endured the insults, taunts, kicks and stone throwing of the victors. As Böll's biographer wrote:

In der Kriegsgefangenschaft wandelte Böll sich. Er erlebte die Beschimpfungen der Sieger ... Den ganzen Krieg über hatte Böll sich seinen Mitsoldaten fern gefühlt, jetzt, wo sie gefangen waren, hätte er auf keinen Fall nicht zu ihnen gehören mögen. [. . .] Er hatte sich als Rheinländer, Kölner verstanden. Das Wort "Deutscher" - zumal in Hitlers Mund - hatte er nie auf sich bezogen. Jetzt fühlte er sich zum erstenmal als Deutscher: "Weil dieses Volk so verachtet wurde, wollte ich auch dazugehören." (G. Hoffmann, Heinrich Böll 77)

Böll's compassion for the weak, the "inferior," the downtrodden and the despised also resounds in the pages of works such as Wo warst du, Adam?, Haus ohne Hüter, Und sagte kein einziges Wort, Der Engel schwieg, Der blasse Hund, among many others.

War Letters

Heinrich Böll, the soldier, remained an infantryman during his entire six years in the army. Although it had been tempting to become an officer, Böll stuck to his ideals at the expense of seeing himself, as he put it, as nothing more than a piece of shit. At times he felt either lost in the masses, or pushed down into the mud or toward the back. He constantly experienced degradation, humiliation, a lack of nourishment, sickness, isolation, and the deprivation of human warmth. Above all, he deeply resented being subordinated to a totalitarian authority, and to tyrannical institutions and language that he did not believe in. On July 19, 1942, while in France, Böll wrote to his mother and expressed his deep affection and concern for her and family: "Wir alle, unsere ganze Familie, haben unendlich viel zusammen leiden und ertragen müssen; . . . niemals vergesse ich auch, daß Du das meiste dabei ertragen hast; wir gehören wirklich zusammen" (G. Hoffmann, Heinrich Böll 96). He explained his decision to remain an infantryman in this way:

Ich habe es mir oft [. . .] überlegt, ob ich nicht Offizier werden soll; [. . .] Ich könnte es einfach nicht über mich bringen, auf dem Roß zu sitzen, stolz und sauber, und zu meinen Füßen die drekkige [sic], erschöpfte Masse nach einem langen Marsch. Irgendwie gehöre ich viel mehr und viel inniger in die Masse, die leiden muß, mehr, tausendmal mehr als alle die, die zu Roß sitzen. (G. Hoffmann, Heinrich Böll 96)

Torn between his desire for bodily comfort in a cruel war and his fear of losing his sense of solidarity with his fellow foot soldiers, Böll exclaims: “Es ist ja unheimlich verlockend, die Aussicht, die Möglichkeit, dem ganzen blöden Gesindel überlegen zu sein; einen Putzer zu haben, der alles erledigt, [. . .] und ein Bett haben und Ruhe und vorne zu sein, [. . .] nicht mehr hinten weit drin in der Masse wie ein Stück Scheiße; [. . .] aber es wäre ein Verrat, und deshalb will ich es nicht” (G. Hoffmann, Heinrich Böll 96).

In the hierarchical world of the military, power was derived from practising a corporeal schema that positioned bodies according to their rank and insignia. Böll’s reaction to this system was ambivalent. Böll consciously wanted to remain within the ranks of the lowly infantryman, yet bubbling up from the depths of his unconscious was this startling desire to be an officer. However, identifying himself as an officer forced him to recognise himself as neither an officer nor a superior. After he suppressed this desire, Böll realised that it was far more important to him to maintain his solidarity with his fellow infantrymen.⁸⁸ Many of these thoughts also find their way into his future writings.

In his letter dated June 4. 1941, Böll bitterly regretted his wasted years as a soldier since they deprived him of valuable time to write as a profession:

Jeder Tag, [. . .] in diesem ewigen Einerlei, ist auch verloren für mein Werk, deshalb quält es mich so maßlos, dieses Militärleben. [. . .] ich bin nicht verzweifelt, [. . .] nur irgendwie äußerst ungeduldig und sterbe vor Sehnsucht nach Schlaf und Ruhe, nach Friede; aber es gibt keinen Frieden auf dieser Welt, das weiß ich. (G. Hoffmann, Heinrich Böll 91)

His abiding faith in God, the cross, and hope lit up his dark days and nights. In addition, his firm belief in a better, more productive and peaceful existence, even if it would only be possible in the hereafter, also helped him to survive his bouts of depression, impatience, boredom and physical discomforts.

Böll’s staunch belief in the dignity of human life also persisted in the face of utter degradation:

Ich leide jede Sekunde maßlos unter meinem uniformierten Zustand, [...] das Schlimmste an unserem Leben ist, diese andauernden Demütigungen vor allen und in allem; [...] Ich weiß natürlich, im Grunde genommen kann mich niemand demütigen, wenn ich nicht will, kann mir niemand meine Menschenwürde rauben. (G. Hoffmann, Heinrich Böll 86)

The very discipline forced on him in the army also helped him to discipline himself for his own future goals.

In another letter dated June 5. 1941, he shared his desire to write a huge book about the tremendous potential and power of human life:

Ich fühle eine unbändige Lust, ein großes, dickes Buch zu schreiben, [. . .] von der Gewaltigkeit des menschlichen Lebens, [. . .] jedenfalls will ich mich nicht mehr von meiner quälerischen Ungeduld stören lassen, die mich leer macht und öde und alle Freude aus meinem Herzen nimmt; ich will die Unruhe meines Herzens bezähmen und sie nicht sterben lassen an dieser vernichtenden Ungeduld. (G. Hoffmann, Heinrich Böll 91)

⁸⁸ In The Body and the City 250 ff., Steve Pile offers some interesting insights into this phenomenon.

However, his future ability to write would depend on his ability, as a soldier, to control his emotions, anxieties, and, in general, his body in his current situation. Soldiers, commented Böll in a November 6, 1940 letter, found waiting difficult: "Wir warten immer auf irgend etwas, auf Versetzung, Einsatz, Urlaub, auf die Erfüllung oder Dementierung irgendeines Gerüchtes, ... doch letztlich immer auf unsere Entlassung" (G. Hoffmann, Heinrich Böll 80). However, Böll felt that God would not allow his deep desire for a more intellectual life to die, and that the day would surely come when borders would be fixed and, "daß man einmal mit brennendem Herzen und glühendem Mund wird für die Wahrheit sprechen dürfen und müssen" (G. Hoffmann, Heinrich Böll 92). The war would end, and peace would return in some manner, and he would be free to speak the truth as he knew it.

Böll's vow in a letter dated November 1940, that if God allowed him to survive the war and return to Germany where his damaged body could finally heal, reveals his future path: "[I]ch möchte wieder soviel Leben haben, wie ich hatte, und dann, dann will ich - nicht die Toten begraben - nein, den Ermordeten will ich ein Lied singen" (G. Hoffmann, Heinrich Böll 80). He clearly wanted to honour the millions of souls that the war had consumed and then spewed out as so much chaff. In the same month, Böll discussed the tenseness and nervousness he experienced sitting in the barracks in the early mornings, listening to the loud shouting outside and dreading being collared at any given moment by an unannounced corporal or sergeant.

Imagining a future time of peace, Böll wrote: "Wir werden keine Uniform mehr tragen, daß heißt, wir dürfen wieder - in einem sehr beschränkten Maße - wir selbst sein" (G. Hoffmann, Heinrich Böll 81). As early as 1933, it had already become clear to him that uniforms and military decorations, or the lack of either, would define the body of the German male during the Hitler regime. They would honour or stigmatise the wearer and/or non-wearer. Böll analysed this in many stories such as Wo warst du, Adam?, Das Vermächtnis, Der Zug war pünktlich, Der Engel schwieg, Der blasse Hund, among others.

God, according to Böll, gave mankind three possibilities to regain paradise: the artist, lovers, and children. They could be seen, in all guises, by those who had eyes to see:

Wer Augen hat zu sehen, der sieht sie; in allen Masken, allen Berufen [. . .] Es gibt keine interessantere Wissenschaft oder Kunst [. . .] als die Physiognomik. Sieh Dir die Gesichter aller Leute an, die Dir begegnen. [. . .] wie ein Arzt der [. . .] über das stille Schlachtfeld schreitet [. . .] Leichen, Leichen, Leichen - und manchmal findest Du einen Lebenden, einen lebendigen Menschen. Du siehst Gesichter, die vor Glück strahlen, und solche, die vom Unglück beleuchtet sind wie von einem dunklen Feuer; aber sie leben [. . .] sie leben. (G. Hoffmann, Heinrich Böll 84)

The ability to show and experience elementary emotions such as joy, sorrow, pain and anger by smiling, laughing, crying or screaming is what makes a person human. To prevent someone from feeling or expressing his emotions is demonic and grossly inhumane. Through the regime of the drill, he who became a soldier learned how to detach himself from his body both physically and spiritually.

The Writer Emerges

The soldier's body, with its professional inscriptions, could be read like a map. One look at a soldier's body revealed a great deal about his identity, worth, potential, power, tours of duty, and his position in the military hierarchy. One is informed not only by what is invisible and by what is visible, but also by what is lacking and by what is present. As the uniformed Böll sat

with his wife in a Cologne streetcar, he unexpectedly met his former high school principal and history teacher. Böll remembered him as “anständig”, a congenial, polite, non-Nazi, and a true-blue “Frontkämpfer.” When a former student fell in the Spanish Civil War, as a member of the German Condor Legion, he arranged a sombre memorial service for him. His teacher at that time seemed almost to regret not having been killed at the front in the First World War. Was dying for the fatherland really the highest honour and symbol of a soldier’s worth? Böll was not convinced then or now. He, personally, wanted to live so he could write about his fellow Germans who had been so horribly led astray by Hitler.

The bodily reaction of Böll’s former teacher when he realised that Böll was on leave from the Crimea revealed what he called the “Hindenburgfluch” that burdened decent, national German academicians. It was a curse that reflected the ridiculous mentality that anything undocumented did not occur. The principal’s misplaced priorities left an indelible impression on Böll:

Im fünften Kriegsherbst, in einer Kölner Straßenbahn, ein halbes Jahr nach Stalingrad, wo gewiß viele seiner früheren Schüler gestorben und verelendet waren, blickte er erst auf meinen Ärmel, dann mir kopfschüttelnd ins Gesicht. (Böll, “An einen Bischof” 239)

The history teacher read the soldier body of his former student and found it sorely lacking. Böll would debate these questions and this mentality in several of his works. For example, in Wo warst du, Adam?, Der Engel schwieg, Haus ohne Hüter, Das Vermächtnis, and “Der General stand auf einen Hügel...,” military ranks, and the body discourses of the Nazis help to reveal the hypocrisy, senselessness, and horror of war and its aftermath.

In his interview with René Wintzen, Böll remarked that his desire to write in his own language about all of his wartime experiences was established while he was in the prisoner of war camps:

Dieses Land war unsere Heimat, mit einer eigenen Sprache, und in dieser Sprache wollten wir schreiben, ohne Herablassung und auch ohne Anbiederung zu spüren. Das ist [. . .] nicht besonders schmerzlich, weil ich im Gefangenenlager schon diesen Stolz entwickelt habe. Wenn Sie so monatelang als fucking German Nazi behandelt werden und in den Hintern getreten, dann denken Sie, also nun leck mich am Arsch, ich bin trotzdem Deutscher, und ich werde schreiben. (Wintzen, Erinnerung 96)

Up to this point in his life, Böll had often found it necessary to “hide” his identity. He hid himself in school, at home, in the countryside, in cinemas, in hospitals, even in the army, and now finally in POW camps. However, with his soldier days finally behind him, and his civilian days stretching before him, Böll no longer had to hide or suppress his opinions: he would not be silenced for four decades.

However, before he would attain the future he had so passionately longed for, a future in which he would write, Böll would have to let his damaged mind and body heal. He would also have to survive the present. It would be this physical and mental struggle, one shared by all of his fellow Germans, that Böll would eventually put down on paper. He would not write in a vacuum because he would have more than enough experiences in the first thirty years of his life to fill volumes. Böll’s early prose, therefore, is a discussion of mentally, physically, and psychologically war-damaged bodies. Body language is his literary tool for conveying the horror, tenderness, frustration, disappointments, pain, joy, and suffering that he and his fellow German

citizens experienced under the Nazi tyranny. As Böll and his wife approached Cologne on that cold November day in 1945, the devastation that confronted them moved them to tears.

CHAPTER IV. THE DISCIPLINED BODY

Wenn zwei Truppenkörper miteinander kämpfen, wird nicht derjenige siegen, bei dem jeder einzelne die höchste strategische Ausbildung erhielt, sondern derjenige, der die überlegenste Führung und zugleich die disziplinierteste, blindgehorsamste, bestgedrillte Truppe hat. (Adolf Hitler)

Discipline "makes" individuals; it is the specific technique of a power that regards individuals both as objects and as instruments of its exercise. (Michel Foucault)

Das Ziel der Ausbildung, einen anderen, besseren Leib zu bekommen, hat er [der Vorgesetzte] erreicht und stellt es dar. Im neuen Leib liegt die ersehnte Garantie, "in keiner Weise lächerlich" zu sein. (Klaus Theweleit)

The "Making" of a Disciplined German Soldier

Heinrich Böll's early prose provides deep insights into the nature and role of the German soldier in Hitler's armies during the Second World War. Böll draws heavily upon his own army experience (1939-1945), his observations of fellow soldiers, and the contemporary military discourses, especially those expounded by Hitler in *Mein Kampf* (1925), a text which he closely read and then had to summarise in part, as a class assignment. Although I refer to other sources, I also turn to this notoriously famous document which distils the militaristic rules and model images propagated throughout National Socialist Germany at the time I am concerned with in my dissertation.

My own close reading of it has revealed what Hitler expects from his German soldiers. He demands absolute discipline, obedience, loyalty, and faith in the justness and power of his plans for creating a healthy and expanded new empire. Above all, his soldiers had to be prepared to unquestioningly sacrifice themselves in the service of their community and fatherland. In my view, Böll's intimate knowledge of Hitler's ideology and theory on the disciplined Aryan body, which did not persuade him to join the Nazis, is clearly reflected in his early prose. For this reason, our awareness as readers of the Nazi body discourses helps us to understand the prominent role Böll assigns the body. In his writings, Böll portrays German soldiers of all ranks. They appear on or off duty; in barracks, towns, brothels, bars, restaurants, and hospitals; in trenches, and at the front; in vehicles, and on foot. They are seldom healthy in both mind and body, in fact, many are sick, injured, dead, or dying. Some are corrupt, some are deserters, and others commit acts of indecency, murder, and treason. In fact, soldiers in Böll's narratives seldom approximate Hitler's projected images of brave, honourable, disciplined, triumphant, and physically robust Aryan bodies.

In the context of this chapter on the soldier's disciplined body, Hitler's general views on the making of the soldier bear revisiting. If Foucault can be viewed as the theorist of the disciplined body, then Hitler can surely be considered to be one of its practitioners *par excellence*. Foucault declares: "The classical age discovered the body as object and target of power." For him, therefore, a "docile," disciplined body is one "that may be subjected, used, transformed, and improved. The celebrated automata [...] were also political puppets, small-scale models of power: Frederick II, the meticulous king of well-trained regiments, and long exercises, was obsessed with them" (Foucault, "Docile Bodies" 180). Hitler, himself a great admirer of "celebrated automata," that is, well-trained soldiers, refers to Frederick the Great no less than six times in *Mein Kampf*.

For Hitler, only what is practised at an early age can be performed with precision at a mature age. During the demilitarised period of the Weimar Republic (1919-1933) military training was non-existent. However, after seizing power, Hitler decreed that a future soldier's

training had to begin in school.⁸⁹ Through the medium of state sponsored sports of all types, including gymnastics, fencing (duelling)⁹⁰ and boxing, this goal was achieved. Hitler also deemed it the duty of schools, and therefore of the state, to inculcate in young minds important values such as loyalty, the spirit of sacrifice, discretion, self-control, will-power, determination, the joy of responsibility, courage for action, and self-confidence. In addition, he expected these institutions to teach his future soldiers to endure suffering, adversity, rebuke, and humiliation, even when undeserved, in silence.⁹¹

Apparently, Hitler was convinced that this type of physical education would develop courage, deep national pride, and strong, healthy bodies immune to the weaknesses that ultimately cause nations to crumble.⁹² Consequently, in his opinion, the virtues of “Treue,” “Opferwilligkeit,” and “Verschwiegenheit,” essential for the formation of a great nation, must be based on the well-trained German body and mind.⁹³ Completing his racial education in human selection during his military service, the German soldier is eligible for his citizen’s diploma and a certificate of health, without which he cannot marry.⁹⁴ While the army provides the soldier with his highest education in patriotism,⁹⁵ his previously acquired physical prowess and mental abilities, gained both during and after his school career, provide the basis for his military training.⁹⁶

Hitler therefore insists that education alone does not make a man brave. Equally, a courageous man must also be physically fit if he is to successfully challenge a more agile and physically prepared opponent. Superior training in peace time, therefore, injects the entire national organism with an indestructible faith in its own superiority and that of the nation as a whole. Hitler is convinced that weaker bodies benefit from this sense of self-confidence and invincibility even in the worst battle situations.⁹⁷ Consequently, state-sponsored paramilitary training and education in the schools filled the void created by the demilitarised Weimar period, and continued even after rearmament to produce well-trained young recruits for Hitler’s military machine.

Hitler and his military leaders, first secretly and then openly, reinstated the old army regulations. As a result, soldiers only needed to be trained in the correct use of weapons.⁹⁸ Hitler also insisted on the primacy of the old Prussian army’s personality principle of authority downward and responsibility upward toward the higher personality of the leader.⁹⁹ Clearly, for

⁸⁹ See Hitler, Kampf 458; vol. 2, ch. 2.

⁹⁰ Duelling as a means of getting satisfaction, and fencing as a sport activity, were both supported by the Nazis not only for their potential to train the body in agility and quick decision-making, but also because they are traditionally steeped in the mystique of blood and honour.

⁹¹ See Hitler, Kampf 459; vol. 2, ch. 2.

⁹² See Hitler, Kampf 418; vol. 2, ch. 2.

⁹³ See Hitler, Kampf 461; vol. 2, ch. 2.

⁹⁴ See Hitler, Kampf 459; vol. 2, ch. 2.

⁹⁵ See Hitler, Kampf 459; vol. 2, ch. 2.

⁹⁶ See Hitler, Kampf 458-459; vol. 2, ch. 2.

⁹⁷ See Hitler, Kampf 455-456; vol. 2, ch. 2.

⁹⁸ See Hitler, Kampf 459; vol. 2, ch. 2.

⁹⁹ See Hitler, Kampf 501-502; vol. 2, ch. 4.

Hitler: “Das Entscheidende ist die Führung selbst” (Kampf 510; vol. 2, ch. 5). The army, therefore, would only be able to preserve its inner discipline and to succeed in its campaigns if it had both a broad mass of common soldiers and a reserve of intelligent leaders.¹⁰⁰ In addition, according to Hitler:

So wie er [der einzelne Soldat] vielmehr zu straffer Disziplin und zur fanatischen Überzeugung von dem Recht und der Kraft einer Sache und zu restloser Einstellung auf sie erzogen wird, so muß diese auch beim einzelnen Anhänger einer Bewegung [. . .] geschehen. (Kampf 508-509; vol. 2, ch. 5)

The disciplined soldier and follower were the backbone of Hitler’s military regime.

Foucault argues that discipline creates individuals. For him, its unqualified success is assured with the use of the simple tools of “hierarchical observation, normalising judgement, and their combination in a procedure that is specific to it – the examination” (Foucault, “Correct Training” 188). Disciplinary power is therefore as discreet as it is indiscreet. Surveillance techniques, like the constant gaze of another human being or some electronic device, turn the soldier into an object to be examined. In fact, the soldier ends up policing his own activities out of fear of being observed committing some indiscretion or of deviating from the established norm. Like other institutions, the army is also subject to a whole system that penalises tardiness, absences, slackness, inattention, negligence, inappropriate behaviour, insolence, gossip, poor body posture, uncleanness, and sexual misconduct. In fact, even the most minute forms of nonconformity subject the soldier to punishment.

“The perpetual penalty that traverses all points and supervises every instant in the disciplinary institutions,” Foucault explains, “compares, differentiates, hierarchies, homogenises, excludes. In short, it *normalises*” (“Correct Training” 195). The examination is the most effective tool of all the mechanisms of discipline since its normalising gaze enables the qualifying, classifying, and punishing of the individual, e.g., the soldier. In fact, as Foucault notes, “At the heart of the procedures of discipline it manifests the subjection of those who are perceived as objects and the objectification of those who are subjected” (“Correct Training” 197). In addition, it is the “examination,” with “its rituals, its methods, its characters and their roles, its play of questions and answers, its systems of marking and classification,” that provides the examiner with knowledge and power to control the individual (Foucault, “Correct Training” 197).

For Klaus Theweleit: “Der ‘neue Mensch,’ gezeugt aus dem vom Drill organisierten Kampf des alten Menschen gegen sich selbst, ist lediglich der Maschine verpflichtet, die ihn geboren hat. Er ist eine wirkliche Zeugung der Drillmaschine, gezeugt ohne Zuhilfenahme der Frau, ohne Eltern.” (Männerphantasien 2: 161; ch.4). The bodies of German soldiers, with their rope-like muscles, broad chests, and strong legs and arms, are presented as well-oiled components of a troop/military machine. Relentlessly moving forward to the front, it is energised with spare parts (men) and fuel (food) from the rear by Germany, its ultimate operator.

Moreover, for Klaus Theweleit: “Die notwendigste Arbeit der Stahlnaturen: alles zu verfolgen, einzudämmen, zu unterwerfen, was sie zurückverwandeln könnte in das schrecklich desorganisierte Gewimmel aus Fleisch, Haaren, Haut, Knochen, Därmen, Gefühlen, das Mensch heißt, alter Mensch” (Männerphantasien 2: 161; ch. 4). The soldier, like the machine which needs an operator, only responds and moves on the commands of his superior. The disciplined soldier’s loyalty lies only with his creator, his drill master and upward to his “Führer.”

¹⁰⁰ See Hitler, Kampf 508-509; vol. 2, ch. 5.

For Elias Canetti, the army is Germany's symbol of the masses and of "the marching forest." Deeply rooted as it is in the German people's understanding of the mysterious forest as the home of their German forefathers, the forest symbolises for them a place where they can feel both at home and secure. For Canetti, trees in Germany's temperate forests have an "orderly separation and the stress on the vertical [. . .] [as well as] a conspicuous rhythm. The eye moves along lines of clearly visible trees into a uniform distance" (Crowds 173). As each tree strives toward the light, it grows into a giant. In addition:

Its steadfastness has much in common with the same virtue in a warrior. In a single tree the bark resembles a coat of mail; in a whole forest, where there are many trees of the same kind growing together, it suggests rather the uniforms of an army. [. . .] He was never afraid in it; he felt protected, one amongst others. He took the rigidity and straightness of trees for his own law. (Canetti, Crowds 173)

In fact, the feeling of belonging that Germans experience, once they enter the forest, is recorded in many early romantic poems and songs in which the forest is often dubbed "German" (Canetti Crowds 174).

What do all of these theories on the disciplined body have or do not have in common? Michel Foucault traces the history of the disciplined body and body technologies with the help of sociology, psychology, and philosophy. In Discipline and Punishment (1977), he posits problems that arise from imposing power, whether political, familial, or institutional, on bodies. However, in his earlier Archaeology of Knowledge (1972), Foucault's efforts to define a theory of history led him to try to excavate concealed assumptions and thought patterns not readily discernible to observers. Foucault, apparently uninterested in the physiological aspects of the lived body, clearly prefers to focus on how bodies are reflections of knowledge and discipline.

The importance of psychoanalysis and technology for defining the "new" rigidly obedient man desired and "designed" by the Freikorps and the Nazis, is explored by Klaus Theweleit. For him, the drill trains men to suppress their fears and emotions by developing an impenetrable outer body armour. The new man of "steel," therefore, loses his individuality and becomes, as it were, a cog in a machine. Foucault's ignoring of the physical changes taking place in the body seemed to suggest to Klaus Theweleit that "the human body was disciplined in relation to the construction of social institutions, which were meant to serve as models for the body."¹⁰¹

In Crowds and Power (1960), Elias Canetti uses a metaphor—the forest—which is deeply embedded in Germanic culture to explain why Germans feel at home and secure in it. For him, the human hand has imposed a sort of military order and precision on nature¹⁰² that mirrors Nazi Germany's efforts to create a "new man" who would fit its expectations. Again, for Klaus Theweleit, Canetti, in completely neglecting to describe the role of what he terms the "stereometrische Figur" as an element of the troop machine, he limits the reader to only consider the individual soldier as a figure who experiences security from his "body armour" and the surrounding walls of the barracks, block arrangement of his troops, etc.¹⁰³

In all three cases, the historical authenticity of the discourses and institutions that shape the disciplined body play an important part in defining the image of the future human being. In

¹⁰¹ See Theweleit, Männerphantasien 2 432 ["Ganzheitsmaschine Truppe"], note 7.

¹⁰² Canetti, however, could not have used this same image for Canada's forests which, unlike Germany's planted forests, reflect the variety of natural growth.

¹⁰³ See Theweleit, Männerphantasien 2: 154; ch. 4.

accordance with Hitler and members of the National Socialist regime for whom body discourses are also “historically” based, the disciplined body of the new man must remain intact in order to fulfil its claims of superiority. The German army, therefore, is the super body as it were of every soldier who enters its folds. For Hitler, the block formation, that is the mass, is the security blanket that he offers his disciplined soldier. The individual is of no consequence.

It is important to note, however, that while Böll’s writings explore the disadvantages of the disciplined body of the individual soldier, Hitler’s is firmly fixed on the advantages of being an almost indiscernible part of moving masses of bodies that unhesitatingly act as one body. For Böll and Hitler, the human body is both means and end to their markedly divergent views on humanity, and to their understanding of an ethics and aesthetics of the body. I therefore argue that Heinrich Böll’s awareness of the body’s interdisciplinary “history,” and his familiarity with, and understanding of the power that contemporary discourses of body technologies, surveillance, examination, and knowledge gives to superiors, frequently emerge in his multi-layered descriptions of his characters’ body language. For him, the drive for a perfect, “mechanical,” unthinking, unemotional automaton deprives human beings of their dignity. Instead, Böll insists that man must be seen as both “Körper” und “Leib.”

How do literary body language and its codes, symbols, and conventions help to develop the underlying theme of damaged bodies of individuals in his works? This chapter will focus on Böll’s treatment of the “disciplined” bodies of generals, colonels, captains, first lieutenants, non-commissioned officers, and foot soldiers. Böll’s emphasis on the individual rather than on the mass, and the value he places on humanity in his works will be explored with the help of our imagination. According to Korte, body language in painting, sculpture, and photography is especially significant. In these art forms, the body can be described as basically “frozen” in its most meaningful pose,¹⁰⁴ or perceptibly slowed down, as in films, in its temporal quality. The same effect can also be achieved in literature since, depending on the method of presentation, the story’s action can either seem dynamic in tempo or inherently “static” in its temporal quality. The static, “frozen” nature of body language functions like a close-up lens to reveal and focus on important personality features like a character’s disposition, opinion, attitude, values, as well as his age, cultural belonging, and social status.¹⁰⁵

Böll, of course, can either slant his interpretation of his characters’ body language, or complement it with detailed, informative comments. For example, words and phrases like “seemed,” “looked,” “it was as if,” and “it was possible,” tend to suggest the uncertainty and ambiguity of some of the information about the body language of characters that is given to the reader.¹⁰⁶ According to Barbara Korte, this is because the opinions expounded are influenced not only by the narrator’s external or internal location in relation to the narrative action but by his emotional, perceptive, and ideological stance.¹⁰⁷ Again, following Korte, body language also establishes fictional reality. It may be used as an image, as a way to develop a theme, perform a technical and/or structural role, or to elicit a particular effect in the reader.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁴ See Gotthold Ephraim Lessing’s *Laokoon*, Chapter 16.

¹⁰⁵ See Korte, *Body Language* 104-106

¹⁰⁶ See Korte, *Body Language* 110-111.

¹⁰⁷ See Korte, *Body Language* 115.

¹⁰⁸ See Korte, *Body Language* 159.

The General: Wo warst du, Adam?

Böll's choice of an epigraph for his war novel Wo warst du, Adam?, is taken from Saint-Exupéry's novel Flight to Arras (1942).¹⁰⁹ Its comparison of war to a disease has been both praised and criticised by critics. Paul Konrad Kurz rejects the metaphor because for him while illness belongs to the realm of nature, war can only belong to history and responsibility. Hans Joachim Bernhard, however, vigorously defends the illness metaphor because it reflects the dangerous, life-threatening and abhorrent nature of war. Also for him, war, like a disease, has causes.¹¹⁰ Rainer Nägele, however, with regard to this disease metaphor, offers a cautionary note: "Ursachen schon, aber, [. . .] Zumindest lädt eine solche Metapher zu Mißverständnissen ein, indem sie die Ursachen als vom menschlichen Handeln ausgehende eher verbirgt und fatale Schicksalhaftigkeit nahelegt" (Heinrich Böll 126). Susan Sontag also uses this metaphor in her discussion of her personal battle with cancer.

In my opinion, Böll specifically chooses this physical metaphor because he does want to put a face, a body from its conception, birth, life, death and decay, on war. War, from his bodily experience of it, is not an abstract concept. As early as his "Gymnasium" days, as discussed earlier, Böll insisted that the start of his sinus problems coincided with Hitler's seizure of power and its cure with the end of the war. Yes, war for him is a disease, one that has causes and can be cured if we pay attention to the symptoms and treat it effectively. It is for this reason that the emotional, suffering body is constantly present in his texts.

In the first two paragraphs of Böll's war novel Wo warst du, Adam?, the important role of the body is immediately apparent. It is especially significant that Böll begins the novel with a description of a General who has been plagued with bad luck throughout the war, and whose face seems to "float" past the soldiers standing at attention on the review grounds. A careful analysis of the body language in these two paragraphs will show layers of meaning for the story:

"Zuerst ging ein großes, gelbes, tragisches Gesicht an ihnen vorbei, das war der General. Der General sah müde aus. Hastig trug er seinen Kopf mit den bläulichen Tränensäcken, den gelben Malariaaugen und dem schlaffen, dünnlippigen Mund eines Mannes, der Pech hat, an den tausend Männern vorbei" (7; ch. 1). The protracted description of the General's seemingly fragmented body is revealing. His nondescript tired-looking face with puffy, bluish bags under eyes yellowed from bouts of malaria, and a thin-lipped, slack mouth, signals to the reader that although he is officially the "head" of the group as the highest ranked officer there, he fails to project an image of unquestionable leadership, authority, and success. In fact, with each new detail of his body language that we learn, this becomes more and more obvious.

The long, detailed description "freezes" his face so that we can focus our attention on it. In addition, his utter silence makes the narrative seem more static than dynamic. Although they have been drilled only to look unflinchingly straight ahead when being examined by a superior, as they observe the General's "disembodied" face, the collective thoughts of the disciplined soldiers are conveyed to us:

Er [. . .] blickte jedem traurig ins Gesicht, nahm die Kurven schlapp, ohne Schwung und Zackigkeit, und sie sahen es alle: auf der Brust hatte er Orden genug, aber sein Hals war leer, ohne Orden. Und obwohl sie wußten, daß das Kreuz am Halse eines Generals nicht viel bedeutete, so lähmte es sie doch, daß er

¹⁰⁹ See Saint-Exupéry, Flight to Arras 81.

¹¹⁰ See Rainer Nägele's discussion of these two opposed views in his book Heinrich Böll 1976, 126.

nicht einmal das hatte. Dieser magere, gelbe Generalshals ohne Schmuck ließ an verlorene Schlachten denken, mißlungene Rückzüge, an Rüffel, peinliche, bissige Rüffel, wie sie hohe Offiziere untereinander austauschten, an ironische Telefongespräche, versetzte Stabschefs und einen müden Mann, der hoffnungslos aussah, wenn er abends den Rock auszog und sich mit seinen dünnen Beinen, dem ausgemergelten Malariakörper auf den Rand seines Bettes setzte, um Schnaps zu trinken. Alle die dreihundertunddreißig mal drei Mann [. . .] fühlten [. . .] Wut auf diesen Krieg, der schon viel zu lange dauerte, [. . .] als daß der Hals eines Generals noch ohne den gehörigen Schmuck hätte sein dürfen. Der General hielt seine Hand an die verschlissene Mütze, die Hand wenigstens hielt er gerade, [. . .]. (7; ch. 1)

Böll has managed to provide many significant details in this long description of the General. How important for the reader is the General's body language to the novel's action? What does it tell us about the man and his relationship to those with whom he comes into contact with during the course of performing his duties?

Beginning with this paragraph, Böll's novel soon makes it obvious that Nazi Germany's claims regarding the invincibility, superiority, self-confidence, professionalism, as well as the beautiful, erect, and healthy bodies of its military personnel are at best inaccurate. For example, the General's body is neither tall, well-built, nor young. In fact, his thin legs bear the signs of malaria, perhaps signifying past service in the tropics or the German colonies in Africa. There is nothing about the General that reminds us of the northern Aryan. The yellow hue of another disease, probably jaundice, is ever present in his eyes, and on his neck and face. His unhealthy-looking skin and diseased body, therefore, do not meet the Nazis concept of a rosy-hued, healthy skin that is well-nourished with blood. The seemingly hopeless General looks sadly into each soldier's face as he reviews the troops. His listless movements lack the precise, smart military quality normally associated with a high-ranking officer of the German army. Even his officer's salute as he raises his hand to his cap is lessened by the comment that his cap is shabby. His body language seems to reflect the tension he feels about the "shameful" military losses, failed strategies, and the lack of comradeship among officers.

In this first paragraph, the General's neck is mentioned five times, fixing our full attention on this part of his body. His neck is described as being "empty," "without the Knight's Cross," "skinny, yellow and unadorned," "void of its rightful decoration," and "undecorated." Although the General's chest is covered with medals, the narrator makes it clear that in the eyes of German soldiers of all ranks, to see a General without the Knight's Cross is a discouraging and embarrassing. In addition, the narrator's comment that in the evenings, when he takes off his tunic (presumably the one covered with medals), the General's body is exposed as being thin, and racked with malaria. His sitting down on the army bed to have a schnapps also fosters an image of a man trying to drown his misery and insecurities in alcohol, a vice which further weakens the body. It also destroys the image of an erect figure in full control of himself and his duties. The General's "empty" neck is a reminder of lost battles, ill-fated retreats, of derisive telephone calls, the nasty and bitterly severe rebukes of senior officers, and of chiefs of staff that have been transferred. According to the narrator, the General discerns in the eyes of each of the soldiers a feeling of sorrow, pity, fear, and a rage that in spite of the long war he has been unable to qualify for the Knight's Cross.

Everyone there is especially embarrassed when the sun's rays, glinting off of the Knight's Crosses of lower-ranked officers in his midst, figuratively and literally eclipse the general, while at the same time illuminating them: "[. . .] und es war peinlich, ihn dort zu sehen, ohne

Halsschmuck, während andere, Rangniedrigere, das Kreuz in der Sonne blitzen lassen" (7; ch. 1). His reaction to this situation is swift:

Er schien erst etwas sagen zu wollen, aber er nahm nur noch einmal sehr plötzlich die Hand an die Mütze und machte so unerwartet kehrt, daß der Schwarm von Offizieren sich erschreckt verteilte, um ihm Platz zu machen. Und sie sahen alle, wie das kleine, schmale Männchen in seinen Wagen stieg, [. . .] und dann zeigte eine aufwirbelnde weiße Staubwolke an, daß der General nach Westen fuhr, dorthin, wo die Sonne schon ziemlich niedrig stand, [. . .] dorthin, wo keine Front war. (7-8; ch.1)

The General's body language, whether intentionally or unintentionally, seems to indicate that he feels humiliated or perhaps even "demoted." The longer that the symbol of his vulnerability, his neck, remains bare of the insignia of successful campaigns, the less he appears able to project an image of the superiority of his rank and leadership, and of being a General in the German army. It could be argued that there is a nexus between body and mind, but it is a nexus that is not perfect. It should be his link with the soldiers and ultimately with the state's body. Unfortunately, the connection is incomplete, and everyone, including himself, as the text implies, is painfully aware of this fact.

The pace of the General's hurried walking is actually slowed down by the drawn out description of his face. Tension is therefore created between the words in the text that indicate haste and movement, and the descriptive words that retard and even stop the action in its tracks. This tug of war between the dynamic and static narrative quality of the text is indicative of the General's conflicting mental state. While one part of him wants to flee from the embarrassment, pity, and/or rebuke in the eyes of his subordinates, the other part demands that he stay and silently accept their rebukes. His ultimate duty, according to the assumptions the text raises in the reader, is to try to inspire his men with confidence and to project the personality of good leadership.

Another aspect of his dilemma can be deduced from the narrator's description of the body language of the General and the soldiers on the review ground. The review is a form of military examination. Under normal circumstances, it clearly shows the subjection of the soldiers who become the objects, as it were, of the reviewing officer's gaze. Following Foucault's theory of the power of the examination "to qualify, to classify, and to punish," however, in this instance the tables appear to be turned ("Correct Training" 197). The General's body language seems to infer that he has now become an item of inspection. Subjected to the gaze of his lower-ranked soldiers, he appears to feel uncertain of both his position and his authority over them. As a result, the General feels compelled to escape. The narrator, however, does not spare the beleaguered general any further embarrassment. Rather, his comments pursue the demoralised general as he perhaps with a mixture of wistfulness and irony reports that he and his car are speeding off to the west, into the setting sun. Does it also symbolise the dying days of the Third Reich?

At the end of the first chapter, the General reappears once more, but this time at an army hospital to visit recently wounded soldiers. After the noisy approach of his car, the General's visit is again characterised by silence:

Ein sanft heulender Motor kam näher, schnell und fast drohend, [. . .] dann war er plötzlich still, [. . .] und als sie sich umwandten, [. . .] sahen sie den General, der langsam an den Bahnen vorbeiging und wortlos Zigarettenschachteln in die Schöße der Männer legte. Die Stille wurde drückender, je näher die Schritte des kleinen Mannes von hinten kamen, und dann sah Feinhals das Gesicht des

Generals ganz nah: gelb, groß und traurig mit schneeweißen Brauen, eine schwärzliche Spur von Staub um den dünnen Mund, und in diesem Gesicht war zu lesen, daß auch diese Schlacht verloren war. (16; ch. 1)

The entire scene is permeated by a sense of loss and defeat expressed by the close description of the General's face.

The narrator of the third appearance of the general in the novel is a widowed innkeeper who participates in the non-verbal action of the novel. She describes his arrival on the scene three years after the bridge at Berczaba was blown up:

Aber eines Tages, [. . .] kam ein sehr hoher Offizier mit roten Streifen an der Hose und einem goldenen Kragen – sie hörte später, daß er ein richtiger General war -, dieser hohe Offizier kam [. . .] in einem sehr schnellen Auto aus Tesarzy herübergelassen; er war ganz gelb im Gesicht, sah traurig aus und brüllte [...] den Feldwebel Peter an, weil er ohne Koppel und Pistole herausgekommen war, um zu melden – und dann stand er wütend draußen und wartete. Sie sah, daß er mit dem Fuß aufstampfte, sein Gesicht schien kleiner und noch gelber zu werden, und er sprach heftig schimpfend auf einen anderen Offizier an. (110; ch. 8)

Although there is no mention of the General's "empty" neck, we, of course, recognise him by his signature yellow, sad face. What is uncharacteristic for him, however, is his visible display of anger at the insubordination of sergeant Peter and his serious neglect of his discipline as a soldier. The general's temper tantrum is marked by his stamping his foot, and by his face "seeming" to shrink and turn even more yellow. His body language expresses it all. There is no need to know his angry words.

Another reason why the General remains "unidentified" may be explained by the fact that the narrator is an unsophisticated, hard-working country woman whose perspective on war is cynical: "Wahrscheinlich bestand der Krieg daraus, daß die Männer nichts taten und zu diesem Zweck in andere Länder fahren, damit niemand es sah" (109). For three years she has watched them in disgust get well-paid to play cards, drink, run a black market, and once a year go shooting in error at animals and poor women in the forest taking their sick children to the doctor at night. In contrast, however, her work is endless since she must cook, clean, wash, mend, and also tend bar at night. No, medals and insignia, whether absent or present, mean nothing to this female narrator. Only later does she find out that he is a general.

The completion of the bridge at Berczaba turns out to be a symbol for the completed "reconstitution" of the general. Even though the bridge is immediately destroyed, it represents a successfully concluded project and a successfully executed military tactic to cut off the advancing enemy (although many of their own men as well). We meet the General for the last time in chapter nine which details the fate of many high-ranking German officers who have been taken prisoner and interrogated by the Allies in "Fincks Weinstuben und Hotel seit 1710." The General is immediately recognised by a deserter from the German army:

Feinhals erkannte den General sofort: er sah besser aus, entspannter, und er hatte jetzt das Kreuz am Hals, er schien sogar leise zu lächeln und ging ruhig und gehorsam vor den beiden Posten her, die Läufe ihrer Maschinenpistolen auf ihn gerichtet hatten. Der General war fast gar nicht mehr gelb im Gesicht, und er sah auch nicht mehr müde aus, sein Gesicht war ebenmäßig, ruhig, gebildet und human, das sehr sanfte Lächeln verschönte sein Gesicht. (128-129; ch. 9)

The narrator again provides a careful description of the General's body language. The Knight's Cross that had been so conspicuous by its absence to the narrator at the start of chapter one, is now conspicuous by its presence. His neck, now finally decorated with the Cross is a visible symbol that his Berczaba mission has been successfully completed. His docility seems out of character, and his quiet smile of contentment seems bizarre in the light of the fact that he is now a prisoner of war and is about to be interrogated for possible war crimes.

Even in defeat, the only thing that seems to matter to him is that his body is now inscribed with the trappings that will now make him deserving of the recognition and respect of his fellow officers. His physical ailments almost seem to be psychosomatic at their source. In fact, the contentment that he seems to experience in his mind, is reflected in his body. The Knight's Cross certifies his "Tauglichkeit" which gives him the sense of being a worthy German officer. More than this, however, Böll seems to be stressing that the General's own honour and the success of his mission, even when they still lose the war and many of his own men, seems more important to him than Germany's victory.

For Böll, the General's selfishness is unbounded despite the fact that he is nothing but an unthinking machine, a cog in a wheel. After receiving the order to rebuild the bridge and successfully executing it, he receives his reward, the "Ritterkreuz," and that is all that seems to matter to him. Böll takes this attitude even further when he introduces us in chapter seven to First Lieutenant Filskeit, the head of a concentration/death camp, for whom nothing is more sacred than following orders. The General's docile attitude to military commands which is played out on his body, continues to be reflected in parts of the German military mentality even after the war. It is a mentality that would be expressed time and time again by the accused at the Nürnberg Trials.

The General: "Der General stand auf einem Hügel ..."

Further insights into the "disciplined body" and the disciplined mind of a German general can be found in Böll's novel fragment "Der General stand auf einem Hügel ...". In this third-person narrative, Böll introduces us to yet another general standing on a hill facing the enemy. He is surrounded by his staff and all the trappings of his rank as he awaits the start of the impending battle. His men must again cross over the river that separates them from the Russian enemy. The dilemma that confronts the General is whether to follow his intuition and rescind the order to attack, or to maintain his discipline and simply obey the orders he received: to cross the river and begin the battle.

If he gives the order, he would be sending his disciplined soldiers to their certain death:

Der General wußte, daß seine Truppen den Fluß nicht erreichen würden, und wenn er gereizt und ärgerlich war, so war er es deshalb, weil er in seinem Inneren uneins war; weil er sich fürchtete, der klaren Einsicht zu folgen, die ihm sagte, daß es nicht zu verantworten war, auch nur eines Menschen Leben noch in dieses hoffnungslose Spiel zu werfen ...

Durch das Fernglas beobachtete er die Einschläge seiner Artillerie. [...] Plötzlich blieb dem General fast das Herz stehen ... er entdeckte, völlig unberührt und unbeschädigt vom Feuer seiner Kanonen, einige fabelhaft, [...] getarnte Batterien [...]. (30)

The General's physical features are not described in his first appearance in the novel. The narrator, however, reflects on his dispositions, opinions, attitudes, and values in the above quote.

As dawn begins to break the general discovers that his guns have not damaged the enemy's batteries. His heart, the motor that drives his "mechanical," soldierly body, almost stops as he recognises the hopelessness of the situation. Because the enemy is hiding in the distant forest waiting to attack, the forest's traditional role in German culture, as expressed by Elias Canetti, loses its potential to offer his beleaguered troops security. However, as the highest ranking officer in charge, the General must decide to fight or not to fight: "[...] er zauderte, sollte er alle Befehle widerrufen, oder?" (31).

Our observation of the General's body language helps to convey his initial ambivalence, and the consequences of his final decision. As he stands and surveys the battlefield from on high, the terrifying sounds of the enemies' fire jolts him back to reality and elicits his decision:

Da hörte er das gräßliche, leise und trockene Geräusch der Abschüsse, und kurz darauf riß die furchtbare Rasanz der Einschläge die letzte Müdigkeit aus den Gliedern aller Umstehenden ...

Die ersten Strahlen der Sonne, die frisch und zart weit, weit hinter den feindlichen Linien aufging, fingen sich in den roten Aufschlagen am Mantel des Generals. [...] es stand nun fest: in zehn Minuten sollte der Angriff beginnen." (31)

In spite of the fact that his troops are without reinforcements and supplies of either food or fuel, the disciplined general relies on his strict military training to guide his decision. His training leaves no room for personal opinions and the second guessing of orders. His unsuspecting soldiers are caught by the enemy's surprise attack. The screams of his wounded men reach him on the hill, but to no avail. Orders are orders. The general stands firm: the battle must begin on schedule.

Although the pre-emptive strike is under way, they must wait ten minutes longer before the general will give the order to respond. The result is catastrophic. As the senseless slaughter begins, the general has a change of heart, but it is too late:

Der General saß unterdessen mit grauem Gesicht und toten Augen in seinem Gefechtsstand und hörte scheinbar den Meldungen und Vorschlägen der ihn umgebenden Offiziere zu; er hörte in Wirklichkeit keines der Worte; [...] wie sinnlos erschien ihm mit einem Mal der Satz, daß der Soldat nur seinen Befehl auszuführen habe, ohne nachzudenken; [...]. (42-43)

His grey face and dead eyes reflect the horror and the death and mayhem taking place both on the battlefield and in his soul. Although he appears to hear the words spoken by his officers around him, Böll's interpretation makes it clear that they fall on his deaf ears.

Böll appears to be providing the reader with an example of a German officer who finally becomes aware of his conscience and begins to doubt Hitler's demand that military orders be carried out without hesitation. In fact, it is in this horrific arena of war that he finally come to his senses: "[...] in diesem eingefahrenen Spiel [...] geschah es plötzlich, daß ein Mensch, eine entscheidende Person sich zu sich selbst bekannte" (43). Böll, through this character, criticises Hitler's views on the disciplined soldier while suggesting that some German officers still had the potential to think on their own and act accordingly. The General decides to fight along his doomed men. In the midst of the raging battle, the solitary image of the General's erect, god-like figure calmly walking, with just a stick in his hand, over to his entrenched soldiers barely 150 meters from the Russian front, is astonishing. The comments of the narrator reflect the General's

powerlessness: "Er war so machtlos den Unerbittlichkeiten des Krieges ausgeliefert wie sie, was nützte da dieser wunderschöne Orden am Hals, wenn der Hunger sie quälte und der Durst sie bis zum Irrsinn trieb" (47).

Body language again gives structure to the narrative. The static quality of the text caused by the protracted discussion of the soldiers' thoughts is suddenly, but only momentarily, broken when the narrator informs us that the General has jumped into the trench. Up until then, he had been alone on the battlefield, "frozen" by the narrator's digression, in a striding position with a stick in his hand. Now the focus is once again on him as he listens to his lieutenant's battle reports with a serious face. The General's awareness of the soldiers' seeming indifference to their hopeless situation is emphasised even further by the description of the relaxed positions of their bodies. In fact, they never leap to their feet either to salute or to stand at attention upon his arrival. Their non-verbal behaviour almost suggests that he is not even there in their midst. His rank becomes a mere abstraction and he becomes one of them.

In the middle of a raging battle, as mechanical, "celebrated automata," their sole responsibility is simply to kill or be killed. In Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's *Flight to Arras* (1942), a French war pilot's understanding of his relationship to his body during war is informative in this regard:

I felt safe in that bed. No danger could reach me there. During the day [. . .] my body was available for transformation into a lair of agony and undeserved laceration. [. . .] my body was [. . .] no longer mine. Any of its members might at any moment be commandeered; its blood [. . .] be drawn off without my acquiescence. For it is another consequence of war that the soldier's body becomes a stock of accessories that are no longer his property. The bailiff arrives and demands a pair of eyes – you yield up the gift of sight. [. . .] demands a pair of legs – you yield up the gift of movement. [. . .] demands the flesh off your face – and you yield up the gift of smiling and manifesting your friendship for your kind, become a monster. [. . .] Yet this body had to be [. . .] made respectable before presenting itself to the bursts of steel. (82-83)

His account drives home the point that the body of the disciplined soldier basically belongs to his superior and, like a well-oiled machine, must leap into action when the command is given. As the sun grows hotter, the corpses in the field begin to give off the sweet smell of decay. The General, "mit unbewegtem Gesicht," gives the order to charge and leads the way. His body signals his ultimate intention to the reader: clearly, he does not intend to return alive from this encounter with the enemy.

However, no match for the well-armed Russians, the Germans turn and flee from the steadily approaching Russian tanks: "Nur der General stand mit dem verzweifelten Gesicht eines Selbstmörders vorne, mit wirrem Haar, in den Augen die harte Kälte, die ihm entgegenstieß aus dem Abgrund, in den er sich stürzen wollte" (50). The narrator's careful description of his body language again freezes the image of the General, upright amidst the raging battle scene. This desperate, untidy image is in stark contrast to the last reference (only a few pages earlier in the story) to the erect, almost regal figure of the General. Here, Böll seems to be ambivalent about the image of the General that he wants to project. Should we regard him as brave, or as foolhardy? Is his death heroic or the cowardly suicidal act of a desperate man who knows that the battle is already lost and cannot face the wrath and the humiliation of his superiors or, for that matter, the silent rebuke of his men?

By discussing Böll's work as a discourse of war-damaged bodies many important insights are brought to light, namely, the central role of non-verbal and vocal behaviour. This approach also shows that Böll's focus falls not only on the ordinary infantryman but also on high-ranking officers like the two German generals discussed above. Although Böll himself never seriously desired to rise in the ranks of the military, or maybe because of this fact, he still manages to provide us with compelling accounts of both of these generals. The less than ideal, physical body of the general in Wo warst du, Adam? pales before Böll's portrayal of the almost "god-like" erect, and magnificently uniformed and decorated image of the general in his fragment "Der General stand auf einem Hügel..." However, once his ego becomes satisfied by finally "earning" the Knight's Cross, nothing else seems to matter, not Germany's humiliating surrender, not even the uncertain future he faces as a prisoner of war. Even his body takes on the more appropriate posture of a German officer.

The Colonel: Wo warst du, Adam?

The Knight's Cross is again associated with another major character in Böll's war novel Wo warst du, Adam?. It both defines and identifies the high-ranking officer, Colonel Bressen, who appears in chapters 1, 2, 6, and 9, in varying degrees of prominence. In addition, Bressen is also identifiable by two physical features: his thin, long nose and his high-pitched voice. In the novel, the Colonel is first introduced to us as a thin, striking face moving past a line of soldiers. The moving face makes the connection between this troop of three hundred and eleven soldiers and the original nine hundred and ninety-nine soldiers that the General without the Knight's Cross had reviewed earlier in the story. The tired, hungry, and thirsty men are visibly fed up with the war. After arranging their gear, they stand at attention on the immaculately groomed grounds of a quiet, green residential district waiting to be examined by this imperious-looking Colonel. They assume that his neck will be decorated with the Knight's Cross:

Als sie wieder stillstanden, ging ein schmales, rassiges Gesicht an ihnen vorbei: das war der Oberst, blaß, mit harten Augen, zusammengekniffenen Lippen und einer langen Nase. Es erschien ihnen allen selbstverständlich, daß der Kragen unter diesem Gesicht mit dem Kreuz geschmückt war. Aber auch dieses Gesicht gefiel ihnen nicht. Der Oberst nahm die Ecken gerade, ging langsam und fest, ließ kein Augenpaar aus, [. . .] "Kameraden," sagte die Stimme hell und klar, "Kameraden, ich begrüße euch. Es gibt nicht viel zu sagen, nur eins: wir müssen sie jagen, diese Schlappohren, jagen in ihre Steppe zurück. Versteht ihr?" (8; ch.1)

Böll's choice of language here is strategically brilliant. By addressing the soldiers as "Kameraden," the Colonel insinuates that they are all equals: they are his "Kameraden" and he is their "Kamerad." His choice of verb "jagen" suggests that together they are the hunters, and the "Schlappohren," that is, the cowardly Russians, are the hunted ones. Finally, he emphasises that the enemy must be chased back to "ihre Steppe," their place, where they belong.

However, the soldiers are simply too tired, hungry, thirsty, and fed up with the war to be impressed by either his words of encouragement men, or his narrow, striking face with its tightly pressed lips, pale colour, hard eyes, and long nose. In addition, the preciseness of his step as he smartly walks past them examining each pair of eyes, is in total contrast to that of the sloppy General who had previously reviewed them in silence. In spite of their strict discipline, they can only muster a half-hearted response to his speech, visibly irritating him.

The well-manicured grounds also reflect the tidy, deliberate quality that the colonel exudes. The emphasis placed on the Colonel's voice quality alerts us that this is and will

continue to be an important identifying feature. However, his high-pitched, clear, rising voice fails to inspire the men with either self-confidence or courage:

Die Stimme machte eine Pause, und das Schweigen in dieser Pause war peinlich, fast tödlich, und sie sahen alle, daß die Sonne schon ganz rot war, dunkelrot, und der tödliche rote Glanz schien sich in dem Kreuz am Halse des Obersten zu fangen, ganz allein in diesen vier glänzenden Balken, und sie sahen jetzt erst, daß das Kreuz noch verziert war, mit Eichenlaub. (8; ch. 1)

The silence that greets the pause in the Colonel's pep talk is referred to as being "embarrassing" and almost "deathly." The concentration of this deathly red reflection draws our attention to the illuminated neck decoration and the face above it. Only then do the soldiers, and we the readers, see that the Colonel's Knight's Cross is decorated with oak leaves.¹¹¹

In the body culture of the early decades of the twentieth century, it is the first, not the last rays of the sun that are regarded and worshipped as the source of strength for the German people. While the oak leaves may be interpreted as being symbolic of the mystical unity that exists between the German army/soldiers and the German forest of their ancestors, they may also be seen as being symbolic of the wreaths used to honour the dead. While the disciplined bodies of German soldiers are mainly dedicated to death and sacrifice, the perfectly formed male bodies of Nazi statues are dedicated to immortality. Unable to stir their passions for the battles ahead, colonel Bressen stalked off cursing the soldiers under his breath. Bressen's external trappings of rank, honour, and bearing cannot compete with the internal, bodily demands of the undernourished, dehydrated, and exhausted bodies of the soldiers.

The First Lieutenant: Wo warst du, Adam?

In this short, first chapter of Wo warst du, Adam?, the breakdown of military discipline among the officers, and the soldiers under their command, becomes more and more apparent. In fact, the more the bodies of the soldiers display a lack of discipline, the more the signs of disorder, decay, and dilapidation in both nature and civilisation increase:

“[S]chlapp hing das magere Laub von den Bäumen, als sie weitermarschierten, [...] vorbei an [. . .], einem völlig deplacierten Block moderner, dreckiger Mietskasernen, Abfallgruben, durch Gärten, in denen [. . .] pralle Tomaten an großen Stauden hingen, staubbedeckt, [. . .]. Fremd waren auch [. . .] Scharen schwarzer Vögel [. . .] die träge aufflogen, als ihr müder Tritt sich näherte, [. . .].” (9; ch. 1)

Even the First Lieutenant leading the now one hundred and five obviously tired, dusty soldiers with sore feet and sweaty faces, no longer seems to bear any resemblance to the once proud image of a German military leader.

In fact, his eyes betray what he thinks of the war: “Er hatte sie nur angeblickt, und in seinen Augen lasen sie es, obwohl sie müde waren, durstig, durstig, sie lasen es: ‘Scheiße,’ sagte sein Blick, ‘nichts als Scheiße, aber wir können nichts machen’” (9; ch. 1). As he takes command

¹¹¹ Following Roland Barthes' argument about modern day myths in his essay "Myth Today" (1956), the symbolism attached to the cluster of oak leaves on the Colonel's "Ritterkreuz" possibly has a subtext which elicits a sort of "Volksmythologie." Perhaps it is in the form of a German patriotic song like "Frei und erschütterlich, wachsen unsre Eichen..." that rolls around in the soldiers' heads as their eyes meet those of the wearer, and presumably also in the minds of Böll's German readers.

of the platoon, in a voice filled with complete indifference, and ignoring the typical commands demanded by army regulations, he simply shouts: “Los” (9; ch. 1). Disgust with the war is slowly but surely infecting the entire disciplined body of Hitler’s “celebrated automata,” that is, of his supposedly superior fighting disciplined soldiers. Their next stop, a dirty-looking school situated among a grove of half-withered trees, and black puddles and a stinking urinal all covered with swarms of buzzing flies, reflects the whole situation.

The Captain: Wo warst du, Adam?

The Captain who walks past them completes the picture of the deplorable state of the German army:

[. . .] der Hauptmann, der an ihnen vorbeiging, nahm nicht einmal die Hand an die Mütze; er hatte kein Koppel um, einen Strohhalm zwischen den Zähnen, und sein dickes Gesicht mit den schwarzen Brauen sah gemütlich aus. Er nickte nur, machte “hm,” stellte sich vor sie und sagte: “Wir haben nicht viel Zeit, Jungens. [. . .]” Aber sie hatten an seinem gesunden Gesicht vorbei schon lange gesehen, daß die Gefechtswagen fertig gepackt dort standen [. . .]. (10; ch. 1)

Indeed his unconventional behaviour emphasises his circumvention of army protocol, and his physical description reveals that he does not fit the characteristic model of the physically perfect, disciplined German soldier.

When the round-faced, bareheaded Captain reluctantly arrives at the front, the vulnerability of his unprotected body becomes tragically evident. An earlier description of the Captain wearing his helmet bears out his fears of looking foolish: “Und breitbeinig und langsam, die Zigarre im Mund, trat der Hauptmann aus der Tür, ein finsterer, dicker Pilz mit seinem Stahlhelm” (14-15; ch. 1). During the ensuing enemy attack, he is horribly wounded:

Er war kein Held, hatte es auch nie behauptet, wußte sogar, daß er keiner war [. . .] Und als er der vorderen Linie nahe gewesen war, hatte er den Stahlhelm abgenommen, weil er nicht lächerlich aussehen wollte, wenn er vorn ankam und brüllen mußte. [. . .] Verflucht, sie wußten doch alle, daß er nichts mehr machen konnte, [. . .] Jeder Offizier wußte, daß zuviel Panzer und zuviel Artillerie zur Deckung der Stabsquartiere kommandiert waren. Scheiße, dachte er – und er wußte nicht, daß er mutig war. Und dann stürzte er, und es riß ihm den ganzen Schädel auf, [. . .]. (43; ch. 3)

In fact, as absurd as it may sound, if the captain were to recover, he would be immediately faced with a court-martial on the grounds of wilful “Selbstverstümmelung.”

According to army regulations, the removal of one’s steel helmet under fire at the front is strictly forbidden. John J. White makes an important observation when he argues:

Self-inflicted wounds (a form of sabotage, from the military’s point of view) are always being suspected in Wo warst du, Adam? – they form a vital part of the overall *Kontrafraktur* to the official propaganda-image of soldiers enthusiastically laying down their lives or only receiving wounds while resisting the enemy despite hopeless odds. In actual fact, the captain’s reason for not wanting to wear his helmet would surely have been even more detrimental to the military ethos than the odd act of “Selbstverstümmelung.” (White “War” 26)

However, for John White, “the idea that there might be something inherently ridiculous about wearing a helmet *at all* is far more ‘wehrkraftzersetzend,’ to use the vocabulary of the time!”

(White “War” 26). His observations pin-point the regime’s misplaced sense of priorities. Böll therefore uses the captain’s body to ridicule him both for his vanity and his lack of responsibility, and the regime which has failed to discipline him to the detriment of his men. His injury leaves his regiment “headless” and without direction in the middle of a serious military situation. The suggestion in an earlier quotation that the captain’s act of removing his helmet is an unconscious sign of his bravery can be challenged. It is not the captain’s bravery, but rather his poor judgement, indifference, and above all vanity, that have brought him to this dreadful state of the living dead: “... alles was in ihm war, war das Wort: ‘Bjeljogorsche.’ Das war alles. Es schien ausreichend, ihn für sein ganzes übriges Leben am Sprechen zu halten, ...” (43-44; ch. 3).

The Sergeant Major: Wo warst du, Adam?

The narrator focuses our attention on a company of twenty-four soldiers, behind whom the low, dying sun gives the pale sky a hue that looks like poorly painted blood. The soldiers here are portrayed in “un-soldierly,” squatting positions in the shadows of small houses. Even the tired, sad First Lieutenant who appears, neglects to walk past them and simply addresses the soldiers. In drawing our attention to his nondescript quasi-decoration, a small black tin medal he has earned for shedding blood for the fatherland, the narrator implies that his military career has been at best mediocre. In fact, the irritable, conceited sergeant major standing beside him is more highly decorated than his immediate superior. With the sergeant major in charge, the soldiers recognise that their ordeal is about to get worse:

Er hatte viermal soviel Orden wie der Oberleutnant, und er nickte jetzt und sagte mit lauter Stimme: ‘Los, Soldbücher raus!’ [...] alle [dachten] das gleiche: die Fahrt war ermüdend gewesen, langweilig, zum Kotzen, aber es war nicht ernst gewesen. Auch der General, der Oberst, der Hauptmann, sogar der Oberleutnant, die waren weit weg, die konnten ihnen nichts wollen. Aber die hier, denen gehörten sie, diesem Unteroffizier, der die Hand an die Mütze nahm, die Hacken zusammenknallte, wie man es vor vier Jahren einmal getan hatte, oder diesem büffeligen Feldwebel, der nun von hinten herantrat, die Zigarette wegschmiß und sein Koppel zurechtrückte – denen gehörten sie, bis sie gefangen waren oder irgendwo lagen, verwundet – oder tot. (11; ch. 1)

In the above quote, the bored and tired soldiers are much more apprehensive about being under the command of the sergeant major and the sergeant than when they were the objects of the review of the general, the colonel, the captain, or for that matter, the first lieutenant.

The military body language of the victorious early war years—the salute and clicking of heels—has changed. Clearly, the body language of the previous high-ranking officers reflects their acute awareness that the war is all but lost. The sergeant major and the sergeant, however, seem to be stuck in the “glorious” past, that is, in the early days of the war when Hitler’s Germany seemed to be invincible, and every army regulation was carried out to the last detail. In addition, the soldiers are shown to feel powerless and completely at the mercy of these officers until something worse befalls them, namely capture, wounding or death at the hands of the enemy. Basically, the bodies of soldiers of all ranks, and the degree to which they exhibit their military discipline, become “weather vanes” or indicators not only of their attitude to the war, but also of Germany’s fortunes in the war. The motifs of tired, bored, sad, and indifferent bodies build the narrative’s theme of low morale and the oppressive sense of impending defeat.

Although Böll’s sympathies may lie primarily with the body of the common soldier, they also recognise those ranking officers who care about the welfare of the men under their

command. However, his disgust with the whole absurd apparatus of war is unmistakable. In his early prose, Böll appears to focus a great deal on the ambivalent relationship that exists between the infantryman and his superiors. Is it possible for a soldier to maintain a disciplined body which, by German military standards is only significant as a controlled element of a mass and at the same time, preserve the autonomy, individuality, and dignity of the human being?

The Foot Soldier, Feinhals: Wo warst du, Adam?

Böll's use of the suffix "-hals" in the name of the exhausted and little decorated foot soldier Feinhals, as well as in his reference to the weary, militarily unsuccessful General whose neck is conspicuously "leer," is not accidental. In fact, according to Bernd Balzer:

Der "magere gelbe Generalshals" kontrastiert mit dem Namen Feinhals, ebenso wie diese beiden Personen als Gegensätze aufeinander bezogen sind: Feinhals, der Architekt, der zum Bauen, zum Schaffen, ausgebildet ist und der General, der Schlachten gewinnen, zerstören soll; [. . .] Beide begegnen dem Leser in diesem ersten Kapitel als ermüdete, kraft- und hoffnungslose Menschen, die sich nur noch dahinschleppen können. Die Ursache dafür sind beim General "Halsschmerzen", wie das Streben nach dem Ritterkreuz im zynischen Jargon der 'Wehrmacht' hieß, bei Feinhals Durst, Hunger und Erschöpfung. (Werk 94)

While military decorations classify soldiers who not only support the war effort but also the Nazi fascist ideology, this "Orden-Motif" is lacking in those for whom neither is acceptable or for that matter, desirable. We, as readers, are "guided" by Böll's use of body language to associate the neck as a negative symbol in reference to the General whose "Hals war leer," and as a positive symbol when associated with the name of "Feinhals."

Bernd Balzer makes an interesting observation when he states: "Feinhals ist gleichsam ein vorweggenommenes Gegenstück zu Mahlke in der Novelle Katz und Maus (1961) von Günter Grass; der feine Hals statt des abnormen Kehlkopfes" (Balzer, Werk 95). In fact, while Feinhals' neck is always associated with bodily deprivation rather than a lack of military decorations, that of Mahlke's is always "voll" with objects either to conceal his large Adam's apple and/or to commemorate his successes in his earlier, youthful activities and then later in the war. At the end of the novel, Böll again contrasts the much healthier-looking General whose neck is finally adorned with the "Ritterkreuz" with Feinhals, now a deserter dressed in civilian clothes. For different reasons, neither of them display any regret that Germany has lost the war. The neck of the "disciplined" soldier, therefore, is an aspect of body language effectively used by Böll to criticise the war from several perspectives.

After having traced the gradual reduction of the original size of the troops from one thousand, to three hundred and thirty-three, to one hundred and five, and to twenty-four, Böll finally allows the individual, the infantryman, Feinhals, to step forward. It is a move that the soldier makes with a sense of timidity since he feels exposed and deprived of the feeling of solidarity with his fellow soldiers as he stands alone before the sergeant major: "Von den tausend Mann war einer allein übriggeblieben, der nun vor dem Unteroffizier stand und sich hilflos umblickte, weil niemand mehr neben, hinter und vor ihm war" (11; ch. 1). The word "umblickte" is also to be considered as an important, signifying instance of body language. Instead of facing his superior, Feinhals looks around – an absurd move under the circumstances.¹¹² Feinhals, as an

¹¹² However, his reaction may be explained by Klaus Theweleit's assertion that new body totalities are created in the [troop] machine. For him, the soldier's body ceases to be identical with that of the individual human being.

element of the mass, has been singled out and must face his superior's full scrutiny alone. However, instead of experiencing a sense of freedom, the infantryman feels more like an object than a human being as the sergeant major's gaze examines his person.

As the First Lieutenant agrees with the sergeant major's claim that the headquarters could use Feinhals' civil skills and experience as an architect, he stares off in the direction of the city. Feinhals also follows the officer's gaze in order to see what is so fascinating:

[D]a hinten lag die Sonne jetzt in einer Stra enzeile zwischen zwei H usern auf dem Boden, merkw rdig, wie ein abgeflachter, gl nzender, sehr *entarteter*¹¹³ Apfel lag sie da einfach zwischen zwei schmutzigen rum nischen Vorstadth usern auf dem Boden, ein Apfel, der zusehends an Glanz verlor und fast in seinem eigenen Schatten zu liegen schien. (11-12; ch. 1)

This description of the shape, position, and fading brilliance of the sun serves two purposes. First, it focuses our eyes downward onto this strange, misshapen phenomenon, and secondly, it forces us to watch the unfolding in slow motion, frame by frame, of this un-heroic drama. Although the sergeant major is still far too occupied with his power trip to see the writing on the wall, the first lieutenant seems to be fully aware of what is about to take place. The sun, like a flattened apple compressed between two dirty Romanian houses, is also indicative of the supporting structures of the Third Reich caving in on itself, and of the negating of its drive to create "Lebensraum." In the end, like the flattened, "degenerate" apple-like setting sun lying in its own shadow, nothing would remain of its former glory. In addition, the fact that B ll uses the word "entarteter," one coined by German art critics of his time to judge and reject art that did not fit Nazi ideology, namely "entartete Kunst," intensifies the description by adding a touch of irony.

Nature, in the form of the scrawny pine trees that surround a leaky garden faucet, again reflects the sorry physical and mental state of the soldiers. Before continuing their march to the front, Feinhals, now back with his fellow soldiers, fights to get his mess bowl through the tangle of other arms to fill it with water. The text dwells on his frantic efforts, and his trembling reaction to the sensation of the bowl filling with water, his weakness, and his need to sit with his bowl between his knees and drink from it like a dog until his strength returns. The human being is reduced further to an animal state, seated, hunched over in an un-soldierly posture. The detailed descriptions have the effect of "foregrounding" the soldier's mental, degraded, and exhausted state.

The respite from the day's ordeal is brief. What follows is Feinhals' detached observation of his body's pain:

Dann marschierten sie vorw rts, ins Dunkle hinein, und er bewegte sich, ohne es zu wollen: er wollte sich eigentlich fallen lassen, aber er ging voran, ohne es zu wollen, sein eigenes Schwergewicht veranla te ihn, die Knie einzudr cken, und wenn er die Knie eindr ckte, schoben sich die wunden F  e vorw rts, die gro e Placken von Schmerz mitzuschleppen hatten, viel zu gro e Placken, die gr  er waren als seine F  e; seine F  e waren zu klein f r diesen Schmerz; und wenn er die F  e vorw rts schob, kam die Masse von Hintern, Schultern, Armen und Kopf

(M nnerphantasien 2 179). Feinhals feels lost, incomplete, and alienated from the security that the "troop machine" provides.

¹¹³ The emphasis is mine.

wieder in Bewegung und veranlaßte ihn, die Knie einzudrücken, und wenn er die Knie eindrückte, schoben sich die wunden Füße vorwärts ... (13; ch. 1)

Feinhals' body is presented like fragments dipped in pain. It seems to have a mind of its own, moving contrary to his wishes. His body moves as a machine would when the switch is thrown to set it in motion. As the external order comes to march, it sets up a chain reaction that drags him forward where neither he nor anyone else wants to go: to the front. Feinhals is only one part of the whole military machine, a soldier, he has been trained to mentally detach himself from his disciplined body. In this visual image of a moving body, his weight forces his knees to bend, his feet in turn shuffle forward – a movement repeated without will, unconsciously, while the terrible pain threatens to make his body explode.

After three more hours of marching, the foot soldier, Feinhals, finally receives some rations. However, shortly after hearing mortar shells in close proximity, his arm is suddenly bathed in blood, then feels limp and estranged from the rest of his body. He has been mercifully wounded:

Feinhals wußte nicht, ob er sich jemals so glücklich gefühlt hatte. Er spürte kaum Schmerz; in seinem linken Arm, [. . .] spürte er ein leises Unbehagen, sonst nichts; sonst war alles heil; er konnte die Beine einzeln hochheben, die Füße in den Stiefeln kreisen lassen, den Kopf hochheben, [. . .]

Es ist gut, es ist schnell gegangen dieses Mal, sehr schnell [. . .] Nur ein wenig Durst hatte er gehabt, Schmerzen an den Füßen und ein wenig Angst. (15; ch. 1)

The soldier's body is presented as consisting of individual units that he seems to observe from a distance.

The abstract manner in which Feinhals analyses his body is a reflection both of his military discipline and of the abstract quality of war. Some unseen power appears to be manipulating each of his limbs, that is, as if he were a puppet. His movements occur against his will, since he is not the master of his own destiny. The military drill has taught his disciplined soldier's body how to ignore and/or bear his pain without complaint. The wound, however, has the ability to change his "luck," if only for a while. But even then, it is the military that decides both his physical unfitness and his readiness to rejoin active duty and, therefore, to have the chance to be captured and/or be wounded or even worse, to die for the fatherland. However, as we will see in the next chapter, Böll shows us some soldiers who do find ways to use their bodies to avoid this great "honour" that the Germany army bestows upon them.

"Die Verwundung"

Heinrich Böll's story "Die Verwundung," originally conceived in 1948 as part of a novel, provides further examples of body language. In this text, all four narrative modes are in evidence: speech, report, comment, and description. The greater frequency of direct speech provides the text with a more dynamic pace. However, descriptions of the protagonist's wound in its various stages of suppuration slow down the story's pace and focus our attention on its symbolic aspects. In addition, Böll's use of body language contributes to a better understanding of the interpersonal relationships between the infantry soldier who is wounded at the front and other army personnel, including a general, a colonel, and a corporal. The soldier's body becomes a tool of resistance against the senselessness of military conflict in the dying months of the war.

The protagonist and first-person narrator, is an unnamed foot soldier who, after three days of marching and attacking, is wounded in the back by a grenade. The injury is serious enough

that it guarantees him at least four months away from active duty at the front and the hope that the war will then be over. From then on, his mantra is that no one can touch him because he has been wounded ten kilometres from the Russian front. There the scene is one of total chaos and panic: "Dort, wo vor einer halben Stunde die Staubwolke der Angreifenden gewesen war, war nun die Staubwolke der Fliehenden" (97). The military police threaten the terrified, fleeing soldiers calling them "Schweine," and forcing them at gunpoint to obediently return to the scene of the still raging battle. The situation, however, is different if you are wounded in action:

Ich hörte hinten die Rufe der Offiziere, ... das Brummen von Panzern, Heulen von Granaten und immer noch das Schreien von Schwerverwundeten. Langsam und mit einem Gefühl unheimlichen Glücks ging ich der Kette der Feldjäger entgegen. Mir konnten sie nichts wollen, ich war verwundet, wenn man mir auch von vorne nichts ansehen konnte. ...Aber ich spürte gar nichts, es war eine herrliche Verwundung, eine Verwundung wie gemalt, ... es war eine prachtvolle Verwundung, [. . .] es würde mindestens vier Monate dauern, ehe das Loch zu war, dann war der Krieg zu Ende. (97-99)

In this quotation, the wound becomes, as it were, the soldier's "ally."

Of course, because the story is told only from the perspective of the first-person narrator, his account is, as it were, biased and limited. However, a character's direct speech and body language can become useful tools with which to correct unreliable views presented by the narrator. In particular, a psychologically believable account is only feasible if the protagonist is fully conscious of his own body language. As a consequence, the portrayal of body language can be strongly influenced by his values and mental perspective. In fact, the first-person narrator's way of "seeing" is determined both by the context in which he finds himself, as well as by his cognitive, emotional, and ideological views.

Because body language is a visible element, it often becomes an image that can convey several levels of meaning. The "wound" is a multi-layered visual image in Böll's story "Die Verwundung." On the one hand, the Nazi regime, figuratively speaking, may be interpreted as an open, dangerous, life-threatening wound in the body politic of the new state, and in the body of the "Volk." It must be cured if Germany and its people are to survive the Nazis and the Third Reich. On the other hand, the physical wound, whether gained in combat, self-inflicted, or purchased by the German soldier, is one that must stay open if those who are marked by it are to survive the war and the Nazi regime.

The wound also initiates a soldier into a military "elite" for all who have shed blood for the fatherland. Being wounded has its privileges. This marked, imperfect body, contrary to standard Nazi ideology, is not only accepted but honoured with medals and more comfortable living conditions. Like the wound/scar¹¹⁴ that a dueller proudly wears which marks him as "satisfaktionsfähig," as an equal, and as belonging to an accepted social class or status, the soldier's wound, when not self-inflicted, becomes an accepted military status symbol, and distinguishes him as a hero. In fact, many soldiers, whether legitimately or illegitimately wounded, consume excessive amounts of alcohol in order to slow down the healing process of their wounds.¹¹⁵ In this way, the soldier's body is altered to meet certain criteria that mark it as a bona fide member of the body politic, and to make it visible, exclusive, and worthy of honour.

¹¹⁴ Some duellers not only purposely sought to get a wound but also to maximise the resulting scar.

¹¹⁵ See Wintzen, *Erinnerung* 131.

However, these symbols of manliness, honour, bravery, responsibility etc., can be misleading. Both duelling and combat wounds and scars are often more signs of transactions than of blood and honour. Heinrich Böll's story "Die Verwundung," presents several layers of meanings of the wounds of soldiers in military institutions.

The wounded soldier, or as he calls himself, "the unknown soldier," is the first-person narrator of the story. His wound grants him the luxury to rest on a hill and smoke a cigarette. In a way, it legitimately allows him to take time off from the war without fear of "punishment." From his vantage point, he sees a car rapidly approaching: "Es war richtig zornig, das Auto, ungeduldig, gereizt, ärgerlich" (100). The car is described in physical terms, that is, in terms of body language which in turn implies the emotional state and attitude of its occupants. In fact, the human moods that the car acquires, as we shall see, reflect those of the general: "Sein rundes rotes Gesicht war [. . .] so wütend wie das Auto" (101). While the car takes on human moods, the disciplined soldier is trained to be an automaton. The general's anger, therefore, reveals a break in his "armour" and in his self-discipline.

As the vehicle comes to a stop in front of him, the soldier distinguishes its occupants. He deduces their military status and success in the war from their uniforms and decorations: "Unser General saß darin und hatte einen Stahlhelm auf, [. . .] Auch ein Oberst war dabei, mit Ritterkreuz, sonst gar nichts. Das sah sehr schick und vornehm aus" (100-101). In this quotation, the wounded soldier's use of the word "schick" to describe the colonel's "Ritterkreuz" sounds distinctly out of place in this military scenario. It also suggests his inability to blend in with the non-civilian life that he has undoubtedly been forced into.

Rising to his feet, the general angrily demands to know what the seemingly healthy-looking soldier is doing sitting there on the hill smoking when a battle is being waged at the front. His erect, standing posture contrasts starkly with the non-military, relaxed, seated posture of the soldier. Revelling in the ambiguity of his own body language, the soldier turns his backside to the general to show him the wound he "earned" fighting for the German cause. Is he being comical, disrespectful, or is he simply being obliging?:

"Bin verwundet, Herr General," sagte ich und drehte mich. Ich mußte fast lachen, es war ja komisch, wie ich dem General den Hintern zudrehte.

"Es ist gut, mein Sohn." Ich drehte mich wieder um. [. . .] Generäle sagen immer "mein Sohn," [. . .].

"Da, Rauch ein bißchen," er gab mir eine ganze Packung Zigaretten, Generäle geben meistens Zigaretten. Ich dankte ihm durch eine straffe Haltung, dann fuhren sie los. Der Oberst nahm die Hand an die Mütze, das fand ich sehr schick, wo er doch's Ritterkreuz hatte und ich gar nichts auf der Brust. (101-102)

Once again, the wounded soldier's use of the word "schick," this time to describe the colonel's hand salute, does not fit with military jargon. It is more likely a word from the everyday vocabulary of this soldier who has no other way of expressing his possibly grudging admiration for the high-ranking officer's gesture.

Moreover, the soldier is impressed that, as they drive off, the colonel wearing the Knight's Cross even bothers to salute him, a wounded, lowly, undecorated soldier. The implication is that his wound makes him more equal in the military scheme of things, keeps him away from the fighting, brings him respect, and most of all, makes him a bona fide hero in the eyes of his superiors. The wound individualises the soldier and lifts him out of the mass. In a way, his wound restores some of his human dignity – the damaged body, paradoxically,

providing him possibly with an even greater appreciation of his wound. However, as the wounded soldier finds out when he tries to get a free tram ride in Romania as an inactive military personnel, his wound is no substitute for money.

In addition, while the wounded soldier's comments focus our attention on the colonel's Knight's Cross, nothing is revealed about the general's military decorations. Sometimes, however, what is not mentioned becomes even more conspicuous by its absence: the general's neck is apparently unadorned with the Knight's Cross. What is more important, however, is that he is described as wearing his steel helmet, a sign, according to the soldier, that something has gone seriously awry at the front. By putting these two facts together, we may rationally deduce that the general will not be earning a Knight's Cross for this battle either. This also helps to explain his apparent frustration and anger.

The wound also makes the infantryman the envy of other soldiers who are fed up with the senseless war, and who no longer (that is, if they ever truly did) want to fight and risk their lives for a cause they no longer believe in. In a Romanian bar, the wounded, unknown soldier is invited to share a carafe of wine with Hubert, a drunk, highly decorated corporal. The NCO's use of his first name is again an indication of his disdain for army protocol:

“Sauf”, sagte der Unteroffizier, “ich muß heut abend wieder an die Front, zum fünften Mal ... verdammt!”
 “Fahr mit der Straßenbahn”, sagte ich, “ich komm daher, zum dritten Mal.”
 “Wo kommst du her?”
 “Von der Front.”
 “Bist du stiftengegangen?”
 “Nee, verwundet.”
 “Glaub ich nicht.”
 Ich zeigte ihm meinen Rücken.
 “Verdammt”, sagte er, “hast du Massel. Das ist ja prachttvoll. Verkauf es mir.”
 “Was?”
 “Das Ding da, den roten Klatsch auf deinem Kreuz, verkauf es mir.” [. . .]
 “Verkauf's mir, du Feigling”, rief der Unteroffizier, “ich geb dir tausend, zweitausend, dreitausend Lei, [. . .]”
 “Du kannst doch hier auch Verwundungen kaufen, am Bahnhof haben sie es mir angeboten.” [. . .]
 “Zahlen!” Er knallte Geld hin, packte mich am Arm und sagte: “Warte hier.”
 Er setzte die Mütze auf, schnallte das Koppel fester und ging. (106-107)

The corporal is obviously envious of the infantryman's wound and all that it signifies. After fighting at the front on four previous occasions, he desperately wants to avoid his impending fifth experience. He leaps at the opportunity to “buy” a wound, and by extension save his life and gain his freedom.

In addition, Hubert's non-verbal behaviour of slapping down his money on the table, grabbing the unknown soldier's arm, and brusquely asking him to wait, adds authenticity and tension to the scene. It also conveys the sobering effect that the unknown soldier's words have on him, and his readiness to do the unthinkable in order to avoid going back to the front. By focusing on the wounded body of the soldier, Böll effectively focuses our attention on the collapsing morale, lack of self-confidence, and corruption among certain German soldiers in the

closing months of WW II. Their incessant praise of the “beauty” and splendid painterly quality of the wound is symbolic of the misplaced emphasis that the Nazis placed on the “beauty” of the human body, especially in the form of statues of smooth, naked, whole, human beings.

After the sceptical looks and comments of the doctor and his assistant, Hubert’s purchased wound is only deemed bona fide after the unknown soldier calmly lies to the doctor saying he knows Hubert: “Mein Gruppenleiter”, sagte ich ruhig, “er lag neben mir ...” (115). He ironically explains why both the doctor and his assistant believe him: “Ach so”, und sie glaubten mir, weil ich so ein prachtvolles Loch im Rücken hatte, ein Heldenloch” (116). In this case, the unknown soldier’s wound becomes a guarantee of his apparent veracity. However, Hubert’s wound, and the unknown soldier’s words with which he vouches for it, are not what they seem. Contrary to the normal Nazi ideology, the mutilated body in this instance does have value. But which one? The wound medals awarded for shedding blood for the fatherland will not in and of themselves reveal which of these two soldiers has earned it honourably. For different reasons, the word “honour” has no value in either of their cases.

On the casualty train, the drunk Hubert accuses the stern, jaundiced corporal in charge of trying to keep his place on the train by making it difficult for soldiers like himself that have been “honourably” wounded in the line of duty. In fact, liquor, as well as his wound seem to give him the perverse freedom to mercilessly torment and disrespect the corporal because of his large body. Soon to be elevated to the rank of sergeant, the corporal also wears the Cross of Merit. Hubert, in accusing the former schoolteacher of overeating, shouting, and being selfish, conveniently seems to forget that his “honourable” wound is a symbol of his own deception and a complete misrepresentation of his honour. In addition, it is he who is doing most of the yelling.

Hubert’s long description of the corporal focuses our attention on him and his appearance:

Er zeigte auf den strengen Unteroffizier und sagte: “Guck die den an: Das ist’n braver Staatsbürger. Der glaubt selbst, daß er alles um des Staates willen tut, aber in Wirklichkeit geht’s ihm um seinen Staatsbürgerbauch und seinen Arsch. Der frißt gern gut und ist ein bißchen feige. Und schnauzt gern die Leute an. Im Grunde denkt er nur an sich. Der hat Angst, weil ich eingestiegen bin, könnte er rausgeschmissen werden, denn er hat ja nur die Gelbsucht, und ich bin doch immerhin in Ehren verwundet worden. Bin ich’s nicht? (132)

Hubert attacks the corporal’s body by applying the standards of the Nazi ideology. We as readers may ask ourselves whether his comments are “unwitting” or, if he fundamentally subscribes to it even though he no longer wishes to fight and, therefore, risk his life for it.

In a drunken state, even the narrator and his Hungarian drinking friends loudly curse Hitler. Hubert reminds them all that they are human beings: “Kumpels” rief er, “ungarische Kumpels, wir sind Menschen, vergeßt das nicht”(146). They are celebrating the landing of the Allies on France’s western coast, and the rapidly approaching end to the war. The unknown soldier is thrilled that his wound is festering: “Ich fand es prächtig, daß meine Wunde eiterte, sie sollte nur nicht schnell heilen. Ich würde saufen, saufen ... dann heilt es nämlich nicht so schnell, weil das Blut zersetzt wird, [. . .]” (150). Hubert, impressed with the skilful manner in which the corporal bandages his friend’s wound, finally patches up his disagreement with him.

The wound, which continues to fester, takes on the characteristic of a homely soup bubbling away as it reduces its ingredients to a welcome substance that nourishes the body:

Der Suppentopf in meinem Rücken fing ganz langsam wieder an zu brodeln, ganz langsam füllte er sich wieder mit Brühe, [. . .].

Raus mit dem Dreck, dachte ich, jetzt kannst du ruhig gesund werden, solange das prachtvolle Loch dich sowieso untauglich macht.

[. . .] in meinem Rücken kochte, kochte das Süppchen aus Eiter und Blut und Tuchfetzen und Granatsplitterstückchen. (152)

The culinary images such as “Suppentopf,” “Süppchen,” and “kochte” used by the unknown soldier in reference to his wound are a psychological tour de force: the wound will nourish his survival. Although these images may be sickening for the reader, they represent instead a vision of hope for the soldier. In addition, the ambiguity of the images is further stressed by words such as “Brühe” which suggests both a clear soup and sludge, and “brodeln” which could mean either to bubble or seethe [with unrest].

It is also striking that the unknown soldier’s “Blut” is associated with the past participle “zersetzt” and with nouns like “Eiter” and “Tuchfetzen” that all conjure up images of decline, decay, corrosion, subversion, undermining; viscid substances produced by suppuration found in abscesses, sores, wounds, etc., and assorted waste material. The mix of biologically and manmade waste is indicative of the Nazi policy of biologically producing a pure race and getting rid of human “waste” material by “modern,” artificial means. The blood of German soldiers is supposedly guaranteed to be pure. A soldier in Hitler’s army has to be granted citizenship, and this status is based on the “purity” of his blood, his race, his health. However, here the body seems to be rejecting this Nazi claim to purity. Yet, pus etc. is also essential if the damaged body is to recover. The unknown soldier feels no repugnance about maintaining his “bad” blood through excessive alcohol consumption. Release from active duty at the front is all that matters.

The narrator’s festering wound is a metaphorical leitmotif that gradually builds the theme of the story. It could be argued that it is a theme that is meant to convey a broader political message, namely, that the body of the German state is infected with the poisoning effect of Nazism. At first it seems tolerable, then increasingly gets worse. However, only when the Nazis are defeated can the German body begin to heal. Similarly, only when the scraps of metal, cloth, pus etc. are removed, will the unknown soldier’s wound improve. However, he is prepared to slow its healing in the hope of sitting out the rest of the war.

In a strange way, the wound is the protagonist of this story. As the impurities in the wound come to a head, the greater become the chaos among the German soldiers and the failure of their discipline. As the wound is cleaned and drained, a semblance of order and discipline begins to return among the soldiers. In this story, while Böll has no love for either the army or the war, it is clear that his sympathies lie with the common soldier. His stark presentation of the un-heroic, seamy side of the war and the German military institution is all the more effective with his use of the metaphorical and ambiguous term “wound” in the story.

Das Vermächtnis

In his story Das Vermächtnis (1949), Heinrich Böll continues to portray the ambivalent interpersonal relationships that exist between disciplined officers and lower-ranked soldiers. While the action in the above discussed texts takes place in eastern Europe in the late stages of the war, the action in this text begins on the French coast in the summer of 1943 and ends a few months later on the Russian front, at the turning point of the Second World War. In addition, this story provides some vivid examples of the daily routines and existence of German soldiers in France during the German occupation. The silent enemies that relentlessly stalk each soldier are boredom, a sense of futility, hunger, and a lack of human warmth and dignity.

Every day of every year they follow the same routine: training in the use of all types of guns and mortars, eight hours of drill exercises behind the dunes, four hours of sentry duty at night, and the new passwords and flare signals that must be learned. For many soldiers:

Diese Sinnlosigkeit war grauenhaft. Da standen die Männer jeden Morgen an ihrem MG oder ihrem Granatwerfer, übten, übten im Dünensand [. . .] jeden Morgen dasselbe, und nachts dasselbe und immer nur als einzigen Gegner das Meer; ringsum Minenfelder, leere Häuser und nicht einmal genug zu essen [. . .] um bei Kräften zu bleiben. Die Verpflegung ist ein wesentlicher Teil des Krieges. Jeder vernünftige Offizier weiß das. (44; ch, 4)

As one of the protagonists explains, the job of being a soldier has its rules and regulations like any other job.

The men that the army trains to become disciplined soldiers are ordinary men taken from all walks of life:

Man hat diese Arbeiter, Schuster, Ankerwickler zu Soldaten gemacht, diese braven Leute, man hat sie wild gemacht, stolz, nachdem man sie zuerst gezähmt hat. [. . .]

[. . .] Man zieht ihnen die Uniform an und tötet das, was die Preußen den inneren Schweinehund nennen, das Gefühl für Menschenwürde und die glorreichen Freiheiten eines Zivilisten. Gut. [. . .] Dann schickt man die Männer hinaus, um zu töten oder sich töten lassen, und diese Beschäftigung macht ein bißchen wild, [. . .] Erst recht, wenn diese Helden nichts zu essen kriegen. Dann aber kommt man mit Vorschriften, die mehr Zähmheit von ihnen verlangen als von einem Zivilisten. Mehr Biederkeit, Würde, Opfermut, als sie früher je besessen haben. Man verbietet ihnen zu plündern, während man sie gleichzeitig hungern läßt. Da haben Sie einen typischen deutschen Krampf. [. . .]

[. . .] Man dürfte nicht das Plündern verbieten, man sollte sie nicht zu Soldaten machen. [. . .] Soldat ist ein Beruf, und man kann ihn erlernen. Und wenn man sie zwingt, und sie sind doch alle gezwungen, diese braven Leute, dann sollte man sich nicht wundern, wenn vielleicht Soldaten daraus werden. (75-77; ch, 6)

This stark account of what it is to be a soldier in Hitler's "people's army," especially coming from an officer, is portrayed as startling in its frankness. Ordinary civilians who put on soldier-uniforms, psychologically soon lose their perspective on what is right and what is wrong. This is especially so when their everyday physical and mental needs are not met. The mild-mannered man is turned into a fighting machine and therefore cannot be expected to behave like

a monk. This, however, is the reality of war. Clearly the adequate supply of rations for soldiers will be a central theme in this story.

Written a year after "Die Verwundung" in 1949, *Das Vermächtnis*, a first-person narrative, is first published in 1982. In this short novel, Wenk, the narrator, is a young German soldier guarding the French coast who paints a compelling and devastating picture of his life as a soldier in Hitler's army consisting of "disciplined" bodies. Although Wenk's views may seem overly biased and unreliable, we can still make independent assessments based on our own experience of NVC by analysing the characters' body language and speech.

The narrative action takes place in 1943, and Wenk recounts the events of that year in a letter written in 1948. Wenk is an infantryman who serves in 1943 as a dispatch runner for First Lieutenant Schelling in France. The lieutenant is murdered by his drunken, angry superior, Captain Schnecker. The total breakdown of discipline leads to all but Schnecker and Wenk managing to escape a sudden and violent Russian attack on their unguarded military camp. Both officers served together. Wenk is shocked to run into Schnecker as he enjoys the economic boom that is sweeping Germany after the war. Schnecker, who is presently living next door to the Schelling family, callously allows them to believe the military report that their son is missing in action. Wenk therefore decides to take it upon himself to break the news of his death to Schelling's brother in a letter, and to expose Schnecker as his murderer.

In contrasting the events of 1943 with those of 1948, Böll reveals that the horrors and inhumanity of the war cannot be completely whitewashed by consumerism and convenient lapses or ellipses of memory. Schnecker is a painful reminder that they live on. Wenk puts life into perspective when he writes that in war getting good grades pale in significance to the horror of seeing the "neatly" mutilated bodies of young men on battlefields: "[. . .] sie sahen alle gleich aus, die, die in Latein 'Gut' hatten, und die, die nie etwas von Latein gehört hatten" (10-11). Regardless of nationality, their horribly damaged, lifeless bodies rapidly become indistinct from the dirt of the battlefield. This chapter will now primarily concern itself with Wenk's first encounter with Schnecker, and then Schelling. In these meetings, Böll continues to develop his thoughts on soldiers of various ranks who either irrationally follow orders to the letter, or who allow themselves to be guided by reason and a sense of what it means to be treated fairly and as a human being.

Wenk's description of his first meeting with Captain Schnecker at battalion headquarters, introduces two symbols of NVC, namely the army uniform, and the military salute. Both of these symbols have the potential to subject the soldier's body not only to daily submission and humiliation but also to feelings of superiority and power. The difference depends largely on the soldier's rank and the psychological dynamics between him and his superior:

Während ich in dem dunklen Flur mein Gepäck auflud, kam ein Offizier vorbei, ein großer schlanker Bursche, der trotz seiner Jugend die Abzeichen eines Hauptmanns trug. Ich vollführte die berüchtigte "Ehrenbezeigung durch stramme Haltung", er blickte mich an, als sei ich aus Glas, nickte nicht einmal und ging vorbei. Es war Schnecker. (14; ch. 2)

Recognition of the body language used in the above quotation is important for understanding the reality portrayed in this encounter between a lowly, disciplined and undisciplined soldier of higher rank. The youthful captain is tall and slim, and the infantry man's posture is erect. Also, in this encounter, Wenk's uniform forces his body to recognise its humiliation, and its loss of identity, meaning and power. Every second that he wears the uniform is for him unbearable. Therefore, when the Captain looks in his direction and appears to see nothing, Wenk feels

indescribably degraded as a human being. Choking on the bitter taste of his hate and disgust, and breaking the mould of the controlled, disciplined soldier, Wenk plants himself in an erect position in front of the door and demands to be recognised by his superior:

Ich [. . .] nahm wieder Haltung an und sagte: "Ich bitte Herrn Hauptmann, meine Ehrenbezeugung zu erwidern." Der Haß erfüllte mich wie eine tiefe Lust. Er blickte mich an, als sei ich verrückt geworden.

"Wie?" fragte er heiser.

Ich wiederholte meine Worte mit gleichgültiger Stimme, grüßte ihn noch einmal, blickte ihn an, grüßte noch einmal.

Der Kampf spielte sich zwischen unseren Augen allein ab. Er war rasend, hätte mich am liebsten zerfleischt, ich aber war von meinen kühl vibrierenden Haarspitzen bis in meine Zehen hinein angefüllt mit einem kristallinen Haß. Er hob plötzlich die Hand an die Mütze, ich machte ihm Platz, öffnete ihm die Tür und ging. (14-15; ch. 2)

What takes place in this encounter between the lowly infantryman, Wenk, and his higher ranked superior, Captain Schnecker, is played out in their body language and in their speech.

In the above incident the simple action of saluting, that is, of raising one's hand to one's cap (imposed body language) has become charged with symbolism. The "Ehrenbezeugung" (i.e., the military salute) is literally a showing of honour which is simultaneously executed when two members of the military meet each other. It symbolises submission to an authority that ties both individuals in mutually advantageous association. The encounter, on the surface taking place within the borderlines of disciplined bodies, is described in highly intense physical terms: "zerfleischt," "vibrierenden Haarspitzen," "Zehen," and "kristallinen Haß."

Schnecker views himself as being so far above Wenk that he need not stoop to acknowledge him. He expects him to swallow his humiliation like a "good" soldier and go on his way. When Wenk does not fade away, Schnecker has to swallow his rage like a "good," disciplined soldier and return the salute. This delayed salute gives Wenk a sense of power, a power which is normally dissociated from the disciplined body of the soldier, especially of a foot soldier. At the same time, it strips Schnecker of a sense of power that is normally his right due to his higher rank. In accepting the humiliation he has been subjected to by an insubordinate, Schnecker acknowledges that his soldier's body can be depended upon to react in accordance to army regulations. The soldier's body can only be a disciplined body if it remains dependable and dissociated from itself and its emotions.

Wenk, however, still insists on his right to think, see, and feel. His reactions are neither automatic, nor mindless responses to his superior. Rather, they are clear manifestations of the living bodily interaction that still exists between his inner and outer experiences. In the area of interpersonal communication there is more credibility attached to unconscious, natural body language than to intentional body language. Because controlled body language is potentially deceptive, it is more open to several interpretations, and therefore more likely to be misunderstood, even when no deception is intended. The fact is that contradictory thoughts often lurk behind body language that looks the same.

Because he is fully aware of it, Wenk's description of his own body language is psychologically believable: "Jede Sekunde, die ich sie trug, hatte ich die Uniform gehaßt, aber nun würgte mich ein solcher Ekel, daß ich wirklich einen bitteren Geschmack auf der Zunge spürte" (14; ch. 2). In this example, Wenk can actually "taste" the bile rising up in his throat.

Finally, Wenk and Schneckler simultaneously salute each other. However, their individual thoughts contradict this outward mutual show of respect and solidarity. The long description of Wenk's thoughts and feelings as he salutes Schneckler not only freezes and foregrounds Wenk's act of saluting, but also serves to verify Wenk's awareness of his own body language. The importance of the salute is emphasised, but not for its traditional symbolic meaning.

If someone had come across this scene of two soldiers saluting each other, the symbolism of the event would most likely have been misinterpreted. However, the narrator makes it clear that their salutes neither reflect mutual respect for, nor a sense of solidarity with each other. The layers of meanings, conceptions and misconceptions that are associated with the soldier's uniform and the military salute serve as leitmotifs that help to construct the story's theme: the inhumanity of war, and the fight for the recognition of the dignity of all human beings.

If humiliation is a natural product of wearing a uniform and being drilled in military discipline, why does this particular incident lead Wenk to risk such "undisciplined" action? The uniform, especially that of the infantryman, is the main symbol of difference and inferiority in a military hierarchy. Military power functions according to a corporeal plan which determines the position and value of bodies in accordance to its inscriptions. Forced to see his reflection mirrored in this military hierarchy, Wenk understands himself as inferior and different. However, in a conscious effort to fit in, he opts to follow army protocol and to salute his superior.

Identity is the result of continually negotiating one's way through an occupied territory under the perpetual surveillance of one's superiors. The true self shuttles between the silent self, the observed physical body, and the various impositions of those that hold power over it. Schneckler's ignoring of Wenk is the non-act that spontaneously catapults him into action. This unexpected action of an "inferior" sends a wave of "fear" and anger through Schneckler, causing him to question the stability of his own "disciplined" identity.

Wenk's response is fuelled by his utter humiliation in the face of a figure of authority in the military hierarchy that he deeply detests. He feels his inferiority has been laid bare for all to witness, and perhaps even more importantly, he is forced to witness his own inferiority. Wenk feels dislocated since he is at one and the same time seen and not seen, noted and dismissed, sure and unsure of himself. His body has been relocated in a space without co-ordinates. As noted above, Wenk hates saluting a superior. However, on this occasion he fulfils his duty only to be ignored by Schneckler. He therefore finds himself in the ambivalent position of wanting the officer's recognition, since without it he is reduced to a state of non-existence. Wenk shifts between the need to identify with and to oppose his superior, to desire Schneckler's acknowledgement and to hate him, and finally to move within and to transgress the boundaries of the military protocol. Wenk's physical body, the body identified by the meeting with Schneckler, and the historical authenticity of the body seem to be trying to exist in one space. Although being "invisible" may at times be desirable, at this time Wenk needs to be recognised.

Böll continues to develop the dynamic relationship that exists between superiors and inferiors in the army, as well as what goes into the making of a disciplined soldier. Challenged by a first lieutenant (a former SA platoon leader, and schoolteacher) for not carrying his own pack, Wenk replies, standing at attention, that his decision was logical: "... 'es erschien mir sinnlos, meinen Kameraden mit dem Fahrrad leer fahren zu lassen'" (30; ch. 3). The officer questions Wenk's audacity in taking the liberty to think, and use his head: "'So. Und haben Sie nicht das Gegenteil gelernt, daß Sie das Denken auszuschalten haben, wie?'" (31; ch. 3). Wenk's cheeky answer that yes, in his previous unit, he was indeed expected to use his head, throws him off guard. Upon recovering, the officer shouts: "'Hier ist Schluß, hören Sie? Schluß mit dem Nachdenken, verstehen Sie? Schluß mit aller Intelligenz, verstanden?'" (31; ch. 3). The officer is

reiterating Hitler's declaration that intelligence ruins a soldier's potential to be rigidly disciplined. For Hitler, a soldier's only obligation is to blindly follow military orders and regulations. The officer sends Wenk to Larnton ordering him to remember not to think.

Willi, the sentry, informs Wenk that Schelling is a "First Lieutenant," but that he is not fussy about the title. Through the sentry's comment, the narrator provides another clue as to the type of personality that we are about to meet. The symbols of military hierarchy seem to hold no fascination for the as yet unseen officer. Wenk is first introduced to Schelling only by his voice as he answers Willi's knock on his door: "Er [Willi] klopfte an die Tür, jemand rief – wie mir schien widerwillig – 'Herein!' [. . .] Eine brüchige Stimme sagte: 'Gut, soll reinkommen'" (35-36; ch. 3). Böll's emphasis on Schelling's body language, that is, his voice quality indicates that it will remain one of his most important and identifiable characteristics.

As Wenk enters, he is greatly encouraged by the man's alacrity in jumping up from his bed to greet him. It is no coincidence that Wenk refers to him as the "man" and not as the "officer" when he first lays eyes on him in the darkened room. We are to recognise him by his voice and by his actions and not by his uniform and military decorations. The narrator's use of the two words "the man" makes Schelling the embodiment of humanity and adumbrates his role as a champion of the right of each and every soldier to be treated as a respected human being, and not as an unthinking machine, even in the army.

In his letter of 1948, Wenk explains his interpretation of Schelling's body language to his brother:

Ich empfand es als unsagbar wohltuend, daß dieser Mann sofort bei meinem Eintreten aufstand. Das mag Ihnen unwesentlich erscheinen, aber glauben Sie mir, wenn man viele Jahre in dieser Armee Soldat gewesen ist, stets mit sogenannten Vorgesetzten zu tun hatte, hat man ein unfehlbares Gefühl für menschliche Formen. (36; ch. 3)

Wenk further declares: "Ihr Bruder war in fünf Jahren der erste Offizier, der mir begegnete, von dem ich behaupten kann, daß er sich sicher auf der schmalen möglichen Grenze bewegte, Befehlender und Demütiger zugleich zu sein, wie es dem Befehlenden geziemt" (36; ch. 3).

Clearly, for him, officers like Schnecker are ignorant, brainless, incompetents who depend more on their uniform than on their military and soldierly skills to get them through the war:

Diese Pimpfenleutnants: vollkommen unwissend, geistlos und nicht einmal ihres militärischen, geschweige denn des soldatischen Handwerks kundig, würden sie lediglich gehalten durch die Gewalt ihrer beiden Achselstücke, nicht zuletzt durch ihrer schicken Stiefel. Und wie groß die Dämonie der Uniform ist, mag Ihnen einleuchten aus der Tatsache, daß diese Riesenarmee sich einzig und allein auf diese idiotische Verkehrung der Werte stützte, [. . .] (37; ch. 3)

The uniform, in Wenk's opinion, has the awesome power to turn normally good-hearted, law-abiding, kind citizens into bastards once they enter the German army barracks. In fact, the uniform also implies body language. "Achselstücke" make the shoulders appear more impressive, and "Stiefel" give power to legs and feet, forcing the soldier to stand erect.

Schelling's body language is again foregrounded by giving us a close-up of the officer who immediately impresses Wenk:

Ich brauche ihn Ihnen nicht zu beschreiben: groß und schlank, ein wenig gebeugt damals, die blauen Augen voll Trauer, die Uniform ohne jede Dekoration. Er war

in meinem Alter, fünf- oder sechsundzwanzig Jahre, und es mag Ihnen lächerlich erscheinen: der Oberleutnantstern hatte ein furchtbares Gewicht an dieser Erscheinung. (38; ch. 4)

Schelling seems to be a good example of the Nazi ideal of a beautiful body since he is tall, slim, and has blue eyes, and probably blonde hair. In reality, however, time will show that he is anything but a supposedly typical German soldier. Schelling is obviously not cut from the same cloth as most German officers. Schelling is firm, yet courteous when he informs Wenk of his duties. However, in contrast to his earlier encounter with Schnecker, Wenk experiences no tension and no need for a power struggle or confrontation. In fact, what is revealing is that Wenk and Schelling do not perform the expected military convention: the "Ehrenbezeugung."

On the very next occasion that they meet, Schelling who is again introduced first by his voice, makes it clear to Wenk that he detests the military salute: "Plötzlich sagte hinter mir eine Stimme: 'Guten Morgen.' Ich wandte mich um, machte Front und grüßte militärisch. Das Gesicht Ihres Bruders verzog sich. 'Ich bitte Sie, lassen Sie das doch. Ja?'" (49-50; ch. 4). As noted above, the narrator intentionally makes Schelling's voice his main identifying characteristic rather than his rank, uniform, or potential power. In articulating the two words "Guten Morgen," Schelling makes it quite clear where he stands regarding army protocol. He informs the surprised Wenk that he would prefer to be greeted with a simple "Good morning." Wenk's military response is both automatic and understandable: "Ich war schon zu lange im Gefängnis der Uniform, um die Freiheit aufzubringen, einfach 'Guten Morgen' zu sagen" (50; ch. 4).

Recognising Wenk's embarrassment, Schelling gently explains his point of view to his subordinate:

"Ich weiß, Sie sind es so gelehrt worden. Aber es paßt nicht, und Sie brauchen es nicht, nicht wahr? Wenn Sie wollen, sagen Sie 'Guten Morgen' zu mir. Es würde mir leid tun, Sie gekränkt zu haben, aber ich denke, wir verstehen uns . . ."

Ich blickte zur Seite. "Vor allen Dingen", fügte er hinzu, "weiß ich, daß es Ihnen widerwärtig ist – mir auch." (50; ch. 4)

In expressing himself so freely, Schelling places himself at the mercy of the lowly foot soldier, since even thinking about such insubordination is punishable by death. Wenk immediately tells him: "Herr Oberleutnant, ich denke, wir sind einer Meinung" (52; ch. 4). At this point, Schelling goes back to his room rather than taking the late arriving sentry to task again. Schelling's body language helps to underscore that it is possible to find an officer in the German army who is not a conformist and a mere cog in the military machine.

Schelling eventually tells Wenk that he lost his command and was demoted as a direct result of his waging a battle for fair rations for his men against Schnecker and the army administration: "[I]ch wüßte keinen sinnvolleren Kampf als den gegen die Verwaltung, [. . .] Ich möchte gegen diese Toten das Recht der Lebenden vertreten, und wenn ich bei der nächsten Attacke dem General meine Achselstücke ins Gesicht schmeiße. Ich will sie nicht [. . .]" (109; ch. 8). Here again, Böll uses the uniform to symbolise the great power officers wield over helpless soldiers under their command. In denouncing the suffering and hunger that the system already generates, Schelling comments: "Ich kann mir nichts Schlimmeres vorstellen, als einen Soldaten um Verpflegung oder Schlaf zu betrügen. Wir vertreten mit unserer Offiziersuniform schließlich die Macht, die diese Leute zwingt, sich kaputtschießen zu lassen oder sich zu Tode zu

langweilen" (100; ch. 7). Clearly, unlike Schnecker, Schelling has great compassion for the soldiers under his care, and the only administration that interests him is that of life.

In this chapter on the disciplined body, Böll strongly criticises the German military organisation, especially the army and its officers, by shining a spotlight on the body language of his characters. In fact, the body is the essential literary tool with which Böll reveals these insights. In this way, Böll makes us aware, for example, how uniforms are worn, how officers flaunt and abuse the power that is associated with their uniform and therefore their rank in the military hierarchy. In addition, the chapter also reveals how soldiers of all ranks are reduced to a series of mechanical, yet "disciplined" gestures, gestures which reflect military conventions rather than their true, innermost emotions. Within this system, the human body is reduced to "lifeless" pawns, moved at the will of superiors. However, while this chapter shows that the disciplined body is trained to please not itself but those in authority above it, the following chapter will discuss how the "mirroring" body is focused on satisfying its own desires.

CHAPTER V. THE MIRRORING BODY

Hitler verstand Ästhetisierung konkret, wenn auch vordergründig, als "Verschönerung des Lebens," als Erzeugung einer Scheinwirklichkeit, welche die Wahrnehmung und das Realitätsbild von Millionen beeinflussen und ihnen visuell und symbolisch zugestehen sollte, was ihnen real versagt wurde. (Peter Reichel)

In his early writings, Heinrich Böll seems particularly aware of people's ability not only to deceive themselves and others, but also to be deceived. He also recognises the dire consequences of deception and the inability to face reality both for the victim and the perpetrator. One could say that these works treat in some measure the theme of "Schein und Sein." In fact, it appears that Böll has chosen this theme in order to analyze the illusionary world in which many German people, whether civilian or military, found themselves living. It is this conflict between illusion and reality that is meant to be reflected in the title of this chapter. Several examples of "mirroring" bodies, a term that will be defined below, occupy the pages of Heinrich Böll's early prose. These works deal almost exclusively with the lives of Germans during the Third Reich, an empire that survived twelve years by virtue of the National Socialist government's ability to sell a false reality to its people.

The first part of this chapter will briefly discuss the "Scheinwelt" of the Nazis, and provide some insights into why there was no place in it for the Jews. The second part will evaluate selected incidents in Böll's short story "Todesursache: Hakennase" and his novel Der Zug war pünktlich. Events in these works reveal the reaction of some German soldiers to the National Socialist regime's deplorable treatment of Jews, and the deadly consequences of being mistaken as a member of that much reviled race. Then will follow an in-depth discussion of a German officer, Colonel Bressen, who appears in Böll's war novel Wo warst du, Adam?, and who often seems to be living in an unreal world, a "Scheinwirklichkeit" of his own and of the state's creation. The Colonel is a good example of the old cliché: appearances can be deceiving. In fact, the more that is revealed about him through a close look at his body language, the less he appears to be what he pretends to be—the perfect German officer that Hitler desired to lead his armies into battle.

Using the critical tool of literary body language, this chapter will explore how habitus, a term that will be addressed in more detail below, reflects not only the tastes, values, and physical bearing of the Colonel, but also the superficiality, shallowness, and isolation of his existence. Nothing is at it seems. In addition, the chapter will also show how Heinrich Böll uses non-verbal and verbal behavior to reveal the reality that lies behind the illusions created and fostered by this character and others in his early writings. It is an analytical process that will provide a better understanding of Böll's underlying discussion of real flesh and blood, war-damaged bodies during the Third Reich. At the same time, it will also seek to plumb the depths of man's inhumanity to his fellow man. However, before undertaking this investigation, a closer look at what is to be understood by the term "mirroring body" will be helpful.

Appearance and Reality

So, what exactly is a "mirroring body?" The above epigraphs reveal the existence of a world in which people seem to prefer illusions to reality. It is a world that is created by varying degrees of deception on the part of the state and self-deception of the individual. Peter Reichel's epigraph is a quotation taken from his book Der schöne Schein des Dritten Reiches (1996). It provides a useful entry into a discussion of the National Socialist "Scheinwelt." In it, the political scientist argues that Hitler and his political associates had no problem either visually or

symbolically providing the people of the new German state with the illusion of a reality that they had in fact been denied (Schein 372). The task of constructing an illusionary Third Reich was made even easier since Hitler and most of his administrators were themselves, as far as we know, convinced enthusiasts of their own propaganda and the myths it created. Their success was further assured through the highly professional and varied use of the emerging technology employed in film-making, broadcasting and the press. Moreover, the majority of the German people themselves seemed far more interested in being nationally uplifted than in the fact that they were being politicised and indoctrinated.

It is also Peter Reichel's view that the profound self-deception discernible in the vast majority of the people resulted from the fact that they had unconditionally accepted not only Hitler's views on the autonomy of beautiful art, but also his political program. In return for their unswerving trust, however, the German people expected him to solve their economic problems and improve their standard of living. Based on a false reality constructed on his supreme leadership, his enforcement of eugenics, and his fostered myth of the "beautiful" Aryan body, many Germans agreed, as it were, to a Faustian blood pact with their Führer, Adolf Hitler. He, in turn, gave Germans many reasons to feel proud of their nationality by orchestrating lavish, dazzling public events and numerous welfare institutions that created the appearance of a classless German society, or "Volksgemeinschaft." Hitler accomplished his goal by fostering an image of himself as the mythical leader of the Third Reich (Reichel, Schein 372).

Furthermore, as Peter Reichel explained, the successful introduction of numerous decorations and displays of power by the Nazi regime made the dreams of the masses appear to come true. What the people wanted was the revival of a great unified Germany that would once more be recognised by the world community (373). Reichel interpreted this remarkable phenomenon as follows:

Die Ästhetisierung erschien [. . .] so unentbehrlich, weil die Realisierung dieser Ziele entweder nur mit repressiven Mitteln möglich oder überhaupt illusorisch war. Diese Strategie diente weniger der Veränderung der Wirklichkeit, als der Veränderung ihrer Wahrnehmung oder der Täuschung über die wahren Absichten des Regimes. Dafür nutzten die Nazis vielfältige Instrumente und Techniken, die sie überwiegend im Fundus der Selbstdarstellung bürgerlicher und proletarischer politischer Akteure vorfanden, die sie perfektionierten und zugleich pervertierten und die im übrigen mit dem Dritten Reich nicht einfach untergegangen sind. (Schein 373)

It seems clear from Reichel's comments that he saw Germany as having become a stage upon which Hitler and his loyal government officials directed unsuspecting "worthy" Germans citizens as actors in their political dramas.

The sociologist Arthur W. Frank makes a succinct point when he argues that for the mirroring body, "what counts is the endless producing and reproducing of desire, of the body in the world's image and the world in the body's image" ("Sociology of the Body" 63). The human body's mirror-like ability not only to reflect desires and ideals such as beauty and perfection but also to "see" itself reflected in its surroundings helped to assure Hitler's success during the Third Reich. The sociological term "Habitus"¹¹⁶ encapsulates how the human body mirrors an individual's cultivated, yet natural-looking tastes.

¹¹⁶ A term used by sociologists like Pierre Bourdieu, Jean Baudrillard, and Norbert Elias.

Habitus is a concept clearly exemplified by the statements of the French sociologist Georges Vigarello regarding the body training of the nobility from the sixteenth century onwards. In his opinion: "Excellence should in no way show the care which leads to it. It should truly become second nature" (Vigarello, "Training" 156). Lineage, although still important today, can also be validated through other means besides the privilege of one's birthright: "The body becomes a matter of lineage [. . .] when one's breeding is evident in one's physical bearing [. . .] aristocratic elegance can be learned" (Vigarello, "Training" 156). It is interesting that for him everything else can only be learned and studied as an intellectual endeavour once physical demeanour has been mastered. Posture and uprightness of the human body, therefore, are often important signifiers of a person's social status.

From the foregoing discussion, therefore, it would seem that in any given era a specific class is capable of being reproduced through the internalization and demonstration of certain tastes. In every case it is the human body that constitutes the very basis of these tastes. The sociologist Mike Featherstone insists that taste "is *embodied*, being inscribed onto the body and made apparent in body size, volume, demeanor, ways of eating and drinking, walking, sitting, speaking, making gestures, etc." ("Leisure" 123). The human body is infinitely capable of mirroring a habitus either to reproduce its original class or status or of mirroring another class whose habituated body techniques are alien to it.

While Mike Featherstone's research on the body zeroes in on habitus/taste, Arthur W. Frank's is focused on the production of desire. Both sociologists practise behavioural, objective research. Writers, however, tend to approach the human in a far less scientific and far more subjective manner. Frank also suggests that there may be no correlation between being able to, and actually mirroring a specific class. In fact, the sociologist insists that "even the disposition for mobility may be a matter of habitus" (Frank, "Sociology and the Body" 68).

Consciously or unconsciously, acculturated Jews practice a form of bodily deception when they strive to acquire a habitus that is not their own which helps them to become less "visible." In his often ironic treatment of the Jewish body, the Jewish scholar Sander Gilman notes that by "the latter half of the nineteenth century, Western European Jews became indistinguishable from other Western Europeans in matters of language, dress, occupation, location of their dwellings and the cut of their hair" (Gilman, *Jew's Body* 177). However, he also argues that:

it was precisely those Jews [in Germany and Austria] who were the most assimilated, passing as non-Jews, who feared that their visibility as Jews could come to the fore [. . .] For [the German Jewish poet, Heinrich] Heine, [. . .] it is the body, specifically the "*long nose*"¹¹⁷ that is a type of uniform, by which the King-God Jehovah recognises his old retainers even if they have deserted. (Gilman, *Jews in Today's* 15)

It would seem, therefore, that for him, although the Jew's body is capable of changing and adapting, at its core it remains the same. In fact, anti-Semitic rhetoric is often so deeply etched into the Jews' psyche that it is impossible to completely erase the experience of their bodies as "flawed," and/or "diseased."

Syphilis, the dreaded disease that marked the Jew for centuries, was also blamed for the Jewish nose. According to Sander Gilman, Eden Warwick [George Jabet], in his *Notes on Noses*

¹¹⁷ The emphasis is mine.

(1848) described the “Jewish,” or “Hawknose” [sic], as “thin and sharp” (*Jew’s Body* 180). For Gilman: “The nose becomes one of the central loci of difference in seeing the Jew” (*Jew’s Body* 180). Especially in the Third Reich, the long nose, unless it had been “bobbed,” marked the Jew’s body as unworthy of respect and of life itself. However, once Hitler, in 1941, “distinguished” the Jews with the yellow “Jewish star,” the virtual invisibility of the Jews completely dissipated.

No longer regarded as individuals, Jews in the Third Reich were identified instead as the “Other,” and as members of one of the “ugly” and “diseased” non-Aryan races. From then on, “nothing, not acculturation, not baptism, could wipe away the taint of race” (Gilman, *Jew’s Body* 179). The Jew, in Hitler’s realm, as opposed to those, for example, in England, therefore, carried the symbols of his diseased status not only on his external physical body, but also in his mental body: his internal, moral and psychological state. Böll even gives us a story in which the shape of a character’s nose causes him to be mistaken for a Jew and tragically suffer the deadly consequences of this error.

What’s in a Nose? “Todesursache, Hakennase”

Heinrich Böll’s powerful short story “Todesursache, Hakennase” is one in which Böll vividly presents an appalling example of WW II anti-Semitism and the deadly price paid for being identified as a non-Aryan. In the story, having a nose that looks Jewish proves fatal for a Russian. A German soldier, Lieutenant Hegenmüller, is told by his uncontrollably sobbing Russian landlady that her non-Jewish husband, Piotr Stepanowitsch, has been taken away by the Germans. Along with hundreds of others whose only “crime” is that of being Jewish, he is to be imminently executed by firing squad on the edge of a quarry. Hegenmüller races to the scene of the impending tragedy:

[. . .] herrlich war es, um das Leben eines Menschen zu laufen. [. . .] [er] wurde sich mit Schrecken bewußt, daß er die gleiche Uniform trug wie die Mörder. Mit schamrotem Gesicht wandte er sich nun dem Posten zu und stammelte heiser: “Mein Quartierwirt ist hier. Kein Jude [. . .].” (63-64)

The intoxicated lieutenant in charge calls out the name of the “innocent” man: “Piotr Grimschenko.” No one steps forward. How could he? His name is not *Grimschenko*. Hegenmüller finally spots him just as he is shot and falls backward. He rushes the dying man to the hospital where he himself collapses out of sheer exhaustion. Upon regaining consciousness, and again misidentifying his Russian landlord, Hegenmüller whispers inquiringly to the doctor: “Grish, Grimschenko?”

Hegenmüller is struck by the sincerity and concern that he first hears in the voice of the German doctor’s voice, and the feel of his hands as he administers to him: “Hegenmüller fühlte nun die geschäftsmäßige Kühle einer Arzthand auf seiner Stirn und hörte eine biedere Stimme sagen: “Ein bißchen übernommen, was?” Dann glitt die Hand den Ärmel hinab zu seinem Puls” (71). However, Hegenmüller goes into shock at the doctor’s reaction to Grimschenko’s fate:

[. . .] während Hegenmüller seinen eigenen Puls unregelmäßig gegen die sanften Finger des Arztes klopfen fühlte, sprach wieder die biedere Stimme: “Gut Schwester, haben Sie? Und dann also schreiben Sie: Todesursache – na, Hakennase”, und dann lachte die biedere Stimme, während die Hände, die zu der biedereren Stimme gehörten, immer noch fast liebevoll Hegenmüllers Puls fühlten. (70-71)

Through his skilful use of body language, Böll succeeds in conveying the callousness of the scene. He heightens the horror of the doctor's "joke" about the cause of the Russian's death by juxtaposing his outburst of laughter with his "biedere" voice and soft hands as he "fast liebevoll" examines the German/Aryan soldier, Hegenmüller.

In this story, Böll again demonstrates that for the Nazis, the individual does not exist, only the mass. By incorrectly naming his landlord, "Grimschenko," not just in the hospital, but throughout the story, even Hegenmüller, in spite of having finally found his conscience, is guilty of stereotyping, that is, of seeing him as just another Russian. After all, the name sounds Russian, does it not? The irony is doubled in that, unfortunately for Piotr Stepanowitsch, his hooked nose erroneously labels him as a Jew which, in the Third Reich, was the same as a death sentence. His "imperfect" body, that is, by virtue of the shape of his nose, inadvertently mirrors the body of the despised "Other." This single aspect of his body included him among the "diseased" Jewish people whom the Nazis had deemed unworthy of human dignity, indeed of life itself. In a fit of psychotic laughter, Hegenmüller sarcastically repeats the doctor's cruel joke: "Todesursache – na, Hakennase" (71). As we are told, they would be the only words that Hegenmüller would ever again utter in his lifetime.

During the Second World War, the Czech Jewish writer Jiří Weil (1900-1959) was forced to go underground to avoid being sent to a concentration camp. He is another literary figure who explores the consequences of assuming that anyone with a large nose must be a Jew. However, as his opening chapter of his book *Mendelssohn is on the Roof* (1960) shows, appearances can be deceiving. It is a humorous but bitter account of racism and mistaken identity in Nazi occupied Prague during the Third Reich. Himmler's number two SS man, General Reinhard Heydrich (1904-1942)¹¹⁸ was a fine figure of a man with classically Nordic features. He was not only the most merciless supporter of Nazi ideology and the organiser of mass exterminations of European Jews during the opening years of the Second World War but also a dedicated music enthusiast.

On direct orders from the "blond beast," as Heydrich was sometimes called by the SS, Julius Schlesinger, a cowardly SS candidate, is assigned to knock down one of the unlabeled statues, namely, that of the Jewish composer Mendelssohn, which adorned the roof top of the famous Carolinum concert hall in Prague. Unable to decide which one was Mendelssohn, Schlesinger, who is too afraid of heights to go out on the roof, instructs the workmen: "Go around the statues again and look carefully at their noses. Whichever one has the biggest nose, that's the Jew" (7).

However, just as they are about to pull down the offending statue with a beret covered head, Schlesinger, "sweating with terror," shouts:

"Jesus Christ! Stop! I'm telling you, stop!" [. . .]

My God, it was Wagner, the greatest German composer; not just an ordinary musician, but one of the greats who had helped build the Third Reich. His portraits and plaster casts hung in every household, and they also lectured about him in those courses [on "racial science"].

¹¹⁸ On the morning of 27 May 1942, Reinhard Heydrich was assassinated by Czech resistance fighters while serving as "Reichsprotektor" of Bohemia and Moravia. Interestingly, several historians, even to this day, still believe that Heydrich was of "Jewish ancestry," even though his family tree had been traced in October 1931 by a leading genealogist of the Party who concluded that "Lieutenant Heydrich is of German origin and free from any taint of Jewish or coloured blood [. . .]." (See Höhne, *Death's Head* 161ff.).

Schlesinger thought hard. Then he asked, "Did that statue really have the biggest nose?"

"You bet, Boss," said Becvar. "The other noses were just regular." (8)

Finally, however, with the help of the SS, the task was successfully accomplished, allowing a positive response to Heydrich's question: "Has the statue of that Jew, Mendelssohn, on the balustrade been torn down? [. . .]" (Weil, "Mendelssohn" 163). Like Heinrich Böll's short story "Todesursache: Hakennase," Jiří Weil's story again drives home the point that during the Third Reich, the misinterpretation of body language, for example, nose size and/or shape, could potentially lead to death and destruction of innocent people and harmless objects. This is because the codes and conventions that inform body language have an underlying meaning depending on who is doing the observing and what system of values he adheres to.

Der Zug war pünktlich

For a non-Jew, the mere appearance of a Jew automatically "mirrored popular assumptions about his inherent, essential nature"¹¹⁹ (Gilman, *Jew's Body* 173). In Heinrich Böll's *Der Zug war pünktlich*, his protagonist Andreas, a German soldier, prays for, and incessantly thinks about the Galician Jews¹²⁰ while travelling on the troop train to his predestined death just outside of Styr in Galicia:

Er betet auch wieder für die Juden von Czernowitz und für die Juden von Stanislau und Kolomea; da sind überall Juden in Galizien, Galizien, [...] Galizien ... das ist ein dunkles, schönes und sehr schmerzenreiches Wort, und in diesem Lande werde ich sterben.

Es ist viel Blut in diesem Wort, Blut, von dem Messer fließen gemacht. (46)

Clearly, Heinrich Böll knew that the Jews who had lived in Galicia had fallen victim to the Nazis' murderous intentions. The word "Galicia" appears to trigger in Andreas' mind the Nazi anti-Semitic song which promotes the killing of Jews. It is a word that fills him with enormous guilt when he thinks about his own and his fellow German's inhumanity to Jews and other minority races who, in their eyes, were degenerates. In the Third Reich, therefore, being ugly¹²¹ marked the Jew for a life of brutal slavery and/or death in concentration and death camps set up by the supposedly superior "racially pure" Aryan Germans. The Jew's physical body effectively determined his fate.

Heinrich Böll, however, was also apparently aware that Jews had fought for Germany with great honour during the First World War.¹²² In *Wo warst du, Adam?*, the German

¹¹⁹ Gilman argues that since the Jews living in Vienna mirror the Galician Jews from the Eastern reaches of the old Hapsburg Empire, then they too reflect the "essential nature" of the Galician Jew (*Jew's Body* 172-173).

¹²⁰ For the eighteenth century "liberal" Bavarian writer, Johann Pezzl, only the twelve tribes from Galicia could outdo the Viennese Jews in "filth, uncleanness, stench, disgust, poverty, dishonesty, pushiness" etc. (See Gilman *Jew's Body* 172).

¹²¹ In the Third Reich, darker skin colour, black curly hair, a long, thin, convex nose, full lips and protruding mouth, small chin, bowed legs, flat feet, and an impaired gait etc., were features that marked the Jew as being "ugly."

¹²² Edgar Hilsenrath, whose writings Böll admired, also wrote about his Jewish protagonist's father who fought with distinction in WW I. (See *Bronskys Geständnis* 173).

infantryman, Feinhals, discovers why Ilona, a pious converted Catholic German Jew is not restricted to the ghetto:

“Wie kommt es, daß Sie nicht im Ghetto sind?” fragte er.
 “Wegen meines Vaters. Er war Offizier im Krieg und hat hohe Auszeichnungen bekommen und beide Beine verloren. Aber er hat gestern seine Auszeichnungen dem Stadtkommandanten zurückgeschickt, auch seine Prothesen – ein großes braunes Paket.” (68; ch. 5)

The above quote shows Böll’s awareness of the ambiguous status of German Jews both in the military and in their civilian life up until the National Socialists came into power. In fact, it is no coincidence that Ilona’s German Jewish father, now twenty-five years after his exemplary service in the German army during the First World, was being deported without any hesitation to death camps. Blood purity was all that mattered. For this same reason, even Ilona’s conversion to Catholicism would not save her from the death camp.

The fact is, in contrast to the First World War, no recognisable Jew in the Third Reich could ever hope to serve in the military and thereby earn the right to become a German citizen in the Second World War. Hitler had certainly made it abundantly clear that not even a pure-blooded German male could hope to have the “honour” of German citizenship bestowed upon him unless he had proven himself to be physically fit for military service. The fitness versus unfitness of Jews for military service was a question that has been vigorously debated ever since the nineteenth century.¹²³

Shattering Colonel Bressen’s Mirroring Body and his “Scheinwelt”

In Heinrich Böll’s war novel *Wo warst du, Adam?*, the character of a Colonel particularly epitomises the superficial and uncommunicative qualities of the mirroring body. However, up until now, our impressions of the Colonel have been shaped by a narrator who only reported what other characters thought of him. Feinhals, who had previously been subjected to the arrogant gaze of the Colonel on a review grounds, next takes on the role of narrator. Slightly wounded in the arm, Feinhals, himself awaiting medical treatment, focuses our attention on the wounded officer.

Feinhals provides us with a long description of his vocal and non-verbal behaviour as he observes him lying on a stretcher in a military field hospital: “Türen wurden aufgerissen, [. . .]

¹²³ As early as 1804, Joseph Rohrer suggested that because of their “weak feet,” Jewish soldiers spent far more time languishing in military hospitals than in active military service. However, by 1867, Austria had granted the Jews the constitutional right to serve in the army and therefore to become citizens. Being active soldiers helped Jews towards their goal of acculturation since this made it easier for them to more effectively mirror their Aryan counterparts. In addition, Franz Joseph, the “liberal” Austrian monarch who reigned from 1848 until his death in 1916, is said to have stated that the Austrian army had only soldiers, and whether he was Jewish or not, as long as he deserved it he could become an officer. Against all odds, Jews therefore also began to strive to be military officers. The liberal German novelist and journalist, Theodor Fontane, also noted that the Jews wanted to put a stop to the rumours that they hated war and were physically unable to engage in it. In 1897, a nineteenth century history of the “Jews as soldiers” was published in Berlin. With the loss of WW I, and the growth of the “Stab in the Back” legend, Jews were accused even more openly of not only avoiding military service, but also of making great profits from the war. In 1922, Jacob Segall not only recognized and supported the efforts of Jewish soldiers in WW I, he firmly denied the by now common accusation that Jewish soldiers remained at home by claiming physical unfitness for military service (See Gilman *Jew’s Body* 42-47).

und er sah [. . .] ganz vorn, auf der ersten Bahre, einen weißen Kopf, der dicht verbunden war, vollkommen unwickelt, einen häßlichen, viel zu schmalen Kopf, und aus diesem Mullpacken kam eine Stimme, schneidend, hell, klar, hart gegen die Decke steigend, hilflos und frech zugleich, die Stimme des Obersten, und die Stimme schrie: 'Sekt!'" (15-16; ch. 2). Böll first of all provides us with a description of the Colonel's "paralanguage" or voice quality, and then on its verbal content.

While we now know for sure who he is, we are perhaps shocked at his demands for champagne and sex:

"Sekt", schrie die Stimme wütend, "kühlen Sekt." [. . .] "Sekt", rief die Stimme weinerlich, "ich will Sekt"; und der weiße Kopf sank nach hinten, lag jetzt flach da, und zwischen dichten Mullbahnen stieg eine dünne Nasenspitze heraus, und die Stimme stieg noch höher und rief: "Eine Frau – eine kleine Frau . . ." (15-16; ch. 2)

Although the Colonel is immediately identifiable by his voice quality, his horizontal body posture and his "weinerlich," "wütend" non-military verbal utterances contradict our first impressions of him. In the first part of chapter one of the novel *Wo warst du, Adam?*, the officer smartly walks in an upright posture past the soldiers without missing a pair of eyes. However, now the narrator's long description at the end of the same chapter makes no mention of the Colonel's erect posture and striking face with its pale hard eyes, and tight lips that had previously given him such an air of authority. Instead, Feinhals describes his face as ugly.

In fact, neither the wounded colonel's bearing nor his decorated, uniformed body are mentioned by Feinhals. In addition, Böll appears to have deliberately obliterated all signs of his high military rank and aristocratic demeanour and posture in this hospital setting. The Colonel's physical identity has therefore been effectively reduced to his voice quality and to the tip of his thin long nose. Böll's careful attention to body language throws up some red flags that raise some interesting questions. Why is his head so completely wrapped? Is it supposed to provide him with a hiding place? If so, what is he hiding from? Why does Böll seem to emphasise the colonel's nose? Could it be that he is ironically turning the Nazis' measure of an Aryan man's worth, namely, his physical "beauty," on its head in order to shatter the false reality of the Colonel's world?

Through Böll's careful choice of words and posture, the Colonel who at first was made to seem like the epitome of the true German Aryan soldier, is gradually reduced to the level of a despised "Other." Böll's emphasis on the Colonel's body language and his negative portrayal of it are essential for instilling in us a sense of disgust and revulsion towards him. In his flattened position, the once arrogant, erect Colonel is no longer the observer but the observed, no longer the examining subject but the examined object. In this situation, the "hierarchical observation,"¹²⁴ to use Foucault's terminology, is reversed and the Colonel is deprived of his sense of power over his subordinates. This theoretical point will be revisited below in connections with his reported ruminations.

Furthermore, in describing this high ranking German officer as "ugly," the narrator also makes the object of his investigation appear completely unworthy of anyone's respect. In fact, the Colonel's pitiful demands for cold "Sekt" and a girl only draw crude comments from the other wounded soldiers in his company. Disrespectful comments such as: "'Schiffe, [. . .] sauf

¹²⁴ See Foucault, "Means of Correct Training" 188ff.

deine Schiffe.’ [. . .] ‘Halt die Fresse’, sagte der Glatzkopf ruhig, ‘halt endlich die Fresse.’ [. . .] ‘Schlaf mit dir selbst’” (16; ch. 2) may also seem to suggest their complete ignorance of his identity. While champagne is cooled externally before being taken into the body, a person’s urine is warmed internally before it leaves the body. While champagne is a drink usually associated with high society and celebrations, and is taken into the body not as a necessity but as a luxury in life, urine must be excreted from the body since it is a harmful waste product. Heinrich Böll’s paralleling of the words “Sekt” and “Schiffe” is not accidental. While “Sekt” instantly conjures up images of a higher society or military rank, the slang word, “Schiffe,” is more associated with a lower class of person. Therefore, in suggesting that the Colonel drink his own piss, the injured bald-headed soldier shows his utter disrespect for him, something he would never have openly risked on the review grounds for fear of being court-martialled.

If, however, the injured soldier does in fact recognise the Colonel by his nose and his voice as we readers do, why is he risking being charged with insubordination? Is it just the fact that the Colonel no longer looks imposing or sounds authoritarian that gives him license to direct such vulgarities in his direction? Or is it that he knows that the Colonel cannot afford to let himself come under close scrutiny? It is also worth noting Böll’s rather mild phrasing of the sexual act in the sentence: “Schlaf mit dir selbst” (16; ch. 2). Surely there were far more colourful verbs in use at that time by the soldiers. Maybe the bald-headed soldier who utters this suggestion does know that he is the Colonel and therefore cannot quite bring himself to be more crude than he has already been. Is it Böll himself who is not prepared to use such explicit sexual language in reference to the Colonel? Perhaps Böll’s own wretched wartime experience of being helpless and wounded prevent him from using the obscene language that may have been more appropriate here.

In chapter 2 of *Wo warst du, Adam?*, Heinrich Böll continues to cleverly explore the significance of body posture and body language as a whole in order to deconstruct the original mirroring, deceptive image of the Colonel. His “subject-related externalizers” indicating his social and gender role, as well as his age, cultural belonging, and social status also suggest the dispositions, opinions, attitudes, and values that constitute his personality structure (Korte, *Body in Literature* 42; 133). Böll’s omniscient narrator informs us of what goes on in the Colonel’s mind. According to him, the Colonel refuses to look at the divisional medical officer Kleewitz because he is only concerned with when he can resume his active military duties.

The Colonel’s attitude to the war, however, has obviously changed in the wake of the crushing military defeat of several regiments under his command:

Aber er dachte nicht daran, Kleewitz anzusehen; nichts wollte er von diesem Regiment, das ihm unter seinen Händen auseinandergefallen war wie Zunder; Roßapfel, Freischütz und Zuckerhut – befehligt durch seinen Stab, der sich Jagdbude nannte – weg! Und kurz darauf hörte er, daß Kleewitz gegangen war. (19; ch. 2)

The Colonel’s nonverbal and verbal body language exposes him as a shirker, and as a fair-weather soldier. He has lost both his will and his courage to fight, and obviously his belief in what Hitler termed the “invincibility” of German soldiers.

Also, in surrendering to his feelings of low esteem and disappointment, the Colonel appears to contradict another of Hitler’s demands, namely, that of the “leadership principle.” The narrator also takes pains to ensure that we understand that the Colonel is deliberately

ignoring the doctor: "Er [der Oberst] wußte nicht, ob er Kleewitz' Stimme hörte; *er hörte sie natürlich, aber er wollte es sich nicht eingestehen*,¹²⁵ [...]" (17; ch. 2). Once the narrator gives us access to Colonel Bressen's¹²⁶ inner thoughts, and provides new revelations of his character, a more complete, and shockingly uncomplimentary picture of this German officer emerges.

Earlier, in the first chapter of the novel, as Feinhals falls wounded on the battlefield with his face in the dirt, he raises his head and calls out: "Ich bin verwundet" (14; ch. 1). However, the narrator tells us that the foot soldier does not hear his own words, instead he hears his captain's voice repeating the word "Roßapfel" several times as he speaks with the Colonel on the phone. While Feinhals' exclamation expresses the reality of his situation, the captain's words give no idea of the death, pain and suffering that his men are undergoing. As the latter hangs up he says: "Mist, Durchbruch bei Roßapfel drei, Freischütz vier, ich muß nach vorn" (14; ch. 1). Feinhals' reaction to being wounded and to the captain's almost automatic response to the Colonel's news of the collapse of his regiments and the heavy loss of life, demonstrates Böll's vivid literary imagination.

In his conversation with Horst Bienek, Böll states: "Ein Roman ... ist ein Versteck, in dem man zwei, drei Worte verstecken kann, von denen man hofft, daß der Leser sie findet" (Balzer Interviews 1 16). As it turns out, "Roßapfel" is one of his code words since it also occurs in Böll's original title for the war novel. In addition, Böll also gave the same name, "Durchbruch bei Roßapfel," to the first chapter when it appeared in the Frankfurter Heft no.8 in 1951. Bernd Balzer makes the following point:

Doch es heißt hier nicht von ungefähr "Roßapfel": Das ist die offizierssprachliche "Veredlung" des soldatischen Fäkalvokabulars. "Mist" und "Roßapfel" stehen zu Recht nebeneinander, wie kurz danach "Sekt" und "Schiffe" im "Dialog" zwischen dem simulierenden [...] Bressen und dem "Glatzkopf" [...]. (Werk 95-96)

When soldiers in the novel use the word "Scheiße" as a military password, and label the war "ein Scheißkrieg," they are being far more realistic about war than the higher ranking officers who hide behind euphemisms. Before his injury and during his winning campaigns, the Colonel's use of a more refined, less excremental language is simply an attempt to deceive himself into thinking that war is a glorious, honourable and manly pursuit. Also, later in the novel, Böll's vivid depictions of the unheroic and ignominious deaths¹²⁷ of two soldiers in the midst of shit and muck contrast with the Colonel's "Scheinwirklichkeit," revealing instead the stark reality of the horror of war. It is a world that the Colonel now fully rejects and wishes to avoid at all costs. In the second chapter of the novel, Böll deals exclusively with Bressen's "story." It is one that emerges in segments through the third and omniscient narrator's ability to convey the Colonel's inner thoughts and reflections on his life to us, the readers. The narrator also provides us with the reaction of the doctors to the Colonel's body language. The narrative mode is predominantly

¹²⁵ The emphasis is mine since I wish to stress that this is the narrator's comment.

¹²⁶ We learn his name when Kleewitz checks up the medical officer who contrary to military regulations, disrespectfully refers to the wounded officer as "er:" "Sie meinen Herrn Oberst Bressen?" fragte Kleewitz kühl.(18).

¹²⁷See Böll's description of the ill First Lieutenant Greck's death as he struggles to defecate next to a cesspool which is blown up showering his face and body with excrement, mud, and hay (86-87). Also see his account of the death of the non-commissioned medical officer, Schmitz, when a dud shell next to a cesspool blew up in his face when he stepped on it (45).

dynamic in tempo due to the narrator's presentation of Bressen's inner reveries, as well as his brief acts of speech. His thoughts and feelings are punctuated by the word "Sekt" which not only ends his reveries, but returns him to the reality of the events taking place around him in the hospital. This past/present narrative pattern repeats itself until the decision is finally made to transfer the shamming Bressen back home to Vienna to "recuperate" from his "battle wounds." Could they be self-inflicted?

The novel abounds with suspected cases of self-mutilation as a means of avoiding military duties. However, as John J. White argues, "Self-inflicted wounds (a form of sabotage, from the military's point of view) [. . .] form a vital part of the overall *Kontrafraktur* to the official propaganda-image of soldiers enthusiastically laying down their lives or only receiving wounds while resisting the enemy despite hopeless odds." For him: "An occasional self-inflicted wound at least leaves the myth of the majority's heroism essentially intact" (White, "War" 26). The senior medical officer sums up his decision as follows: "Verladen mit DL nach Wien – die Division bedauert zwar außerordentlich, daß sie auf Herrn Bressen verzichten muß, aber . . ." (20; ch. 2).

The three wall pictures in the room upon which he fixes his gaze add structure to Colonel Bressen's thoughts.

Each picture forecasts the content of Bressen's ruminations after the pause caused by the word "Sekt." In addition, his eye behaviour purposely excludes the doctor from his field of vision. Bressen's eye functions like a movie camera zooming in for a close up of a part of the body that signals a shift from his fictional present into his fictional past. In order to ignore Kleewitz, Bressen twists his neck to the far right thereby fixing his gaze on the back of the neck of a shepherd in the first of these pictures who is playing a flute amid his flock of sheep.

The Colonel, we are told, revels in disgusting but undisclosed thoughts that the scene conjures up in his mind: "Er dachte an Dinge, die kein Mensch hätte erraten können und an die er gern dachte, obwohl sie widerwärtig waren" (17; ch. 2). The omniscient narrator's revelation of Bressen's apparent "confession" of deviant sexual behaviour is surely meant to shock and further shatter our impression of the distinguished image he first seemed to mirror. His intense gaze, in conjunction with his prurient thoughts, certainly seem to suggest that this assumption is a logical one. It will be interesting to see if any further clues and/or answers emerge from a close observation of Böll's further portrayal of the Colonel's body language.

The shepherd's neck also makes Bressen think of his past career as a "Nicker" in a posh hotel before the war broke out. He remembers his erect bearing and the ease with which he had learned the subtle differences in bowing to restaurant lunch guests:

Mittags, [. . .] ging er hoch aufgerichtet durch das Lokal und verbeugte sich, und es war merkwürdig gewesen, wie schnell und genau er begriffen hatte, welche Nuancen in seine Verbeugungen zu bringen waren: ob er sich kurz verbeugte, tief, ob er nur eine sehr kurze Kopfbewegung, die in Wirklichkeit ein Auf- und Zuklappen der Augen war, aber wie eine Kopfbewegung wirkte. (17; ch. 2)

The detailed description of Bressen's erect body posture during the Third Reich is in stark contrast to his present prone, helpless body posture during the waning years of the war. In a way, it also shows that he is a sort of actor who can rely on his performance skills when he has to review the troops. While these two conflicting images imparted by the author may create tension and ambiguity in us readers, they will not affect the other characters around him in the same way since they do not have access to Bressen's thoughts. Our feelings of disgust and moral outrage continue to build with each new revelation. For Bressen, the status of the restaurant patrons was

as easily determined as military ranks, only in this case it was the size of the lunch bill rather than the type of shoulder decorations that counted.

From the narrator's continuing reports we discover that the dashing Bressen seldom smiled, in fact, he usually wore a severe, impassive look on his thin, aristocratic face. This begs the question: Why is it that Böll never portrays Bressen with a smiling face? Perhaps, for Böll, a smiling waiter would seem too obsequious in the presence of his patrons, and a smiling Colonel too friendly, soft, and unauthoritarian in the presence of his soldiers. In this regard, the comments of the sociologist Norbert Elias on the human ability to smile are provocative. For him:

The face evolved into a signalling board. [. . .] one of the best known face signals [is] the smile. [. . .] In its primary form where it can be regarded as unlearned and spontaneous, a person's smile seems to indicate to another person friendly feelings and a readiness for friendly action. [. . .] It can be deliberately used to convey to others a rich variety of shades of feeling. (Elias, "Emotions" 121)

Smiling is too "dangerous" an exercise for either Bressen the civilian or Bressen the Colonel since he is not interested in communicating, under any circumstance, his feelings and emotions to those in his presence. Here again, Böll uses the body to reinforce Bressen's various attempts to mirror the appropriate habitus which has the potential to make him feel superior.

In fact, during the performance of his restaurant duties, Bressen's gaze also make his patrons feel decidedly "beobachtet," "gemustert," and "verwirrt" in his presence. However, in the hospital the tables are turned and it is the Colonel who is impaled like an insect on his stretcher. There he falls under the merciless scrutiny not only of his wounded fellow soldiers whose level he is now sharing but also that of the doctors who stand in judgement over him. Bressen also finds himself the vulnerable object of the prying eyes of the narrator who relentlessly discloses all of his dark secrets. Böll, in providing these multi-faceted observations of the Colonel's body language, effectively makes it impossible for Bressen to hide behind his carefully created illusions. Also, in stating that his patrons uneasily checked for their wallets after he walked by them in the restaurant, Böll is using the body language of both Bressen and the restaurant guests to unmask his ambiguous character and to suggest that he is not all that he appears to be.

Superficially, Bressen looks every inch the aristocrat. Yet, no matter how elegant a figure he cuts, he is still nothing more than a waiter who has flawlessly learned how to mirror the habitus he most desires to imitate. In addition, according to the narrator, back then the Colonel was himself unsure in his own mind of the success of the illusion he had tried to create: "Aber während er sich den Schein eines Hochmuts zu geben versuchte, war er im Grunde oft ängstlich. Es gab Tage, an denen er spürte, wie sich der Schweiß auf seinem Körper sammelte, wie er stoßartig herausbrach und ihn beklemmte" (18; ch. 2). Here, Böll uses the bodily excretion, sweat, to bring Bressen back into the physical world, exposing at the same time his insecurity with the role he has chosen to play. Apparently, we are to understand that although his performance may be excellent, he is betrayed by both his mental and his bodily functions, over which he has little or no control.

Bressen's boss, a good-natured if coarse and rather awkward man who is vain about his business success, generously offers him fine cigars at closing time: "[A]bends spät, ... griff er manchmal mit seinen dicken Fingern in die Zigarrenkiste und steckte ihm trotz seines Sträubens drei oder vier in die obere Rocktasche" (18; ch. 2). Although we may feel a sense of revulsion at the description of Bressen's boss sticking his fat fingers in the cigar box, we also recognise that his personality is more genuine than Bressen's. In fact, it is becoming more and more obvious that Bressen's aristocratic bearing neither endears him to us readers nor to the other characters in

the novel. Later he would share and smoke the cigars with his approving roommate, a travelling wine salesman, who would often contribute a bottle of champagne.

The narrator also informs us that Bressen was revolted by having to eat in the restaurant's filthy back room:

[Es] war widerlich gewesen. In einem ziemlich schmutzigen Hinterzimmer auf einer schäbigen Tischdecke, bedient von der unfreundlichen Köchin, die seine Vorliebe für Pudding keinerlei Rechnung trug - in der Nase, in Hals und Mund diese ekelhaften, kalten Kochdünste, fett und gräßlich -, und dieses ständige Aus- und Eingehen des Wirtes, der dann für Augenblicke neben ihm hockte, die Zigarre im Mund, sich aus einer Schnapsulle einschenkte und stumm soff. (18; ch. 2)

Böll makes several significant points with the help of body language that continue his relentless process of deconstructing Bressen's mirroring body image. The contrast between his non-verbal behaviour in the high class restaurant located at the front of the hotel and in the kitchen backroom is powerful.¹²⁸ While Bressen enjoys the exhilaration of social dominance in the restaurant, he has to endure being subordinated to the cook and the owner in the kitchen. Böll's choice of words such as: "schmutzig," "schäbig," "ekelhaft," "-dünste," "fett," "gräßlich," all evoke disgust and add to his bodily discomfort and feelings of insignificance.

Bressen's own feelings of unease and distress when the owner, uninvited, enters his personal space, mirrors the discomfort to which he subjected the restaurant patrons. This spatial behaviour is a reliable indicator of interpersonal relations. It shows Bressen to be a cold and isolated individual, completely incapable of establishing a warm rapport with others. This basic personality trait is made obvious with each and every one of the narrator's account of the verbal and non-verbal behaviour of Bressen and all those who find themselves in his proximity.

As mentioned above, the word "Sekt" acts as a punctuator between Bressen's past and present. In the hospital, his persistent demands for cold champagne and small women expose Bressen's deep-seated habitus or "tastes" which override the "Scheinwelt" behind which he tries to hide. Drawing from his own experience of successfully mirroring a class to which he does not belong, Bressen thinks back to the time before the war when he used to give lessons in social etiquette to the nouveau riches in his town:

Es gab dort viele Reiche, [. . .] die buchstäblich ihr Leben lang mit den Fingern gegessen hatten, nun Autos hatten, Villen und Weiber, die es nicht länger ertrugen, in ihrer eigenen Haut zu stecken. Er lehrte sie, sich auf dem Glatteis gesellschaftlicher Verpflichtungen einigermaßen aufzuführen, [. . .] er hatte ihnen jeden Handgriff beizubringen, sie genau zu beobachten, zu korrigieren, und versuchte ihnen klarzumachen, wie man eigenhändig die Sektpulle aufmacht. (18-19; ch. 2)

Böll focuses our attention on the changing function of the hands of the newly rich peasants. First used to eat with,¹²⁹ they now only use their hands for gesturing and for social effect. In fact,

¹²⁸ See Erving Goffman's discussion of "backstage and frontstage activity" in this regard (Self 119).

¹²⁹ Marcel Mauss, for whom "body techniques" such as handshakes, salutes, attention, walking and eating correctly are impossible without an organic foundation, recognises that these common bodily activities also result from social learning and vary culturally across societies. With regard to the correctness of eating with the hands, Mauss repeats a story told by Harald Høffding about the Shah of Persia which emphasises this fact: "The Shah was

hands play an important role throughout Böll's writings and will be discussed in greater detail in the chapter on the "Communicative Body." It is also important to notice Böll's use of "Haut" in the phrase that suggests their growing discomfort with being who they really are, namely peasants.

Since it is the body that mirrors the signs of class, it must be so trained as to display the new habitus they desire. Bressen, therefore, meticulously and methodically teaches the newly rich how to train their bodies to reflect their new status. By successfully internalising and outwardly demonstrating certain tastes they reproduce themselves as members of the class to which they aspire. In other words, as the sociologist Mike Featherstone suggests, their newly acquired social position must be "embodied."¹³⁰ Lacking any hereditary experience of this nature to draw upon, they must now learn to "internalise" through self-restraint these new ways of using their bodies. Norbert Elias presents a clear picture of the history of manners, including eating habits, in his first volume of *The Civilising Process*.

Bressen, himself, in refusing to face his disintegrating present reality, elects to stay in his intact past. Fixing his gaze on the second picture which depicts the tiered society of the Crown Prince Michael and his royal entourage talking with a Rumanian peasant, Bressen returns to his reflections on habitus:

Was ihn bei diesem Unterricht verblüfft hatte, was er noch nicht gewußt hatte und was einzusehen er sich lange sträubte: daß man diese Dinge wirklich lernen konnte – diese kleine Schauspielerei, mit Messer und Gabel richtig zu hantieren. Er erschrak oft, wenn er diese Burschen und ihre Weiber sah, die ihn nach drei Monaten korrekt und höflich wie einen tüchtigen, aber einseitigen Lehrer behandelten und ihm lächelnd einen Scheck überreichten. (19; ch. 2)

The Colonel is amazed how well these little details can be learned. Even here, Bressen's hopes to see himself mirrored in the nouveau riches and they in him partially fail since after just three months they treat him as a subordinate that they must humour. The pupil has surpassed his teacher – a paid teacher at that! As Bressen finds out, this is not always the case: "Manche auch begriffen es nie – ihre Finger waren zu ungeschickt, sie brachten es nicht fertig, eine Käsekruste abzuschneiden, ohne die Scheibe in die Hand zu nehmen, [. . .] und es gab eine dritte Kategorie, [. . .] die es gar nicht für nötig hielten, ihn zu Rate zu ziehen" (19-20; ch. 2). Böll's emphasis on his characters' body language is clearly intended to make us more aware of the coexistence of a false and a real world.

During this depressing time, Bressen consoles himself by initiating a risk free, sexual "Abenteuer" with their wives. However, Böll again makes it clear that Bressen is still incapable of sustaining a normal relationship with another person. Even more telling, women shunned him after just one night: "Er hatte viele Abenteuer [. . .] mit den verschiedensten Frauen -, aber keine einzige von diesen allen war je ein zweites Mal zu ihm gekommen oder mit ihm gegangen" (20; ch. 2). However, it appears that in spite of the fact that he often orders champagne—a recognised symbol of high society tastes—for their trysts, it is perhaps his deviant, unwelcome sexual

the guest of Napoleon III and insisted on eating with his fingers. The Emperor urged him to use a golden fork. 'You don't know what a pleasure you are missing,' the Shah replied" (Mauss "Body Techniques" 118).

¹³⁰ It is worth repeating here Mike Featherstone's definition of taste: "[It] is embodied, being inscribed onto the body and made apparent in body size, volume, demeanour, ways of eating and drinking, walking, sitting, speaking, making gestures, etc." ("Leisure" 123).

practices that turn the women off. Even though it is never specifically stated, clearly, they resent how he uses his own, and their bodies. Böll later provides some insights into this aspect of his behaviour.

Back in the present, the Colonel pretends to ignore the senior medical officer calling his name, and giving orders to transfer him back home to Vienna. As Bressen hears the doctors shuffling through pages as they examine his medical history, he takes refuge in his memories of the past. Once the Nazis seized power and remembered his talent for training men for the military, Bressen's interest in women faded. He gladly returned, on horseback, at first secretly then openly, to his military occupation as a major, in command of a real battalion. In this capacity he trained the "Stahlhelm" and Youth Groups in his region, organised drill plans, rehearsed them tirelessly in the art of smartly standing at attention and executing about-turns. He also promoted route marches and relished every moment of it. This masculine world was more definitely to his taste.

Bressen's stretcher is eventually moved so that he must fix his gaze on the third picture in order to avoid looking at the two doctors standing on either side of it discussing his medical case: "Bressen konnte nicht verstehen, was sie sagten, nicht weil er nicht hören konnte; [. . .] nein, sie waren einfach zu weit entfernt und flüsteren" (22; ch. 2). Because they are out of his earshot, Böll's emphasis on the interpersonal proximity and distance, as well as the spatial arrangement of the doctors in relation to Bressen, suggests that there is something important and even extraordinary about his medical condition.

The doctors notice Bressen's reaction to the picture of the Virgin Mary: "Er schüttelte leise den Kopf und dachte: widerwärtig, und plötzlich sah er, daß die beiden Ärzte [. . .] blickten ihn an, dann das Bild, folgten dem Weg seines Blickes und kamen langsam auf ihn zu" (22; ch. 2). Unlike the doctors who have no insight into Bressen's thoughts, we are in a better position to explain Bressen's obvious revulsion. For him, it seems that the Virgin Mary is not just a woman, but a symbol of female power. In Bressen's male oriented military world, this is totally unacceptable. Besides being forced to look at the Virgin's severe expression, Bressen must also endure feeling the doctors' four eyes on the back of his head.

Even more disconcerting for him is that his efforts to conjure up his earlier days of glory in the army during the First World War fail miserably:

[E]r versuchte es, seine Gedanken zurückfallen zu lassen in diese Jahre, [. . .] in denen er spürte, daß die Dinge, die einmal seine Welt waren, langsam wieder eine Welt wurden: der Umgang mit Stabsoffizieren, Garnisonsklatsch, Adjutanten, Ordonnanzen. Es gelang ihm nicht, daran zu denken. (22; ch. 2)

The highly coveted masculine world of the military, once lost and regained, was again in danger of being lost with the disintegration of his prized regiments. It is as if the mirror in which he is accustomed to seeing himself is shattering, leaving him with an imperfect "body" image.

Böll's emphasis on Bressen's eye movements is not accidental. The Colonel's eyes act like a camera lens that gradually pull the doctors in closer as they move towards him and eventually stand almost out of his peripheral vision on either side of his stretcher:

Er war eingeklemmt in diese zwanzig Zentimeter, die zwischen den beiden Köpfen frei waren, und in diesen zwanzig Zentimetern hing das Bild – aber es war erleichternd, zu sehen, wie dieser Zwischenraum sich vergrößerte, weil sie näher auf ihn zukamen, auseinandergingen und neben ihm stehenblieben. (22; ch. 2)

However, they are now close enough for Bressen, whether he wants to or not, to clearly hear their conversation.

The narrator dramatically reports the ensuing conversation between the ward medical officer and the new doctor as they try to explain Bressen's apparent delirium:

“Sie glauben also nicht, daß es mit dieser Verwundung zusammenhängt?”
 “Ausgeschlossen, [. . .] Ausgeschlossen. Eine geradezu lächerlich geringfügige Verletzung der Kopfschwarte. War in fünf Tagen abgeheilt. [...] Ich kann höchstens Schock annehmen – oder . . .” Er schwieg plötzlich (22-23; ch. 2)

However, although the ward medical officer declines to explain himself any further, at least out loud, the narrator's description of their non-verbal behaviour helps us, with a little imagination, to fill in the gap:

“Es war peinlich, daß die beiden Ärzte schwiegen, sie schienen irgendwelche Zeichen zu wechseln - dann lachte plötzlich der fremde Arzt. Bressen hatte kein Wort gehört. Dann lachten beide Ärzte.” [. . .]
 Bressen spürte, daß er hochgehoben und fortgetragen wurde; [. . .] Er war froh, als sich die Tür des Sankras hinter ihm schloß. (23; ch. 2)

The reality of the situation is appalling. The doctors' body language, especially that of their non-verbal behaviour, makes it clear that Bressen is shamming his physical unfitness in order to avoid military duty.

Their awkward silence and the laughter which follows are demonstrations of their embarrassment and scorn for the unseemly conduct of this senior German officer. Even more disturbing, perhaps, is that Colonel Bressen appears to feel no shame or remorse for his own cowardly, selfish behaviour. Nor does he appear to demonstrate any sense of responsibility for the wounded and the dead of his routed regiments. Bressen's mask continues to slip and the man beneath is less and less worthy of our respect. However, there are a few more surprises about the Colonel that are still to be revealed before his character and his “Scheinwirklichkeit” are completely deconstructed.

Sergeant Finck, a commissary at a big hospital near Linz, on the Danube, is dispatched on an absurd and deadly mission to purchase the best Tokay wines, liqueurs, and champagne. The omniscient narrator explains why Finck has been assigned this task in the midst of pitched battles in Hungary:

Sein Chef, Oberstabsarzt Ginzler, trank sehr gern echten Tokaier, aber vor allem ging es wohl um seinen Saufkumpan und Skatgenossen, diesen Oberst, der Bressen hieß, zu dem man aber unwillkürlich *von*¹³¹ Bressen sagte, weil er so vornehm aussah mit seinem schmalen, ernsten Gesicht und dem seltenen Orden am Hals. Er, Finck, hatte einen Kneipe zu Haus, und er kannte die Menschen, und er wußte, daß es nichts als Angabe vom Chef war, daß er ihn losschickte, fünfzig Flaschen echten Tokaier zu holen – irgendeine Wette oder so etwas, zu der dieser Oberst den Chef wahrscheinlich gereizt hatte. (76; ch. 6)

The prefixing of Bressen's name with “von” serves as a sign post to remind us that the Colonel's aristocratic bodily appearance is nothing but an illusion. It also tells us that even in Austria, miles

¹³¹ The emphasis is mine.

away from the front, he is still able to outwardly project himself into the role he most covets, that of the noble and respectable German officer.

Finck despises Bressen after he unwittingly discovers his predilection for masturbation. Knowing that no one would either guess or believe this, Finck has kept this disturbing information to himself:

Er, Finck, hatte es selbst gesehen, ganz deutlich . . . Und man behandelte den Oberst mit großer Vorsicht. Einmal war er abends zu dem Oberst gegangen, ohne anzuklopfen, da hatte er es gesehen, im Halbdunkel, dieser grauenhafte Ausdruck auf dem Gesicht des blassen Greises. [. . .] Wenn zu Hause ein junger Bursche bei so etwas ertappt wurde, wurde er sofort mit kaltem Wasser übergossen, und es half... (77; ch. 6)

This incident confirms what we have probably long suspected: the Colonel's sexual behaviour is questionable. In addition, his sexual behaviour also confirms his social isolation: he needs no one but himself for his sexual satisfaction.

Our final encounter with the Colonel occurs in chapter nine. From his body language it is clear that Bressen's mask has completely slipped, and that he has finally come face to face with the real world and himself. It is obvious that the "real" Bressen is not up to the challenge of real life: "[D]er Oberst hatte jetzt einen schlappen Gang, sein spitzes Gesicht sah krank aus, und der Kragen, an dem die Orden baumelten, war ihm viel zu weit. Er hob kaum die Knie, schlackerte mit den Armen. "Eine Schande", murmelte Finck,¹³² "eine Schande" (130; ch. 9). Colonel Bressen's sickly, physical appearance and uncoordinated limb movements show him to be nothing more than a mere shadow of his former self. In contrast to the first time Böll introduces him to us, his "Ritterkreuz" adorned with oak leaves, the German symbol of dependable strength and vitality, does not give him a noble, commanding appearance. In fact, his physical appearance destroys the myth of the invincible, proud German soldier fostered by the Nazis.

Böll's clever deconstruction of the colonel is now complete. It is a process that began in earnest once Böll presented him to the readers by focusing on his nose, voice, prone posture, and by giving us access to his verbal and non-verbal thoughts. In gathering up the many red flags that litter the text, we can compile a list of "facts" that have been revealed about this high ranking German officer. For example, the second time that we meet the Colonel we learn that his thin, long nose makes his narrow face ugly. In addition his prone position and his "injuries" make his body appear flawed. We also are informed that he is basically a sexual predator whose unspecified sexual escapades do not endear the women he seduces to him. On his third appearance in the novel, we find out more about Colonel Bressen's arrogant conduct. Through Finck's horrified eyes, we are also given an unwanted glimpse at the Colonel engaged in one of his sexual predilections, one that underscores his isolation. Finally, at the end of the novel when we meet him for the fourth and last time, his poor posture, sloppy gait, and sickly appearance leave us aghast. In our eyes, he is no longer the arrogant officer whom we first met reviewing the troops.

In addition, we also find out that Bressen comes from Vienna, and had fought in the First World War. However, Böll also makes it very clear that he is now shamming his being unfit for military duty while languishing in a military hospital until he's sent back to recuperate in Austria. Colonel Bressen has also been shown to be selfish and totally without any sense of

¹³² He is the younger Finck's father.

responsibility for his beleaguered soldiers on the battlefield. Neither is he in any way willing to die for the "Vaterland." Colonel Bressen has also displayed an amazing degree of social mobility and a remarkable talent for internalising and externalising the habitus of the "aristocratic" class to which he aspires. However, our last view of him is one of complete disillusionment and abject failure. His body now mirrors the shattered world of the Third Reich. It is one in which he no longer has the ability to see himself either as a cultured civilian or as a victorious German officer.

We are left instead with nagging questions—who then is the "real" Colonel Bressen? What is his true identity? We know that he is neither an aristocrat nor an ethically irreproachable German officer. In fact, if we did not know better, we might even be tempted to question the "purity" of his racial background. Rather than the Nazi image of a superior, handsome, and ethically irreproachable German officer, is he perhaps one of what Sander Gilman called many "assimilated" Austrian Jews, "passing as non-Jews, who feared that their visibility as Jews could come to the fore"? There is no way, of course, of definitively answering this question since Bressen is a fictional character. However, by now Böll has made us aware that appearances can be deceiving, and that what the human body mirrors is not necessarily reality. As we have seen in Böll's short story "Todesursache: Hakennase," during the Third Reich, it only takes one of these "facts," whether true or false, to rob a man of both his human dignity and of his very life.

Perhaps Böll's main message is that we must always be prepared to search below the sometimes shiny surface of life for the truth. Someone's life, indeed, a whole nation's existence may depend on our due diligence. This study shows that in *Wo warst du, Adam?* Böll's views on humanity shine through the horrors of the war. Although they are fair, humanistic views, ones which may seem obvious to us today, at the time that Böll was writing they were potentially perplexing and highly volatile. For example: One should not be discriminated against or favoured above another purely by the physical size and shape of parts of one's body. Neither should one be judged by one's social status, religious and political affiliation nor by one's "body techniques," that is, by the way one walks, talks, stands, and eats. Most importantly, however, race should neither deprive one of human dignity nor of one's right to life.

Böll's "deconstruction" of the Colonel's mirroring body demonstrates how easy it is to be influenced by outward appearances. Bressen's story unceremoniously concludes on a negative, disillusioned note. It is therefore feasible to surmise that Heinrich Böll's outlining of Bressen's "meteoric rise within the regime" (White "War" 27), and his figurative dismantling of his pompous mirroring body are symbolic of the rise and fall of his and the Third Reich's "Scheinwelt." The next chapter, the "dominating body," will again investigate a German officer in the Third Reich, one whose physical features, to use Sander Gilman's term, make it almost impossible for him to "pass"¹³³ as an Aryan. His efforts to contain his fears and insecurities lead him to personally order and participate in unspeakable acts of violence and brutality against alleged enemies, especially Jews, of the National Socialist regime. The body, therefore, continues to play a crucial role in Böll's writings.

¹³³ See Gilman *Making the Body Beautiful* xx-xxi

CHAPTER VI. THE DOMINATING BODY

"Du bist nichts, der [schwarze] Orden ist alles", [...] [Die] Angehörigen der Waffen-SS und der Totenkopfverbände [...] waren innerlich "Heimatlose" und "Militante," bereit, allein "für die Idee zu töten." (Peter Reichel)

Der Nazi in einem Roman [ist] eben der potentielle Faschist, [...] Aber Macht ausüben, faschistische Macht, über Menschen, kann ein Familienvater, kann ein Familienmitglied, [...] Da haben Sie den Faschismus. (Heinrich Böll)

Heinrich Böll's early writings provide us with several opportunities to study various examples of "dominating" bodies. As Böll himself intimates in the above epigraph, fascism is the private and/or public abuse of power. It is a form of power that is wielded not only by the National Socialist regime, but also by Nazi family members, teachers, employers, clergy, among others. For Böll, fascist power, whether used by the government or by members of the public, leads to the domination of another human being. Although aware of other forms of abuse of power, Böll clearly preferred to concentrate in his early prose upon the fascism he encountered, portraying its devastating effects on his contemporary German society.

In Böll's eyes, any exercise of power and/or force that deprives any individual or group of people of their human dignity and rights, especially of their life, is an intolerable act of domination. As we have seen in the previous chapter, the mirroring body satisfies its desires not only by adopting a habitus that is not its own but also by seeing itself already reflected in all that its gaze encounters. However, the dominating body seeks not only to stifle its desires, but also to allay its fears of losing self-control by inflicting mental or physical violence on another.

Although the dominating body is often male and its victim female, the reverse is also possible and the victim can be of any sex, race, age, or social status. According to Klaus Theweleit, to whom I have referred before as one of Germany's leading exponents of fascist consciousness, sexuality may also play an important role in dominating behaviour. He has argued that fascist males, especially soldiers, may have a built-in fear of their own repressed sexual needs and an overwhelming fear of women. In fact, in his opinion, since female bodies remain virtually unknown to these males they are perceived as the origin and object of their fear. For fascist males, therefore, women and anything that *flows* and transgresses boundaries of any sort, be they those that separate countries or define what is or is not traditionally acceptable, all symbolise a form of danger which both attracts and repels. It is this perceived danger that creates the conflicting emotions of fear, desire, and disgust in such men.

In fact, for fascist males, anything that could be construed as being either *soft* and/or detrimental to the preservation of their bodies' boundaries had to be excised. For them, it was the "humane" thing to do. In his opinion, therefore, the most dangerous *flows* reside within these men. The projection of these fears onto a victim's body and the perpetrating of brutal acts of killing that effectively reduce this body to a bloody mass, provide the dominating body with immediate release and satisfaction. In this way, such individuals and/or groups of people are able to assure themselves of their own continued physical existence and continued survival. In his interview with René Wintzen, Böll also seems to be in agreement with this concept of a close connection between war and male sexuality: "Ich glaube schon, daß die Analytiker recht haben, die Zusammenhänge zwischen Krieg und Sexualität des Mannes erkennen" ("Erinnerung" 47). In several of his stories set during and immediately after the fall of the Third Reich, Böll focuses our attention on the bodily aspects and consequences of physical and mental domination.

This chapter will now examine “Täter/Opfer,” that is, dominator/victim pairs selected from Böll’s posthumously published collection of war stories *Der blasse Hund*, and from his war novel *Wo warst du, Adam?* It will also investigate this deadly twinned relationship in his posthumously published “Trümmer/Restauration” novel *Der Engel schwieg* whose plot begins on May 8, 1945, the day of Germany’s unconditional surrender. A close study of Böll’s use of body language, his vivid presentation of the thoughts of his characters, and the comments and glosses of his narrators in these works will be informative for a better understanding of his portrayal of these contrasting bodies. In other words, Böll’s emphasis on the role of the human body in these relationships of domination will reveal more concretely and dramatically his views on the effects of both public and private abuse of power and racism on German society.

“Der Flüchtling:” Joseph

In Böll’s suspenseful short story “Der Flüchtling” (1946), Joseph, a German fugitive and escapee from a German concentration camp, is mercilessly hunted down like an animal. His frantic attempts to evade his pursuers eventually fail when he is finally cornered and reduced to a bloody pulp by the most tenacious of all search party leaders, “der gemeinste Bluttiger [sic],” Germat (38). In this short narrative, Böll describes the dominating Germat as a “Spürhund” who, in turn, labels Joseph a “Hund” and a “Dreckschwein” (41-42). In comparing these two human beings to animals, Böll emphasises the deplorable lack of human dignity in the story that rapidly unfolds. Moreover, his choice of figurative language (such as: “wie die Wölfe würden die Häscher über ihm sein” (44)) and vocabulary (such as: “Jagd,” “tierisch,” “Wildheit,” etc.) also distinguishes Joseph as a degraded human being and as a victim.

The narrator’s careful description of the exhausted, hungry fugitive’s abject, unarmed body clad in filthy, greasy drill, and of Germat’s tall, commanding Aryan bodily appearance dressed in his distinctive black uniform and soft, elegant boots, reveals a lot about their power relationship. In a conversation with the chaplain who reluctantly offers him temporary sanctuary, Joseph makes this clear: “Jetzt verstehe ich auch, warum diese saudummen Henkersknechte im Lager uns so überlegen sind, weil wir immer hungrig und oft auch schmutzig sind” (49). Physical appearance in every way creates the illusion of an individual’s power. In addition, Böll’s juxtaposition of Germat and Joseph also firmly establishes their dominator/victim relationship:

[Joseph] lief schnell, [. . .] bis er im Dunkeln Germats große Gestalt in der schwarzen Uniform erkannte [. . .], und dann sah er deutlich im Schein der Werfer das harte, kalte, rassig-schöne Gesicht, und [. . .] der befriedigt lächelnde Mund sich öffnen wollte zum sprechen, aber er warf sich, indem er seinen ganzen Körper zusammenballte – seine einzige Waffe! ... mit der ganzen tollen Wildheit seines Hasses gegen Germat ...; dann legte er sich ganz leise und behutsam auf die Straße und kroch langsam, lautlos unter den Wagen. (40)

Joseph’s animal-like behaviour and low profile contrast starkly with Germat’s Aryan features and imposing, tall figure.

Wounded and bleeding, Germat is all the more determined to capture the “Dreckschwein,” Joseph. Böll focuses our attention on the fugitive’s uncontrollably rising fear through a long description of his helpless, emotional state and the awkward position of his body as he hangs on for dear life under Germat’s car. His fear is made even more manifest by the copious amounts of sweat secreted from his pores and the unstoppable flow of tears that blind his eyes. However, Joseph’s tears remind us that he is not an animal, but rather a living human being. Böll further stresses Joseph’s bodily discomforts by describing how he must fight the

mounting feelings of nausea in his stomach as he inhales the oil and gas fumes emitted by Germat's vehicle until he finally falls onto the pavement when the car unexpectedly lurches into motion. It is interesting to note, however, that Joseph is neither afraid of displaying his fear nor of recognising the sheer physical danger to himself that Germat and his men signify.

The protagonist is first introduced by named fragments of his body such as his heart, face, eyes, head etc., then by his emotions, senses, movements, and body positions. His fear is palpable. In fact, his body is essentially reduced to its basic survival instincts and to its five senses: seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, and tasting. For example, in the darkness, Joseph must depend solely on his sense of hearing in order to avoid being caught:

Aber mit einem Male hörte er rechts und links von sich auf dem dunklen Acker Geräusche ... ja, wie Schleichen ... fast schlurfend [sic] ... und das untrügliche und unvermeidliche Quetschen, wenn man einen Stiefel aus der nassen Erde zieht, [...] im gleichen Augenblick fiel ihm ein, daß sein Kopf ja weit sichtbar [...] auf der Mauer zu sehen sein mußte! Er duckte sich, keuchend vor tierischer Angst, und in der nächsten Zehntelsekunde, während er sich bemühte, den wirbelnden Knäuel von Gedanken und Gefühlen zu ordnen, pfiß ein Geschoß [...] das Zeichen, daß die Jagd offiziell eröffnet war. (38)

By focusing our attention on Joseph's physical body and mental state of mind—his fear —, Böll succeeds in immediately embroiling us in the physical reality of the life and death situation and terrifying emotions that are engulfing the hunted man. Böll also accredits Germat with possessing supernatural instincts that help him to sniff out and set the trap for his prey. It is clear that, through his choice of vocabulary, Böll wishes to focus on the animal-like attributes of these two men, especially those that reflect the helplessness and powerfulness that is associated with the hunted and the hunter. Germat and Joseph play a deadly cat and mouse game, no holds barred.

Böll also contrasts the warm and inviting, secure human living conditions that the fugitive encounters in a chaplain's house with that of Germat's barbed wire enclosed and cage-like concentration camp from which he has just escaped. As Joseph plunges once again headlong into the night, and unable to see his tormentors, he must now rely not only on his senses and his instincts but also on his faith in God.

As the "terrified" animal imagery dissolves, that is, until the last scene, Joseph regains his desire and ability to pray, proving that unlike an animal he is a spiritual human being. Joseph's prayers help him to replace his former feelings of hate and bitterness with feelings of faith and hope. Böll again chooses to use the verb "zusammenballen" to signal that another attack is about to take place. Previously, gathering his whole body into a ball, Joseph had launched himself at Germat knocking his body to the ground just long enough for him to make his bold getaway. Now, however, it is the personified night which, in forming itself into a tight ball of darkness, helps Germat to successfully complete his brutal attack on Joseph.

Almost completely overwhelmed with fear, Joseph falls so heavily on his chin on the steep meadow that the moist earth covers his ears momentarily deafening him:

[Joseph] hörte, eingebohrt in die Erde, den Anruf nicht, [...] er lag da, festgenagelt von dem mörderischen Licht, auf der abschüssigen Wiese wie ein ausgelegtes Ziel ... und bevor die nächste Folge von Schüssen ihn durchsiebte und zerriß ... schrie er ... schrie er ... [...] er hatte den Kopf noch einmal erhoben und schrie mit geblendeten Augen ... aber der nächste Stoß aus dem bleckenden Maul löschte seine Schreie aus... (54-55)

By drawing us in for a close-up of Joseph's face and head, Böll magnifies the image and forces us to witness the last brutal attack on Joseph's body as he lies face down in the deep mud. The image of the forlorn fugitive's raised, mud covered head, blinded eyes and screaming open mouth is grotesque and expressionistic in quality. Indeed, Böll's opposing the metallic "Maul" of the gun with Joseph's undescribed but screaming, human mouth is both effective and dramatic. His graphic portrayal of the fugitive's final gesture of horror and fear at his impending execution suggests that Joseph can now only wordlessly confront the incomprehensible.

The vulnerability of his body, as he lies "nailed" to the ground first by the merciless searchlight and then by a hail of bullets, conjures up a vivid image of a crucified victim. The final description of the general scene pulls us back far enough that we can "view" Joseph's entire body, that is, what is left of it. It is a horrific scene, almost sacrificial in nature, over which the dominating figure of Gerzat presides as high priest. Gerzat's men identify the pulpy mass of blood and earth as the body of the fugitive and victim, Joseph:

Es war ganz still, als die Henkersknechte um ihn standen und mit der Taschenlampe die Fetzen seines Leibes beleuchteten, der so vollkommen der Erde gleichsah, daß man hätte glauben können, die Erde selber habe geblutet ...
"Ja ... das ist er", sagte eine gleichgültige Stimme ... (55)

It is obvious that for Gerzat anyone who is an "enemy" of the Third Reich is unworthy of life, and that the killing of such persons is all in a day's work. In "Der Flüchtling," Böll's use of the body has succeeded in vividly portraying the bodily nature of both the dominating and the dominated body. Although they both bleed and experience pain, they have done so in different degrees. It is also evident that neither body can exist without the other. Böll appears to be saying that it takes a victim and a henchman to demonstrate the consequences of abusive power. It is also clear that the only association that Gerzat's dominating body can have with his victim, Joseph, is one that is ruled by physical, deadly force.

"Der blasse Hund:" Theodor Herold

Still staying with Der blasse Hund, this study will now turn to an examination of the title story "Der blasse Hund" in relation to the above established aspects of the dominating body. Although women do not play a role in "Der Flüchtling," two dominating "dangerous" women open and close the story "Der blasse Hund." The title is also the alias of the protagonist, Theodor Herold. The story gradually unfolds as a chaplain apprises the doctor who has been called in to pronounce the brutally murdered man legally dead, of the victim's life history. Theodor, an orphan who is rescued from the clutches of his dominating and impoverished aunt, is cared for and educated by members of a clerical institute. In the process of his storytelling, the chaplain offers reasons why this intelligent and ambitious young man eventually turns his back on his clerical benefactors and their religious teachings.

Theodor is seduced as much by the secular world as by the new "religion:" the fascist ideology of the "Volk" propagated by Hitler and the NSDAP. His obvious intelligence automatically makes Theodor a welcome member of the Party. However, as a soldier with aspirations of making a career for himself in the military as a member of the officer caste, his intelligence is a distinct deterrence. His complete rejection by the officers causes him not only to hate the military hierarchy, but also to declare war against society. The disillusioned Theodor willingly seeks consolation in the war since it offers him the opportunity to dominate others, and

to participate in the annihilation of all those who were deemed by the Nazis as being unworthy of life:

Der Krieg war für ihn wie eine Erlösung, und nun meldete er sich freiwillig in einen jener Verbände, die, erzogen im Geiste der Verneinung aller wirklichen Werte, das Morden an der Front, das sie Krieg nannten, ohne weiteres gleichsetzten mit den Morden hinter der Front, das die Vernichtung minderwertigen Menschentums geheißen wurde. (92)

In spite of his growing sense of regret and guilt about his horrific and inhumane actions, this milieu allows Theodor to finally achieve his desires: "Er war bei diesen Verbänden Offizier geworden" (93).

Becoming highly decorated, however, still leaves Theodor unsatisfied and increasingly fearful: "Ja, [. . .] er fühlte sich [. . .] oft von bitterster Reue erfüllt, von Grauen über die Ströme von Blut, vermischt mit Dreck, entsetzt über viehische Grausamkeiten . . . alles durcheinandergemischt mit jenen unrevindierbaren Begriffen von Rasse, Ehre und unbedingtem Gehorsam . . . Vaterland . . . Herrentum" (93). Heinrich Böll's vivid portrayal of external streams of blood mingled with dirt is intentional. It is clearly meant not only to conjure up the Nazi association of impure blood with the racial impurity of the Jews and other minorities but also to show us the body in its final state, hardly seeming human any longer.

In addition, the words that Theodor and others used as justification for their deeds (fatherland, race, honour, etc.) are shown to be meaningless when one is confronted with the destroyed human bodies described in the story. The chaplain also grasps at these words for some sort of plausible explanation for the rapid deterioration of the mental and physical state of Theodor's mangled corpse that had once been such a promising human being. The obvious attention paid to body language, including verbal and non-verbal behaviour, by the two first person narrators, the doctor and the chaplain, provide us with an image of the dominating body in action.

Upon seeing Theodor's corpse, the examining doctor comments: "Viele, viele Tote habe ich gesehen, aber beim Anblick jeden Leichnams ergreift mich immer wieder das erregende Bewußtsein, [. . .] einen Menschen zu sehen . . . der gelebt, gelitten und geliebt hat . . ." (81). Through the doctor's detailed description, Böll gives us another "close-up" of Theodor's lifeless body whose reddish hair is now matted with blood and dirt, and his face criss-crossed with vicious stab wounds. In addition, the doctor notices not only that his mouth is twisted but that his thin pale nose has been pushed in and that his hands are still clenched even in death.

Theodor's death has been a particularly violent one. The narrator's gloss of his horrific wounds makes the physical circumstances of his death even more real and appalling: "Man glaubte, die infernalische Wut zu erkennen, mit der er geschlagen, getreten, gestochen worden war; mit einer tierischen Lust war er ermordet worden" (82). Like the doctor, the chaplain also compares Theodor's incredibly white and narrow face to a knife, a sharp knife that indiscriminately slices its way through life and anyone who stands in the way of his selfish ambitions. However, as the story progresses we recognise how much truth exists in the old adage: violence begets violence. The doctor's shock and horror increases when the chaplain tells him that the murdered man in the tattered grey uniform is the feared and notorious murderer, "Blasser Hund." One is therefore compelled to ask oneself how a man who has been known to be a cruel and dominating individual, can himself become a victim of domination?

By projecting his fears onto another person whom he can destroy at will, Theodor is able to hold himself together and therefore to survive. He is the sole author of the reign of terror that ensues:

Die Pläne stammten alle von ihm, und er war das erkannte Haupt ... und er war der "Richter" ... er tauchte auf, mit einer gewissen Glorie des Geheimnisses, wenn seine Gehilfen den Einbruch verübt und das Opfer oder die Opfer "gestellt" hatten. Er verkündete "je nach Laune" die Todesart ... erschießen ... erstechen oder aufknüpfen ... oft auch machten sie reine Schrecküberfälle, um die Zitternden nachher der blanken Angst einer ständigen Drohung zu überlassen ... auf diese Weise brachten sie [. . .]dreiundzwanzig Menschen um [. . .]" (98)

The chaplain's chilling account of Theodor's murderous and terrorising acts of violence against the helpless bodies of his victims vividly demonstrate the bodily nature of his vicious domination.

However, when a woman works her way into his band of murderous criminals, Theodor's recently regained sense of being in control of his destiny evaporates. His inability to control her and to calculate the dangerous effect of his scorn when she confesses her love for him leads to his ignominious demise at her hands. Fully aware of the danger that he symbolises for her, she cunningly pre-empts any plans he may have for her destruction by inciting his own men to violently rise up against him:

Und das Schrecklichste war, daß dieses Weib ihn liebte und [. . .] durch monatelangen kalten Hohn dazu getrieben wurde, seine Mörderin zu werden; sie hat die anderen aufgestachelt, und ich [. . .] sie sind mit schrecklicherer Wut über ihn hergefallen als über die anderen Opfer; [. . .] sie haben ihn fast zerfleischt. (99)

Heinrich Böll's use of the verb "zerfleischen," meaning "to tear limb from limb, to tear to pieces," describes the physical damage that the notorious dominator sustains during their vicious attack on his body. Theodor's open, bleeding flesh is indicative not only of the vulnerability of his physical body, but also of the reversal of the dominating/victim roles. Only through her use of both mental and physical force does she succeed in taking over the role of the dominating body from Theodor's now powerless and victimised body. However, it is also interesting that, although his clothes are bloody and torn, the rest of his body is seemingly untouched. In fact, it can be argued that Böll's detailed portrayal of his disfigured head, with its twisted lips, pushed in nose, matted hair, and deeply gashed and lacerated skin and skull is meant to be symbolic of Theodor's loss of power and position at the head of his gang.

In this dramatic story, Heinrich Böll has continuously focused our attention on the physical aspects of power and domination. For him, acts of domination inflict not only mental and physical suffering on the bodies of human beings, but often also deprive them of their human rights, dignity, and even of life itself. The dominating body as examined in Böll's story "Der blasse Hund" is one that tries to overcome rejection and instability with the use of deadly force. However, when the dominating body allows cracks in its protective "armour" to remain open it can rapidly become a dominated body. Inexperienced in matters of the heart, and too slow in recognising this salient fact, Theodor learns too late that hell has no fury like a woman scorned. She becomes the dominator when she brutally destroys her victim, Theodor.

In the discussion of the two stories taken from Der blasse Hund collection, Heinrich Böll appears to hint that the victimisers Germat and Theodor are active members of Hitler's SS, a group which will be closely examined below. Germat's black uniform and excessive use of force,

and Theodor's chilling account of his inhumane acts against his innocent victims during the war amply support this assumption. However, in his war novel *Wo warst du, Adam?*, Heinrich Böll no longer hints at the SS "Schreckensherrschaft," instead he deliberately focuses on its dedicated participation in the calculated destruction of the Jews and other minorities deemed "inferior" to the German Aryan race.

To do this, Böll provides us with a close-up of the physical and mental body, personality, and horrific actions of a member of the SS "Totenkopfverband." "SS-Obersturmführer" (SS First Lieutenant) Filskeit is the commandant of a northern death camp. A barbed wire enclosed panoptic-like camp with manned guard towers, "bath" huts, and most chilling of all, a continuously smoking crematorium provides a constant backdrop for the stage upon which Filskeit "performs" his SS duties. In order to better understand SS First Lieutenant Filskeit as a dominating body it will be important to provide some background information about the SS.

The SS-Elite Organisation: The Black Order

SS marschieret, die Strasse [sic] frei! / Die Sturmkolonnen stehen! / Sie werden aus der Tyrannei / Den Weg zur Freiheit gehen. / Drum auf bereit zum letzten Stoss [sic]! / Wie's unsere Väter waren! / Der Tod sei unser Kampfgenoss [sic]! / Wir sind die schwarzen Scharen. (SS Liederbuch 18)

In her thought provoking essay "Fascinating Fascism" (1974), Susan Sontag remarks that the "SS was the ideal incarnation of fascism's overt assertion of the righteousness of violence, the right to have total power over others and to treat them as absolutely inferior." Sontag also further notes that the SS acted out this allegation "in a singularly brutal and efficient manner;" and "dramatised it by linking itself to certain aesthetic standards." In her opinion, therefore, the "SS was designed as an elite military community that would be not only supremely violent but also supremely beautiful" (Sontag, "Fascinating" 99).

According to Peter Reichel: "Der schwarze Orden unterm Totenkopf gilt seit den Tagen des Dritten Reiches als die Inkarnation des Bösen schlechthin" (Schein 223). It is no wonder, therefore, that the members of the SS soon came to regard themselves as the "aristocracy" of National Socialism. In addition, before, during and after the Second World War, the familiar SS themes of faith, obedience, bodily beauty, power, combat, death, light, and fire in creative works of art have consistently portrayed German fascism as an extraordinary aesthetic experience.¹³⁴

To what does it owe its elite reputation? Having finally separated itself from the shadow of the SA ("Sturmabteilung") whose members, according to Susan Sontag, "have gone down in history as beefy, squat, beerhall types; mere brownshirts" ("Fascinating" 99), the SS under Heinrich Himmler were given a complete "make over." A major change was that the SS got new black uniforms. As we have seen throughout this study, Böll draws on the well known fact that a decorated uniform not only instils an aura of identity, order, and belonging but also instantly makes visible what does not belong. It is also a veritable "licence" to assert one's authority and in some cases even to do violence to another.

The tight, heavy, and stiff canvass-like SS uniforms were not only stylishly tailored but also designed to ensure that the wearer stood erect. Boots and gloves also added to the feeling of being constricted and "encased." White gloves provided a bizarre but aesthetic appearance to

¹³⁴ See, for example, the artistic works of Leni Riefenstahl, Albert Speer, Ernst von Salomon, Ernst Jünger, Hans-Jürgen Syberberg, Rainer Werner Fassbinder, Jean Genet, Yukio Mishima, and Liliana Cavani.

those wearing the SS black uniforms and soft elegant boots.¹³⁵ Numerous decorations ranged from the collar runes to the “Totenkopf” insignia. The uniforms not only made the SS troopers, with their blonde hair, sharp facial features, blue eyes, and tall, slim, muscular bodies with narrow hips look dramatic and threatening but also “erotic” in their appearance. The SS soldiers were essentially “political”¹³⁶ soldiers.

In The Order of the Death’s Head: The Story of Hitler’s SS (1970), Heinz Höhne states that SS men have “murdered men in millions.” For him: “Hardly an aspect of the nation’s life seemed safe from their interference; they were in charge of the police and the secret service.” In addition, “they provided the sentries on the Reich Chancellery and the guards in the concentration camps; they manned the divisions which carried the death’s-head symbol to Europe; they occupied key positions in agriculture, the health service, racial policy and scientific affairs; they crushed their way into traditional diplomatic festivities” (Death’s Head 1). Höhne also quotes the feared SS General Reinhard Heydrich, as boasting: “The Gestapo, the Kriminalpolizei [Criminal Police] and the security services are enveloped in the mysterious aura of the political detective story” (Death’s Head 1).¹³⁷ For Höhne, the “real history of the SS is a story of idealists and criminals, of place seekers and romantics: it is the history of the most fantastic association of men imaginable” (Death’s Head 13).

After the “night of the long knives” or blood purge of June 30, 1934, Hitler consolidated his power. He sanctioned the murder of many of his SA leaders and officials, including Heine and Röhm, on suspicion of either mutiny, ‘criminal,’ and/or homosexual behaviour. Under Heinrich Himmler, the SS organisation was developed according to principles that governed the Jesuit Order which he both admired and abhorred.¹³⁸ However, in keeping with their total rejection of Christianity, Himmler and the Nazis devised their own brand of “religious” symbolism and mysticism which coincided with Christian festival days and celebrations, and rituals. This substitution appeared to satisfy the “religious” needs of many Germans during the Third Reich. In the vaulted cellar of the Wewelsburg SS Castle, for example, Himmler set up the cult home of the SS as the sacred “Reich der Toten” where the ashes of dead SS leaders were stored and revered. The SS not only rapidly set itself up as the new elite of the newly conquered Europe but also as a powerful SS-State.

According to Peter Reichel: “[. . .] der rasante Aufstieg und Aufbau [. . .] [begann] mit Sicherheitsdienst und Gestapo, mit Ahnenerbe, Lebensborn und Rasse- und Siedlungshauptamt, mit Waffen-SS und Reichskommissar für die Festigung des deutschen Volkstums, mit den SS-Totenkopfverbänden und Wirtschaftsunternehmen” (Schein 223). In this way, the SS became the most powerful of the NS-organisations. The main thrust of all these types of administrative offices, organisations, and SS Death’s Head units was blatantly the promotion and preservation of the racial purity of the German people. The SS-State attracted idealists and criminals alike to its ever expanding masculine order. In fact, by the end of the thirties, the nobility made up ten to

¹³⁵ It is clear that black and white represent important aspects of the Nazi “Scheinwelt.” While black is indicative of the Nazi cult of death and the afterworld, white suggests their insistence upon racial purity.

¹³⁶ See Bernd Wegner’s book Hitlers Politische Soldaten 1983 for an in-depth discussion of this phenomenon.

¹³⁷ Here, Höhne quotes from the Record of International Military Tribunal, Nuremberg Vol XXI 500-501.

¹³⁸ According to Heinz Höhne: “Karl Ernst, the murdered SA leader, had frequently ridiculed him [Himmler] as the ‘Black Jesuit;’ even Hitler referred to the head of the SS as ‘my Ignatius Loyola.’ In the Jesuits Himmler had found what he regarded as the central feature of any Order’s mentality – the doctrine of obedience and the cult of organisation” (Höhne, Death’s Head 144).

twenty percent of the SS membership, and academics over 30 percent thereby giving the SS a more “intellectual” appearance. However, since brute force and violence was needed to protect the fledgling state, the “Totenkopfverbände” were mainly recruited from among Germany’s rural people.¹³⁹

The SS became more and more of an exclusive, closed society which categorically discriminated against non-Aryans and homosexuals even within their own ranks. Entry into this exclusive Black Order increasingly became more difficult as its profile developed into that of political soldiery and military tradition. Disciplinary and service regulations as well as numerous types of authorities helped to sustain the SS ideology of unconditional obedience, absolute loyalty, the cult of fighting, and especially its dogma of a racist concept of the enemy. These and many other minute details not only provided the SS with its elite image but also decisively separated it from the rest of the armed forces. Interestingly enough, in 1935 Himmler revived the once honourable activity of duelling¹⁴⁰ in order to enhance the Order’s much desired “aristocratic” character. Clearly, “Himmler intended that special prestige should attach to his Order, comparable to that of the medieval orders of chivalry” (Höhne, Death’s Head 149).

As Heinz Höhne comments: “In an SS recruited from all walks of life and classes of society, Himmler looked to romanticised history, Germanic legend and paganism to provide the integrating factor” (Death’s Head 153-154). However, as Hans Buchheim argues, “the SS Order was held together not by its political aim but by commitment to a certain mode of life,” one that demanded “moulding the mentality of a man.” The SS man, according to Buchheim, learned that:

his basic attitude must be that of a fighter for fighting’s sake;
 he must obey unquestioningly;
 he must be ‘hard’ – not only inured to but impervious to all human emotions;
 he should be contemptuous of ‘inferior beings’ and arrogant towards all
 those who did not belong to the Order;
 he must show comradeship and ‘cameraderie’[sic];
 the word ‘impossible’ did not exist. (Buchheim, “Command and
 Compliance” 320)

In addition, as Buchheim further notes, the enemy was to be perceived by the SS in absolute terms such as: “Jewry,” “Bolshevism,” and “the Eastern sub-human.” While this mentality was also nurtured by the Nazis as a whole, the SS were particularly persistent in its cultivation and translation into action (Buchheim, “Command and Compliance” 321). Members of both the “Totenkopfverbände” and the “Waffen-SS,” basically became the NS-killing machine: “Der neue Mensch im rassistischen Leitbild der Nazis sollte Herr sein über ‘Tod und Leben’” (Reichel, Schein 224).

In his March 1943 speech to the SS leadership in Posen, Himmler declared: “Ehrlich, anständig, treu und kameradschaftlich haben wir zu Angehörigen unseres eigenen Blutes zu sein und sonst zu niemand.” The Nazis stereotyped and stigmatised Jews, homosexuals, the mentally

¹³⁹ See Reichel Schein 225.

¹⁴⁰ In November 1935, with the SS no longer under the jurisdiction of SA Courts of Honour, Himmler decreed that, subject to his approval, every SS-man was duty bound to defend his honour and to seek satisfaction with his choice of weapon. With that, “the duel, that hallmark of aristocratic arrogance, was resurrected [and] ... every SS man was henceforth entitled to challenge another to a duel” (Höhne, Death’s Head 149).

ill and habitual criminals, as well as Communists and Gypsies, lumping them all together as a race of the damned, as “Outsiders” who, for the alleged good of the fatherland, had to be killed without remorse. It was therefore the sworn duty of the SS not only to embody but also to fulfil the image of terror and the cult of beauty which would inoculate the new SS-State against the alleged threat posed by these “inferior” people. Undoubtedly, the body and its appearance, as well as its readiness and ability to use violence against another human being were paramount issues for the SS. Himmler, therefore, insisted on the “creation” of the “standardised SS man, the nordicised master-race type who [. . .] was to be typical of the SS” (Höhne, Death’s Head 146).

In keeping with the NS-master-race policy which was based purely on the blonde, blue-eyed Nordic being, Himmler therefore set out to methodically remove all non-Aryan types from the SS. His appointee “Hauptsturmführer” (Captain) Professor Bruno K. Schultz’s selection plan concentrated on the following three aspects to help the RuSHA¹⁴¹ define the ideal SS man: racial appearance, physical condition and general bearing. He also divided the Nordic types into five racial categories. Only applicants who fell into one of the first three groups, namely, the “‘pure Nordic,’ ‘predominantly Nordic or Phalic,’ [and] harmonious bastard with ‘slight Alpine, Dinaric or Mediterranean characteristics’” (Höhne, Death’s Head 146), would be considered for possible entry into the elite SS Black Order.

In addition, Schultz devised nine categories for evaluating the SS applicant’s physical suitability. Serious attention was paid to his body proportions since Himmler hated men who were tall but disproportionate in other ways. For the applicant to be immediately acceptable, therefore, his physical stature had to be judged as being “ideal,” “excellent,” “very good,” or “good.” While men in the next two categories could try to overcome their physical “inadequacies” by proving by their bearing that they were true Nordic men, those in the last three categories were completely rejected. Like the Jesuits, “the SS candidate had to undergo manifold tests before he was allowed to swear the ‘kith and kin oath’ [Sippeneid] and call himself an SS man” (Höhne, Death’s Head 146-147). Besides his oath to his Führer, Adolf Hitler, the SS candidate also had to bind himself and his future family to obey Himmler’s marriage laws that were instituted on December 31, 1931. Finally, his acceptance into the Order was symbolised by his being given his SS dagger.

The SS, therefore, is a “bizarre exclusive brotherhood in which the fanaticism of the religious sect, the rites and customs of a feudal age and the romantic cult of Germanism blended oddly with contemporary political and economic management and cold-blooded power politics” (Höhne, Death’s Head 148-149). The SS units, however, were more than internal security forces. Apart from the Waffen-SS, “the other armed, full-time component of the SS, designated as SS-Totenkopfverbände in 1936, assumed the duty of guarding the inmates of concentration camps” (Ziegler, Aristocracy 47). Himmler was convinced that the end justified the means, even those that under normal circumstances would have been declared criminal. The title of Hans Buchheim’s article “The SS – Instrument of Domination,” is particularly appropriate for introducing the next portion of the present study.

After this summary of the most important aspects of the SS, we are now ready to investigate and interpret Heinrich Böll’s portrayal of the SS First Lieutenant Filskeit as a dominating body. Filskeit is first introduced to us as an “old man” crazy about his mixed choir.

¹⁴¹ “Rasse-und Siedlungshauptamt” [RuSHA] was the SS Central Office for Race and Settlement which controlled the racial purity of the SS and was responsible for organising the settlement and welfare of SS colonists in the conquered eastern territories

However, it is obvious from our first “face to face” encounter with Filskeit that this is perhaps the most understated and misleading remark in the entire novel. Heinrich Böll’s gradual deconstruction of his seemingly innocuous image eventually exposes the depth and breath of Filskeit’s racially charged and uncontrolled murderous brutality. SS First Lieutenant Filskeit is like a human time bomb waiting to go off. His excessive use of power and force in response to his mounting fear makes it clear to us that Böll envisaged this character as belonging to the group that, for the purposes of the present study’s argument, has been termed “dominating bodies.” The objects of Filskeit’s fear, therefore, become his victims.

Ilona and Filskeit: The Good, the Bad, the Beautiful, and the Ugly.

The main question that this study is investigating, however, is what sort of role does Heinrich Böll assign the body in this scenario of the victimiser, Filskeit, and his victim, Ilona? How does it enrich his underlying theme of fascism, that is, particularly that of the racist kind that engendered so many atrocities against Germany’s and Europe’s racial, political, and religious minorities, and other European nations? Böll’s careful detailing of various aspects of his character’s body language, in conjunction with the foregoing discussion of the SS and its fascist racial ideology, will therefore provide a solid foundation upon which to build answers.

Up to the present, Filskeit has managed to remain chaste and in control of all of his emotions by studiously avoiding any sexual contact with women. However, in spite of his readiness to blindly carry out his SS duties, his mental torment and constant feelings of inadequacy and fears concerning his physical appearance plague him daily: “Obersturmführer Filskeit [. . .] war schwarzhaarig, mittelgroß, und sein blasses und intelligentes Gesicht strömte ein Fluidum von Keuschheit aus. Er war streng, sah auf Ordnung und duldeten keinerlei Unkorrektheit. Er handelte nur nach den Vorschriften” (93; ch. 7). Much to his chagrin, Filskeit is neither tall nor blonde like the typical members of the promulgated northern Aryan race. In addition, his large angular chin makes his pale but otherwise intelligent and handsome face seem disproportionate and surprisingly brutal.

In fact, the concentration camp leader’s inharmonious facial features cause some people to experience extreme fear.

Obersturmführer Filskeit liebte die Kunst, die Musik. Er war mittelgroß, schwarzhaarig, und manche fanden sein blasses, intelligentes Gesicht schön, aber das kantige und zu große Kinn zog den zarten Teil seines Gesichts zu sehr nach unten und gab seinem intelligenten Gesicht den Ausdruck einer ebenso erschreckenden wie überraschenden Brutalität. (93; ch. 7)

Böll uses Filskeit’s imperfect body, that is, by SS standards, to demonstrate the sense of ambiguity, absurdity, and hypocrisy reflected in so much of what German fascistic racism allegedly represented.

While Filskeit’s obvious intelligence makes him a desirable candidate for the SS-State, it is the “deficiencies” of his physical body that block his admittance to the Death’s Head units of the racially defined SS-Elite. As the following comments make clear, Heinrich Böll’s emphasis on Filskeit’s non-Aryan bodily appearance is obviously intentional:

Als der Krieg ausbrach, [. . .] bewarb [Filskeit] sich mehrmals bei den Totenkopfverbänden und wurde zweimal nicht angenommen, weil er schwarzhaarig war, zu klein und offenbar dem pyknischen Typus angehörte. Aber bei seiner dritten Meldung nahmen die Totenkopfverbände ihn an, weil er ausgezeichnete Zeugnisse von allen Parteiorganisationen vorlegte. (95; ch. 7)

These observations focus our attention again on the high degree of importance placed by Himmler and the National Socialist government on racial purity.¹⁴² Finally, the SS-organisation overlooks his non-Aryan physical attributes in favour of his undisputed leadership qualities and organisational skills, and of his intelligence and driving ambition. As a strict choirmaster and a successful bank department head in the years before Hitler seized power, Filskeit developed a strict work ethic. In addition, those under his control had to follow his instructions to the letter. By providing us with such details, Böll makes us even more aware of the underlying petty bourgeois values of many of the SS-troops.

Unlike the mirroring body discussed in the previous chapter of this study, Filskeit cannot satisfy his desire for the SS concept of a perfect Aryan body no matter how long he gazes into his mirror. The narrator's comments leave no doubt that Filskeit, unable to deceive himself, feels he does not legitimately "belong" to the superior master race. It is a realisation that causes him great personal anguish: "Niemand wußte, daß er stundenlang verzweifelt zu Hause vor dem Spiegel stand und sah, was nicht zu übersehen war: er gehörte nicht dieser Rasse an, die er glühend verehrte und der Lohengrin angehört hatte" (95; ch. 7). Böll's frequent use of the verb "angehören," to belong to, dramatically emphasises Filskeit's feelings of "Otherness" and isolation from the "Chosen," he so greatly admires.

It is also interesting that Böll has his fictional character Filskeit conjure up the fictional medieval German Legend of Lohengrin, Parzival's son, and a knight of the Holy Grail, as an example of one who truly belongs to this superior, Aryan race. Himmler certainly saw the collective body of SS leaders as a "Ritterschaft," solemnly engaged in the "holy" and mystical mission of creating and preserving a pure German race. However, Hitler and the Nazis were far more influenced by Wagner's¹⁴³ potentially fascistic interpretation of these Germanic legends than in their medieval origins. According to Joachim Köhler:

Manchem Zeitgenossen war Hitlers mythische Identität nicht verborgen geblieben. "Er war nicht nur von Wagners Musik begeistert, er hielt Wagner auch für einen Propheten des Nationalsozialismus; er lebte in seinem Werk. Er hielt sich selbst für einen Helden aus der Welt Wagners," schrieb der französische Botschafter in Berlin, André François-Poncet, und "sah sich als Lohengrin, Siegfried, Walther von Stolzing, vor allem Parsifal, der die blutende Wunde des getroffenen Anfortas heilt und dem Gral seine Wunderkraft zurückgibt." (Wagners Hitler 416)

For Köhler, therefore, Hitler's actions were completely dictated by his admiration for Wagner and all that he stood for: "Deshalb ließen sich auch, [. . .] die Phänomene, [. . .] auf Wagner zurückführen – auf seine Weltanschauung und seine Bühnenspektakel, seinen Größenwahn und seine gnadenlose Radikalität in der Vernichtung eingebildeter Feinde"¹⁴⁴ (Wagners Hitler 416).

¹⁴² As Herbert F. Ziegler comments in Nazi Germany's New Aristocracy (1989): "Himmler ... wanted to cultivate [through selection and breeding] a new human type – a loyal, duty-committed, tough, and self-sacrificing warrior, leader, scholar, and administrator all in one" (52).

¹⁴³ See Joachim Köhler's Wagners Hitler for insights into how Wagner's music influenced Hitler.

¹⁴⁴ For Köhler, Hitler not only had to hate the Jews because he loved the man who hated the Jews but had to carry out Wagner's obvious intentions. In an 1878 conversation about the Jews with Ernst Schmeitzner, then editor of the Bayreuther Blätter, Wagner, emphatically declared: "Es gibt Wanzen, es gibt Läuse, Gut, sie sind da! Aber die brennt man aus! Die Leute, die das nicht tun, sind *Schweine!*" (See Köhler Wagners Hitler 416).

Böll's portrayal of Filskeit's dilemma as he observes his non-Aryan features in the mirror also stresses the absurdity of his "Sehnsucht." Böll, in making Filskeit think of Lohengrin, doubly ridicules him while at the same time exposing his naiveté. In addition, Filskeit's desire to model himself on a fictional character emphasises the racial "Scheinwelt" created by the Third Reich's regime. Böll, as this study has been trying to show, has once again succeeded in turning the NS racial ideology on its head at the expense of another high ranked German officer.

That the SS Lieutenant Filskeit is obsessively preoccupied with his physical inadequacies is made even more obvious when the narrator reports his thoughts as he impatiently observes the newest arrivals of Jews and other "enemies" of the state at his death camp:

Filskeit ging ungeduldig hinter seinem Fenster auf und ab. Er hatte einige blonde Juden entdeckt. Es gab viele blonde Juden in Ungarn. Filskeit liebte sie noch weniger als die dunklen, obwohl Exemplare darunter waren, die jedes Bilderbuch der nordischen Rasse hätten schmücken können. (97; ch. 7)

In revealing Filskeit's racial thoughts as he watches the prisoners coming out of the transportation van, Böll once more focuses our attention on the flawed nature of the Nazi racial ideology. He plants these thoughts again in Filskeit's mind who simply sees the "Aryan" bodies but does not question his ideology. Finally, after years of faithful service directing the choral training of entire SS armies, Filskeit's twentieth application for military service at the front is granted.

However, as the commandant of this concentration camp, he reserves the right to audition the new prisoners immediately on their arrival: "Null bekamen nur wenige – sie kamen sofort in den Lagerchor, und wer zehn hatte, hatte wenig Aussicht, länger als zwei Tage am Leben zu bleiben" (96; ch. 7). In this way, Filskeit has been able to keep his choir well-supplied with good voices: "das überraschte ihn bei Juden" (96; ch. 7). In making us privy to Filskeit's comment, Böll again stresses the inflexibility of the racial views of the body for the SS. Clearly, Filskeit's surprise stems from his understanding of the "Jewish body image" (especially that of a nasal voice) which precludes in his mind the possibility of Jews being blessed with a melodious voice. Filskeit's own struggles to meet the stringent standards set by the SS leader for acceptance to the SS-elite harden rather than soften his treatment of those who fail to measure up to his own standards of musical excellence. He immediately and dispassionately condemns these human rejects for immediate disposal. Böll stresses the ironic component in the situation: he shows us Filskeit watching the blonde Hungarian Jews paraded before him, many of whom, simply by virtue of their Aryan-look, could easily have passed the SS's strict physical racial test that he, a pure-blooded German, always fails.

Although Filskeit does not resemble the Nazis' racist image of the "new man," he unequivocally possesses, in the name of the "Vaterland" and of the SS-Elite, the awesome power over life and death. What he lacks in his bodily appearance, he makes up for in his zeal to obey orders. In fact, as the narrator informs us, orders are more sacred to him than even his music: "Es war sein Ehrgeiz, alle Befehle korrekt auszuführen" (96; ch. 7). Consequently, when he is unable to logistically transfer the prisoners in his previous camp when he receives orders to immediately evacuate the area, Filskeit unhesitatingly kills them all, including his entire choir. The narrator sarcastically glosses his desire to follow orders when he comments: "Filskeit tötete nicht gern. Er selbst hatte noch nie getötet, und das war eine seiner Enttäuschungen: er konnte es nicht. Er sah ein, daß es notwendig war, und bewunderte die Befehle, die er strikte ausführen ließ" (96; ch. 7). Filskeit's concern about his inability to do his own killings reflects the fact that even "artistic" members of the "Totenkopfsverbände" were expected to be not just political soldiers but also

fighters and indeed killers.¹⁴⁵ However, in this organisation, the distinction between “killing” a defenceless “enemy” rather than “fighting” an armed opponent was completely lost.

Long before becoming a member of the Death’s Head Formations, Filskeit had successfully channelled his deep interest and research in racial issues into the writing and publishing of his own racist article “Wechselbeziehungen zwischen Chor und Rasse.” To use a modern term, “ethnic cleansing” is one aspect of the duties of a member of the “Totenkopfverbände” for which Filskeit is particularly suited. The fact is: “Die Ermordung der europäischen Juden war [. . .] Sache von Polizei und SS” (Dingel “Schutzstaffel (SS)” 720). Filskeit is completely dedicated to being a fanatical supporter and facilitator of the NS racist ideology.

Böll, through his narrator’s report, reveals to us Filskeit’s painful memories of being deeply resentful of his parish priest’s smile and “Jewish” look of love while observing him as he conducted his church choir. We also find out that although Filskeit is familiar with church music of all types and for all occasions, he particularly detests the liturgy. Clearly, it is not religion but rather his ability to control and lead the singers in his choir that captures Filskeit’s interest:

Filskeit fühlte, wie sein Widerwille gegen die Liturgie gleichzeitig mit seinem Haß gegen dieses Lächeln stieg. [. . .] Er wollte nicht geliebt werden, [. . .] Er dachte oft an dieses Lächeln, diese schemenhafte Strenge und diesen “jüdischen” Liebesblick, [. . .] und es bohrte in seiner Brust von Haß und Qual . . . (94; ch. 7)

Böll uses an almost sexual image of unsolicited penetration to describe the effect of the priest’s look of love and his smile on the unwilling object of his attention, Filskeit. In other words, Filskeit, who rejects any form of intimacy that might stir a human response in his heart, appears to feel physically and almost sexually violated by the priest’s probing gaze and smile.

Yet, his own intensity and love of his work as he conducts the choir is also so deeply etched on his face that it can easily be “read” by others: “Es war faszinierend, sein blasses, leise zuckendes Gesicht zu sehen und seine schmalen Hände, wenn er den Chor dirigierte” (94; ch. 7). Filskeit’s slim, delicate hands which almost seem effeminate, are every bit as capable of coaxing the most beautiful sounds out of his choir members as of later causing the death of thousands. Böll’s use of the hand motif will be more thoroughly discussed in the next chapter on the “Communicative Body.” Now as a camp commandant it is even harder for SS Lieutenant Filskeit to allow himself the slightest physical response—a smile—even though he is pleased with his camp organisation: “Er nickte befriedigt: alles war in Ordnung. Er hätte lächeln können bei diesem Gedanken, aber Filskeit lächelte nie” (93; ch. 7). Here, the author drives home a point: by denying himself even the slightest of sensual reactions, Filskeit hopes to control his unknown fears and, as if, physically, to protect his dispassionate, asexual image.

Filskeit therefore avoids all “vices,” including women: “[Er] rauchte nicht, trank nicht und hatte für Frauen nichts übrig” (94; ch. 7). Instead, he reserves his intense passion for his SS duties and for his music. His main goal is the preservation of the purity of his own Aryan body and that of the nation. However, while auditioning a female Jewish prisoner for his camp choir, Filskeit completely loses his battle to contain his fears. Who is this woman? And what is it about

¹⁴⁵ As Herbert F. Ziegler writes: “Unlike the military soldier who fights only in times of war against a clearly defined enemy, the political soldier was a *Kämpfer* (warrior or fighter) who was engaged in an eternal struggle for existence (*Daseinskampf*). The difference between external and internal enemy, the distinction between peace and war, and the separation between military and civilian life all but disappear for the political soldier” (Ziegler *Aristocracy* 7-8).

her that drives the normally emotionless SS Lieutenant Filskeit to react in such a brutal manner to suppress his unexpected sexual attraction to her? Heinrich Böll provides answers by focusing our attention on the body of Ilona, a converted Catholic German Jew. While searching in vain for her parents in the ghetto, she and sixty-six others are seized by German soldiers. They are then crammed like animals into a furniture van with a barbed wire covered opening in its roof to be transported north to SS Captain Filskeit's death camp. During the terrifying ten hour journey, Ilona experiences moments of sheer desperation, feelings of disgust and horror, and the unbearable physical torment of hunger, thirst, and a lack of fresh air.

Strangely enough, Ilona experiences no fear, only the burning desire to be alone to pray. All the same, as the narrator comments, she entertains no false illusions about the dire predicament she is in. Ilona's thoughts about the upcoming agony of her death throes after she is forced to inhale poisonous gasses, although riveting, are matter-of-fact and rational in its tone: "Die Angst kam nicht. [. . .] Wenn alles gut ging, war sie in einer halben Stunde tot. [. . .] Sie wußte wohl, was es für Badeanstalten waren, [. . .] sie hatte damit zu rechnen, zehn Minuten Todesqualen auszustehen" (98; ch. 7). The fact is that neither her conversion to Catholicism nor her life as a German language and music teacher outside the ghetto can save her from her impending cruel fate. Nothing can change the fact that she is now only recognised as a member of the expendable Jewish race. She and the others, after all, are the main reason why the SS exist. By virtue of her race, she becomes the object of their domination and violent inhumane acts.

Heinrich Böll's focus on her body language gives us a close up look at Ilona as a victimised body. While still in the truck, Ilona barely escapes a rape attack by a stranger:

Auch im Auto hatte sie viele Dinge erduldet, die sie persönlich betrafen, aber nicht in sie drangen. Jemand hatte sie zu vergewaltigen versucht, ein Kerl, dessen Geilheit sie im Dunklen roch [. . .] Ein anderer hatte sie vor ihm geschützt, ein älterer Mann, [. . .] Der andere Kerl hatte ihre Brüste im Dunkeln gesucht, ihr Kleid zerrissen und sie in den Nacken geküßt. (98; ch. 7)

Here again, Böll effectively uses several powerful body images to show that even under these horrible circumstances, the human body and its physical drives, absurd as it is in this appalling, inhumane situation, is still capable of asserting itself.

For Ilona, this affront to her human dignity in the close confines of the overcrowded van neither figuratively nor literally gains entry to her inner body. In fact, she does not see but only smells her assailant's lecherousness. Also, in the darkness, Ilona only feels his groping hands on her breasts, and the unexpected touch of his kiss [mouth, lips, and tongue?] on her bare neck. Her assailant's close proximity to her body is not a sign of mutual intimacy but rather one which violates her rights even in this most non-private of all situations. The sexual desire of her unknown assailant is the very opposite of the "Zärtlichkeit" that she had longed for when she exchanged her serene, secure convent life for that of the unpredictable secular world: "Sie war ein ganzes Jahr im Kloster gewesen, [. . .] [aber] der Wunsch zu heiraten und Kinder zu haben war [zu] stark in ihr, [. . .] .. und sie war in die Welt zurückgekehrt" (100; ch. 7).

During the trip, however, a more positive bodily interaction occurs between Ilona and another unknown individual, probably her benefactor: "Im Auto hatte ihr jemand eine brennende Zigarette in den Mund gesteckt" (99; ch. 7). He had obviously lit the cigarette in his own mouth and then put it into hers. She accepts this intimate gesture and indirect exchange of body fluids at face value, that is, purely as a sign that he cares about her as a human being. This, her first cigarette ever, helps her to relax. Everyone in the van remains an unknown entity: "[. . .] niemand gab sich zu erkennen, weder dieser keuchende, geile Bursche noch ihr Wohltäter, und wenn ein

Streichholz aufflammte, schienen die Gesichter alle gleich zu sein: entsetzliche Gesichter voller Angst und Haß" (99; ch. 7). Their faces are a blur of fear and hate. Böll uses this imposed sense of anonymity to underline the Nazis' common practice of depriving all prisoners of any sense of individuality.

The narrator's opinion as to what may have triggered the man's frightening rape attempt on Ilona is based on the unavoidable crush of human bodies in the van's dark interior:

[Ilona] war froh, als sie sich hinten an die Polstertür lehnen konnte und wenigstens am Rücken allein war – erst hatte sie umgekehrt gestanden, mit dem Rücken in die Masse hinein, und als sie müde war und sich fallen ließ, einfach nach hinten, hatte ihr Körper wohl in dem Mann, auf den sie fiel, diese tolle Begierde erweckt, die sie erschreckte, aber nicht kränkte – fast im Gegenteil, sie spürte etwas, wie wenn sie teil an ihm hätte, an diesem Unbekannten . . . (100; ch. 7)

Ilona, although understandably frightened by his conduct, is not upset. In fact, in this quotation, Böll again clearly makes us aware of the human body's ability to respond to another human body even in this horrendous situation, without fear or hate. For Ilona, the feeling of this unknown man's desiring body against hers, in an odd way, also makes her feel a part of him. In spite of her own traumatic experience, she is still able to recognise her niece's need to be comforted and reassured. What they all have in common in this desperate situation is the fact that they are all victims and that they are all thinking, acting human beings with bodily needs and desires that defy their being labelled and treated as non-humans by others.

As they are being carted off like animals to the slaughter house, the scene in the van's interior is nightmarish. Many around Ilona are screaming hysterically as they slip in the blood of others who, unable to face the horrors that lie ahead of them, have chosen to die from self-inflicted wounds. The stream of blood again reminds us that these prisoners are indeed human beings who, only because their blood has been declared impure, are being denied not only any semblance of human dignity but also the right to live.¹⁴⁶ The threatening sounds of loud banging on the van's exterior by their unseen jailers tells Ilona that she and the others are no longer among rational human beings. "Aber [. . .] es klang drohend und schrecklich, dieses Pochen, es konnte kein Mensch sein, der klopfte, sie waren schon lange nicht mehr unter Menschen . . ." (99; ch. 7) In comparison to their cruel jailers outside of the van, the prisoners inside the van are in every way all too human. While some bleed, scream, and suffocate, others abandon themselves to their sense of smell, touch, hearing, sight, and even taste. Their bodies are on high alert as they await the unknown.

Ilona's body is again subjected to unwanted touching when she steps out of the dark interior of the van into the blinding sunlight. However, being able to see changes very little about her dire circumstances. Prodded and shouted at as if her body were that of a herded animal, Ilona stumbles up the stairs to the barracks where she exchanges a fleeting smile, with her benefactor. That smile would be the last positive human interaction she would experience in a world seemingly gone mad: "Sie war erstaunt, wie gelassen es in dieser Verwaltung des Todes zugeht. Alles ging mechanisch, [. . .] sie erfüllten lediglich eine Pflicht, [. . .] die ihnen lästig war, die sie aber erfüllten. [. . .] sie wartete immer noch auf die Angst, [. . .]" (101; ch. 7). Like her inhumane

¹⁴⁶ Heinrich Böll also paints a stark picture of the sadistic cruelty of the German [SS] soldiers in his shocking short story "Todesursache: Hakennase:"

van “jailers” who in fulfilling their duties had been reduced to machines, these robot-like guards process Ilona through their smoothly functioning administrative machine. The mechanical force with which her niece, Maria, is separated from her is evident by the child’s piercing screams as the guard, inflicting physical pain, pulls her by the hair. The impersonal grasp of one hand and the pain of another body – a young and vulnerable one – shows the unequal encounter of two human bodies.

We immediately recognise the lone man in the room as the SS camp commandant, Filskeit: “Im Zimmer war nur ein Mann, der die Uniform eines Offiziers trug; er hatte einen sehr eindrucksvollen schmalen, silbernen Orden in Kreuzform auf der Brust, sein Gesicht sah blaß aus”(102; ch. 7). Although Filskeit’s body, that is, his disproportionate face with its massive chin shocks and frightens Ilona,¹⁴⁷ he at first finds nothing threatening about her: “[. . .] als er den Kopf hob, um sie anzusehen, erschrak sie über sein schweres Kinn, das ihn fast entstellte. Der Mann [. . .] sah sie an und sagte ruhig: ‘Singen Sie etwas’” (102; ch. 7). However, when she opens her mouth and begins to sing the All Saints’ Litany, Filskeit’s face becomes even more distorted.

In fact, it is only while watching his face become more and more inhuman in its appearance that Ilona discovers the true meaning of the word fear:

Sie sah ihn an und öffnete den Mund. Sie sang die Allerheiligenlitanei [. . .]
Sie sah den Mann während des Singens genau an, und nun wußte sie plötzlich,
was Angst war, als er aufstand und sie anblickte.

Sie sang weiter, während das Gesicht vor ihr sich verzerrte wie ein
schreckliches Gewächs, das einen Krampf zu bekommen schien. Sie sang schön,
und sie wußte nicht, daß sie lächelte, trotz der Angst, die langsam höher stieg und
ihr wie zum Erbrechen im Hals saß (102; ch. 7)

Here, Böll presents us with a close-up of the unconscious muscular reactions of their faces to this incongruous situation: one distorted and the other smiling. Ilona’s smile, however, is different to the one that she had earlier exchanged with her benefactor and which had signalled their solidarity. This time her smile and her choice of music, reflects a joy and a sense of personal, inner security that completely escapes Filskeit. Unknowingly, Ilona’s singing, her choice of church music, and her smile rekindles Filskeit’s fearful emotions and hatred of both the liturgy and the Jewish “Liebesblick” of his former parish priest. In addition, although as an SS man, Filskeit has no use for anything to do with the Church and religion, her beautiful singing forces him to remember the religious music he once knew. The whole scene is blasphemous to his SS mentality. In addition, Böll’s description of her fear in vivid, physical terms keeps us focused on her body.

Heinrich Böll portrayal Filskeit’s already “disfigured,” contorted face as a convulsing horrible growth is masterful since it focuses our attention on his non-Aryan facial features. In addition, since the Nazis regarded Jewish people as a life threatening cancerous growth that was rapidly contaminating the German people, it associates him with the inferior race he is sworn to defend the German nation. Since, for the SS only radical surgery could halt the spread of this “disease,” Filskeit is, as it were, slated for self-destruction. The nouns “Krampf” and “Gewächs”

¹⁴⁷ As discussed in chapter one of this study, any “disfigurement” of the face, whether real or imagined, potentially threatens its delicate unity.

imply not only a loss of control and inability to move but also the change into something non-human, for example, a plant or a tumour devouring a human being. His fear and anger grow and expand within him.

In addition, to his horror Filskeit also finds himself unexpectedly captivated by Ilona's physical beauty and the musical quality of her voice:

Filskeit starrte sie an: sie war schön – eine Frau – er hatte noch nie eine Frau gehabt – sein Leben war in tödlicher Keuschheit verlaufen – hatte sich, [. . .] vor dem Spiegel abgespielt, in dem er vergebens suchte – hier war es: Schönheit und Größe und rassische Vollendung, verbunden mit etwas, das ihn vollkommen lähmte: Glauben. [. . .] vielleicht träumte er - und in ihrem Blick, obwohl er sah, daß sie zitterte – in ihrem Blick war etwas fast wie Liebe – oder war es Spott – [...] er hatte noch nie eine Frau so singen hören. (102; ch. 7)

Here, Böll brings us back full circle to Filskeit's personal anguish and his utter hatred of what he calls the Jewish "Liebesblick." Ironically, the body of this Catholic Jewish woman, like his mirror, also mercilessly reflects all of Filskeit's Aryan body's racial shortcomings. Even more disturbing for him is that Ilona stirs in him his deliberately suppressed or perhaps "killed" off sexual desires.

In fact, for a few moments he feels as if he has virtually lost control of himself, his camp, and all of its occupants: "Er rannte ans Fenster und riß es auf: draußen standen sie und hörten zu [. . .] Filskeit spürte, daß er zuckte, er versuchte zu schreien, aber aus seinem Hals kam nur ein heiseres tonloses Fauchen, und von draußen kam diese atemlose Stille, [. . .]" (103; ch. 7). His twitching body and his inability to release a scream of fear and rage signal his failure to maintain his bodily composure and appearance of superiority in the presence of this female prisoner. More than that, Filskeit's body takes over and rebels, becoming, as it were, independent as it twitches and emits animal-like noises.

Like the male soldiers that Klaus Theweleit describes in *Männerphantasien 2*, Filskeit can only disengage himself from this trance-like state and regain his voice by the use of unmitigated violence against this threatening, singing body: "Sancta Dei Genitrix . . . er nahm mit zitternden Fingern seine Pistole, wandte sich um, schoß blindlings auf die Frau, die stürzte und zu schreien anfang" (103; ch. 7). It is only when Filskeit finally silences Ilona's beautiful voice by his display of violence is he able to regain control of his bodily functions, especially, his ability to speak. Böll clearly uses the human voice to differentiate these two characters who professionally train others voices to sing: when her voice goes, his voice returns.

His voice then becomes an extension of his handheld weapon as he hysterically shouts orders to the guards to slaughter the whole lot of prisoners, including his "prized" choir:

[J]etzt fand er seine Stimme wieder, nachdem die ihre nicht mehr sang.
"Umlegen", schrie er, "alle umlegen, verflucht – auch den Chor – raus mit ihm – raus aus der Baracke –", er schoß sein ganzes Magazin leer auf die Frau, die am Boden lag und unter Qualen ihre Angst erbrach . . .
Draußen fing die Metzelei an. (103; ch. 7)

With the use of our imagination, we can visualise the horrific, bloody scene in the courtyard below, and the one in the interrogation room in which Ilona has been brutally murdered. Her bullet-riddled body and the piles of corpses on the assembly square below his window are the concrete proof Filskeit needs to satisfy himself that he is alive, and that his vital forces have been

securely contained within his still intact body. Once again, he can feel that he is in charge of his own body and of his camp. It is a process by which Filskeit has finally managed to externalise, concretise, and then “kill” his fear by dominating his victim(s) through the use of violence.

The physical image of Ilona’s fear is powerful. With her dying breath, she has literally “vomited” up her fear. However, with her death, Filskeit has finally been able to trap his own fear within his undamaged body. This heinous, personal act of brutality, committed out of sheer fear of his own bodily insecurities, is Filskeit’s first direct act of killing. He is now a “fighter” in the SS understanding of the term, involved in “an eternal struggle for existence.”¹⁴⁸ Although both Filskeit and Ilona have simultaneously experienced suffocating fear in the presence and appearance of the other, it is Filskeit’s power to dominate that inevitably casts her in the inescapable role of victim.

Böll’s detailed description of the encounter between Filskeit’s and Ilona’s bodies is powerful. On the one hand, Filskeit’s Aryan body is revealed to be “ugly” since it is the opposite of the promulgated “Schönheitsideal.” His face and his voice even lose their human qualities when they are compared to a horrible, convulsing “growth” and to a “toneless hiss.” On the other hand, Ilona is described as beautiful, even by the proclaimed standard of beauty. Her voice, raised in song, brings out the best qualities in all those who hear it: Filskeit’s memories, and the breathless hush of the prisoners and guards alike in the courtyard below. Böll leaves no doubt in our minds that her body is superior despite its resemblance to a Nazi ideal of beauty.

Their encounter leaves the “machine-like” Filskeit physically incapable of functioning efficiently in her spell-binding presence. In fear, he grabs his gun and blindly begins shooting his entire magazine into her body. It is only this decisive, deadly action that breaks the “spell” that her astonishingly beautiful voice and face have cast upon him. Once he has succeeded in silencing her voice, Filskeit regains control of his body and his voice and shouts out his murderous orders. His guards’ mechanically trained bodies immediately obey his orders and begin the slaughter. Their mechanical actions can be explained when we reflect back on Foucault’s observation on discipline and the making of a soldier. For him, “the machine required can be constructed; a calculated constraint runs slowly through each part of the body [. . .] mastering it, making it pliable, ready at all times, turning silently into the automatism of habit” (Foucault “Docile Bodies” 179). In fact, according to Foucault:

[A] “mechanics of power,” [. . .] defined how one may have a hold over others’ bodies, not only so that they may do what one wishes, but so that they may operate as one wishes, with the techniques, the speed, and the efficiency that one determines. Thus discipline produces subjected and practiced bodies, “docile” bodies. [. . .] disciplinary coercion establishes in the body [. . .] increased domination. (“Docile Bodies” 182)

It is ironic, however, that the physical body and voice of this Jewish woman momentarily have the power to eject a measure of humanity into these usually impenetrable, mechanical SS bodies. In the end, however, “SS-Obersturmführer” Filskeit exercises his supreme power over life and death to dominate and crush his powerless victims without any compunction.

¹⁴⁸ See Ziegler *Aristocracy* 8.

Der Engel schwieg. Fischer vs. Gompertz: The Abuse of Power in the Family

So far, examples of the dominating body have all been taken from Heinrich Böll's stories and novels set during the Third Reich. However, as Böll himself notes, a form of "fascist" power can also be wielded by one family member over another family member even in peacetime. Michel Foucault was also aware that the state's power is dependent on other established power relations existing, for example, in families. Foucault's comments during an interview with Alessandro Fontana and Pasquale Pasquino in the seventies, will help to underpin the argument in this final section of this chapter on dominating bodies. According to him:

[. . .] relations of power [. . .] necessarily extend beyond the limits of the state. [...] [T]he state [. . .] is far from being able to occupy the whole field of actual power relations, and [. . .] can only operate on the basis of other, already existing power relations. The state is superstructural in relation to a whole series of power networks that invest the body, sexuality, the family, kinship, [. . .] and so forth. (Foucault, "Truth and Power" 64)

With this in mind, we will now investigate how Böll, in his early novel Der Engel schwieg (1949-1951) which was posthumously published in 1992, allows the bodies of his dominating and victimised characters to "speak" about abusive power relations and acts of familial domination.

As the story unfolds, the "victims" of Dr. Fischer's domination are revealed to be two ill females: his widowed sister, Elisabeth Gompertz, and his own daughter, Elisabeth Fischer. Böll's narrator informs us that the ex-Nazi, Fischer, is a philologist, a lawyer, an editor of a church journal, and the pre-war, unofficial adviser in cultural matters to His Eminence the cardinal. As a seeming "pillar" of the community, Fischer is part of an intricate web of "power relations" which are dependent on his access to wealth through marriage. Fischer's unhesitating use of mental and bullying tactics which hastened the fatal growth and spread of his sister's ulcers, and his apparent use of physical violence against his young pregnant daughter makes him an example of a dominating body. However, in both cases, his ulterior motive is not simply to stem his loss of control but also to ensure his own personal and financial future success.

The following discussion of Fischer's body language as he searches for the will in the hospital room from which his sister's body has just been removed, demonstrates how Böll allows Fischer's body "to do the talking." Böll portrays him like an animal with his face close to the floor where the traces of Elisabeth's coughed-up blood are still visible. However, this does not deter Fischer from his goal: suppressing his shame and revulsion, he even checks the contents of the chamber pot: "[. . .] auch in der Nachtkommode war der Zettel nicht" (183; ch. 18). Even in death, Elisabeth seems to have outsmarted her avaricious brother.

Böll provides a compromising, embarrassing, and at the same time humorous picture of the intellectual as he scrambles around the dirty hospital floor first on his hands and knees, and then slides on his stomach under his sister's deathbed:

[Fischer] mußte seinen Kopf beugen, ihn unters Bett schieben und sich mit den Händen vortasten; Ekel packte ihn, und nun lag er auf dem Bauch im Dreck, in dieser Widerwärtigen dikken [sic!] Staubschicht, und als er sich duckte, [. . .] berührte seine Nase den Staub, Flusen drangen ihm in den Mund, [. . .] Er hielt den Atem an, unterdrückte den Husten, schnappte den ledernen Griff; (183; ch. 18)

Fischer's body is first broken down into fragments: "Kopf," "Hände," "Bauch," "Nase," "Mund," and then into its actions: "Atem," "Husten." There is nothing majestic or superior about Fischer's actions or his body positions. Böll portrays him as being more like a treacherous snake than as a human being as he slithers around on his stomach on the floor and under the bed in the dirt and dust searching for the will.

While in this position under the bed, with only the lower half of his body exposed, Fischer is horrified to hear the door gently open and close: "[Er] dachte daran, daß nun irgend jemand dort stand, der seine Beine betrachtete, seine Schuhe, die lächerliche untere Hälfte eines männlichen, unter dem Bett liegenden Körpers" (184; ch. 18). In this basically horizontal position, Fischer's body loses its sense of importance and dignity. It also emphasises the callousness of his behaviour and the absurdity and humorousness in what for him is obviously a deadly serious matter. Being observed in this vulnerable and compromising position, as well as being caught in this shameful activity trigger in Fischer's mind a silent barrage of obscenities: "Er fluchte stumm in sich hinein, und dieses heftige und häßliche innere Stammeln brachte ihm Erleichterung. [. . .] 'Scheiße – Hurendreck . . .' es war wie eine Befreiung" (184; ch. 18).

However, Fischer never for a moment contemplates backing out from under the bed without the suitcase: "[. . .] er beschloß, herauszukriechen. [. . .] Dreck drang in Nase und Mund, er mußte niesen; [. . .] und spürte in einer Mischung von Ekel und Lust, daß Schweiß und Schmutz sich vermengten; [. . .] Er warf den Koffer aufs Bett . . ." (184; ch. 18). Böll zooms us in for a startling close-up of the dishevelled, mortified Fischer covered in a disgusting mixture of dust, dirt and sweat. It is quite a contrast to his earlier refined, intellectual image. While hastily rummaging through Elisabeth's underwear, Fischer snaps over his shoulder to the intruder: "Was wollen Sie . . ." (184; ch. 18). However, at this moment: "[. . .] alles war ihm gleichgültig – nur dieser Fetzen . . . Er setzte sich kaltblütig aufs Bett, wischte sein Gesicht sauber" (185; ch. 18). The word "kaltblütig" sums up Fischer's lack of respect for himself and for the dignity of the deceased Elisabeth.

There is simply too much money and potential power at stake here for Fischer to be concerned about how he is seen. Hans locates the document under Elisabeth's crucifix on the night table. As he puts it casually into his pocket and turns to walk away, Fischer loses his self-control: "Fischer fühlte, daß er die Nerven verlor; er mußte die Lippen aufeinander pressen, um das Knirschen seiner Zähne zu unterbinden, aber hinter den geschlossenen Lippen spürte er dieses wilde Knacken seines Gebisses" (186; ch. 18). Fischer's facial reactions involving his teeth, lips, nerves, and jaw, speak volumes. Overcome with greed and frustration, he physically attacks Hans:

[. . .] plötzlich stürzte er sich auf den Mann [. . .] nützte die erste Sekunde, ihn gegen die Wand zu drücken, ihm die Arme abzuklemmen, während die freie Hand zielbewußt in die linke Tasche des Fremden drang – er lachte laut, als er den Fetzen in seiner Hand fühlte, und rannte hinters Bett; dort wartete er kampfbereit, die Hände wie zum Boxen erhoben, [. . .]. (186-187; ch. 18)

Fischer's body image has now been completely reduced to a caricature of his former self. Böll magnifies the actions of his face and his hands giving the impression that they are independent of his body. His boxing stance adds to his ridiculous appearance. In contrast to fencing, boxing is both a sport and a means of self-defence practised mainly by the lower classes. It is an appropriate metaphor for Fischer's existence since boxing has always been associated more with prize money rather than with a gentleman's honour. However, by running behind the bed Fischer

projects the body image of a coward which is all the more pathetic when Hans ignores his offer of money and wordlessly leaves the room.

As an art enthusiast, Fischer is an avid collector of religious body images, especially those of the Madonna and Child. Yet, while he admires the external lines of the female body, it is its inner mysteries and unknown territories that mercilessly torment him and fill him with confusing emotions of fear and hatred. This is especially so when he is unable to suppress these thoughts. In fact, even the mere thought of embryos, unfinished human beings, which always seem connected in his mind with the Madonna, fill him with disgust. In addition, the Christ Child on the arm of the carved figures of the Madonna often reminds him of embryos, that is, “unfinished” beings. Like living children, embryos seem to him to be all too sweet, clumsy, coarse and kitschy.

Even when he thinks of his beautiful wife, Fischer feels an inexplicable hatred rising in him. He is, as it were, caught in a dilemma: he is both attracted to, and repelled by the female body. As Susan Sontag remarks in her study of fascism and domination: “The erotic (that is, women) is always present as a temptation, with the most admirable response being a heroic repression of the sexual impulse” (“Fascinating” 93). Fischer is painfully aware that women’s bodies, like that of the embryo and the child, are constantly changing. Change, however, unsettles Dr. Fischer who not only wants to remain in control of his own body but also particularly of the women in his immediate family. Fischer’s inability to suppress these disturbing thoughts about the female body and the life that is produced within it fill him with uncontrollable fear and anxiety since they symbolise for him an uncertain future in the new Germany.

Fischer, through his financial connections with the Church and his familial ties with his powerful and wealthy industrialist father-in-law, Gompertz, is therefore the epitome of a “Geldmensch,” or one to whom the future belongs (Kovács, Engel 23). Robert C. Conard’s 1981 comment with reference to what he terms Böll’s first “novel of the economic restoration”—Und sagte kein einziges Wort (1953)—is every bit as relevant for Böll’s “Trümmer/Restauration” novel Der Engel schwieg ([1951] 1992). For Conard: “In such a society education does not serve the creation of better men but provides the wealthy with the means to broaden the gap between rich and poor and to enjoy culture as a pastime” (Heinrich Böll 112).

Clearly, money is all that matters to Fischer who, as we have seen above, will stop at nothing to get it and to keep it in his possession. His body language, both verbal and non-verbal, has clearly attested to this fact. Fischer and the senior Gompertz are only interested in accumulating money, possessions, and the creation of an even bigger family empire. Unlike Elisabeth and her husband, they have no interest in using their wealth to help the poor. These then are the opposing views that have pitted the two powerful, dominating male figures in the novel against the ailing, victimised female figure of Elisabeth.

At Elisabeth’s funeral, Fischer triumphantly hands over the will to his father-in-law as they stand on the back of a fallen marble angel to keep their shoes from getting muddy. After reading it, Gompertz rips it to shreds admitting that he has never doubted its authenticity:

“Ich habe nie daran gezweifelt.” Er zerriß den Zettel langsam und schob die Fetzen vorsichtig in die Öffnung seines Handschuhs . . .

Der Engel schwieg; er ließ sich vom Gewicht der beiden Männer nach unten drücken; seine prachtvollen Locken wurden von gurgelndem Dreck umschlossen, und seine Armstümpfe schienen immer tiefer hinein in die Erde zu greifen. (190-191; ch. 19)

The senior Gompertz's actions effectively symbolise that he has the control of his family's wealth back in his hands again. This close study of Fischer's body language demonstrates that he too fits the pattern of a dominating body. Although the victims of his abuse of power are most directly his sister and his daughter, Böll makes it clear that indirectly it is society as a whole, as represented by the "beggar" Hans, that is his victim.

Fischer's body language is a visual representation of his desire to acquire and hold onto power not only at the expense of doing physical and mental harm to his own flesh and blood but also at the risk of personal degradation. Böll's contrast of Fischer's earlier willingness to wallow in filth with the closing scene in which the marble angel's body slowly sinks into the mud is striking. Obviously, for Fischer the ends justify the means. Fischer and Gompertz, elevated as they are out of the mud on the back of the statue, can now ignore the marginalized, bare-headed poor who are standing in the mud and rain paying their last respects to their only benefactor, Elisabeth. Like the abandoned angel, the poor now effectively cease to exist for these two representatives of the rich and powerful Church and business community. In fact, the Currency Reform of 1948 puts paid to any serious thoughts of restructuring society along more "democratic" lines.

In Fischer and Gompertz, Böll presents us with the two sides of the power/domination coin. While one side has a physical face, body and mind, the other remains mostly unknown and faceless making it an even more frightening entity. However, both the visible and the invisible "faces" of the dominating body require a victim. This chapter also demonstrates that the common denominator in all of the dominator/victim pairs discussed above, whether in wartime or in peacetime, is the dominator's fear of his or her own loss of power and control. In addition, personal weaknesses and inadequacies also lead to acts of domination which may take the form of either mental or physical violence against another.

In all of the above discussed examples, it is Böll's focus on the physical aspects of fascistic power, public or familial, that marks what this study classifies as the violent actions of the dominating body. In the following chapter, however, unlike the disciplined, mirroring, and dominating body, the communicative body will be shown to be one that desires an open, mutual interaction with others and looks upon change as a potential and not as a threat to its stability.

CHAPTER VII. THE COMMUNICATIVE BODY

Mich interessieren vielmehr Menschen, die keine Autoren [. . .] sind, weil mich das Problem beschäftigt, wie deren Sensibilität, [. . .] sich ausdrückt, in welchen Gesten, in welchen Zärtlichkeiten, in welchen Beziehungen. (Heinrich Böll)

[. . .] [A] single sign is enough to tell man that everything has changed. (Antoine de Saint-Exupéry)

In the previous three chapters, this study has sought to investigate the presence of the human body in Heinrich Böll's early prose. Böll's prolific use of body language has also been examined as an effective analytical tool for identifying and defining the role of what I have called disciplined (to use Foucault's terminology), mirroring, and dominating bodies in his writings. This chapter will continue this process by first seeking to define the term "communicative body" and then to identify characters in Böll's early works who appear to fall into this category. In addition, it will examine their role as the bearers of Böll's understanding of the human relationships exhibited by some of his fellow citizens before, during, and after the war. In contrast to the above discussed military disciplined body, taste-oriented mirroring body, and fascist dominating body, the communicative body does not conform to any specific body "type." Rather than being an "ideal" type, the communicative body is best described by its unselfish and caring practices and actions.

The qualities that identify characters as being communicative are therefore based neither on their beauty, military or social status, race, or creed. In fact, there are no "fixed" rules that govern a communicative body's shape, size, posture, or behaviour. Rather, the communicative body is defined by its openness to its own and to the spiritual, emotional and physical needs of others. Such a character also demonstrates the ability to literally and figuratively "touch" and be "touched" in a positive, caring manner. In Böll's prose, characters who can be interpreted as being communicative bodies come from all walks of life. In addition, they intentionally and spontaneously involve themselves in dynamic and reciprocal "performances" of human acts of communication. The communicative process as defined above is readily observable in Böll's careful portrayal of the physical and mental body language of "performing" and care-giving protagonists as they spontaneously interact with each other.

It is our recognition of his characters' ability to communicate which is so important for Böll's literary and humanitarian message of human dignity and brotherly love. Unlike the previous three body types, the communicative body does not refuse to isolate and alienate itself from others. In the act of sharing itself with others, it accepts its potential for realising itself in ways perhaps never before contemplated or even imagined. In other words, by not fearing the unknown, the communicative body signals that it is willing to take a chance and to experience life without necessarily being completely in charge of the moment. It is therefore prepared to embrace the opportunity to share its own, as well as the joy, suffering, and disappointments of others. It also neither shuns their physical and/or mental illnesses, nor their fears and anger. Consequently, the communicative body neither reins in its own emotions nor denies those of others.

In addition, in contrast to the previously discussed body types, the actions of the communicative body are enabled rather than constrained by institutions and their dogmatic, arrogant discourses. As a result, it openly and freely expresses itself as a physical part of a community. In Böll's opinion, language, love, and a feeling of belonging create a lasting bond and a sense of what he calls "Gebundenheit." Communication binds human beings together into

a community or “Gemeinschaft” rather than a “Gesellschaft.” Characters who display such attributes get to know themselves, and to relate to others and to God in a more positive manner. As Böll writes:

Ich gehe von der Voraussetzung aus, daß Sprache, Liebe, Gebundenheit den Menschen zum Menschen machen, daß sie den Menschen zu sich selbst, zu anderen, zu Gott in Beziehung setzen – Monolog, Dialog, Gebet. [...] Die Deutschen [...] warten auf Gebundenheit, finden aber nur Gesellschaft, kein Vertrauen. (Böll “Vorlesungen” 33-35)

For Böll, if people take time out in their lives for self-reflection, as well as for conversation and prayer with one another they will succeed in achieving this much desired feeling of “Gebundenheit.”

As the Nazi era has so clearly demonstrated, “Gesellschaft” which is mainly associated with the joining of clubs and organisations neither guarantees the preservation of human dignity, for it is aimed at “Gleichschaltung,” nor provides the warmth of a caring community or “Gemeinschaft.” For the National Socialists, the individual never truly becomes a part of a community. Although society is dependent on social contracts to keep it united, a community’s sense of human solidarity is firmly based on the spontaneity and warmth of its members. In this regard, Böll’s skilful use of the universal nature of body language makes his message of humanity and community more accessible to his readers.

Böll’s concern for the status quo as he sees it in his contemporary German society is evident in this remark:

Die Worte “sozial,” “human” dagegen werden in unserer Gesellschaft vermieden, unterdrückt, lächerlich gemacht: sie sind gesellschaftsunfähig, asozial, wenn sie ohne Anhängsel auftreten, ohne wissenschaftliche Deckung, wie sie in Worten wie Soziologie und Humanismus vorhanden ist, ohne politische Deckung, wie in einem Wort wie Sozialismus geboten wird. [. . .] ich würde mich nicht wundern, wenn die Kirchen sich mit einer atheistischen Gesellschaft verbünden würden, um eine Person oder eine Gruppe zu tilgen, die in bloßem Gottvertrauen sich nicht in Gesellschaft, sondern ins Humane begäbe. (“Frankfurter” 31)

Always present beneath the surface of Böll’s work, therefore, is his fervent hope for a renewed sense of community and security, and his on-going search for warmer, more generous human relationships. For him, none of this is possible unless people try to shape their present and future lives and actions with the full knowledge and acceptance of their mutual experience of suffering before, during, and after the war, as well as their shared human qualities.

In a conversation with Siegfried Lenz in 1982, Heinrich Böll explains the importance of imagination for an appreciation of his writings and of the world we inhabit: “Ich als Autor versetze den Leser, und der Leser versetzt sich in eine bestimmte Situation. [...] Zum Verständnis der Welt [...] ist diese Versetzung, glaube ich, unumgänglich” (Mensak, Über Phantasie 162-163). Expanding on this thought, Böll continues: “Aber um Widerstand zu leisten, dazu gehört eben Phantasie. Dazu gehört das, was ich ‘Versetzung’ nenne, Vorstellungskraft” (Mensak, Über Phantasie 169). It also becomes increasingly evident in much of Böll’s writings that women have an important role to play in maintaining the balance in society. As Böll comments in his conversation with Lenz: “Es gefällt mir nicht, das Männliche und Weibliche jetzt wieder mal als Gegensatz zu nehmen: aber um es verständlich zu machen: in die Phantasie sollte das “männliche Element” eingebracht werden” (Mensak, Über Phantasie 204).

For Böll, therefore, the elemental nature of the female is indispensable for the establishment of a more unified, communicative relationship between the sexes: “Wir brauchen das Weibliche, ‘das Elementare, das Leben verkörpert,’¹⁴⁹ [. . .] Diese Verbindung muß hergestellt werden, auf allen Gebieten” (Mensak, Über Phantasie 206). As Bernd Balzer comments:

Gerade das Zusammenleben, die Gemeinschaft, ist für ihn [Böll] die einzige Möglichkeit zur [. . .] Verwirklichung seiner Utopie. [. . .] Liebesbegegnungen [. . .] sind Paradigmen für ein machtfreies, nicht verrechtliches, nicht institutionalisiertes Miteinander zweier Menschen auf der Ebene der “elementaren Dinge” des Lebens und im Medium der Zärtlichkeit. (Balzer, “Anarchie” 31)

Böll’s prolific use of the body and his reliance of the potency of human love in his early prose points to his determination to expose and *embody* the healing force of the elemental nature and emotions of his fellow human beings in life’s continually changing situations.

Böll appears to be suggesting that we must learn to use our imagination while reading his works since it will make us more aware of the physical and emotional aspects of his characters and their collective and individual humanity. In other words, Böll’s literary yet physical language breathes life into the bodies of his characters. As he explains: “Ich verfüge ja über die Person, [. . .] ich schaffe sie, [. . .] ich gebe ihr den Namen, und dann nehme ich sie an die Hand” (Mensak, Über Phantasie 201). In addition, it is interesting that Böll uses bodily images to express his creative process as a writer. Through his deliberate attention to the physical, mental, and emotional characteristics of his protagonists and those with whom they succeed or fail to communicate, Böll offers deep insights into his characters. Moreover, what is clearly reflected in his narratives is his intention to both care for and rekindle the fires of community in his and their shattered world.

Much of Böll’s prose revolves around recurring themes that express communicative acts that shape the daily lives of all human beings. They are: “Ehe, die Familie, Freundschaft, Religion, das Essen, die Kleidung, das Geld, die Arbeit, die Zeit, [. . .] die Liebe” (Böll, “Vorlesungen” 73). Another important ingredient of the communicative body is its recognition and response to the events of the past. Böll’s characters’ memories are often triggered by their physical experience of love, and the five bodily senses of seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, and touching. In addition, Böll often uses human facial muscular movements such as the gaze and a smile to non-verbally signal brotherly love or other forms of communication between individuals: “Als das verlässlichste Zeichen echter menschlicher Kommunikation gilt den Gestalten Bölls das Wechseln eines Blickes, mehr: der Austausch eines Lächelns” (Beckert, Untersuchungen 205). Communication, therefore, is the result of bodies reaching out to others.

In his 1975 interview with Christian Linder, Böll is astutely aware of the potential of human beings, in the face of tragic events and atrocities, to experience a healing, bodily sense of community with a fellow man. For example, in searching for a means of preventing suicide, Böll suggests:

Diese Isolation, diese Verzweiflung, muß doch heilbar sein, [. . .] Im Neuen Testament steckt eine Theologie der [. . .] Zärtlichkeit, die immer heilend wirkt: durch Worte, durch Handauflegen, das man ja auch Streicheln nennen kann, durch Küsse, eine gemeinsame Mahlzeit [. . .] es gibt doch gewiß Menschen, die durch

¹⁴⁹ The emphasis is mine.

eine Stimme, einfach durch das Tonmaterial einer bestimmten Stimme geheilt werden können [...] . (Böll, "Drei Tage" 393)

Böll's interpretation of this "Theologie der "Zärtlichkeit," therefore, clearly demonstrates the deep faith he places in the healing power of human interaction—physical interaction: "Streicheln," "Handauflegen," "Küsse," and "Stimme" —. Böll, as the present study will show, incorporates this concept into much of his early work.

In his essay "Vom armen H.B." (1975), however, Marcel Reich-Ranicki critically questions Böll's "Theologie der Zärtlichkeit." If theology is a science, he wonders:

Fordert Böll eine Wissenschaft von der Zärtlichkeit? Damit überschritte er die Kompetenz der Literaturkritik abermals, wenn auch in unerwarteter Richtung. [...] Es geht ihm offenbar nicht um eine Theologie der Zärtlichkeit, sondern eher um eine Art Erlösung durch Zärtlichkeit. [...] Aber meint Böll wirklich, dies sei der Weg zu einer Gesellschaft, "die Selbstmord verhindern könnte"? (Reich-Ranicki, *Dichter* 84)

The fact is that it seems that this is precisely what Böll set out to determine in his literary examination of a "Theologie der Zärtlichkeit."¹⁵⁰

In conversation with Christian Linder, Böll asks: "Ob es aber jemals eine menschliche Gemeinschaft oder Gruppe oder einen Staat oder eine Gesellschaft geben wird, die Selbstmord verhindern könnte?" (Böll, "Drei Tage" 393). For Böll, the inflexibility of dogma makes no allowances for human frailties. It is his hope, therefore, that human "Zärtlichkeit" can ease the isolation and desperation that people experience when catastrophic events upset the harmony in their lives. More than "Erlösung," Böll is seeking "Heilbarkeit" for all whose lives are "aufgelöst" by personal tragedies, as well as the injustices and inhumane actions of many Germans during and after the Second World War. A discussion of the presence of this "Theologie der Zärtlichkeit" in Böll's two short stories "Die Brennenden" and "Der blasse Hund," as well as in his novel *Und sagte kein einziges Wort* will follow after a few more remarks on other important aspects of his work that help to identify the communicative body.

In his writings, Böll moves beyond the institution of the Roman Catholic Church to what David Hill calls "the lived experience of particular individuals" (Hill, "Religion and Humanity" 93). The reader's human imagination and common sense are other useful tools for deciphering the reality that Böll intimates more often than he states in such early works as "Die Brennenden," "Der blasse Hund," "Mit diesen Händen," *Der Zug war pünktlich*, *Das Vermächtnis*, *Der Engel schweig*, *Wo warst du, Adam?*, *Und sagte kein einziges Wort*, *Haus ohne Hüter*, and *Das Brot der frühen Jahre*. In these works, the touch of a friend and/or stranger's hand or lips, the sound of their voice, a few kind words, a shared meal or prayer, as well as other physical and mental acts of communication, all reveal Böll's determination to apply his concept of the healing power of "Zärtlichkeit" to his writings. In addition, Böll often pairs the retrieval of past memories with the healing effect of this theology.

A heightened awareness of body language, that is, of the senses, the face, hand, as well as the movements and positions of the human body in relation to another person, is therefore

¹⁵⁰ The suicidal death of Böll's beautiful, widowed, and alcoholic aunt when he was twelve years old, deeply influenced him. From then on, Böll saw: "Selbstmord wirklich als Ausdruck vollkommenen Aufgelöstseins." For him, variations of the same arrogance of Church dogma that denied the burial of a suicide victim in consecrated ground were evident in Germany's established societies (Linder "Drei Tage" 392).

important for transposing Böll's characters into the past. This is even more significant since for Böll it is the past, not the present, that holds the key to how man will conduct himself in the future:

Die Gegenwart ist ja eigentlich eine Fiktion. [. . .] Ich empfinde die Versetzung in die Vergangenheit schon sehr wichtig – aber nicht auf dem Wege der, wie ich finde, täuschenden Nostalgie. Ich sehne mich nicht zurück nach bestimmten Zeiten, die ich erlebt habe, sondern, wenn ich mich in die Vergangenheit versetzte, dann erlebe ich Gegenwart und fürchte die Zukunft. (Mensak, Über Phantasie 174-175)

Sharpening our awareness of the past and of our powers of imagination is Böll's way of also helping us to consciously shape our future in a more positive and humane way. For Michael Butler, Böll is a writer who seeks to "conserve" and to re-establish humane concepts in his own life and in the lives of his fellow Germans. He accepts Böll's conviction that imagination is the essential tool for decoding reality.¹⁵¹ He also argues: "It is this sense of narratives rooted in an observed reality, which yet remain incomplete and thus demand the reader's creative participation, that makes Böll such a challenging writer" (Butler, "Conservative Moralism" 8). An examination of the role of the communicative body in Böll's prose will help us to meet this literary challenge.

Böll contrasts honest, spiritual and sacred values of his caring characters with the perverse, profane values of others who, in order to increase their personal wealth and power, prey on the weak and less fortunate members of society. In Böll's stories, the real Germany of that time exists on many levels. It is reflected in his vivid portrayal of the chronic lack of money, food and housing; in his depiction of physical and mental illnesses; and in the ever-widening gap between rich and poor members of society. However, it is a reality in which physical human desperation and suffering co-exists with glimmers of joy and understanding. The many minute everyday details¹⁵² in Böll's prose act as signposts to facilitate our active participation in his literary product.

Das Brot der frühen Jahre is a text that offers a good opportunity for us to investigate the importance of the role of the communicative body in Böll's writings. Although Rudolf Hartung criticises its plethora of details he does acknowledge its moral significance:¹⁵³

Bei Böll ist jedoch diese minutiöse Darstellung nicht nur erzählerische Methode, sondern ebenso sehr auch ein moralischer Akt. Wie das Vergangene erinnert wird, so muß die Gegenwart Schritt für Schritt durchwandert werden. [...] auch die Bagatelle hat Bedeutung und so etwas wie erzählerische und moralische Würde. (Hartung, "Böll-Lektüre" 191)

Manfred Durzak praises the story's structure and the linguistic portrayal of the climax of Fendrich and Hedwig's "Liebesbegegnung"¹⁵⁴ as that which makes it one of Böll's most

¹⁵¹ As early as 1953, Böll expressed his views on imagination, topical events and reality: "[. . .] unsere Phantasie ist wirklich, eine reale Gabe, [...] um aus den Tatsachen die Wirklichkeit zu entziffern. [...] Die Wirklichkeit wird uns nie geschenkt, sie erfordert unsere aktive, nicht unsere passive Aufmerksamkeit. [...] Aus dem Aktuellen das Wirkliche zu erkennen, dazu müssen wir unsere Vorstellungskraft in Bewegung setzen" (Böll "Zeitgenosse" 68-70).

¹⁵² Foucault also recognises the importance of details: "There is a whole history to be written about [...] the utilitarian rationalisation of detail in moral accountability and political control" (Foucault "Docile Bodies" 183).

¹⁵³ See Nägele Einführung 129.

successful works: “Diese sprachliche Eruption einer in Wallung geratenen Prosa ist der konsequente Höhepunkt einer sorgfältig gesteigerten Struktur, die diese Erzählung zu einem der vollkommensten Prosastücke des frühen Böll macht” (Durzak, Roman 96). While Bernd Balzer finds Durzak’s argument “in jeder Hinsicht zutreffend” (Balzer, Werk 207), Rainer Nägele remains sceptical: “Den nahegelegenen ‘Absprung in die Sentimentalität’¹⁵⁵ habe Böll glücklich vermieden” (Nägele, Einführung 130).

Peter Leiser’s recognition of Böll’s criticism in the story of Germany’s post-war society, however, is of particular significance for the present study. According to Leiser: “Bölls Brot der frühen Jahre ist ein literarischer Beitrag zur Widerlegung der Legende von ‘gemeinsam getragenen Entbehrungen’ in den bitteren Jahren der größten Not” (Böll; Brot 140). The story details how, after falling in love, the protagonist is able to finally recognise and ultimately reject a society whose desire for material wealth and power makes it difficult for communication and human dignity to flourish. Robert C. Conard notes that the story contains many of Böll’s themes, motifs, and symbols, namely: “love, religion, social concern, hands, smiles, and above all bread.” He further adds: “Any reader wishing to find out what Böll’s work is like could well start with this little book. [...] The entire work is rich in detail and exact in its presentation of human situations” (Conard, Heinrich Böll 118).

While Nägele admits that Das Brot der frühen Jahre is potentially nostalgic for many German readers, Böll himself avoids such feelings since for him nostalgia is deceptive. In fact, he points to this danger in the last two lines of the story when his protagonist Walter Fendrich states: “... ich wußte, daß ich nicht vorwärtskommen wollte, zurückkommen wollte ich, wohin wußte ich nicht, aber zurück” (Böll, Brot 500). Alexander Mathäs correctly sums up Fendrich’s plight when he states: “Love both instigates the protagonist’s quest for self-recognition and at the same time induces him to idealise the past” (Mathäs, “Heinrich Böll” 157). As a literary character, Fendrich, unlike the author who created him, Böll, fails to realise that transposing himself into the past is not enough. He must also recognise that by remembering the past he can face his fears of the unknown, truly experience the present, and ensure himself of a more humane future.¹⁵⁶ This Böll text, therefore, challenges protagonists, readers, and critics alike to step back in order to move forward into a future anchored in communicative interactions with others.

In a way, Böll and the vast majority of his contemporary German readership can be classified as emotionally, psychologically, and physically “damaged” bodies caught in the struggle to survive in a society devastated by brutal warfare and its aftermath. Seen as an artistic “performance,” Böll’s acts of writing succeed as communicative acts only if they attract a receptive and emotionally aware “audience.” The same criteria can be applied to all of the characters this study classifies as communicative bodies. They too need to “perform” for, and thereby communicate with, a receptive audience. While some characters are communicative by nature, the ordinarily selfish Walter Fendrich proves that communication is a human skill that can be learned. This chapter will examine how the motifs of human tenderness in Böll’s early writings define the role of communicative bodies in promoting his ideas on the need for a more humane post-war German society.

¹⁵⁴ See Böll, Brot 500; ch. 4

¹⁵⁵ See Durzak, Roman 89.

¹⁵⁶ See Mensak’ Über Phantasie 175.

The “Zärtlichkeit” / “Gebundenheit” Motif

The focus of this section will be the physical and mental acts of communication, that is, in terms of Böll’s theories of “Gebundenheit” and “Zärtlichkeit” in “Der blasse Hund,” “Die Brennenden,” and Und sagte kein einziges Wort. Whereas the previous chapter discussed Theodor Herold, the protagonist of “Der blasse Hund,” in terms of a dominating body, this chapter explores the communication between the story’s two first person narrators. The chaplain in whom Theodor confides, and the doctor who officially examines his body are discussed in regard to how their verbal and non-verbal body language communicates their personal fears and compassion. Then will follow a discussion of “Die Brennenden,” a story written ten years earlier by the then nineteen year old Böll, whose focus will be the positive effects of “Zärtlichkeit” and “Gebundenheit” on the suicidal youth Heinrich Perkoning. Finally, Käte Bogner, the female protagonist of the first of Böll’s three family novels Und sagte kein einziges Wort, experiences an immediate sense of being included in the warmth of a snack-bar family. These three works effectively demonstrate Böll’s claim that Germans are still actively looking for and need that human bond he calls “Gebundenheit.” It is a topic he discusses in great detail in his “Frankfurter Vorlesungen” a quarter of a century after writing “Die Brennenden.”

“Der blasse Hund”

Everything we learn about Theodor’s past life, including the events that lead to his demise, comes to us through the chaplain’s emotionally charged conversation with the doctor. The latter is an eager but distraught listener who out of compassion feels compelled to hear every detail of Theodor’s misguided life and gruesome death. Böll’s careful attention to the chaplain’s and doctor’s body language powerfully conveys their attempts to share their feelings, console each other, and to show their compassion for the dead man. The doctor’s description of the chaplain’s verbal and non-verbal behaviour is particularly revealing:

Der Kaplan packte mich hart an der Schulter und drehte mein müdes Gesicht gewaltsam sich zu ... seine Augen flammten vor Erregung wie sprühende blaue Lichter ... sein armes, blasses Gesicht war gerötet ... und sein Mund zuckte. Wir standen uns fast gegenüber wie Streitende [. . .]. “Sehen Sie”, stöhnte der Kaplan, “ich kann mir das genau vorstellen, weil ich selbst unzählige Male so getan habe. [. . .] Becker hatte eben keine persönliche Bindung mehr an ihn [. . .] war kühl zu ihm. Vielleicht gleichgültig, vielleicht sogar abweisend [. . .].” (96-97)

In his account, the physical reality of their bodies, that is their hands, shoulder, blazing eyes, flushed face, and twitching mouth, vividly brings into focus the chaplain’s urgent need to communicate his personal fears to the doctor.

Visibly moved by Theodor’s desperate search for “Gebundenheit,” the doctor and the chaplain make no effort to hide their emotions from each other. On the contrary, the chaplain wants to bare his soul and to expose his own vulnerabilities to the doctor. His unbearable anguish stems from the realisation that he too has often been guilty of the same shortcomings that he attributes to Theodor’s schoolfriend Becker, now a priest himself. He too has displayed indifference and cool professionalism in the face of countless confessions of human frailties and suffering. In firmly grasping his shoulders and turning him to face him, the chaplain urgently tries to communicate his mental pain to the doctor and to seek his understanding. However, unlike the chaplain and Becker who over the years have become inured to the spiritual suffering of “unburied bodies,” we already know that the sight of every corpse still deeply disturbs the doctor:

[I]ch schrak unwillkürlich zurück, nun, da ich die Leiche im vollen Licht sah. Viele, viele Tote habe ich gesehen, aber beim Anblick jeden Leichnams ergreift mich immer wieder das erregende Bewußtsein, [. . .] einen Menschen zu sehen . . . der gelebt, gelitten und geliebt hat.... (81)

The doctor obviously never allows clinical distancing to override his human emotions even when he examines dead bodies.

The doctor, however, neither feels prejudice nor animosity toward the chaplain after his disturbing confession. On the contrary, trembling, he turns away from the corpse and longs to experience the consolation that he feels sure the chaplain's humane face will offer. Böll personifies the doctor's fear as being rigid, iron-like claws (a variation on "hands") that hold him prisoner. His fearful thoughts are mercifully interrupted when he hears the chaplain's gentle, consoling voice and, in contrast to his vice-like grip, he now feels the light, comforting touch of his hand on his shoulder. Böll appears to be experimenting here with his theory of "Zärtlichkeit" as a viable means of introducing a sense of fellowship and communication between these two men while they perform their professional duties. The importance of the hand for the communicative body will be discussed in greater detail in the next section of this chapter.

As they stand in silent reflection and prayer over Theodor's corpse, the stillness of the night is shattered when three policemen noisily barge in to remove the body of the notorious "Blasser Hund." The chaplain's insistence on personally accompanying the body in the truck leaves them perplexed:

Er hob abwehrend die Hände und rief: "Nein . . . nein . . . lassen Sie mich das machen. . ." Er drehte sich schnell um und packte furchtlos dieses zerstörte Menschenbündel und hörte nicht auf den erschreckten Ruf: "Herr Pastor. . .!"

Er sah aus, als trüge er eine verstorbene Geliebte, mit einer verzweifelten Zärtlichkeit. . .

[. . .] Langsam . . . liebevoll legte der Kaplan die Leiche auf einen Strohsack im Ladenraum des Wagens . . . es roch nach Benzin und Öl . . . nach Krieg und Schrecken.[. . .] (101)

Böll again stages this dramatic scene in terms of body language—"hob die Hände," "packte," "roch"—Here the chaplain's hands play an important role. They not only protect the corpse from the rough and irreverent handling of the indifferent policemen but also demonstrate his compassion and love for this dead sinner and social outcast.

The desperate, almost erotic tenderness expressed in the chaplain's loving treatment of the body ["die Geliebte"] underscores the chaplain's renewed faith in his own humanity and in that of the dead man. The irony is that it is only in the dying moments of his dissolute life that Theodor rediscovers in the clergy an earlier source of "Gebundenheit" which he foolishly threw away. Many years ago, the clergy had given him acceptance, love, warmth and respect, in a word: "Gebundenheit." The doctor's report concerning the policemen's verbal and non-verbal body language when the chaplain gets into the vehicle with Theodor's body, points out how little they understand his unselfish acts of love, caring, and forgiveness:

"Aber . . . nein . . . das geht nicht. . .", rief nun einer der Polizisten, als der Kaplan in den Wagen einstieg . . . aber der dritte von ihnen machte eine eindeutige Handbewegung zur Stirn—während der Dunkle still und, wie mir schien, mit schmerzlichen Lächeln dabeistand. . . (101-102)

Böll's effective use of body language contrasts their shocked responses, ambiguous smile with the compassionate conduct of the doctor and the chaplain. The callous hand motion, to use Barbara Korte's term, is an "illustrator."¹⁵⁷ The gesture, used here in lieu of speech, not only communicates the impression that the chaplain is crazy but also adds a graphic dimension to the scene.

The policemen's body language focuses our attention on the importance Böll places on details to aid in interpreting "das Aktuelle" in order to arrive at "die Wirklichkeit,"¹⁵⁸ that is, the urgent need for increased human sympathy, and a "verkörpert" community.¹⁵⁹ As the vehicle noisily departs, the doctor hears the chaplain say: "Er hat noch geweint . . . wissen Sie . . . ich habe die Tränen abgewischt, bevor Sie kamen [. . .]" (102). These few words perhaps serve to provide us and the doctor with consolation and hope for a more positive outlook on life. In fact, the critic Alberto Manguel raises an interesting question in his review article: "The reader understands that, at last, there has been a redemption, but who has redeemed whom?" ("Lost Böll Stories" 12).

That Theodor apparently shows remorse for his actions before he dies is clear. His absolution is due in no small measure to the kindness and "Zärtlichkeit" of the chaplain. In making Theodor feel forgiven, even loved, the chaplain demonstrates that he has finally been able to move beyond his indifference to his fellow man's physical and emotional suffering that he has been subjected to during the course of the war. Being able to communicate with each other has been beneficial to both men. His renewed ability to love his fellow man regardless of his faults and crimes is the result of his willingness to interact and share his feelings with the criminal Theodor and the attentive doctor who signed the death certificate.

Through his death-watch and re-telling of Theodor's life story, the chaplain has come to understand more fully the importance of, to use Böll's word, a "verkörpert" interaction and communication for the preservation of human dignity. Listening to his personal story and confession, keeping a bedside vigil, and finally accompanying Theodor's dead body to the morgue, is surely the chaplain's attempt to compensate for both Becker's insensitivity as well as his own previous indifference to others in his fold.¹⁶⁰ Böll makes it clear that in both his narration and his "performance," the chaplain has been able to gain a deeper insight into what it means, even in a chaotic world, to be human and to need the warmth of a community.

"Die Brennenden"

In "Die Brennenden," Böll introduces us to his suicidal seventeen year old protagonist, Heinrich Perkoning by describing the personal crisis that threatened to destroy him a year ago: "Als Heinrich Perkoning 16 Jahre alt war, dachte er zum ersten Male, daß es schön sei, zu sterben. [...] Er sah so viele Dinge, die schlecht und häßlich waren, und so wenige, die seine

¹⁵⁷ See Korte *Body Language* 44-46.

¹⁵⁸ See Böll's essay "Der Zeitgenosse und die Wirklichkeit" re. his views on "das Aktuelle" and "die Wirklichkeit." See Böll, *Zur Verteidigung* 67-71.

¹⁵⁹ Georges Bataille's comment that "reality . . . does not reside in the moment" effectively sums up Böll's own thoughts on the subject. See Botting *Bataille* 213.

¹⁶⁰ The chaplain's presiding over Theodor's unclaimed corpse is reminiscent of the sociologist Erving Goffman's comments regarding the practice of giving unclaimed patients' bodies an elaborate funeral on hospital grounds: "No doubt [. . .] where [. . .] the general unconcern of society can threaten these standards. [. . .] hospital [staff] [. . .] perform a demonstration of civilised regard for the dead" (Goffman, *Presentation* 82).

Seele erfreuten, daß er beschloß, sich selbst zu töten" (9). For him, the world is an evil and ungodly place in which to live. Worse yet, no one seems to sense the misery he experiences when he observes the ills of society. So far, every time he reaches out to others for support, their superficiality and indifference shatter his confidence and faith in his fellow man. Now, a year later, Perkoning's continued failure to find "Gebundenheit" fills him with anguish and desperation, driving him once again to consider suicide as the only relief from such a painful existence. He is pulled back from the brink by his faith in God: "[...] eine Stimme brauste in seinem Innern [...] Die Gnade und die Liebe Gottes weht überall, vertraue!" (9-10). Heeding his inner voice, he finally finds the courage to walk away.

After leaving the river, the troubled youth sits in a brothel reading the New Testament over a cup of coffee. However, when he is approached by a smiling young woman named Susanne, Perkoning is struck by her "Reinheit." Her tender, genuine concern for his spiritual well-being instantly fills his life once again with hope and meaning. Disguised as a whore, Susanne is on a mission to win the souls of young men like Heinrich for Christ. Her mystical beauty, her enigmatic smile and eyes somehow reveal to Heinrich that something strange and unexpected is taking place within her mind and body.

Her smile is like a sign telling him that everything in his life has changed even though his outward appearance remains the same.¹⁶¹ Their spirituality and physical desire for each other inexorably draw them together. In describing her as having the suffering face of an apocalyptic angel, Perkoning acknowledges to himself that his life has been radically changed for the better through his unexpected encounter with Susanne. Their instant recognition of each other as Christian souls, and their eagerness to selflessly help each other marks them as communicative bodies.

Heinrich's hand movements chart how his brief, initial mistrust of Susanne changes to complete trust in her and what she represents. Thinking she is a whore, he at first uses his listless hands to wave her away. They then cover his face to hide his shame when he suddenly realises he loves her. Finally, when her tears tell him that she returns his love, Perkoning profusely thanks her for the new life she offers him, and for caring about what happens to him: "Weine nicht, vielmehr freue Dich, jubiliere mit mir, der ich eben erst neu dem Leben geschenkt wurde" (14). However, when words fail to express the depth of his joy, Perkoning relies on his body language to comfort and reassure her of his love and respect: "[...] und er sank nieder und küßte die Hände des Weibes, und sie bebte vor Seligkeit, als er sie aufrichtete und sie in seine Arme schloß"¹⁶² (14). Being able to love and be loved has saved Perkoning's life. From this moment on, feeling as if he now shares in a warm, caring world, Perkoning thinks only of life, not death.

Susanne, in exposing Perkoning to, and making him a contributing part of her community of young Catholic believers, breathes life into the protagonist. As Heinrich Vormweg writes: "Sie [die Hauptfiguren] leben fast als Ausgestoßene in einer zwar katholisch beherrschten, dennoch feindlichen, engstirnigen, besitzbestimmten Umwelt, im Kampf oft mit nacktem Hunger

¹⁶¹ See this chapter's Saint-Exupéry epigraph. It is a phenomenon that crops up time and again in Böll's early work.

¹⁶² Here, writing as he is a few years before the start of the Second World War, the literary style of the youthful Böll (just nineteen years old) which is in its early stages of development, is arguably melodramatic. Böll's story *Das Brot der frühen Jahre*, written almost two decades later, portrays his protagonist Fendrich as a man who after just one look falls head over heels in love with a beautiful young woman. However, in this "romantic" work, Böll's use of verbal and non-verbal body language is not only more subtle but forms a part of its structure.

und immer wieder nahe an der Verzweiflung. [. . .] Trotz allem sind sie fähig zu Liebe und Glück" ("Böll vor 1945" 13). His commitment to this group saves Perkoning from the static existence that Böll calls "Fertig-Sein," thus banishing all thoughts of suicide from his mind. Thirty-eight years after this story is written, Böll discusses with Christian Linder the dangers of a static life: "Das Abgeschlossensein eines Lebens, wo von innen und außen gar nichts mehr in Bewegung ist, das meine ich mit Fertig-Sein. [. . .] Fertig, darin steckt nämlich auch: fertigmacht-werden, jemanden umbringen, sich selbst umbringen. Aber man kann sich ja auch regenerieren" (Böll, "Drei Tage" 392). Among these young people, and in the glow of the warm, spiritual environment they create, Perkoning is able to regenerate himself and regains his desire to live. Susanne and Perkoning's open display of mutual caring, healing looks, kisses, touches, and words exemplify Böll's concept of a "Theologie der Zärtlichkeit." The young people's willingness to expose their vulnerabilities and to share each others joys and sorrows marks them as communicative bodies.

The young priest in the poverty stricken group, however, gently cautions them against feeling the need to form an association of believers. For him: "Vereine zum Beispiel sind meist lächerlich, [. . .] ob sie nun Einzelfälle [sic] Mode, Sport, Tanz, Rhythmus oder Kino heißen [. . .] oder Geld" (35). His point of view regarding "Gesellschaft" clearly reflects those discussed by Böll in his "Frankfurter Vorlesungen." The young Böll is obviously already leery of what regimented groups during the Third Reich really represent. Speaking through the young priest, Böll here labels all such clubs as middle-class traps set by Satan to distract passive people from the truth. As readers we must therefore use our imagination to uncover the reality behind contemporary events in the Germany of the late nineteen thirties. According to the young priest, the association they want to establish already exists: It is the Church. However, as independent thinkers, they refuse to be ruled by its, at times, inflexible dogma.

Michael Butler's comment about these two stories is thought provoking: "What makes the title story memorable, as a sober pendant to the idealism of 'Die Brennenden,' is Böll's first hesitant attempt to locate the nature of human evil in the context of social degradation and corrosive class divisions" ("The Devastated Years"). However, in spite of his degraded situation, Theodor Herold is still capable of recognising a communicative body when he sees one. The chaplain's actions prove him right. In the dying moments of his earthly life, Theodor's ability to communicate with the chaplain helps him to clear his conscience and gives him hope for a better life in the next world. Heinrich Perkoning, however, finds salvation and fellowship at a young age since he immediately recognises, and is more receptive to the selfless actions of the communicative "bodies" he encounters during his darkest hours. Susanne and her pious friends save him from an untimely death and introduce him to a brighter, more spiritual and humane community in this world.

Becker's indifference destroys the vital line of communication that once existed between himself and his former friend Theodor Herold. However, in "Die Brennenden," the young priest and his friends extend a stout life line to Heinrich Perkoning who holds on to it for dear life. In his review of *Der blasse Hund*, Joachim Kaiser also points to details in the title story and "Die Brennenden" that reflect Böll's views on the spiritual and the temporal worlds. According to Kaiser: "Für alle armen Kaplane oder überforderten Ärzte hat er etwas übrig – aber, gar nichts für 'abscheuliche Geldverdienerfratzen'¹⁶³ oder gar die selbstsicheren, feingebildeten, restaurativen Verbands-Christen" ("Heinrich Bölls Unerschöpflichkeit"). Böll's conveyance of

¹⁶³ See "Die Brennenden" 24.

these views in bodily terms in his novel Und sagte kein einziges Wort will be discussed below in the section that investigates the hand motif. His tolerance for poor priest and intolerance of well-off ones who stay in luxury accommodations and make very little effort to communicate with the poor is obvious.

Und sagte kein einziges Wort

Fred and Käte Bogner are the two alternating first person narrators in Böll's economic restoration novel Und sagte kein einziges Wort. Fred, an alcoholic and a gambler who is unable to support his family on his meagre salary as a telephone operator at the Catholic chancery, vents his frustration on his children. Out of concern for them, he moves out of their cramped accommodations and is presently without a fixed address. Although Käte resents feeling like a whore whenever she meets Fred in cheap hotel rooms, she accepts his decision in order to protect the children. Poverty, like a "social disease," is the reality that infects every aspect of their lives. Fred and Käte both resent being exploited by bourgeois society and the Church. As a result, Käte is consumed with hate, and Fred withdraws from society. After hearing her hate-filled confession, the peasant priest of the "Sieben Schmerzen Mariä" cannot find it in his heart to unreservedly absolve Käte. Unbeknownst to her, Fred also feels excluded as he sits in the same church where the same priest is reading the mass. On separate occasions, as they leave the church, both Fred and Käte have their spirits uplifted by a chance encounter.

Käte feels instantly included in the warm fellowship radiating from the poor family (a father and his pretty daughter and imbecile son, Bernhard) who operate a snack bar located among the city's rubble and ruins. It is here, and not in the church, that Käte experiences a real sense of "Gebundenheit" and human "Zärtlichkeit." The sight of Bernhard messily eating a jelly doughnut at the entrance to the snack-bar melts Käte's heart:

Auf der Türschwelle saß ein Kind in der Sonne, es blinzelte in den Himmel hinauf, der sanfte Ausdruck der Blödigkeit, die rötlichen Lider, die mir im Sonnenlicht durchsichtig erschienen - ich spürte eine schmerzliche Zärtlichkeit: Das Kind hatte einen frischen Berliner Pfannkuchen in der Hand, rund um seinen Mund war Zucker verschmiert, und als es jetzt in den Kuchen biß, quoll bräunliche Marmelade heraus und tropfte auf seinen Pullover. (77; ch. 8)

By focusing our attention on Käte's tender rather than disgusted reaction to Bernhard, Böll drives home the point that for him, every individual, regardless of their mental and physical condition, is worthy of our love, respect, and understanding. Although Bernhard's gaze is empty, and his face and pullover are sticky with his efforts to feed himself may make him appear repelling, he too should be accorded human dignity, and be allowed to experience the "Zärtlichkeit" that emanates from his close-knit family. After all, he too is one of God's creatures.

Käte is attracted by the young woman frying doughnuts in the snack-bar: "Ihr Gesicht war schön, ihre Haut von zwiebeliger Zartheit, und obwohl ihr Haar [...] verdeckt war, sah ich, daß sie blond sein mußte" (77; ch. 8). Here, Böll subtly contrasts her "ideal," healthy, and therefore "beautiful" German/Aryan physical features, namely, her face, skin, and hair, with her unresponsive, fat, imbecile brother's inadequate, unhealthy and therefore "ugly," non-Aryan body. When Bernhard's young sister looks up from her cooking and smiles at Käte, she feels an instant sisterly bond developing between them:

Sie angelte frische Kuchen aus dem dampfenden Schmalz, legte sie auf einen Rost, und plötzlich hob sie den Blick, unsere Augen trafen sich, und sie lächelte mir zu. Ihr Lächeln fiel wie ein Zauber über mich, ich lächelte zurück, und so

blieben wir einige Sekunden stehen, ohne uns zu bewegen, [. . .] einander zulächelnd wie Schwestern. (77; ch. 8)

For Käte, the instant communication between them is mystical. Their reflection in the mirror makes Käte imagine her head on the young girl's body and herself at the same age.

Through his protagonist's eyes and thoughts, Böll's imaginative use of the body motif provides us with a unique opportunity, while contemplating the present, to reflect on the past and future, and to more fully decode reality: "Das Mädchen [. . .] blickte in den Spiegel und ordnete ihr Haar; ich beobachtete ihre weißen, sehr kleinen, kindlichen Hände und sah nun im Spiegel neben ihrem frischen Gesicht, das mir zulächelte, mein eigenes: mager, ein wenig gelblich, mit der seitlich schmal auszüngelnden Flamme des dunkelrot gefärbten Mundes" (78; ch. 8). The reality that Böll vividly exposes by contrasting the body of the young girl with that of Käte's, is the ephemeral nature of even the most beautiful, healthy body. The young girl's welcoming smile, therefore, stirs in Käte's mind a strong physical image of her own time-ravaged body.

Käte imagines the girl giving herself like she herself had done so many years ago to a man who says he loves her, and her youthful face, as Käte's, also becomes "mager" and "gelblich:"

[N]un schienen unsere Köpfe schnell die Plätze zu wechseln, [. . .] und ich sah mich als junges Mädchen vor dem Spiegel stehen, mein Haar ordnend - sah sie, [. . .] nachts einem Mann geöffnet, [. . .] der [. . .] die Spuren [der] Liebe [...] in ihrem Gesicht hinterlassend, bis es meinem gleichen würde: mager und gelblich gefärbt von der Bitternis des Lebens. (78; ch. 8)

For Käte, this hybrid bodily image represents the inexorable passage of time and its negative effects on all women. Käte's suffering and compassion, therefore, bind her to all generations of women.¹⁶⁴

Overwhelmed by their generous and spontaneous offer to serve her coffee and doughnuts on credit, Käte exclaims: "'Vielen Dank', [...] aber Sie kennen mich doch nicht.' Er [der Vater] lächelte mir zu, [...] und murmelte: 'Oh, keine Sorge'" (78; ch. 8). The spontaneous communication between Käte and the family is dynamic. Gathered around Käte, and while sharing their food and drink with her to help restore her body's strength, they frankly discuss Bernhard's irreparable body and their passionate hopes and fears for his survival in a success and money driven society. Böll depicts Käte and the family as being materially poor, yet spiritually rich. Their acts of common decency and generosity, while reminiscent of biblical traditions, rise above the hypocrisy and commercialism of the institution of the Church. In fact, as Ihor Prodaniuk states, it is "the positive values of true religion and true love which seem to make life endurable for Käte and Fred" (*Imagery* 53). Clearly, it is Böll's firm belief that a true religious and communicative atmosphere can be created in any secular setting where two or more are gathered together.

Just like his daughter's smile, that of her father's also makes Käte feel comfortable in his presence. She is also deeply touched by the warmth, loving care and understanding that they shower on the mentally deficient Bernhard. On several occasions, however, Käte has to reassure them that she is neither disgusted by Bernhard's physical appearance and messy eating habits, nor by the incomprehensible sounds he utters as he tries to communicate. As his father explains:

¹⁶⁴ Earlier in chapter four of the novel, Käte also expresses her solidarity with poor women all over the world as she looks at her reflection in a mirror(43).

“Er versteht die Sprache der Menschen nicht, mein Sohn,” sagte der alte Mann, “auch nicht die der Tiere, kein einziges Wort kann er sprechen, nur dsu-dsa-dse, und wir”, seine Zunge, die er aufgeworfen hatte, um diese Laute zu bilden, fiel wieder flach in den Mund zurück, “wir machen es nach, unfähig und hart, sagen zu-za-ze. Wir sind unfähig,” sagte er leise, und er [Bernhard] hob plötzlich schwerfällig seinen Kopf, ließ ihn sofort wieder nach vorne fallen. (79; ch. 8)

In this body language vignette, Böll is clearly demonstrating to us that the attempts made by Bernhard’s father and sister to imitate his “non-human” sounds are a form of communication which occurs without the help of either words or thoughts. That they try to understand his way of “talking” and accept his inability to impart his “thoughts” to them in their language is another example of the communicative power of what Böll calls a “Theologie der Zärtlichkeit.” In fact, the young girl has had to use her vivid imagination in order to try and understand what goes through his mind in relation to events taking place around him. Their extraordinary efforts to try and understand Bernhard, to care for him, and to provide him with a secure and loving family environment make them good examples of communicating bodies.

While loud noises make Bernhard cry, their voices, and the rhythmic melody of the monks’ prayers seem to get through to him. Concerned that Käte may be feeling uncomfortable that he is sitting so close to her with his drooling son on his lap, the man asks Käte to say if Bernhard disgusts her:

“Nein,” sagte ich, “ich ekele mich nicht.” Seine Tochter brachte den Kaffee, [...] und blieb neben ihrem Vater stehen. “Sie müssen sagen, wenn es Sie ekelt, wir sind nicht böse, die meisten ekeln sich.”

Das Kind war fett, beschmiert, blickte dumpf vor sich hin, lallte sein dsu-dsa-dse, ich sah es genau an, [...] “Nein, ich ekele mich nicht – es ist wie ein Säugling.” (79; ch. 8)

Käte’s genuine compassion for Bernhard astonishes them since most people find him disgusting. The young girl’s comment is an indirect reminder that not so long ago, that is, under the Nazi regime, such a child would not have been allowed to live. Yet, here in this poverty-stricken environment Bernhard is obviously deeply loved and protected by his whole family.

That Käte is drawn to this family and wants to actively remain in communication with them all is obvious: “Ich komme wieder, [. . .] es ist so schön bei Ihnen” (81-82; ch. 8). Their blossoming relationship and their ability to communicate with each other both verbally and non-verbally is portrayed by the dense amount of body language present in the parting scene. For example, Käte verbally promises not only to return to visit them soon and often but also to go and listen with them to the chanting of the monks. In addition, the form and function of non-verbal body language represented by Käte’s comments on the young girl’s “sehr leichte weiße Hand,” “ihr blühendes Gesicht,” and her own firm handshake, gaze, smile, and nod¹⁶⁵ all point to a greater sense of what Böll calls the “Theologie der Zärtlichkeit” and “Gebundenheit” than she could ever hope to experience with her heartless, and hypocritical practising Catholic landlady, Frau Franke. Therefore, as Barbara Korte argues: “All non-verbal behaviour can be significant in the sense that, apart from its direct practical purpose, a further level of meaning can be attributed to it” (*Body Language* 36).

¹⁶⁵ See Böll, *Wort* 82; ch. 8.

The Hand Motif in Böll's Early Prose

The remainder of this chapter will now specifically examine how Böll's use of hands in his early prose focuses our attention on "communicative bodies" and their interaction with others. The art historian Moshe Barasch reminds us of "the ability of the hand to intelligibly communicate different emotions, and of its power to bring about definite emotional results (it excites, restrains, etc.)" (Barasch Giotto 16). In fact, we have already seen examples of this in our above discussions of several of Böll's texts. For example, in "Die Brennenden:" the dismissive hand motion of Heinrich Perkoning; in Haus ohne Hüter: the "light" hands of Nella, Rai, Martin, and the taxi driver, the probing fingers of Leo's hands, the beautiful hands of Frau Brielach; in "Der blasse Hund:" the chaplain's protective hands, and the doctor's light hands; in Wo warst du, Adam?: Bressen's students' uncultured hands, and Filskeit's delicate, slender, yet murderous hands; in "Todesursache: Hakennase:" the doctor's businesslike, gentle, almost loving hands; and in Und sagte kein einziges Wort: the snack-bar girl's very "light" white hands, just to name a few. The hand motif, therefore, appears to establish important lines of communication not only between characters but also between characters and readers.

An investigation of the role of the hand motif in his early prose will seek to reveal how Böll uses it not only to negatively and positively define human relationships but also to revive his protagonists' and indirectly his readers' memories of the past. After a discussion of Heinrich Böll's powerful short story "Mit diesen Händen," the present study will then investigate his use of the recurring motif of hands in four of his larger works which span the first decade of his literary efforts: Der Zug war pünktlich, Und sagte kein einziges Wort, Haus ohne Hüter, and Das Brot der frühen Jahre. However, before doing so, it will be useful to briefly consider the hand's epistemology, particularly in reference to Martin Heidegger's privileging of the hand and of Jacques Derrida's response to it.

The Heideggerian Hand

In his letter of November 1945 to the Academy Rectorate of Albert-Ludwig University, Heidegger tries to make it clear that at that time he had thought that it would have been possible to tell the difference between an ideology based on biology and racism and one founded on the national. However, without launching into a discussion of Heidegger's infamous association with the Nazis during the Third Reich, suffice it to say that this study in no way condones his questionable conduct during this nefarious period of German history. All the same, this will not preclude a brief discussion of some of his ideas on the hand published in his lectures entitled Was heißt Denken?, and Parmenides. This study, however, will not review any of his other writings.

In a lecture he gave during the winter semester (1951-1952) at the University of Freiburg, Heidegger undertakes to teach "thinking." He compares this process with perhaps that of building a cabinet. Heidegger's views on thinking are unequivocal:

Es ist jedenfalls ein Hand-Werk. [. . .] Allein das Wesen der Hand läßt sich nie als ein leibliches Greiforgan bestimmen oder von diesem her erklären. Greiforgane besitzt z.B. der Affe, aber er hat keine Hand. Die Hand ist von allen Greiforganen: Tatzen, Krallen, Fängen, [. . .] verschieden. Nur ein Wesen, das spricht, d.h. denkt, kann die Hand haben und in der Handhabung Werke der Hand vollbringen. (Denken 50-51)

Clearly, Heidegger privileges the hand over the eye,¹⁶⁶ the ear, and the voice in that for him it distinguishes man from animal and shows him to be capable of thinking. He argues:

[. . .] die Gebärden der Hand gehen überall durch die Sprache hindurch und zwar gerade dann am reinsten, wenn der Mensch spricht, indem er schweigt. Doch nur insofern der Mensch spricht, denkt er; [. . .] Jede Bewegung der Hand in jedem ihrer Werke trägt sich das Element, gebärdet sich im Element des Denkens. Alles Werk der Hand beruht im Denken. Darum ist das Denken selbst das einfachste und deshalb schwerste Hand-Werk des Menschen, wenn es zu Zeiten eigens vollbracht sein möchte. (Denken 51)

In addition, for Heidegger, it is only man, not animal, who is capable of giving.

In Parmenides (1942-1943), Heidegger's recognition of the central role of the hand in Old German leads him into an exploration of words such as: "Hand," "Hand-Werk," "Handeln," "Vorhandenheit" (presence-at-hand) and "Zuhandenheit (readiness-to-hand). In this seminar, given a decade earlier than his Freiburg seminars, Heidegger had already discussed many of the above mentioned motifs. For example, in it he declares:

Durch die Hand geschieht zumal das Gebet und der Mord, der Gruß und der Schwur und der Wink, aber auch das "Werk" der Hand, das Handwerk und das Gerät. Der Handschlag gründet den bündigen Bund. [...] Die Hand west nur als Hand, wo Entbergung und Verbergung ist. Kein Tier hat eine Hand, und niemals entsteht aus einer Pfote oder einer Klaue oder einer Kralle eine Hand. (Heidegger, Parmenides 118)

The hand, therefore, in all of its ambiguity is, in Heidegger's opinion, unique to the thinking, speaking man. It is this sense of ambiguity that is particularly interesting for my study.

Another important observation that Heidegger makes regarding the role of the hand becomes clear when he compares the written word with the machine-typed word. The typewriter degrades the word in that it rips it away from the essence of the hand. It also allows both the handwriting and the individual's character to be hidden. For him: "Der Mensch 'hat' nicht Hände, sondern die Hand hat das Wesen des Menschen inne, weil das Wort als der Wesensbereich der Hand der Wesensgrund des Menschen ist" (Heidegger, Parmenides 119). The essence of man, therefore, resides in the hand. In addition, for Heidegger:

Die [. . .] Vergessung, ist jene Verbergung, die das Vergangene, Gegenwärtige und das Zukünftige in das Weg einer selbst abwesenden Abwesenheit hinausfallen läßt und damit den Menschen selbst in die Verborgenheit gegenüber diesem Entzug wegstellt, so zwar, daß diese Verbergung ihrerseits im ganzen nicht zum Erscheinen kommt. (Parmenides 123)

That the hand and speech are inextricably bound to each other and distinguish man from animal, is revealed in that the hand has the awesome potential to expose exactly that which is concealed.

It is interesting that Heidegger mainly speaks of the hand in the singular. One of the occasions in which he uses the word hands is when they meet to form one unit during the act of

¹⁶⁶ For Heidegger: "The eye, the vision, which originally projected the project into potency, becomes a mere looking at or looking over or gaping at. Vision has degenerated into mere optics. [...] the essent has been made into an 'object' of endless and variegated busy-ness, and only thereby has it retained an appearance of its permanence" (An Introduction to Metaphysics 63).

prayer. Derrida questions Heidegger's failure to directly mention the role of the hand in expressing human acts of love and desire. In this regard, Derrida suggests the kind of response that Heidegger might have been expected to advance if directly faced with this inquiry:

[T]his question is derivative; what you call desire or love presupposes the coming of *the* hand since speech, and as soon as I alluded to the hand that gives, gives itself, promises, lets go, gives up, hands over, and engages in the alliance or oath, you have [. . .] everything you need to think what you commonly call making love, caressing, or even desiring ("Geschlecht II" 182-183).

Derrida, however, finds this ambiguity in Heidegger's explanation troublesome especially in connection with the important issue of what it means to be human.

Heidegger summarises the most essential quality of the hand, that is, its potential to "speak" by both signalling and giving, as follows:

Allein das Werk der Hand ist reicher, als wir gewöhnlich meinen. Die Hand greift und fängt nicht nur, drückt und stößt nicht nur. Die Hand reicht und empfängt und zwar nicht allein Dinge, sondern sie reicht sich und empfängt sich in der anderen. Die Hand hält. Die Hand trägt. Die Hand zeichnet, vermutlich weil der Mensch ein Zeichen ist. Die Hände falten sich, wenn diese Gebärde den Menschen in die große Einfalt tragen soll. Dies alles ist die Hand und ist das eigentliche Hand-Werk. (Denken 51)

Here, Heidegger stresses that whereas the human being's hand gives and is given, the "Greiforgan" of the ape or for that matter man as a rational being is only capable of taking hold of, grasping, or placing hands on something. This is because the actions of the hand in this instance are not founded on thought, or in other words, on the essence of the being per se.

Jacques Derrida notes that Martin Heidegger, true to his own observations on the hand's indisputable involvement with human thought, language, and writing, "could write only with the pen, with the hand of a craftsman and not a mechanic" ("Geschlecht II" 168). In 1979, after seeing a photograph of Heidegger's hand on the cover of an album of his published photographs, Derrida comments: "The play and the theatre of hands in that album would merit a whole seminar. If I did not forgo that, I would stress the deliberately craftsman-like staging of the hand play, of the monstrosity and demonstration that is exhibited there, [. . .]" ("Geschlecht II" 169). For Derrida, therefore, Heidegger's writings privilege not just the hand of man but also man who, through his ability to think, speak, and give, is himself a sign that points and demonstrates.

The sociologist Bryan S. Turner also takes Martin Heidegger's philosophical treatise on the hand as his point of departure for his own exploration of the hand. Turner asks: "What is the relationship between animals and humans, between behaviour and action, and between nature and the social? [. . .] what, if any, is the connection between the physiology of the hand in relation to gesture and communication [. . .]?" ("Epistemology" 100). While writers like Robert Hertz concentrate on the [right] hand's symbolic potential, others like George H. Mead focus on its relation to speech and thought. Turner also poses some thoughtful questions about the role of the hands among human beings: "what is the role of the hand in human thought, gesture and interaction? Is shaking hands, waving hands, holding hands, binding hands, mutilating hands or cutting off hands of no sociological significance? Would it make no cultural difference if human beings had no thumb?" (Turner "Epistemology" 100). These questions may also be of great significance to the writer who depends on his portrayal of his protagonists' body language to "speak" to other characters in a text and to those who read about them.

Ever since ancient times, hands have been recognised as having a language of their own.¹⁶⁷ It is one which can often be easily “read” and understood without the use of language and words by human beings from all walks of life. A study of the motif of hands in Böll’s text is especially important since, as Bernd Balzer noted, so far, precious little research has gone into this aspect of his writing (Balzer, Werk 201). In his discussion of Das Brot der frühen Jahre, Robert C. Conard also mentions that hands are an important motif in Böll’s writings (Heinrich Böll 118). Bernd Balzer, in his analysis of the same novel, writes: “Einen anderen, in der Sekundärliteratur selten beachteten Symbolkomplex stellen die Hände dar, auf die Böll hier [. . .] zu sprechen kommt, häufig in Verbindung mit ‘Brot’ [. . .] oder ‘Geld’ [. . .]” (Werk 201).

From Balzer’s footnoting of the word “selten” we read: “Von den Interpreten von *Brot* ist nur Margret [sic] Stone (Stone 1974, S. 81f.) die symbolische Bedeutung aufgefallen, im übrigen hat man erst im Blick auf den *Clown* die Wichtigkeit dieses Komplexes für Bölls literarische Sprache erkannt (Werk 201).¹⁶⁸ However, the present study will show that hands provide more than, to use Bernd Balzer’s term, “Charakterisierungsmöglichkeiten”¹⁶⁹ (examples of which will be discussed below) since they also focus our attention on the actions of the communicative body. In addition, it will be shown that Heinrich Böll has incorporated the symbolic use of hands in much if not all of his early writings.

“Mit diesen Händen”

Assumed to have been written in 1947, Böll’s undated short story “Mit diesen Händen” was first published in 1992 on the occasion of the exhibition Mit diesen Händen. Moderne chinesische Kalligraphie der Künstler Gu Gan und Huang Miaozi in Cologne.¹⁷⁰ As mentioned above, a part of the human body that has always played a significant if unrecognised role in Böll’s writings is that of the human hand. In this five hundred and twenty-two word short story, Böll uses the word “Hände” twenty-three times. The two-page story begins and ends with the tender image of someone’s hands making the sign of the cross on the foreheads of children at bedtime. However, Böll fills the gap between these two sentences with alternating horrific and mundane visual images of war and daily life that leave us aghast. For example, the same hands that make the sign of the cross on a child’s forehead also pull the trigger that shatters the foreheads of numerous innocents.

Among other harmless actions, hands carry food and drink to one’s mouth, clean one’s body, make money transactions, open doors in posh and rundown hotels and bars, roll cigarettes and throw objects in fun, pull on one’s mother’s breasts for nourishment, and grasp a schoolbag. However, as Böll reminds us, these same hands also steal from corpses, and dig trenches on the battlefield for protecting one’s body from the enemy. Desperate hands are also torn to shreds on barbed wire fences when food supplies are intentionally destroyed in plain sight, just out of the reach of hungry prisoners. Hands slap the face of another, falsify documents, and at times

¹⁶⁷ See, for example, the famous remarks [quoted in the introduction] of the Roman rhetorician, Marcus Fabius Quintilian (A.D. c35-c95) (Institutio oratoria xi.3.85-7) concerning the importance of hands for human communication.

¹⁶⁸ See Balzer, Das literarische Werk 201; footnote 37.

¹⁶⁹ See Balzer, Das literarische Werk 201.

¹⁷⁰ The exhibition ran at the Museum of East Asian Art in Cologne from December 17, 1992 to February 14, 1993. In co-operation with WDR, a musical composition by Prof. Dieter Schnebel (Berlin) based on Böll’s at that time unpublished text “Mit diesen Händen” was performed at the exhibition.

become covered in one's own blood or that of others. Böll sums up the conflicting images of hands as follows:

Diese Hände hast du millionenmal gewaschen, und immer wieder waren sie sauber, rein und unschuldig, und kein Mensch hat sich gefürchtet, sie anzufassen, obwohl du tödliche Granaten damit in den Trichter des Werfers gesteckt hast [. . .] von vielerlei Blut waren sie befleckt, [. . .] sie waren wie Metzgerhände, diese Hände, die dein Kind abends im Spiel mit seinem unschuldigen Mund berührt, wenn du das Zeichen des Kreuzes auf seine Stirn zeichnest. (25)

What makes this story all the more dramatic and unsettling is Böll's continuous use of the intimate personal pronoun "du" which effectively prevents us from reading the story in a detached manner. Again, the author seems to be trying to educate our imagination to see the reality of life often masked by topical, ordinary events and rituals. In his writings as well as in real life, it is clear that the same hands that demonstrate gentle acts of communication can also perform gross atrocities against another human being. The communicative role of hands, both negative and positive, will now be studied in four of Heinrich Böll's novels.

Der Zug war pünktlich

As the protagonist, Andreas, leaves by a troop train for the Russian front, he is convinced that he will soon die. Böll uses one aspect of the hand, its fingers, here "lange Leichenfinger," to suggest the inevitability of Andreas' rapidly approaching death. Searchlights become corpse fingers that rip the dark sky in two in their relentless search for their powerless victim. On another occasion, when all Andreas wants to do is drink himself into a drunken stupor, "eine unsichtbare Hand" inexplicably "restrains" him from using his physical hands to open a bottle of wine. Hours before his death, the prostitute Olina's piano playing reduces Andreas to tears. In fact, her hands perform several tasks: they make music, gently dry his tears, touch, and comfort him.

In placing her hands on Andreas's head while promising him he will be safe wherever she may take him, Olina enacts the religious and communicative act of giving a blessing to the faithful: "'Wohin ich dich auch führen werde, es wird das Leben sein. Komm!' Ihre Hände liegen auf seinem Kopf" (146). The irony, of course, is that in deserting the German army to flee with Olina, Andreas rushes with her into the arms of death. The decision to spend the night together deprives them not only of their material and monetary possessions but also of their lives. Avoiding a night with the General prevents Olina from finding out that the General's car, the one they try to escape in, will be attacked at first light by the Polish Resistance fighters. The searching corpse-like fingers finally find their victim.

As he ponders his fragmented body—his legs, arms, head, cheeks, face, breast—the narrator reveals the protagonist's dying thoughts:

Mein Gott, denkt Andreas, sind sie denn alle tot? ... und meine Beine ... meine Arme, bin ich denn nur Kopf ... ich liege auf dieser nackten Straße, [. . .]
Weine ich denn? ... Nein, es tropft auf seine Wangen, und [. . .] [er sieht] nun, daß Olinas Hand über seinem Kopf von einem Bruchstück des Wagens herunterhängt, und daß Blut von ihren Händen auf sein Gesicht tropft, [. . .]."
(154)

The macabre image reminds us of the narrator's earlier "verkörpert" description of the words issuing forth from the "mouths" that seem to belong to the corpse-like fingers: "Wir kriegen dich, wir tasten die ganze Nacht durch" (9).

Ironically, it is Olina's blood covered hand that finally points out to Andreas that the answer to the question which has dogged him throughout the novella. He will die in Styr. However, the death of the lovers is paradoxically the symbol of their new life in Christ. In the midst of the carnage, Böll manages to conjure up the Christian imagery of the blood of Christ pouring from his wounded hands to save sinners. Andreas's fragmented body is, as it were, made spiritually whole by Olina's blood as it drips from her mutilated hands. Their spiritual love and faith in God appears to bind them to each other in death.

In this text, Böll has effectively portrayed the conflicting role of hands, both figuratively and literally, for Andreas' and Olina's fate. Hands not only give solace while bringing two young people together but also cast them asunder while inflicting unspeakable destruction on all those in their company. Their love and their anticipation of a better life in the next world, however, is a glimmer of hope that Böll allows to shine forth even in the midst of the horrors of the war. Ihor Prodaniuk's interpretation of Böll's world view seems valid. According to him: "[Andreas' and Olina's] tragic lives reflect Böll's view. Spirituality, love of beauty, of human dignity, of all forms of life cannot exist in a world demoralised by war. Thus the lovers must die" (Prodaniuk *Imagery* 26). However, the reality behind the contemporary events portrayed by Böll in this story clearly suggest that it is the hand of death which gives Olina and Andreas salvation.

Und sagte kein einziges Wort

Fred Bogner has breakfast in the snack-bar where Käte would also stop later for coffee and doughnuts. The warm smile of the pretty young snack-bar girl casts a spell on Fred: "Wünschen Sie Kaffee?' 'Ja,' sagte ich schnell, und sie wandte mir, als habe der Ton meiner Stimme sie berührt, ihr ruhiges und schönes Gesicht zu und nickte lächelnd, [...]" (35; ch. 3). He is also drawn to her hands as she works around him: "Sie hantierte nahe vor meinem Gesicht mit dem Tablett, weil sie mit der freien Hand eine Serviette ausbreiten wollte, und ich half ihr, [...] und roch für einen Augenblick ihre Hände: Ihre Hände rochen gut" (37; ch. 3). Her body language expressed through her hands and her smile signify that a warm human bond is already developing between them.

Käte's observations on hands also serve to signify loving human interaction. For example, she focuses our attention on Fred's hands when she remembers giving birth to their twins in a bomb shelter during an air raid: "Fred's Hände waren es, die die Nabelschnüre zerschnitten, die die Geräte auskochten, auf meiner Stirn lagen, während ich in den Wehen schrie" (42; ch. 4). For Fred and Käte, the sharing, helping, comforting actions of hands are welcome signs of communication in a chaotic world. In times of joy, pain, sorrow, and loneliness, a helping human hand assures them both that they are neither ignored nor alone. For Fred, being able to relate to the shop girl lifts him out of his depression, if only temporarily: "Wunderbar, Ihr Kaffee.' Sie lächelte mir zu, nickte, und ich wußte plötzlich, wie gerne ich sie sah. Ihre Anwesenheit erfüllte mich mit Wohlbefinden und Ruhe" (37; ch. 3). Again the language of hands speaks of sharing, caring, friendship, and another human being's intimacy and love (both platonic and sensual since her coffee reminds him of Käte's coffee).

However, Böll also demonstrates that the language of hands may also speak of the impersonal nature of many relationships. For example, when Fred goes to cash his paycheque, he describes the cashier's hands as being "sauber." In this transaction, their interaction is sterile. Neither Fred nor the cashier particularly care about the life of the other. Fred just wants his

money so he can give it to Käte to support herself and their children, and the cashier is only interested in efficiently doing her job so she can collect her paycheque.

In another situation, as she makes her confession, the priest's hands do not at first inspire Käte with confidence:

[D]ie Art wie er sein Profil mit der aufgestützten Hand verdeckte, hatte etwas Gewerbsmäßiges und Einstudiertes. [. . .] Dann hob er die Lider, ich sah seine Augen, das Gelb vom Nikotin in seinen Fingern, und er senkte die Augen wieder und sagte: "Weiter." Er sagte es sanft, und doch schmerzte es mich, so wie es schmerzt, wenn eine geschickte Hand den Eiter aus einer Wunde drückt. (73; ch. 8)

It is interesting that Böll appears here to depart from his more realistic descriptions to "stage" and dramatise this meeting between Käte and the country priest. The priest's theatrical hand gestures make the reader aware that even in the priesthood, the lowest members of the hierarchy are defenceless, controlled, as it were, directed by their superiors.

Böll's use of the bodily image of a skilled hand pressing out the pus in a festering wound to portray the priest's gentle words coaxing the hatred out of her system, is striking. Throughout her confession, his hand movements seem choreographed as he covers and uncovers his face with his cupped hands, grips the edge of the table with them, or places them on his knees. They effectively prevent the peasant priest from making eye contact with Käte for any more than a brief moment at a time. Is he hiding something?

Käte desperately wants to be absolved, however, his body language alienates rather than comforts her. In the light of her intense hatred for sophisticated, wealthy, smooth-skinned priests, the peasant priest ponders out loud whether he should absolve Käte. His words tumble out from between the fingers of his hands which once again cover his face. Filled with emotion, he brandishes his hands in front of her face. Finally, after again using his hands to hide his face while he prays, the priest of the Sieben Schmerzen Mariä abruptly rises and to her relief absolves Käte. Only then does she feel sorry for him, and only then do we discover the discontent that has been building up within the priest, and therefore what he has been hiding.

Abandoning his attempt to justify his decision with a sweeping motion of his hands, the priest launches into a bitter confession of his own hatred for his superiors. His tirade concludes with the following cynical question: "' [. . .] ach – warum soll ich sie hassen, die armen Priester, die den Geruch exquisiter Hotelbadezimmer in meiner zerfallenen Sakristei hinterlassen'" (76; ch. 8). Suddenly the priest's confusing hand motions take on meaning. He and Käte obviously share the same feelings of outrage at the hypocrisy of the travelling clergy. From Fred we find out that the Bishop lumps this priest together with others who in his eyes only fit into a C-minus to D-minus category. Käte's confession gives him the courage to finally speak his mind regarding the insincerity and lack of dedication that characterises the approach of superiors to the Church and its faithful following. His "confession," therefore, is an honest display of solidarity with Käte, and concern for her problems, while simultaneously dispelling her earlier mistrust.

In Käte's presence, the priest's evasive hand movements seem to direct the tenor and rhythm of their meeting, including its highs and lows, and its moments of indecision, desperation, and relief. After his emotional and impassioned outburst, the priest says good bye to Käte: "Er gab mir zum Abschied die Hand, blickte mich seufzend an und geleitete mich zur Tür" (76; ch. 8). This time, however, having shared their innermost feelings about the Church he is finally able to look her in the face while shaking hands with her. Their joined hands seal their communication and show their mutual respect and understanding for each other's lot in life.

Clearly, Böll's sympathy lies not with the Bishop but with the poor priest who is so burdened with his own hatred that he finds it difficult to balance inflexible Church dogma with his human inclination to communicate his understanding of Käte's spiritual and physical needs. Together, however, Käte and the priest recognise each other as fellow sufferers who can take solace in being able to confide in each other.

Haus ohne Hüter

In this full-length novel dealing with the plight of two war widows and their fatherless sons, Böll again uses the motif of hands to establish the extent or lack of communication that exists between his characters. The narrator informs us that Martin and his parents, Nella and Rai all have light hands. The adjective "leicht" in reference to hands is always associated with shared, tender, loving moments among Böll's characters. In his writings, Böll successfully "teaches" us to think like he does about the "language" "spoken" by hands, for example, that "light" and "heavy" hands refer respectively to "good" and "bad" hands. As a result, we are now able to recognise his personal designation of untraditional human qualities and values for specific parts of the body. The motif of light hands, therefore, is a reliable indicator we can use to recognise characters who communicate in a positive manner with each other. For example, Rai's light hands identify him as a literary artist who openly seeks to communicate with others through his art. However, when the Nazis appropriate his poems for their fascist propaganda, Rai stops writing.

Interestingly enough, the only time in the novel that Nella's hands come into physical contact with her son is when he gains her attention by deliberately coughing and interrupting her late-night reading: "Die Mutter sprang sofort auf, wenn er hustete, und kam an sein Bett. Sie legte die Hand auf seine Stirn, küßte ihn auf die Wange [. . .]" (152; ch. 1). On another occasions, as Nella leaves Luigi's ice-cream parlour, she openly admits to herself her negligence of the boy: "Sehr plötzlich befiel sie oft die Sehnsucht nach dem Kind, das sie für Tage ganz vergaß: Es war gut, seine Stimme zu hören, seine Wange zu fühlen, zu wissen, daß es da war, seine leichte Hand zu spüren und [. . .] sich seines Daseins zu vergewissern" (181; ch. 3). Although she loves Martin, in allowing hate and nostalgia to consume and control her day to day existence, Nella inadvertently excludes him from sharing in her life. The touch of Martin's "leichte Hand" reminds her that even though Rai is dead there is still something good and positive in her life: their son.

Much later in the novel, Nella slowly begins to show a more active interest in her eleven year old son. It is a gradual change that Böll again depicts through focusing our attention on their hands. The narrator's description of a breakfast scene with Nella and her son reveals that they are both keenly aware of the actions of each other's hands: Nella, by what she hears and Martin, by what he sees:

Sie hörte die Geräusche von Martin, der hinter ihr am Tisch frühstückte; sie hörte das kleine Schaben, wenn er die Kaffeemütze von der Kanne nahm, wenn er Brot bestrich, den Löffel am Marmeladentopf ausklopfte, [. . .] und den Schlag vernahm sie, den er traditionsgemäß dem leeren, umgekehrt im Eierbecher stehenden Ei versetzte: knacks, [. . .]. (297; ch. 11)

In fact, after three days, Nella begins to experiences a sense of routine, and even to recognise Martin's reaction to her hands as she sets the table and pours his coffee at breakfast time: "[. . .] schon hatte sie den Eindruck von [. . .] Regelmäßigkeit: Toast, Ei, Kaffee und das glückliche Gesicht des Jungen, der das morgendliche Frühstück mit der Mutter genoß, der ihr beim

Tischdecken zusah, ihre Handgriffe beim Kaffee-Einschenken beobachtete" (297; ch. 11). His mother's undivided attention not only gives Martin great enjoyment but also begins to show her the importance of small details in everyday activities for establishing a closer relationship with her son.

Böll also conveys Nella's ability to finally communicate with children in terms of her use of her hands. At Albert's mother's idyllic Bietenhahn country estate where she elects to stay and play outdoors with Heinrich Brielach and his sister Wilma, the boy is surprised to hear Nella say: "Geben Sie mir die Kleine 'raus.' [. . .] Heinrich war sehr erstaunt, wie Martins Mutter das Kind an der Hand nahm, mit ihm lächelte und hinters Haus ging. [. . .] Heinrich war erstaunt, weil auch sie ihm plötzlich gut erschien" (410; ch. 22). Holding her hand out to him, Nella even offers to teach Heinrich how to play ping pong. It is an act that demonstrates Nella's readiness to involve herself in the give and take of life in general, and in particular of the present rather than the past which has left her often drowning in self-pity and nostalgia for a lost life.

Much earlier in the novel, on an occasion when her preoccupation with the past has reduced her to tears, Nella welcomes the comforting touch of a stranger. When a taxi driver tells her that he is married and has a family, she begins to weep out of sheer envy and longing for her lost life with Rai: "Der Chauffeur [. . .] löste [. . .] die rechte Hand vom Steuerrad und legte sie für einen Augenblick leicht auf ihren Arm. Er sagte nichts, und sie war froh darüber" (182; ch. 3). The spontaneity of the light touch of his hand on her arm not only comforts her but also signals that a bond now exists where before there was none. In fact, words would have been superfluous. Nella's willingness to touch and be touched by another's hand is, therefore, symbolic of her becoming more of an open, receptive, and communicative body.

Nella contemplates encouraging and allowing the romantic advances of Gäseler, the suspected "murderer" of her husband Rai, in order to avenge Rai's untimely death. However, when she begins to live in the present her hatred turns into utter boredom and she recoils in disgust at the unexpected touch of his hand. Böll uses the hand motif to highlight her change of heart: "Rai kam nicht, und die Erinnerung schwieg. Haß kam nicht, nur Gähnen, [. . .] 'Tun Sie die Hand weg! [. . .] lassen Sie die Hand endgültig weg, es langweilt mich so'" (352; ch. 14). The change in her emotional response to Gäseler is due to her finally beginning to question her priorities.

Once the welfare of her family begins to take on greater significance for Nella, she becomes more communicative in her relationships, more forward looking, and less obsessed with a past that she cannot change or retrieve. Just as the changing colours from the neon lights at Luigi's ice-cream parlour on her hands segment her memories of her past life with Rai, the increasing hand contact that she spontaneously makes with Martin, Heinrich, and Wilma represent her growing readiness to fully engage in a new life with all its uncertainties.

Beautiful hands characterise Heinrich's mother, Frau Brielach. Their beauty, however, has only been acknowledged by two men in her life, her deceased husband and the baker. In fact, her hands are the source of the baker's passion for her: "Des Bäckers Leidenschaft entzündete sich schon beim Anblick ihrer Hände" (198-199). Because Frau Brielach suffers from pyorrhoea and loose teeth and has no other means of supporting herself and her two children outside of her job at the bakery, she is caught in a "love" triangle that makes her life a living hell. Nella is relentlessly pursued by the pathetic murmuring of the love-starved baker whose ex-Nazi wife hates him and denies him his conjugal rights. His desire for children spurs him on to try and communicate his feelings to Frau Brielach who so far has rebuffed his sexual advances with vulgar words she learned from her foul-mouthed lover, Leo.

Nella endures the humiliation of Leo's verbal and physical abuse because he provides her with a place to live and some financial support:

Leo ha te nichts mehr als schlechte Z hne: Er selbst hatte tadellos wei e, ganze gesunde Z hne, die er mit gro em Eifer pflegte. [. . .] Er hatte so strahlend gesunde Z hne, und schon seit Monaten bem ngelte er die ihren und ihren Mundgeruch, [. . .] Seine harten, sauberen H nde pr feten ihren K rper von Tag zu Tag, und seine Augen waren so hart und unbestechlich wie seine H nde." (186-187; ch. 4)

Although Leo's healthy teeth suggests that his breath is fresh, figuratively speaking, the filthy words that daily issue forth from his "foul-mouth" suggest otherwise. B ll's description of their physical relationship is clearly anything but romantic. Leo's clean but uncompromising hard hands violate rather than caress her body. His touches are not aimed at giving her pleasure but rather at discovering weaknesses or imperfections on her body that he can ridicule.

Based on the fact that the baker has money and a thriving business in which Heinrich can later do an apprenticeship, Frau Brielach finally decides to favour him over Leo. However, her dire financial circumstances in the end force her to agree to move into the vacant room above the bakery. The room is obviously not without its advantages: "Auch ein Badezimmer war oben. Rosenfarben gekachelt, Brause und die stetig brennende Stichflamme. Sauberkeit, kostenlos und warm in Winter. Und dreizehn schneewei e, neue Z hne" (377; ch. 16). However, to experience its comfort and security, she must basically "sell" her body to the baker.

The word "Hand," which appears nineteen times in the novel's sixteenth chapter, is very much an indicator of the progress of their relationship. For example, after withdrawing her hand several times from the baker's when he tries to hold it and cover it with his pathetic kisses, Frau Brielach finally stops resisting. It is a decision that almost overpowers him with expectations:

Er sah sie sch chtern an, nahm wieder ihre Hand, und sie lie  sie ihm: Als w re ein Kontakt geschlossen, leuchteten seine Augen, [. . .] und wieder k bte er ihre Hand, k bte den Arm und murmelte rhythmisch geordnetes, unverst ndliches Zeug  ber ihre Hand,  ber ihren Arm hin: "Hand", verstand sie – "Hand – gl cklich." (374; ch. 16)

For the baker, not pulling her hand away signals that he has finally established communication with her. Here, B ll appears to be suggesting that her "hand" now symbolically represents her whole body – she is yielding to him. However, for Frau Brielach, it is purely a matter of convenience, one that suggests she has struck the best bargain possible under her current circumstances.

Having made up her mind, Frau Brielach insists that he turn the light back on and continue working: "'Mach das Licht an', sagte sie ... 'Ja', sagte sie, 'ich ziehe in das Zimmer, aber mach jetzt Licht'" (377; ch. 16). Her insistence that the light be switched back on cancels any illusions the baker may have that his offer has been accepted based on romantic feelings on her part. There is no joy in her decision, only resignation. By emphasising the potential of the human hand to both ward off and invite close contact between two people, Heinrich B ll emphasises the economic plight and social dilemma of women like Frau Brielach in post-war Germany. Although Frau Brielach may physically survive, she is still left emotionally destitute. For B ll, beneath this seemingly child-like game of hand holding is the bitter reality facing many war widows in Germany's economic restoration era.

Das Brot der frühen Jahre

In this novel, Heinrich Böll's heavy reliance on the language of hands again focus our attention on the presence and / or lack of human communication between his characters. J.H. Reid suggests that "Böll's response to materialist society is to be found purely in the oasis of personal relationships and a diffuse aesthetic symbolism" (Heinrich Böll 121). In this story, bread is the predominant symbol around which Böll introduces many of his other favourites such as colours (e.g., red and green),¹⁷¹ water (e.g., waves, streams, pools, tears),¹⁷² and the human hand. However, as interesting as these and other symbols may be, the present study will mainly concentrate on Böll's use of the hand motif in *Das Brot der frühen Jahre*. It will show that the hand motif not only reflects the giving and taking of bread but also helps Böll to negatively and positively define human relationships while excavating Fendrich's buried and suppressed memories.

A rare telegram from Walter Fendrich's father begins the revival in him of a series of suppressed memories. In it his father reminds him to pick up Hedwig Muller, a colleague's twenty year old daughter. After one look at Hedwig and touching her elbow and her broad "light" hand, Fendrich falls hopelessly in love with her. Böll's careful depiction of the communication between Fendrich and his father and Fendrich and Hedwig indirectly makes an important point. The telegram, which of course is not hand-written, symbolises the physical and emotional distance between father and son. However, Fendrich's hand touching that of Hedwig's at the train station symbolises the physically and emotionally close relationship that immediately develops between them.

It is a turning point in his life when love finally makes him think more about the welfare of others and less about himself and his selfish needs: "Später dachte ich oft darüber nach, wie alles gekommen wäre, wenn ich Hedwig nicht am Bahnhof abgeholt hätte: ich wäre in ein anderes Leben eingestiegen, [. . .] ein Leben, das mir damals, bevor ich Hedwig kannte, als ganz passabel erschien" (421; ch. 1). Fendrich's previous lack of concern for others is inherent in his father's words to his twenty-three year old son: "Sei nett, hole sie ab und denke daran, ein paar Blumen zu kaufen und freundlich zu sein" (421; ch. 1).

Before meeting Hedwig, it is clearly money and not human relationships that used to occupy Fendrich's thoughts. In fact, his own comments about how he interacts with others are couched in terms of what he calls the "price" of his hands, or in other words, what they can earn:

Die meisten Menschen, mit denen ich zu tun habe, sind freundlich zu mir, ich bin es zu ihnen. Es ist alles ganz passabel. Ich habe meinen eigenen Preis, den meiner Hände, meines technischen Wissens, den einer gewissen Erfahrung, den meines lebenswürdigen Umgangs mit den Kunden (denn man rühmt meinen Charme und

¹⁷¹ While red in *Das Brot der frühen Jahre* is symbolic of Fendrich's superficial love for Ulla, his attraction to her red coat and unscrupulous business practices, green is characteristic of his new love Hedwig, new beginnings, and a more generous spirit. Also, according to Alexander Mathäs, red "not only stands for remembering Germany's cultural accomplishments but also for forgetting Germany's brutally insatiable hunger for wealth and prestige" (Mathäs "Love" 154-155). However, in *Wo warst du, Adam?* the colour symbolism is reversed. While a green moving van takes Ilona to Filskeit's death camp, it is a red one that takes Feinhals away from the front, that is, temporarily to safety. The colours, therefore, not only separate the lovers but also define who lives and who dies.

¹⁷² Water imagery, for example, in *Der Zug war pünktlich*, traces how Andreas's sensual love for Olina changes to spiritual love. Their free flowing tears are symbolic of the release of their pent-up emotions and long suppressed secrets.

meine tadellosen Manieren, die mir besonders zustatten kommen, da ich auch Vertreter für jene Maschinen bin, [. .] – diesen Preis habe ich immer mehr steigern können, alles ist am besten mit mir bestellt, und die Brotpreise sind ... inzwischen angeglichen. (436; ch. 1)

By intentionally using his charm to take advantage of his clients' goodwill and money, Fendrich shows himself to be just as much of an exploiter as his hated employer, Wickweber, against whom he so bitterly rails. Clearly, his personal price ("den meiner Hände") is no longer the reward for his handiwork but rather for his ability to "entertain" his customers with his body language. His ulterior motive is to stretch out his repair time so that he can charge more for his "services."

The story is set in 1952. After seven years of long hours of hard work, Fendrich has finally risen through the company ranks to become a well-paid expert in the repair and servicing of washing machines. Although he is now "rich" in material possessions such as a city apartment, a sizeable savings account, and a car, Fendrich is spiritually bankrupt. He even admits: "Es hatte Stunden gegeben, in denen ich mich selbst haßte, meine Arbeit, meine Hände" (423; ch. 1). However, Wickweber's daughter Ulla, who also happens to be Fendrich's fiancée, presents a different point of view when she praises his hands in terms of their suitability for his job and misinterprets what they say about his character:

"Ich habe deine Hände oft beobachtet, wie sie das Werkzeug hielten, wie sie das Gerät anfaßten – wie du Apparate, die du gar nicht kanntest, auseinanderlegtest, ihre Arbeitsweise studiertest und sie wieder zusammensetzttest. Man konnte sehen, daß du für diesen Beruf wie geschaffen bist und daß du ihn liebst – und daß es besser war, dich dein Brot verdienen zu lassen, als es dir zu schenken." (490; ch. 3)

Fendrich's response, however, proves that after all these years Ulla does not really know him: "'Ich liebe ihn nicht', sagte ich, 'ich hasse ihn [. .]'" (490; ch. 3). In fact, after meeting Hedwig, Fendrich finally admits that, to this point in time, his love has not been lavished on the job itself but rather on the money that his skilled hands have earned:

Ich wußte jetzt, was ich immer gewußt hatte, mir aber seit sechs Jahren nicht mehr gestanden hatte: daß ich diesen Beruf haßte, [. .] Ich haßte diese Waschmaschinen, und ein Ekel vor dem Geruch von Seifenlauge war in mir, ein Ekel der mehr als körperlich war. Was ich liebte an diesem Beruf, war das Geld, das er mir einbrachte." (452; ch. 2)

For Böll, therefore, Fendrich's hands are symbolic not only of his greed and materialism but also of his ability to mislead others and himself, that is, until he meets Hedwig.

Fendrich's incessant desire for bread is closely connected with the motif of hands. He frankly admits his addiction in vivid bodily terms. His thoughts about his hunger for freshly baked bread made his head spin, his eyes burn, and his knees go weak. Moreover, he felt as if a wolf was constantly tearing at his insides: "Brot. Ich war brotsüchtig, wie man morphiumsüchtig ist. Ich hatte Angst vor mir selbst, [. .]" (429; ch. 1). The "early years" of the story title refer to the years of deprivation and hunger he and other Germans experienced in the immediate post-war years. Fendrich does not allow shame to stop him from getting bread. For example, the fact that in those years his father often goes hungry or has to sell his precious books to buy him bread, causes him no concern whatsoever. Also, like Hans Schnitzler, Böll's protagonist in *Der Engel schwieg*, Fendrich values people mainly for their willingness to give him bread.

Although he appears to recognise that the sharing of bread is a symbol of a person's ethical urge to partake in the most important nourishment, Fendrich has so far failed to apply this principle to his own actions:

Noch jetzt oft, wenn ich mein Geld abgeholt habe [. . .] überkommt mich die Erinnerung an die wölfische Angst jener Tage, und ich kaufe Brot, [. . .] zwei [. . .] dann [. . .] eins, und kleine braune knusprige Brötchen, viel zu viele, die ich dann später meiner Wirtin in die Küche lege, weil ich nicht den vierten Teil [. . .] essen kann, und mich der Gedanke, das Brot könne verderben, mit Angst erfüllt. (429; ch. 1)

Before he meets and falls in love with Hedwig, Fendrich's act of "sharing" his bread with his landlady is one that is fraught with ulterior motives since it does not have her well-being at its core.

Using his thumbs, Fendrich breaks open two of the three rolls paid for by Ulla's brother. Again, the hand plays a decisive role here. First he takes the bread from Wolf without expressing his thanks then the assertive, intimate action of the thumbs which come directly in contact with the roll is more natural than if he were to cut it with a knife. Finally, without offering any of the rolls to Wolf, he eats them unbuttered as they sit in a café talking over a cup of coffee:

Ich [. . .] öffnete ein Brötchen, indem ich die beiden Daumen nebeneinander in den weißen Schnitt setzte und es dann nach außen aufbrach, [. . .]

"Mein Gott," sagte Wolf, "du hast doch nicht nötig, trockenes Brot zu essen."

"Nein," sagte ich, "ich habe es nicht nötig." [. . .]

Ich öffnete das zweite Brötchen, und ich spürte Wolfs Blick, wie er [. . .] auf meine Hände blickte. [. . .] und steckte das dritte Brötchen in die Tasche. (464-468; ch. 2)

Böll draws our attention to Wolf's hands which he describes as efficient and "clean," two adjectives which describe him to a tee: "[. . .] als er ihr zwei Groschen Trinkgeld gab, lächelte die junge Frau und legte die beiden Groschen wieder in seine tüchtige, saubere Hand, und er steckte sie kopfschüttelnd in sein Portemonnaie" (464; ch. 2). The waitress's smile and actions perplexes Wolf since he cannot imagine how such a lowly individual could so cheerfully refuse his money. It is interesting that Heinrich Böll again uses the adjective "sauber" to describe a character's hands when his relationship with another is strictly impersonal.

Standing in the doorway of her building, Fendrich now spontaneously gives the last of the three rolls to the hungry Hedwig: "Ich zog das Brötchen aus der Rocktasche, sie nahm es lächelnd, brach es schnell auf, und ich sah ihren weißen kräftigen Daumen tief in den weichen Teig hineinsinken" (469). Like Fendrich's, Hedwig's thumbs meet no resistance as they almost erotically but firmly sink into the soft bread. For the first time, Fendrich is finally able to control the "wolf" [his hunger] within him that earlier incessantly demanded to be fed.

Fendrich's unselfish act is made without any thought of financial or other form of gain. For Ulla, Wolf's sister, and now Fendrich's ex-girlfriend, this would have been quite impossible to imagine: "'Ganz [. . .] verstehe ich es nicht, weil ich nicht verstehe, daß es Dinge gibt, die du nicht des Geldes wegen tust – oder hat sie Geld?'" (486; ch. 3). Her cynical remark clearly suggests that in her eyes Fendrich is a selfish, and insensitive individual who recklessly and indiscriminately exploits others for his own monetary advancement. This time, however, in the

case of Hedwig, his act of gift-giving is genuine and made without the expectation of taking something from her.

The fact that Fendrich chooses to eat dry bread which he breaks open with his bare hands, after aggressively inserting his thumbs into the soft dough the middle, rather than cutting it with a knife, is important. Böll here is intentionally making reference to the sacrament of Holy Communion which is only possible in the company of others. As Michael C. Eben writes:

The loaf of bread has now assumed its own lofty aesthetic – one of humanity and philanthropy, free of Church dogma and rhetoric. The breaking of bread demands the necessary plurality of those who partake. Yet this overtly Christian gesture must also be man's natural bent and not a laborious and contrived adherence to a particular religious denomination. ("Aesthetic" 260)

Although Fendrich and Hedwig's act of breaking bread takes place in an unconventional setting, the religious connotations are obvious. The acts of giving, taking, and smiling not only spiritually bind them together but also express their ability to think about, and communicate with each other in a warm human way. In addition, by sharing a piece of apple cake they further demonstrate that they are able to "commune" with each other outside of the inflexible rituals, regulations, and locations authorised by the Church. Unlike his earlier meeting with Wolf in this same café, Fendrich is now willing to share what he is eating with his companion, Hedwig.

The motifs of hands and bread predominate in Fendrich's recollections of those early years as well as in the narrative present. Before Hedwig enters his life, other women beside Ulla have also found Fendrich attractive. However, his opinion of women has mainly been based on the potential of their hands to either give him bread or take it away from him. For example, Fendrich contrasts the long since deceased Sister Clara of the early years who used to give him soup, bread, pudding, and cigarettes with Ulla and her friends:

Ihr [Schwester Clara] gehört mehr Zärtlichkeit als allen denen, die ich so kennenlernte, wenn ich mit Ulla ausging: ich las in ihren Augen, sah in ihre Hände geschrieben die Preise, die ich ihnen hätte zahlen müssen; [...] und ich weckte den Wolf, der immer noch in mir schlief, den Hunger, der mich die Preise lehrte. (436; ch. 1)

In his mind's eye, he even visualises his dancing partners' dainty hands changing into claws that can snatch away his bread. Also, in using the word "Zärtlichkeit" to describe Fendrich's relationship with Sister Clara, Heinrich Böll emphasises the lack of a sense of "Gebundenheit" between him and Ulla and her friends whose hands "speak" more of money than of tenderness. The fact is that until he meets Hedwig, Fendrich has never been able to truly trust anyone.

As mentioned above, Fendrich's bitter memories of the starving early years make him unwilling to accept people and their actions at face value. As the friendly, pretty owner of Café Joos warmly greets him, her eyes tell him that she finds him attractive. However, when Fendrich transposes himself back to the years of hunger and deprivation, he imagines her negative reaction to his request for bread:

Ich [. . .] versuchte mir vorzustellen, wie sie wohl mit mir gesprochen hätte, wenn ich vor sieben Jahren gekommen und sie um Brot gefragt hätte – und ich sah diese Augen noch schmaler werden, hart und trocken wie die einer Gans, und ich sah diese reizenden, zierlich gespreizten Finger sich krampfen wie Krallen, sah diese weiche gepflegte Hand runzelig und gelb von Geiz. (483; ch. 3)

By using the striking image of her fingers turning into claws as soon as she realises she must give something to him, Böll portrays Fendrich as thinking of her as being more animal-like than human. This animal imagery also reminds one of Heidegger's emphatic statement that no animal can have a hand, and that the hand contains the essence of the thinking, gift-giving human being. In Fendrich's eyes, no thinking human being would deny him bread. In fact, his reverie is so real that he involuntarily jerks his hands away from her "Krallen" and seemingly wrinkled yellow hand, startling the unsuspecting woman.

By drawing our attention to how Fendrich perceives her hands now and as they would have looked to him in the early post-war years, Böll reveals the reality behind a seemingly friendly "Handsschlag," to use Heidegger's word, between acquaintances. The present-day burgeoning economy is therefore reflected in the proprietor's soft, well-manicured hands, and the earlier, vicious, dog eats dog times by the image of her hands turning into claws. Clearly, for Fendrich, claws symbolise the imagined inhumanity of all those who would seek either to take bread away from him or deny him bread. Also, by making an associating between the symbol of monetary greed to her hands that he originally applied to his own, Fendrich imagines her to be also grasping and selfish and only concerned with making a profit.

For Fendrich, it is only his parents and a few women at work who have ever given him anything. When he sees his old girlfriend Veronika, Fendrich's description of her still revolves around his memories of her hands and the food they served him seven years ago:

Einmal stand die Tür offen, und ich sah sie [. . .] mit ihren großen Händen Milch ausschöpfen. Manchmal hatte sie mir Brot mitgebracht [. . .] hatte darauf bestanden, mich zu füttern, und jedesmal, wenn sie mir ein Stück Brot gab, hatte ich diese Hände nah vor meinem Augen gehabt (435; ch. 1).

Böll's use of the verb "füttern" enforces Fendrich's personification of his hunger for bread in the early years as an insatiable wolf within him which still stalks him even in these times of plenty. Fendrich also remembers Helene Frenkel, another female employee who, although she herself is sickly, shares her sandwich with him and later dies. The sudden recollection of this incident makes him feel guilty and ashamed of his greed.

Touching Hedwig's body with his hands for the first time physically awakens in him a need to share his life with her:

Ich [. . .] half ihr beim Einsteigen, und so hielt ich zum erstenmal ihre Hand und ihren Ellenbogen: Es war ein runder, kräftiger Ellenbogen und eine große, aber leichte Hand; trocken war die Hand und kühl- [. . .] ich würde nicht mehr von ihrer Seite weichen, an diesem Tage nicht und nicht in den vielen Tagen, die kommen würden, diese Tage alle, deren Summe Leben heißt. (444; ch. 2)

Fendrich immediately recognises her as his life's partner.

It is also interesting that Böll, as he did in Haus ohne Hüter, again uses the adjective "leicht" to indicate that an unbreakable, intimate bond now exists between two individuals. In contrast, Fendrich negatively describes Wolf Wickweber's hand on his shoulder as being heavy and intrusive: "Plötzlich lag Wolfs Hand auf meiner Schulter: Ich spürte sie, wie ich das Gewicht der Wassersäule gespürt hatte, [. . .] man war nicht mit einander verbunden, [. . .] und ich schob seine Hand von meiner Schulter" (458-463; ch. 2). According to Margaret Stone: "Der Erzähler drückt Wolfs freundschaftliche Gefühle für Walter durch seine Gesten aus" (Brot 83). However, what she fails to recognise is that Böll emphasises Walter's rejection of this friendly overture by drawing our attention to the *weightiness* of Wolf's hand as it is pushed away. Böll's use of body language intentionally distinguishes between "light" hands that inspire feelings of security,

intimacy, and communication and “heavy” hands that register suffocating feelings of disgust, fear, and alienation.

Another important human aspect of Fendrich’s change for the better is registered as Böll again focusing our attention, and that of his protagonist, on his hands. Fendrich experiences increasing pain and discomfort when his hand is accidentally injured in the company of both Ulla and Hedwig. Ulla asks for, and accepts Fendrich’s outstretched hand. When she suddenly lets go, his hand drops and hits the edge of the table: “‘Verzeih’, sagte sie, ‘das wollte ich nicht – nein.’ Ich spürte einen heftigen Schmerz in der Hand, aber ich glaubte ihr” (490; ch. 3). Fendrich believes her claim that it was an accident.

His ability to feel the physical pain in his hand, and to recognise Ulla’s mental pain, suggests that Fendrich is beginning to understand what it means to be human and therefore vulnerable. He injures his other hand when he accidentally bangs it against the door handle when, almost driving past Hedwig, he has to abruptly stop. He assesses his injuries as follows: “Beide Hände taten mir weh, als ich ausstieg und im Dunkeln auf Hedwig zuing” (491; ch. 4). The physical pain in his hands reminds him that others are suffering because of his decision. In other words, an awareness of his hands finally helps him to recognise his essential being.

Unlike Wolf’s hand, the pressure of Hedwig’s hand fills Fendrich with great relief, comfort, and anticipation: “[. . .] ich hörte ihre Stimme, spürte ihre Hand auf meinem Arm und fühlte mich fast, wie sich jemand fühlen muß, der die große Prüfung am Jüngsten Tag bestanden hat” (492; ch. 4). For Fendrich, his life now falls into two time periods: before and after Hedwig. He feels her reassuring hand on his shoulder while he is speaking with his landlady, Frau Brotig, who in rejecting his claim that Hedwig is his wife, turns them out of her house. For the first time he sees that his landlady, the woman he has had a secret crush on for several years, has grown old. Fendrich and Hedwig, who are now learning how to love and fully share and communicate with each other, feel no need to have their union blessed and “legitimised” by the Church. While they as communicative bodies positively impact on each other’s lives, it remains to be seen what sort of effect they will have on the lives of others.

Even though they both reject the profit oriented society they live in, Böll has not given any assurances that these two young people will fight for social change. This is why Fendrich is still hesitant of the future and, even though his recollections have often been shown to be false, prefers to lose himself in an idealised past. The physical pain in his hands are surely meant to be symbolic of the past selfish life he has recently abandoned and the present new life with all its potential joys and problems that he hopes to continue to enjoy into the future. Remembering the past, therefore, is essential for recognising the present and facing the future. It is something Böll hopes his young protagonist will eventually come to understand.

In the foregoing, a discussion of the motifs of “Zärtlichkeit”/“Gebundenheit,” and the hand has been used to define the communicative body and its role in several of Heinrich Böll’s early texts. These motifs describe the communicative body as being open, caring, unselfish, and sharing. Böll’s prose shows how the human touch, gaze, smile, and a few kind words not only have the amazing power to bring people together in love and understanding but also to offer them a chance to redeem themselves.

Many of his characters are actively searching for a way to bond with others in a loving community which is not administered by the inflexible rules and regulations of religious, governmental, military, or commercial institutions. When they do experience this sense of “Gebundenheit” it is often as the result of caring for and/or being cared for by others. In Böll’s writings, therefore, the motifs of tenderness, a sense of belonging, and hands characterise his protagonists’ ability to think and convey the ever changing status of communication between

them and other characters. Clearly, for Böll, the ability to communicate is mankind's main hope for survival in a chaotic world.

CHAPTER VIII. CONCLUSION

The present study has been devoted to researching Heinrich Böll's early prose as a discourse of war-damaged bodies. I would now like to state the importance of what I have accomplished by discussing my results. Almost immediately after I began working on my project, it became clear to me just how significant the role of the human body really is in Böll's early writings. However, in order to research its role, I first had to find a theoretical approach that would be capable of meeting the challenge posed by the task at hand. In this regard, I found that the use of an "interdisciplinary" approach to developing a theory of the body for analysing literary texts to be invaluable. In reaching out to the sociology of the body, I was trying to integrate into my theme the insights of a diverse group of theoretical perspectives. In addition, this approach would eventually suggest the structure for my thesis.

The fact that sociology and literature both deal with human beings and society, provided a useful point of departure for my project. The gradual recognition of the body's role in sociology over the last three decades by sociologists was greatly influenced by a variety of theoretical perspectives. Selectively drawing upon insights from disciplines such as anthropology, philosophy, theology, psychology, cultural studies, and the arts, which informed a broad sphere of circumstances related to the body, sociologists finally came to understand the human body as both a symbolic object ("Körper") and an experiential subject ("Leib"). Also, since the body is a bearer of meaningful codes, signs, and conventions, an understanding of them is important if man is to successfully negotiate his way through life. Although the decoding of body language is instinctive, our full awareness of its diverse signals must also be learned. A viable literary theory, one based on an informed awareness of body language in literature, therefore, has provided me with an invaluable tool for text interpretation. As it turns out, it is an approach which indirectly confirms Böll's personal views on interpreting a literary text.

Because of its significance for my choice of a methodological approach to my dissertation, I would like to repeat here, in part, Böll's comments on how best to interpret an author and his works. For him: "Die Zeitlichkeit eines Autors [. . .] müsste aber das Erste sein, das man zu vermitteln versucht, bevor man anfängt ihn auszulegen, zu interpretieren (Böll, "In Leserbriefen" 111). In following this suggestion, my appreciation and investigation of the role of the human body in Heinrich Böll's early prose has been greatly enhanced by my research into his "Zeitlichkeit." In other words, the political, social, and cultural milieu in which Böll lived, studied, worked, fought, and physically and mentally struggled for survival, both during the Third Reich and after its collapse, was one dominated by the regime's racist body ideologies and its aftermath.

Perhaps, the most important of all the insights that I gained into Böll's "Zeitlichkeit" were those of the body discourses promulgated by the National Socialists. In my opinion, Böll's complete rejection of the Nazis' interpretation of the perfect Aryan/Nazi body explains why the body plays such a major role in his early writings. For me, many of Böll's early works clearly seek to undermine the Nazis' "Schönheitsideal" and all that that entails. In addition, they also appear to intentionally expose the failure of the National Socialist regime's extraordinary efforts to create and train a "new" breed of human being, specifically mirroring the Northern Aryan races, that was to inhabit Hitler's new National Socialist German state.

So far, the central role of the body, especially that of the hand, in the recurring themes, motifs, and symbols in Böll's writings has mainly gone unrecognised by most critics. If the body has been noticed at all, it has more often than not been judged as simply one of the details that

add a touch of realism to his writing. The present study tries to show that for Böll, however, reality has several layers. Awareness of the body's physical and emotional nature in his works reveals what he calls "Wirklichkeit." Our recognition of the multidimensional meaning and nature of body language is essential if we are to follow Böll's suggestion that we use our imagination to decode what we read. For him: "Jene, die das Aktuelle für das Wirkliche halten, sind oft sehr weit davon entfernt, das Wirkliche zu erkennen" ("Zeitgenosse" 70).

When the General in Wo warst du, Adam?, for example, is finally awarded the Knight's Cross, his happy countenance is misleading. In contrast to his first appearance in the novel, the General's face is now described as "gar nicht mehr gelb," "nicht mehr müde," "ebenmäßig," "ruhig," "gebildet und human," even "verschönt[e]" by a tender "Lächeln" (129; ch. 9). Taken at face value, his body language completely misrepresents the reality of the circumstances. The stark reality is that it is Germany's failure to win the war, not the General's symbol of military success, that will profoundly affect his and the lives of others in a multitude of ways for years to come. His non-verbal behaviour in this humiliating scene of defeat and surrender, seems decidedly absurd. However, if we use our imagination as the author suggests, we will realise that he makes a scathing critical statement about the German military, its personnel, and its ideology. Clearly, Böll presents us with the small picture and expects us to recognise the big picture. A medal should not be considered more important than the senseless brutality and loss of lives that occur in war. The General's priorities are clearly misplaced and selfish.

Böll's focus on the verbal and non-verbal body language of soldiers of all ranks vividly introduces readers to many aspects of what I have termed in Chapter IV as "disciplined" [military] bodies. These include on the one hand, shocking acts of disobedience, insubordination, cowardice, irresponsible behaviour, indecisiveness, and corruption, and on the other hand, some remarkable displays of respect by officers for the rights of others and an abiding faith in human dignity. Böll also portrays soldiers whose bodies would be hard-pressed to meet the physical and psychological standards of perfection set by the National Socialist regime for members of its military, or for that matter, its general citizenry. In addition, an obvious lack of self-confidence, courage, faith and leadership in the war initiative dispels the Nazi dream of a Germany and a people so superior as to be capable of world domination. In other words, through close attention to body language, Böll smashes the myth of the perfect Aryan body while at the same time demonstrating that "imperfect" Aryan and non-Aryan bodies often belong to characters of higher value and with a greater understanding of what it means to be human.

The uniqueness of my study lies, therefore, in the fact that, to my knowledge, no other study has tried to interpret Böll's writings from this perspective. My aim, therefore, has been to finally bring both Böll and his work into the current discourse of the body, one that already garnered much interest in several disciplines, including literature. Böll, through his attention to the body, makes it clear that precisely because human beings are highly individualistic creatures that resist being reduced to machines, a government cannot successfully decree and enforce a preferred type of body, activity, and life style on an entire nation.

For Böll, people, unlike consumer goods, cannot be mass produced. By drawing our attention to their body language and their reaction to wearing the uniform, Böll portrays characters who try to express their individuality, some in an altruistic way, others not. For example, while the Captain in Wo warst du, Adam? felt he looked silly in his "Stahlhelm," in Das Vermächtnis, the First Lieutenant Schelling's undecorated uniform reflects his lack of interest in the military hierarchy and initiative, as well as his greater concern for the welfare of his men. Using our imagination, therefore, takes us beyond the obvious, allowing us to discover Böll's

attempts at drafting an ethics of the body, one that is based on human dignity of the individual and not the mass.

In my chapter on the “mirroring” body (Chapter V), appearances carry very important consequences for certain characters. Because of the shape of his nose, a Russian man was rounded up by German soldiers and executed in cold blood with numerous Jews on the edge of a stone quarry. Later, a German doctor would jokingly declare that the cause of death was “Hakennase.” Although one could applaud the German officer’s frantic attempts to save the life of his non-Jewish Russian landlord, the deeper reality Böll reveals is shocking. The officer, although disgusted by the atrocities he witnesses, still appears to consider that non-Aryans, especially Jews, are unworthy of his rescue efforts. If one’s hooked nose correctly identified one as belonging to a minority race of undesirables, Hegenmüller seemed prepared to turn a blind eye to the brutality to which one was subjected. In other words, his sense of humanity was conditional.

The “mirroring” body of Böll’s fictional character Colonel Bressen, also at first appears to be what it is not, namely, honourable, brave, and strictly disciplined. Bressen, whose body Böll keeps us firmly focused upon, made every effort to assume and maintain this persona, that is, as long as it was to his advantage. However, once his regiments began to collapse under the attacks of the advancing enemy, Bressen managed to turn a slight head injury (self-inflicted?) into one serious enough to get himself taken off the active duty roster. Even in his inter-war years he so successfully adapts himself to the airs, mannerisms and tastes of an aristocratic, upper class society that he is able to teach the newly rich who no longer felt comfortable in their own “skin.” His is a “Scheinwelt” in which nothing is as it seems. Böll’s detailed attention to his physical body and inner thoughts expose him as a fraud, no different from many whom the regime he served regarded as being degenerate and unworthy of life itself. Bressen’s body language, therefore, simultaneously conceals and reveals his real “identity.”

Again, characters whose bodies I have labelled as “dominating,” can also be recognised as such by observing Böll’s careful attention to their body language. For example, he draws our attention to SS First Lieutenant Filskeit’s non-Aryan bodily features by describing him as being “schwarzhaarig,” “zu klein,” and “pyknisch.” It is therefore ironic that Böll chooses to introduce Filskeit to us as a representative of Hitler’s most feared and ruthless, black-uniformed, racist organisation, his all-powerful “Schutzstaffel” [guard echelon SS]. In “reality,” although Filskeit unquestioningly carried out orders, he did not in many other respects fit the physical image of the real SS man. For one thing, contrary to the blood-thirsty, “Kämpfer” image of the SS man, Filskeit, who does not see himself as a killer, never directly kills anyone until he shoots the prisoner Ilona out of fear.

In this way, Böll alerts us to the fact that Filskeit is nothing but a caricature of all the hopes, ideas, and dreams of Himmler, the mastermind of the SS organisations whose members reigned supreme in the concentration and death camps they controlled. Unfortunately, for the most helpless human beings in Hitler’s Third Reich, the Jews, Filskeit’s power to dominate his victims in his death camp is absolute. In fact, his ability to contain his fear of his own personal, bodily deficiencies is based on his undisputed power to kill whatever appears threatening to his position and authority as a man and as a soldier. For Böll, therefore, domination of another, weaker than oneself, is predicated on fear, force, and violence. In other words, the “dominating” body depends on violence to preserve its power and contain its fear of its irrational emotions within its body “armour.”

“Communicative” bodies, as I have defined them above, abound in Böll’s early writings. They are easily recognised by their willingness to reach out and “touch” another human being by

spontaneous bodily actions such as a warm smile, touch of a hand, a look, words etc. Böll's characters who fit into this fourth category of bodies are individuals who stand out from the masses, and who are willing to show their emotions. Such characters are open and ready to take a chance on what possibilities may be contained in the unpredictable, in the unknown. For example, Käte Bogner opens her heart and mind to the family who operate a snack-bar among the bombed out city ruins. In so doing, she finds friendship and a sense of community that is not possible with her hypocritical Church-going landlady who is only focused on money and shows her and her family no compassion.

The human hand is an important symbolic bodily motif in Böll's writings which so far has neither been fully recognised nor researched. In the present study, I have paid particular attention to how this motif can be used by the reader to better understand Böll's underlying theme of what it means to be human in chaotic Germany, before, during, and after the war. The fact that he wrote a short story strictly about hands shortly after the war is an indication of just how much he felt could be deduced from them about human relationships. Clearly, for Böll, the role of hands can be ambiguous. Changes in a relationship, for example, the one between Frau Brielach and the baker in Haus ohne Hüter, can be traced by taking note of how characters use their hands and/or react to the signals that emanate from the hands of others. In his novel Das Brot der frühen Jahre, Fendrich describes the hands of those who would take bread away from him in the early post-war hunger years as claws, that is, non-human, and those that would give him comfort and sustenance, as broad and handsome hands of warm, thinking human beings.

As mentioned above, no other studies have as yet addressed the presence and importance of the body in Böll's work. In answering the research questions laid out in my introduction, my research results confirm not only its importance for a better understanding of Böll's writings but also the usefulness of literary body language in this regard as an effective analytical tool. In addition, it is hoped that this study may lead other critics to further explore this topic or use it as a point of departure for other studies of his texts. Since the present study only deals with the first quarter of his creative literary output, future research could be aimed at analysing the rest of his oeuvre from the perspective of his use of the body. Does the body continue to play an important role? If so, how? Are political, social, and cultural factors reflected in it? If not, why? Is Böll's "Zeitlichkeit" a factor? If so, how? Research along these lines would serve to either substantiate or contradict the results of my research and its application and thus start a new dialogue on the value of Böll's work for today's post-war generation of readers.

In this regard, Frank Finlay's observations in On the Rationality of Poetry: Heinrich Böll's Aesthetic Thinking (1996), are interesting. According to his research, modern developments in Böll scholarship have demonstrated that, "for all the obvious advances which new approaches have provided, the general trend steadfastly continues to regard Böll primarily as the literary chronicler of West German history" (222). He also notes that as a result the vast majority of secondary literature zeroes in on the "social, political, and religious" aspects of Böll's writings. It is Finlay's opinion, therefore, that there is, "in the eyes of his critics, much in Böll's works, which militates against the fame which they have achieved" (222). It would therefore be interesting to see if Böll scholars would regard the new approach advanced in this study as having the potential to infuse his work with a sense of immediacy for readers at the close of the century and the start of the new millennium.

It is my opinion, that the present study demonstrates that while the theme of the body in Böll's works also draws our attention to related "secondary" themes that deal with the "social, political, and religious" aspects of his "Zeitlichkeit," it also catapults us into the present and even the future. It has been my intention to show that his writings are still relevant and can reach the

modern reader. While the body as a topic of discussion was mainly avoided for obvious reasons in most post-war German literature, Böll found a way to incorporate it into his early writings. Like the often increased value of hidden treasure re-discovered at a later date with the help of clues, the value of the human body's role in his writings is even more valuable today. Our awareness of Böll's use of body language in his texts and our imagination are the keys to this perhaps too well concealed "treasure."

Clearly, for Böll, the human body is to be appreciated for its strengths and weaknesses, its perfection and imperfections, and not as a steel armour which dams in all emotions, and remains impervious to outside influences. The human body is not an indestructible machine, rather, it is a living, changing, vulnerable organism. Over fourteen years have passed since Heinrich Böll's death. During this period, rather than declining, interest in his writings has in fact continued to expand. It is my hope that my investigation into the role of war-damaged bodies in Böll's early prose will contribute to the on-going Böll scholarship. Viewing his literary oeuvre from this fresh perspective, namely, that of the body, will help to determine its relevance for contemporary and future generations of readers, and to maintain its place in the literary canon. It is an approach which aims to revitalise the author and his writings.

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