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National Socialistic Folklore and Overcoming the Past in the Federal Republic of Germany

Abstract

Following the perversion of *Volkskunde* by National Socialism during the Third Reich, scholars in the German-speaking world have several times attempted to overcome this usurpation of their discipline. *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* has, however, been quite difficult. Through the postwar years there have been various attempts to hide the unholy alliance between German *Volkskunde* and National Socialism. A few attempts had been made immediately after the end of the war, but this resulted in the "legend" of two *Volkskunden* by John Meier and Will-Erich Peuckert, one tainted and the other continuing the traditions of the past. Then again from the mid-1960s to the early 1970s there was hefty debate concerning the work of Hermann Bausinger and Wolfgang Emmerich, but there was too little interest, too much guilt, or too much concern with the newly developing directions of the discipline to devote the kind of energy and careful documentation necessary to accomplish an accurate historiography of this dark period. Research activity again intensified during the 1980s. Some revisionistic tendencies are surfacing, and the topic continues to be avoided by many German and Austrian scholars.

Key words: National Socialism — *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* — John Meier
Will-Erich Peuckert

The more honestly we address the intellectual crimes of the past the less chance there is that they will be repeated.

VERGANGENHEITSBEWÄLTIGUNG — OVERCOMING THE PAST

FIFTY years ago the academic discipline German *Volkskunde* (folklore) was being perverted in the German-speaking world directly and very consciously by National Socialism. The final tabulation on this usurpation in academia has yet to be completed, however; indeed, it seems that the investigation has just gotten underway, and very belatedly. It has been a long time coming, and even today, just as in the first decades after the Second World War, the real difficulties of such an analysis have yet to be dealt with. Some revisionistic tendencies are surfacing, and there continues to be a large and widespread avoidance of the topic by many German and Austrian scholars. Most of them began their scholarly careers quite some time after the advent and demise of National Socialistic *Volkskunde* and the end of the Third Reich. However, they are the students of those folklore scholars who lived and worked under fascistic rule, almost all of whom have now died, or they are their successors at the universities and research institutes. A few ask honestly and pleadingly to leave the topic alone and not uncover old wounds. Some few others are still striving to hide the unholy alliance between German *Volkskunde* and National Socialism, or to trivialize and forget that this scholarly discipline was established, almost in its entirety, during the Third Reich. They use the most varied methods, ranging from denial to libel and slander, against those who see an important and even a necessary task in trying to bring clarity to the history of *Volkskunde* under fascism. From the instances of those who try to hinder the treatment of this tainted and yet very instructive past of *Volkskunde*, it becomes clear that the *Nestbeschmutzer-Syndrom* (nest-dirtying syndrome) in the German-speaking countries is still virulent and in the final analysis can probably only be studied

from a psychological standpoint. Nevertheless, some German and Austrian folklorists have begun the long and arduous process of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* (overcoming the past) of their National Socialist years.

There have been many hefty debates since the end of the war concerning the problem of those central criteria of the discipline that reach far back into the past, and concerning the extensive methodological and ideological relationship between National Socialistic and bourgeois-national *Volkskunde*. A clear confirmation of this relationship by responsible scholars of the discipline would have meant admitting complicity in National Socialism by the disciplinary thrusts of German *Volkskunde* prior to 1933, Austrian *Volkskunde* prior to 1938, or all of German *Volkskunde* from 1933/1938 to 1945, *as well as for the period that followed*. From a recognition of this complicity and guilt there would have come, of necessity, a fundamental reorientation of *Volkskunde* that would have included an intensive study of the perversion of the discipline during the Third Reich, and that would perhaps have even resulted in the removal of the discipline from the universities and research institutions of those states that developed out of the ruins of the German Reich. However, this fundamental revision of the history and theoretical perspectives of *Volkskunde* did not take place during the first two decades after 1945. As a result we are just now undertaking some of those necessary investigations concerning National Socialistic *Volkskunde*, concerning its prehistory and its alliance with bourgeois-national *Volkskunde* and folklorists, and concerning the continuation of those tainted and invalid methodological traditions and ideologies within the discipline in the postwar decades.

The research activity became particularly intense during the decade of the 1980s. A few attempts had been made immediately after the end of the war and then again from the mid-1960s to the early 1970s, but there was too little interest, too much guilt, or too much concern with the newly developing directions of the discipline to devote the kind of energy and careful documentation necessary to accomplish an accurate historiography of this dark period. This is no longer the case, but it has taken more than 40 years to get to this point. National Socialism has been discussed in one way or another at a series of folklore meetings in Germany and Austria since 1981 (cf. the newsletter of the German Folklore Society, the *DGV-Informationen* 90, 1981: 36-37, 98; 91, 1982: 38-40), even when this has not been the theme of the conference. There is scarcely a folklore journal appearing now in the German-speaking world that does not have some reference to the theme, even if it is little more than a report on one of the many gather-

ings of folklorists, such as the meeting held in Munich in October of 1986 that was devoted exclusively to *Volkskunde* and National Socialism, or an announcement of a forthcoming meeting that will be devoted partially or totally to papers that report on studies being undertaken at various universities and research institutes. Many journal articles have begun to appear, several master's theses and doctoral dissertations are being completed, and in 1987 the first volume dealing specifically with the topic appeared (GERNDT 1987) and still others are in process.¹ The difficult task has obviously begun and thus it seemed appropriate to cause some of this information to move across international boundaries (STEIN 1987).

BUT WHERE DO WE BEGIN?

It hardly seems worthwhile trying to reach back once again to look for origins, for the roots of German National Socialistic thought processes. We could ask, and thereby imply, isn't this what Novalis was writing about when he referred to those "fine, splendid times . . . when . . . one sovereign guided and united the great political forces" (NOVALIS 1966, 289-90) in Europe? We could point an accusing finger at Herder for seeing, in what he describes as the evolution of language, in fact a devolutionary process that results in a later developmental stage of mankind that is degenerate and in need of a gathering in of its own *Naturpoesie* so that it can regenerate itself (HERDER 1877). Or shall we blame all on the Brothers Grimm for actually suggesting a Germanic core to the Indo-Germanic continuum and stating quite directly that the "Old High German dialects have their several points of superiority over the Old Norse" (GRIMM 1966, 10), thus implying that the lore they were collecting was the detritus of an ancient German faith that had been desecrated by Christianity. The Grimms do give us much to ponder when they say in the Introduction to the *Household Tales*:

We shall be asked where the outermost lines of common property in stories begin, and how the degrees of affinity are graduated. The outermost lines are coterminous with those of the great race which is commonly called Indo-Germanic, *and the relationship draws itself in constantly narrowing circles round the settlements of the Germans . . .* [emphasis added]. (Quoted from THOMPSON 1967, 370)

In postwar Germany there was indeed much concern with the presumed potential for violence found in the Grimm tales, and the volume was even banned from use in schools (DÉGH 1979).

This kind of delving into Germanic mentality of the 18th and 19th centuries, this searching for the origins of National Socialistic thought processes, hardly seems productive here since it would certainly lead to few conclusions that have not already been suggested (cf. BAUSINGER 1965; EMMERICH 1971). Nevertheless, it would perhaps be of value to pursue these ideas further and to analyze in special investigations not only the roots of German National Socialistic thought processes, but more particularly the closely allied roots of National Socialistic *Volkskunde* to the 18th and 19th centuries, possibly even to a far distant past.

Most of the studies that have been recently published by folklorists in the German-speaking countries of Europe do, however, deal primarily with the 20th century, particularly with the first half. For us, too, it seems more meaningful to treat the period itself, but actually we are more specifically interested in this present study in the immediate postwar history of this academic discipline.

For the record we would like to note that in the studies of the National Socialistic period, and in the scholarly battles that grew out of some of them, there are striking similarities, and yet differences, with the more widely known German *Historikerstreit* (historians' battle; cf. *Historikerstreit* 1987) in regard to:

- the treatment of the nazification of German *Volkskunde*, i.e., the positions assumed toward a perverted National Socialistic *Volkskunde*, and the meaning of these stances both for the present and for the future of the discipline;
- the attempts by neo-conservative scholars of the discipline to trivialize National Socialistic *Volkskunde* and its perversions, to dismiss and/or to defend the participation by German folklorists, and to brand historians of the discipline who think differently as outsiders and as “nest-dirtiers”;
- the revisionistic goals of hiding, falsifying, or cleaning up the history of this discipline during the Third Reich, thereby contributing to an “agreed upon” feeling of identity among folklorists that was also in agreement with the conservative political trends in German-speaking countries;
- the attempt to uncover and refute these revisionist and apologetic tendencies that have had an effect on the scholarly conscience and the self-consciousness of the discipline of *Volkskunde* (cf. WEHLER 1988, 7) in order to contribute to a critical and national coming to terms with the past and thus a better shaping of the present (cf. BRUCK 1990).

It seems to us that it would be instructive to offer a chronological sequence of the three major attempts by German and Austrian folklorists to begin to deal with the topic: in the immediate postwar years, again around 1965–1971, and finally during the decade of the 1980s. This procedure will document for us why it took three attempts to begin to sketch out a relatively broad, historical treatment of *Volkskunde*'s role in the Third Reich, and how resistance to these investigations continues into the present.

JOHN MEIER'S JUSTIFICATION OF GERMAN *VOLKSKUNDE*

As recently as 1987 a biographical article closes with an apologetic praise of John Meier as a "reasonable researcher who was uncompromising in his own scholarship and who did not let himself be corrupted by the attempts to draw him in during the Third Reich" (HOLZAPFEL 1987, 204). This was not quite the way it was, as many folklorists still would like to present it more than forty years after the end of the war.

John Meier, the Chairman of the Verband deutscher Vereine für Volkskunde [League of German Societies for Folklore], the only umbrella organization of the discipline in Germany that existed both before and after the rule of the Third Reich, was entangled through many concessions to National Socialism and National Socialistic *Volkskunde*. He collaborated with the Ancestral Inheritance of the Reichsführer-SS, Heinrich Himmler, sent him his 1944 book on *Ahnengrab und Brautstein* [Ancestral Grave and Bride Stone],² which completely fitted the former's ideological presumptions, and finally offered to the SS-Ahnenerbe [SS-Ancestral Inheritance] his own scholarly life's work, the *Deutsches Volksliedarchiv* [German Folksong Archive] in Freiburg im Breisgau.³

John Meier had been working intellectually toward National Socialistic *Volkskunde* and its ideology in the decades prior to and soon after the seizure of power by German fascism in 1933, certainly more unknowingly and unwillingly, but especially in his plan for a pan-German *Reichsinstitut*.

At the Folklore Meeting in October 1933 in Weimar he very emphatically made moves for his German *Volkskunde* toward the new powers, through speeches of praise for National Socialism and its Führer, Adolf Hitler. He subjected his League of German Societies for Folklore to the same self-imposed *Gleichschaltung* (political co-ordination) then spreading throughout the country. This political co-ordination was to serve the "National Socialistic revolution" and the "Führer principle." He himself was to be the Führer of the

League, and, as he intended and hoped, the Führer of all German *Volkskunde* in the Third Reich. This ambitious plan was not carried out, in spite of the founding of the mass organization, the Bund für deutsche Volkskunde [Union for German Folklore], with its unbelievable announcement in 1933 (see Appendix), yet another statement of submission to National Socialism (cf. LIXFELD 1989). On the contrary, Meier was increasingly pressured and robbed of power during the following years by the high NSDAP functionaries Rosenberg and Himmler, who were competing for control over National Socialistic *Volkskunde*. Finally, in order to get away from Rosenberg and his version of National Socialistic *Volkskunde*, he fled into the protective arms of the SS-Ancestral Inheritance. The collapse of the fascistic regime in Germany at the end of the Second World War protected Meier from the final consequences of his collaboration, and bourgeois-national German *Volkskunde* from a definitive takeover by National Socialism.

After the war the new political situation offered this deeply discredited scholarly discipline another chance for self-realization and continued life. Here again the octogenarian John Meier performed during the first postwar years one final important service for his *Volkskunde*, even though it too has proven to be very questionable.

The central publication of Meier's umbrella League, the *Zeitschrift für Volkskunde*, had been transferred in the years prior to the beginning of the Second World War, under duress, to the SS-Ancestral Inheritance and its publisher (cf. OESTERLE 1987, 85-86). For three more years it appeared under the editorship of Heinrich Harmjan, Gunther Ipsen, and Erich Röhr (*Zeitschrift für Volkskunde* 47, 1938; 48, 1939; 49, 1940). For the fiftieth volume, the jubilee edition of the *Zeitschrift*, John Meier submitted the manuscript of his treatment of the "*Geschichte des Verbandes deutscher Vereine für Volkskunde*" [History of the League of German Societies for Folklore].⁴ The effects of the war, however, interrupted the appearance of this jubilee volume. Meier nevertheless repeatedly called for the production of the 250 offprints promised to him, which he wanted to send out as a gift at the beginning of February 1945 to each member of the League.⁵ He only succeeded during the postwar years, when his article appeared in 1947 as a private publication with only a few changes in the conclusion but otherwise obviously unchanged (MEIER 1947; also reprinted in *Fünfzig Jahre Verband* 1954, 3-27).⁶

In his conclusion, *added in 1947*, John Meier supplies the words for German folklorists on how the recent past of the discipline was to be treated for the public:

At the Weimar Folklore Meeting of 1933 the League of German Societies for Folklore had pointed out publicly "that it was necessary for it to preserve a certain freedom of movement and isolation in regard to political-organizational alliances, so as not to endanger the self-sufficiency and independence of scholarly research, which has its own laws. In contrast to the attempts to redirect these scholarly tasks into the service of political ideas of the new age, it pointed out publicly in a celebratory and emphatic way at the Heidelberg Meeting in 1934 . . . the inability of a political tendency to be united with the immanent laws of scholarly research, which was carefully made known through the speech of its chairman" (MEIER 1947, 27).

These comments are directed ostensibly toward a pretended objective, i.e., the value-neutral and completely nonpolitical character of humanities scholarship, such as *Volkskunde*, and in order to clarify its non-participation in the political tendencies (read: *Gleichschaltung*) of National Socialism. Meier continues:

The leading circles of the Party nevertheless let the League continue its work undisturbed and with no restrictions, and for that we thank them. It was probably the only large organization whose leadership and membership was left untouched and which was not politically co-ordinated personally or in substance. Only those little *Mitläufer* [accomplices] and opportunists of the movement have accused us and our actions over and over again in public, and slung mud (MEIER 1947, 27).

It seems almost unnecessary to comment on this errant attempt at self-justification. It does not just sound strange, it fails in its tragedy to convince any serious scholar of the discipline by its grotesqueness, "that the years of Nazi rule were for the aristocrat John Meier 'unimportant' to 'scarcely worth mentioning.'" Meier's attempt at justification is quite simply not truthful and was apparently dictated by a fear of sanctions against the League of German Societies for Folklore, its leadership, and its membership. It was necessary for Meier to salvage this umbrella organization, which had lost more than half of its members as a result of Nazi rule and the war that rule had started (cf. *Mitteilungen des Verbandes* 57, 1949: 3), and thereby to salvage the existence of the scholarly discipline of *Volkskunde*, which, as we have already stated, had been established almost in its entirety during the Third Reich at universities and research institutes (cf. *Volkskunde an den Hoch-*

schulen 1986). Even more troublesome are Meier's words of gratitude to the "leading circles of the Party," those high functionaries of the NSDAP who had just been tried in the postwar courts, since they were the very ones who had, indeed, completely institutionalized German *Volkskunde*, but who had also usurped and perverted it.

It is likewise incomprehensible today why John Meier fails even to mention in his attempt at justification the intellectual responsibility of *Volkskunde* and the practical guilt of folklorists over the misanthropic atrocities of National Socialism and the European and world-wide catastrophe that it brought on. Was he incapable because of his advanced age, was it psychic inability, or was it fear of sanctions and a tactical calculation in the interest of his discipline? Consonant with this failure to admit guilt, we have Meier's inability to comprehend it, as well as his unrealistic summons to continue once again with scholarly and folk preservational work, and that means with the same ideological goal perspectives—exactly the path that German *Volkskunde* had begun under National Socialism:

And so today, with heads held high and not bowed down, we enter the dark gate of the future, and we will quietly and tirelessly continue our work with the full consciousness of our absolute duty, of preserving and building up our prostrate German folk-nation, for it is a task that is more necessary today than ever before. In our deep and firm consciousness we know that it is a task not only in the service of the German folk but for the whole world, where the German folk-nation has its assigned and necessary place (MEIER 1947, 27).

As improbable as it sounds, this untruthful and macabre justification of German *Volkskunde* during the Third Reich by John Meier was to determine the image the discipline developed for itself during the following decades. The National Socialistic perversion continued in this thought process and brought on even more scholarly scandals in the discipline, which couldn't be dealt with because German folklorists had not yet come to terms with National Socialism itself.

WILL-ERICH PEUCKERT VERSUS HEINZ MAUS

Early in 1946 the sociologist Heinz Maus of East Berlin published an article on the *Situation* of German *Volkskunde* (MAUS 1946; MAUS 1988; cf. DOW and LIXFELD 1986, 11–12) in which he attempted to deal with the National Socialists' perversion of the discipline:

During the period of material and moral preparation for war *Volks-*

kunde was unsure about itself and its situation in a highly industrialized society. Its narrow-minded blindness made it available for purposes that shied away from the light, and the internal history of *Volkskunde* proved to be useful for ideologizing. It looked askance at the present and in the end saw it incorrectly, it dealt more with that which had been handed down, and for the most part offered a romantic and ahistorical presentation. In this way the past was glorified and that which still existed was left untouched in its essence.

The availability of *Volkskunde* for ideology became quite obvious through the role that the fascistic power techniques granted it, but it emitted a false appearance behind which was lurking a demonology of brutal power. *Volkskunde* was used by National Socialism as a "world view" affirmation of its need for political dominance. No matter how well it presented itself as being nonpolitical, it had already been proclaimed by Wilhelm Heinrich Riehl as *soziale Volkskunde* and thus as a political science; and thus in the Third Reich it was fundamentally politicized. The support, of which its research as well as its cultural-political undertakings had become a demagogic part, allowed *Volkskunde* to misunderstand National Socialism as a folk movement and thus to believe in and expect new impulses from it. Insofar as the most problematic core of *Volkskunde*, the concept of the *Volk*, had been shifted ostensibly toward irrationality, the discipline had become a part of fascistic ideology with no resistance, which then could utilize the ideological theorems of *Volkskunde* and could also take on the appearance of a scholarly science (MAUS 1988, 25–28).

Maus's essay was not a doomsday message for *Volkskunde*, as it was later presented by Tübingen students (cf. GERNDT 1988, 1–2), but was instead a strong call for *Volkskunde* to rid itself of its ideological complicity, and to take on two new tasks: the writing of social history and the development of an inclusive contemporary *Volkskunde*. He goes on to clarify his intention by describing his social scientific conceptualization of the *Volk* and the task of *Volkskunde* as writing history *von unten her* (from below). By doing so folklorists would thereby enrich the theory of culture and would also make a positive contribution to cooperation among all peoples.

What resulted was not only a non-acceptance of Maus's suggestions of how to redirect the discipline, there was also a strong voice raised in the year 1947 by the reinstated Göttingen *Ordinarius* for *Volkskunde*, Will-Erich Peuckert (PEUCKERT 1948 and 1988: DOW and LIXFELD

1986, 11–13; Dow 1990, 293–95), the first German professor to be re-assigned folklore teaching and research duties in postwar Germany. It is important to see that Peuckert doesn't just reject Maus's call for a new methodology, he maintains that German folklorists should once again continue along the path that the discipline had taken prior to the advent of National Socialism, i.e., to search for the "laws" that are fundamental to the various folk elements of society in order to write a *Naturgeschichte des Volkes* (natural history of the folk). In vehement statements countering Maus, Peuckert has the following to say:

The key figures that Maus presents are scarcely suited to verify the Mausian presentation; at least they do not prove anything about German *Volkskunde*, for serious folklore research in Germany can hardly be identified with visionaries like Spieß or with non-folklorists like Boehm. This is especially the case since serious folklore research not only rejected these "directions," it also refused to perform primary services for National Socialistic politics—one should remember here the Weimar Folklore Meeting in 1934 [sic; recte, 1933] and John Meier's leadership of the League. In addition to the yea-sayers there was a still larger number of nay-sayers—Friedrich Ranke, the fairy tale and legend scholar who had to go to Basel because there was no place for him in Germany; Peuckert, whose *venia legendi* [permission to teach at a university] was taken away after the advent of the "Third Reich" because he was "politically unreliable"; John Meier; Fritz Böhm, who assumed a position of leadership for those who were thrown out and persecuted; etc. *The Volkskunde of the years 1933 to 1945 is not the Volkskunde of Boehm and Mudrak and v. Spieß; to a much more serious and a greater degree than was apparent to the outside, alongside the loud and dominant "Volkskunde" of these people, which was in the foreground, there existed a serious, working, scholarly Volkskunde* (PEUCKERT 1948, 130; emphasis added).⁸

Peuckert sums up and reiterates his response to Maus with: "And with this I come to that which is supposed to be the brief meaning of these lengthy statements, that aside from the obvious 'folklore of the Third Reich' there continued to exist a real scholarly *Volkskunde*. And it didn't just continue to exist, it also made advances, even if these advances were only made known, naturally, in the disciplinary discussion within the narrowest circles." The "underground" accomplishments of this real scholarly *Volkskunde* would have produced much earlier much of what Maus was calling for from a new *Volkskunde*

(PEUCKERT 1948, 131). Some things had certainly been suppressed during the Third Reich, or their spread or even publication was obstructed. But *Volkskunde* bore no guilt, "at least not the scholarly *Volkskunde* of Germany, rather it was the political system that killed off all scholarship" (PEUCKERT 1948, 133).

Peuckert maintained that German *Volkskunde* had absolutely not become, as Maus had said, "a part of fascistic ideology with no resistance," it had "exercised the resistance that it was capable of through its scholarly representatives, for the most part very seriously and through changing positions—however this was necessary for the battle" (PEUCKERT 1948, 131).

The suspicion forces itself upon us that the folklorist Peuckert, who was so steeped in traditional thinking processes, could not or did not want to understand the ideological preparation laid by bourgeois-national *Volkskunde* for National Socialism, nor the methodological requirements made by the sociologist Maus for a reworked and re-directed *Volkskunde*, its necessity and its implications, for the postwar years. Peuckert must have been aware, at least from his own personal experience, of the personal entanglements of such a large number of bourgeois-national folklorists in National Socialism and their tragic end, since he had assumed a stance of resistance to the regime, the position of an endangered outsider, during the previous twelve years.

The methodological requirements of Maus for a social scientific *Volkskunde* have become self-evident for us today. It is just as self-evident, however, that they were not realized in any way at that time or even taken seriously. Peuckert indirectly admits this himself when he views these "presentations for a new perspective for *Volkskunde*" simply as "suggestions" from "non-folkloric circles" that compel the folklorist "to set and calculate new goals for himself from a more comprehensive experience of his scholarship" (PEUCKERT 1948, 133). The fact that these new goals, which came from the discipline itself, did not have to be sociological, is obvious for that age.

The first result of this scholarly exchange in the immediate postwar years was that Maus's call for reorientation of the discipline of *Volkskunde* was for all practical purposes ignored until the students rediscovered him in the mid-1960s (cf. GERNDT 1988, 1, and the conversation that Marburg students conducted with Maus: INTERVIEW 1968) and forced a confrontation, debate, and reorientation during the decade 1967–1977. Since we have dealt with this break in our first book, *German Volkskunde* (DOW and LIXFELD 1986), we shall not offer any further thoughts on the subject here. Another result of this failed confrontation of 1946–1948 was the development of the "legend" of

two *Volkskunden* in Germany during the National Socialistic regime (a guilty folklore of the Third Reich and the guiltless real scholarly folklore), a legend that most folklorists of the postwar era wanted very much to believe and that was then developed, promoted, taught, and finally indeed believed by scholars in Germany, Austria, and elsewhere.

Peuckert even attributes to real scholarly *Volkskunde* the character of militancy and resistance to National Socialism and its version of *Volkskunde*. In the process of defending this real scholarly *Volkskunde* he refers quite justifiably to his own opposition, as well as that of others but especially to John Meier, who really was not good state's evidence. Peuckert does not associate serious resistance with those few who were indeed persecuted because of their opposition to National Socialism (cf. LIXFELD 1987a, also in this special issue) and to whom one could attribute that kind of battle, but rather in general to an uncounted mass of representatives of the discipline and thereby to real scholarly *Volkskunde* in general. His viewpoint must, in our opinion, be seriously challenged, and his response to Maus must for this reason be viewed as unbelievable and missing the point.

THE NS PAST AND "SECOND GUILT"

If we look for deeper reasons why respected German scholars attempted through such defensive publications to offer their contributions to bending and falsifying the history of the discipline, we must finally arrive at a collective psychic syndrome, which, of course, can only be viewed hypothetically as attempts at resolution.

Will-Erich Peuckert's and John Meier's involvement in the traditional-ideological thought structures of their scholarly discipline, of their social class, and of their historical epoch is insufficient explanation for their silence and denial of complicity and guilt in regard to *Volkskunde* and folklorists under National Socialism. For both apologists it was probably not their exclusive purpose to protect the discipline and its members from justifiable accusations, or from an official judgment and thus existential damage during the postwar years. They suffered, along with their colleagues (those who were tainted during the Third Reich and those who were not) and with many others, perhaps even with most Germans, from the deep shock of the atrocities committed in their name and with the help of their folk, and in their inability to experience bereavement and through mourning to overcome it. This has been interpreted psychologically (MITSCHERLICH 1987). In the years after the Second World War a new and second guilt was added to the first guilt of the Germans under Hitler, one that consisted of suppression and denial of the first guilt. According to one interpreta-

tion, they made their own “final peace with those who were responsible for” the Third Reich, and thus in this case with those who were responsible for *NS-Volkskunde*, thereby perpetuating the “loss of human orientation” (GIORDANO 1987, 11–12). Instead of mourning they acted out a denial that appeared immediately after 1945, and that was articulated the same way then as it is today. With these “collective aspects” there is a concealment of the first guilt (GIORDANO 1987, 29–40) through such slogans as: We didn’t know about the misdeeds, we did not participate in them, others are guilty; There weren’t just bad things that happened during the Third Reich, there were also positive things; Today we finally have to stop all these accusations and forget about that which is past, etc. Collective aspects of this type, sometimes in sublimated form, can be found in those folkloric texts written in defense of the discipline and its practitioners, and they were passed along further and became the common property of all folklorists in the German-speaking world. We shall certainly encounter them again in the future.

There can be little doubt that Peuckert’s response to Maus was influenced by John Meier’s justification, which appeared one year earlier (MEIER 1947). The protective armour established by Meier and taken over by Peuckert was so absolutely impenetrable for outsiders of the discipline that even the anti-fascist folklorist and founder of Marxist *Volkskunde* in the German Democratic Republic, Wolfgang Steinitz, who had emigrated abroad during the Third Reich, could be deceived and thus joined in with a simulated salvaging of John Meier’s honor. Meier had been very supportive of Steinitz when he was working in the German Folksong Archive in Freiburg im Breisgau on his *Deutsche Volkslieder demokratischen Charakters* [German Folksongs of Democratic Character] (STEINITZ 1955–1962; cf. also JACOBET 1987, 321–22), and thus was highly regarded by Steinitz. In 1950 Meier was able to publish his second book on the *Ahnengrab* [Ancestral Grave] with the Academy of Sciences of the German Democratic Republic in East Berlin, a book that was conceived and planned during the Third Reich (MEIER 1950). His first book on the *Ahnengrab und Brautstein* had found favor with the president of the SS Ancestral Inheritance, the Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler (MEIER 1944a; cf. HEIBER 1968, 272, 281–83; HOLZAPFEL 1989, 42–43, 66–67, and the latter’s opposing and apologetic interpretation of the historical facts). Steinitz promoted the granting of the National Prize of the East German state to Meier and even spoke about “his documented behavior during this difficult time for the German folk from 1933 until today, as a true patriot and an upright democrat” (STEINITZ 1955, 16–20, here

20). The West German state granted the man who for many years chaired the League of German Societies for Folklore the *Bundesverdienstkreuz* [Federal Service Cross] at just about the same time (HOLZAPFEL 1989, 14).

Apparently rehabilitated by major representatives of their scholarly discipline and by the postwar governments of the East and the West, the representatives of the discipline could now return to rebuilding *Volkskunde* in the German-speaking states, at the universities and research institutes of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Republic of Austria, and in the course of the next few years they could once again occupy most of those professional positions created under National Socialism. Only a small number of those well-known folklorists who had behaved too National Socialistically during the Third Reich changed their profession. In the German Democratic Republic a Marxist-Leninist *Volkskunde* was developed by Wolfgang Steinitz; however, here, too, former NS folklorists took part (STEINITZ 1955; JACOBET and MOHRMANN 1982; also JACOBET in this special issue).

As if to prove their good will and their understanding of future questions, former folklorists of the Rosenberg Bureau, the SS-Ancestral Inheritance, and other NS organizations met with their colleagues in the discipline who had not gone over to fascism. Opponents of National Socialism, foreigners sympathetic to Germany,⁹ former persecutors and those who had been persecuted, met together in 1951 for a "General Folklore Congress (7th German Folklore Meeting)" of the League in Jugenheim on the Bergstraße in Baden-Württemberg. Out of this League was to come the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Volkskunde* (DGV) [German Folklore Society]. Here they unanimously laid out the strict guidelines of their future work, which was to continue the ideology, the methodology, and, as one of the participants, Will-Erich Peuckert, had stated three years previously, the "underground" accomplishments of real scholarly *Volkskunde* (read: the bourgeois-national thrust of the discipline).¹⁰

The new Chairman of the League, Helmut Dölker, commented in the "Jubilee Edition" of the *Zeitschrift für Volkskunde* that the year 1951 would be pointed to as one with special significance in the history of German *Volkskunde*. The German Folklore Meeting in Jugenheim, under the patronage of the President of the Federal Republic of Germany, and in the presence of so many representatives of the ministries and scholars, brought about "not only the final public rehabilitation of *Volkskunde* . . . but also a promise by the more than 250 scholars assembled there, to be active with even greater zeal than before for the further expansion of *Volkskunde*."¹¹

The National Socialistic past of German *Volkskunde* was not dealt with in 1951 in Jugenheim. It was not even critically discussed in public, it was simply silenced. It was to continue to haunt *Volkskunde* in the German-speaking states of Europe as a sticky and unsolved problem. It was not until two decades later that the defensive assertion of two *Volkskunden* was challenged, i.e., the "seduction from outside" (BRUCK 1990, 178) of bourgeois-national folklore, first by Hermann Bausinger and then by his doctoral student Wolfgang Emmerich. In this second confrontational phase of overcoming the past we can easily pick out those basically helpless but effective arguments or "collective aspects" by the defenders of the past. They lump together the "first guilt" and the "second guilt," and while they avoid the more prestigious Bausinger, they brand his representative, the young *Neutöner* (new voice) Emmerich, as an outsider and a "nest-dirtier."

BAUSINGER AND EMMERICH CHALLENGE AN ESTABLISHED LEGEND

In 1965 Hermann Bausinger held a lecture in Tübingen, "*Volksideologie und Volksforschung*" [Folk Ideology and Folk Research], and then published an expanded version of that paper with the subtitle "*Zur nationalsozialistischen Volkskunde*" in the *Zeitschrift für Volkskunde* (BAUSINGER 1965), the main organ of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Volkskunde. Even though Bausinger was still in the process of establishing the reputation he now has as one of the clearest spokesmen for a new *Volkskunde*, his main thoughts on the complexities of the ideological base of National Socialistic *Volkskunde* could hardly be challenged. Indeed they were not, if the published record is accurate; i.e., there is little reaction to his article among the studies to appear in the next few years. It was indeed often cited, and thus for the majority of folklorists the dealing with the past was completed. His student, Wolfgang Emmerich, however, completed his dissertation on *Germanistische Volkstumsideologie (Genese und Kritik der Volksforschung im Dritten Reich)* [Germanic Folk-National Ideology (Genesis and Criticism of Folk Research during the Third Reich)] and published it in 1968 as part of the Tübingen folklore series (EMMERICH 1968). Immediately thereafter a series of extremely acerbic reviews appeared by some of the best-known scholars of that day. There was then a response to the reviews by one of the younger scholars, and Emmerich himself felt it necessary to respond to the revised edition of his dissertation, now a book published in 1971 (EMMERICH 1971). The vehemence of these reviews and counter reviews needs to be clarified somewhat here. Three are particularly of note, and two others need to be mentioned.

Hans Trümpy of Basel (TRÜMPY 1969) begins by stating that this

book treats that discomfiting period of National Socialism. Even though Trümpy himself says that certain conceptions from this dark age continue to "spook around" (*geistern weiter*), he does quote Emmerich's statement that "There is no argument that the directly perceived contents of that pure German ideology scarcely determine folklore today; mythologism, nationalism, or even racism are no longer typical for us," and thus asks, "was it then necessary to write this book?" He goes on to say that Hermann Bausinger had already said the most important things in his 1965 article. In Trümpy's opinion, the book is typical of the age (namely, the Vietnam era), and now that it is there it can not be disregarded, and it will certainly be part of folklore discussion in the future. He rejects Emmerich's suggestion that the concepts of *Volk* and *Volkskunde*, because of their ideological overtones, be relaced with other terms. Trümpy concludes by warning against "making taboo the question of the continuity of certain manifestations because they once were answered under ideological considerations in an unscholarly way," and by warning against the development of a new ideology to replace one that had already been overcome. By this "new ideology" he means the statements by Emmerich about the NS past of German *Volkskunde*.

Walter Hävernick of Hamburg (HÄVERNICK 1969) ostensibly agrees with Emmerich's statement about the words *Volk* and *Volkstum* taking on such ideological associations during the Third Reich that we must forever be cautious about their usage. Hävernick speaks against Emmerich's recommendation that the name of the discipline be changed from *Volkskunde* to *Kulturanthropologie*, and thus most of his review is in fact devoted to a discussion that was so much in vogue in Germany at that time. Concerning the actual contents of the dissertation Hävernick has almost nothing to say. His conclusion, however, is nothing less than a condescending query about whether or not to welcome a "young man beginning his career not only with careless chopping away [at the discipline], but also with the assumption of a judgmental stance?" For Hävernick the ideology of 1933-45 was a product of the age, just as Emmerich's viewpoint was fashionable and the thought process exclusively of his age (i.e., an ideology). And thus he asks "can the author ever return to unprejudiced research?"

Leopold Schmidt of Vienna (SCHMIDT 1969) is even less kind in his review. In his words, Hermann Bausinger "found it necessary to comment on National Socialistic *Volkskunde*," and then he denounces many of the "ostensibly well-read literati out there" (meaning Adorno, Bloch, Horkheimer, Mannheim, and Topitsch), whom Emmerich cited as representatives of contemporary ideology, and "who

are of no significance for our discipline." Emmerich was raining down attacks of superiority on everything: the Brothers Grimm, mythology, racial ideology. Schmidt bemoans the fact that the concept of continuity is of course being made impossible, and symbol research is once again being discredited. Schmidt says that there are in fact some important "suggestions" (*Hinweise*) in the book, but then he ridicules Emmerich for not defending the discipline and its "real representatives." He then virtually laughs at Emmerich for confusing Karl von Spieß with a *Namensvetter* (man by the same name), Karl Spieß. Schmidt then surmises that this reveals "how little knowledge of the real intentions" of those scholars Emmerich has. His harshest accusation, however, is that Emmerich overlooks the establishments that were created at that time and that will once again become active. His reference here is specifically to such material as that produced by Karl Theodor Weigel and Eugen Fehrle (cf. BREDNICH 1985 and ASSION 1985). The material by Fehrle was apparently unknown to Emmerich. Schmidt then lashes out at Emmerich on a personal level in an apparent attempt to intimidate the young scholar, and asks "whether the author shouldn't have studied another discipline? We don't need successors who deal with matters that don't concern them."

Two other reviews are considerably more positive. Arnold Niederer of Zürich (NIEDERER 1970) explains the Marxist ideology concept used by Emmerich and praises him by offering a critical understanding of the contents and the conclusions of the book. Niederer also expresses the hope that Emmerich's work will lay to rest the confrontation between *NS-Volkskunde* and the folk-national ideology, but not without adding "that the fruitful beginnings already present for research that is oriented toward empirical-cultural anthropology will be encouraged and followed."

Just as Niederer had done, Gerhard Lutz, now of Hamburg and still perhaps one of the best historians of the discipline, was apparently one of the few who understood the implications of Emmerich's study. He skillfully describes (LUTZ 1970) Emmerich's tracing of Grimms' *Weltanschauung* through the father of German *Volkskunde*, Wilhelm Heinrich Riehl, but chides him for not recognizing others who contributed to Riehl's conservative views on natural laws, the organic, the idea of the nation, etc. Far more significant, however, is Lutz's recognition that Emmerich's book is primarily about "where *Volkskunde* stands today and where it should stand." The central issue, according to Lutz's reading of Emmerich, is the question of "doing justice to the historical implications of the concept of tradition," i.e., Adorno's call for an "enlightened" relationship to tradition.

Lutz's review reflects the generally favorable reception to Emmerich's work from Germanistics, from Scandinavian scholars, and elsewhere. These positive reviews made the three harsh reviews mentioned above stand out even more, and caused Utz Jeggle of Tübingen to write a counter review (JEGGLE 1970). His comments are to be viewed as being concerned more generally with the purpose of reviews in a scholarly discipline, but in the process of writing this he does clarify the deeper meaning of such implications, particularly for *Volkskunde* and its relationship to National Socialism.

One wants to get away from the past and chooses the most direct path: everything has been overcome! And those who do not want to believe this lie will be fought against, discredited as trouble makers, they will not be accepted as complete—even though according to Trümpy there is no doubt “that it (Emmerich's book) will certainly be part of folklore discussions in the future. But why?” (JEGGLE 1970, 7).

Jeggle clarifies a division in the discipline through various phrases used by the reviewer, e.g., Leopold Schmidt: Bausinger “found it necessary” to comment on National Socialism, or the “ostensibly well-read literati.” He sees this denouncing of those on the “outside” as a trick that is all too well known: “I call the opponent a literatus and an intellectual and a Jew, and then the controversy is over.” He then says that this kind of accusation allows us to see direct and continuing fascistic tendencies, even though Schmidt as well as Hans Trümpy were never fascists. On the contrary, they opposed National Socialism and were certainly individuals of integrity. But it is exactly this that is discouraging. Certain tendencies have continued to have an effect and have tainted the discipline and its role in society (JEGGLE 1970, 7).

Jeggle goes on to question the recommendation of Schmidt in particular that those “remaining establishments” be utilized in our modern *Volkskunde* research, that the discipline and its “real representatives,” who were there during the NS period, should have been defended. He questions the implied interpretation that fascism was just a product of the age, and points out that this is exactly the kind of soil needed for producing the comparison that red=brown (i.e., Communism=Nazism). He says that none of the reviewers he was criticizing understood that the separation of truth from falsehood is not a prerequisite but rather the goal of any scholarship that views itself critically. In other words, “the ideology of a value-neutral and perspectiveless scholarship made it easy not only for the Nazis, it makes

the treatment of the past very difficult today" (JEGGLE 1970, 8-10, here 10).

The reaction by some folklorists from Germany, Switzerland, and Austria was swift and severe. In essence it was a solid rejection of the topic for in-depth analysis. Wolfgang Emmerich left the discipline of *Volkskunde* and became a professor of German. In their critical estimation of this period of confrontation concerning the *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, Utz Jeggle and Gottfried Korff drew an unhappy conclusion concerning the situation of scholarship in the discipline:

Even shame unifies. When Hermann Bausinger tried in 1966 [sic; recte, 1965] to analyze National Socialistic folk research, it was found to be unnecessary, the past became a trauma that took on a touch-me-not taboo. The anxious reaction of various folklorists to the book by Emmerich made the pathological basic structure of our discipline horribly clear. Aggressions were not directed toward what was discovered but rather toward the diagnostician. Such reactions are clearly part of an aspect of the disease (JEGGLE and KORFF 1972, 3).

After the appearance of Jeggle's review of 1970, Emmerich's second book of 1971, and the resumé by Jeggle and Korff in 1972, the topic of German *Volkskunde* and National Socialism disappears again from the pages of the scholarly organs of the discipline. Even if it was not a full-fledged "conspiracy of silence," the fact remains that German and Austrian folklorists did not begin to look at the topic again for a decade or more. Not until the 1980s is there once again a concentrated effort to place the issue on the table for deliberation.

In all fairness, however, it must be pointed out that it was exactly during the mid-1960s that young scholars were attempting to reorient the discipline, and they were no doubt more interested in the newly developing social scientific perspectives than they were in *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*. On the other hand, it must be pointed out that it was exactly this second phase of the confrontation concerning the NS past that brought out important impulses for the reorientation and change in the discipline toward social and cultural science, and thus the contemporary structure was very decisively promoted (cf. BRUCK 1990, 178-79, and on the reorientation DOW and LIXFELD 1986).

VOLKSKUNDE AND NATIONAL SOCIALISM REDIVIVUS

Beginning in the early 1980s there was at the professional gatherings of folklorists a growing and more broadly based interest in delving into

the archives, the institutional histories, and the personalities who functioned before, during, and after the National Socialistic years. The third phase of folkloric reworking of the past thus began. By 1981 the topic of National Socialism was proposed for the biennial meeting of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Volkskunde (DGV) to take place in Berlin in 1983, an appropriate place and an appropriate time (50 years after the seizure of power) to discuss German *Volkskunde*'s involvement with National Socialism (*DGV-Informationen* 90, 1981: 36–37, 98; 91, 1982: 38–40; cf. BÖTH 1980 and the polemical response by BRÜCKNER 1981). It was, however, decided by the Executive Board of the DGV to devote the conference to “Urban Folklore” instead (KOHLMANN and BAUSINGER 1985), also a fitting topic for a city of three million, politically and physically divided at that time as were only a few other cities in the world. The theme remained on the agenda for the next meeting in Bremen in 1985, but was again moved aside in favor of *Kinderkultur* (Children’s Culture) (KÖSTLIN, POHL-WEBER, and ALSHEIMER 1987). Because the city of Bremen and the Focke Museum were concentrating on children’s culture as part of Unesco’s International Year of the Child, they asked that the meeting be held in their city and that the theme be that of children. Once again the “official” beginning of public discussion of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* by the society was delayed.

In the meantime, several things had happened that would finally give rise to a full-fledged conference on the topic. Publications were beginning to appear in books and professional journals. A few examples will suffice.

1) *Volkskunde als Akademische Disziplin* (1982). The papers at this symposium, organized and carried out by Wolfgang Brückner, looked at folklore as an academic discipline (BRÜCKNER and BEITL 1983). The first part traced the institutional history of various folklore programs, including some comment on the NS years. The second part, however, specifically addressed *Volkskunde* during the National Socialist period. There were three papers. Heide-Marie Schade reported on research in the letter files of De Gruyter Verlag during the 1920s and 1930s, and was able to follow the political leanings of many well-known folklorists (SCHADE 1983). Gerhard Lutz concentrated on the role of Matthes Ziegler as a driving force in the Nazification of German *Volkskunde* (LUTZ 1983). He said that nothing was known about Ziegler after he left the Rosenberg Bureau and during the postwar years, but in a footnote he added a correction that Ziegler was in fact active for many years as a Protestant minister in the Odenwald (cf. WEBER-KELLERMANN 1969, 77). Peter Martin reported in detail on

the Reich Vocational Contests, through which German students competed in essay writing concerning their discipline. The winner was to receive a trip to Berlin, where he would be personally welcomed by the Führer himself. There are over 700 of these essays still available in Würzburg, and some of them treat folklore topics (MARTIN 1983).

2) At the 1983 folklore meeting in Berlin on "Urban Folklore" the *Ordinarius* from Würzburg, Wolfgang Brückner, presented one of the closing lectures. His topic was "*Berlin und die Volkskunde*" [Berlin and Folklore—A Scholarly Outline] (cf. the announcement of the lecture in *DGV-Informationen* 92, 1983: 100). During the course of his lecture it became apparent that he was in fact whitewashing some of the people who were deeply involved with the NS world view and folk reeducation programs. He was interrupted numerous times from the audience, and the president of the society, Hermann Bausinger, had to ask the membership to respect Brückner's right to present his history of the discipline in Berlin as he had researched it. The custom at all German Folklore Society meetings is that the lecturer answers questions after the presentation. When Brückner completed his lecture, however, he said that he had to leave to attend another conference and would thus not be able to discuss his paper. There was a near explosion in the lecture hall, with whistling, stamping of feet, jeering. Normally the proceedings of these meetings are published and appear about one year later. This particular lecture was withheld, even though Brückner finally decided to publish his lecture in 1988 in his own journal (Brückner 1988a). Missing, of course, are the asides and allusions that Brückner made and that brought on the audience's reaction.¹²

3) The second issue of 1982 and both 1985 issues of the *Zeitschrift für Volkskunde* have lengthy studies of the NS perversion, particularly the 1985/I issue (ASSION 1985; BREDNICH 1985; EBERHART 1985; FRECKMANN 1982 and 1985; GRUNSKY-PEPER 1985; HESSE and SCHRÖTER 1985; KUNTZ 1982; MOSER 1982).

4) Finally, in October of 1986 a full working session in Munich (as opposed to the regular biennial meetings of the DGV) was devoted to the topic (cf. DOW 1987 and 1988). The organizer of the meeting was the President of the DGV, Helge Gerndt, who opened the meeting on *Volkskunde und Nationalsozialismus* with his "Theses for a Necessary Investigation" (GERNDT 1987). It was a two-and-a-half-day meeting and represented the first more or less official dealing with *Volkskunde's* complicity with NS. The meeting was absolutely unique from numerous standpoints. It was not a tribunal, it was scholarly inquiry, on location so to speak, where much of the NS perversion had taken place. The discussion was intense, and of course there were some voices that

said "it wasn't like that." But mostly it was an attempt to delve ever deeper into the question of how such an aberration could happen.

Two thrusts became apparent during the conference, both of which will no doubt continue as primary emphases during the coming months and years. First were the German Democratic Republic (GDR) presentations, which served as opening and closing statements for the conference; they were papers that attempted to seek answers far beyond the time limits of National Socialism (1933-45). Hermann Strobach's question ". . . but when did the prewar begin?" (STROBACH 1987) seeks to lay out the atmosphere of the 1920s as fertile ground for developing a mentality that could easily be usurped by National Socialism. And Wolfgang Jacobeit, in his paper (JACOBEBIT 1987) presented the continuing interest in East Germany with the topic of fascism, an interest that was addressed in the immediate postwar years and continued to be a topic of great importance and interest in the GDR. Secondly, research is beginning to focus on several individuals who were not Nazis and who were not anti-fascists, e.g., Anka Oesterle's paper (OESTERLE 1987) at the Munich meeting and her work for the M. A. in Tübingen (OESTERLE 1988). By tracing the growing complicity of such individuals as John Meier with the new movement, researchers are gaining insights into how reputable individuals in extremely responsible academic settings were coming more and more to accept the new world view, racist as it was, as the basis for a new postwar ethnocentric German society (cf. also LIXFELD 1987a).

Our topic would be easy to deal with if it were possible for German and Austrian scholars to limit research only to those obvious cases of abuse by individuals who came to their positions in folklore departments by means of the Party. In many cases the task of identifying the motivation and the methodology for perverting the discipline is easy and the work of such individuals tends to be nothing less than ridiculous. Eugen Mattiat is "called" to a newly created chair of folklore at Göttingen but must immediately take a sabbatical leave to study up on the discipline so that he can begin to offer lectures (BREDNICH 1987). Eugen Fehrle is placed in Heidelberg and soon is offering museum exhibitions "proving" that the National Socialist *Heilgruß* (Heil greeting) could be traced back to neolithic times in Germanic culture, and that it was even borrowed by the Romans. Displayed in a museum exhibition was a Roman soldier giving the Heil greeting (ASSION 1985). Karl Theodor Weigel's "symbol archives" of over 50,000 photos and cards in a card catalog have resurfaced and are available, all documenting the various signs and symbols that were used to "prove" their Germanic/Nordic origin (cf. BREDNICH 1985).

The topic becomes more difficult, however, when we see that *most* folklore journals published statements of welcome and greeting to Hitler and the new NS regime, many in the early 1930s, and often included blatant racist and Germanic-superiority statements. It becomes even more difficult when we look at the research goals and outlines for *Gleichschaltung* (political co-ordination) that were published under the names of some of the foremost folklorists of the period. The complexity continues to grow when we trace through documents out of the various archives that reveal an *Anbiederung* (cozying up) by some extremely well-known folklorists, correspondence that documents plans for the *Reichsinstitut* for folklore mentioned above, which was to be completed after the war, plans that existed long before National Socialism and that during the period came to sound like outlines for research and public education by NS functionaries (LIXFELD 1989).

And finally, the theme seems to take on an insurmountable perplexity when one reads materials by Kurt Huber from the late 1920s and early 1930s, statements that could easily be taken over by the Party and used for its own racial and political purposes (BAUSINGER 1965, 200–202). If the name Kurt Huber is not familiar, one should know that he was executed for sympathizing with and aiding the Scholls (brother and sister), who led the student resistance movement in Munich called the White Rose.

These few statements, all taken from current research, much of it published within the last five years, are intended to suggest how very difficult it is to deal with German *Volkskunde*'s involvement with National Socialism. It would be very easy if there were in fact two *Volkskunden*, as many have tried to suggest through the last 40 years: one that was perverted and obviously, ridiculously, and revealingly tainted; the other representing a long tradition reaching back through the great figures of the 18th and 19th centuries all the way back to Herder and his concept of *Naturpoesie*, and which was alive and well during the Third Reich, even though it was closeted. Unfortunately, current research in Germany and Austria is beginning to reveal how very faulty this description of the period is.

THE VOLKSKUNDLERSTREIT—FOLKLORISTS' BATTLE

Current research in the third phase of folkloric *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* of the 1980s, however, like the first and second phases, has not been able to avoid countermoves within the discipline that exemplify some of the characteristics of the phenomenon of "second guilt," and on occasion even the suppression and denial of the first guilt. This has led to considerable controversies not unlike those in

the German *Historikerstreit*. Toward the end of the 1980s there arose, as the Executive Committee and Board of the German Folklore Society tried to describe it diplomatically, a *neue Streitkultur* (new combative culture). In it were involved the two authors of this study and Wolfgang Brückner, the *Ordinarius* for *Volkskunde* at Würzburg who is also deeply involved in the analysis of the NS past, particularly the *Volkskunde* of the Rosenberg Bureau. Our description of this confrontation, which became known far beyond the boundaries of the German-speaking countries, is certainly quite subjective. On the other hand, it is our firm conviction that it is symptomatic of the current situation of German *Volkskunde* in regard to *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*.

At the core of this confrontation were irreconcilable positions concerning scholarly and personal approaches to working up the National Socialistic past of the discipline of *Volkskunde*. Brückner, who is a well-known but feared scholar in the discipline because of his tendency to make vitriolic attacks on colleagues who do not agree with him, represented the position of two *Volkskunden* during the Third Reich and bitterly defended it in several publications. In the process of the controversy, Brückner, as a conservative supporter of the totalitarian theory (BRÜCKNER 1988d), directly equated National Socialistic and Marxist folklorists, i.e., red=brown or brown=red, which brought on a vigorous response from the GDR folklorist who has been aiding us in our archival work for many years, Wolfgang Jacobeit (JACOBET 1987, 301–302).

The confrontation grew out of a paper presented at the December 1987 Modern Language Association meeting in San Francisco by James Dow, who assumed a critical position in regard to Brückner's lecture at the 1983 Berlin folklore meeting mentioned above, "*Berlin und die Volkskunde*." Dow suggested that the lecture contained revisionistic tendencies. Brückner answered this criticism in his own journal, *Bayerische Blätter für Volkskunde*, with two short articles (BRÜCKNER 1988b and 1988c), and in the same issue he published his long-withheld Berlin lecture (BRÜCKNER 1988a). It was, however, incomplete, in that it lacked most of the statements that had caused so much reaction five years previously, particularly the ad-libbed side comments (ASSION 1984, 85–86).

Brückner claimed in his publications that we had disparaged and slandered him, and that in his Berlin lecture he had not "whitewashed" any folklorists of the National Socialistic years who were deeply involved with the NS world view and folk reeducation programs, and thus was now publishing this lecture as proof against our "untruthful presentations." He goes on to say that the meeting being planned for

1988 in Bayreuth as the "Folklore Section" of the Catholic "Görres Society" was to be devoted to NS *Volkskunde* and would offer no revisionist tendencies. Our criticism of him, and his invitation to Hannjost Lixfeld to present a lecture at the Bayreuth meeting, which was refused, were later interpreted by Brückner as a kind of persecution of the "Folklore Section" of the "Görres Society," much as this same society and its chairman, Georg Schreiber (Brückner's predecessor), had been persecuted at that time by the Nazis (BRÜCKNER 1988b). There were numerous other disparaging accusations. He then placed his brand on other real and presumed opponents and even lumped them together with some US folklorists, all of whom he insulted by calling them "fakelore" fabricators (BRÜCKNER 1988c).

In our attempt to respond we were denied access not only to the main organ of the DGV, the *Zeitschrift für Volkskunde*,¹³ for presenting our concept of the encounter, but also to other disciplinary journals of the Federal Republic of Germany,¹⁴ and it was thus only possible to respond through an open letter sent to Wolfgang Brückner on 8 May 1988 and to many German-speaking colleagues.

The previously mentioned comparisons with the German *Historikerstreit* thus seem even more appropriate, especially since the confrontations concerning the working up of the NS past of *Volkskunde* have continued. In an open letter of 16 July 1990 the Austrian folklorist Olaf Bockhorn was sharply attacked by Ulrike Kammerhofer for statements in one of his studies (BOCKHORN 1989, 32).¹⁵ Kammerhofer is the Director of the Salzburger Landesinstitut für Volkskunde [Salzburg State Institute for Folklore], which now calls itself the Richard-Wolfram-Forschungsstelle [Richard Wolfram Research Post], and which has received or has been assured that it will receive the literary legacy of this man and of other NS folklorists like Karl von Spieß and Karl Haiding, who are also being honored in Salzburg.¹⁶ Kammerhofer has nothing to say in her open letter about Bockhorn's research results concerning Wolfram and other NS folklorists in Austria, which had led up to his incriminating final paragraph and its critique of the Salzburg State Institute for Folklore. Following her word-for-word quotation of this paragraph, she asks whether Bockhorn viewed his conclusion as a "sensational *bonmot*" or perhaps as a part of his "scholarly intentioned article," thereby attempting to discredit Bockhorn and his scholarly work.

The open letter by Ulrike Kammerhofer was sent to a long list of individuals in Austrian scholarship and politics. Its objective was obvious, to suppress Bockhorn's NS research and to trivialize the NS past of Austrian folklore and folklorists. What is still left from this

period is being archived and honored in Salzburg, and the State Institute for Folklore has still not sought to distance itself definitively from the perversions of this NS period.

CONCLUSION

The revisionistic and apologetic tendencies of neo-conservative scholars identifiable here and elsewhere in German-speaking countries are having an effect on the consciousness as well as the self-consciousness of scholars of the contemporary discipline of *Volkskunde*. The scholarly objectives of this discipline in the German-speaking countries of Central Europe no longer have anything in common with the practices of fifty years ago in the Third Reich, practices that served the fascistic political system. Still, many of the attitudes and behavioral patterns of the scholars of our discipline are reminiscent of their National Socialistic predecessors. There have been and still are attempts to trivialize National Socialistic *Volkskunde* and its perversions, to dismiss and to defend the discrediting participation of German folklorists in it, and to brand in the *Volkskundlerstreit* those scholars in the discipline who think differently as outsiders and as "nest-dirtiers." Uncovering and refuting these tendencies must be the task of a critical and rational historiography of the discipline and our coming to terms with the past.

APPENDIX

CALL BY THE BUND FÜR DEUTSCHE VOLKSKUNDE, E.V.

German *Volkskunde* awakens and preserves the knowledge of the most authentic cultural goods the German folk possesses. The digging is deeper and deeper, more and more relationships are being established, more and more knowledge is being gained. Precisely the world-view foundations for National Socialism and the national movement have been prepared in the past through folklore research, as the names Jahn, Riehl, etc. prove.

Lacking, however, was unity, large-scale cooperation, penetration into the broad folk strata, a consciousness that everyone must work together.

Great things have already been accomplished: the associations and institutes that have promoted German *Volkskunde* through collections and research, have joined together in a League; the German Folksong Archive has collected German folksongs throughout the entire German area since 1914; the great German folklore *Atlas* is in process; folk art is promoted throughout the widest area; handbooks that bring together synoptically the materials of superstition, fairy tales, etc., and numerous other works have had a far-reaching effect.

Still, it is of value to preserve what has been done, and it is of value to expand it, to find champions for *Volkskunde* in every city and every village, not hundreds, no, but thousands.

In order to reach this goal, and at that moment when the great pure German and National Socialistic renewal has made *Volkskunde* into a public affair of the German nation as research and instruction of the folk-national thought and life forms in the past and the present, we have founded the

BUND FÜR DEUTSCHE VOLKSKUNDE

Yearly dues RM 1.—; for associations and corporate public sector bodies RM 3.—.

Those who are members of an association for folklore that is allied with the League of German Societies for Folklore, need pay only RM 0.60, but may voluntarily increase this to RM 1.—.

Every Mark contributes to giving *Volkskunde* new assignments, to deepening its scholarly base, preserving threatened folk material from extinction.

What do we want to do with this small fee, which becomes powerful

when it is given by many hands?

1. Publish annually a folklore work that all members will receive without further payment;
2. Have lectures held on a regularly scheduled plan about folklore, whose scholarly value is guaranteed;
3. Publish a folklore newsletter that supplies newspapers and magazines with impeccable contributions;
4. Support the editing of scholarly works in the realm of folklore;
5. Supply school libraries and scholarly institutions that are not able to buy folklore works with valuable pieces;
6. Further the work of individual folklore associations and dispense new scholarly assignments.

Is that not a lot?

It can only take place, however, if in fact thousands contribute, if it is all of Germany, indeed all *Deutschtum* [Germandom], wherever our language is spoken, wherever it has validity.

Verify your participation in this great task by sending in the attached membership declaration, and solicit other members.

Every German of Aryan heritage and every politically coordinated association can become a member of the Bund.

The Bund für deutsche Volkskunde will be recorded in the list of associations and will be directed by an executive committee made up of a business chair and from 8 to 60 advisors.

We ask that payment be made through a postal money order to the Treasurer, Berlin No. 1337 57: Dr. Gerhard Lüdtke, Berlin W 10, Genthinerstr. 38.

Patron

Herr Prussian Minister for Science, Art, and Folk Education
Bernhard Rust
Executive Committee for Business

Chairs

Prof. Dr John Meier Freiburg i./Br.	Prof. Dr Otto Lauffer Hamburg	Prof. Dr Hans Naumann Bonn a./Rh.
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Secretaries

Prof. Dr Adolf Spamer Dresden	Prof. Dr Herbert Freudenthal Halle a./S.	Prof. Dr Ernst Bargheer Berlin
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Senior Head Master Dr A. Becker, Zweibrücken; Dr F. Boehm, Berlin-Pankow; Book dealer H. Cram, Berlin; Senior Head Master Dr G. Faber, Friedberg i./H.; Ministerial Officer Prof. Dr E. Fehrle, Karlsruhe; Senior Reverend Dr h.c. C. Frank, Kaufbeuren; Museum Director Prof. Dr K. Hahm, Berlin; Prof. Dr H. Hepding, Gießen; Prof. Dr A. Hübner, Berlin; Prof. Dr F. Karg, Leipzig; Head Master's Assistant Prof. Dr J. Klapper, Breslau; Head Master's Assistant Dr Klinkott, Schneidemühl; Prof. Dr Künzig, Lahr; Conservator A. Lämmle, Stuttgart; Prof. Dr O. Lehmann, Altona; Prof. Dr F. v.d. Leyen, Köln a./Rh.; Prof. Dr L. Mackensen, Riga; Author G. F. Meyer, Kiel; Docent at the Technical University Prof. R. Mielke, Berlin; Prof. Dr W. Mitzka, Marburg; Prof. Dr J. Müller, Bonn a./Rh.; Prof. Dr E. Nägele, Tübingen; Privy Councillor Prof. Dr F. Panzer, Heidelberg; Museum Director Dr W. Peßler, Hannover; University Director Prof. Dr K. Plenzat, Elbing; Prof. Dr F. Ranke, Breslau; Conservator Dr J. M. Ritz, Munich; Assistant Master Dr H. Schewe, Freiburg i./Br.; Prelate Prof. Dr Schreiber, Münster i./W.; Prof. Dr J. Schwietering, Frankfurt a./M.; Privy Councillor Prof. Dr T. Siebs, Breslau; Ministerial Officer Dr Stier, Weimar; Prof. Dr H. Tardel, Bremen; Prof. Dr H. Teuchert, Rostock; Prof. Dr J. Trier, Münster i./W.; Dr h.c. Wagenfeld, Münster i./W.; Prof. Dr M. Waehler, Frankfurt a./M.; Head Master Prof. Dr Wirth, Dessau; Prof. Dr R. Wossidlo, Waren; Prof. Dr W. Ziesemer, Königsberg i./Pr.

[Note: original can be found in *Niederdeutsche Zeitschrift für Volkskunde* 11 (1933): 255–56.]

NOTES

1. We are now in the final stages of preparing a two-volume set entitled *The Nazification of an Academic Discipline. German Volkskunde during the Third Reich*, which will be published by Indiana University Press.

2. MEIER 1944a and the accompanying correspondence between Meier and Himmler, as well as the commentary by Himmler in the file in HOLZAPFEL 1989, 111–14 and HEIBER 1968, 272, 281–83; cf. MEIER 1944b.

3. Cf. OESTERLE 1987 and OESTERLE 1988; cf. also the publication of a relevant letter by Meier in HOLZAPFEL 1989, 104–108, as well as 42–43 and 66–67 and the untenable doubts by Otto Holzapfel on John Meier's entanglement with National Socialism.

4. Bundesarchiv Koblenz NS 21/579. Letter from Erna Andersen to the Ancestral Inheritance dated 20 January 1944.

5. Bundesarchiv Koblenz NS 21/579. Correspondence between Meier and the Ancestral Inheritance Foundation Publisher, dated 1 March, 12 March, 15 March, 17

March, 4 June, 21 June 1943, 8 July 1944 and 6 February 1945.

6. We are indebted to Wolfgang Jacobeit and the Archive of the Humboldt Universität Berlin for this information.

7. This was maintained by the present Deputy Director of the German Folksong Archive, HOLZAPFEL 1989, 70. Otto Holzapfel states in a manuscript of 1989 being prepared for publication in English in the USA, that he must defend John Meier from statements made by LIXFELD 1989 and forthcoming in our volume with Indiana University Press. He says that we must not "leave the presentation of the scholarly history of that period to those who—for whatever reason—are clearly drawing a too one-sided and 'more sensational' picture than everyday life in the German Folksong Archive during the years 1933 to 1945 will support." We want to thank Otto Holzapfel for letting us see his manuscript, and we want to reassure him that critical rationality will prevail.

8. The scholars cited by Peuckert, Karl von Spieß and Edmund Mudrak were folklorists in the Rosenberg Bureau (LIXFELD 1987a); Max Hildebert Boehm was Professor of Folk Theory and Folk-National Sociology at the Universität Jena and Director of the Institute for Borderland and Foreign Studies in Berlin, who published many papers relevant for folklore (cf. *Volkskunde an den Hochschulen* 1986, 5, 20 and EMMERICH 1968, 143-44); Fritz Böhm, for a time the Director of the Berlin Central Office of the *Atlas der deutschen Volkskunde* and the editor of the *Zeitschrift für Volkskunde* through volume 46, 1936/1937, was a member of the NSDAP—cf. Berlin Document Center file on Boehm, Friedrich (born 2 September 1880); Friedrich Ranke was until 1937 Professor for German and *Volkskunde* at the University of Breslau. Because his wife was not Aryan he moved in 1938, with the help of John Meier, to the University of Basel in Switzerland (*Volkskunde an den Hochschulen* 1986, 8, 44).

9. Cf. also the standard work for *Volkskunde* by the Swiss participant, Richard WEISS (1946), which does not address the NS past of German folklore and thus contributes only silence to the attempt to "overcome" it.

10. Cf. BERICHT 1952; GERNDT 1988, 9 also speaks of "attempts at consolidation with old traditions of *Volkskunde*, which documents a continuity in research. On the one hand National Socialistically influenced developments are excluded and are looked upon as not belonging to 'real' *Volkskunde*, or on the other hand they are not recognized for their destructive results, or at least they are not considered When all is taken into consideration the programmatic of folklore during the first postwar decade remains on track with the older tradition of the discipline."

11. *Zeitschrift für Volkskunde* 50, 1953: 1; formal continuities in the daily course of events are also quite obvious. At folklore meetings during the Third Reich telegrams with greetings were sent to Adolf Hitler, and in Jugenheim they were sent to the Federal President Theodor Heuß. It was not without a secondary meaning that the democrat Heuß spoke in poetically guarded phrases of the new and difficult tasks of scholarly *Volkskunde*, of researching and presenting that which had been, and was then passed on, "recognizing a development that was nurtured by revised presuppositions," and that he wished for "realistic sobriety and a sensitive fantasy." See BERICHT 1952, 3.

12. Cf. Assion's and Jeggle's comments on the lecture. Assion offered the following statement in his summarization of the meeting: "In conclusion the contemporary situation of German *Volkskunde* was supposed to be surveyed once again by looking at the scholarly history in Berlin. The Congress had already carried this out half way. Wolfgang Brückner, however, used his survey of Berlin and Folklore to instigate a battle on folklore during the NS period and to distinguish between folklorists

who fell prey to the *Zeitgeist* of the period and the others who protested. His apologetic rigor had not seemed possible after Bausinger and Emmerich did their studies on the genesis and the plurality of Germanic Folk-National Ideology. A protest arose, also directed at Brückner's asides, which were leveled at the ostensible *Zeitgeist* opportunists of today, but there was no discussion because Brückner had no time for a discussion. Instead, in something of a bad mood, the plenary session took up the detailed presentation made by Theodor Kohlmann" (ASSION 1984, 85-86). A letter by Utz Jeggle to Brückner had the following to say: "I find it correct to investigate philologically the texts of researchers who had to work during the Nazi period, I also find it correct to identify with them a little bit—let him who is sure how he would have reacted at that time cast the first stone. I find it wrong, however, to try to clean up those brown spots that did exist" (quoted in BRÜCKNER 1984, 27).

13. There was in fact a majority decision by the Executive Committee and the Board of the DGV that instructed the president to look around for publication possibilities for our Open Letter; shortly thereafter we received a letter from the editors of the *Zeitschrift für Volkskunde* that our letter would not be published; we heard nothing more concerning the matter.

14. One exception was the friendly offer by Bernhard Oeschger, the Director of the Landesstelle für Volkskunde in Freiburg im Breisgau and the editor of the *Beiträge zur Volkskunde in Baden-Württemberg*. We, however, refused his offer for personal and professional reasons.

15. Bockhorn concluded his lengthy study with the following words: "Is it any wonder, and with this I want to conclude my brief final remarks on contemporary *Volkskunde*, which are intended to instruct future generations of folklorists, that in 1986 the Salzburg State Institute for *Volkskunde* honored the name of its mentor through the additional description 'Richard Wolfram Research Office,' after it had received his library, the photo collection, and all of his notes. It also boasts of having received portions of the literary remains of Karl von Spieß and the collection 'Game and Folk Speech' by Karl Haiding (which we have already encountered). It has thus reversed itself and become a place of devotion and atonement. And so they have, as is so nicely said in Austria in the year 1988 on such occasions, all simply done their duty."

16. Cf. Salzburger Landesinstitut 1986; concerning Richard Wolfram see the chapter "The Ancestral Inheritance during the War" in OESTERLE 1988.

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