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Durham University

Department of History

Supervisors: Dr Kay Schiller and Dr Jo Fox

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M.A. thesis:

With A Little Help From My Friends: Ernst Jünger and his network in the post-war period

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Author: Thomas Hajduk

Subject: Modern History

College: Ustinov College

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Picture taken from *Tagesspiegel*, 8.11.1946.

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Abbreviations: Ernst Jünger's works

AA = *Autor und Autorschaft* (Stuttgart, 1984).

DA = *Der Arbeiter: Herrschaft und Gestalt* (Stuttgart, 1982 [1932]).

DtM = 'Die totale Mobilmachung', in Ernst Jünger (ed.), *Krieg und Krieger* (Berlin, 1930). pp. 9–31.

Frieden 1946 = *Der Friede: Ein Wort an die Jugend Europas und an die Jugend der Welt* (Amsterdam, 1946).

Frieden 1948 = 'Der Friede', *Die Aussprache* 5 (1948), pp. I-IV, 1–12.

Frieden 1949 = *Der Frieden: Ein Wort an die Jugend Europas: Ein Wort an die Jugend der Welt* (Zurich, 1949).

Helio = *Heliopolis* (Tübingen, 1949).

JO = *Jahre der Okkupation* (Stuttgart, 1958).

KiE I = *Der Kampf als inneres Erlebnis* (Berlin, 1922).

Marmor = *Auf den Marmor-Klippen* (Hamburg, 1939).

Pub = Sven Olaf Berggötz (ed.), *Ernst Jünger: Politische Publizistik: 1919 bis 1933* (Stuttgart, 2001).

SG I = *In Stahlgewittern: Aus dem Tagebuch eines Stoßtruppführers: Von Ernst Jünger: Kriegsfreiwilliger, dann Leutnant und Kompanie-Führer im Füs.-Regt. Prinz Albrecht von Preußen (Hannov. Nr. 73)* (Leisnig, 1920).

SG III = *In Stahlgewittern: Aus dem Tagebuch eines Stoßtruppführers* (Berlin, 1924).

Strahlungen = *Strahlungen* (Tübingen, 1949).

SV I = *Siebzig verweht I* (Stuttgart, 1980).

SV IV = *Siebzig verweht IV* (Stuttgart, 1995).

W125 = *Das Wäldchen 125: Eine Chronik aus den Grabenkämpfen 1918* (Berlin, 1925).

Waldgang = *Der Waldgang* (Frankfurt, 1953⁴ [1951]).

Abbreviations: correspondence

AH = Albert Hofman
AM = Armin Mohler
AT = Alfred Toepfer
B = Umm-El-Banine Assadoulaeff
BZ = Benno Ziegler
CC = Carl Cohen
CS = Carl Schmitt
CSd = Carlo Schmid
EB = Erich Brock
EJ = Ernst Jünger
EK = Ernst Klett
ER = Ernst Rowohlt
FGJ = Friedrich Georg Jünger
GH = Gerhard Heller
GN = Gerhard Nebel
HS = Hans Speidel
HVA = Hanseatische Verlagsanstalt
KOP = Karl O. Paetel
MM = Manfred Michler
MT = Michael Thomas
VK = Vittorio Klostermann
WM = Werner Milch
YMCA = Young Men's Christian Association

Note: All correspondence is quoted according to the following pattern: EJ/ WM. The first abbreviation stands for the sender, the second one for the addressee.

I have used the published editions of the correspondence between Ernst Jünger and Gerhard Nebel as well as between Jünger and Carl Schmitt. In these cases, the page number is given in addition to the abbreviation.

1. Introduction

1.1 Ernst Jünger

Ernst Jünger was one of the most peculiar Germans of the twentieth century. The author of numerous essays, diaries and Science Fiction novels fascinated more people by his personality than his writings: a highly decorated ‘writer-warrior’¹, connoisseur of various drugs, recognised entomologist and strange hermit. Around his hundredth birthday in 1995, there was much hustle and bustle in the media, and the old man was celebrated as one of Germany’s greatest men of letters. But after his death three years later, public interest has fallen sharply.

Not so academic interest. Nearly ten years after his death, Jünger remains the subject of numerous scholars worldwide.² Despite a general tendency among them to read his works more and more without their political implications, historical research remains critical. However, these historians are predominantly interested in Jünger’s shady past, in other words his career as nationalistic intellectual in the 1920s and early 1930s, and his share in the decline of the Weimar Republic³ and the rise of National Socialism. Especially German scholars are prone to continuing the ideological trench warfare that surrounded Jünger most of his life. Obsessed with those controversial years, they overlook a question that is far more important than balancing the old pros and cons: how did the former anti-democratic intellectual become a much acclaimed, seclusive writer of post-war Germany *despite* all the controversies and disapproval?

To answer this question, it would take a thorough analysis of Jünger’s biography, nearly eighty years of German cultural scene and industry and a similarly long history of his reception (see chapter 5). This thesis, instead, will concentrate on one period in Jünger’s life which probably was the absolute low point of his career as a writer. Rather than National Socialism, as Jünger-apologists would have it, it was the post-war period from 1945 to 1949: after the Second World

¹ See N.N., ‘Ernst Jünger, writer warrior’, *Economist* 346 (1998).

² The rapidly growing literature is recorded by Nicolai Riedel from the German Literature Archive in Marbach (DLA), see Nicolai Riedel, *Ernst-Jünger-Bibliographie: Wissenschaftliche und essayistische Beiträge zu seinem Werk (1928–2002)* (Stuttgart, 2003). The bibliography is regularly updated in the journal *Les carnets: Revue du Centre de Recherche et de Documentation Ernst Jünger* in Montpellier.

³ According to the classical study by Kurt Sontheimer, *Antidemokratisches Denken in der Weimarer Republik: Die politischen Ideen des deutschen Nationalismus 1918 und 1933* (Munich, 1994⁴), pp. 103–24.

War, Jünger was no more than a blacklisted, accused and unpublished writer, who denied any accountability for recent history. Only four years later the ban was lifted, public opinion turned largely in favour of him and publishers fought over him – and he still denied any accountability and refused to review his early writings critically. During the four years of post-war period, Ernst Jünger made nothing less than his most important comeback.

Why the post-war period? After the First World War, Jünger was depressed and his father took great pains to give him new courage.⁴ During National-Socialism Jünger's contempt for the new rulers upset NS-grandees, who more than once tried to get rid of him. Even during the later years of the Federal Republic, there was considerable opposition to Jünger and his works.⁵ But the chance to call Jünger to account was never better than during the four years of British occupation: the denazification policy was designed to find and punish everyone who contributed to the rise of National Socialism, and Jünger was considered to be one of the culprits. Public opinion was against the famous author of belligerent novels and nationalistic articles. And no publisher would dare to bring into print a single line written by him.

Yet against all odds, Jünger managed to prevail. In the first place, he did it by means of an extensive and diverse network. It even circumvented the ban on publication, the ultimate weapon of an incoherent and ineffective denazification policy. Due to his supporter's efforts, Jünger never had to renounce his former convictions. On the contrary: based on his early writings, he conceived an exonerating explanation of recent history, which was convenient to most Germans, because it vaporised away all questions of guilt and responsibility.

This thesis does more than filling an important, maybe the most important gap in Jünger's biography. It has been often remarked that the life of the 102 years-old writer mirrored much of German history. Jünger made his way through four political systems: the constitutional monarchy of Kaiser William II, the uneasy years of Germany's first democracy, the totalitarian Third Reich and eventually a democratic (West) Germany again. One should add the interim years between 1945 and 1949. The analysis of the Jünger-network in particular will reveal a row of characters who became influential in the later Federal Republic. The links between them and their common endeavour to support Jünger provide an example of the importance and the functioning of personal networks in war-ridden Germany. After the societal framework had collapsed, personal contacts were one of the most valuable resources one could have. As the Jünger-network tells us about German post-war history, so does the 'Jünger case' tell about denazification. The British

⁴ Paul Noack, *Ernst Jünger: Eine Biographie* (Berlin, 1998), pp. 28, 46.

⁵ In 1982 for example, when Jünger was awarded with the reputable Goethe-prize of Frankfurt on the Main, members of the Green party tried to prevent the awarding and caused a great controversy.

authorities, in whose zone Jünger lived until the end of 1948, were determined to call the writer into responsibility. But their means were insufficient and their actual activities became inconsistent with their idealistic aims. The British denazification attempt failed generally, but at least it prevented Jünger from spreading his problematic words in the apologetic atmosphere after the collapse of Nazism. Thus Jünger's case reflects denazification in general. Furthermore, his political writings of that time give a sophisticated response to the thesis of collective guilt, which was propounded by the Allies. Since those writings were appealing to many Germans, their analysis contributes to the understanding of Germans coming into terms with their past.

Ernst Jünger's comeback after 1945 will be dealt with in three chapters. Chapter 2 is dedicated to the Jünger-network and Jünger's publishing strategies. Since it accounts for most of his comeback, it is the central piece of this thesis. Chapter 3 focuses on the denazification of Ernst Jünger. It comprises the measures of the British authorities as well as Jünger's responses. Because he kept remarkably calm about denazification, chapter 4 will analyse his relevant post-war publications which are considered to be a reaction to the occupation.

1.2 Research overview

1.2.1 The Jünger-research

As mentioned before, Jünger-scholars are still mainly interested in the writer's life between 1920 and 1945. Due to his ambivalent behaviour during that time and the problematic nature of most of his writings, the corresponding research does often not lead to clear results but ideological judgment. Another problem is the still missing authoritative biography. More recent attempts to write it have been affirmative and descriptive like Meyer's account⁶ on Jünger's (intellectual) life or affirmative and rather unscholarly like Noack's anecdotal biography⁷. Older biographical studies tend to concentrate on the time until 1945.

Lately, there have been three studies that cover the post-war period. Elliot Neaman investigated Jünger's writings and his reception particularly by the (European) *Nouvelle Droite*.⁸ His study is important to this thesis as both share two core assumptions about Ernst Jünger. The first one refers to the distinction between deeds and thoughts: while Jünger's behaviour proves his

⁶ Martin Meyer, *Ernst Jünger* (Munich, 1993).

⁷ Noack, *Jünger*.

⁸ Elliot Y. Neaman, *A Dubious Past: Ernst Jünger and the Politics of Literature after Nazism* (Berkeley, 1999), pp. 161–2.

personal integrity and may be used to exonerate him, his writings are ‘problematic in the extreme’, since they ‘give concrete form to totalitarian thought at several crucial moments in German history’.⁹ The second assumption is that ‘one should never lose sight of the fact that he [Jünger, TH] never abandoned his anarchist animus against the liberal order in Europe’¹⁰. These assumptions are both a balanced view often missed in the Jünger-research and a new approach to Jünger’s post-war works. As long as scholars were preoccupied with his radical articles in the 1920s, they considered the books published after 1945 apolitical by and large. Neaman shows that the late writings contribute ‘to the project of post-1945 radical conservatism’¹¹ as they shed historical responsibility for Holocaust and prototypically deny its uniqueness.

The latest study comes from Daniel Morat.¹² He analyses the development of the three German right-wing intellectuals Ernst and Friedrich Georg Jünger and Martin Heidegger. Depicting the parallels and intersections of their intellectual biographies between 1920 and 1960, Morat explains their transition from the rhetoric of radical activism back to a merely contemplative state of mind. The failure of ‘Conservative Revolution’¹³ in principle and the disappointing rule of National Socialism in particular made them turn away from their political engagement. Because the Jünger brothers and Heidegger claimed to follow a coherent ideology, they did not renounce former thoughts or even admit to have been wrong. Instead, they constructed ‘Denkwege’ to conceal their intellectual dead end.¹⁴ Besides giving evidence of Jünger’s ‘denkbiographische Abstandnahme’¹⁵, Morat shares both Neaman’s and Seferens’ core assumption:

Sie [the Jünger brothers and Heidegger, TH] waren in ihrem Denken seit Mitte der 1930er Jahre und in der Nachkriegszeit nicht unbedingt weniger radikal als während der 1920er Jahre und blieben auch nach 1945 strikte Antidemokraten, zogen sich aber aus der Sphäre des Politischen mehr und mehr zurück.¹⁶

One chapter of Morat’s book is all about Jünger during 1945 and 1949. Therein he argues that after the destruction of the Third Reich the now condemned and despised radical thinkers like

⁹ See *ibid.*, p. 18.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 68. In 1998, Horst Seferens published a study on the post-war making a similar point, see Horst Seferens, »Leute von übermorgen und von vorgestern«: *Ernst Jüngers Ikonographie der Gegenauflärung und die deutsche Rechte nach 1945* (Bodenheim, 1998). However, Seferens claims that Jünger communicated with his followers of the *Nouvelle Droite* after 1945 by means of a ‘politischen Geheimcode’ (p. 10). This interpretation is far-fetched; I prefer Neaman’s moderate approach.

¹¹ Neaman *Dubious Past*, p. 3.

¹² Daniel Morat, *Von der Gelassenheit zur Tat: Konservatives Denken bei Martin Heidegger, Ernst Jünger und Friedrich Georg Jünger 1920–1960* (Göttingen, 2007).

¹³ ‘Conservative Revolution’ is the generic term for a group of mostly right-wing intellectuals who refused a world shaped by Enlightenment and Liberalism. The alternative conception they conceived differed a lot due to their intellectual background, but they all can be called anti-democratic; see Stefan Breuer, *Anatomie der Konservativen Revolution* (Darmstadt, 1993).

¹⁴ See Morat, *Tat Gelassenheit*, p. 16.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

Jünger, Heidegger and Carl Schmitt resorted to a 'Netzwerk der Verschwiegenheit'¹⁷. This network has two functions:

Zum einen diente es ihnen als ein Refugium der Stille, das sie gegen Angriffe von außen schützte und in dem sie ungestört ihre Ideenhaushalte neu sortieren konnten. Zum anderen konnten sie in ihr die Rückkehr in die Öffentlichkeit erproben und gleichzeitig einen Kommunikations- und Denkstil ausprägen, der auch für ihr öffentliches Wirken in der Bundesrepublik konstitutiv blieb.¹⁸

The idea of elitist circles was certainly vital to Jünger and other intellectuals who were socialised in the heyday of *bündisch* youth. But the other side of the coin is the purely material value of a network. Although Morat does acknowledge the 'instrumentellen Charakter von Ernst Jüngers Netzwerk- und Kontaktpflege'¹⁹, he underestimates its full significance. He is primarily interested in the continuity of the Jüngers' and Heidegger's thinking and introduces the activities of the network only to support this thesis. According to Morat, the primary purpose of the post-war network was 'Absicherung der Rückzugsstrategien', whereas it enabled a return into the public only in the 1950s.²⁰ In contrast, this thesis argues that the network was the very starting point of Jünger's comeback: without the publication of his books and the numerous apologies during the precarious post-war period, the return beginning in the 1950s would have been impossible.²¹ After all, other 'Conservative Revolutionaries' were networking too, but failed to be rehabilitated.²² One reason was that their networks were not as extensive and diverse, that is to say effective, as Jünger's and thus rather covering a retreat than staging a comeback.

1.2.2 Denazification

The Second World War was a 'total war'. It was more radical than the preceding war by quashing the distinction between civilians and combatants completely and due to the German war aim to enslave or destroy so called 'inferior races'. Such a war could not be ended by the conventional means of a peace treaty, which would require some kind of compromise. Instead, the concept of 'unconditional surrender' was proclaimed by the USA, Great Britain and the Soviet Union in Casablanca in January 1943. This announcement meant the dissolution of a sovereign German

¹⁷ Ibid, p. 419.

¹⁸ According to his pointed formulation in Daniel Morat, 'Techniken der Verschwiegenheit: Esoterische Gesprächskommunikation nach 1945 bei Ernst Jünger und Friedrich Georg Jünger, Carl Schmitt und Martin Heidegger', in Moritz Föllmer (ed.), *Sehnsucht nach Nähe: Interpersonale Kommunikation in Deutschland seit dem 19. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart, 2004), pp. 157–75, here p. 173.

¹⁹ Morat, *Tat Gelassenheit*, p. 323.

²⁰ Ibid, p. 526.

²¹ This difference also affects the choice of sources. While Morat read Jünger's correspondence with his most prominent supporters only, I had a look at minor characters like Michael Thomas and Werner Milch too.

²² For instance Carl Schmitt, see Dirk van Laak, *Gespräche in der Sicherheit des Schweigens: Carl Schmitt in der politischen Geistesgeschichte der frühen Bundesrepublik* (Berlin, 1993).

government as soon as the armistice would arrive, and it was a preliminary step to denazification. Two years later the 'Big Three' announced in their Report of the Crimea (Yalta) Conference: 'It is our inflexible purpose to destroy German militarism and Nazism and to ensure that Germany will never again be able to disturb the peace of the world.'²³ The Allies wanted to 'remove all Nazi and militarist influences from public office and from the cultural and economic life of the German people'²⁴.

This large-scale intervention in the internal affairs of a country had 'very few precedents in even comparatively modern times'²⁵. That is one reason why its implementation was handled differently in each occupation zone despite a common framework, which was endorsed in the Allied Control Council, the military occupation governing body for Germany. Two of the directives concerning denazification were decisive: *Control Council Directive No. 24* was issued on 12 January 1946 and ordered the 'removal from office and from positions of responsibility of Nazis and of persons hostile to allied purpose'.²⁶ It was a detailed list of what was to be understood under the all but precise term 'Nazi'. *Control Council Directive No. 38* concerning the 'Arrest and Punishment of War Criminals, Nazis, and Militarists and the Internment, Control, and Surveillance of Potentially Dangerous Germans' can be called the 'most important law passed in Germany during the occupation'²⁷. It introduced five categories of 'Nazis': major offender, offender (activists, militarists, and profiteers), lesser offender (probationers), follower, and persons exonerated.²⁸ Like *Directive No. 24* it was a 'catch-all-clause'²⁹: the detailed list of what was to be understood under a 'Nazi' already covered all notable ranks within National Socialist and affiliated organisations. Additionally, regional military commanders were entitled to apply the directive on everyone who was considered 'dangerous to Allied purposes'.³⁰

The actual application of the directives to the occupation zones differed markedly. In the three Western zones, the Americans led the way with much moral vigour and the aim to eventually re-educate Germany.³¹ After 'wild' internments, American troops were the first to distribute the notorious questionnaire. It was designed to provide evidence whether the questioned was a 'Nazi' and therefore should be removed from any office. It contained 131 questions, for instance about

²³ Beate Ruhm von Oppen (ed.), *Documents on Germany under Occupation, 1945–1954* (London, 1955), p. 5.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ Constantine FitzGibbon, *Denazification* (London, 1969), p. 13.

²⁶ See Oppen, *Documents*, pp. 102–7.

²⁷ Dennis L. Bark and David R. Gress, *A History of Western Germany*, vol. 1: *From Shadow to Substance 1945–1963* (Oxford, 1993²), p. 75.

²⁸ See Oppen, *Documents*, pp. 168–79. The directive is dated 12.10.1946.

²⁹ Patricia Meehan, *A strange enemy people: Germans under the British 1945–1950* (London, 2001), pp. 67–8.

³⁰ 'The internment of Germans, who, though not guilty of specific crimes are considered to be dangerous to Allied purposes, and the control and surveillance of others considered potentially so dangerous' (Oppen, *Documents*, p. 168).

³¹ See Theodor Eschenburg, *Jahre der Besatzung 1945–1949* (Stuttgart, 1983), p. 112.

employment and income during the Third Reich, membership in National Socialist and affiliated organisations, the (secret) vote at the elections in November 1932 and March 1933. This formalistic measure resulted in a flood of questionnaires (around 13,000,000 by the end of 1945), but not enough personnel to process them. These shortcomings, the growing grudge within their zone and democratic zeal led them to cooperate with Germans. The establishment of *Spruchkammern* – lay courts supervised by Americans, but staffed with German ‘Anti-Nazis’ – marked the turn from a general, questionnaire-based denazification to a more individual one.³² Yet, the Americans lost interest in a thorough denazification by the end of 1947. In spite of German protests it was virtually ended in 1948.³³

British denazification policy was similar to the American one in using questionnaires and panels, but differed greatly in one crucial point: it lacked the will to turn Germany into a true democracy. Instead, the British were pragmatic and security-minded.³⁴ British officers and officials believed in the ‘bellicose German national character’.³⁵ A statement which deputy military governor Sir Brian Robertson made in March 1947 is typical of this thinking:

Our interest in Denazification is quite different from that of the Germans. Apart from war crimes, we are chiefly concerned with security i.e. we wish the German administration and German industry to be staffed with people who are not dangerous to the aims of the occupation. For the Germans, however, the question is largely one of justice and retribution upon individuals who have oppressed and persecuted their fellow citizens and brought disaster upon their country.³⁶

Consequently, the British hesitated to confer the enforcement of denazification to the German bodies.³⁷ They had a mainly advisory function until the midst of 1947, and the system of *Spruchkammern* and *Spruchgerichte* proved to be quite complicated.³⁸ Moreover, British denazification was struggling with a hostile public opinion.³⁹ Unpopular measures like denazification only worsened resentments, while the British authorities tried to keep their starving zone from collapsing.

³² Klaus-Dietmar Henke, ‘Die Trennung vom Nationalsozialismus: Selbstzerstörung, politische Säuberung, »Entnazifizierung«, Strafverfolgung’, in the same and Hans Woller (eds.), *Politische Säuberung in Europa: Die Abrechnung mit Faschismus und Kollaboration nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Munich, 1991), pp. 21–84, here p. 38.

³³ See Eschenburg, *Besatzung*, pp. 116–7.

³⁴ See Ian Turner, ‘Denazification in the British Zone’, in the same (ed.), *Reconstruction in Post-War Germany: British Occupation Policy and the Western Zones, 1945–55* (Oxford et al., 1989), pp. 239–71, here p. 247, Jill Jones, ‘Eradicating Nazism from the British Zone of Germany: Early Policy and Practice’, *German History* 2, 8 (1990), pp. 145–61, here pp. 147–5, 161, and Ullrich Schneider, ‘Nach dem Sieg: Besatzungspolitik und Militärregierung 1945’, in Josef Foschepoth and Rolf Steininger (eds.), *Die britische Deutschland- und Besatzungspolitik 1945–1949* (Paderborn, 1985), pp. 47–65, here pp. 49, 62.

³⁵ See Turner, ‘Denazification’, p. 139.

³⁶ Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 244.

³⁷ Clemens Vollnhals and Thomas Schlemmer (eds.), *Entnazifizierung: Politische Säuberung in den vier Besatzungszonen 1945–1949* (Munich, 1991), p. 24.

³⁸ See Eschenburg, *Besatzung*, p. 118. Essen alone had 271 denazification panels, see Henke, ‘Trennung’, p. 46.

³⁹ See Barbara Marshall, ‘German Attitudes to British Military Government 1945–47’, *Journal of Contemporary History* 15 (1980), pp. 655–84.

All in all, most scholars tend to condemn denazification or the ‘Revolution auf Papier’⁴⁰. The British plans how to purge the German society were called inadequate.⁴¹ The American-British approach was condemned as ‘excessive formalism’⁴². It led to the wide-spread belief that it was always the small fry that got caught, while the big fish got away.⁴³ Indeed, major and more complicated cases were deferred, while the small and simple ones were dealt with first; when denazification was abruptly ended, pending cases were mostly dropped.⁴⁴ Furthermore, there were no common standards among the zones by which the accused were judged; in the British and especially the French zone these standards were even missing within the respective zone.⁴⁵ A man who feared to be dismissed in the American zone could come to the British one where he would not be prosecuted.⁴⁶ More generally, denazification faced a problem that could not be overcome: a nation could be either thoroughly purged or adequately run and rebuilt.⁴⁷ This was the dilemma of the Allied forces, and they failed in as much as they tried to do both. The dawning of the Cold War did the rest by turning a society of former foes and actual culprits into one of valuable allies. Nevertheless, denazification had positive outcomes as well. The most important: radical ideas were suppressed by Allied crack-down, and Germans had to face their responsibility. There was no second Weimar in terms of influential intellectuals who would publicly fight an unstable democracy and thereby add to its downfall.⁴⁸

Jünger’s case is in line with these findings. On the one hand, British authorities followed an inconsistent policy about Jünger. They deemed him a ‘militarist’ and wanted him to undergo denazification measures. At the same time, they considered him useful for their purposes and tried to win him for a democratic reconstruction. Since Jünger was able to refuse both, his denazification clearly failed. On the other hand, the British measures and particularly the ban on publication in Germany prevented him from engaging in political journalism again. As the analysis of his post-war writings shows, he had not given up his anti-democratic animus. The British authorities helped to stabilise the German society by banning his works and thus keeping out his problematic thoughts that could only obstruct but not promote post-war affairs. Thus chapter 3 of this thesis does more than telling and analysing one single case: in its ambiguity it

⁴⁰ Hermann Glaser, *Die Kulturgeschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, vol. 1: *Kapitulation und Währungsreform 1945–1948* (Munich, 1985), p. 139.

⁴¹ See Meehan, *Strange enemy*, p. 108.

⁴² Bark and Gress, *Western Germany*, p. 76.

⁴³ A point made by many scholars, for example Schneider, ‘Nach dem Sieg’, p. 62.

⁴⁴ See FitzGibbon, *Denazification*, pp. 141–2.

⁴⁵ See Henke, ‘Trennung’, p. 37.

⁴⁶ See Turner, ‘Denazification’, p. 250.

⁴⁷ See for example Marshall, ‘Attitudes’, p. 669, and Jones, ‘Eradicating Nazism’, p. 162.

⁴⁸ See Marshall, ‘Attitudes’, p. 677.

reflects the very policy of denazification.

Before turning to the Jünger-network, it is necessary to have a closer look at the man who caused so much turmoil. Who was he and what makes him such special an example of the post-war period and denazification alike?

1.3 Jünger – a short biography 1895–1945

I should mention at the outset that it is extremely difficult to give a balanced account of Ernst Jünger's biography. This is due to the turns in his life, his ambiguous personality and especially to his contradictory way of thinking. He always tried to grasp reality in all its variety and reduce it to some sort of metaphysical idea. Between the 1920s and early 1930s, this idea had to serve as an answer to the writer's search for the meaning of the Great War, in other words his and his comrades' apparently futile sacrifices. The problem was that it changed quite often, as can be seen in the different versions of his writings and the varying interpretations of his war experience. This feature of Jünger's thinking already baffled his contemporaries, who for instance considered *In Stahlgewittern* a heroic account and a pacifistic book.⁴⁹ It continued to polarise (German) scholars too, leading to two camps of apologists and prosecutors. For each camp, Jünger's books provided sufficient material to condemn or to defend him.

As a result of this difficulty, I will not try to give a balanced account of Jünger's intellectual biography in the Weimar Republic.⁵⁰ I will take a different approach and concentrate on the problematic events and works in his life. Whenever his early works are quoted here, the passages are therefore one-sided and represent what I think was the bone of contention after 1945: did or did not Jünger contribute to the downfall of democracy and the rise of dictatorship?

Ernst Jünger was born on 29 March 1895 in Heidelberg. He was one of six children of the Protestant chemist Georg Jünger (1873–1943), a self-made man, who later owned a mine and settled as a pharmacist in Hanover. His son proved to be a rather unruly child: lacking

⁴⁹ Among them were social democrats like Paul Levi and even the pacifist author Erich Maria Remarque, whose *All quiet on the Western Front* was and is often considered to be the counterpart to Jünger's *In Stahlgewittern*. Remarque claimed to see a pacifistic influence in the book, see Steffen Martus, *Ernst Jünger* (Stuttgart, 2001), p. 18

⁵⁰ For a pointed reconstruction of Jünger's changing interpretation of the war, see Harro Segeberg, 'Regressive Modernisierung: Kriegserlebnis und Moderne-Kritik in Ernst Jüngers Frühwerk', in the same (ed.), *Vom Wert der Arbeit: Zur literarischen Konstitution des Wertkomplexes »Arbeit« in der deutschen Literatur (1770–1930)* (Tübingen, 1991), pp. 337–79, and Thomas Rohkrämer, 'Strangelove, or How Ernst Jünger Learned to Love Total War', in Roger Chickering and Stig Forster (eds.), *The Shadows of Total War: Europe, East Asia, and the United States, 1919–1939* (Cambridge, 2003), pp. 179–96. For a more detailed analysis of Jünger's works in their context of 'soldierly nationalism', see Hans-Harald Müller, *Der Krieg und die Schriftsteller: Der Kriegsroman der Weimarer Republik* (Stuttgart, 1986), pp. 211–83.

concentration and ambition in school, he spent most of his time on escapist readings or rambled around with like-minded bourgeois youths in the *Wandervogel*. It came to no surprise, when the boy ran away from home in late autumn of 1913. He enrolled in the French Foreign Legion and was sent to Algeria. There he tried to escape as soon as he arrived. Yet, his attempt failed and, thanks to his father's intervention, he was sent home. Shortly after his return, the First World War broke out.

In the four years of war, the volunteer Jünger made a splendid career. Refused by the air force, he became a highly decorated infantry lieutenant instead and was one of very few front-line soldiers who were awarded with the highest medal, the *Pour le Mérite*, in 1918. During the war, Jünger kept a diary, and when he came back home to a revolutionary Germany and suffered from depression, his father encouraged him to rewrite and publish it. This was the birth of Jünger's most popular and still best-selling book *In Stahlgewittern* in 1920.

The book was characterised by a sober style, gruesome details of death and destruction and a striking lack of compassion. Thus some considered the book to be celebrating war and false heroism, while others stressed the disillusioning realism of the unfiltered horrors of war. And yet, it is not that easy. Between 1920 and 1978, Jünger published seven versions of *In Stahlgewittern*.⁵¹ The first one was a rather raw and personal account of a young war hero yearning for recognition. The third version of 1924 was enriched with Jünger's aggressive nationalism of that time. It ended with his war cry: '*Deutschland lebt und Deutschland soll nicht untergehen!*'⁵² The fourth version of 1934 was once again accustomed to Jünger's new standing and cleansed of all nationalistic and other ideological passages which might have been used by the Nazis. Nevertheless, sales rose during the Third Reich: between 1920 and 1934 only 57,000 copies were sold, whereas in the following nine years, especially during the war, 173,000 further copies were printed.⁵³ The last version of the book came out in 1978 and completed the depersonalisation, which was typical of all revisions. Now it was a stoic and apolitical account of a man who survived a war.

Back in 1920, Jünger was far from being a writer. He became a regular soldier in the newly founded army of 100,000 men as prescribed by the treaty of Versailles. There he served until November 1923. Apart from *In Stahlgewittern*, he wrote some military essays and a theoretical complement to his diary: *Der Kampf als inneres Erlebnis*. The collection of essays dealt with

⁵¹ A good overview of the changes can be found in Eva Dempenwolf, *Blut und Tinte: Eine Interpretation der verschiedenen Fassungen von Ernst Jüngers Kriegstagebüchern vor dem politischen Hintergrund der Jahre 1920 bis 1980* (Würzburg, 1992).

⁵² *SG III*, p. 283.

⁵³ See Dempenwolf, *Blut Tinte*, pp. 262–3.

many motives of the war and started with the apodictic confession: ‘Der Krieg, aller Dinge Vater, ist auch der unsere: er hat uns gehämmert, gemeißelt und gehärtet zu dem, was wir sind.’⁵⁴ Jünger claimed that a new human type was born in the fiery battles of the First World War. The idea can be traced back to *In Stahlgewittern* where he fancied those ‘geschmeidige Tiger der Gräben, Meister des Sprengstoffs’⁵⁵. Now they became ‘eine ganz neue Rasse’⁵⁶, ‘der neue Mensch’⁵⁷, who is going to change the post-war world. With the invention of the new human type of the front-line soldier, Jünger contributed to the stab-in-the-back legend and provided a legitimation for former servicemen who organised in the free corps and kept on fighting in the French occupied Ruhr valley as well as in Upper Silesia and the Baltic States. While British and French soldiers coped with their war experience by mourning the dead at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier⁵⁸ and became civilians again, for Jünger’s front-line soldier the war never ended and therefore was never lost.

Although still a regular soldier and therefore forbidden to engage in politics, Jünger contacted proponents of the radical right. As soon as he left the army in late 1923 in order to study zoology in Leipzig and Neapel for the following two years, he wrote an article for the National Socialist paper *Völkischer Beobachter*. In ‘Revolution und Idee’ he anticipated a coup d’état, which Hitler eventually attempted on 9 November:

Die echte Revolution hat noch gar nicht stattgefunden, sie marschiert unaufhaltsam heran. Sie ist keine Reaktion, sondern eine wirkliche Revolution mit all ihren Kennzeichen und Äußerungen, ihre Idee ist die völkische, zu bisher nicht gekannter Schärfe geschliffen, ihr Banner das Hakenkreuz, ihre Ausdrucksform die Konzentration des Willens in einem einzigen Punkt – die Diktatur! Sie wird ersetzen das Wort durch die Tat, die Tinte durch das Blut, die Phrase durch das Opfer, die Feder durch das Schwert.⁵⁹

It was typical of Jünger’s political thinking throughout the Weimar Republic that he put deeds above words. He rejected the idea that the November revolution was a real one, because he considered it a ‘Revolution des Materialismus’⁶⁰. In order to do a true revolution, it was not enough just to topple a government and replace it by another. Instead of these materialistic aims, a pure idea had to be realised. At that time, Jünger thought that the National Socialists’ *völkisch* movement would represent this idea. But this idealised approach to revolution could not stand the test of

⁵⁴ *KiE I*, p. 2.

⁵⁵ *SG I*, p. VIII.

⁵⁶ *KiE I*, p. 33.

⁵⁷ *KiE I*, p. 74.

⁵⁸ Britain was the first country to bury an unknown soldier at a central site. In 1920 the remains of a British soldier were buried in Westminster Abbey. France followed suit a year later. The *Neue Wache* in Berlin was rebuilt into Germany’s war memorial as late as in 1931.

⁵⁹ *Pub*, p. 36.

⁶⁰ *Pub*, p. 35.

political reality. When Hitler approached proponents of the democratic order in order to seize power in Munich and finally failed, Jünger was disappointed by this kind of realpolitik.

Neither did he find satisfaction in his own political activities: for a month, he acted as Saxon deputy of the prominent volunteer corps leader Gerhard Roßbach and was glad when he got rid of the office.⁶¹ Jünger's political ambitions, nevertheless, grew and in 1925 he abandoned his studies to become a full-time political journalist. He wrote for *Die Standarte* which was a supplement of *Der Stahlhelm*. The paper was published by Germany's most influential veteran association of the same name. The *Stahlhelm* was the paramilitary arm of the national-conservative and antidemocratic Deutschnationale Volkspartei (DNVP). *Die Standarte* was aimed at its younger members and ought to create a common ideology of front-line soldiers. It reached a circulation of 150,000. As it became too radical for some of the older and more conservative *Stahlhelm* members, who cherished change by democratic means, it was re-launched as an independent paper in 1926 and edited by Jünger among others. Its circulation was 2,000, and it was abolished, when one of its writers hailed the assassinations of Matthias Erzberger and Walther Rathenau, both senior politicians who were killed by free corps members in 1921 and 1922, respectively.

Jünger was never more explicit about politics than during his time at the *Standarte*. While the Weimar Republic underwent its only period of relative calm, he sought to destroy it. Jünger believed in the ability of front-line soldiers to revolutionise Germany in the name of nationalism:

Das letzte Ziel der inneren Politik muß die Ermöglichung einer starken Außenpolitik sein. Der Staat ist nicht Selbstzweck, sondern das umfassende Mittel zur Verwirklichung der nationalen Idee. Ob die nationale Idee zeitweilig durch viele oder wenige Stimmen vertreten wird, ist nebensächlich, jedenfalls ist sie die unbedingt richtige.⁶²

The new state would be some kind of autocracy and, due to the 'Gliederung aller Deutschen in das Hundertmillionenreich der Zukunft'⁶³, pursuing an expansionist foreign policy. Violence would be the way to realise these aims: 'Die Mittel des Kampfes sind unbeschränkt, sie werden von der Führung bestimmt.'⁶⁴ The greater good of this agenda was nationalism. Jünger's definition shows that even at an explicitly political stage of his life his goals were diffuse and transcending rational politics:

Nationalismus ist der Glaube an die Lebenskraft der Nation, einer großen Schicksalsgemeinschaft, deren der Mensch durch die Geburt teilhaftig wird. Nationalismus ist der Wille, für diese Nation zu leben als für ein übergeordnetes Wesen, dessen Existenz wichtiger ist als die des einzelnen.⁶⁵

⁶¹ See *JO*, pp. 246–7 Jünger claimed to have had 'ideale Vorstellung' of his engagement in Roßbach's volunteer corps.

⁶² *Pub*, pp. 150–1. 'Der Frontsoldat und die innere Politik', *Die Standarte*, 29.11.1925.

⁶³ *W125*, pp. 185–6. *Das Wäldchen 125* and *Feuer und Blut* were both published in 1925 and were the ideological offshoots of *In Stahlgewittern*.

⁶⁴ *Pub*, p. 71. 'Wesen des Frontsoldatentums', *Die Standarte*, 6.9.1925.

⁶⁵ *Pub*, p. 186. 'Der Nationalismus', *Standarte*, 1.4.1926.

Jünger never further elaborated this definition and left open what for instance the German nation was. His expansionist musings about the ‘Hundertmillionenreich der Zukunft’ as well as the exclusion of Jews from the German nation⁶⁶ suggest a *völkisch* concept. Anyway, what mattered most to Jünger, was not a politically implementable definition. He conceived the nation as an independent entity or an idea that could justify the ultimate sacrifice of death during the war and beyond.

Jünger retained his metaphysical nationalism, after he had left *Standarte* and later *Arminius*, a radical right-wing paper that was financed by another notorious volunteer corps leader named Hermann Erhardt⁶⁷. In 1927 he moved to Berlin. In the vibrant capital the frontiers between left and right were permeable, and he soon got to know important proponents of all creeds: Bertolt Brecht, Erich Mühsam, Friedrich Hielscher, Ernst Niekisch, Arnolt Bronnen, Ernst von Salomon, Joseph Goebbels and others were among the (parlour) revolutionaries Jünger met with.⁶⁸ Correspondingly, Jünger no longer wrote for one special group. He now appealed to the nationalistic youth and co-edited the papers *Der Vormarsch. Blätter der nationalistischen Jugend* (1927/ 28) and *Die Kommenden. Überbündische Wochenschrift der nationalistischen Jugend* (1930/ 31). He also contributed to Niekisch’s *Der Widerstand* which advocated a blend of nationalism and communism.

Although he had abandoned active politics, he remained an important proponent of nationalism and more generally the ‘Conservative Revolution’. In 1929, the leftist *Tagebuch* invited Jünger, the ‘unbestrittene geistige Führer [des] jungen Nationalismus’⁶⁹, to present his ‘Neuer Nationalismus’, as it was also called, to its readership. He responded that ‘Nationalismus, soweit er eine politische Erscheinung ist, [...] den nationalen, sozialen, wehrhaften und autoritativ gegliederten Staat aller Deutschen an[strebt]’⁷⁰. Jünger did not suggest any policy or manifesto how this aim could be reached but condemned organisations like *Stahlhelm*, which were ‘immer noch konstruktive Teile des Systems’⁷¹. The only activity he let pass was destruction: ‘*Zerstörung ist das Mittel, das dem Nationalismus dem augenblicklichen Zustande gegenüber allein*

⁶⁶ See Jünger’s article on the ‘Jewish question’, *Pub*, pp. 587–92. ‘Über Nationalismus und Judenfrage’, *Süddeutsche Monatshefte*, September 1930.

⁶⁷ Ehrhardt was involved in the Kapp-Lüttwitz-putsch in 1920, when General Walther von Lüttwitz and the senior Prussian official Wolfgang Kapp tried to seize power. With help of voluntary corps, which were to be disbanded according to the treaty of Versailles, they occupied Berlin and the legal government had to escape. The putsch failed after only four days due to resistance in the ministerial administration and among the workers.

⁶⁸ An illustrative overview can be found in Noack, *Jünger*, pp. 78–86. For Goebbel’s approaches, see Berggötz’s postface in *Pub*, pp. 854–61.

⁶⁹ Quoted in Martus, *Jünger*, p. 49.

⁷⁰ *Pub*, p. 504. ‘Nationalismus« und Nationalismus’, *Das Tagebuch*, 21.9.1929.

⁷¹ *Ibid*, p. 507.

*angemessen scheint.*⁷² Although he never became violent nor called for the destruction of anything specific, he did endorse violence, when it was used by others. A week prior to his article in *Tagebuch*, Jünger wrote another article defending the *Landvolkbewegung*. This ‘movement’ of economically depressed peasants from Schleswig-Holstein protested against the government by bombing taxation offices and eventually the Reichstag. While all parties including the NSDAP condemned this terrorism, Jünger called it ‘nächtliche Feuerwerkerei vor fiskalischen Gebäuden’⁷³ and claimed ‘daß es eine Art *des Presseterrors* gibt, die weit verächtlicher ist als jeder Bombenterror’⁷⁴. It was probably the National Socialist leaders’ unwillingness to act that made Jünger turn away from them. In Niekisch’s *Widerstand* he admonished them that National Socialism ‘seinen Sieg nur dann erfechten kann, wenn seine Waffen aus diesem reinsten Metall geschmiedet sind, und wenn auf jeden Zusatz aus den brüchigen Resten einer vergangenen Zeit verzichtet wird’⁷⁵, which was to say without a strategic shift towards legality.

Jünger’s relation to National Socialism had two sides. First, there were the acquaintances with famous NSDAP leaders. His interest in National Socialism began in 1923, when he heard Hitler making a speech in Munich. He sent him signed copies of his books,⁷⁶ but a scheduled meeting never came to happen. Jünger hoped that Hitler would become the ‘great leader’ of a nationalistic movement, but was similarly disappointed by his strategic shift towards legality after the failed putsch attempt as earlier by the *Stahlhelm*’s policy of democratic resistance. Other NSDAP grandees acquainted with Jünger were Joseph Goebbels and Otto Strasser. Jünger met both of them in Berlin, which was the centre of the Strasser circle and where Goebbels was the local party leader. Goebbels tried to win Jünger for the NSDAP several times but failed.⁷⁷ Jünger’s contact to Otto Strasser illuminates the other side of his relation to National Socialism, which means the intellectual similarities. The Strasser circle was the left wing of the NSDAP and like Jünger strongly opposed the party’s legality course as they yearned for revolutionary changes. Strasser devoted a complete issue of his paper *NS-Briefe* to Jünger, who published a nationalist anthology with two articles written by the Strasser brothers.⁷⁸ It was probably this revolutionary left wing of

⁷² Ibid, p. 506.

⁷³ Ibid, p. 508.

⁷⁴ Ibid, p. 499. ‘Vorschusslorbeeren der Polizei’, *Deutsche Zeitung*, 15.9.1929.

⁷⁵ Ibid, p. 512. ‘Reinheit der Mittel’, *Widerstand* 4,10 (1929).

⁷⁶ They were dedicated to the ‘nationale Führer Adolf Hitler’, quoted after Hans-Peter Schwarz, *Der konservative Anarchist: Politik und Zeitkritik Ernst Jüngers* (Freiburg, 1962), p. 117.

⁷⁷ See *JO*, pp. 34–43.

⁷⁸ See Nikolaus Wachsmann, ‘Marching under the Swastika? Ernst Jünger and National Socialism, 1918–33’, *Journal of Contemporary History* 33, 4 (1998), pp. 573–89, here pp. 584–5. The Strasser brothers wrote both about the Hitler putsch, see Gregor Strasser, ‘Der 9. November 1923: Erlebnisse eines Mitkämpfers’, in Ernst Jünger (ed.), *Der Kampf um das Reich* (Essen, 1929), pp. 294–301, and Otto Strasser, ‘Der Sinn des 9. November 1923’, in Ernst Jünger (ed.), *Der Kampf um das Reich* (Essen, 1929), pp. 301–9.

the NSDAP which Jünger wished to succeed ‘from all his heart’, but which was deprived of its power in 1930.

At that time, Jünger wrote one of his most influential essays. *Die totale Mobilmachung* is a good example of how his ideas found their way into the political vocabulary of his contemporaries. It was first published in 1930 and was an analysis of the German defeat in the First World War. In a nutshell it said: Germany failed to understand a new era and to mobilise its full potential like its enemies had done. However, it was important that ‘total mobilisation’ was not limited to war alone, but that it had become a dominant principle in peacetime too. Although Jünger described it as a global process, he concluded his essay with demanding ‘eine Mobilisierung des Deutschen – und nichts außerdem’⁷⁹. It is striking that Jünger did not tell his readers to which end this mobilisation should be pursued. There could be only one answer – a new war. Jünger was too detached from politics at that time to pay attention to such details, and the essay was just a preliminary step to his magnum opus *Der Arbeiter*.

Between 1930 and 1932, when the Weimar Republic turned from a democracy to an autocracy of presidentially appointed cabinets, Jünger made a step back and tried to see the big picture. *Der Arbeiter* was the summary and keystone of Jünger’s thinking so far. It was an explanation of how the metaphysical entity⁸⁰ of the Worker⁸¹ informed the world since it appeared in the First World War. In plain text, Jünger tried to reduce all aspects of modernity like depersonalisation, industrialised warfare and particularly technology to one common denominator: ‘Sie [entity of the Worker; TH] ist es, die in unserer Landschaft [...] am Werke ist; ihr Blut ist der Kraftstoff, der die Räder treibt und an ihren Achsen raucht.’⁸² The age of the Worker led to a uniform, totalitarian society, in which the individual as it had been conceived by Enlightenment ceased to be. Jünger, who was interested in insects all his life, saw metallic anthills, which were all executing one script. This was total mobilisation. Worker states were formed and applied total mobilisation by adopting all-embracing long-term plans (*Arbeitsplan*). Their aim lay in the ‘planetarischen Herrschaft’, which was tantamount to ‘übergeordneten Sicherheit’.⁸³ This would

⁷⁹ *DtM*, p. 30.

⁸⁰ The German term *Gestalt* cannot be sufficiently translated with form, guise or figure. It is more similar to Plato’s idea, a metaphysical entity by which all appearances and activities in our world are informed. Jünger compared it with stamp and stamping.

⁸¹ Not to be confused with the Marxist term. It rather refers to Jünger’s metaphysical concept of work as ‘Tempo der Faust, der Gedanken, des Herzens, das Leben bei Tage und Nacht, die Wissenschaft, die Liebe, die Kunst, der Glaube, der Kultus, der Krieg; Arbeit ist die Schwingung des Atoms und die Kraft, die Sterne und Sonnensysteme bewegt’ (*DA*, p. 68).

⁸² *Ibid*, p. 47. Technology was a crucial characteristic of the Worker. It was the way he changed life in every aspect, notably the war.

⁸³ See *ibid*, p. 306.

not necessarily include war as Jünger knew: ‘man wird nicht gerne im Aufmarsch gestört’⁸⁴. Nevertheless: ‘Dem Eintritt in den imperialen Raum geht eine Erprobung und Härtung der Planlandschaften voraus, von der man sich heute noch keine Vorstellung machen kann.’⁸⁵ Jünger’s position is unclear at this point, yet from my perspective the unthinkable ‘Erprobung und Härtung der Planlandschaften’ can only be called total war.⁸⁶ When *Der Arbeiter* was published, probably nobody knew what it was really about, but it was clearly related to the (European-wide) changes taking place. Jünger successfully presented himself as seer, a role he retained and cultivated for the rest of his life, and which he later used in his apology.⁸⁷ Actually, he affirmed the totalitarian future he just claimed to describe. The rise of the Worker required the ‘Zerstörung der Erziehungsarbeit, die das bürgerliche Zeitalter am Menschen geleistet hat’⁸⁸, ‘[...] und es gehört zu den hohen und grausamen Genüssen unserer Zeit, an dieser Sprengarbeit beteiligt zu sein’⁸⁹.

After the Nazis had come to power in 1933, Jünger chose ‘inner emigration’. He had already declined their offers to be a guest of honour at their annual conventions in Nuremberg and to become a National Socialist member of *Reichstag* in 1927. In 1933, he rejected another *Reichstag* mandate as well as the admission to the conformist Prussian Academy of Poetry. Because of his friendship with the anarchist Erich Mühsam,⁹⁰ the Gestapo searched his house in 1933. He and his family then moved from Berlin to the small town of Goslar and he forbade the *Völkischer Beobachter* to publish extracts from his works.⁹¹ After 1933, Jünger only published four new books. The most important was *Auf den Marmor-Klippen*, which he wrote in the summer of 1939 and published when he was in military service again. It is a parable about two brothers fighting an evil ruler called *Oberförster* (chief ranger) and escaping after their defeat. It included allusions to the National Socialist dictatorship like *Schinderhütten* (concentration camps), and despite Jünger’s claim that it was about dictatorship in general, it was read as criticism of the Nazi

⁸⁴ Ibid, p. 305.

⁸⁵ Ibid, p. 306.

⁸⁶ There are many passages where Jünger did not spell out the practical and political consequences of his theory. Thus it was not easy to understand what he exactly meant. For more of those passages see Marianne Wunsch, ‘Ernst Jüngers *Der Arbeiter*: Grundpositionen und Probleme’, in Lutz Hagedstedt (ed.), *Ernst Jünger: Politik – Mythos – Kunst* (Berlin, 2004), pp. 459–77.

⁸⁷ *Der Arbeiter* can be interpreted as theory about modern civilisation too, because it tries to explain contemporary cinema and clothing for instance; see overview in Martus, *Jünger*, pp. 90–4. Within this thesis, which is interested in the political aspect of Jünger’s writings, this point is immaterial.

⁸⁸ *DA*, p. 42.

⁸⁹ Ibid, p. 43.

⁹⁰ Mühsam as many of Jünger’s ‘Conservative Revolutionary’ friends was imprisoned after 1933. Mühsam ended up in the concentration camp Oranienburg, where he was killed in 1934.

⁹¹ But he still allowed Mittler & Söhne to promote and sell these books in a society that started to apply total mobilisation. The books sold best during the Second World War, see Liane Dornheim, *Vergleichende Rezeptionsgeschichte: Das literarische Frühwerk Ernst Jüngers in Deutschland, England und Frankreich* (Frankfurt on the Main et al., 1987), pp. 57–9, 123–5.

government. It is not clear how Jünger could get away with it, but the imprint saying 'revised in the army' indicates that the officer and bearer of the *Pour le mérite* was protected by the army.

After the blitzkrieg against France, captain Jünger was called to Paris by Chief of Staff Hans Speidel. At the Military Government for France under Otto and later his successor Heinrich von Stülpnagel, Jünger censored the forces' mail, worked on the plans how to invade Britain and wrote two reports. One was about the struggle between the military governor and National Socialist party officials, the other about the execution of French hostages.⁹² These were more or less alibi-activities and Jünger was given much time to spend on meetings with the cultural elite of (Vichy-) France like Picasso, Jean Cocteau, Georges Braque, Henry de Montherlant and Pierre Drieu la Rochelle. In his spare time he also kept a diary, and he published the parts covering 1939 and 1940 under the title *Gärten und Straßen* in 1942. It included a quote from the Bible, which was meant as an allusion to the German dictatorship. Because Jünger refused to delete the passage, his publisher was denied paper and was not able to print further books, and the Gestapo searched his house for a second time.⁹³ Jünger published the remainder of his diaries under the title *Strahlungen* in 1949; it was his first major and long-awaited work written in the post-war period.

In Paris, Jünger knew many officers who were involved in the attempt on Hitler's life on 20 July 1944, but apart from writing a foreign policy manifesto for the conspirators called *Der Friede* he remained an observer (see chapter 4.2). After the attempt, he was discharged and returned to his home, where he had to command a Volkssturm unit. Although his contacts to the conservative resistance⁹⁴ circle in Paris were known, he was not persecuted when the Nazis took revenge.⁹⁵ In February 1944, his son Ernstel was accused of establishing a group of resistance. He was first sentenced to death, but pardoned to serve in a punishment battalion in Italy. He died at the marble quarries at Carrara in November 1944.⁹⁶

⁹² The former was burnt after the attempted assassination on Hitler, the latter recently published by Sven-Olaf Berggötz, 'Eine Denkschrift von Ernst Jünger über die Geiseler-schießungen in Frankreich 1941/42', *Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 3 (2003), pp. 405–72.

⁹³ Nevertheless, special army editions remained in print and were not affected by this quasi ban.

⁹⁴ By 'conservative resistance' I understand the opposition within the army which eventually carried out the attempt on Hitler's life and circles involved in the post-war plans like the group around Carl Goerdeler and the Kreisau Circle. It is hard to define who belonged to the conservative resistance, but the social background, which means upper middle class and aristocratic, and the (late) will to topple Hitler were two crucial characteristics, see for instance Ekkehard Klaus, 'Konservative im Widerstand', in Peter Steinbach and Johannes Tuchel (eds.), *Das andere Deutschland: Der Widerstand gegen den Nationalsozialismus: Mythos und Vermächtnis* (Berlin, 1994), pp. 185–201, here pp. 190–1.

⁹⁵ The concrete circumstances remain unclear. It is believed that Hitler himself ordered to spare Jünger. His letter to President of the People's Court Roland Freisler, which was found in 1986, turned out to be a forgery, see Martus, *Jünger*, p. 59.

⁹⁶ His son was the only soldier who died on this day. Jünger suspected that he might have been murdered; see Neaman, *Dubious Past*, p. 47.

After the war, Jünger was sitting in a small village, watching enemy tanks rolling by and getting the message that he was on the Allies' black list. Fifty years later he would be sitting in another small village and showered with congratulations on his hundredth birthday. The following chapter explains how it took him only four years to stage this incredible comeback.

2. The Jünger-network

In 1986 the ninety-one year-old Ernst Jünger notes in his diary:

Nach Mitternacht weckte mich eine Dankeswelle für Eltern, Lehrer, Kameraden, Nachbarn, unbekannte Freunde, ohne deren Hilfe ich nie mein Alter erreicht hätte. Meine Knochen würden in der Sahara bleichen, in einem Granattrichter modern; ich würde in Lagern oder Zuchthäusern verschmachtet sein. Wer weiß, wer für mich eintrat, wo um Köpfe gehandelt wurde, wer für mich Akten fälschte oder verschwinden ließ. Man sagt: »Freunde in der Not gehen hundert auf ein Lot.« Aber einer genügt; ich habe gute Erfahrungen. Ob bei leichten Havarien, ob in schweren Katastrophen – es war immer einer da.⁹⁷

Though he alluded to his father's efforts to save him from the French Foreign Legion, his comrades' backing during the First World War and unknown supporters during the Third Reich, he omitted the most important support: the comprehensive assistance which he had received in the post-war period. Turning his desolate situation in 1945 into a restart of his career in 1949 was the result of a joint and coordinated endeavour of various friends and supporters, in short: the Jünger-network. Its importance can be hardly overstated. In a time when Jünger would not speak himself and with public opinion against him, supporters had to act on his behalf. Due to the nature of the network – vast and diverse – its members managed to sustain both Jünger's physical existence and his existence as an author. Wherever Jünger's own efforts failed and the Allied denazification policy was ineffective, they prevailed.

The network comprised a vast number of diverse characters such as American publishers, Swiss students, British officers, German generals and ministers, and Jewish émigrés. Their actions and interactions show how Jünger and more generally Germans not only survived the Allied interregnum, but re-established themselves in former and new positions. As cigarettes became the unofficial substitute for the worthless *Reichsmark*, so did personal networks for the now obsolete institutional framework. Networking was the only means of influence that was left to the vanquished or rather to the lucky among them.

The significance of the Jünger-network as key argument of this thesis is reflected in its considerable length. The first part (2.1) deals with the structure and the functions of the network. It tries to explain the peculiar finding that there are numerous, highly committed supporters, but only small evidence of co-ordination can be found. In the following sub-chapter (2.2) three

⁹⁷ *SV IV*, p. 57.

groups of supporters are identified in order to highlight the extension and diversity of the network: the circle around Armin Mohler in Switzerland, Jünger's former wartime-comrades in South Germany and various German émigrés abroad. Apart from their share in Jünger's rehabilitation, the selection shows typical mentalities of the network-members. The last part (2.3) depicts the different publishing strategies which Jünger and his supporters pursued. Whilst the preceding subchapter is about the network and its support in general, this one accounts for Jünger's survival as an author, and it is thereby touching the core of denazification: the ban on publication and the way it was undermined and eventually overcome.

2.1 Spider in a web: structure and function of the Jünger-network

Ernst Jünger knew a lot of people. In the early 1920s, the acknowledged war hero made his acquaintances mainly among ideological comrades of the army, the free corps and sectarian right-wing movements like the National-Socialists. By the time he became a writer respected in all political camps, Jünger's contacts had grown greatly. Moreover, he had become a centre of revolutionary-minded Weimar intellectuals and an icon of the nationalistic youth. Back then Jünger had the opportunity to practice what would be called networking nowadays. Long before he became dependent on it, he had built up an extensive network. In fact, he had so many contacts that he often complained about the number of visitors and letters that were distracting him from work.⁹⁸ Shortly after the Second World War, he even hired a secretary to get them under control.

How did Jünger manage this network? One would assume to find a plethora of letters documenting his managerial activities. But although the correspondence with all his friends and supporters kept him quite busy, only a few explicit references to the network and its actions can be found. Thus it might seem as if most actions in favour of Jünger happened without his involvement.

This lack of explicit documents has four reasons. Firstly, only a part of the letters of the post-war period has survived. There are remarkable gaps in Jünger's correspondence. Letters were maybe lost during his moves from Kirchhorst to Ravensbrück and from there to Wilflingen. Another, not less important reason: Jünger had to be careful about what he wrote, because the British authorities read his mail.⁹⁹ I was not able to find out, how long Jünger's letters were

⁹⁸ See for instance *JO*, p. 155.

⁹⁹ Stamps saying 'British censorship' can be found on postcards addressed to Jünger. Hans Speidel mentions an effect of the censoring, namely delays due to a 'lange Zensorenlaufzeit' (HS/EJ, 4.6.1947). Consequently, Jünger

checked by British officers, since he did not keep the stamped envelopes. Given the authorities' hostile attitude towards him, it might have well gone on until 1948, when denazification measures generally waned. Anyway, it is questionable if those activities of the British censorship were effective at all, since the communication within the network was based on both correspondence and personal meetings.

The personal meetings and journeys of Jünger and his supporters are the third reason why evidence of the network is scarce. During the early post-war period the postal service like most other institutions had to be rebuilt. The best way to send mail was by means of a messenger one could trust. Michael Thomas, a German-Jewish émigré, British officer and one of Jünger's supporters, mentioned in his biography that whenever he had met Germans they had slipped him letters.¹⁰⁰ An even better way to transmit confidential messages was personal meetings. By virtue of its regional concentration, Jünger's network made good use of this means of communication as a lot of letters indicate. The most important members were all living in the area north of Basle and south of Stuttgart, in other words in parts of the American and French occupation zones and in Switzerland. This area was quite small when compared with members living in countries as far away as the USA. The regional closeness only emphasised the already strong ties between men like Friedrich Georg Jünger, Armin Mohler and Hans Speidel, who were also Jünger's closest supporters. The only person missing, as it seems, was Jünger. He lived in Kirchhorst, a small village nearby Hanover in Lower Saxony. This was the Northwest of Germany, and it was controlled by British authorities. Living in Kirchhorst meant that Jünger was spatially separated from his closest supporters. It is therefore not surprising that he travelled quite often during the four years of occupation, although travelling at that time was difficult and occasionally dangerous. Vice versa, he constantly received guests, many of them coming from South Germany. Besides the correspondence, this 'shuttle diplomacy' was one way to hold the network together.

Yet it takes a fourth reason to fully understand why Jünger is so hard to pin down on his managerial activities. It is his ambiguous conception of authorship. He did not consider himself a writer living in and reflecting upon a certain historic time, but an author solely contemplating on the very grounds of human existence, on an eternal truth. Jünger ignored and pretended to avoid the socio-economic parts of an author's life like contracts, conventions and critics,¹⁰¹ and he

was cautious when he wanted to discuss delicate topics. In a letter to his brother he wrote: 'Auch ich habe das Bedürfnis, mit Dir über eine Reihe von Fragen zu sprechen, die sich der schriftlichen Behandlung entziehen. Doch werde ich vorläufig kaum nach Süden fahren' (EJ/FGJ, 9.6.1946).

¹⁰⁰ See Michael Thomas, *Deutschland, England über alles: Rückkehr als Besatzungsoffizier* (Berlin, 1984), p. 128.

¹⁰¹ A typical, stylised remark on the economic aspect of his profession: 'Die Währungsreform hat manche Unzuträglichkeiten für mich mit sich gebracht, und mich vor allem in meinem Grundsatz, den Geschäften nicht mehr als drei Stunden im Vierteljahr zu widmen, gestört' (EJ/FGJ, 2.8.1948).

deeply despised the literary scene.¹⁰² From his point of view, something mundane like dealing with criticism would be well beneath the author's dignity. While cultivating the image of a seclusive spirit only devoted to his work, Jünger nevertheless registered every remark about him, especially when it was critical (and there were a lot of them). His supporters provided him with national and international Jünger-articles, and he expected them to react on his behalf, for instance by publishing a counterattack. Thus Ernst Jünger double-crossed the public by pretending to be uninterested in public opinion but contributing secretly to the debates about him at the same time.¹⁰³

This kind of deliberate ambiguity was an essential part of Jünger's personality and of his behaviour regarding his shady past. I will therefore further elaborate it by means of portrait photographs taken from the DLA in Marbach. Jünger was photogenic and vain on top of it, and he had had taken plenty of photographs during his long life. Yet those are only minor reasons for the vast amount of photographs which can be found in the DLA. They rather reflect that and how Jünger wanted to be perceived by his contemporaries and remembered by posterity – despite his seeming seclusiveness. Thus the photographs taken by Ursula Litzmann in 1947 and 1948 show Jünger as a mature writer, who is slightly marked by the burdens of war and post-war (see pictures 1 and 2). Other photographs from the same series show Jünger in his study and in his library crammed with exquisite antiquarian books. They stress the writer's traditional education and his roots in classic literature. It is mostly these pictures which were published in the press between 1945 and 1949. Thus his image remained present in the debates, although Jünger was actually banned from them. While the articles discussed his militaristic texts and the ban on him, the photographs showed a genteel man in the prime of his life. Litzmann's photographs were literally asking the reader 'Is this still the author of *In Stahlgewittern*?'

These pictures no doubt mark Jünger's attempt to present himself as an apolitical writer. A few years earlier, similar photographs were taken in Paris (see picture 3). Back then captain Jünger had a lot of time, and he indulged in leading a dandy's life when off-duty (see chapter 4.3). It is no coincidence that the photographs were made by Florence Henri, a known painter and photographer; she mirrored much of his company in occupied Paris. Moreover, the picture ignores Jünger's role in those years: he was not just a writer, as the pictures suggest, but an active officer

¹⁰² A late collection of aphorisms summarised his contempt: 'Die Einäugigen stellen sich gleich als Halbmenschen vor. Sind »rechts« oder »links«. Prüfen auch den anderen, ob er halb ist wie sie, und fühlen sich nur dann bei ihm wohl. Sehen auch am Kunstwerk nicht das Ganze, sondern die Mängel, treten nicht als Einzelne, sondern als sich gegenseitig akklamierende Cliques auf. Dienen sich gar beim Systemwechsel als Denunzianten und Lakaien dem neuen Machthaber an. Schwach als Künstler, doch stark im Betrieb' (AA, p. 23).

¹⁰³ Neaman was the first to point this out and to show its implications: on the one hand Jünger refused critical debates about his past, on the other hand he was still able to influence them by means of his supporters; see Neaman, *Dubious Past*, pp. 102–3.

in the German occupation army. Nevertheless, Henri took another picture which is the odd one out (see picture 4). It was taken in 1942 and shows Jünger dressed in his captain's uniform reading. It was probably made for his publisher or the press, and a reminiscence of his early war novels, which sold strongly during the war.¹⁰⁴ This picture grasps Jünger's role in Paris more adequately than the others which show him as civilian and predominate in Henri's series.

In the post-war period, Jünger was very careful with photographs showing him in uniform. Even years after he had overcome denazification he had his doubts. In 1954, his former secretary Armin Mohler was collecting material for a commemorative publication on Jünger and asked for photographs. Jünger sent him some, but uttered his reservation and concluded 'Wenn Sie daher auf Bilder verzichten würden, fände das meine Zustimmung.'¹⁰⁵ A few days later he confirmed his doubts: 'Mit den Fotos bleibe ich skeptisch, weil ich deren mythoszerstörenden ~~Azt~~ [Macht] kenne'¹⁰⁶. There was one photograph in particular which made Jünger feel insecure. It was taken in Paris in 1941 and showed captain Jünger riding at the head of his company, a swastika banner waving in the background (see picture 5). This photograph was precarious, because it documented Jünger's involvement in the occupation of Paris. What is bewildering though is a letter he had written several weeks before uttering his doubts. Therein he had asked Mohler to replace a photograph showing him as youngster in the French Foreign Legion with the picture from Paris. Why? Apparently, Jünger had been criticised by the two rightwing publications *Nation Europa* and *Soldatenzeitung* for his easy-going life during the war. The picture which showed him in the pursuance of his duty was meant as a retort: 'es [wäre] wohl an der Zeit zu einer solchen Veröffentlichung'¹⁰⁷.

The photos give evidence of Jünger's ambiguous behaviour: he tried to cultivate the image of a mere man of letters, but was not willing to give up his soldierly reputation, which was at odds with the former. Because the same ambiguity determined his relationship to the network, it is hard to trace Jünger's managerial activities within his correspondence. Many of his letters were bound for publication, whether in his published diaries or separate publications.¹⁰⁸ Even unpublished correspondence was likely to be read by historians one day. That is why Jünger kept numerous copies of his own letters, certainly the ones which were consistent with his authorship. He had sold his correspondence and his manuscripts to the DLA before he died. A part was transferred to

¹⁰⁴ See Dempenwolf, *Blut und Tinte*, pp. 262–3.

¹⁰⁵ EJ/AM, 23.4.1954.

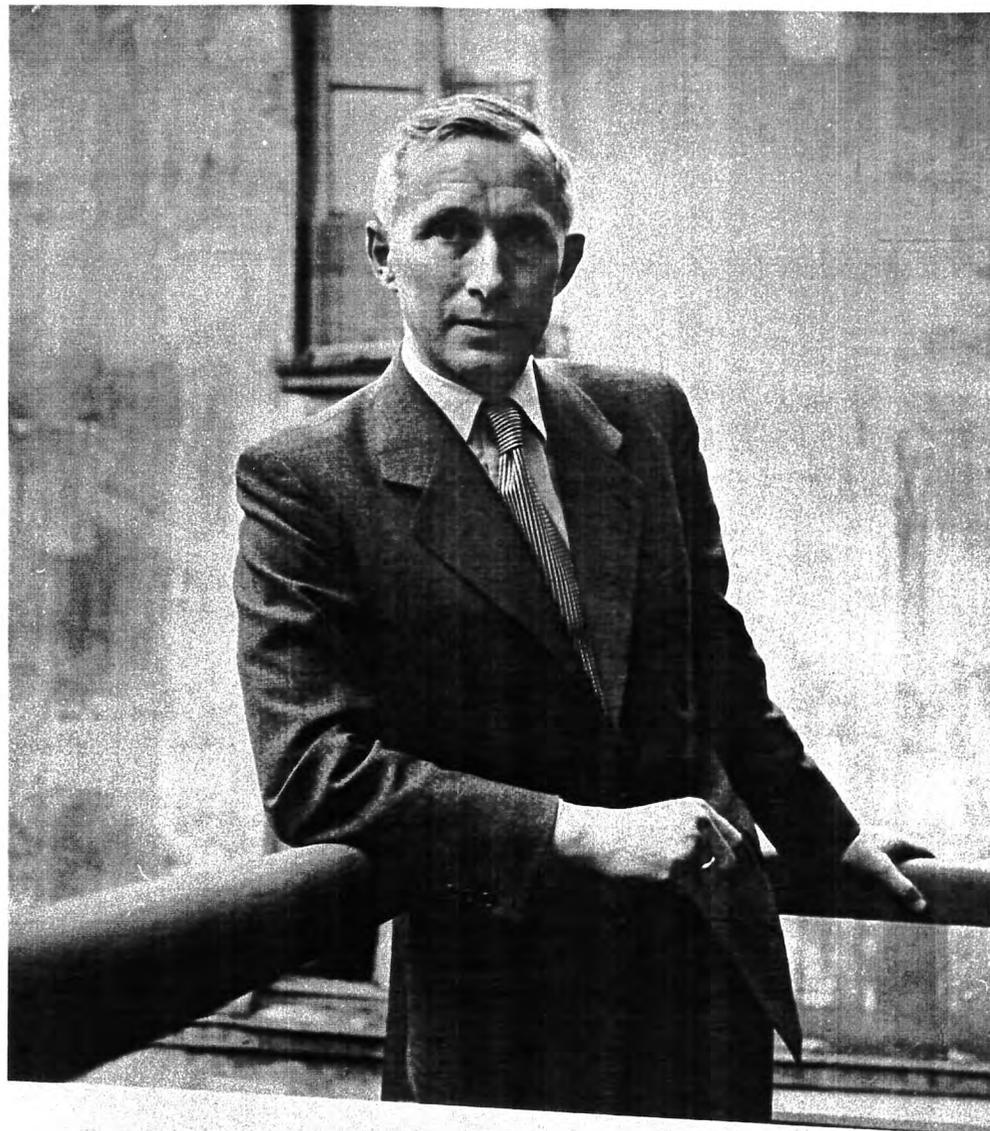
¹⁰⁶ EJ/AM, 29.4.1954.

¹⁰⁷ EJ/AM, 16.3.1954.

¹⁰⁸ Between 1945 and 1948 Jünger planned the publication of his own letters in a book called *Das Briefe-Journal*, see DLA, A: Jünger, Verschiedenes, *Notizbücher* [notebook covering the years 1945 to 1948], EJ/FGJ, 21.8.1947, and EJ/FGJ, 6.9.1945.



Picture 1: Ernst Jünger in Kirchhorst (1947). Photographer: Ursula Litzmann.



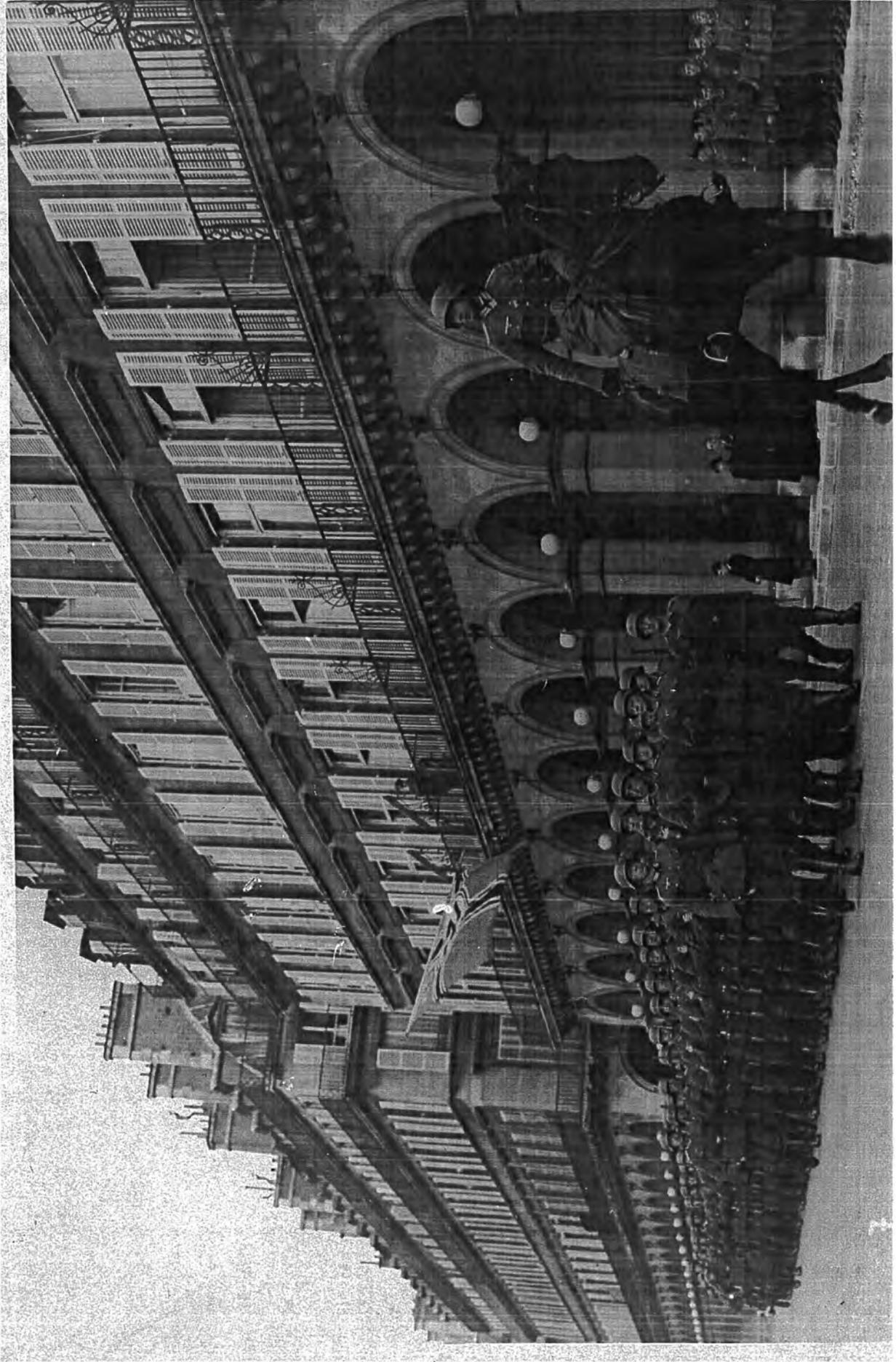
Picture 2: Ernst Jünger (1948). Photographer: Ursula Litzmann.



Picture 3: Ernst Jünger in Paris (11 August 1944). Photographer: Florence Henri. Dedication to Umm-El-Banine Assadoulaeff: 'In fine memory of the hours in the cafe in rue Lauriston: Ernst Jünger.'



Picture 4: Ernst Jünger in Paris (1942). Photographer: Florence Henri.



Picture 5: Ernst Jünger in Paris, Rue di Rivoli (1941). Photographer: unknown.

the archive while he was still alive. When he died, the remainder got there too. The letters and manuscripts alone are stored in 320 boxes. Each document was arranged for archival use by Jünger and his wife personally. As he was well aware of posterity, he no doubt weeded out delicate documents that would have contradicted his idea of authorship.¹⁰⁹ To make things worse, the documents are not fully accessible yet. The DLA simply lacks manpower to catalogue the remainder of the Jünger collection. Unfortunately, crucial parts of his correspondence with publishers are among it.

As a consequence of all these constraints, I could find only a few statements that were made by Jünger himself and are suitable to illuminate the way he managed his network. They are generally characterised by the use of a subtle language rather than direct commands or requests. A letter to Friedrich Georg Jünger¹¹⁰ is a good example of how Jünger mentioned a problem, hinted at its solution and left the rest to the addressee and the network:

Mein Guthaben in Hamburg ist immer noch [...] gesperrt. Du schreibst von Deinem Kleinvieh, mit dem Du gut versehen scheinst. Sollte das in der Tat der Fall sein, doch auch nur dann, so wäre ich Dir dankbar, wenn Du aus Deiner Herde einige Stücke abzweigst. Solltest Du enragierte [sic] und einflußreiche Freunde von mir kennen, die ja nicht selten sind, so könntest Du ihnen auch die Frage stellen, ob sie nicht Hilfsquellen für mich wissen, solange die meinen verschlossen sind. Ich hörte schon, daß dieser oder jener mir gern helfen möchte. Doch läßt man dergleichen besser durch Dritte anschneiden.¹¹¹

It is noteworthy that even a letter to his brother lacks plain text: Jünger is almost broke and strongly in need of financial help, yet he does not ask for it explicitly. Instead, he is ironically alluding to a proverb and requesting ‘many a little’ of his brother’s ‘mickle’. His brother’s help, however, would not be sufficient, because Jünger is also asking about his

¹⁰⁹ The resulting availability of letters from the sender and the addressee in one single archive is both convenient and tempting. Many scholars do not sufficiently reflect upon this fact. Since modern archives keep the original arrangement of the documents they accept (*Provenienzprinzip*), the Jünger collection in Marbach is above all the way its author wanted to be remembered. This shortcoming could be and is tackled by comparing Jünger’s copies with the letters he actually posted, at least in regard to prominent correspondents. When it comes to less prominent or nowadays unknown members of the network, this kind of double check usually is not feasible. I was able to do it only once in the case of Alfred Toepfer who argued with Jünger about the authorship of *Der Friede* (see chapter 4.1). I would not be surprised if more of such material had been left out of the semi-official correspondence or rather memorial in the DLA.

¹¹⁰ Friedrich Georg Jünger (1898–1977) was Ernst Jünger’s favourite brother. Friedrich Georg read law, but became a poet and nationalistic essayist. He followed his brother to Berlin, where he contributed to and edited journals and books about ‘New Nationalism’. Although he supported Ernst in Southern Germany, where he tried to find more supporters [see FGJ/EJ, 27.6.1946 (Abschrift)], from my point of view, Friedrich Georg’s role within the network is less important than his strong tie to his brother: Ernst trusted him and reported regularly about what had happened in Kirchhorst. This makes their correspondence a valuable source of information. For more information on Friedrich Georg Jünger, see Ulrich Fröschle, *Friedrich Georg Jünger und der ‘radikale Geist’: Eine Fallstudie zum literarischen Radikalismus der Zwischenkriegszeit* (Dresden, 2007).

¹¹¹ EJ/FGJ, 17.6.1947. Twelve days later he wrote a letter to thank his brother for ‘zwei Stück Großvieh’ (EJ/FGJ, 29.6.1947).

‘enraged and influential friends’ and whether his brother could contact them. With his brother as an intermediary, Jünger manages to keep a low profile and thereby to maintain his concept of authorship. This behaviour can be called a strategy of subtly triggering instead of directly commanding his network: Jünger had just to mention a problem, and his supporters would do the rest, while he could devote himself to what was really important to him, namely his writing.¹¹²

The same method can be found in a letter to Werner Milch, one of his supporters in Britain. Milch was a professor of German literature, and he wrote positive articles about Jünger in order to influence the British debate about the writer and more generally German intellectuals. Jünger referred to this engagement when he wrote ‘Die Hilfe meiner intelligenten Freunde habe ich heut recht nötig – das umsomehr, als ich selbst in solche Auseinandersetzung nicht eingreife.’¹¹³ The professor must have been delighted to be one of the author’s ‘intelligent friends’. This was more than flattery: Jünger knew how to give his supporters the feeling to be part of a hand-picked community. To Carlo Schmid, the Minister for the Arts in Württemberg-Hohenzollern, Jünger wrote:

Ich weiß, daß mich die Revenants von 1933 [i.e. the émigrés who fled from Germany after 1933; TH] nicht gerne sehen. Das kommt mir insofern zustatten, als ich es nicht vertrage, von Leuten gefördert zu werden, die dessen nicht würdig sind. Das kann mich nur schädigen.¹¹⁴

The idea that one had to be worthy to help the distressed author was typical of the Jünger-network, particularly during the immediate post-war period. When former ‘Conservative Revolutionaries’ like Jünger, Schmitt and Heidegger were blamed for their behaviour before and during the Third Reich, they reacted by resorting to remote villages and keeping to themselves and their like-minded comrades. They thereby created elitist communities where they could hibernate until the fury of the ‘rabble’ and the reign of the occupiers were over. Likewise, they staged their seclusion as a continuation of their ‘inner emigration’ during the Third Reich.¹¹⁵ To be a member of those communities therefore was tantamount to supporting the true prophets, while the masses outside were wrong again. From Jünger’s point of view this must have been enough to ‘dignify’ his friends and supporters, an idea

¹¹² In this regard, one might see parallels to the circle of Stefan George; see Ulrich Fröschle and Michael Naumann, ‘Nachwort’, in the same (eds.), *Ernst Jünger und Gerhard Nebel: Briefe 1938–1947* (Stuttgart, 2003), pp. 921–44, and Morat, *Tat Gelassenheit*, p. 323. Though his network was not as formal as the George circle, Jünger entertained the notion of a poetic leader and, what is more important, was perceived as such. However, I think that only few of his relevant supporters were devoted to him that passionately. Armin Mohler and Gerhard Nebel fall in this category.

¹¹³ EJ/WM, 13.4.1946.

¹¹⁴ EJ/CSd, 17.3.1946.

¹¹⁵ See Morat, *Tat Gelassenheit*, p. 209. They justified their continued ‘inner emigration’ by the continuity of technocratic oppression: the ruling caste had changed, but the methods of control remained the same (see chapter 4.3).

that stems from his experience in the 1920s, when he was an intellectual leader or rather guru of 'New Nationalism'. Back then a flock of mostly young people nourished his idealised notion of authorship. In the satirical manner of his book *Der Fragebogen*, Ernst von Salomon depicted them as

[...] Schar aufgeschlossener Adepten, der Jünger-Jünger [...], der Kauern (die zu den Füßen des Meisters kauern) [sic; TH] und die fasziniert auf den Stein der Weisen starrten, den der Meister in den Händen hielt, nicht mit ihm zu lösen, sondern um ihn zu wiegen, zu messen, zu analysieren und zu sublimieren.¹¹⁶

It is revealing to compare this deliberately humorous passage with the sober observation in Michael Thomas's biography in which he described a visit to Jünger's house nearly twenty years later:

Wenn Jünger die Tür öffnete, kam es, kaum hatte er einen kurz begrüßt, sogleich zu Aussagen. Diese hatten keinen Bezug zu Ereignissen, sondern waren eher abstrakten Charakters. Auch schienen sie weniger für den Besucher als für die Um- und Nachwelt bestimmt: "Es regnet. Am Fenster sammeln sich Tropfen. Der Regen hat etwas Mythisches." Oder er spricht über irgendwelche Pflanzen und Käfer, mit denen er sich dann wohl gerade beschäftigt.¹¹⁷

There is little difference in the way Jünger presented himself: a disinterested thinker who is contemplating on the origins of existence. This was, as Thomas noticed, the way Jünger wanted to be remembered. However, the British officer concealed another aspect of those meetings, namely the straight talking between the blacklisted writer and his well informed supporter, who worked for the deputy military governor of the British occupation zone (see chapter 2.2.3.1). It would have been very strange if Jünger had chatted with someone like Thomas just about the weather.

Jünger's involvement in the network was not confined to controlling alone. There was another area of activities: it was the creation, coordination and expansion of the network. With each letter Jünger wrote, he engaged in one or more of them. Opportunities were legion as he constantly corresponded with old and new members of the network. Jünger's correspondence with the potential supporter Manfred Michler gives a good example of his method. Michler was in his late twenties and published a small paper called *Die Aussprache*, in which he criticised the ban on Jünger's books (see chapter 2.3.3). The young man contacted him in 1947 and asked him to contribute to his magazine hoping it would benefit the blacklisted author. Jünger then introduced Michler to key characters of his network, who could use a helping hand in campaigning for their friend. They comprised the usual suspects such as Karl O. Paetel, Armin Mohler, Friedrich Georg Jünger, Wolfgang

¹¹⁶ Ernst von Salomon, *Der Fragebogen* (Hamburg, 1951⁸), p. 244.

¹¹⁷ Thomas, *Deutschland England*, p. 135.

Frommel, Hans Speidel and others.¹¹⁸ By integrating Michler in the network, the publication of pro-Jünger-articles was promoted as well: Michler received and published several articles that were written by Jünger-activists like Mohler and had been already published somewhere else.

Once links between new and old members were established, they had to be maintained. Besides the 'shuttle diplomacy', the distribution of Jünger-devotionals and articles among the supporters was a way to strengthen ties between them. Because it was hard to get hands on his early works or even a manuscript, Jünger provided a limited number of these to members of the network. By forwarding and receiving them, the supporters kept in touch and got to know each other better. Michler, for instance, got to know Paetel by requesting material and articles from him. The relation between the young man from Düsseldorf and the émigré in New York became so good that Michler even wanted to become Paetel's 'Sprachrohr in Deutschland'¹¹⁹. This mechanism of teaming up the supporters was supported by Jünger's two archivists Karl Baedeker (the eponymous owner of the popular travel guides) and Peter des Coudres. Both of them created substantial repositories of Jünger-material which they made available only to other members and people approved by Jünger.

The coordination of such diverse a network did not go off smoothly, and envy, animosities and petty plots were inevitable side effects. More than once, Jünger had to pour oil on troubled waters and to mediate between supporters he could not afford to lose. Notably, Armin Mohler, Gerhard Nebel and Karl Paetel proved to be his problem children. Mohler, for example, sneered at Paetel's deficient writings about Jünger and only reluctantly worked together with the émigré; both complained to Jünger about each other.¹²⁰ Jünger as well as his supporters were well aware of those problems which came with the network. Thus Mohler wrote to Jünger:

Sie schreiben [...], dass die Beschäftigung mit Ihrem Werk allmählich die literarischen Grenzen überschreite. Ich kann hier – übrigens auch an mir selbst – den gleichen Vorgang beobachten. Dass Sie selbst nichts dazu tun, ist im Grossen wohl richtig. Doch drohen im Zusammenhang mit dieser Entwicklung zwei Gefahren, die Sie im rechten Augenblick sicher mit wenig Aufwand zurückweisen können: der Verein und die Sekte. Das erstere eher in einem Land wie der Schweiz, das zweite mehr in Deutschland. Beides brächte nur quantitativ erfreulichen Zuwachs und scheucht die freien Geister.¹²¹

¹¹⁸ See list of people who received a copy of the first and illegal edition of *Der Friede* in Germany (MM/EJ, 8.5.1948). Jünger kept no copies of his letters to Michler, probably because Michler was of a purely pragmatic value to him, a fact that would have contradicted his cultivated image. The tune of those letters, however, must have been quite clear, since Michler was thankful for Jünger's 'großzügiges Entgegenkommen' by allowing him to publish the preface of *Strahlungen* (MM/EJ, 25.10.1947).

¹¹⁹ MM/EJ, 28.2.1948.

¹²⁰ See for instance AM/EJ, 4.5.1949, and KOP/EJ, 7.12.1947.

¹²¹ AM/EJ, 1.7.1948.

It is pure consideration for his idol that prevented Mohler from blaming Jünger. Of course, the writer could have put an end to the sect-like adoration. In a letter to Nebel, he claimed to despise ‘alle Cliquenbildung, alle geistige Inzucht’¹²². But here Jünger merely paid lip service, since speaking against the formation of cliques would have affected the very principle of his network: a group of individuals with such strong a devotion to the writer that they spent a considerable part of their time to assist him – even without his explicit request. The ties between them had to be very strong; otherwise they would have never been as efficient as they actually proved to be. And although he never spoke of a network and probably would have never used this term, Jünger, nevertheless, provided the appropriate image: ‘[...] ich sitze in einem Netz von Fäden, das hier und dort berührt wird und mir Schwingungen zuträgt, die sich durch die Entfernung eher verstärken als abschwächen’¹²³.

To sum up, Ernst Jünger used his network by triggering rather than commanding its members who were eager to help him anyway. Although standing in the centre of severe public hostility, he remained, as it seems, in a stoic, dignified position. The reason is simple: he could afford it, knowing about his zealous supporters working in the background. Therefore, if one wants to reconstruct Ernst Jünger’s actions about denazification, the activity of his network rather than his own passiveness has to be studied.

The following members of the network were chosen because of their different background, motivation and their general importance in Jünger’s rehabilitation.¹²⁴ The way they are grouped and labelled here does not necessarily reflect their own perception. In most cases those men were strongly individualistic (like Jünger himself) and, apart from the Mohler-circle in Switzerland, acted as individuals, that means without deliberately forming a subgroup including a spokesman. Depicting them as groups is therefore for presentational purposes only.

¹²² EJ/GN, p. 298.

¹²³ EJ/CS, 14.5.1949, p. 236. In the context of the letter, it referred to his sources of information: Jünger knew every newspaper snippet about him. In a letter dated 24 June 1953, he complained to Armin Mohler ‘Es ist eine der Schattenseiten meines seismographischen Netztes, daß zuviel an mich herangetragen wird.’ As this chapter shows, the ‘threads’ conveyed more than information alone.

¹²⁴ That is why France is missing. Jünger had made many friends during his time in Paris, yet only one of them was an active supporter in the post-war period: Umm-El-Banine Assadoulaeff. The Algerian writer produced pro-Jünger articles (B/EJ, 20.8.1946), negotiated with French publishers (B/EJ, 22.5.1946, 5.3.1948), and translated and published *Der Friede* (B/EJ, 28.2.1946, 18.5.1947, 23.3.1948). However, her influence was small when compared with other members of the network. For instance, neither she nor any other French supporter spoke with the French authorities about Jünger. It was his former Wehrmacht comrades who did that (see chapter 2.2.2).

2.2 As thou wish: main apologists in Germany, Switzerland, England, Netherlands and USA

2.2.1 The secretary: Armin Mohler in Switzerland

Among his many supporters those in Switzerland were most important to Jünger's survival during the post-war period. This is for three reasons. In the first place, the Swiss, who were spared from the war, could afford to help the distressed writer. Secondly, besides Germany and Austria, Switzerland had the only considerable German speaking readership. This detail is meaningful – Jünger wanted to be published, which meant being published in German. However, Switzerland would have never become such a strong pillar to his cause without, thirdly, Armin Mohler.

Jünger's Swiss connection can be traced back to the 1930s. When he visited Switzerland in 1938, he told Carl Schmitt 'die Zahl meiner Freunde dort hat sich vermehrt'¹²⁵. One of those friends was Erich Brock (1889–1976). The philosopher and literary historian wrote articles about Jünger and did his doctorate on the writer's world view.¹²⁶ Jünger and Brock even corresponded during the war; Brock tried to get the Scientia-Verlag to publish two of Jünger's minor travel books *Myrdun* and *Goldene Muschel*.¹²⁷ After the war Jünger entrusted Brock with finding a publisher for the topical and therefore urgent *Der Friede*.¹²⁸ But publishing Jünger's works was not easy. It required tenacity, skilful marketing and horse trading. It is questionable whether Brock, rather a cautious intellectual than the dynamic type, could have done that. The results of his efforts are unknown, and it seems as if the young student Armin Mohler left him far behind in that respect, after he had been introduced to Jünger in the late summer of 1946.

Mohler was born on 12 April 1920 in Basle, where he studied history of arts, philosophy and German literature from 1938. German émigrés had made him familiar with Ernst Jünger's writings of which *Der Arbeiter* strongly influenced him all his life. One result of his reading was that in January 1942 the young student illegally crossed the German-Swiss border and, with reference to Jünger, tried to join the Waffen-SS. He was rejected and interned in a camp for foreigners. Waiting in the barracks his idealism soon fizzled out. He spent some time in Berlin looking for and copying Jünger's political articles, before he

¹²⁵ EJ/CS, 3.6.1938, p. 75. Paetel mentions (unnamed) Swiss friends, who tried to persuade Jünger to immigrate to Switzerland, see Karl O. Paetel, *Ernst Jünger: Weg und Wirkung: Eine Einführung* (Stuttgart, 1949), p. 104.

¹²⁶ Erich Brock, *Das Weltbild Ernst Jüngers: Darstellung und Deutung* (Zurich, 1945).

¹²⁷ See EB/EJ, 21.8.1944.

¹²⁸ See EJ/FGJ, 5.12.1945.

returned to Switzerland in December 1942, where he had to serve six months of imprisonment. His experience ‘entfernt[e] ihn trotz Ernüchterung und Enttäuschung nicht wirklich von Geist, Raum und Volk, die er gesucht hat’¹²⁹. He continued his studies and did his doctorate on the ‘Conservative Revolution’ in 1949/ 50 (supervisor: Karl Jaspers). The dissertation was published in the same year and became a standard work on the topic, although it was more an apology than an analysis.¹³⁰ Between 1949 and 1953 he was Jünger’s secretary. Afterwards he became foreign correspondent of the Swiss daily *Die Tat* and the German weekly *Die Zeit*. From 1964 on he wrote for *Die Welt* and later the rightwing publications *Criticón* and *Junge Freiheit*. Beside his journalistic work, Mohler was director of the influential Carl Friedrich von Siemens foundation between 1964 and 1985. His academic, journalistic and organisational activities earned him the reputation to be the ‘secretary of conservatism in the Federal Republic’.¹³¹ He died in 2003.

Armin Mohler’s ardent support of Jünger’s cause clearly stemmed from his ideological inclinations. In one of his first letters to Jünger he confessed:

Meinen Freunden, von denen fast alle von Ihrem Werk in entscheidender Weise getroffen worden sind, habe ich die von Ihrer Arbeit handelnden Stellen gezeigt. Das Wichtigste war uns, dass Sie wie damals zu den Grundlinien Ihres “Arbeiters” stehen. Denn für uns – wir sind 25–30jährig – sind Sie vor allem und zuerst der Autor des “Arbeiters”. Dieses Buch hat uns am tiefsten getroffen und zu Ihren Lesen gemacht.¹³²

Yet this alone does not explain Mohler’s strong commitment to outdated ideas and their authors. His numerous activities were to a greater degree a compensation for his young age. The glorious days of ‘Conservative Revolution’, when the muddle of ideas had some impact on society and politics, had ended long before Mohler discovered and adopted them. After 1945 these ideas were taken up again, but only to condemn them and those who fathered them. It was this situation which allowed Mohler to nourish the illusion that he could continue or even revive the long-lost battles of the 1920s by assisting and defending former ‘Conservative Revolutionaries’ like the Jünger brothers, Gottfried Benn and Carl Schmitt.¹³³ When people were looking for the roots of Nazism and blaming fascist writers, it was an act of nonconformity to defend men like them. Given his age and the remarkable resources and

¹²⁹ These words are taken from the introduction to his memoirs, which is based on an interview in the 1990s; Armin Mohler, *Ravensburger Tagebuch: Meine Jahre mit Ernst Jünger* (Leipzig, 1999), p. 8.

¹³⁰ Armin Mohler, *Die konservative Revolution in Deutschland 1918–1932: Grundriss ihrer Weltanschauungen* (Stuttgart, 1950). The title already indicates the apologetic character of the book by differentiating the ‘Conservative Revolution’ from National Socialism which followed in 1933.

¹³¹ See Mohler, *Tagebuch*, pp. 8–10, and Helmuth Kiesel (ed.), *Ernst Jünger, Carl Schmitt: Briefe 1930–1983* (Stuttgart, 1999), p. 685.

¹³² AM/EJ, 29.3.1947.

¹³³ Gerhard Nebel referred to that obsolete commitment, when he characterised Mohler: ‘Mohler ist auf dem “Arbeiter” hocken geblieben. Faschist von 1930. Er hat eben unsere Erfahrungen nicht gehabt’ (GN/EJ, 13.8.1948, p. 220).

energy he spent on Jünger's cause, Mohler's acts may be called the rebellious behaviour of a young man.

Ironically, Mohler's overzealousness became the reason for the break-up between him and Jünger. Even though Jünger never officially renounced his former convictions, he became more and more cautious in terms of political commitment for the rest of his life. Mohler often pushed him to show his colours, which, as he thought, were the black of the fascists. He saw himself as representative of Jünger's true readers and was very critical about alterations especially of *Der Arbeiter* and Jünger's temporary turn to (rhetoric) Catholicism.¹³⁴ Jünger became increasingly annoyed by this kind of interference in his life and work and finally replied in a scathing letter 'Jedenfalls sehen Welt- und Bürgerkriege anders aus für einen, der seinen Kopf nicht nur angestrengt, sondern auch hingehalten hat.'¹³⁵

In the post-war period, however, Jünger soon found out how capable and keen to help Mohler was. His new disciple proved to be effective in three areas: fundraising, marketing and trading. I am using these economic terms deliberately, even though applying them on this topic might seem historically unorthodox, since neither Mohler nor Jünger would have used them. But it is exactly this silence about the network's practical outcomes that they are supposed to contrast. And no one else in Jünger's network embodied these principles better than Mohler.

Fundraising, which is finding financial supporters and providing Jünger with goods of all kind, was the most urgent job to do in the post-war period. After all, Jünger had to make a living in war-shaken Germany despite his retreat to the attic at the beginning of the occupation and the monastic atmosphere which he evoked in his diaries. Apart from his own survival, he had to care for his family too. Since Jünger was neither employed nor looking for a job, he was dependent on the material help by others. His capable wife Gretha, his neighbours in Kirchhorst and generous guests were certainly one source of help. Another was the influx of CARE-parcels, especially when it came to rare goods and semi-luxuries like tobacco. A lot of them came from Switzerland where Mohler organised and supervised all support efforts.

Mohler did not act alone. He had at least two close colleagues to help him: Dr. Hans Fleig and Erhard Hürsch. Fleig was a journalist for the Swiss *Die Tat* and originally initiated the

¹³⁴ 'Ueberhaupt möchte ich nun "Stimme des Lesers" sein und Ihnen zurufen, dass Sie auf Ihre frühen Werke kein Recht mehr haben, dass sie nicht mehr Ihnen gehören. Wieso wollen Sie zum "Arbeiter" einen theologischen Teil schreiben? Der "Arbeiter" lebt nun seit anderthalb Jahrzehnten und bewegt sich von selbst fort, in einer Art, über die Sie keine Macht mehr haben'(AM/EJ, 13.10.1947).

¹³⁵ EJ/AM, 22.10.1960.

support for German intellectuals in need like Benn, Schmitt and Jünger. Erhard Hürsch was a photojournalist. The three men had something in common: they wanted to help, but lacked the necessary capital to do so. That is why Armin Mohler involved another Swiss who was known for his good relations to industry. This was Albert Hofmann, a chemist working for the pharmaceutical enterprise Sandoz, who discovered the lysergic acid diethylamide, which is LSD. It was this discovery that made him and the drugs-interested Jünger friends for the rest of their lives.

Yet in 1947, when Mohler introduced Hofmann to Jünger,¹³⁶ the chemist's financial support was decisive. Symbolically, he enclosed a honeypot in his first letter.¹³⁷ He also announced further parcels. They included for example infant clothing, tobacco, coupons, chocolate, postal stamps, a pair of trousers and eventually even drugs¹³⁸. In 1948 Mohler and Hofmann enabled Jünger to his first journey abroad after the war – destination: Switzerland.¹³⁹ All these goods and presents were only supplementing the regular care parcels that came from different members of the Mohler-circle. One is mentioned by name and with him his motivation:

Walter Müller denkt übrigens daran, Sie in regelmässigen Abständen mit Paketen zu versorgen. Er hält dies für eine richtige Verwendung dessen, was von seinem Einkommen verfügbar bleibt und hofft, dass Sie es als selbstverständliche "Gegenleistung" eines Lesers auffassen, der Ihnen viel zu verdanken hat.¹⁴⁰

This again is a devotion that goes far beyond the usual author-reader-relationship. It can only be explained by the aforementioned quality of the network: money played a minor role when compared with the honourable role of supporting the disdained and persecuted prophets. Mohler was the man to transform these idealistic into real values. He asked Jünger to inform him about any wishes and added 'Ich werde wohl in den meisten Fällen jemanden aus Ihrer "Gemeinde" heranziehen können. In unserer begünstigten Lage halten wir eine solche Hilfe für selbstverständlich.'¹⁴¹

After he had ensured his physical survival, Mohler sought to rehabilitate the author Jünger as well. He did it by marketing and campaigning for the writer, the second area of his activities. As public opinion was hostile within and outside Germany, effective marketing was a preliminary step to the (re-) publication of Jünger's books. Even in

¹³⁶ He knew him since a LSD-experiment (see AM/EJ, 22.12.1947).

¹³⁷ AH/EJ, 29.3.1947.

¹³⁸ 'Um bei unserem Thema zu bleiben, habe ich vor einiger Zeit für Ihren Festtag eine Drogensendung aufgegeben. Ich hoffe, dass sie zur rechten Zeit in Ravensburg [Jünger's home since December 1948; TH] eingetroffen ist. Da es sich dabei um ungefährliche, erprobte Wirkstoffe handelt, wurde die Sendung direkt an die Hausfrau adressiert' (AH/EJ, 20.3.1949).

¹³⁹ See for example AM/EJ, 20.3.1948.

¹⁴⁰ AM/EJ, 27.12.1947.

¹⁴¹ AM/EJ, 26.4.1948.

Switzerland, where most of them were published during the post-war period, public opinion about Ernst Jünger had to be changed first:

Auch nur die Erwähnung Ihres Namens ruft in den hiesigen literarischen Kreisen grosse Gereiztheit hervor. Aus unerfindlichen Gründen scheinen hier gewisse Leute nach dem Tode Hitlers Sie zum neuen "Bölimaa" (so nennt man in meinem Dialekt den "Schwarzen Mann") sich auserlesen zu haben. Die meisten von ihnen kennen aus Ihrem Werk natürlich nur einige herausgerissene Zitate aus der Friedensschrift und aus den Tagebüchern des ersten Krieges – was Sie vom Nationalsozialismus scheidet – ist ihnen nicht bekannt. All das macht eine unvoreingenommene Beschäftigung mit Ihrem Werk hier zum mindesten in der Oeffentlichkeit schwer.¹⁴²

Mohler's first articles in a paper with a wide readership were published in the *Weltwoche*. It was founded in 1933 by Manuel Gasser und Karl von Schumacher, and the anti-communist weekly initially sympathised with Hitler and Mussolini. Later they condemned National Socialism and invited German émigrés to write for them. The newspaper had a remarkable impact on a world-wide readership, if one can trust Jünger's words: 'Ihr erster Aufsatz in der "Weltwoche" erreichte ein weites Publikum. So erreichte [[hörte] mich sein Echo aus England, Amerika, Batavia und aus Nairobi in Afrika.'¹⁴³ However, after his first pro-Jünger article had been published, Mohler was 'starken Anfeindungen ausgesetzt' and claimed that his colleagues tried to oust him so that he had to leave the weekly, which 'unter den Schweizer Zeitungen – um eines Ihrer Bilder zu verwenden – der Omnibus [ist], der am weitesten führt'.¹⁴⁴

Mohler soon found a good replacement for *Weltwoche* by writing for the arts section of *Die Tat*. As soon as he was employed, he wrote a long article about Friedrich Georg Jünger.¹⁴⁵ He also supervised and promoted the circulation of extracts of Jünger's works in order to prepare the field for their publication.¹⁴⁶ This marketing and campaigning helped to change public or at least journalistic opinion within Switzerland to an extent that publishers began to see a market for Jünger's books. Negotiating with them and co-producing the first serious German editions was finally Mohler's third area of activities and most significant achievement as Jünger's representative in Switzerland. It is dealt with in a separate chapter.

2.2.2 Beyond Paris: Jünger's war-time comrades

Even though Jünger's network was mainly based on its German members, Germany comes only second after Switzerland. The reason is simple: pro-Jünger campaigns were contained

¹⁴² AM/EJ, 29.3.1947.

¹⁴³ EJ/AM, 11.2.1947.

¹⁴⁴ See AM/EJ, 29.3.1947.

¹⁴⁵ See AM/EJ, 16.12.1947.

¹⁴⁶ See AM/EJ, 27.7.1947.

by occupation and denazification policy, especially between 1945 and 1947. Moreover, public opinion was at first strongly against Jünger, and the means as well as the influence of his supporters were modest immediately after German surrender. Nevertheless, there were active supporters in Germany as well. They pursued two aims, namely to publish Jünger's works and to convince the occupation authorities in the three Western zones to lift the ban on publication.

When compared with each other, most of the German supporters had one characteristic in common apart from belonging to the same generation: they were one-time officers from the German military government in Paris. These men – among them Gerhard Heller, Friedrich Sieburg, Carlo Schmid, Hans Speidel and Alfred Toepfer – attended the meetings of the so called 'Georgsrunde'. They were regularly held in the eponymous Parisian hotel Grégoire V. in 1941 and 1942, and the participants discussed the course of the war and the future of Europe. More than a decade later, Speidel, who had presided over the 'Georgsrunde', wrote an article about the discussions in a commemorative publication for Jünger:

Unvergeßliche Gespräche werden lebendig über den Mißbrauch der Macht unter Kniebolo [Jünger's pseudonym for Hitler; TH], über die Paarung von Macht und Anmut unter den großen Hohenstaufen, über Sulla, über Preußentum und Europäertum, über Tolstoi's »Krieg und Frieden«, über Friede und Freiheit, über die Fülle des noch zu Leistenden, über die französischen Moralisten und ihre Nachfahren, über die Gefühle des schöpferischen Menschen [...].¹⁴⁷

According to this description, the 'Georgsrunde' was an elitist debating society of dissenters. In his diaries, Jünger contrasted its meetings with the more and more brutal German occupation government in Paris when he called it a 'geistige Ritterschaft'¹⁴⁸. Whether one may call the 'Georgsrunde' resistance or not: some of its members had relations to the conservative resistance or were even involved in it. They were persecuted and interned or executed after the foiled assassination attempt on Hitler. However, Jünger kept his distance to them, because he did not believe in the success of an assassination. Notwithstanding his passiveness, he wrote *Der Friede* and gave permission to publish it after Hitler's death or the failed attempt.

This contradictory behaviour was typical of Jünger. His comrades' perception after 1945 is more important here: despite Jünger's rather passive role within the resistance, they considered him to be one of them. They shared a common identity, which was formed in the

¹⁴⁷ Hans Speidel, 'Briefe aus Paris und aus dem Kaukasus', in Armin Mohler (ed.), *Freundschaftliche Begegnungen: Festschrift für Ernst Jünger zum 60. Geburtstag* (Frankfurt on the Main, 1955), pp. 181–95, here p. 194.

¹⁴⁸ *Strahlungen*, p. 64.

‘Georgsrunde’¹⁴⁹ and put to the test during the revenge of the Nazi regime. Particularly *Der Friede* strengthened the ex-officers in their resolve to help Jünger. It was the only available manifesto of the military resistance – a resistance that according to considerable parts of the German population had committed high treason and that was observed with suspicion by the Allies because of its noble-conservative origin. To some extent, the fate of *Der Friede* and its author were therefore connected to the resistance in general: the text was part of the legacy of the resistance within the army. Moreover, the debate about Jünger and his former militaristic attitude echoed the principal accusation of ‘militarism’ which those ex-officers had to face as well. Fighting for Jünger’s rehabilitation and the publication of *Der Friede* meant not only to support an old comrade and friend, but also to justify their own behaviour during the war. Thus Jünger could count on his comrades’ esprit the corps, especially since his wide condemnation appeared to be such a flagrant example of victor’s justice and opportunism. And it was not only the group identity that worked in Jünger’s favour. His former comrades lived in Baden and Württemberg-Hohenzollern. In a time of shortages and shortcomings of all kinds, this was a logistical advantage, but even more a political one, because Baden and Württemberg-Hohenzollern were parts of the French occupation zone. The Francophile ex-officers made good use of their closeness to the French authorities.

Among his old comrades, Hans Speidel (1897–1984) was the one whom Jünger owed the most as he had been the writer’s protector in Paris. Born in the Swabian village of Metzingen, Speidel was a regular officer who made his career through four different political systems. He joined the First World War as a volunteer and became second-lieutenant. In 1921 he was admitted to the recently founded Reichswehr, studied history and economics in Stuttgart, Tübingen and Berlin, and graduated with a PhD in 1925. Between 1930 and 1933 Speidel trained for the general staff. He became assistant of the German military attaché in Paris during the subsequent two years. Two promotions followed. Then Speidel participated in the campaign against France as general staff officer. At the German military government in Paris he became chief of staff. In 1942 he was ordered to the Eastern front. He returned to France in 1944 and served in Rommel’s army group where he tried to convince the Field Marshal and his successor von Kluge to join the resistance. After the failed uprising he was imprisoned by the Gestapo, but not sentenced. French troops liberated him and other imprisoned soldiers at the end of the war. In the following four years Speidel became a scholar at the University of Tübingen and published a historical

¹⁴⁹ The ‘Georgsrunde’ remained an attractive concept to some of its participants. Speidel cherished the idea of reviving it after the war and wrote to Jünger that it was maybe time ‘für eine erweiterere “Georgsrunde”, denn auf solche Kreise müssten wir ja mutas mutandis wieder abkommen’ (HS/EJ, 25.11.1946).

study on the Allied invasion in 1944.¹⁵⁰ His military career continued in the Federal Republic, when he was involved in re-armament ('Amt Blank') and later in the European Defence Community. He retired in 1963 after having made four-star general of the Bundeswehr and chief commander of the NATO-land forces in Central Europe.

Besides an influential former superior, Speidel was one of Jünger's closest friends, which intensified his commitment to help Jünger. With 95 years the old man still remembered Speidel, who 'als Chef und Freund in meinem Leben eine große Rolle gespielt hat – auch als einer von denen, die mich "herausholten"'.¹⁵¹ Speidel conceived his support as a 'counter operation' which basically meant getting positive articles into the press and finding a German publishing house. In order to influence the press, he met with journalists and planned how to respond to attacks against Jünger. In August 1946 for instance, two journalists visited him, and together they discussed the 'counter-operation'. One of them had already written two articles which were about to be published in the academic weekly *Universitas* and the daily newspaper *Schwäbische Zeitung*, both based in Stuttgart.¹⁵² Speidel also talked to publishers. On 4 June 1946 he told Jünger that Wunderlich Verlag in Tübingen and the reputable Deutsche Verlagsanstalt were interested in his books, and he asked whether to contact them.¹⁵³ The full extent and particularly the success of Speidel's 'counter-operation' cannot be reconstructed, because too many letters are missing. But it was probably him who established and maintained Jünger's relation to Tübingen based Furche-Verlag, the publishing house that made available Jünger's first two major works after the ban (see chapter 2.3.3).

So far, Speidel's efforts do not differ much from what Mohler did in Switzerland. The former officer, however, had political contacts which the young student lacked. Speidel knew senior officers from the French occupation authorities and was on good terms with them. During the war, Speidel had belonged to a small fraction of Francophile German officers who represented the educated, gentleman-like *bon allemand* rather than the ruthless *boche* shooting women and children. In the end, he had been even liberated by the French army. This made him trustworthy, and he used his privileged access to the French authorities to help his friend in Kirchhorst. Speidel seems to have been quite successful, since the French authorities knew that Speidel acted as his representative. In June 1947, for instance, a French officer approached him in order to communicate with the blacklisted

¹⁵⁰ Hans Speidel, *Invasion 1944* (Tübingen/Stuttgart, 1949). Jünger contributed the foreword.

¹⁵¹ *SV IV*, p. 418.

¹⁵² See HS/EJ, 2.9.1946.

¹⁵³ See HS/EJ, 4.6.1946.

writer:

Am 18.6. bat mich Herr René Charles Galoin (zur Zeit Oberleutnant) vom Service de l'information der Militärregierung für Württemberg in Tübingen nach seiner Rückkehr aus Paris zu sich und sprach mich auf die holländische Ausgabe der Friedensschrift an. Auch das Vorwort von Frommel war ihm bekannt. Er bat mich nun um eine Vermittlung bei Ihnen, die Rechte für die Veröffentlichung der Friedensschrift in Frankreich zu erwerben. Er möchte den "Frieden" in dem neuen Verlag "Table ronde" baldigst veröffentlichen und bat um Übermittlung Ihrer Bedingungen.¹⁵⁴

This example makes clear how vital Jünger's supporters were in circumventing the ban. The French officer did not contact Jünger directly. If he had done so, he would have risked annoying his British colleagues, who struggled with imposing the ban. With Speidel as an intermediary the contact was only informal and involved no risk at all.

Speidel was Jünger's confidential and loyal friend, and his efforts prepared the ground for the latter's move to the French zone, where the ban was lifted first. But his actions were limited, because he held no influential office above being a university scholar during the post-war time. This was where another of Jünger's war-time comrades came into play: Carlo Schmid. Schmid (1896–1979) studied law between 1919 and 1924 and worked as lawyer and judge. During National Socialism he was a private scholar in international law, and between 1940 and 1944 he served as a legal expert in the Wehrmacht commandant's office in Lille. Like the rest of Jünger's war-time comrades, Schmid participated in the 'Georgsrunde'. After the war, he joined the Social Democratic Party and became President of the State Secretariat of the French Occupation Zone and Minister of Education and Cultural Affairs in 1945. Furthermore, the social democrat held a seat in the state parliament of Württemberg-Hohenzollern, and from 1947 on he was Minister of Justice and one of the 'fathers' of the German Basic Law. All in all, Schmid was a nascent member of the new democratic elite.

Ernst Jünger was certainly not Schmid's natural ally. Yet shortly after German surrender, Schmid wrote him a letter which contained quite generous an offer: '[...] falls Sie Pläne haben sollten, bei deren Ausführung ich Ihnen nützlich sein könnte, schreiben Sie nur.'¹⁵⁵ Jünger grasped this opportunity in an unexpected manner – the minister became his driver. Due to Schmid's public office, he was one of the few Germans privileged with having a car after the war. So he gave Jünger several lifts to the South, which allowed him to discuss sensitive topics with his supporters personally. But Schmid's political influence came in handy too. There is one case which gives evidence of the minister's intervention to help Jünger. The writer decided to move from Kirchhorst in the British occupation zone to

¹⁵⁴ HS/EJ, 21.6.1947.

¹⁵⁵ CSd/EJ, 25.7.1945.

Ravensbrück in Upper Swabia, which was part of the French zone. Despite Jünger's growing concerns Schmid got the necessary permission.¹⁵⁶ This was not a mere formality but a preliminary step to the end of the ban, because the British authorities thereby lost direct control of Jünger.¹⁵⁷

Why did the social democrat Schmid help a former right-wing icon and militarist anyway? The answer is to be found beyond politics. Schmid was not only a politician but also a lover of literature. He translated French poets, among others Baudelaire. This unusual hobby of an official and politician attracted Jünger's interest, and as both shared a common love for French literature they became friends. This was not the last time that one of Jünger's friends came from a different political camp; the leftist writer Alfred Andersch, who defended him against journalistic attacks, is another prominent example. Both Schmid and Andersch evince the diversity of Jünger's network.

Supporters like Schmid were exceptions in the network. Most of its members including Jünger's war-time comrades were conservatives in one way or another. Gerhard Nebel (1903–1974) was one of them, and he deserves a closer look, since he was the most zealous and active supporter in the British zone. In contrast to Speidel, he got to know Jünger already in 1938. Born in Dessau, Nebel studied classics and philosophy in Freiburg, Marburg and Heidelberg, and attended lectures held by Heidegger and Jaspers. Leaving university with a PhD, he led a turbulent life as a private teacher in Africa. After Nebel had read *Blätter und Steine* and *Das Abenteuerliche Herz* in its second version, both of them comparatively apolitical, he became an adherent of Jünger, moreover, he felt encouraged becoming a writer too.¹⁵⁸ As a consequence, his early works until 1949 were strongly focused on Jünger, whom he deemed one of the most important thinkers of the West. In 1941 Nebel was drafted into the air force and served as interpreter in Paris, where he joined the 'Georgsrunde'. He was denounced because of an allegedly defeatist essay and transferred to the Channel Island Alderney, Dortmund and eventually Italy. After the war, he tried to make a living as a free author in Wuppertal, but eventually had to go into teaching again.

Nebel, who lived in the British zone, excelled particularly in campaigning for Jünger's works. In addition to the efforts of the supporters in South Germany, he tried to find a

¹⁵⁶ See CSd/EJ, 10.11.1948.

¹⁵⁷ This may be the reason, why Jünger retorted to Nebel's derogatory remarks on Schmid, 'Carlo Schmid hat sich in meiner Angelegenheit recht bemüht – das muß ich zu seinem Lobe anführen' (EJ/GN, 15.11.1948, p. 255).

¹⁵⁸ His books owe much to Jünger, especially stylistically, and earned him some critical acclaim in the post-war period. The first one, *Feuer und Wasser*, was published in 1939.

publisher in the British zone. But due to the hostile standpoint of the British authorities, Nebel had to do more than just to probe the publishing field. Before a West German publisher could print *Der Friede*, Nebel had to convince the authorities that Jünger was harmless. He therefore wrote a report about the writer and sent it to the British headquarters.¹⁵⁹ Yet changing the occupiers' point of view was not as easy as it was in South Germany. That is why Nebel chose a strategy different from that in the French zone:

Die Engländer sind in der Tat im Fall Ernst Jünger intransigent. Ich nehme an, dass die Leute in Bünde Angst vor irgendwelchen Londoner Stellen haben. Aber ich bin dafür, dass man immer wieder bohrt und ihnen keine Ruhe lässt. Nicht Sie sollen bohren, aber es ist die Pflicht Ihrer Freunde. Ich werde immer wieder angreifen. ~~Im Herbst~~ So ist z.B. die Kölner Studentenschaft an mich herangetreten und hat mich gebeten, eine grosse Diskussion um den "Fall Ernst Jünger" zu leiten. Ich habe natürlich zugestimmt. Es darf keine Woche vergehen, in der nicht dieses Wasser aufgeführt wird.¹⁶⁰

Relentless public actions were supposed to create a counter-public to the alleged 'press-campaign' in German newspapers (see chapter 3.5) and the intransigency of the British occupation authorities. Thus Nebel held talks and public debates all over the British zone, particularly in front of students. He maintained that they were always well-attended and met with general approval.¹⁶¹ Nebel expanded his lecture by publishing the script and broadcasting it on radio together with Manfred Michler. Michler reported back to Jünger:

Eben komme ich von einer Besprechung (streng vertraulich) vom NWDR Köln zurück. Wir planen, wenn der Furche-Verlag einverstanden ist, in der Nachtsendung vom 29.6. 22.30 bis 00.25 Ihre Friedensschrift nach einleitenden Worten von Dr. Nebel und mir zur Verlesung zu bringen. Den Abschluss soll nach Ansicht der Rundfunkleute, die den Zensor immerhin für den Plan gewonnen haben, eine kritische englische Stellungnahme (Fisher, London) bilden, damit die Sendung nicht nur pro beurteilt werden kann.¹⁶²

Jünger appreciated Nebel's mixture of intelligence, restless effort and his expertise in 'Jungeria'. Even if all this resulted in nothing, the writer would be at least represented in an appropriate manner, and Nebel would extend the network. The trained teacher and charismatic man made indeed a deep impression on his young audience. Jünger was satisfied with the results and wrote 'Sie führen mir da in Scharen neue Adepten zu.'¹⁶³ He therefore delegated representational tasks to Nebel and sent him as an 'expert' to meetings Jünger himself could not or did not want to attend, for instance to a conference in Zurich.¹⁶⁴

With his constant campaigning, Nebel made his voice eventually heard by the British authorities. Several months before the ban was lifted, he was told that Colonel Fredricks,

¹⁵⁹ See GH/EJ, 4.6.1947, p. 130.

¹⁶⁰ GN/EJ, 1.7.1947, p. 137. Bünde was the location of the ISC-HQ.

¹⁶¹ See GH/EJ, 6.12.1947, pp. 155–6.

¹⁶² MM/EJ, 31.5.1948. The talk was actually broadcast, see N.N., 'Der Fall Ernst Jünger', *Westdeutsches Tageblatt*, 13.9.1948. Jünger's works were also read and discussed in a talk broadcasted in Frankfurt on the Main, see N.N., 'Ernst Jünger', *Municher Zeitung*, 15.2.1949.

¹⁶³ EJ/GN, 5.7.1948, p. 210.

¹⁶⁴ See EJ/GN, 2.12.1947, pp. 154–5.

‘augenblicklich die höchste britische Instanz in Kulturdingen’, was interested to find ‘den Modus [einer] Rückkehr’ together with Jünger.¹⁶⁵ By that time Jünger had already resolved to move to the French zone and did no longer rely on the Fredricks’ good will. Yet it is noteworthy that the British officer did not contact Jünger personally, but, as I have shown in Speidel’s case, approached a supporter who acted as his representative. These and the following examples demonstrate the ‘agent’ quality of the network: though Jünger remained silent and indulged in his seclusive existence, he actually worked on his comeback by means of his network. This meant to coordinate and to influence his supporters. Nebel is an extraordinary example of this controlling, because he had quite an independent mind and was not as easy to influence as Paetel for example. Jünger’s influence had to be very subtle in order not to upset the forceful Nebel. A close look at the genesis of Nebel’s pro-Jünger publications shows how cunningly the writer manipulated his supporters.

Nebel wrote two Jünger-books during the post-war period, and they were the most sustainable results of his activities. He started with a mere script of his public talks and eventually wrote a full-scale biography. This biography was one of four books on Jünger written post-war period, and he deemed it the best.¹⁶⁶ This was probably due to Nebel’s talent as a writer: by comparison with the other three biographical studies, Nebel’s book was stylistically better, more sophisticated and – maybe most important – consistent with Jünger’s own view. The first version, a script of his talk, was called *Ernst Jünger und das Schicksal des Menschen*, which already said a lot about Nebel’s adoration. Its main thesis dealt with the nature of Jünger’s development and how he had abandoned *In Stahlgewittern* and *Der Arbeiter* in order to embrace faith in his recent works. This transition from a state of ‘nihilism’ to a religious renewal was a common explanation at that time, and it was thought to be a panacea for Germany after its fall. Many of his apologists adopted it, because it seemed tailor-made for Jünger and his way from warrior to peace-maker. However, Nebel was anxious to stress that this change had nothing in common with the ideological opportunism that was popular with many Germans at that time:

Jüngers geistige Bewegung ist Entfaltung, nicht Bruch, und wenn er in die großen Symbole des Christentums dringt, so nimmt das nicht die Form eines Damaskus an, sondern geschieht als stetige Erwerbung und als eine Anreicherung, die nichts von dem bisherigen Besitz preisgibt.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁵ See GN/EJ, 30.8.1948, pp. 232–3.

¹⁶⁶ The other three were Paetel’s biography (see further below), a small book written by the Jesuit Hubertus Becher and Alfred von Martin’s academic study on Jünger and nihilism; see Hubertus Becher, *Ernst Jünger: Mensch und Werk* (Warendorf, 1949), and Alfred von Martin, *Der heroische Nihilismus und seine Überwindung* (Krefeld, 1948). The fact that only four books followed the Jünger debate indicates both that it was mainly led in newspapers and that it ended in 1949.

¹⁶⁷ Gerhard Nebel, *Ernst Jünger und das Schicksal des Menschen* (Wuppertal, 1948), p. 9.

This was perfectly in line with Jünger's own view. With a reference to denazification, Nebel added:

Entweder nehmen sie [die Moralisten; TH] nur das Beharrende wahr, und dann denunzieren sie den Nationalisten und Militaristen und rufen, wenn nicht nach Ausrottung, so doch nach Verbot und Unterdrückung, und es gibt ja in der Tat Administrationen, die sich zu Handlangern dieser Eunuchen mißbrauchen lassen. Oder aber sie sehen die Veränderung und dann isolieren sie sie und verlangen ein öffentliches Schuldbekentnis. Die Dummheit beider Haltungen ist gleich groß, und vielleicht ist auch die erste nicht einmal soviel boshafter als die zweite.¹⁶⁸

This argumentation was aimed at immunising Jünger against all criticism. Both the stubborn and the moderate accusers failed to understand Jünger's intellectual biography by emphasising either his early radicalism or the recent changes. Nebel deemed Jünger's nihilistic work the prerequisite to his turn; they were two sides of the same coin. His apology therefore culminated in the assertion 'daß die Kraft der Liebe, die wir schon im frühen Jünger am Werke sahen und die sich nun immer reiner und kristallischer darstellt, mit Christus identisch ist.'¹⁶⁹ This identification with Christian values was another common interpretation of Jünger's post-war ideology and it suited him well at least during the post-war period. All in all, Jünger could easily embrace Nebel's argumentation: he did not have to renounce his intellectual and political development, but still got rid of its burden as the former apologist of totalitarianism turned out to be an evangelist of Christian love. Furthermore, the book was another blow at British denazification policy, since the authorities approved it for print despite the ban on Jünger's works and studies quoting from them.¹⁷⁰ It is no wonder that Jünger encouraged Nebel to elaborate the text.

When Nebel published *Ernst Jünger: Abenteurer des Geistes* in 1949, the battle over Jünger had already been won by the network. Jünger lived in the French zone, and his war journals *Strahlungen* had been recently published. That is why Nebel called the whole Jünger debate 'windiges Geschwätz, da sie sich in einem Raum abspielte, in dem man Jüngers nicht einmal ansichtig werden, geschweige denn daß man ihn dort beurteilen konnte'¹⁷¹. An accolade for the French authorities and their far-sightedness in 'geistigen Dingen' followed.¹⁷² The main thesis of his book was still that of a change without self-denial. Nebel distinguished three stages of Jünger's thinking, namely the war experience which led to *Der Arbeiter*, the 'diesseitige Metaphysik' of *Das Abenteuerliche Herz* and

¹⁶⁸ Ibid, p. 10.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid, p. 29.

¹⁷⁰ 'Tigges hat den Vortrag setzen lassen, und die Engländer haben, nachdem sie vier Wochen zögerten, den Druck erlaubt' (GN/EJ, 4.6.1948, p. 206). A year ago Nebel was not able to find a publisher for his book, see GN/EJ, 22.5.1947, p. 128.

¹⁷¹ Gerhard Nebel, *Ernst Jünger: Abenteurer des Geistes* (Wuppertal, 1949), pp. 9–10.

¹⁷² See *ibid.*

finally the post-war period where Jünger tried to find the 'christlichen Gott'.¹⁷³ To prove his thesis, Nebel quoted abundantly from Jünger's recently published war-diaries *Strahlungen* where indeed many references to the Bible could be found.

However, Nebel's affirmative book did not only reflect his personal bias. It was equally a result of the joint consultations between him and Jünger while he was writing the book. This 'collaboration' was crucial when it came to the difficult parts of Jünger's life. Nebel planned to analyse the writer's radical journalism during the 1920s. He saw no problems in integrating these years in his biography, since they were part of Nebel's change-without-self-denial thesis:

Um Gotteswillen keine Entschuldigung und Verteidigung. Es ist ganz deutlich, dass hier kein Bruch, sondern eine Erweiterung und Ueberhöhung vorliegt. Die alten Bestände bleiben, aber sie erfahren natürlich, indem von 33 ab andere Wirklichkeiten sichtbar und angeeignet werden, zugleich auch eine Veränderung.¹⁷⁴

Yet this plan was imprudent from Jünger's perspective. When Nebel requested a copy of the bellicose *Der Kampf als inneres Erlebnis*, Jünger replied: 'Von den meisten meiner Bücher bestehen mehrere, oft recht differente Fassungen (So "Wäldchen 125"). Es ist daher ratsam, immer die späten Ausgaben zu Rate zu ziehen.'¹⁷⁵ He did not add that the later versions of his war novels were defused and comparatively harmless. Indeed, Jünger deliberately concealed them from Nebel, who only knew his later works from the 1930s onwards. It has to be remembered that Nebel wrote his book in the post-war period: it was difficult to get Jünger's early works, especially since they were officially banned from public libraries. Because Jünger was aware of his problematic early works, he did not mention them and thus influenced Nebel, who did not even notice it. Six months after Nebel's first request, Jünger resorted to a similar answer. Nebel had asked for the articles written in 1920s, and Jünger answered:

Ich dachte darüber nach, wie ich Ihnen noch bei dem Buche behilflich sein könnte. Die Sekretierung meiner frühen Aufsätze, die ich Mohler auferlegte, gilt selbstverständlich nicht für Sie. Ob es aber viel Wert hat, daß Sie, daß Sie sich in diese Fehden vertiefen, über die der totale Staat und der Weltkrieg dahingegangen sind?¹⁷⁶

Jünger signaled that he did not appreciate Nebel's idea to quote from the 'obsolete' articles in his book, and he reminded him that he had already forbidden Mohler to use them. Mohler contributed to the book by writing a biographical and bibliographical annex. Even before he had completed the manuscript, he allowed Jünger to revise it: 'Das Manuskript würde Ihnen

¹⁷³ See *ibid*, pp. 27–8.

¹⁷⁴ GN/EJ, 24.3.1948, p. 188.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid*, p. 186.

¹⁷⁶ EJ/GN, 30.9.1948, p. 236.

zur Berichtigung und Ergänzung vorgelegt werden.’¹⁷⁷ One and a half years later, Mohler noted in his diary: ‘Bespreche mit GJ [Gretha Jünger; TH] meinen Anhang zu Nebels EJ-Buch und kann noch ein paar Daten richtigstellen. EJ meint, einige Unklarheiten auf diesem Felde wären ihm nicht unlieb.’¹⁷⁸ Apart from an official biography, which condemned the denazification and ‘press-campaign’ against Jünger, the result of Jünger’s interference was that neither the essays nor the different versions were listed in it. But since Mohler deemed these works and *Der Arbeiter* the best texts Jünger had ever written, he at least mentioned their existence.¹⁷⁹

It has become clear that Jünger influenced the making of Nebel’s biography by retaining crucial material and revising some of its parts. Yet characteristically, he denied his hidden co-authorship and ascribed the whole book to Nebel alone:

Sie wissen, daß ich streng vermieden habe, Einfluß auf Ihre Monographie zu nehmen; es ist das für mich eine Frage der ~~inneren~~ geistigen Sauberkeit. Ob Ihr Buch erscheint, wie es erscheint, und welche Stellung Sie darin gegenüber meinem Werke einnehmen – das sind Fragen Ihrer eigenen Einsicht und Verantwortung. Unsere Freundschaft wird dadurch nicht berührt.¹⁸⁰

It is unclear if Nebel became ever fully aware of Jünger’s influence on his biography. He would have probably stuck to his thesis of a change anyway, because, all in all, he was one of Jünger’s most ardent supporters at that time. When the writer reviewed the post-war period at its end, he acknowledged Nebel’s achievement:

Mein Fall steht heute anders als gleich nach der Katastrophe, umsoweniger darf ich jene vernachlässigen, die sich damals für mich einsetzten, und das waren nur einzelne. Und unter diesen waren und bleiben Sie die eigentliche geistige Potenz.¹⁸¹

2.2.3 The émigrés: Jünger-activists in Britain, the USA and the Netherlands

Ernst Jünger’s network was international to a considerable part. Yet even its international members were still very German. The reason is that most of them were German émigrés. More than that, they were conservatives, if not former ‘Conservative Revolutionaries’ like Jünger himself. They had been scattered to the four winds during Nazi rule and war, but kept their ideology. Thus, on the one hand, this chapter shows how Jünger could receive help from the very same countries from which his accusers came. On the other hand, it is

¹⁷⁷ AM/EJ, 26.4.1948.

¹⁷⁸ Mohler, *Ravensburger Tagebuch*, p. 20.

¹⁷⁹ See Armin Mohler, ‘Anhang’, in Gerhard Nebel, *Ernst Jünger: Abenteuer des Geistes* (Wuppertal, 1949), pp. 367–79, here p. 376.

¹⁸⁰ EJ/GN, 5.2.1949, p. 276.

¹⁸¹ EJ/GN, 15.11.1949, p. 333.

another example of continuity after 1945, because the émigrés presented here still acted accordingly to their political and intellectual socialisation in the Weimar Republic and were not willing to scrutinise their past.

2.2.3.1 Britain: Stuart Hood and Michael Thomas

The British members of the Jünger network had a unique position. They were not only instrumental in supporting Jünger and translating and publishing two of his works; they were of utmost symbolical importance too. As members of the British armed forces they used resources like petrol, cars and their authority to help the man who was blacklisted and banned from publishing by their colleagues in the British authorities. Their greatest success was the British publication of Jünger's 'resistance'-novel *Auf Marmor-Klippen* in 1947. They thereby created the paradoxical situation that a German author could not be published in the British zone but very well in Britain. Not only Jünger's apologists could point to that paradox and question the consistency and adequacy of denazification.

However, not much can be said about the actual activities of the British supporters, because again only a few letters are left. The three main supporters were Stuart Hood, Michael Thomas and Werner Milch. Stuart Hood was born 1915 in Scotland and served as an intelligence officer in Italian East Africa and the Middle East during the Second World War. He was captured in North Africa and transferred to Italy, where he managed to escape. Hood continued fighting together with Italian partisans and later British forces. After the war he worked in the media, notably the BBC. He translated from German and Italian and wrote several novels. Politically, Hood was a man of the left. It must have been the combination of daredevil, cosmopolitan and writer which made him and Jünger friends. Hood not only translated *Auf Marmor-Klippen* and *Der Friede* into English, but was negotiating with British publishers and helping Karl O. Paetel to find an American publishing house. In order to publish *Auf Marmor-Klippen*¹⁸² he worked together with Werner Milch, a scholar of German literature who wrote affirmative articles on Jünger and his works.¹⁸³

¹⁸² In 1947, it was published by John Lehmann, a poet and editor of German-Jewish origin. He had established a small publishing house the year before, and he made a name for himself with discovering intellectuals like Sartre and Malraux for the British post-war readers. See Petra Rau, 'John Lehmann', *The Literary Encyclopedia*. Site was looked up on 12 August 2007. <http://www.litencyc.com/php/speople.php?rec=true&UID=2681>.

¹⁸³ A letter from Jünger to Milch has survived wherein the writer gives direct orders which publishers Milch should contact (EJ/WM, 13.4.1946). This is a rare example of Jünger's direct involvement in negotiations with publishers during the post-war period (see chapter 2.3).

Michael Thomas (*1915) was the second British officer who supported Jünger. He assisted Hood in negotiating, but was more useful when it came to doing 'kleine Aufträge'¹⁸⁴ for Jünger like giving him several lifts to his pre-war publisher Benno Ziegler in Hamburg.¹⁸⁵ Like Hood, Thomas was an extraordinary man: he had emigrated from Germany to Britain after 1933 and become a British officer and, after German surrender, the liaison officer of Sir General Templer, the deputy of the British military governor. But unlike Hood, Thomas was Jewish and his real name was Ullrich Hollaender. This makes him another seemingly unnatural ally of Jünger. But Thomas was as Prussian as a spiked helmet: in his biography he described himself as 'conservative and patriotic' and called 'Prussian-Berlin' his ideological home.¹⁸⁶ Moreover, Ernst Jünger's and Stefan George's works had influenced him in his youth, and he was a friend of Wolfgang Frommel and Percy Gothein, both members of the George circle. For good measure, Thomas had been a student of Carlo Schmid. So it was no surprise that he supported Jünger. His job as liaison officer consisted mainly in contacting German politicians, writing reports about their activities and bringing them together with British authorities. Naturally, Thomas travelled a lot, which benefitted Jünger and his network. His privileged access to the deputy military governor was useful too. Benno Ziegler, who met Thomas several times, wrote to Jünger 'Auch wenn Thomas bei der Information Control in Ö. [Oeynhausen, the HQ of the Information Control Branch; TH] nur anregt, ist das ausserordentlich wertvoll, und ich hoffe, er wird es tun.'¹⁸⁷

Thomas was not the only Jewish emigrant who supported Jünger. Carl Cohen in Cambridge, Massachusetts regularly sent parcels to the writer. The British medical officer Hans Magnus Cohn was the third British officer who visited and supported Jünger. His motivation was basically gratefulness; Gretha Jünger's brother-in-law had helped him to escape persecution in Germany.¹⁸⁸ The examples provided here make clear why Jünger received support from the very institution which was imposing a ban on his books. The supporters had mainly personal motives to act in contradiction to the official denazification policy.

However, there was also a wider motive: Jünger was identified with the idea of 'Other Germany'. This notion meant that Germany was not equal with Nazi Germany. It could be found where Germans within and outside Germany offered opposition to the Nazi regime.

¹⁸⁴ MT/EJ, 8.4.1946.

¹⁸⁵ See for example BZ/EJ, 5.12.1945.

¹⁸⁶ See Thomas, *Deutschland England*, p. 276.

¹⁸⁷ BZ/EJ, 14.11.1945.

¹⁸⁸ See Gretha von Jeinsen, *Silhouetten: Eigenwillige Betrachtungen* (Pfullingen, 1955), pp. 273–4.

The ‘Other Germany’ comprised the different forms of resistance during the twelve years of the Third Reich as well as the ‘inner’ and actual emigration starting in 1933. The Germans involved in resistance or emigration formed the ‘better *alter ego*’¹⁸⁹ of their Fatherland; patriots could identify with this ‘Other Germany’ instead of Nazi Germany. Jünger, who chose ‘inner emigration’, could be considered a representative of the ‘Other Germany’. Indeed, one of his supporters had already come up with this idea and disseminated it among émigrés. It was Karl O. Paetel in the USA.

2.2.3.2 USA: Karl O. Paetel

‘Ob Sie sich meiner noch erinnern? “Die Kommenden” 1930?’¹⁹⁰ – so began Karl O. Paetel’s first letter to Jünger after the war. It was Paetel who finally made the translation of *Der Friede* available in the USA and Britain. He also wrote two apologies on Jünger’s behalf and coined the expression ‘seismograph’ to describe the writer’s role during the Weimar Republic and Third Reich.

Karl O. Paetel (1906–1975) was shaped by the *bündisch* youth. In 1930, he founded the *Gruppe Sozialrevolutionäre Nationalisten*, a group of young nationalists who were disappointed by the National Socialists’ strategic shift towards legality. The group was thereby a reaction to Otto Strasser’s break-up with Hitler and his failed attempt to give the NSDAP a leftist profile. Politically, Paetel and his comrades were caught somewhere between National Socialism and bolshevism, a blend they referred to as ‘National Bolshevism’. Jünger with his similarly blended ‘New Nationalism’ was one of their champions, and Paetel got to know him, when he worked as editor in chief of the magazine *Die Kommenden. Überbündische Wochenzeitschrift deutscher Jugend*¹⁹¹. Despite a publication ban in 1933, Paetel continued writing political articles and was imprisoned by the Gestapo several times. He emigrated to the Czech Republic in 1935, where he wrote for the bourgeois-leftist *Die neue Weltbühne*¹⁹². One year later he went to Sweden, then France and Portugal and in 1941 eventually to New York. There he worked for *Deutsche Blätter*, an émigré newspaper with the mottos ‘Für ein europäisches Deutschland, gegen ein

¹⁸⁹ Lothar Kettenacker, ‘Die britische Haltung zum deutschen Widerstand während des Zweiten Weltkrieges’, in the same (ed.), *Das “Andere Deutschland” im Zweiten Weltkrieg: Emigration und Widerstand in internationaler Perspektive* (= *Veröffentlichungen des Deutschen Historischen Instituts in London*, 2; Stuttgart, 1977), pp. 49–76, here p. 49.

¹⁹⁰ KOP/EJ, 10.5.1946.

¹⁹¹ Jünger and Werner Laß were its official editors.

¹⁹² It was the successor of *Die Weltbühne*, which had been forbidden in 1933.

deutsches Europa!'. It held up the idea that there was the 'Other Germany' within the Third Reich, different from the Western liberal democracies, but also from the National Socialist barbarity. Although Paetel originally planned to come back to Germany, he actually stayed in the USA and became a US-citizen in 1952. The *bündisch* youth and 'National Bolshevism' occupied him for the rest of his life.¹⁹³

For Paetel, Jünger was *the* symbol of the 'Other Germany'. Thus he concluded his first letter with words of thanks: 'Von den "Marmorklippen" bis zum "Frieden": Sie haben uns hier draussen den Glauben an die drinnen am Leben erhalten: Dank!'¹⁹⁴ Like for Jünger's former comrades in arms, it was a point of honour for Paetel to defend and support his one-time comrade of the 'Conservative Revolution'. Besides sending CARE-parcels to Jünger and his family,¹⁹⁵ Paetel's main support came through his role as a journalist and negotiator. He had already defended Jünger during the war, when he had retorted accusations made by other German émigrés, and thereafter he was the first to publish a book on the contested intellectual.¹⁹⁶ It was influenced by Jünger's last two works which Paetel knew, namely *Auf den Marmor-Klippen* and *Gärten und Straßen*. He deemed them 'die beiden bedeutendsten antinationalsozialistischen Dokumente, die im Dritten Reich entstanden sind.'¹⁹⁷ The purpose of his book was to produce evidence that Jünger belonged to the 'breite Front von Deutschen, die den Nationalsozialismus auch schon auf der Höhe seiner äusseren Macht ablehnten, weil sie in bester deutscher and [sic; TH] europäischer Kulturtradition zu tief verwurzelt sind'¹⁹⁸. Paetel claimed that Jünger had been a little known 'Gestalt des deutschen Anti-Nationalsozialismus'¹⁹⁹. In regard to the crucial question, whether Jünger had changed or not, Paetel remarked:

[Es ist kein] einfaches Auswechseln von politischen Glaubensartikeln. Die Dinge liegen sehr viel tiefer. Hier vollzieht sich, mit allen tastenden Umwegen und teilweisem Zögern, ein Prozess der europäisch-deutschen Selbstverständigung, der alle Keime einer neuen Position in sich trägt, weil er die unfruchtbar gewordene Diktion des "deutschen Europa" ersetzt durch das zukunftsreichere "europäische Deutschland".²⁰⁰

The structure of his argument resembles Nebel's one: he rejected the idea of an opportunistic change and stylised Jünger's intellectual biography into a complex

¹⁹³ See Karl O. Paetel, *Versuchung oder Chance? Zur Geschichte des deutschen Nationalbolschewismus* (Göttingen, 1965).

¹⁹⁴ KOP/EJ, 10.5.1946.

¹⁹⁵ See for instance KOP/EJ, 1.4.1947.

¹⁹⁶ Karl O. Paetel, *Ernst Jünger: Die Wandlung eines deutschen Dichters und Patrioten* (= *Dokumente des Anderen Deutschland* 2; New York, 1946). The first book in the series was Carl Goerdeler's will, a crucial document of the conservative resistance.

¹⁹⁷ Paetel, *Jünger Wandlung*, p. 11.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

development. But Paetel went beyond Jünger's individual case and put him in a row of further, as he thought, ideal representatives of the 'Other Germany' like Ernst Niekisch, Martin Niemoeller, Bishop Clemens August Graf von Galen, Ernst Thälmann and Carl Friedrich Goerdeler: 'Sein Weg steht dabei stellvertretend für viele.'²⁰¹

Although the book was not particularly successful, it had an effect in the USA. Looking back, Paetel wrote to Jünger 'Mein Buechlein, so unvollkommen es infolge der Kuerzungen war, hat hier [immerhin] eine ziemliche Discussion [sic] ueber Ihr Werk hervorgerufen.'²⁰² The discussion, which was probably led by émigrés, helped Paetel to find a publisher for *Der Friede*. Soon after he had established contact to Jünger, he asked for permission to negotiate with potential publishers.²⁰³ The first substantial offer came from a newsletter named *Human Events*, 'der mehr als einmal sehr nachdrucklich fuer deutsche Antinazis Stellung genommen hat.'²⁰⁴ One of the founding members of *Human Events*, Henry Regnery, decided to publish the book instead.²⁰⁵ Before he established a publishing house in 1947, Regnery (1912–1996) had studied mathematics and economics. Between 1934 and 1936, he had spent two years at the University of Bonn. When Regnery became a publisher, his 'mission was to contribute to the rebuilding of Western civilization after the Second World War, publishing serious works of cultural recovery, including, as it turned out, establishing and sustaining the post-war conservative intellectual movement in America.'²⁰⁶ It was the extraordinary mixture of personal experience with the Third Reich, conservative convictions and eventually the closure to German émigrés circles²⁰⁷, which enabled an English edition of *Der Friede*.

At the same time as Paetel was negotiating with Regnery, he collected material for a detailed revision of his first Jünger-book. It was an introduction in Ernst Jünger's life, a 'Feuer der Verwandlungen'²⁰⁸, as well as a lengthy history of his reception during the post-war period. Paetel's conclusion was in line with Jünger's own interpretation:

²⁰¹ Ibid, p. 10. This openness towards the left and the right was characteristic of Paetel's 'National Bolshevism'; in one breath he was able to mention communists like Thälmann and (to some extent) Niekisch, and conservatives like Galen and Goerdeler.

²⁰² KOP/EJ, 1.4.1947. Half of his book was abridged.

²⁰³ See KOP/EJ, 9.8.1946.

²⁰⁴ KOP/EJ, 1.4.1947.

²⁰⁵ See KOP/EJ, 6.3.1948.

²⁰⁶ According to the account of the publishing house, <http://www.regnery.com/about.html>. Site was looked up on 8 April 2007.

²⁰⁷ Regnery also published Hans Rothfels's study on the conservative resistance, see Hans Rothfels, *The German Opposition to Hitler: An Appraisal* (Hinsdale/Illinois, 1948). The Jewish historian Rothfels, who had emigrated in 1938, wrote one of the very first books on the resistance, and his aim was to give evidence of the 'Other Germany' by describing the men of 20 July 1944. His book was published in Germany the following year.

²⁰⁸ Paetel, *Jünger Einführung*, p. 11.

Er [Jünger, TH] umreißt [...] die Konturen einer fragenden, aber in der Richtung eindeutigen Hinwendung zu einer dem Haß und der Vergeltung absagenden Rückbesinnung auf die echten abendländisch-deutschen Kulturwerte: das Wort, die Wahrheit und die menschliche Würde.²⁰⁹

Consequently, Paetel neither analysed Jünger's nationalistic articles nor listed them in his bibliography, because they were allegedly 'so an den Tag gebunden, daß sie zum Verständnis der grundsätzlichen Position des Dichters nichts beizutragen vermögen'²¹⁰. However, Paetel at least mentioned in his introduction that his book was 'nicht unwesentlich gekürzt'²¹¹. This was a subtle cue that his book had been manipulated by others, and that he was not very happy with the outcome. As in Nebel's case, the content of the book is therefore less instructive than the process of its production. It gives once again evidence of Jünger's interference with his supporters' texts. In fact, he had such strong an influence on Paetel's book that he can and indeed should be called its co-author.

First of all, the idea to write another book about Jünger came not from Paetel but Ernst Klett jr. Klett, heir of a traditional school book publisher, met Jünger during the war and showed interest in his works.²¹² In order to do something about the 'widerwärtige Hetze aller möglichen Kläffer'²¹³ he commissioned Paetel to write an up-to-date account of Jünger's life. Klett's calculation was not purely commercial, but a strategy to reestablish his friend (and potential writer for his publishing house). According to him, it was vital to be present in public:

Ich könnte mir denken, dass Sie keinen Wert darauf legen, Bücher dieser Art [gleichgültigen oder fragwürdigen Inhalts] veröffentlicht zu sehen. Aber Sie müssen Ihren Lesern schon die Möglichkeit gönnen, etwas über Sie zu Gesicht zu bekommen, wenn schon bis auf Weiteres von Ihnen nichts zu erwarten ist.²¹⁴

After Paetel had accepted his offer, Klett specified to Jünger what he expected of the book:

Wenn das Paetel'sche Manuskript kommt, werde ich wohl zweckmässigerweise für einen Tag zu Ihnen fahren, um die Sache zu besprechen. Ich nehme an, dass das Buch mehr taktischen als grundsätzlichen Wert haben wird und dass man über einzelne Formulierungen wird sprechen müssen.²¹⁵

Jünger accepted to revise the manuscript together with Klett, who judged that it was 'journalistisch geschickt, aber ohne besondere Rücksichten auf das taktisch Wünschenswerte', in short: a 'überdimensionale Tagesschrift'.²¹⁶ It meant that the book too often mainly repeated the Jünger-debate by quoting in depth the critical articles of those

²⁰⁹ Ibid, p. 206.

²¹⁰ Ibid, p. 216.

²¹¹ Ibid, p. 12.

²¹² He was bound to become Jünger's main publisher from the early 1950s onwards, and he published both editions of his collected works (1960 and 1978).

²¹³ EK/EJ, 2.5.1947.

²¹⁴ Ibid.

²¹⁵ EK/EJ, 2.12.1947.

²¹⁶ EK/EJ, 2.8.1948.

‘yappers’. Both Jünger and Klett thought that Paetel’s lengthy account would thereby give the Jünger accusers too much credit. In regard to the revision, Klett wrote to Jünger:

Insgesamt bin ich doch sehr froh, wenn Sie sich der Sache annehmen wollen: Da es sich um ein Buch handelt, das einen ganz bestimmten Zweck verfolgt, sollte man alles tun, um ein Höchstmass an “efficiency” zu erreichen.²¹⁷

Paetel on the other hand did not exactly resist Jünger’s interventions. On the contrary: he formally allowed all corrections and abridgements Jünger deemed necessary, though not without the faint hope that this would not be necessary:

Wie ich Klett schrieb, bin ich mit allem einverstanden, was SIE an Aenderungen, Ergaenzungen, Streichungen fuer NOTWENDIG halten. Im allgemeinen waere ich natuerlich froh, wenn meine – wenn auch unvollkommene – Meinung zum Ausdruck kaeme und auch die von mir gewaehlte Methode des ‘Berichts’ und nicht der ‘Untersuchung’.²¹⁸

Three months later he completely resigned and gave Jünger full permission to revise the text: ‘jede Korrektur, die Sie fuer noetig halten, ist auch von mir erbeten, jede Kuerzung und Ergaenzung, die Sie Herrn Dr. Klett vorschlagen, ist apriori von mir beim Verlag mit befuerwortet.’²¹⁹ Apparently, Jünger had made several objections to the original manuscript in the meantime, since Paetel justified it in the same letter:

Doch gebe ich Ihnen meinen Gesichtspunkt zu bedenken, dass weiss heller erscheint, wenn es mit einem schwarz kopulliert ist. Seien Sie bitte jedenfalls von dem einen ueberzeugt, dass mir an nichts anderem liegt, als der, durch Ihr Werk personifizierten Sache zu dienen.²²⁰

And indeed, there were black spots in Jünger’s life, which he wished to conceal. Like in Nebel’s book, it was Jünger’s collection of articles written during the Weimar Republic. But unlike Nebel, Paetel was easier to manipulate. Despite Paetel’s self-censorship²²¹ Jünger decided:

Was die Bibliographie betrifft, so äußerte ich mich verschiedentlich gegen die Aufführung jedes einzelnen Aufsatzes, den ich früher in Zeitschriften schrieb. Auf diese Weise lege ich für meine Antagonisten eine Fundgrube für aus dem Zusammenhang gerissene und den aktuellen Situationen unterschobene Zitate an.²²²

Thus another account of Jünger’s life was produced which concealed some of the most problematic texts, which Jünger had ever written. As Paetel’s introduction was the only book which was published by a bigger publishing house and much easier to understand than the other three studies on Jünger, it remained an important source of information. Jünger

²¹⁷ EK/EJ, 10.8.1948.

²¹⁸ KOP/EJ, 15.6.1948.

²¹⁹ KOP/EJ, 9.9.1948.

²²⁰ Ibid.

²²¹ ‘Aus den alten Aufsaetzen zitiere ich kaum im Text. In der Bibliographie werde ich, mit der ausdruecklichen Angabe, dass es sich um eine Auswahl handelt, einige meiner Ansicht nach allgemein gueltige anfuehren. Die Gesamtliste verwende ich nicht’ (KOP/EJ, 6.3.1948).

²²² EJ/EK, 21.8.1948.

therefore appreciated Paetel's contribution to his comeback during the post-war period. To counter Mohler's permanent resentment against Paetel and his inaccurate citation, he wrote:

Paetels Verdienst besteht darin, daß er den Mut hatte, sich in Amerika und von Amerika aus für mich einzusetzen, und zwar unmittelbar nach dem verlorenen Krieg – und das war ein Unterfangen, mit dem man sich damals nur unbeliebt machen konnte. Das wiegt die Unvollkommenheiten seiner Bibliographie bei weitem auf.²²³

Thirteen years later, Jünger fell back on Paetel's services, when he needed an author for a new biography. Paetel accepted and wrote a book for the popular series *rowohlts monographien* of the Rowohlt publishing house. Again, Jünger controlled Paetel's writing and another official hagiography was the result.²²⁴

2.2.3.3 Netherlands: Wolfgang Frommel

The Netherlands were of no particular interest to Jünger. Neither did they have a considerable Jünger-readership nor did anybody in this country have a say in denazification. Nevertheless, the Netherlands were the first country after the war in which a full German edition of *Der Friede* could be published. This was another émigré's work: Wolfgang Frommel.

Frommel's (1902–1986) formative event was an encounter with Stefan George. He met him while he was studying German literature, theology and education in Heidelberg, and he was such inspired by their meeting that he founded his own circle of George-disciples. Under the pseudonym Lothar Helbig he established the publishing house Die Runde in 1930; two years later it published his *Der dritte Humanismus*²²⁵. After 1933 Frommel carried on working as a journalist and was responsible for a series of radio talks entitled 'Vom Schicksal des deutschen Geistes'. They were broadcast on Südwestdeutscher Rundfunk, covered topics related to literature and humanities and sometimes contained subtle criticism. When the censors found out about the subversive content, Frommel emigrated to Switzerland in 1937. Two years later, he went to Amsterdam, where he stayed for the rest of his life. In 1951, he co-founded the *Castrum pelegrini*, an arts magazine and foundation which was supposed to be the successor of the George-circle.

²²³ EJ/AM, 5.8.1955. By imperfections of the bibliography Jünger meant the false citation, not the concealment of the political articles. Nebel's opinion was similar: 'Ich habe, wie ich Ihnen schon sagte, von Paetel nicht den Eindruck des Bedeutenden. Seine Stärke liegt wohl in der Mittler-Tätigkeit' (GN/EJ, 21.3.1948).

²²⁴ Karl O. Paetel, *Ernst Jünger in Selbstzeugnissen und Bilddokumenten* (Hamburg, 1962). For instance, Paetel dealt with denazification in just one sentence (p. 114): 'Die Aufforderung, sich denazifizieren zu lassen, hat Ernst Jünger nie bedacht.'

²²⁵ Wolfgang Frommel, *Der dritte Humanismus* (Berlin, 1932). It was forbidden in 1936.

Although little is known about the relationship between Frommel and Jünger, it is likely that Frommel published *Der Friede* for the sake of the ‘Other Germany’ or, in his case, the original ‘Geheimes Deutschland’ (Secret Germany). He even established a small publishing house called ‘Die Argonauten’ with the sole purpose to bring Jünger’s text into print. In the introduction, the editor R. v. Rossum (that is Frommel) portrayed Jünger as ‘ein gefährdeter Mann’, whose *Marmor-Klippen* ‘wiesen ihn als schärfsten Gegner Hitlers aus’.²²⁶ The rest of it is mostly a summary and quotation of Jünger’s circulars *Briefe an die Freunde* (see chapter 3.3), which are Jünger’s own account of his role within the conservative resistance. Since Frommel draw the picture of a courageous resistance fighter, it is obvious why Jünger appreciated his edition:

Ich sähe allerdings am liebsten, daß bei alldem [the publication of an English version; TH] zunächst das Erscheinen der von Frommel besorgten Holländischen Ausgabe abgewartet würde. Sie ist die authentische. Auch ist die Einleitung von Frommel gut.²²⁷

Given the limited capital of Frommel’s small publishing house, the number of copies was probably quite small. Nonetheless, it had an impact on readers even outside the network. Speidel’s letter cited earlier shows that the small book even reached French army officers and that its foreword was effective as well (see page 45). The actual pillars of Jünger’s publishing strategy, however, were to be found in Germany and Switzerland.

2.3 Publish or perish: failed and successful publishing strategies

For the writer Ernst Jünger, getting published again was the number one priority after 1945. Not only were the war diaries *Strahlungen*, which were his opus magnum in the post-war period, and several smaller manuscripts lying in his drawer. He was also eager to comment on the decisive politics in the wake of Germany’s defeat – first and foremost on the upcoming peace negotiations between the Big Three. After the defeat, Germans were disoriented and needed an explanation of the recent events. They wanted a vision of the future that differed from such terrifying plans of the Allies as to turn Germany into a gigantic farmland and its inhabitants into peasants (Morgenthau plan). Jünger as an interpreter of his time seemed to be the right person to provide this vision. In addition, he had not emigrated. Among war-weary Germans his credibility was certainly higher than that of émigrés like Thomas Mann, who

²²⁶ See *Frieden 1946*, p. v.

²²⁷ EJ/KOP, 15.6.1947.

held radio speeches from sunny California.²²⁸

All the more Jünger was disappointed to find his name on the Allies' black list. In the first months after defeat, he had to realise that no German publisher would dare to publish his works. It was exactly this hopeless situation when his network took effect. The writer Jünger was put out of action, but his numerous supporters were free to act on his behalf. Not Jünger, but his supporters defied and undermined the ban on publication.

The following three sub-chapters will show how Jünger could not succeed in getting published despite several attempts (2.3.1), but relied on the help of his friends abroad (2.3.2) and finally the change of public opinion within Germany (2.3.3). It will become clear that after the initial failures Jünger acted with prescience: he never gave up his long-term goal of a comeback in Germany. Unfortunately, there is a lack of sources covering these events. Owing to the sheer size of Jünger's unpublished works (*Nachlass*), most of the correspondence with publishers is not available yet.²²⁹ It is impossible to fully reconstruct the events except in the cases of Arche Verlag (2.3.2) and Manfred Michler (2.3.3).

2.3.1 Failed attempts in Germany

The publishing situation right after the war was devastating: the premises of Jünger's main publisher Mittler & Söhne were completely destroyed during an air raid on Berlin in 1945, while Hanseatische Verlagsanstalt (HVA) struggled for its survival. Surprisingly enough, Jünger was extremely confident. His optimism drew on *Der Friede* and its unusual ways of publication. Shortly before the attempted assassination on Hitler, Speidel announced to Jünger the imminent publication of his essay. It was supposed to be published after the successful coup d'état and to serve as the manifesto for a new German government. In August 1944, the officer Alfred Toepfer passed on the manuscript to HVA-publisher Benno Ziegler in Hamburg. In March 1945, a German tank commander took one of the handwritten copies that were already circulating among German troops and showed it around on his way through South Germany; he thereby produced around 300 further copies. Immediately after German surrender, Ziegler brought the official version of the essay into print. He could distribute around 60 copies, before British officers confiscated the remaining books and destroyed the

²²⁸ 'Während Thomas Mann aus kalifornischer Ferne das Volk, in dessen Sprache er schreibt, verloren gibt [...], während er sein altes Vaterland dem Satan überantwortet [referring to Mann's novel *Doktor Faustus*, TH], hat Jünger zu Deutschland Vertrauen, läßt er in jeder seiner Äußerungen eine tröstliche Hoffnung erscheinen' (Nebel, *Abenteurer*, p. 365). Nebel's scathing remark on Mann is typical of the resentment with which many Germans encountered the returning émigrés.

²²⁹ According to DLA staff it is unclear when the letters will be made available to the public.

printing plates. But by that time countless typed and handwritten copies of the *Der Friede* had been already distributed and read all around Germany.²³⁰

This unofficial and in fact illegal circulation of Jünger's essay bolstered his confidence. He underestimated the seriousness of the new situation in Germany, when he wrote to Ziegler in September 1945:

Vorausschicken will ich, daß es mir mit meinen Publikationen gar nicht eilt. Im Gegenteil bin ich recht zufrieden, daß ich alles sorgfältig vorbereiten kann. So habe ich durchaus Zeit zu warten, bis Sie wieder mit voller Kraft zur Reproduktion fähig, und daß Sie das früher oder später erreichen werden, steht für mich fest. Also nur keine Hast.²³¹

His plans to discuss the 'Einzelheiten unserer Zusammenarbeit in den nächsten Jahren'²³² did neither take into account the Allies' will to denazify Jünger nor Ziegler's own struggle with denazification. These were probably the result of a misunderstanding caused by the British authorities, but gave Ziegler – professionally and personally – a blow from which he recovered never again.

The British authorities refused to give Ziegler a publication license, because they considered HVA a National Socialist publishing house. Founded by the nationalistic-conservative Deutschnationale Partei (after 1918: Deutschnationale Volkspartei), the HVA took over many competitors and thereby became one of the biggest, most influential and loyal publishers in Germany after 1933. In 1938 the Deutsche Arbeitsfront, Germany's unified trade union, became owner of the HVA through an administrative act. Five years later the NSDAP-publishing house Franz Eher Nachf. GmbH bought HVA which then became Deutsche Hausbücherei AG (Hitler was one of its owners). Benno Ziegler was allowed to maintain the original publishing house under its old name and to keep some of the old licenses. Nevertheless, his offshoot officially remained a part of Deutsche Hausbücherei AG. For this reason, the HVA was banned by British authorities in November 1945 and dissolved in December 1946. One year later, it was restored, but Ziegler still did not get a license. After a long disease, he died on 1 January 1949.²³³

It was probably loyalty to an old friend which explains Jünger's repeated promises not to

²³⁰ This is the official account, which can be found in the Swiss edition of the work. It was created by Manfred Michler, who published *Frieden* illegally in 1948 (see chapter 2.3.3) and by Jünger's personal archivist Karl Baedeker; see *Frieden 1949*, pp. 80–8. A more detailed account, which served as guideline, is kept in the DLA, see DLA, A: Jünger /des Coudres, Prosa, *Der Friede: Kopien der Marbacher, Hamburger und der illegalen Fassung*. Since it is not possible to check upon the historical truth of this account, I have to follow Jünger's facts.

²³¹ EJ/BZ, 18.9.1945.

²³² Ibid.

²³³ See Reinhard Würffel, *Lexikon deutscher Verlage von A-Z* (Berlin, 2003), p. 317, and an information leaflet written by the liquidator on the occasion of the final dissolution of the HVA (BZ/EJ, 13.5.1954).

leave the evidently sinking ship HVA.²³⁴ But actually the need to find another publisher was stronger and led to a break-up with Ziegler only several months after Jünger's optimistic outlook quoted above. It seems like there was a quarrel between both, because on 3 January 1946 Jünger's wife Gretha wrote to Ziegler on behalf of her husband. She claimed some of the copyrights so that other publishers could legally contract Jünger. Her letter depicted the very opposite of a calm Jünger without the need to be published soon:

Die Friedensschrift bleibt Ihnen, mit allen Rechten ausschließlich der Lizenz für die Schweiz, und der des Zinnen-Verlages, damit also nur der amerikanischen und französischen Zone. Dies erweist sich als notwendig, um sie nicht weiterhin Monate hindurch brach liegen zu lassen; ihr Erscheinen ist von zu großer Bedeutung in der augenblicklichen innen- wie außenpolitischen Situation, ein halbes Jahr später büsst sie sicherlich – was den rein äusserlichen Ablauf der Geschehnisse betrifft – an Überzeugungskraft ein. Das ist der wahre Grund der Publikation [...] es warten Tausende von jungen Menschen auf ein Wort Jüngers, und es ist wichtig, dass man es ihnen in dieser Zeit des Niederganges nicht vorenthält [...] die Zeit, in der wir augenblicklich zu leben verdammt sind, erfordert Aktivität. Jünger darf nicht schweigen, er muss ganz einfach "da sein".²³⁵

The frankness of the letter shows how severe Jünger's situation after 1945 actually was. He wanted to be present – at all costs, as it seems. When he got the copyrights, he negotiated with several German publishers. His plan was to split up the German market between one publisher in the North (HVA) and another in the South.²³⁶ The one in the South was supposed to be Kurt Desch's Zinnen-Verlag. Jünger signed a comprehensive contract: he gave Desch a license for the American and French zone and was waiting for what would happen.²³⁷ But Desch's promises were premature, and he was not able to publish anything in the American zone at all. As he wanted to be published, Jünger had apparently become careless and clutched any straw. Apart from negotiations with Desch, Jünger was in contact with baroness Marion von Schröder²³⁸ and Europa-Verlag²³⁹, both based in the American Zone, as well as with the more substantial publishers Ernst Rowohlt and Peter Suhrkamp. It may be surprising to read the names of Rowohlt and Suhrkamp here, but both were acquainted with Jünger before 1945. Rowohlt, who had published Jünger's friend Ernst von Salomon, knew him since the end of the Weimar Republic and sent him an offer in 1946.²⁴⁰ Peter Suhrkamp knew Jünger since 1939, when the then director of Fischer Verlag and editor of the journal *Neue*

²³⁴ The last time Jünger mentioned 'gemeinsame Pläne' was on 18 October 1948; see DLA, A: Jünger /des Coudres, Kasten 19, *Briefe von Ernst Jünger (und Gretha Jünger) an Benno Ziegler 1944–1957*, 34 Bl.

²³⁵ Ibid. The Jüngers also needed money to buy a house, but did not get it, because Ziegler's bank accounts were frozen. The money at HVA was Jünger's last financial source after the war, see *ibid.*, 8.10.1945.

²³⁶ See *ibid.*, 31.1.1946.

²³⁷ See *ibid.*

²³⁸ See EJ/BZ, 18.9.1945, and EJ/EK, 23.11.1945. The baroness planned to publish *Der Friede* in the USA.

²³⁹ Jünger gave him a license to publish 20,000 copies of *Der Friede* in the American Zone, see EJ/VK, 23.11.1945.

²⁴⁰ See ER/EJ, 6.2.1946.

Rundschau published a preprint of *Auf den Marmor-Klippen*.²⁴¹ Jünger accepted none of these offers. He had to realise that within Germany there was no chance of getting published for the time being. It is most likely that Jünger's comeback efforts would have ended at this point and that the British pressure on him would have been successful. Ziegler both summarised this stalemate succinctly and hinted the way to overcome it:

Dass Desch Sie vorläufig nicht bringen kann, zeigt, wie die Lage im amerikanischen Sektor ist. Sie wird im englischen ähnlich sein, was sich aber leicht feststellen lässt. Vom französischen Sektor erhoffen Sie selber für den Augenblick nichts. Es bleiben also z.Zt. die Auslandsverbindungen.²⁴²

2.3.2 Crutches abroad

Jünger had several publishers abroad, who helped him to survive the time of the ban. Those crutches were Lehmann and the YMCA in Britain, Regnery in the USA, Frommel in the Netherlands and Table ronde in France. Their use was limited since each of them brought only one book into print, for three of them it was *Der Friede*. This reason alone made Peter Schifferli's Arche Verlag the most important and sustainable publisher: between 1947 and 1949 Schifferli published five books.²⁴³ Except the obligatory *Der Friede*, which came out remarkably late, they were pure belletristic literature, travel books and philosophical musings. The nature of these books indicated that to Jünger Arche Verlag was more than an opportunity for publishing *Der Friede* – it was a replacement for the HVA, at least in the short run. Therefore it is worth having a closer look at the negotiations between Jünger, respectively Mohler, on the one side and Schifferli on the other.

As mentioned earlier, Mohler was not only efficient in fundraising and campaigning for Jünger, but also in negotiating. His first problem was to find a willing publisher in the hostile atmosphere of Switzerland. In March 1947, he claimed that the 'verschiedenen Angriffe' in Swiss newspapers had delayed the publication of Jünger's texts, but after 'Bemühungen von Freundesseite' the first two texts *Sprache und Körperbau* and *Atlantische Fahrt* were about to be published.²⁴⁴ It is unclear since when Schifferli was in

²⁴¹ See EJ/CS, 28.12.1941. Gerhard Heller wrote Jünger about Suhrkamp's interest: 'Suhrkamps Interesse an Ihrem Werk stammt ja nicht von heute, wie Sie wissen, er ist unter allen Umständen bereit, Ihr Werk als Verleger so zu vertreten, wie es heute notwendig ist' (GH/EJ, 5.11.1946). In 1947, when questioned by the satirical magazine *Ulenspiegel*, which blacklisted author he would like to publish, Suhrkamp named Jünger, see Paetel, *Jünger Einführung*, p. 172.

²⁴² BZ/EJ, 9.8.1946.

²⁴³ *Sprache und Körperbau* (1947), *Atlantische Fahrt* (1948), *Ein Inselfrühling: Ein Tagebuch aus Rhodos* (1948), *Myrdun: Briefe aus Norwegen* (1948), and *Der Friede: Ein Wort an die Jugend Europas: Ein Wort an die Jugend der Welt* (1949).

²⁴⁴ See AM/EJ, 29.3.1947.

possession of these manuscripts; the fact that they were already two years old, when he published them, hints to Schifferli's reservations towards the controversial writer Ernst Jünger. This may be the reason why Mohler deemed Arche Verlag just a makeshift solution:

Schifferlis Verlag ist unter den gegebenen Umständen vielleicht doch die verhältnismässig beste Lösung. Ein vollwertiger Ersatz für Ihre beiden früheren Verleger ist kann er natürlich nicht [sein].²⁴⁵

A comparison between the two established publishers HVA and Mittler & Söhne on one side and Schifferli's Arche Verlag on the other was indeed inappropriate. The 23-year old student of law had established Arche Verlag in 1944, and, like many other Swiss publishers, he profited from the immigration of German authors to Switzerland. Apart from Jünger, he contracted writers like Werner Bergengruen, Gottfried Benn and Thornton Wilder. But even if Schifferli was more of a clever businessman than an experienced publisher, Jünger certainly saw the potential of Arche Verlag. In a letter sent by Mohler, who mentioned the possible publication of *Strahlungen*, Jünger marked the following paragraph with a red pen: 'Wenn Sie das Manuskript hierher senden würden, würde sich wohl ein grösserer Kreis dafür einsetzen und eine Publikation lässt sich bestimmt ermöglichen, sei es nun bei Schifferli oder anderswo.'²⁴⁶ These were good prospects after the bleak year of 1946, when no German publisher could be found. That is why Jünger allowed Mohler to negotiate with Schifferli about *Strahlungen*, while Mohler was still reserved about Arche Verlag, which he considered only the 'relativ gesichertsten Ort einer Veröffentlichung'²⁴⁷.

In terms of Jünger's publication strategy, it is noteworthy that even though he was in need of a publisher's hand, he was not desperately so. He would not sell his works below their value. There was at least one more Swiss publisher who was seriously interested in Jünger: Scientia Verlag tried to publish Jünger as early as in 1944, when Brock – unsuccessfully – had negotiated with them about *Die goldene Muschel*.²⁴⁸ Mohler analysed the publishing house and uttered his reservations about it:

Der Verlag hat etwa das gleiche Niveau wie die Arche (wenn er auch ein paar Bestseller herausgebracht hat). Ich rate aber trotzdem eher zu Arche, weil Schifferlis Verlag ein rein schweizerisches Unternehmen ist und über eine sehr solide Verankerung im Bundeshaus in Bern verfügt.²⁴⁹

To mention the political backing of Arche Verlag is characteristic of Mohler's strategic thinking. He was not only looking for a publisher, but one who would stand the expected attacks within 'einer entscheidenden Auseinandersetzung der Jünger-Freunde und der

²⁴⁵ Ibid.

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

²⁴⁷ AM/EJ, 25.5.1947.

²⁴⁸ See EB/EJ, 21.8.1944.

²⁴⁹ AM/EJ, 27.7.1947.

Jünger-Gegner'; in this case Scientia Verlag would not be 'stichfest genug'.²⁵⁰ Despite his own reservation and according to Jünger's wish²⁵¹, he kept dealing with both sides. The result was an offer made by Scientia Verlag, which Mohler used to exert pressure on his hesitating favourite Schifferli:

[...] er gibt nun das allzu vorsichtige Vorgehen auf und wird nun, ohne Rücksicht auf zu erwartende Widerstände, in rascher Folge herausgeben, was er an Manuskripten noch in Händen hat.²⁵²

This was a breakthrough in Jünger's publishing strategy, but small fry by comparison with his real concern, namely the publication of his *magnus opus* *Strahlungen*. The interest of three publishers collided at this point: Arche Verlag, Scientia Verlag and Furche Verlag wanted to publish the promising book. In the spring of 1948, Mohler reported a 'Katzbalgerei' between Arche Verlag and Scientia Verlag, and that he lost his patience with Schifferli.²⁵³ Nevertheless, Mohler settled an agreement with Schifferli 'als dem kleineren Uebel' three months later²⁵⁴. Schifferli officially announced *Strahlungen*, but never came to publish it. After the contract was signed, Mohler reported back to Jünger about issues like an Austrian edition that Schifferli had in mind and that would have violated the contract²⁵⁵ and the generally poor correction of previous printing sheets²⁵⁶. The resulting disgruntlement between Jünger and Schifferli brought Scientia Verlag back into new negotiations; in January 1949, they wanted to publish *Strahlungen* immediately.²⁵⁷ But at that time, Jünger no longer needed crutches abroad to go on as a writer. The situation in Germany had changed, the ban was lifted. After 1949, neither Arche Verlag nor any other Swiss publisher got ever again the chance to publish a Jünger-book.

The negotiations in Switzerland reveal Jünger's calculating publishing strategy. It was more than sheer survival that propelled him and his representatives. After his initial failures in Germany, Jünger did not want just to be published by any publisher. His aims were properly edited (and probably profitable) publications, which would suffice to bridge the period of the ban. As it seems, the Swiss editions met with these requirements. After the situation in Germany had improved, Jünger wrote to Mohler:

²⁵⁰ See AM/EJ, 16.9.1947.

²⁵¹ 'Ich habe den Eindruck, daß die "Arche" zu langsam fährt, und daß es bei diesem umfangreichen Manuskripte [*Strahlungen*; TH] besser wäre, eine neue Kraft hinzuziehen. Ich riet daher dem Furche-Verlag zur Prüfung des Angebots der Scientia' (EJ/AM, 9.8.1947).

²⁵² AM/EJ, 16.9.1947.

²⁵³ See AM/EJ, 15.3.1948.

²⁵⁴ AM/EJ, 8.5.1948.

²⁵⁵ See AM/EJ, 20.8.1948. Apparently, he tried to publish Jünger in Germany as well, see EJ/VK, 28.10.1948.

²⁵⁶ See AM/EJ, 24.12.1948.

²⁵⁷ See AM/EJ, 24.1.1949.

Die Strahlungen erscheinen nun doch vielleicht in Deutschland zuerst. Die Schweizer Ausgaben meiner kleinen Schriften haben gewiß viel an dem Umschwunge der Stimmung mitgewirkt. Das war auch der Gesichtspunkt, unter dem ich sie betrachtete.²⁵⁸

2.3.3 Back in business

From 1948 onwards, when a series of Jünger-books had already been published abroad and denazification came to an end, publishing in Germany again seemed to be just a matter of time. With Katzmann and Klostermann two reliable publishers were optimistically waiting for the right moment to print the manuscripts they had, while Nebel, Speidel and others continued their campaign. Yet, Jünger remained reserved, perhaps remembering his failed attempts in 1945. He needed some encouragement to become active again.

The encouragement, indeed a push, came from Manfred Michler, who approached the revered writer on 25 May 1947 for the first time. The 29-years old lived in British controlled Düsseldorf and was co-editor of a small magazine called *Die Aussprache* (circulation: 300). It was one of the many amateurish publications that came into life after 1945, flourished in the 'Stunde Null'-atmosphere of the post-war period and withered away as soon as the currency reform in the Western zones put an end to experimental mood of the period.²⁵⁹ As mentioned earlier, Michler was promptly integrated in the network, and published pro-Jünger articles in his paper. He also got Jünger's 'grundsätzliche Zustimmung zum Vorabdruck des "Frieden"'²⁶⁰, as he called it. The result was the first semi-legal German edition of the essay published in May 1948.²⁶¹ The number of copies was a mere 500 and was sold out swiftly. It is not clear, whether it was neglect or a lack of interest on the British side that made the publication of a blacklisted author possible. Maybe it was even the concession suggested by Gerhard Nebel, 'ein Verhalten, das der "Staat" immer dann an den Tag legt, wenn er sich von einer Dummheit, die er erkannt hat, aber nicht bekennen will, zurückzuziehen beginnt.'²⁶² Whatever the reasons were, it is clear that the 500 copies, which could be bought in ordinary bookshops, served as a test-balloon for Jünger and more so for major publishing houses. If not scrapped, the ban on publication seemed to be at least brittle. It was no coincidence that besides publishing *Der Friede*, Michler could (together with Gerhard Nebel) accomplish another goal for Jünger, namely the NWDR broadcast of a talk

²⁵⁸ EJ/AM, 2.2.1949.

²⁵⁹ See Glaser, *Kulturgeschichte*, pp. 202, 330–1.

²⁶⁰ MM/EJ, 8.3.1948.

²⁶¹ See Ernst Jünger, 'Der Friede', *Die Aussprache* 5 (1948), pp. 1–12.

²⁶² Nebel, *Abenteurer*, p. 362.

about Jünger's text (see page 47). NWDR was modelled on the BBC, which meant it was supposed to be (relatively) free from the influence of the British authorities. That alone, however, does not account for the broadcast of *Der Friede*. Michler's 'confidential' talk with the radio staff and the late broadcasting time indicate that it was still far from natural to read out Jünger's work in the public. Nevertheless, the censor's approval, which is a British officer's approval, points out that it was not exactly forbidden anymore. This was good news for the three publishers Ziegler, Klostermann and Katzmann, who started to negotiate with Jünger about the imminent German publication of his books.²⁶³

Again, it is worth having a closer look at the publishers to see how their profiles served Jünger's requirements at that time. Furche Verlag was founded in Kassel in 1914 and became the 'literarische Arbeitszentrum der Bekennenden Kirche'²⁶⁴. It was forbidden in 1942. When the lawyer Ewald Katzmann bought it after the war, he continued its Christian tradition and edited the newspaper *Christ und Welt*. The now Tübingen-based publishing house was devised to bring belletristic literature into print. In reverence for Jünger's work, Katzmann renamed Furche Verlag in Heliopolis Verlag in 1949, when he published Jünger's *Heliopolis*. But although Katzmann was important in publishing *Heliopolis* and *Strahlungen* right after the ban, he was dropped by Jünger soon afterwards. Nevertheless, their short collaboration reflects Jünger's short-lived and seeming Christian turn (see chapter 4.1).

Vittorio Klostermann established his publishing house in Frankfurt on the Main in 1930. Because he published philosophy and arts, the Nazis considered him apolitical and he was allowed to carry on working after 1933. Apart from Jünger, whom he published between 1949 and 1956, he was also the main publisher of Friedrich Georg Jünger and Martin Heidegger.²⁶⁵ Klostermann Verlag was a small publishing house with an elitist appeal. In the late 1950s, Jünger replaced it with the well known conservative publisher Klett, who published both editions of the writer's collected works. The step from Klostermann to Klett marked the last stage of Jünger's literal comeback.

Conclusion 1: Young and talented acolytes, wealthy and generous friends, journalists, one-time officers and émigrés in influential positions – extension and diversity were the secrets behind the success of the Jünger-network. The writer Jünger would have never survived the postwar-period without it. Parcels, letters, articles, books, reports to the authorities – all that

²⁶³ See for example EJ/VK, 30.9.1948.

²⁶⁴ Würffel, *Verlage*, p. 263.

²⁶⁵ See *ibid*, pp. 442–3.

had an impact on Jünger's cause and be it just moral backing and material contribution to the very subsistence of the resisting writer. The network was also instrumental in circumventing the ban on publication. After Jünger's own fruitless attempts in Germany, he or rather his supporters resorted to small publishers abroad. This step cannot be overestimated: each book published outside Germany was not only another source of funding and a moral victory to the writer, but led British denazification into absurdity. Jünger himself knew what he owed to his friends; when his works were permitted in the French Zone, he wrote:

Damit hat ein vierjähriges Treffen seinen Abschluss gefunden, und zwar ohne die Konzessionen, die man von mir erwartete. Wahrscheinlich werde ich nie wieder so ungestört arbeiten können wie in jener Zeit. Persönlich habe ich mich in der Auseinandersetzung jeder Einwirkung enthalten, muß aber vielen Freunden, darunter vor allem Ihnen [Gerhard Nebel; TH], dankbar sein.²⁶⁶

The network had a great share in Jünger's comeback. But in order to understand its effectiveness, it is necessary to consider the British denazification policy and to explain its shortcomings. After all, the strength of Jünger's network was also a result of the British authorities' weakness to implement a coherent denazification. The next chapter will show why this policy failed in Jünger's case.

²⁶⁶ EJ/GN, 12.2.1949, p. 282.

3. The Jünger case

For the writer Ernst Jünger, denazification and the ban on publication were the deepest crisis in his career. The common explanation of the ban, however, is short and suspiciously simple: Jünger got the questionnaire but refused to fill it in, because he had not been a party member. As a consequence, Jünger's name was put on a black list, and the ban was imposed.²⁶⁷

Hardly anybody has seriously tested this account yet. Critics and apologists alike adopted it and thereby accepted the image of the steadfast writer Jünger, who would refuse the humiliating questionnaire and not deny his own past like most of his compatriots did at that time. Only two scholars reflected on the account. Elliot Neaman was the first who tried to find out more about Jünger's denazification. His results were meagre: he was not able to explain Jünger's successful resistance to the British authorities and otherwise reproduced the official version.²⁶⁸ Daniel Morat followed the thread and showed that Jünger had been blacklisted by the Americans before the war ended; the ban therefore could not be simply considered a punishment for his refusal towards denazification.²⁶⁹

It is no accident that Jünger's denazification has not attracted much scholarly attention so far. Despite the often autobiographical nature of his works, the writer did not mention his struggle with the British authorities – a struggle which determined four years of his life. His published journals do not contain a single line about denazification and the questionnaire, and even in his unpublished diaries there are just a few notes.²⁷⁰ Jünger was deliberately calm on this topic. He refused to recognise the Allied authorities' right to sit in judgement on him. Silence was a means to demonstrate his utmost objection: the whole story was not even worth talking about, and someday people might forget about it. It reminds one of the

²⁶⁷ See for example N.N., 'Der Traum von der Technik', *Spiegel*, 4 (1950), p. 39.

²⁶⁸ See Neaman, *Dubious Past*, p. 161–2.

²⁶⁹ See Morat, *Tat Gelassenheit*, p. 227–8.

²⁷⁰ Among the numerous diaries and notebooks covering the post-war period, there is only one dealing explicitly with denazification. The notebook with entries from the years 1945 to 1948 shows that Jünger was concerned about the ban and its consequences. For instance, the first entry dated 26 October [1945] reads: 'Über das Verbot meiner Bücher in A. Russ. Zone. "Verbot." Für mich – gegen mich.' Four weeks later he noted 'Pers. Sorgen gross'. On 12 December he listed names of people who might obtain a publication license for him and concluded with 'Lizenzen für mehr Zonen!' See DLA, A: Jünger, Verschiedenes, *Taschenkalender 1942–1993*. However, these few findings are too disperse and too casual to reconstruct Jünger's personal reaction to denazification.

ancient *damnatio memoriae*, the erasing of memories in order to punish an enemy.

Yet, there is another reason why Ernst Jünger's denazification has not been studied before. It is not easy to find official documents on the Jünger case. The National Archives holds only two files on him, both not concerning denazification. The actual file on his denazification can be found in the German Federal Archive in Berlin. It contains American and British documents, but is fragmentary and crucial documents seem to be missing. A request to the National Archives in Washington was without result, and the French National Archives might have also not offered more information.

However, if combined with other official documents about denazification, Jünger's correspondence, contemporary press and books, the files in Berlin and London can be used to describe and explain the Jünger case. This chapter will give the first full account of his denazification by dealing with five of its key elements: Jünger's categorisation as 'militarist' (3.1), the British attitudes towards the writer (3.2), the attempt to win him for their cause (3.3), the imposition of the ban on his publications (3.4.) and finally Jünger's personal reactions to the British measures (3.5).

3.1 Categorisation: how to make a militarist

Why denazify a 'Non-Nazi'? This was Jünger's official argument for refusing to fill in the questionnaire. It sounds reasonable given his distance to the ruling caste of the Third Reich as well as his ties with the conservative resistance. But Jünger's denazification was never about membership in the NSDAP or affiliation to other National Socialist organisations. The British minutes of an interview, conducted with him on 7 February 1948, reveal the actual cause: both the Niedersachsen Cultural Denazification Panel and the Public Safety Special Branch (PSSB) considered Jünger a 'militarist'.²⁷¹

Like 'Nazi', the term 'militarist' was far from being precise in its meaning. Jünger had been already accused of 'militarism' during the 1920s when the word was a part of the political vocabulary. The definition used by the Allies, however, had to be clear as it was used to prosecute and punish 'militarists'. It was laid down in the *Control Council Directive No. 38* which dealt with the 'Arrest and Punishment of War Criminals, Nazis, and Militarists and the Internment, Control, and Surveillance of Potentially Dangerous

²⁷¹ See BA Berlin, RKK 2703, Box 0109, File 17, *Akte Ernst Jünger, PR/ISC Regional Staff to ISC Branch, 16.2.1948*. The PSSB consisted of British policemen and assisted the authorities in maintaining safety throughout the British zone.

Germans'²⁷². This directive introduced five categories of persons responsible: major offenders, offenders (activists, militarists, and profiteers), lesser offenders (probationers), followers and persons exonerated. 'Militarist' was attached to the second category and thereby a serious accusation. A 'militarist' was defined as:

1. Anyone who sought to bring the life of the German people into line with a policy of militaristic force; 2. Anyone who advocated or is responsible for the domination of foreign peoples, their exploitation or displacement; or 3. Anyone who, for these purposes, promoted armament.²⁷³

Particularly the first and the third category seem to be tailor-made for Jünger. In novels like *In Stahlgewittern* he exalted soldierly heroism and self-sacrifice, while in promoting 'total mobilisation' and a totalitarian 'worker state' he seemed to have offered some of the intellectual concepts which were realised by the Nazis. There were five subcategories which further refined what was to be understood under a 'militarist'. Two of them related to the kind of intellectual arson Jünger was made responsible for. According to the first a 'militarist' was 'anyone who, by word or deed, established or disseminated militaristic doctrines or programs or was active in any organization (except the Wehrmacht) serving the advancement of militaristic ideas'²⁷⁴. In fact, this sub-category does not only cover Jünger's mainly intellectual contribution to 'militarism' but also his temporary involvement in *Stahlhelm* as an organization clearly 'serving the advancement of militaristic ideas'. Yet even in the unlikely event that Jünger could have refuted these accusations, he could not have escaped the fifth sub-category:

Anyone whose past training and activities in the General Staff Corps or otherwise has in the opinion of Zone Commanders contributed towards the promotion of militarism and who the Zone Commanders consider likely to endanger Allied purposes.²⁷⁵

This was an elastic clause. It made sure that no German held responsible would slip through a loophole in the directive. But it also turned the legal term into a political one: a 'militarist' was no more exclusively a person who had contributed to the preparation and waging of a war, as defined by official laws and directives of the Allied military government, but could be anybody who was suspicious to the Zone Commander. This is important because no document survived which discloses the specific grounds on which Jünger was accused to be a 'militarist'. A contemporary news item claimed that it was due to his time as regular officer of the armed forces in the early 1920s.²⁷⁶ This seems highly unlikely and does not explain the

²⁷² See von Oppen, *Documents*, pp. 168–79.

²⁷³ *Ibid*, p. 172.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid*, p. 173.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid*.

²⁷⁶ Kbla, 'Jünger lehnt ab', 22.12.1948, *Schwäbische Landeszeitung*. This newspaper was probably influenced by Speidel (see chapter 2.2.2).

rigour of the measures against Jünger. Nonetheless, it cannot be ruled out that he was categorised as ‘militarist’ by virtue of more than just his bellicose writings, this is to say that the term was used to mark him out as a potential danger.

The British authorities distrusted the Germans. They were convinced that the German people was principally dangerous and that they could not even trust ‘Anti-Nazis’. Psychological studies like *The German character* were produced during the war and saw a ‘considerable circulation’ among British officers.²⁷⁷ They affirmed already existing stereotypes among British soldiers by declaring that the average German was characterised by authoritarianism, sadism, an inferiority complex and so on.²⁷⁸ Particularly nationalism and the ‘authoritarian character’ concerned the British officers. A study conducted in an internment camp for high-ranking prisoners of war in 1947 commented on the inmates’ political background:

The regular German armed forces were less tainted by the creed of National Socialism than any other section of the community. They can, therefore, claim exoneration from this stigma; this probably makes them the most dangerous threat in the German community to World Peace. Their approach will not be through National Socialism, which has been so decried by the World that it is probably beyond redemption, but through the far more ‘respectable’ German Nationalism.²⁷⁹

It is striking that the specialists from the Intelligence Division, who had produced this study, deemed German nationalism dangerous enough to threaten the ‘World Peace’. This judgment shows how deeply rooted were the British concerns about German character and security. It also reflects the sustained influence of studies like *National Socialism as psychological problem*, which was issued by the War Office in January 1945. It tried to elaborate the extent to which Germans were Nazis, and for this it categorised them in five classes. Ten per cent were believed to be ‘whole-hearted Nazis’, while twenty-five were supposedly ‘believers with reservations’. The group of believers included

[...] educated militarist, expansionist nationalists who cover their devotion to the Nazi version of pan-Germanism with a deceptive veneer of “Western culture” and lip-service to human ideals. They are at bottom cynical “Machtpolitik”men, and dangerous because plausible, “gentlemanly” and evasive.²⁸⁰

The study concluded that it were the ‘Nazis’ and the ‘believers’ from which ‘we may expect resistance to pacification and democratisation’²⁸¹. And it was probably the group of ‘plausible, “gentlemanly” and evasive nationalists’ which the British authorities had in mind

²⁷⁷ See TNA, FO 1032/531, *Notes on German Psychology*. See also Meehan, *Strange enemy*, pp. 55–7.

²⁷⁸ See Meehan, *Strange enemy*, pp. 92–3. Meehan quotes General McReady, the Regional Commissioner for the Hannover area: ‘Nazism is more than a political creed – it is designed to appeal to all the inherent German characteristics of militarism and domination. [...] The next Hitler will not necessarily be a Nazi.’

²⁷⁹ TNA, FO 1032/531, *A survey of the German generals and general staff*.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid*, *National Socialism as a psychological problem*, January 1945.

²⁸¹ *Ibid*.

when they dealt with Jünger. Especially *Der Friede* mirrored the mixture of Western culture, humanistic ideals and imperialistic thinking which was supposed to be characteristic of nationalists (see chapter 4.1).

However, the dissemination of the text was more worrying to the British authorities than its revisionist content and added much to their concerns about Jünger. As described earlier, Alfred Toepfer brought the manuscript to Jünger's publisher Benno Ziegler in Hamburg in August 1944. Ziegler waited until British troops occupied the city and the initial curfew was lifted. Sixty proof copies had been printed, before British officers destroyed the printing plates.²⁸² This event caused a major stir within Information Services Control (ISC), a British intelligence unit responsible for German media and cultural affairs. Most of the documents in Jünger's denazification file revolve around the investigation of the illegal, which means unlicensed printing of *Der Friede*.²⁸³ According to Ziegler's account, the British crackdown was the result of an official complaint by US authorities, who were upset that Jünger's works were printed in the British zone. To make things worse for Jünger, the US authorities rounded up an illegal printing office in Marburg in 1946. Students had printed and distributed *Der Friede*. This alone was nothing special, as *Der Friede* was widely passed on in form of mostly hand- and typewritten copies. Yet, the head of the students in Marburg was a former leader of Hitler youth. To the Allies, this confirmed their fears of 'Werwolfs'.²⁸⁴ Finding Jünger's books printed by that group, seemed to verify that the writer was still a nationalist leader and a dangerous man.²⁸⁵

Taken these events into account, the term 'militarist' might have been used not only in regard to Jünger's bellicose past, but also to mark him as present danger. This would have allowed the British to apply *Directive No. 34* and impose its catalogue of sanctions on him.²⁸⁶ However, the categorisation becomes easier to understand, if one also considers the information about the writer which US and British authorities had. The next chapter will show how limited and contradictory and therefore problematic it was.

²⁸² See Benno Ziegler's detailed account; DLA, A: Jünger /des Coudres, *Briefe von und an Ernst Jünger und andere Dokumente, Ziegler: Friedensschrift*.

²⁸³ See BA Berlin, RKK 2703, Box 0109, File 17, *Akte Ernst Jünger*.

²⁸⁴ The 'Werwolfs' were created by Heinrich Himmler in 1944. They were small guerilla groups and consisted mainly of young SS men and members of Hitler youth. In order to support regular forces they were supposed to sabotage Allied infrastructure and to kill German collaborators. Their practical value was infinitesimal, but they evoked fears in the Western Allies, who expected to be faced with serious resistance once they had occupied German territories. See Alexander Perry Biddiscombe, *Werwolf! The history of the National Socialist Guerrilla Movement, 1944 – 1946* (Toronto, 1998).

²⁸⁵ The American bulletin spoke of a 'pamphlet published illegally by the writer Ernst Jünger', see BA Berlin, *Akte Jünger*.

²⁸⁶ The British authorities certainly did not need any legal basis to deal with Jünger as they liked. But they were to act in a legally correct way, as they wanted to distinguish themselves from the arbitrary National Socialist rule.

3.2 Ernst Jünger: ‘prophet of the fifth Reich’?

A lack of reliable information about Jünger was a major problem for the British authorities. It started with their war-time reports about Jünger and ended with the ban on publication. The responsible officers had either not enough or contradictory information. This explains why their policy concerning Jünger was so inconsistent.

The earliest document about Jünger was a file created by the British embassy in Washington in December 1943.²⁸⁷ It consists of four statements on Jünger’s personality and a comment by Foreign Office (FO) officials. This file is the only surviving document which is exclusively dealing with the British authorities’ opinion about Jünger. It was written by an unnamed acquaintance of Ernst Hanfstaengl, who was the author’s first source of information. Hanfstaengl was a notorious German émigré with intimate knowledge about Hitler and the NSDAP. Because of this knowledge and his German-American background, he became political advisor of the US government in 1942.²⁸⁸ Hanfstaengl painted a positive picture of Jünger, whom he deemed ‘the coming man in Germany’. He claimed that the writer had ‘a strong character’ and that ‘Hitler knows of him and fears him’. Hanfstaengl even added that Jünger ‘moves around a great deal, and [that] the Gestapo have not been able to put their hands on him’. He evoked the image of a fugitive resistance leader who ‘is known to a large number of under-cover, liberal anti-Nazi forces in Germany’. Given Hanfstaengl’s early admiration for Hitler, it is not surprising that he saw or rather wanted to see another ‘coming man in Germany’. His positive statement was contrasted by Dr Robert Kempner’s critical opinion.

Kempner was chief legal adviser of the centralised Prussian Police system from 1928 to 1933 and fought the National Socialists by legal means, for instance by trying to abolish the NSDAP. The Jewish lawyer had to leave Germany in 1935 and went to the USA. In 1939, he became an advisor of the US government. During the Nuremberg trials he served as deputy of the United States Attorney General. Kempner gave a short and more fact-based account on Jünger, ‘one of the most read nationalistic writers’. He depicted him as a radical writer of bellicose books, but did not forget to mention that he turned away from his early activism after Hitler had come to power. Kempner suspected that the author’s ‘super-

²⁸⁷ TNA, FO 371/39068, *Personality of Herr Ernst Jünger*. All following quotes are taken from this file.

²⁸⁸ After the son of a German publisher and an American mother had graduated from Harvard University and spent many years in America, Hanfstaengl returned to Germany in 1919 and joined the NSDAP. He was fascinated by Hitler and donated large sums to his party. They had a close relationship, and Hanfstaengl became press officer of the NSDAP in 1931. Six years later he emigrated to Britain because of quarrels with Goebbels.

nationalistic front fighter philosophy ... [was] too moronic-metaphysical for the more earthy-tough-gunman approach of the present Nazi gang'. His verdict was unequivocal: 'Juenger belongs to the group of the most potentially dangerous saboteurs and revival evangelists of a fifth Reich.'²⁸⁹ The other two documents were extracts from a German encyclopaedia and an American book on German psychological warfare. Both described Jünger as leader of a small group of nationalistic or militaristic intellectuals.

The two FO officials who commented on the report echoed the antagonistic statements. The first official gave the 'odd report' a short shrift. It would be 'nothing to indicate why this "evangelist of the 5th Reich" has fallen out with the Gestapo, or why he should be in touch, or in sympathy, with 'liberal anti-Nazi forces in Germany'". The second official had probably dealt with Jünger before, because he knew *Auf den Marmor-Klippen* as well as articles about Jünger in *Das Reich*, Germany's international magazine. He acknowledged that Jünger was 'a passionate advocate of war of the machine age', but also stressed his distance to the Nazis: 'He may be an anti-Nazi, but he is not, unless he has changed profoundly, a person to collaborate with.' That he was not a Nazi was not enough to trust him. This is an important point, as these opinions foreshadow the later behaviour of the occupation forces. On the one hand, Jünger's radicalism and nationalism were well known, the writer was therefore suspicious and a change desirable. On the other hand, there was a lasting interest in collaboration with the supposed anti-Nazi, notwithstanding the authorities' reservations and Jünger's uncooperative behaviour. This became most evident, when Jünger was invited to a personnel vetting in 1946 (see next chapter). And even during the war, Jünger remained a potential collaborator. Only two months after they got the report on his personality, the Foreign Office received intelligence that Jünger had allegedly arrived in Switzerland, where he 'was preparing an anti-Nazi book'.²⁹⁰ The responsible official recommended contacting Jünger, if this proved to be true.

As there are no similar documents for the post-war period and the Foreign Office no longer dealt with Jünger after 1945, it might be asked if the officers of the ISC maybe had another opinion about him. Documents in the denazification file indicate that this was not the case. Things had rather worsened in the meantime. The ISC totally differed from the

²⁸⁹ Paul Noack called Kempner one of the émigrés who were against Jünger and involved in putting his name on a black list, see Noack, *Jünger*, pp. 211–2. But Kempner's influence should not be overestimated. There were supportive émigrés too. Besides Hanfstaengel, it was notably the distinguished author and playwright Carl Zuckmayer, who wrote a positive report for the US intelligence service, see Carl Zuckmayer, *Geheimreport* (Göttingen, 2002), pp. 102–3.

²⁹⁰ See TNA, FO 371/39853. This report was most certainly based on a rumor about *Der Friede*. According to his journal, Jünger spent the time in question in Paris, see *Strahlungen*, pp. 477–9.

traditional and well organised Foreign Office. It was a 'tiny intelligence section, staffed by enthusiastic amateurs who had to work on a shoe-string budget'.²⁹¹ They had neither expertise nor enough man-power to deal adequately with a case as complex as Jünger's. On 14 February 1946, the ISC HQ in Bünde even asked the regional unit in Hanover, if they could confirm an American report saying that Ernst Jünger was living in Kirchhorst.²⁹² Apparently, the ISC did not know that Jünger was a resident of the British zone. It seems like they followed their American colleagues, who were much better informed about Jünger, at least at the beginning of the occupation.²⁹³

Given the German newspaper articles which can be found in the denazification file, the British officers' knowledge about Jünger resembled the contradictory opinion held in the Foreign Office. This was an inevitable consequence of the debate which was raging throughout the zones and the post-war period. Therein Jünger was made an exemplary case of Germany and its recent history. The two main questions were whether he was involved in the rise and rule of National Socialism and particularly whether he had really changed since his early days. The opinions were strongly polarised between a camp of apologists and one of accusers (see chapter 3.5). The British authorities relied on the advice of Germans in order to understand Jünger's role in German history. So it was extremely difficult for them to get a consistent judgment about the disputed author. Yet unlike all the journalists, the ISC had the power not only to judge but to impose sanctions. In the end, their contradictory opinion was reflected in an equally inconsistent and paradox policy: while they were banning Jünger from writing, they wanted to use his skills in the democratic reconstruction of Germany, as will be shown in the next chapter.

3.3 In search of the authoritarian character: the German Personnel Assessment Centre

An interesting detail about Ernst Jünger's denazification is his attendance at a British assessment centre. For four days, psychologists tried to find out whether he could be one of the new democratic elites. Apart from its importance for the Jünger case, the very existence of

²⁹¹ As described by Michael Balfour, who had been its director between April 1946 and September 1947, see Marshall, 'German Attitudes', p. 678. Likewise, the PSSB, which was also involved in Jünger's denazification, had no or little background knowledge about German politics, see Jones, 'Eradicating Nazism', pp. 156–7.

²⁹² See BA Berlin, *Akte Jünger*.

²⁹³ American officers had visited and interrogated Jünger in Kirchhorst as early as in May 1945, see *ibid*, report to HQ of the Ninth US Army, 16 May 1945.

such an assessment centre is noteworthy. It seems to have been forgotten even by historians. For that reason, this chapter aims to be an account of the short-lived German Personnel Research Branch (GPRB)²⁹⁴ as well as of Jünger's involvement in it.

British psychologists started interrogating prisoners of war in 1942. Studies on the German mentality like *National Socialism as psychological problem* were the outcome. It was this particular study which 'urgently' recommended establishing expert teams. Their task would be 'the thorough selection of German functionaries [...] prior to their employment' and they could use 'techniques similar to those used in British Army selection'.²⁹⁵ Plans to establish such a branch were adopted in April 1945, but it took nine more months before they became substantial, in other words resources were allocated. In a proposal dated November 1945, the function of the GPRB was specified as 'to advise the Control Commission on socio-psychological matters arising in the assessment of key German personnel and in the rebuilding of the German social structure'²⁹⁶. The selection of German 'key personnel' was the clincher at that time. It was defined as all persons in important positions who would influence

the remodelling of the German social structure, e.g. education, the law, high level administration etc. and/ or
the selection of Germans to be employed in subordinate positions, personnel managers in industry, police chiefs etc.²⁹⁷

The wide circulation of this and similar papers within the control authorities show the considerable interest that most divisions had. Having to meet both aims, denazification and reconstruction, it proved hard for them to find efficient and politically reliable personnel. The GPRB looked like a solution of this urgent problem. And it promised even more: the selected personnel should be 'free of psychological authoritarianism, so that the new departments in law, education, police, finance, etc. shall not again be moulded by "Fuehrers" of an undemocratic type'²⁹⁸. The responsible psychologists, who had produced the studies on German mentality before, believed that it was not enough just to employ 'anti-Nazis'. These people still could have an 'authoritarian character', which was the very opposite of the desired democratic mentality.²⁹⁹ To 'heal' Germany, only individuals with a genuinely liberal

²⁹⁴ The establishment and work of the GPRB are well documented. The principal documents are TNA, FO 936/40, FO 1032/533, FO 1039/129, FO 1032/1464 and FO1051/225.

²⁹⁵ See TNA, FO 1032/531, *National Socialism as a psychological problem*.

²⁹⁶ TNA, FO 936/40, *proposal November 1945*.

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁸ TNA, FO 1032/1464, *letter dated June 1946*.

²⁹⁹ A circular about the 'assessment centres' summarised the whole idea behind the GPRB: 'The recent political history of Germany has been one of recurrent aggression, which has been linked with certain psychological attitudes and types of behaviour. The political cycle has now been interrupted and an attempt is being made to set it going again in a democratic direction. This attempt implies the need for watching and

character should hold influential positions.

To find out if a German's character was fit for democracy, they were invited to an assessment centre. It was modelled on the selection bodies of the British Army, who assessed officers for senior offices. The German candidates had to pass a mix of interviews and intellectual as well as practical tests. Besides psychological and professional abilities and the political background, the point 'psychological authoritarianism' was of particular interest. This was the

degree to which a candidate possesses undesirable mental or moral qualities which are connected with Nazism or German nationalism (such as overboarding behaviour, militarism, aggressiveness, over-emphasis on discipline and submissiveness)³⁰⁰.

A final report concluded with a five-point scale that indicated the candidate's employability in a responsible or subordinate position.

However, the GPRB remained largely an experiment. Several assessment centres had been planned, but only one was established in Bad Oeynhausen. It operated from 10 March to 18 October 1946 and processed a mere 222 candidates. Because the British authorities had to cut costs, the Deputy Military Governor decided to abolish the GPRB as early as in May 1946. The decision took effect in December 1946. Apart from cost-cutting and the claim that its work was done, there was another reason for the Governor's resolution. When German specialists were needed, many divisions did not care much about the character of their candidate and dismissed recommendations of the assessment centre.³⁰¹ In this regard, the GPRB reflected the general dilemma of denazification: it was either possible to thoroughly cleanse Germany from its tainted elites or to employ them notwithstanding their 'authoritarian character' and rebuild the devastated country. The GPRB tried both and failed.

Jünger's case seems to be the exception that proves the rule. A final report on him does not exist, but a letter from ISC dated 18 June 1946 simply stated 'No change', which meant that his name was to remain on the ISC black list.³⁰² Given the definition of 'psychological authoritarianism', which was applied by the psychologists, this result could have been expected. On the other hand, it is striking that only fourteen per cent of all candidates were rated 'total employable only if no one else available' and eight per cent 'totally not

interpreting the underlying psychological behaviour, in order to prevent any recurrence of the former cycle and to encourage healthy and positive attitudes' (TNA, FO 1032/1464, *Assessment Centres*). The final report on the GPRB's work called 'fascism a mass psychosis' which must not be allowed to recur in post-war Germany, see TNA, FO 1032/1464, *The German Personnel Research Branch: A Brief Historical Sketch and Summary of Findings*.

³⁰⁰ TNA, FO 1032/1464, *Assessment Centres*.

³⁰¹ TNA, FO 1039/129, *Letter of the Economic Division dated 19 February 1946*.

³⁰² See BA Berlin, *Akte Jünger*.

employable'.³⁰³ Jünger probably fell in one of these two categories, but rather deliberately than as a result of his 'authoritarian' character. Jünger did not think highly of the occupation forces, and the participation in an odd assessment centre certainly had not changed his mind. The sarcastic account by the journalist Karl Silex, who joined Jünger in Bad Oeynhausen, indicates that some candidates did not take the event very seriously.³⁰⁴

Jünger's letter to his brother is in line with Silex's impression:

Ich komme aus Oeynhausen zurück, wo ich für eine Reihe von Tagen beim englischen Oberkommando war. Es scheint sich dabei um eine Art von geistiger Skalpjägerei zu handeln; doch brachte ich, wie ich glaube, die Locke unversehrt zurück.³⁰⁵

This was all Jünger had to say about his time in Bad Oeynhausen. His publisher Ziegler, who was also denazified, asked him two times about the assessment centre, but Jünger remained silent, at least in his letters.³⁰⁶ By all he had experienced so far, this was just a curious event in the annoying denazification of the writer.

In contrast, it was an important part of the British measures concerning Jünger. Since there is no final report, it is not clear which position in the new democracy they intended for Jünger. However, a blank form, which can be found in his denazification file and which is entitled with 'vetting of personnel "Die Welt"', gives a clue. As the officers of ISC no doubt knew, Jünger was a master of German language and had already work experience in journalism. He seemed to be the perfect choice for the British authorities' ambitious project: a new German newspaper, which could meet British standards.³⁰⁷ *Die Welt* was widely acknowledged for distinguishing fact from opinion, a distinction which National Socialist media had not made. It was also a reaction to the prestigious newspaper *Neue Zeitung*,

³⁰³ See TNA, FO 1032/1464, *Summary of findings, Appendix A*.

³⁰⁴ 'Unter den zwölf Deutschen, die nun dort eine Woche lang auf Herz und Nieren geprüft wurden, befanden sich Ernst Jünger, der Filmschauspieler Willi Fritsch, ein Musikprofessor aus Dessau und höhere Beamte von Post und Eisenbahn. Die Kommission bestand aus sechs in Uniform gesteckten englischen und amerikanischen Psychologen und Soziologen, unter ihnen in amerikanischer Majorsuniform ein Sohn Freuds. Dieselbe Kommission hatte während des Krieges jeden englischen Oberst vor der Beförderung zum General testen müssen. Schon bei den Intelligenztests schwitzte mancher Blut. Entscheidend für die Beurteilung aber war der Willenstest, der in einer ganzen Folge verschiedener Verfahrensarten "die Persönlichkeit" bloßlegen sollte. Die Kommission behauptete, daß dieses "beste Testverfahren der Welt" einen Menschen bis zu 75 Prozent seiner Gesamtpersönlichkeit enthülle. Wenn ich danach urteile, wie ich in diesen sieben Tagen Ernst Jünger von außen und innen kennenlernte, bin ich geneigt, diesen Anspruch der Kommission für berechtigt zu halten. Willi Fritsch war schon am zweiten Tage ein aufgeschlagenes Buch, und auch die Herren von Post und Eisenbahn gaben keine Rätsel mehr auf. [...] Ich war als "für die Zwecke der Besatzungsmacht untauglich" befunden worden mit der Auflage, keinerlei Tätigkeit auszuüben, in der ich Einfluß auf andere Menschen haben würde. Ernst Jünger ging es nicht anders, Willi Fritsch durfte wieder filmen, der Musikprofessor wieder Cello spielen, die Herren von Post und Eisenbahn werden inzwischen Präsidenten geworden sein', Karl Silex, *Mit Kommentar: Lebensbericht eines Journalisten* (Frankfurt on the Main, 1968), pp. 260–1.

³⁰⁵ EJ/FGJ, 9.6.1946.

³⁰⁶ After Ziegler had got an apparently short answer, he wrote 'Ihr Reisebericht war ja ein bisschen sehr dürftig und befriedigt in keiner Weise die nun einmal vorhandene Neugier' (BZ/EJ, 13.6.1946).

³⁰⁷ See TNA, FO 946/7, FO 946/32, FO 1056/211, FO 1056/212, FO 1056/213, FO 1056/214 and FO 1056/487.

which was founded and published by the American authorities and attracted prominent writers like Herman Hesse, Max Frisch, Thomas Mann, Karl Jaspers and many others.

Having Jünger's name on the front page of *Die Welt*, would have greatly heightened its prestige. As the first issue was published on 2 April 1946, it is highly likely that Jünger was considered to join the paper's editorial staff. Another fact confirms this assumption. From January to March 1946, the nationalist journalist Hans Zehrer had been editor in chief, before social democrats protested against him and the British authorities ousted him.³⁰⁸ Maybe Jünger was supposed to follow Zehrer as editor in chief. Whatever it was, the British authorities did not give up after their failure at the assessment centre. In February 1948, ISC regional staff interviewed Jünger. They asked him about Bad Oeynhausen. The minutes dryly comment: 'His experience at the German Personnel Assessment Centre Bad Oeynhausen did not make him want another vetting.'³⁰⁹

Jünger's invitation to the GPRB shows that the British authorities probably wanted to collaborate with the writer. It is nearly certain that Jünger was supposed to work in the editorial staff of *Die Welt*. It is puzzling that an author who was banned from publishing was considered for a (senior) position within a showpiece newspaper. Yet, this was not the only contradiction of the British ban, as the following chapter demonstrates.

3.4 A double-edged sword: the ban on publication

Different from other 'Conservative Revolutionaries' like Ernst von Salomon and Carl Schmitt, who were both interned after the war ended, Ernst Jünger came off comparatively well. Even though he refused to fill in the obligatory questionnaire and otherwise defied the authorities, his denazification consisted only of a ban on publication. Yet, this ban hit him harder than any other measure, as he could not do what he wanted most: publishing his new and old manuscripts. Without his extensive and diverse network, the uncooperative writer Ernst Jünger would not have survived the ban. His supporters, on the other hand, would not have been as successful as they actually were, had the ban been more consistent.

The decision to blacklist Jünger was made during the war. American authorities and

³⁰⁸ Zehrer (1899–1966) was member of a free corps and participated in the Kapp putsch in 1920. Between 1923 and 1929 he wrote for the liberal and respected *Vossische Zeitung* and from 1929 onwards for the radical conservative *Die Tat*. At that time, he engaged in politics and tried to prevent the National Socialists from coming into power by forging an alliance of social democrats, trade unions and the left wing of the NSDAP. Zehrer became editor in chief of *Die Welt* after the conservative publisher Axel Springer had bought the paper in 1952.

³⁰⁹ BA Berlin, *Akte Jünger*.

German émigrés compiled a 'white list' of 1,500 Germans who were working in the cultural scene and should be part of the new democratic elite. On 25 October 1945, the *Neue Zeitung* published this list as well as a black list which included Jünger's name.³¹⁰ Two years later, the British authorities rejected a request to publish *Der Friede* stating that the 'writer is on the US black list'³¹¹. Taking into account the British officers' insufficient information about Jünger at the beginning of the occupation, it was presumably the American authorities who initiated and imposed the ban. They were generally more willing to get hold of and punish all Nazis and Germans they deemed so.³¹² Nevertheless, the British authorities had black lists too.

The idea of a black list was controversial within the British military government. On the one hand, it was necessary to purge libraries and bookshops from 'Nazi literature' and prevent such literature from being published. On the other hand, these measures would entail some unintended side effects. A brief, which was written for a quadripartite meeting on inter-zonal circulation of books, summarised the concerns: the Germans would be reminded of Nazi methods, there was not enough manpower to control the removal of all objectionable books, which could be easily hidden anyway, and it was difficult to create a comprehensive black list.³¹³ However, a report on the meeting held in December 1945 stated that the British officers handed over two 'unofficial black lists' and received the American one in exchange.³¹⁴ These lists were to be kept secret and only a few librarians in Berlin got to see them.³¹⁵ Instead of detailed lists, the Allies published a short list which listed the types of objectionable publications. It was the *Allied Control Council Order No. 4* dealing with the 'Confiscation of Literature and Material of a Nazi and Militarist Nature'.³¹⁶ Besides 'Nazi Propaganda', it covered everything 'which contributes to military training and education or the maintenance and development of war potential'.

³¹⁰ N.N., 'Die »weiße Liste« deutscher Kultur: Ausschaltung nationalsozialistischer Elemente aus dem Kunstleben', *Neue Zeitung*, 25.10.1945.

³¹¹ BA Berlin, *Akte Jünger, PR/ISC Group to Foreign Office*, 24.6.1947.

³¹² Again, the comparison with Ernst von Salomon is interesting. A radical in his youth, he engaged in free corps and was entangled in the assassination of Walther Rathenau. During the Third Reich he wrote film scripts, but did not become a party member and even saved a Jewish woman passing her off as his wife. Notwithstanding his behavior, he was interned by the Americans for more than a year. The reason was his involvement in the assassination of Rathenau.

³¹³ See TNA, FO 1050/1366, *Brief for Delegate to quadripartite meeting on inter-zonal circulation of books and other Allied matters, Annexure 'B'*.

³¹⁴ See *ibid*, 'C' Group, *Mr Umwin*.

³¹⁵ The British officers were not happy with forbidding literature, even if it was objectionable. This might be the reason, why the original black list cannot be found in FO 1050/1366, were according to a covering letter it should be. The Berlin librarians saw the list, because the Russian member of the quadripartite meeting showed it to them.

³¹⁶ TNA, FO 1050/1316, *Allied Control Council Order No. 4*.

This would have covered most of Jünger's works, particularly his bestseller *In Stahlgewittern*. Nevertheless, lists of books which were removed from the shelves by German librarians show that this order was not obeyed consistently. One list only contained two of Jünger's war novels, namely *Feuer und Blut* and *Kampf als inneres Erlebnis*,³¹⁷ while another one from Münster did not include a Jünger book at all.³¹⁸ In contrast, a list from Hanoverian libraries states that the apolitical *Afrikanische Spiele* and the resistance novel *Auf Marmor-Klippen* had been retained, while *In Stahlgewittern* was removed.³¹⁹ The practical difficulties in purging public libraries from Jünger's books confirmed the officers' early doubts about the black list. The imposition of the ban on publication was no easier task.

First and foremost, the responsible ISC tried to prevent the dissemination of *Der Friede*. But their efforts were mostly in vain, as copies were passed from hand to hand (see above). On the contrary, they made things worse by giving Jünger the reputation of the outcast and thereby heightening the public interest. The only thing the ISC officers were able to achieve was to prevent an official publication in Germany. For instance, the Mareés Verlag, which also published Gerhard Nebel, submitted *Der Friede* twice to ISC, and the text was twice rejected on the basis that it was on the American black list.³²⁰ Similarly, ISC forbade a collection of aphorisms in January 1948, because it contained thirteen quotations from Jünger's works. *Biologen-Brevier*³²¹ was a harmless book about Mother Nature, and Jünger's quotations were mere musings about creation. That is why the regional ISC officer in Hamburg 'felt that a penalty is being imposed out of all proportion to the gravity of the offence'³²². The answer of the ISC is illuminating. Jünger was only one of 'notoriously unacceptable authors' who contributed to the book:

Furthermore, we consider that Ernst Juenger, by his constant refusal to submit himself to the finding of a Functional Board, has put himself beyond the *p̄læ* [pale; TH] as far as Germany is concerned; we do not think that any opportunity should be given him of "smuggling" contributions, however small, among the public. He has managed to acquire considerable notoriety abroad, and this, we think, must suffice him and his German admirers until he is willing to come into the open with is political views.³²³

The ISC officer named the fact which impeded the imposition of the ban and, as it seems, frustrated him and his colleagues. Jünger was able to publish abroad – an achievement of his network, which was probably unknown to the authorities. They had to somehow accept

³¹⁷ See TNA, FO 1049/59, *list of books purged from Public Libraries in the British Zone*.

³¹⁸ See TNA, FO 1050/1316, *list of objectionable books now held in the Reichspostdirektion Münster*.

³¹⁹ See TNA, FO 1050/1367, *Staatliche Bücherstelle für die Provinz Hannover*.

³²⁰ See BA Berlin, *Akte Jünger, PR/ISC Group to Foreign Office, 24.6.1947*.

³²¹ See Friedrich Boas and Friedrich Merckenschlager (eds.), *Biologen-Brevier* (Hamburg, 1947).

³²² BA Berlin, *Akte Jünger, PRISC Regional Staff Hamburg, to PR/ISC Group, Book Section, 2 January 1948*.

³²³ *Ibid*, *PR/ISC Group, Book Section to PRISC Regional Staff Hamburg, 6 January 1948*.

the fact that, while they were trying to ban him from publishing, Jünger's works were even published in London. When they rejected the second request of the Mareés Verlag, they got to know or, more likely, were informed by the publisher's report that one of Jünger's travel journals had been recently published in Britain. In 1947, the YMCA published *Atlantische Fahrt*, which was distributed to German prisoners of war in England³²⁴. They found this hard to believe and wrote a letter to the Foreign Office, asking 'whether the pamphlet is officially approved for circulation in P/ W camps'³²⁵. The answer is missing, and thus this paradox remains unresolved.

In Germany, the imposition of the ban was not free of contradictions either, and the 'notoriously unacceptable author' was able to 'smuggle' a considerable number of contributions to the public. At least six small texts including *Der Friede* were published in the three Western zones of Germany, while the ban was supposed to be effective. Moreover, illegal copies of *Der Friede* were sold in some bookshops³²⁶, and parts of *Der Friede* and *Strahlungen* were broadcast in Hamburg and Frankfurt.³²⁷ Despite the small number of copies, each of these publications was a small victory for Jünger and his supporters. Pointing at the contradictory nature of the ban was their main argument against it (see below).

On the other hand, the British authorities were more successful than they knew. Their ban thwarted Jünger's plans to engage in political journalism once again. *Der Friede* was the first political text he wanted to publish. It was to be followed by another one called *Nach der Niederlage*. On 1 December 1945, he wrote to his brother Friedrich Georg that he planned to start a 'innenpolitischen Rückblick, der ein Pendant zur Friedenschrift bilden soll': 'Ich werde ausführen, was in Deutschland während der nächsten Jahre wünschenswert und möglich ist.'³²⁸ Four days later he specified that he wanted to give a 'innenpolitischen Rückblick auf die letzten zwölf Jahre, der in ein "Programm" ausmündet'³²⁹. Before he

³²⁴ This is another example of the network's effectiveness. The YMCA asked Jünger for a permission to publish his Brazilian travel journal. Jünger replied that his 'Name ist auf der schwarzen Liste der Engländer' and that he deemed the 'Versand meiner Arbeiten nicht für angebracht' (EJ/YMCA, 25.11.1946). Members of the network must have initiated as well as carried out the negotiations between the YMCA and Jünger, because the book was published in 1947, see Ernst Jünger, *Atlantische Fahrt* (London, 1947).

³²⁵ BA Berlin, *Akte Jünger, PR/ISC group to Foreign Office*, 24.6.1947.

³²⁶ A contemporary newspaper article reported: 'Man kann zur Zeit in unseren Buchhandlungen ein zwanzigseitiges hektographiertes Schriftchen erstehen (für 4,50 Mark!), verfaßt von dem Schriftsteller Ernst Jünger [...]', Robert Cramer, 'Landsknecht Ernst Jünger', *Tagesspiegel*, 19.4.1947.

³²⁷ *Der Friede* was broadcast with the help of Manfred Michler and Gerhard Nebel, see chapter 2.3.3. For the broadcast of *Strahlungen* see N.N., 'Ernst Jünger las in Frankfurt...', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 15.2.1949.

³²⁸ EJ/FGJ, 1.12.1945.

³²⁹ EJ/FGJ, 5.12.1945.

could do that, he needed the ‘Auswirkung der Friedensschrift als praktische Grundlage’³³⁰. There is neither a manuscript nor a concept left to tell what Jünger exactly had in mind. Taking into account the ideas which he expressed in *Der Friede*, it was probably a nationalist manifesto opposed to the twelve years of National socialist rule as well as to the Allied occupation. Yet in the wake of the ban on publication, Jünger could not expect to publish a domestic manifesto soon. Thus he slowly lost interest in it and sought distance to current political events. In May 1948, he still planned a text called *Nach der Niederlage*.³³¹ Two months earlier, he had written to Friedrich Georg:

Auch fühle ich, daß es gut wäre, wenn ich mich zur Lage äußerte. Doch will ich die Wirkung der Friedensschrift noch abwarten. Ich fühle aber, daß ich den jungen Deutschen den Star stechen könnte, mit dem sie behaftet sind.³³²

But when in October 1948 Gerhard Nebel pushed him to publish his appeal and thereby to oppose the recently elaborated West German Basic Law,³³³ Jünger just replied ‘Für den Aufruf [...] hat es noch lange Zeit’³³⁴. This can be taken as a cue that he had already given up writing a political manifesto. Indeed, he never again wrote a text as explicitly political and topical as *Der Friede*.

This was not the only crucial effect of the ban. Jünger planned to co-publish two new journals after the war had ended.³³⁵ The first one was called *Musische Blätter*, and Ernst and Friedrich Georg Jünger were supposed to be its editors. The first issue was planned to be published in April 1946. Yet since his brother was blacklisted, it was decided that only Friedrich Georg Jünger³³⁶ should be the editor, while Ernst would confine himself to contributions. While the first issue was set, *Musische Blätter* was forbidden on the ground that blacklisted authors contributed to it.³³⁷ In September 1948, Jünger planned another journal together with Heidegger, Carl Schmitt and, at least for a while, Werner Heisenberg. *Pallas* was supposed to be a return into the public debate. Ernst Klett wanted to publish the journal in the French zone, but the British authorities vetoed the publication. Jünger then retreated from the project, and it failed after further negotiations had led to no results. Preventing Jünger’s early comeback efforts in Germany was the most important

³³⁰ Ibid.

³³¹ DLA, A: Jünger, Verschiedenes, *Notizbücher* [notebook covering 1945 to 1948, entry dated 20 May 1948].

³³² EJ/FGJ, 28.3.1948.

³³³ GN/EJ, 15.10.1948, p. 242.

³³⁴ EJ/GN, 19.10.1948, p. 243.

³³⁵ See Morat, *Tat Gelassenheit*, pp. 335–49.

³³⁶ Even though Friedrich Georg Jünger’s inter-war nationalism was in no way inferior to Ernst’s, he was allowed to publish his works as early as in 1946. A French denazification panel cleared him of all accusations in 1948.

³³⁷ First and foremost, Ernst Jünger was meant; see EJ/FGJ, 7.7.1946.

achievement of the British ban. Despite all its shortcomings, the ban kept Jünger at bay in a time when his ideas would have fallen on fertile soil in post-war Germany. Whatever he exactly wanted to say, it was most certainly not in favour of democracy and liberalism, and therefore would have not contributed to the construction of the Federal Republic.

However, Ernst Jünger's denazification ended when the ban on publication was lifted. The preliminary step was a move from Kirchhorst to Ravensbrück in the French zone by the end of 1948.³³⁸ Once Jünger was resident of the French zone, the French authorities were responsible of maintaining the ban. They were much more lenient than their British colleagues. The French experience with collaboration during the occupation made them eager to forgive and especially forget as long as war crimes and other atrocities were not involved. Moreover, the French approach to denazification was the most individual one and did without a questionnaire.³³⁹ Jünger could expect to be judged by his personal merits and, as he was the epitome of the *bon allemande*, he was respected by the French. To them, Jünger was primarily the sophisticated, French speaking officer and *homme de lettres* who praised French culture and saved cathedrals and precious books from destruction. In addition, his influential war-time comrades' constant campaigning made sure that he was not forgotten, while he had to keep a low profile in the British zone. So it came to no surprise when the French authorities were the first to lift the ban on publication.³⁴⁰ In February 1949 Jünger received an official permission to publish his works.³⁴¹ He had not to appear before any court or panel before.

The British military government did not accept this turn of events. They sent a protest note to both the American and the French military government in order to thwart the imminent

³³⁸ Despite his initial doubts, Jünger got a French permission to move to Ravensbrück. He obtained it with the help of Carlo Schmid, who pulled a few strings: 'Was die Zuzugsgenehmigung anlangt, so wird es nicht die geringste Schwierigkeit geben, wenn Ullmer sich dafür verwendet; er ist nicht nur in seinem Kreis allmächtig, sondern auch beim General-Gouvernement. Sollte es jedoch irgendwelche Schwierigkeiten geben, bitte ich um eine kurze Mitteilung. Machen Sie sich auf jeden Fall keine Sorgen' (CSd/EJ, 10.11.1948).

³³⁹ Leniency and inconsistency were generally a consequence of the French denazification policy, see John Gimbel, *The American Occupation of Germany: Politics and the Military, 1945–1949* (Stanford, 1968), pp. 42–3.

³⁴⁰ The Americans too seemed to have changed their opinion about Jünger and the black list. Ernst Klett had spoken to an officer of the American Publication Control and reported back: 'Es ist nun offensichtlich so, dass man die schwarzen Listen stillschweigend zu den Akten gelegt hat, und dass man gar nicht böse wäre, wenn ein Verlag den Mut fände, Bücher von Ihnen zu publizieren. Natürlich wurde mit erhobenem Finger betont, dass der betreffende Verleger sich seiner demokratischen Verantwortung bewusst sein müsse, und so weiter und so weiter. An eine offizielle Aufhebung des Interdikts sei noch nicht gedacht. Ich hatte den Eindruck, dass diese Äusserungen nicht eine private Ansicht waren, sondern dass es ziemlich die offizielle Stellungnahme war' (EK/EJ, 17.1.1949).

³⁴¹ See EJ/GN, 12.2.1949, p. 282.

publication of Jünger books.³⁴² Yet, the protest was in vain. It only showed how deeply flawed the British policy was. As a contemporary newspaper article commented, the protest note was ‘even more surprising as the English translation of “Marmorklippen” had been the first German successful book [in Britain] after the war’³⁴³. The persistence of the British authorities can be understood as a change of the ban during its imposition. As shown above, they adopted and imposed the ban rather late and in the wake of the American measures against Ernst Jünger. The writer’s attendance at the assessment centre in Bad Oeynhausen and the plans about *Die Welt* indicated the ISC’s interest to collaborate with him. If he had accepted their offer, the ban would have been lifted immediately. Yet as Jünger refused denazification and collaboration, the ban was maintained. From there on, it was no more about suppressing ‘militarist’ writings alone. It was rather a punishment and a means to exert pressure on Jünger and eventually ‘persuade’ him. A contemporary newspaper article quoted an ‘official from the military government’ who told the journalist that

zwar die älteren Schriften Jüngers mit gewissen Ausnahmen unerwünscht oder verboten seien, daß jedoch “im Prinzip” der Veröffentlichung der neuen Schriften nichts im Wege stehe, wenn der Autor sich erst einmal den nun einmal geltenden Vorschriften des Fragebogen- und Denazifizierungsverfahrens unterworfen habe.³⁴⁴

This was the same British officers had told Jünger two months earlier:

Jünger was informed that he could not expect to work as a writer, if he should [not; TH] change his mind; as long as he was not cleared by the Niedersachsen Cultural Denazification Panel resp. as militarist by PSSB.³⁴⁵

This shift from a well-founded ban, which was originally directed against Jünger’s indeed problematic works, to a weapon-like lever undermined its effectiveness and contributed to its failure. The longer it lasted, the more opportunities it provided to Jünger and his supporters to point at its inherent contradictions. When Jünger, for instance, had heard about the British protest note, he advised his supporters to highlight the publication of his translated works in Britain and the broadcasts as well as the books about him which had been recently published in the British zone.³⁴⁶ And except from fierce Jünger prosecutors, most journalists too noted that it was hard to understand how this author could be read in the victors’ home countries but be forbidden in a democratic Germany.³⁴⁷ What was meant as a weapon against Jünger, turned out to be double-edged sword, which caused more damage to the British policy than to the writer’s will to resist.

³⁴² According to an American officer, the British protest was ‘very determined’; VK/EJ, 29.4.1949.

³⁴³ N.N., ‘Britischer Protest gegen Ernst Jünger’, *Lübecker Nachrichten*, 18.6.1949.

³⁴⁴ H. Hermann, ‘In heimlicher Emigration’, *Niederdeutsche Zeitung*, 26.3.1948.

³⁴⁵ BA Berlin, *Akte Jünger*, German Personnel Officer to ISC Branch, Licensing Control.

³⁴⁶ EJ/VK, 2.5.1949.

³⁴⁷ See for instance Alfred Brasch, ‘Der Mut zum Frieden’, *Rheinische Post*, 20.5.1946, and Georg Alexander, ‘Für und wider Ernst Jünger, Versuch einer Synthese’, *Hannoversche Presse*, 21.2.1948.

3.5 Not concerned: Ernst Jünger and denazification

Ernst Jünger's role in his denazification was impassive. As the British measure consisted principally of the ban on publication, he remained unaffected otherwise. Moreover, he did not have to fight for his cause, because his supporters would do this. Nevertheless, the four years of denazification and occupation in general had an impact on his intellectual biography. His reaction can be seen in the official works he published during the post-war period and in the unofficial statements he made in the same time. Before I analyse his published works in the final chapter, I will show how Jünger himself dealt with his denazification.

When the war ended, Jünger could be confident. He had survived the war, *Der Friede* was circulating among Germany and the chaotic time seemed ripe for intellectual leadership. An early expression of his self-confidence can be found in the minutes of an American officer who visited him in May 1945. Jünger advised his guest 'to take inventory of Germany's creative and physical potentialities – as far as literature is concerned – first'³⁴⁸. He added that he was 'a lonely figure in Germany's literature life' and that there was no circle of German writers which could be used as a nucleus by the Americans.³⁴⁹ As there is no further information about Jünger's advice, it remains unclear whether this implied an 'offer' to collaborate with the American authorities. However, when his name appeared on the American black list in October 1945, he changed his attitude towards them. In a letter to Gerhard Nebel he wrote 'Obwohl Hitler ja physisch ausgelöscht wurde, hat es doch den Anschein, daß seine Methodik den Krieg gewann.'³⁵⁰ Jünger considered the occupation as a continuance of the National Socialist dictatorship. To him, the actors had changed, but the methods of control remained the same. On the one hand, this was a result of his thinking in metaphysical terms. History was determined by the Worker and its uniform rule over the world, not by individual human beings and their unique deeds. These were merely executing the rule of the Worker. On the other hand, the assumed continuity allowed Jünger to stage his forced seclusion as a continued 'inner emigration'. He managed to turn the Allied accusation into just another form of persecution, while he presented himself as an opposing writer.

The three open letters entitled 'letters to his friends' were the central documents which conveyed this image. Jünger wrote and distributed them between July and September

³⁴⁸ BA Berlin, *Akte Jünger, Report to Ninth United States Army, 15 May 1945.*

³⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁵⁰ EJ/GN, 8.12.1945.

1946.³⁵¹ This was the low point of his post-war biography as he suffered from private setbacks like his wife's miscarriage and from the failure of his own attempts to find a German publisher. Under these circumstances, the open letters served two purposes: rallying supporters and expressing the writer's unbroken defiance. In regard to the first purpose, Jünger sent copies of his open letters to his closest supporters and told them to copy and distribute them. Thus the letters circulated beyond the limits of the network and even years after Jünger had written them.³⁵² He openly admitted that he was 'in einer Lage, in der man Hilfe wohl brauchen kann'³⁵³ and formulated three rules of engagement: 'strikte Legalität', 'Beschränkung auf geistige Mittel' and 'Handarbeit'.³⁵⁴

Nevertheless, the second purpose of the letters was more important: creating and communicating the image of a defiant author.³⁵⁵ The open letters were Jünger's only means to do this more or less publicly and despite the ban.³⁵⁶ His central message dealt with the crucial question, if he had changed or not:

Überhaupt muß ich meine Leser bitten, meine Autorschaft als Ganzes zu nehmen, in dem zwar Epochen, nicht aber Widersprüche zu unterscheiden sind. Ich möchte nicht zu den Zahllosen gehören, die heute nicht mehr erinnert werden wollen, was sie gestern gewesen sind. Wenn ich mich dem Gedanken des Friedens zuwende, so deshalb, weil ich fühle, daß die Stunde trotz allem dafür reif geworden ist, und daß ich der Sache dienen kann. Ich rechne es mir nicht minder zur Ehre an, daß ich, als ich das Vaterland in ungerechten Ketten sah, mich den Gedanken und Plänen der Rüstung zuwandte. Im Augenblick, in dem ich erkannte, daß sich Verbrecher zu Anwälten der guten Sache machen wollten, wandte ich mich auch gegen sie. Ich darf in Anspruch nehmen, daß ich, obwohl ich im Lande blieb, mich weiterhin den Tyrannen gezeigt habe. Das war nicht nur dem Volke und seinen Zwingherrn, es war auch im Ausland[e] bekannt.³⁵⁷

Basically, Jünger justified his radical activities in the Weimar Republic, his distance during the Third Reich and his defiance to the occupation authorities with a structural opposition. He gave the impression that he had always been on the right side which was opposed to injustice. It was a convenient argumentation as he did not have to renounce his early writings but could present them as his reaction against the 'ungerechte Ketten', which means the Treaty of Versailles. On the contrary, he still called the 'plans for armament' a 'good thing' and distinguished them from the 'criminals' of the Third Reich. From this point of view, the denazification was just another unjustified persecution. Jünger did not acknowledge its

³⁵¹ See DLA, A: Jünger /des Coudres, Manuskripte, *An die Freunde, Offene Briefe 1 bis 3, 1946*.

³⁵² Manfred Michler is a good example. In April 1948, he requested copies of the letters in order to distribute them among his fellow students, see MM/EJ, 16.4.1948.

³⁵³ DLA, *An die Freunde*, letter dated 15 July 1946.

³⁵⁴ See *ibid*, letter dated 1.9.1946. 'Handarbeit' meant copying his works by hand and distributing them.

³⁵⁵ In this regard, Morat is mistaken when calling the 'letters to his friends' a mere command to Jünger's supporters, see Morat, *Tat Gelassenheit*, p. 315. He ignores that Jünger corresponded with his most important and effective supporters privately.

³⁵⁶ The letters found their way into contemporary newspaper articles, see for instance Hermann, 'Emigration'.

³⁵⁷ DLA, *An die Freunde*, letter dated 15 July 1946.

legitimacy and forbade his supporters ‘bei jenen Gewaltigen zu antichambrieren, die heute über Papier und Druckerschwärze gebieten, um dort etwa den Nachweis zu führen, daß mein Wesen der Welt der Fragebogen und Kartotheken angemessen sei’³⁵⁸. Instead, he recommended relying on the ‘Handarbeit’, that is the copying and distributing of his works, notably *Der Friede*. Measures like the removal of his books from public libraries were even welcome as long as ‘die jungen Deutschen diese Bücher noch mit der Hand abschreiben’³⁵⁹. Jünger thereby created the notion of an underground writer and an elitist community of readers. An impressive enumeration of places where his books were supposedly read added to this idea of ‘noblen, furchtlosen Geister in aller Welt’³⁶⁰. Such a community could overcome any ban on publication.

The ‘letters to his friend’ were also aimed at the press debate about Jünger.³⁶¹ In his second and third letter, the writer mainly dealt with accusations brought up against him. He called the whole debate ‘wachsende Presse-Campagne’ and ‘einheitlich gerichtete Presse-Propaganda’.³⁶² In his last letter, he even assumed that all the critical articles were commissioned:

Wie ich höre, sollen die Auftraggeber mit dem Erfolge der gegen mich geführten Presse-Campagne nicht recht zufrieden sein. [...] Wenn man die ungeheure Übermacht an Geld, Einfluß und Mitteln bedenkt, die gegen einen Einzelnen gerichtet wurde, so ist das Ergebnis jämmerlich genug.³⁶³

The idea of an organised press campaign against Jünger was not completely unfounded, because the debate was initiated in East Berlin. A young and ambitious journalist and scholar named Wolfgang Harich had written an article about Jünger and *Der Friede*, in which he had strongly doubted Jünger’s change.³⁶⁴ Harich made some good points like showing problematic continuities of Jünger’s thinking in *Der Friede*. Notwithstanding, his harsh criticism was primarily motivated by his communist ideology. Thus he called Jünger ‘ewiger Landsknecht’, ‘Erzreaktionär’, and ‘aktive[r] Schrittmacher des Nationalsozialismus’, and

³⁵⁸ Ibid. This was his only explicit and more or less public comment on his denazification.

³⁵⁹ Ibid.

³⁶⁰ Ibid.

³⁶¹ For an overview, see Dornheim, *Rezeptionsgeschichte*, pp. 157–86, and Norbert Dietka, *Ernst Jünger nach 1945: Das Jünger-Bild der bundesdeutschen Kritik (1945–1985)* (Frankfurt on the Main et. al., 1987), pp. 58–95.

³⁶² See DLA, *An die Freunde*, letter dated 8 August 1946.

³⁶³ Ibid, letter dated 1 September 1946. Similarly, Jünger blamed émigrés for his denazification: ‘Dahinter stehen natürlich gewisse Emigrantenkreise, die mit Recht befürchten, daß originale Kräfte auftreten. Dann ist es mit dem ~~Natur~~ geistigen Naturschutzpark, den sie sich im Schatten der Bajonette geschaffen haben, freilich vorbei. Schon nähern sich die schönen Zeiten ihrem Ende, in denen sie zugleich Zensoren und Autoren waren, wie etwa im Falle Döblin, der gerne äußerte, man müsse mich an die Wand stellen’ (EJ/GN, 12.2.1949, pp. 311–2).

³⁶⁴ Wolfgang Harich, ‘Ernst Jünger und der Frieden’, *Aufbau* 1 (1946), pp. 556–70.

demanded a comprehensive confession.³⁶⁵ Although Harich's article provoked numerous reactions, leftist and communist journalists, who tended to condemn Jünger, wrote comparatively few articles in the following three years.³⁶⁶ Most of the roughly 200 articles, which were published between 1945 and 1949, were less ferocious in their tone, even if they had not been written by a Jünger apologist. For instance, the broadcasting station Nordwestdeutscher Rundfunk invited five critics to discuss Jünger's case. They disagreed on topics like the writer's role in National Socialism, his change and the importance of *Der Friede*. But in three points they agreed with each other: Jünger was a 'großer Sprachkünstler', a 'Bejäger, dadurch Förderer des Krieges' and that his works should not be banned.³⁶⁷ Generally, the ban was unpopular with the journalists, who wanted an open debate including Jünger's own statement. There was a clear predominance of ideological judgment, but no press-campaign.

It did not come to Jünger's mind that all the criticism, even to that extent, could be genuine. The Allies as well as the Germans were looking for the causes of National Socialism. Ernst Jünger's life was too tempting not to be made an exemplary 'case'. Known for his militaristic writings during the Weimar Republic and his critical distance to National Socialism, he provided arguments in order to blame or to exonerate the German people. By stressing Jünger's nationalist but 'anti-Nazi' convictions, pre-1933 Germany and the 'Third Reich' were clearly distinguished from each other.³⁶⁸ By emphasising Jünger's radical writings and his elitist and metaphysical thinking in general, his life 'proved' popular explanations that typical German characteristics like 'militarism' led to the Third Reich. In either case, Jünger's life mirrored, if not epitomised, German history. Moreover, when he of all people wrote a text about peace an increased interest was inevitable. His notorious refusal to fill in the questionnaire made the whole thing even more interesting to write about.

However, the participation in an open debate about his and Germany's past did not fit in Jünger's version of the story. He remained in a 'abwartenden Haltung'³⁶⁹ and called himself 'Autor in der Emigration'³⁷⁰, whilst the ban lasted. Being supported by his network, he could afford to face the British authorities with nonchalance. In an interview conducted on 7

³⁶⁵ See *ibid*, pp. 556, 566, 560, 570.

³⁶⁶ See Dornheim, *Rezeptionsgeschichte*, p. 184.

³⁶⁷ See reprint in Paetel, *Jünger Einführung*, p. 237.

³⁶⁸ Paetel and other émigrés, who cherished the notion of 'Other Germany', are good examples of this thinking.

³⁶⁹ EJ/VK, 18.3.1948.

³⁷⁰ EJ/CC, 22.6.1947.

February 1948, he told the officers ‘that he was not interested in writing books for the German public at present’³⁷¹. To him, ‘a few thousand German readers who matter’³⁷² were enough. Jünger abandoned this position as soon as the ban was lifted in the French zone: he overeagerly embraced the opportunity to publish again and even planned to send Mohler and Nebel on a tour to promote the upcoming *Heliopolis*.³⁷³ His thinking, however, did not change and the exoneration of Germans including himself was one of its tenets as the last chapter demonstrates.

Conclusion 2: by and large, the denazification of Ernst Jünger failed. In clinging to a contradictory ban on publication, the British authorities failed to bridge the gap between democratic reconstruction and a thorough purge. They were neither able to take Jünger into account for his activities in the Weimar Republic nor to win him for the new democracy. Instead, they used the authoritarian means of a ban to suppress his influential writings and to punish him. Since they did not know about Jünger’s extensive and diverse network, they deemed the ban sufficient to break the writer’s resistance. It was not and it is doubtful, whether the use of force, for instance internment, might have done the trick instead. Even though it came at a high price, the denazification measures had one positive outcome: the British authorities stifled Jünger’s political ambitions and perhaps even prevented him from claiming the role of a nationalist leader again.

³⁷¹ BA Berlin, *Akte Jünger, PR/ISC Regional Staff to ISC Branch, 16 February 1948.*

³⁷² *Ibid.*

³⁷³ See Noack, *Jünger*, p. 233. Jünger’s nonchalance towards the British also changed. In a letter to the Hanseatische Verlagsanstalt he wrote: ‘Es gehört zu meinen besonderen Anliegen, daß in der englischen Zone kein Buch von mir erscheint’ (EJ/HVA, 14.2.1949).

4. War, guilt, a writer & his contribution

Words not deeds: such was Ernst Jünger's reaction to the post-war period and denazification. While his network actively pursued his rehabilitation, he largely withdrew from everyday life and spent most of his time on correspondence, visitors and particularly writing. In this seclusion, he wrote, rewrote and published seven books of which three were intrinsically political. These books were Jünger's commentary on the war, German guilt and the post-war affairs. I will analyse them and two later books concerning denazification in order to show how he refused personal guilt and responsibility and provided an interpretation of recent history which was totally in line with the German desire for amnesty. These texts were shaped by post-war events and in a sense they were a German version of denazification, which means an attempt to get rid of Nazism and guilt.

The most important of those texts was written during the war. Notwithstanding, *Der Friede* was also the most discussed and contested of Jünger's writings during the post-war period. It was seen as a turn in Jünger's intellectual biography and gives a clue what his political ambitions had been, before they were thwarted by the ban on publication. It provided a partly metaphysical, partly nationalist account of the war and a peace proposal that blurred German guilt (4.1). The denial of responsibility was a central motif in Jünger's war-time diaries too, which he published right after the ban had been lifted in 1949 (4.2). First and foremost, *Strahlungen* was written in self-defence. Jünger presented himself as a seismograph and deliberately eschewed any responsibility despite his detailed knowledge about war crimes and the Holocaust. In *Heliopolis* he repeated his apology and settled it in a utopia, in which his alter ego fought on the side of the good and noble against the evil and vulgar and finally resigned (4.2). After the denazification had failed and in the next 50 years, Jünger published many books of which two were dealing with the post-war period and could be interpreted as his closing remarks. *Der Waldgang*, which came out in 1951, took up his reaction towards the occupation authorities and recommended seclusion as a form of general resistance to politics (4.3). *Jahre der Okkupation*, published in 1958, contained Jünger's post-war journals from 1945 to 1948 and added nationalist resentment to his revisionist understanding of German history (4.3). Nine years after the post-war period, Jünger made no secret of his nationalist convictions and proved that he had not changed indeed.

4.1 The disappearing guilt: *Der Friede*

It was a surprise: Ernst Jünger proposed peace. The man who was notorious for his *Pour le Mérite*, total mobilisation and *Der Arbeiter* came up with a text as radical as his early militaristic writings – but this time it was all about peace, which should ‘für alle Frucht bringen’³⁷⁴. Was there any better evidence that he had changed? *Der Friede* became indeed the central document in the Jünger debate. Moreover, it was a key document of the whole post-war period, as to my knowledge there was no other widely read text that expressed a German vision of the upcoming peace negotiations. For the Allied authorities, it was a potentially subversive text which they sought to suppress, while German readers controversially discussed the radical proposals it contained. That it was illegal and only hand-made copies circulated made *Der Friede* even more appealing and added to Jünger’s reputation. All this suited him well, because it seemingly proved his structural opposition: with *Auf Marmor-Klippen* and *Gärten und Straßen* he opposed the Nazis, with *Der Friede* at first the Nazis and later the occupiers. Thus *Der Friede* embodied Jünger’s authorship more than any other text he wrote at that time.

One of the big questions about *Der Friede* read: when did Jünger actually write it? This was an important question since the answer would reveal his motivation: did Jünger’s demand for a peace without losers stem from good will or was it a mere reaction to the imminent German defeat? According to the manuscript, his preface to the published editions, the chronological account, which was compiled by his archivist Karl Baedeker and his young apologist Manfred Michler, and eventually the corresponding remarks in *Strahlungen* the answer was clear-cut: Jünger conceived the outline of the text in the winter of 1941/ 42 and wrote the final version between July and October 1943.³⁷⁵ This was to say that the outline of the text ‘fällt [...] zusammen mit der größten Ausdehnung der deutschen Front’ and therefore was not a ‘Frucht der Niederlage’.³⁷⁶

When comparing the official chronologies provided by Jünger and his supporters, one can

³⁷⁴ *Frieden 1946*, p. 7. All further quotes are taken from the Dutch edition of *Der Friede*. It was the first official edition, which was approved by Jünger.

³⁷⁵ The title page of the manuscript reads: ‘concip. Winter 1941, beg. [begun; TH] 27.7.1943, Paris, Majestic [the hotel where Jünger lived; TH], bee, [ended; TH] 30.10.1943, 12⁴⁵, Paris, Majestic’, (DLA, A: Jünger, Manuskripte, *Der Friede*). The foreword can be found in the first official edition published by Wolfgang Frommel in 1946; it is dated 4 April 1945, see *Frieden 1946*, p. 3. The chronological account was written for the first semi-legal edition of the text, which was published by Manfred Michler in 1948, see *Frieden 1948*, pp. I-IV. It comprised quotes and information from Jünger, Hans Speidel and Benno Ziegler. A revised version was used for the Swiss edition of the text, see *Frieden 1949*, pp. 80–8. A full, unabridged manuscript is held by the DLA, see DLA, A: Jünger /des Coudres: Prosa, *Der Friede: Kopien der Marbacher, Hamburger und der illegalen Fassung*.

³⁷⁶ See *Strahlungen*, p. 13.

find several contradictions.³⁷⁷ Thus the official accounts are not very reliable. Moreover, I found so far unknown evidence that questions these accounts. In 1947, Alfred Toepfer wrote two letters to Jünger from a British internment camp; he was undergoing denazification at that time and had to write a testimony, which he wanted to compare with Jünger's account of the events in Paris. Toepfer was the officer who had brought the manuscript of *Der Friede* from Paris to Hamburg in 1943, where it was supposed to be printed.³⁷⁸ In his letters, he claimed having 'commissioned' *Der Friede* in Paris in the early summer of 1943; he chose Jünger because of his writing skills and his reputation among soldiers.³⁷⁹ Jünger's answer to Toepfer's first letter was evasive: he acknowledged having talked with Toepfer about *Der Friede*, yet he did not concede that it might be a collaborative work in any way.³⁸⁰ Toepfer was not satisfied with Jünger's letter and replied:

Bei unserer ersten und einzigen Nachkriegsbegegnung sprachen Sie mich darauf an: „Sagen Sie, Sie sind ja der eigentliche Urheber der Schrift. Wann war doch genau unsere Aussprache in Paris?“ „Fruehsommer 1943“ antwortete ich Ihnen damals in Kirchhorst.³⁸¹

Jünger's answer to this assertion is unknown.

It is unclear to which degree Alfred Toepfer actually contributed to *Der Friede*. It is important, however, to see how deeply Jünger's text was rooted in the conservative resistance. Even if the text was not commissioned by Toepfer, it was evidently influenced by the officers in the 'Georgsrunde' and other members of the conservative resistance. Although it was, at least according to its title, addressed to European and even global youth, it was in fact written for German soldiers: the original manuscript contains a second foreword, which addresses the 'Soldaten, Soldatinnen des großen Krieges', who 'die weiten Grenzen des Reiches wie Löwen abgesteckt [haben]'.³⁸² Indeed, the manuscript was used to persuade Field Marshall Erwin Rommel to join the plans to topple the Hitler government. According to Speidel, Rommel 'fand in dem Manuskript vielfach eigene Gedanken in gültiger Form wieder und rang darum, sie aus der Sphäre dichterischer Erkenntnis in die Praxis umzusetzen'.³⁸³ As a result, Rommel

³⁷⁷ See Gerhard Loose, 'Zur Entstehungsgeschichte von Ernst Jüngers Schrift *Der Friede*', *Modern Language* 74, 1 (1959), pp. 51–8.

³⁷⁸ Alfred Toepfer (1894–1993) was a successful grain merchant from Hamburg and the founder of Stiftung F.V.S., an endowment for cultural affairs. Toepfer knew Jünger and other nationalist intellectuals since the end of the 1920s and organised a 'secret meeting' in 1929, where Friedrich Georg and Ernst Jünger were present. From 1940 to 1943, Toepfer was captain of the counterintelligence and from 1943 onwards he headed an economic unit procuring – one might say: pillaging – goods and resources for Germany. For a critical account of Toepfer's biography and his endowment before and during National Socialism, see Georg Kreis, Gerd Krumeich, Henri Menudier, Hans Mommsen, Arnold Sywottek (eds.), *Alfred Toepfer: Stifter und Kaufmann: Bausteine einer Biographie – Kritische Bestandsaufnahme* (Hamburg, 2000).

³⁷⁹ See AT/EJ, ['Postverkehr im Spruchverfahren'] 1947, and AT/EJ, 26.8.1947.

³⁸⁰ See EJ/AT, 11.8.1947.

³⁸¹ AT/EJ, 26.8.1947.

³⁸² See DLA, Manuskripte, *Der Friede*. The foreword is dated 28 July 1943.

³⁸³ Speidel, 'Briefe', p. 192.

decided to publish and broadcast the appeal ‘des großen Soldaten Ernst Jünger’³⁸⁴ within and outside Germany as soon as the attempt on Hitler’s life would have been carried out successfully.³⁸⁵ When the attempt failed, the text was secretly distributed among German soldiers and eventually circulated all over Europe.

Der Frieden had originally a practical purpose, namely to win the army for the resistance and to provide the basis for peace – a German peace. This purpose shaped its argumentation. The text consists of two parts, one titled ‘seed’, the other ‘fruit’. The biologicistic titles hint that Jünger still conceived the war as a natural phenomenon like he did in his early essays on the First World War. Yet this time the war was not destructive but constructive. In the first part he thought about the countless sacrifices of people all over the world and called the war ‘erste[s] allgemeine[s] Werk der Menschheit’³⁸⁶. Apart from the suffering in the concentration camps (see below), Jünger stressed in particular the soldiers’ anguish. At the same time and correspondingly to the purpose of his text, he called the war ‘grosses Schauspiel’ and claimed that ‘altbewährtem Waffenruhm wurde in Fülle neuer Lorbeer zugefügt’.³⁸⁷ In order to give all that suffering a meaning it was necessary to make a peace which ‘muss für *alle* Frucht bringen’³⁸⁸ and which he outlined in the second part. Therein he demanded that ‘dieser Krieg von allen gewonnen werden muss’³⁸⁹. First and foremost, this meant the unification of the European countries.³⁹⁰ A European union was the only way how all European countries could win and none of them would lose the war. United under one rule the most urgent problems of the upcoming peace, particularly questions concerning territory and ethnic minorities, would vanish.³⁹¹ In addition to a political peace by unification, Jünger thought it necessary to have a holy covenant as well.³⁹² This was the only way to overcome the ‘tiefste Quelle des Übels’, which had caused all the suffering: nihilism (see below).³⁹³ It meant that a ‘Neue Theologie’ had to be established and a reformed Christian church had to become ‘Staatskirche in

³⁸⁴ Quoted in *ibid.*

³⁸⁵ After the war, Benno Ziegler summarised the purpose of the text concisely in his testimony for the British authorities: ‘Durch die Veröffentlichung [der Friedensschrift; TH] sollte nicht nur die politische Lage in Deutschland und die aussenpolitische Willensbildung des deutschen Volkes entscheidend beeinflusst werden, sondern gleichzeitig sollte auch im Auslande ein überzeugender Ausdruck von dem politischen Willen eines neuen Deutschlands erzeugt werden’ (DLA, A: Jünger /des Coudres, *Briefe von und an Ernst Jünger und andere Dokumente*, Ziegler, *Über die Friedesschrift*).

³⁸⁶ *Frieden 1946*, p. 7.

³⁸⁷ See *ibid.*, pp. 9–10.

³⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

³⁹⁰ See *ibid.*, p. 25.

³⁹¹ See *ibid.*, pp. 39–41.

³⁹² See *ibid.*, p. 42.

³⁹³ See *ibid.*

Europa'.³⁹⁴ Jünger claimed that the people were yearning for faith and that an élite of theologians had 'Massen [...] zunächst zur ewigen Moral zurückzuführen'; the return to the Bible was a 'moralische Notwendigkeit'.³⁹⁵ Both, the call for a European union and a religious turn, were common claims among the conservative resistance.³⁹⁶ Jünger's text differed from them mainly by his theoretical framework: he used ideas from *Der Arbeiter* to underpin similar arguments.³⁹⁷

Der Friede contained many proposals which were already outdated after German defeat, when Germans began to read the text in the post-war period. However, one of its aspects became of utmost importance just at that time – this was the German guilt. In 1946 the philosopher Karl Jaspers published a text entitled *Die Schuldfrage*.³⁹⁸ It was a careful analysis of the German guilt and dealt particularly with the concept of collective guilt, which was popular in those days. Jaspers was not content with the judgment that Germany was guilty but differentiated this guilt. His text was much appreciated because of its clarity and its author: Jaspers had a Jewish wife and did not get divorced from her after 1933. Consequently, the professor was retired early and banned from publishing in Germany. After 1945 he was highly respected by the Allied authorities and helped to rebuild his university in Heidelberg. Notwithstanding, he was disappointed by the post-war affairs in Germany and left it for Basle in 1948.

In *Die Schuldfrage* Jaspers differentiated the German guilt into four components: the criminal, the political, the moral and the metaphysical guilt.³⁹⁹ The criminal guilt meant any infringement of the (international) law; courts were the instance to judge. Thus individuals like war criminals could be tried and punished. The political guilt was broader and comprised the deeds of statesmen and citizens of a state. According to Jaspers, every single German had to bear the consequences of those deeds due to his mere citizenship and his own responsibility of how he was governed. The Allied victors had the right to punish Germany as they liked.

³⁹⁴ See *ibid*, pp. 48–51.

³⁹⁵ See *ibid*, p. 51.

³⁹⁶ Carl Goerdeler, for instance, deemed the creation of a 'European federation' imperative; see his peace draft, which was written in summer or autumn of 1943, in Gerhard Ritter, *Carl Goerdeler und die deutsche Widerstandsbewegung* (Stuttgart, 1984⁴ [1954]), p. 591. Goerdeler wrote dozens of post-war plans for the opposition within the Wehrmacht and was designated to become chancellor of the Reich after a successful assassination. A similar conception was conceived by the Kreisau circle, which comprised its founders Helmuth James Graf von Moltke and Peter Yorck von Wartenburg, the trade unionist Wilhelm Leuschner, the Protestant bishop Theophil Wurm and the Christian cardinal Michael von Faulhaber; see Ger van Roon, *Neuordnung im Widerstand* (Munich, 1967), pp. 455–6.

³⁹⁷ Thus Jünger demanded that an upcoming peace had to realise the 'Lebensformen des Arbeiters', see *Frieden 1946*, pp. 37–8. The main argument was that the creation of a European union would correspond to the emergence of global empires, which was typical of the age of the Worker.

³⁹⁸ Karl Jaspers, *Die Schuldfrage: Ein Beitrag zur deutschen Frage* (Zurich, 1946³).

³⁹⁹ See *ibid*, pp. 10–1.

The concept of collective guilt was only appropriate when dealing with this political component of German guilt. Both the criminal and the political guilt were subject to the judgment from outside Germany, first and foremost by the Allied authorities and prosecutors. The other two components were not. Moral guilt meant that every individual was responsible for his deeds, even if they were covered by political or military legitimacy. Only one's own conscience could judge the moral guilt. The metaphysical guilt applied when the 'Solidarität zwischen Menschen als Menschen'⁴⁰⁰ was missing, in other words when people knew that others were murdered but did not do anything about it. Jaspers even claimed that surviving the war, after the Holocaust had happened, was a 'untilgbare Schuld'⁴⁰¹. Here God was the sole instance.

Although the passages in *Der Friede* dealing with German guilt are not as elaborate as Jasper's text, it is instructive to apply his four categories on them. Jünger acknowledged that the National Socialist government was criminal as he had seen and heard about the war crimes and Holocaust: there was 'zuviel an stumpfer, sinnloser Tyrannei und Unterdrückung von Wehrlosen, zu viel Henker und Henkersknechte, zu viele große und kleine Schinder'.⁴⁰² Everybody could be expected to know the difference between justice and injustice and to resist the 'Untat', even if he was endangered himself.⁴⁰³ Therefore Jünger deemed a thorough purge to be a prerequisite for the unification of the European nations. But he had restrictions too. Above all, revenge and passion had to be excluded from any judgement, because they could only add new injustice to the existing one.⁴⁰⁴ This entailed that 'weder Parteien noch Nationen' were allowed to sit in judgement on their enemies: 'Der Kläger kann nicht zugleich der Richter sein.'⁴⁰⁵ Consequently, Jünger demanded national courts. But who could staff them, if neither party was able to judge former enemies? Jünger provided no specific proposal; he only feared that the ones who wanted to judge would be 'stark im Willen, aber schwach im Urteil'⁴⁰⁶. However, he thought that with 'Vernunft und Kenntnis des Ganzen'⁴⁰⁷ the courts could distinguish soldiers from criminals and guarantee 'dass die Verbrechen für alle Zeiten auch sichtbar werden'⁴⁰⁸.

Jünger's conception of the German guilt becomes dubious when it comes to the political

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid, p. 11.

⁴⁰¹ Ibid.

⁴⁰² See *Frieden 1946*, p. 36.

⁴⁰³ See *ibid*, p. 35.

⁴⁰⁴ See *ibid*.

⁴⁰⁵ See *ibid*, p. 36.

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid, p. 35.

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid, p. 36.

guilt. He did not mention the thesis of collective guilt and it is not clear if he knew about it when he wrote *Der Friede*. If he did so, he would have certainly contradicted, because he blamed the Treaty of Versailles to be the cause of the Second World War. It benefitted neither the victors nor the vanquished of the First World War but divided Europe and ‘wirkte unheilvoll, vergiftend auf die innere Politik der Staaten ein, die er als zweiten Ranges betrachtete’.⁴⁰⁹ In retrospective it was obvious, as Jünger claimed, ‘wie winzig jeder Vorteil, der durch diesen Frieden gesichert wurde, im Verhältnis zum Schaden war, den er für alle stiftete’.⁴¹⁰ This argument mirrored Jünger’s life-long aversion against ‘Versailles’ and also served as a legitimation of his political activism during the Weimar Republic (see chapter 4.4). But in *Der Friede* he went further. He claimed that

noch im Jahre 1940 zur Abwendung des Äußersten Gelegenheit. Noch waren große Teile der Erde in Ruhe, zum andern waren die Fesseln des Versailler Vertrages gelöst und damit die Bahn für neue Entwicklung frei.⁴¹¹

Jünger did not criticise Germany for having started the Second World War. On the contrary, he provided a legitimation of the war reaching as far as to 1940, when large parts of Europe including France were under German control and the war against Russia had not started yet. Jünger’s sole criticism was that Germany had not used its victory for a real peace. It had not understood the ‘zufälligen Charakter’ of its conquests and thus repeated the errors of Versailles.⁴¹² Like the League of Nations before, Germany’s ‘Neues Europa’ was ‘doch im Grunde nur die imperiale Verkleidung eines kämpfenden Nationalstaats’.⁴¹³ Nevertheless, it is surprising that Jünger tried to justify the war of the National Socialist government. In 1943 he knew its true nature, which was the determination to carry out its racist ideology. Moreover, he was not a sympathiser of the regime since it had come into power. So what reasons could he have to legitimate its war of aggression? The strategic nature of the text was one reason. By endorsing the first year of National Socialist rule over Europe, Jünger reminded his readers of the army’s greatest victories and thereby acknowledged the military achievements of his original addressees, namely the German soldiers. From this perspective, neither the war nor its legitimation were wrong. The problem was rather political, which means Germany had no acceptable peace proposal to offer, after it had won its first campaigns. However, there was another reason why Jünger did not condemn Nazi Germany and its war from the start. It was his moral and metaphysical conception of the German guilt, in other words his relativising of National Socialism and the Holocaust.

⁴⁰⁹ Ibid, p. 31.

⁴¹⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹¹ Ibid, p. 32.

⁴¹² See *ibid*, p. 33.

⁴¹³ See *ibid*.

The relativising was linked with Jünger's belief that nihilism was the source of the unprecedented destruction and brutality during the Second World War. He conceived it as a disease, which infected the European countries as the age of the Worker was progressing. Basically, nihilism stood for the rule of 'kalte Denken'⁴¹⁴ and the unlimited use of technology, which had replaced the old order and traditional values. Jünger claimed that particularly Russia and Germany were the two 'Residenzen' of nihilism where 'die Verwandlungen am tiefsten [waren], die Zerstörungen am furchtbarsten'.⁴¹⁵ The Russians realised what had been only theory in Europe. Without spelling it out, Jünger referred to the October Revolution, the collectivism and the forced industrialisation in the Soviet Union. During the 1920s, a lot of those ideas which he and other intellectuals from the 'Conservative Revolution' discussed were put into action in the Soviet Union. However, he continued that these events were frightening Europe and that it led to the realisation of nihilism in Germany, where it had been prepared for several generations; it was a realisation 'die nicht nur die Welt entsetzte, sondern auch die eigenen Kenner des Landes selbst'.⁴¹⁶ Jünger did not tell the reader what exactly was shocking the world at this point; he had already done so in the first part of *Der Friede*.

Indeed, the first part named 'seed' was the most dubious passage in the whole text. It was about the victims of the war and the mass exterminations. Therein Jünger emphasised two groups who suffered most, the soldiers and the victims of mass murders. Although he did neither call the Jews nor any places or massacres by name, he used a vocabulary which was unambiguous: 'Schinderhütten' which were 'der Schandfleck unseres Jahrhunderts', 'die Namen der grossen Residenzen des Mordes' and 'Schädelstätten' were ancient sounding synonyms for concentration camps.⁴¹⁷ He described very graphically how its inmates had to walk into the gas chambers and were burned in crematories or buried in mass graves. This was remarkably frank given the time Jünger wrote about the concentration camps. He even admitted that 'dunkle Gerüchte von Mund zu Munde gingen'⁴¹⁸. Yet his knowledge did not comprise the admission that these were crimes committed by Germans:

Diese Mordhöhlen werden auf fernste Zeiten im Gedächtnis der Menschen haften; sie sind die eigentlichen Mahnmale dieses Krieges wie früher der Douamont und Langemarck. Doch jene konnte neben dem Leide auch Stolz umweben; hier bleiben nur Trauer und Demut, denn die Schändung war derart, dass sie das ganze menschliche Geschlecht berührte und keiner sich der Mitschuld entziehen kann. Dort endete der Fortschritt mit seinen Gedanken

⁴¹⁴ Ibid, p. 12.

⁴¹⁵ See *ibid*, p. 43.

⁴¹⁶ See *ibid*.

⁴¹⁷ See *ibid*, pp. 12–6. Jünger had introduced the term 'Schinderhütte' in *Auf den Marmor-Klippen*, where it was a code word for concentration camps too, see *Marmor*, pp. 94–7.

⁴¹⁸ *Frieden 1946*, p. 16.

und Ideen; in diese Sümpfe mündete die allzu kluge erfindungsreiche Zeit.⁴¹⁹

Like Karl Jaspers Jünger had a metaphysical concept of guilt. But while Jaspers thought that a lack of basic solidarity made all Germans guilty who had survived the Holocaust, Jünger deemed it to be the guilt of *all*. He claimed that the Holocaust was a result of progress, meaning the ‘cold rationality’ and technology he called nihilism.⁴²⁰ He even added that nihilism was a moral guilt: it had to be fought in ‘in der Brust des Einzelnen’, because ‘ein jeder war mitschuldig, und es gibt keinen der nicht der Heilung bedürfte’.⁴²¹ The idea that National Socialism and its racist ideology might be unique was alien to Jünger. On the contrary, he declared ‘Und wie verschieden auch die Ideen sich verhüllen, in deren Namen man Köpfe fordert – die großen Massengräber sind einander gleich.’⁴²² This was to say that there were no differences between the German and the Russian terror systems in those countries ‘in denen der weisse mit dem roten Schrecken wechselte’⁴²³. Jünger even demanded that the view on the ‘Marterstätten’ should be ‘offen und voll gerechter Kraft’:

Dort war das Lemurengesindel tätig, das seine grauenhaften Künste im Dunklen treibt. Und wir erlebten die künstlichen Entrüstung anderer Lemuren, die an die Luderplätze kamen, um das verscharfte auszugraben und die verwesenen Körper auszustellen, zu messen, zu zählen und abzubilden, wie es ihren Zwecken dienlich war. Sie spielten die Kläger nur, um daraus für sich das Recht zu niederer Rache abzuleiten, die sie dann in den gleichen Orgien befriedigten. Auf diese Weise lösten sich die Metzeleien endlos im niederen Kreis ab.⁴²⁴

This last paragraph of the chapter about the concentration camps and mass killings revealed Jünger’s true intention: it was the relativising of German guilt. The event in question was the massacre of Katyn. In 1940, the Russian secret service NKWD executed at least 14,700 Polish officers in order to exterminate the Polish élite in the Russian occupation zone. The mass graves were discovered by the German army in 1943 and exhumed for propaganda purposes. In the Dutch version of *Der Friede*, there is a footnote saying: ‘Als der Verfasser 1943 diese Zeiten schrieb, stand er unter dem Eindruck der Nachrichten von Katyn.’⁴²⁵ It is missing in later editions. It is peculiar that in a text which is as abstract as *Der Friede* – Hitler’s name is

⁴¹⁹ Ibid, p. 15. Douamont was near Verdun and one of the bloodiest battle fields of the First World War. 130,000 French and German war dead could not be identified and were buried in the famous ossuary of Douamont. Langemarck was a battle in 1914 when more than 2,000 German soldiers, mostly students, died on one day. Allegedly, they were singing the national anthem, when they attacked the enemy. This was a myth which was used during the war and in the 1920s to prove the ultimate sacrifice of the youth. See Bernd Hüppauf, ‘Schlachtenmythen und die Konstruktion des “Neuen Menschen”’, in Gerhard Hirschfeld, Gerd Krumeich and Irina Renz (eds.), *Keiner fühlt sich hier mehr als Mensch – Erlebnis und Wirkung des Ersten Weltkriegs* (Frankfurt on the Main, 1996), pp. 44–86.

⁴²⁰ Jünger’s idea about progress leading to Auschwitz reminds one of Max Horkheimer’s and Theodor Adorno’s *Dialektik der Aufklärung* which they wrote during the war.

⁴²¹ See *Frieden 1946*, p. 46.

⁴²² Ibid.

⁴²³ Ibid.

⁴²⁴ Ibid, p. 16.

⁴²⁵ Ibid.



not mentioned once, neither is the name of Auschwitz or any other concentration camp – only Katyn is mentioned. From my point of view, it was to signal that all the massacres which had happened so far and included the extermination camps were part of the general nihilism. At least its two ‘residences’ Germany and Russia were not different; in both the same ‘Lemurengesinde’ perpetrated atrocities.

Jünger’s dealing with the German guilt was highly problematic. Being in line with the conservative resistance, he acknowledged the necessity to prosecute and punish war criminals. But the executioners and henchmen were only the ones who actively pursued and carried out the killings. Jünger did not accept a German guilt going beyond the strictly criminal aspect. Instead, he blurred the political, moral and especially the metaphysical guilt with the idea of ‘nihilism’. When he claimed that everyone was guilty of complicity and additionally demanded a peace without losers, it was nothing else than a general amnesty for Germany excluding a bunch of criminals.⁴²⁶ Moreover, it was a denial of the singularity of the Holocaust. Both points anticipated revisionist standpoints like the one of Ernst Nolte, which led to the ‘historians’ dispute’ in Western Germany.⁴²⁷ From the Allied point of view, it was sensible to forbid this text even though this measure made it even more appealing. What Jünger had to say about peace and punishment, was not constructive in a time when the countries involved in and affected by the war stipulated that justice should be served.

4.2 The seismograph: *Strahlungen* and *Heliopolis*

In *Der Friede*, Jünger had dealt with collective forms of guilt. In *Strahlungen* and *Heliopolis*, he focussed on individual guilt by describing and defending his behaviour in the war (*Strahlungen*), respectively, by rethinking his war experience in a utopian novel (*Heliopolis*). *Strahlungen* had nearly 600 pages and was Jünger’s first magnum opus after the war. It contained four of his six war-time journals. The first one had been published in 1942 under the name *Gärten und Strassen* and the last one called *Jahre der Okkupation* came out in 1958.

⁴²⁶ In *Die Schuldfrage*, Jaspers presented some typical argumentations how Germans avoided guilt. It seems as if he conceived the following one after he had read *Der Friede*: ‘Man gibt dem eigenen Unheil, das man als Folge der Schuld aller deutet, ein metaphysisches Gewicht durch die Auslegung zu einer neuen Einzigkeit: In der Katastrophe des Zeitalters ist Deutschland das stellvertretende Opfer. Es leidet für alle. An ihm kommt die Schuld aller zum Ausbruch, und die Sühne für alle’ (Jaspers, *Schuldfrage*, pp. 90–1).

⁴²⁷ The dispute took place from 1986 to 1989 and was grouped around the rightist historian Ernst Nolte and the leftist philosopher Jürgen Habermas. Two of the main issues were: was National Socialist Germany as criminal as the Soviet Union under Stalin, and was the Holocaust a singular crime or modeled on internal purges in Russia. Nolte’s views were similar to what Jünger had written 43 years ago; see Seferens, *Gegenaufklärung*, pp. 83–9.

Strahlungen covered the time from February 1941 to April 1945. In his preface, Jünger called the journals his ‘geistigen Beitrag zum zweiten Weltkrieg auf, soweit ihn die Feder leistet’⁴²⁸. It served as a small political commentary and circulated in the Jünger network nearly three years before *Strahlungen* was published.⁴²⁹ The writer used it to defend *Der Friede* against accusations. He also used it to counter criticism concerning his nationalistic past and declared: ‘Nach dem Erdbeben schlägt man auf die Seismographen ein. Man kann jedoch die Barometer nicht für die Taifune büßen lassen.’⁴³⁰ At this point, the writer reinvented himself. He denied the active and prescriptive role he had played in the downfall of the Weimar Republic and pretended that his works had been pure diagnosis. This was a common behaviour of right-wing intellectuals at the end of the war, and Heidegger and Schmitt joined Jünger therein and remained otherwise silent.⁴³¹ According to his new role, Jünger asserted that the purpose of *Strahlungen* was

keine politische, sondern eine pädagogische, in höherem Sinne autodidaktische [Aufgabe]: der Autor läßt den Leser an seiner Entwicklung teilnehmen. Auch darf ich sagen, daß ich damals bereits der politisch-historischen Kaleidoskopik müde war und Besserung von ihrer Umdrehung nicht erwartete.⁴³²

And indeed, the journals were surprisingly calm about politics given that its author was familiar with notable members of the conservative resistance and they were written during a World War. Mostly they dealt in length with his reading, his diet, his affairs, his meetings with collaborating intellectuals, his purchases in exquisite antiquarian bookshops and stationers’, and his musings. A contemporary critic remarked appropriately that ‘Irrelevanz feiert Triumphe’ and accused Jünger for being secretive and withholding interesting information from the reader.⁴³³ However, *Strahlungen* is a valuable document for two reasons: it shows Jünger’s knowledge about the Holocaust and proves the army officer’s attempt to conceal his involvement in the war.

In regard to the Holocaust, the book is exceptionally frank. For many Germans it was a lifelong taboo to speak of their knowledge about atrocities of all kind. Jünger, however, admitted his knowledge about Auschwitz already in 1943, when he wrote *Der Friede*. In *Strahlungen* he gave a detailed insight in what he got to know by other officers in the military

⁴²⁸ *Strahlungen*, p. 12.

⁴²⁹ See GH/EJ, 11.12.1946.

⁴³⁰ *Strahlungen*, p. 9.

⁴³¹ See Dirk van Laak, “Nach dem Sturm schlägt man auf die Barometer ein ...”: Rechtsintellektuelle Reaktionen auf das Ende des “Dritten Reiches”, *Werkstatt Geschichte* 17 (1997), pp. 25–45.

⁴³² *Strahlungen*, p. 14.

⁴³³ See Peter de Mendelssohn, ‘Gegenstrahlungen: Ein Tagebuch zu Ernst Jüngers Tagebuch’, *Der Monat* 2 (1949/50), pp. 149–74, here p. 153. Mendelssohn’s essay is one of the most illuminating texts on Jünger’s personality and his style. Unnecessary to say that Jünger despised Mendelssohn to whom he referred to as ‘Einschleich-Reptil’, because he had visited the writer before he wrote his article, see EJ/AM, 12.2.1957.

government. Corresponding entries appear as early as in November 1941, shortly after Germany had invaded Russia. On 5 November he noted after a chat with a soldier coming from Russia that prisoners of war were killed automatically by shots in the neck ('Genickschußanlage'). In the following months he wrote about 'große Schinderhütten im Osten' (6 March 1942), 'Dezimierung der Juden', 'Lemuren-Feste, mit Mord an Männern, Kindern, Frauen' (12 March), and murder squads in Lithuania (30 March).⁴³⁴ At the end of November 1942 Jünger was deployed to the Caucasus and had a chance to see atrocities with his own eyes. He mentioned 800 mentally ill, who were murdered in a kolkhoz (1 December 1942), and the fight against partisans, which was 'ganz außerhalb des Kriegsrechts' (11 December).⁴³⁵ On 12 December he noted that there were too many areas which were taboo to him so that he could not come to a 'Bestandsaufnahme in diesem Land'. Furthermore, he had no hope that anything could be changed since 'derartiges gehört zum Zeitstil'.⁴³⁶ However, the ensuing paragraph indicates that Jünger had a chance to see the 'Schreckensstätten' but feared that his disgust would expose him as an opponent.⁴³⁷

Jünger's attitude to his officer rank in an army which was involved in executions was ambivalent. When he spotted a Jewish girl right after the yellow star of David had been introduced, he felt ashamed of his uniform (7 June 1942).⁴³⁸ He believed that the uniform obliged him to protect, and he praised himself that a breach of law had never occurred in his surrounding and that he had even prevented some.⁴³⁹ In the midst of massacres and a ruthless war, this was an odd and self-deceptive idea, and it became inappropriate when Jünger ascribed it to the men in the 'Georgsrunde'. Those were officers who were more or less critical about the regime and grouped around general Speidel. Notwithstanding their quite passive form of resistance, namely debating (see chapter 2.2.2), Jünger characterised the group as a 'geistige Ritterschaft; wir tagen im Bauche des Leviathans und suchen noch den Blick, das Herz zu wahren für die Schwachen und Schutzlosen'.⁴⁴⁰ By referring to chivalric values Jünger tried to draw a line between the men in the 'Georgsrunde' and the politically indoctrinated Wehrmacht, which served a criminal dictator. He failed or did not want to see that those men were serving the same master and that as parts of the military élite they were entangled in the National Socialist system. This became particularly evident when Jünger

⁴³⁴ See *Strahlungen*, pp. 106, 110, 113, 114. On 8 August 1942 Jünger even talked to 'administrators' of concentration camp, see *ibid*, 148–9.

⁴³⁵ See *ibid*, pp. 215, 223.

⁴³⁶ See *ibid*, p. 224.

⁴³⁷ See *ibid*.

⁴³⁸ See *ibid*, p. 125.

⁴³⁹ See *ibid*, p. 136.

⁴⁴⁰ *Ibid*, p. 64. Dated 13 November 1941.

defended the first military governor of France, Otto von Stülpnagel.

As military governor, Stülpnagel had the difficult task to find appropriate retaliatory measures whenever German military personnel were assassinated by French partisans. The party and Hitler demanded the execution of more and more French hostages, while the military governor feared only to further fuel the resistance by such cruel actions and therefore tried to minimise the number of hostages. In February 1942 he resigned, after Goebbels and Hitler had complained about his 'weakness'. While still military governor, Stülpnagel commissioned Jünger to write a memorandum on the execution of hostages.⁴⁴¹ Jünger was thus well-informed about Stülpnagel's policy. He certainly knew that the military governor had several times ordered to intern Jews in 1941 and that most of them were sent to concentration camps. Nevertheless, Jünger defended Stülpnagel by a choice of words which was supposed to emphasise the noble-mindedness of that man:

An solchen Lagen gibt es auch immer eine Seite, die überzeitlich ist. Hier ist es die des Prokonsuls, in der schon Pilatus war. Mit fürchterlicher Wut verlangt der Demos von ihm das Blut Unschuldiger und jubelt den Mördern zu. Und aus der Ferne droht der Blitz des Imperators, der in göttlichen Ehren steht. Da ist es schwer, die Senatorenwürde aufrecht zu erhalten.⁴⁴²

Jünger's argument foreshadowed a characteristic of his post-war work, namely his posthistoire way of thinking. He began to abstract more and more from concrete history and used behavioural patterns from ancient history and even from mythology to understand contemporary history and recent events.⁴⁴³ As foreshadowed in *Der Friede*, this became very difficult when it came to Germany's Nazi past, because it equalled relativising of the National Socialist tyranny and the Holocaust. However, in *Strahlungen* he was more concerned about concealing his and his friends' involvement in the 'military machine'. His words about chivalry served only this purpose. But they were self-contradictory and the result of a comprehensive revision of the original diaries.

In the Caucasus, beyond peaceful Paris, Jünger saw that there was not much noble-mindedness in the war. He described the generals he met as 'Arbeiter auf dem Gebiete der Befehlstechnik',⁴⁴⁴ which meant that they were mere parts of the 'military machine'. On New Year's Eve, he was invited by the local general staff. During the ceremony, 'Gespräche der üblichen Art' put him in a bad mood ('Verstimmung'); they were about the 'ungeheuerlichen Schandtaten des Sicherheitsdienstes nach der Eroberung von Kiew'.⁴⁴⁵ This led him to an

⁴⁴¹ See Berggötz, 'Denkschrift'.

⁴⁴² See *Strahlungen*, p. 100, dated 23 February 1942.

⁴⁴³ An early example is *Der gordische Knoten* where Jünger analysed the Cold War by going back to Alexander the Great and Xerxes.

⁴⁴⁴ *Strahlungen*, p. 235, dated 19 December 1942.

⁴⁴⁵ *Ibid*, p. 250.

embittered conclusion:

Ein Ekel ergreift mich dann vor den Uniformen, den Schulterstücken, den Orden, dem Wein, den Waffen, deren Glanz ich so geliebt. Das alte Rittertum ist tot, wie es noch in den Kriegen Napoleons, ja noch im Weltkrieg der Macht den Adel gab. Die Kriege werden von Technikern geführt.⁴⁴⁶

This was true for Jünger's role as a Wehrmacht officer. But what about his claimed role as a seismograph? In Paris he cultivated the lifestyle of a bohème and spent a lot of time away from his duties. He was even allowed to wear a suit instead of his uniform and staged himself as sophisticated writer (see chapter 2.1).⁴⁴⁷ Nevertheless, he served the 'military machine' and executed its orders. This became particularly clear when he supervised the execution of a deserter.⁴⁴⁸ The entry is too long to be quoted here, but both the published and the original version can be found in the appendix A.1. The original entry is a factual as well as an aestheticised description of the execution with Jünger as the leading officer ('Leitender') and a distant observer at the same time. For the published version, the writer removed the first-person plural personal and possessive pronouns, which related him to the firing squad. Moreover, he now described his task as 'supervision' ('Aufsicht'), which at least sounds less active. He also added several remarks which were missing in the original entry and supposed to indicate his reluctance to what he was 'ordered' to do: he counted the execution among the 'Flut von widrigen Dingen, die mich bedrücken', claimed that 'konnte ich manches menschlicher fügen, als es vorgesehen war', described the place in the woods as 'Schindanger' (knacker's yard) and maintained to have had a 'neuen, stärkeren Anfall von Depression' when they returned to Paris.⁴⁴⁹ This is just one example of Jünger's revisions. After *Strahlungen* came out in 1949, the writer revised it several times, notably the edition published in 1955. For this version, Jünger had abridged the book by one sixth.⁴⁵⁰ Many remarks about atrocities fell victim to those abridgements and thereby further abstracted from the concrete historical context and Jünger's function as a Wehrmacht officer. But in order to leave his historical role completely out of account, he needed another genre.

⁴⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁷ He had obtained a permission to wear his civilian clothing, see Paetel, *Jünger Selbstzeugnisse*, p. 96.

⁴⁴⁸ See *Strahlungen*, pp. 39–42, dated 29 May 1941.

⁴⁴⁹ I cannot see that Jünger made the execution 'more humane'; he simply executed an order. Furthermore, I find it hard to believe that Jünger was severely depressed after the execution. The following entry in the original diary is about lunch at 'Ritz' and drinking champagne with two French women. This is one of the striking features of *Strahlungen*: on one day Jünger describes gruesome details of the Holocaust, on the following he praises a precious leather-bound copy.

⁴⁵⁰ See Martus, *Jünger*, pp. 145–7. A comparison between an entry from the original diary and the published editions of 1949 and 1955 can be found in Armin Mohler, *Die Schleife: Dokumente zum Weg von Ernst Jünger* (Zurich, 1955), pp. 98–105.

From January 1947 to March 1949 Jünger wrote his first lengthy novel.⁴⁵¹ Although it is settled in a utopia, the full title of the book reads *Heliopolis: Rückblick auf eine Stadt*. The action takes place in the futuristic city of Heliopolis, after a catastrophic war had happened. The main character is the aristocrat Lucius de Geer, who works for the 'Prokonsul'. The 'Prokonsul' and the 'Landvogt' are the leaders of the two main parties in Heliopolis and both struggling for power. While the 'Prokonsul' represents the old aristocracy and the senate, the 'Landvogt' is a demagogue, who is using mass media to manipulate the 'rabble' and wants to erect a bureaucratic dictatorship. The city is still governed by the 'Regent', but he does not interfere in the power struggle. The conflict evolves into a civil war, wherein the 'Landvogt' is starting a pogrom against the 'Parsen', a minority group of bankers and artisans, who succeeded the Jews in being the scape goats. De Geer falls in love with one of them and rescues her father from the 'toxologisches Institut' of the 'Landvogt'. In doing so, he also destroys this place, where captives are tortured and murdered in 'scientific' experiments. As a result, he cannot stay in Heliopolis any longer. He leaves the city with his girl friend and together they use a space ship and fly to the 'Regent'. The book ends with the prospect that they will return 25 years later.

Heliopolis is strongly biographical. De Geer is an alter ego of Jünger; he has even a preference for antiquarian books and has his manuscripts bound in fine leather as Jünger did in Paris.⁴⁵² Additionally, the power struggle in the city of Heliopolis is modelled on the conflict between the military government and the National Socialist party in Paris. Although *Heliopolis* is a complex work and less a novel than a sequence of essays about art, the nature of power, the laws of history, language and other of Jünger's favourite topics, it is simple at the same time.⁴⁵³ It reflects the writer's view on recent history. In the realm of fiction Jünger could conceive a struggle between good and evil, between not only noble-minded but indeed noble warriors and a criminal, power-hungry demagogue, whose power was based on the masses and propaganda. This was Jünger's sublime version of history, where things were unambiguous and he was on the right side. Yet it could not have been further away from his ambivalent past.

⁴⁵¹ The imprint stated the exact dates. Jünger did this only once when he had published *Auf den Marmor-Klippen*. Back then the imprint said 'revised in the army' and thus indicated by whom he was protected. Finding dates again in *Heliopolis* might be understood as a cue that it was written during occupation.

⁴⁵² The parallels between de Geer and Jünger, and the power struggle in Heliopolis and the years of National Socialism were noted by contemporary critics, see for instance K.v.S., 'Ernst Jünger versucht eine Diagnose unserer Zeit', *Die Weltwoche*, 16.6.1950, and N.N., 'Technik', p. 37.

⁴⁵³ For a detailed analysis of Heliopolis see Till Rodheutdt, *Die Philosophie Ernst Jüngers aus dem Geist der Mythologie: unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des Romans 'Heliopolis, Rückblick auf eine Stadt'* (Hamburg, 2002).

4.3 Closing remarks: *Waldgang* and *Jahre der Okkupation*

In the wake of his failed denazification, Jünger experienced a comeback and wrote many books which at least implicitly referred to his own biography and National Socialism. But only two of them were about the post-war period. It is worth having a look at them as they can be taken as Jünger's closing remarks on that time.

The essay *Der Waldgang* was published in 1951. It was addressed to the individual and tried to show how one could survive and resist the constraints of dictatorship. Jünger was deliberately unambiguous about what he understood by dictatorship, and according to his examples it could denote National Socialism as well as the still occupied Federal Republic. He recommended the 'Waldgang' (going into the woods) as a form of seclusion from threatening powers, but claimed that it was not tantamount to resignation.⁴⁵⁴ Jünger derived this recommendation from his 'inner emigration' during National Socialism and the post-war period, and his structural opposition during those years. However, the introduction is more important at this point. Jünger started his essay by asserting that he and his readers were living 'in Zeiten, in denen ununterbrochen fragestellende Mächte an uns herantreten'.⁴⁵⁵ These powers demanded filling in 'questionnaires' and the questioned got in a situation

in der von ihm verlangt wird, Urkunden zu schaffen, die auf seinen Untergang berechnet sind. Und wie belanglose Dinge bestimmen heute oft den Untergang.⁴⁵⁶

Anticipating the 'Waldgang', Jünger continued:

Die Fragen rücken uns enger, dringender auf den Leib, und immer bedeutungsvoller wird die Art, in der wir antworten. Dabei ist zu bedenken, daß Schweigen auch eine Antwort ist.⁴⁵⁷

In a complete works comprising 12,000 pages this was the only text which mentioned the questionnaire. If taking into account that *Waldgang* was the first work which Jünger wrote and published after the post-war period, it can be taken for granted that this was meant to be a commentary on his own denazification. On the following pages of his essay, Jünger related the questionnaire to the ballot of the last fake elections after the Nazis had come into power. Thus he signalled that to him the Allied denazification did not differ from National Socialist measures. It was a means of oppression and consequently the 'Waldgang', in other words seclusion, was an appropriate reaction.

⁴⁵⁴ 'Waldgänger ist also jener, der ein ursprüngliches Verhältnis zur Freiheit besitzt, das sich, zeitlich gesehen, darin äußert, daß er dem Automatismus sich zu widersetzen, und dessen ethische Konsequenz, den Fatalismus, nicht zu ziehen gedenkt' (*Waldgang*, pp. 41–2).

⁴⁵⁵ See *ibid.*, p. 8.

⁴⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁴⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

This argumentation was supported by *Jahre der Okkupation* which Jünger published only in 1958. The journal completed his published war-diaries and covered the time from April 1945 to March 1948. Surprisingly, the reader learned nothing about his denazification – the writer did not mention it at all.⁴⁵⁸ Instead he wrote considerably often about the reprisals against the German population, especially in the Eastern territories. It was a resentful and one-sided commentary and led him to the relativistic conclusion that ‘Antigermansimus scheint wie der Antisemitismus zu den Grundstimmungen der Welt zu gehören; er bedarf keiner Begründungen’⁴⁵⁹. What made *Jahre der Okkupation* such illuminating a reading was Jünger’s account of his activities in the 1920s and during National Socialism. It seemed to be the confession that the Allied authorities and many Germans had expected to hear from him in the post-war period. Jünger wrote it especially for *Jahre der Okkupation*, because these paragraphs cannot be found in his original diaries. This means that the account was written several years after the end of the post-war period, in a time when Jünger had nothing to fear. Consequently, he was quite frank about his convictions. All the entries about the rise of National Socialism and his antidemocratic writings and activities were entitled ‘Provokation und Replik’.⁴⁶⁰ They told mainly about his relation to Hitler. Jünger summarised his opinion about the demagogue as:

Das Urteil wandelte sich etwa von: »Der Mann hat recht« zu »Der Mann ist lächerlich«, und »Der Mann wird unheimlich«. Im allgemeinen entsprach das wohl dem Maß, in dem er von der Replik zur Provokation überging.⁴⁶¹

He made no secret of his early agreement with Hitler’s policy and claimed that Hitler had had a right to fight the Treaty of Versailles. Jünger still could not critically scrutinise his early writings nor did he admit that ‘total mobilisation’ was a way to total war. On the contrary, he contended that ‘his capital’ which had burned in the war ‘hätte Besseren zu Besserem gedient’:

Daß Rüstung nach 1918 notwendig war, vermag die Tatsache der Niederlage nicht zu entkräften, die sich nicht auf die Rüstung gründet, sondern auf ihren unsinnigen und provokatorischen Verschleiß. Hinsichtlich der Rüstung löste Hitler eine Aufgabe, die seine Vorgänger versäumt hatten. Diese Lücke erklärt zu einem guten Teil ihre Niederlage und das Wunder seines meteorhaften Aufstiegs. Es gab eine Spanne, in der die Welt ihre Meinung änderte, in der sie die Maske des Shylock, der auf seinem Schein besteht, ablegte und Hilfe leistete, fast über Gebühr. Der Starke genießt Sympathie.⁴⁶²

Nine years after denazification Jünger could publish sentences which, in the post-war period,

⁴⁵⁸ The word questionnaire appears only once and refers to the one Jünger received from the job centre. He commented on it: ‘Jetzt haben sie einen neuen Herren. Ich wußte wohl, daß man dergleichen beibehalten würde, das Instrument ist zu bequem’ (*JO*, p. 153).

⁴⁵⁹ *Ibid*, p. 214, dated 20 November 1945. This had been already criticised by contemporaries, see Franz Schonauer, ‘Ressentiment ist ein schlechtes Denkprinzip’, *Frankfurter Hefte* 14 (1959), pp. 448–51.

⁴⁶⁰ See *JO*, pp. 246–56.

⁴⁶¹ *Ibid*, pp. 252–1.

⁴⁶² *Ibid*, p. 256.

would have exposed him as incorrigible nationalist. Instead of thinking about the internal reasons of Hitler's rise, which included the activities of intellectuals like him, he generalised the problem and blamed external reasons. He could not admit that he had been wrong in the 1920s and that his writings had not been descriptive but prescriptive. At that time however, his belated confession could not do him any harm as he had become a controversial but well-established author again.

Conclusion 3: The relevance of Jünger's post-war works lies in the way they deal with German guilt. The writer began with focussing on the German guilt in *Der Friede*, wherein he ascribed the war atrocities and the genocide to the nihilistic zeitgeist. There was no particular German, but a universal guilt. The war diaries *Strahlungen* were more personal. Despite his entanglement in the 'military machine' in Paris and his detailed knowledge about the Holocaust, Jünger did not accept any guilt. He staged himself as an observer, who happened to live in the midst of destruction and who belonged to a small group of noble-minded men. Similarly, *Heliopolis* as a utopia modelled on recent history came to a clear distinction between the noble-minded few and the dictatorship based on the masses. In the reality of the Federal Republic, however, Jünger muddled the Nazi dictatorship with the new democracy (*Der Waldgang*). There was no room for a specific German guilt. The denazification questionnaire, for instance, marked only continuity in the oppression of the individual, not a means to evaluate personal and political guilt. And nine years after his denazification, Jünger came into the open with his past at last. But instead of a careful self-criticism, he provided an apologetic work. Moreover, he was eager to discuss guilt – but the one of the victors, whom he resented for the way they had (mis-) treated Germans after the war. Thus, Jünger distorted the whole question of guilt: he had first dissolved German guilt in a metaphysical guilt of all, then denied his personal guilt or at least involvement, and eventually ended up in accusing democracy of oppression and the Allied victors of their atrocities.

5. Conclusion: the Jünger-phenomenon

All his long life, Ernst Jünger was contested. Accusations that he considerably contributed to National Socialism never stopped. Nevertheless, his writing career thrived, and he reached eventually an age which nearly put him beyond any criticism. I wondered how Jünger could move from 1945, when he was blacklisted, accused and unpublished, to 1995, when the centenarian was adored, awarded and widely read. The answer can be found in the events of the post-war period, which are the prerequisite to his comeback. At that time, he managed to overcome the crisis of right-wing intellectuals in the wake of defeat as well as the attacks by the public and the occupation authorities. First and foremost, this was the achievement of a diverse and extensive network, which helped him out when other 'conservative revolutionaries' like Schmitt struggled with their rehabilitation. Jünger controlled his network in a subtle way and thus could entertain his elitist conception of authorship. His supporters acted on his behalf and dealt with the bulk of the criticism against him and pursued his rehabilitation, which gave him time to devote himself to work. Without the assistance of the network, Jünger's name might have fallen into oblivion after 1945. But it was not only the effectiveness of his network that made his comeback possible.

The British authorities had the unique opportunity to take Jünger into account but did not make full use of it. The 'Jünger case' epitomised many of the general shortcomings of denazification: the British authorities wanted to punish Jünger on the basis of his early political activism and the potentially subversive effects of his latest pamphlet *Der Friede*. Yet they were not sufficiently consequent and consistent in their policy. While trying to ban Jünger's writings, an aim which they could never fully achieve, they were interested in winning him for their cause. Jünger refused, and they continued to fight and court him at the same time. As they tried both, they got none. Thus the only chance to force the disputed writer to disclose his convictions was missed. Nevertheless, the ban on publication had a positive outcome too: it stifled Jünger's urge to comment on politics right after the war.



Mission accomplished: Hans Speidel and Ernst Jünger (1953). Photographer: unknown.

The last chapter of the thesis suggests how desirable this positive outcome was. *Der Friede* is not the document of Jünger's change, as many contemporaries deemed it, but the relativising of National Socialism and the Holocaust, which anticipated much of the author's later works and made it an inappropriate, indeed dangerous peace proposal. Other post-war books like *Strahlungen*, *Heliopolis* and *Waldgang* confirm that Jünger advocated metaphysical explanations of recent history, which blurred the specific German guilt and ascribed it to the zeitgeist. Moreover, he sought to minimise his own role in Hitler's army, as the war diaries and its revision show. These findings are in line with Jünger's general development from a fierce proponent of the Worker to its impassive, critical observer. The role which he claimed for himself had changed. His ideology, however, was more continuous. Ideas of the radical Jünger re-appear in the works of the mature writer, where they are taken for granted. Even though he no longer recommended to fulfil the principles of the Worker but to evade it, the sheer survival of these ideas was the consequence of a successfully avoided self-criticism. After he had overcome the hard times of denazification, Jünger had less reason to scrutinise his thinking than ever before.

In general, my thesis has shown how important, indeed powerful, networking in the post-war period could be. The support from outside Germany and the bond between old 'conservative revolutionaries' are striking, and it would be interesting to know whether the same is true for other groups like the pre-1933 communists. After all, Jünger's network might be unique in its extension and diversity. In contrast, the findings about the British denazification reflect the insights of the corresponding research. They strengthen a balanced view: compared with the idealistic plans of the (Western) Allies, denazification was a failure. But in the short run, it helped to stabilise Germany by silencing potentially dangerous intellectuals like Jünger, who could have easily exploited the public disappointment about the occupation politics. Insofar, denazification was useful and prepared the West German society for a democratic rebirth.

The most important result of my thesis concerns the Jünger research. Scholars like Neaman and Morat showed that Ernst Jünger's biography after 1945 had been ignored for far too long and that it is as problematic as the preceding 25 years. However, they argue within traditional narratives: they take the writer's Weimar and Nazi years and ask how he or his contemporaries dealt with it after 1945. To explain the cultural phenomenon 'Ernst Jünger', I deem it more important to ask how it was made in the first place. This is not meant as a concession to the intellectual fashion which favours books starting with 'The making of...'. The bibliography of 'conservative revolutionary' intellectuals contains hundreds of names – why is Jünger's contribution so important and persistent, why has his name been (pre)occupying people for so long? Given his image cultivation and his network's extensive sphere of influence, his standing in historiography

might be more based on good marketing than genuine importance. People doing research on Jünger often claim that he had an interesting and exceptional personality and that his life was embodying German history. But is this true? Or is this impression resulting from nearly 80 years of books, debates, supporters, critics, academics, high politics and readers? Even (or in particular) Jünger's harshest critics contributed to a Jünger-image which could not have been more satisfying to him: a highly controversial and (therefore) significant writer. Why else are *In Stahlgewittern*, *Der Arbeiter* and *Auf Marmor-Klippen* among his best known and best-selling books?

To answer who or rather what 'Ernst Jünger' was, scholars, in particular historians, have to turn away from the traditional narratives and to concentrate on his *whole* life and the many parties involved in it. This is more important than writing the long-awaited authoritative biography, which will cement the conventional Jünger-image.⁴⁶³ Maybe a new generation of scholars, who had not been active parts of the Jünger-phenomenon, will be able to explain it. Whatever the results will be, they will most certainly comprise a skilful writer and master of self-projection as well as (presumably) one of the largest networks of Germany's post-war history.

⁴⁶³ Nearly ten years after Jünger's death, two full-scale biographies are about to be published. One is written by Jünger's old disciple Heimo Schwilk, a new Mohler so to speak, while the other tries to 'do justice to the writer', as the publisher's advertisement reads, see Heimo Schwilk, *Ernst Jünger – ein Jahrhundertleben: Die Biographie* (Munich, 2007), and Hellmuth Kiesel, *Ernst Jünger: die Biographie* (Munich, 2007).

Appendix

A.1 The execution of a deserter: two versions

A.1.1 The original entry dated 29 May 1941

Erschießung eines wegen Fahnenflucht zum Tode verurteilten Mannes, zu der ich als Leitender befohlen war. [Gedanke: illegible] Wir fahren in ein kleines Waldstück bei Robinson, in das ich am Vortage durch den Kriegsrichter eingewiesen worden war. In meinem Wagen Kuhlmann und der Oberstabsarzt, während der Fahrt Gespräche, die sich durch eine gewisse Familienstimmung auszeichnete. Gedanke: „Als ob man drinnen sitzt [illegible].“

Am Platze [illegible] der Baum, eine Esche, am Stamme zersplittert durch frühere Einrichtungen. Wir bilden eine Art von Korridor davor: erster der Zug[führer; TH] Kuhlmann, hinten das Kommando von zehn Männern mit geladenem Gewehr. Die Sonne scheint, nachdem es bei der Abfahrt geregnet hat, die Wassertropfen blitzen im grünen Gras [illegible]. Es ist kurz vor fünf, ein Personenwagen fährt den schmalen Waldweg entlang. Wir sehen den Verurteilten aussteigen, bei ihm zwei Gefängniswärter und der Geistliche. Dahinter kommt noch ein Lastwagen. Er führt das Beerdigungskommando und den Sarg, der nach Vorschrift bestellt wurde „von üblicher Größe und billigster Anfertigung“.

Der Mann wird in unseren Korridor geführt. Dabei ergreift mich ein Gefühl der Beklemmung, als ob es sehr schwierig Atem zu holen geworden sei. Man stellt ihn gegenüber dem Kriegsrichter, der daneben steht, auf: Die Hände werden durch Handschellen auf dem Rücken gehalten. Er trägt eine graue Hose aus gutem Stoff, ein grünes Seidenhemd und einen offenen Militärrock, den man ihm über die Schultern geworfen hat. Ich sehe, daß er gut gewachsen ist und daß sein Gesicht angenehme Züge trägt.

Das Urteil wird verlesen. Der Verurteilte folgt den Vorgang mit höchster Aufmerksamkeit, dennoch habe ich den Eindruck, daß ihm der Text entgeht. Seine Augen sind weit geöffnet, starr, saugend, groß, als ob der Körper an ihnen hänge; der volle Mund bewegt sich, als ob er buchstabiert. Sein Blick fällt auch auf mich und verweilt für eine Sekunde mit fürchterlicher durchdringender, forschender Spannung auf mir. Ich finde, daß die Erregung ihm etwas Krauses, Blühendes verleiht.

Eine winzige Fliege spielt um die linke Wange ~~des Gefesselten~~ und setzt sich einige Male dicht neben seinem Ohre fest. Er zieht die Schultern hoch und schüttelt mit dem Kopf. Die Verlesung dauert eine knappe Minute, dennoch erscheint die Zeit mir außerordentlich lang, als ob sie am gedehnten Pendel schwingt. Dann führen die beiden Unteroffiziere den Mann an die Esche; der Pfarrer begleitet ihn. In diesem Augenblick vermehrt sich noch die Schwere. Es hat etwas Umwerfendes, als ob sehr starke Gewichte sich auslösen. Ich entsinne mich, daß ich ihn fragen muß, ob er eine Augenbinde verlangt. Der Geistliche bejaht das für ihn, während ~~zwei~~ die Unteroffiziere ihn mit zwei weißen Stricken fest[zu]binden. Der Pfarrer stellt ihm noch einige leise Fragen; ich höre, daß er sie mit „Jawohl“ beantwortet. Dann küßt er ein kleines, silbernes Kreuz, das ihm vorgehalten wird, während der Arzt ihn ein ~~wa~~ ~~während~~ Stück roten Kartons von der Größe einer Spielkarte über dem Herzen an das Hemd heftet.

Inzwischen ist das Kommando bereits lautlos eingeschwenkt und steht hinter dem Pfarrer, der den Verurteilten noch deckt. Nun tritt er zurück, es folgen die Kommandos und mit ihnen tauche ich wieder zum Bewußtsein empor. Ich möchte fortblicken, zwingt mich aber dennoch hinzusehen und erfasse den Augenblick, in dem mit der Salve fünf kleine, ~~Löcher~~ dunkle Löcher im Karton erscheinen, als schlügen Tautropfen darauf. Der Getroffene steht noch am Baum, in seinen Zügen drückt sich eine ungeheure Überraschung aus. Ich sehe den Mund sich öffnen und schließen, als ob er Vokale formulieren, mit großer Mühe noch sprechen will. Dieser Umstand hat etwas Verwirrendes und sehr Gefährliches, und wieder erscheint die Zeit mir sehr lang. Gedanke: [illegible]

Endlich gegen die Knie nach. Die Stricke werden gelöst, und nun erst überzieht die Todesblässe das Gesicht jäh, als ob ein Eimer voll Kalkwasser sich darüber ausgösse. Der Arzt tritt hinzu und meldet dem Richter: „Der Mann ist tot.“ Der eine der beiden Unteroffiziere löst die Handschellen und macht ihr blitzendes Metall mit seinem Lappen vom Blute rein. Das Kommando legt den Leichnam in einen Sarg; es ist mir, als ob die kleine Fliege von eben darüber fliegt.

Source: DLA, A: Jünger / Verschiedenes, Autobiographisches, *Tagebücher 1935–1945*.

A 1.2 The published entry in the first edition of *Strahlungen*

Zur Flut von widrigen Dingen, die mich bedrücken, kommt, daß ich zur Aufsicht bei der Erschießung eines wegen Fahnenflucht zum Tode verurteilten Soldaten befohlen bin. Ich hatte zuerst die Absicht, mich krank zu melden, doch kam mir das zu billig vor. Auch dachte ich: vielleicht ist es besser, daß *du* dort bist als irgendein anderer. Und wirklich konnte ich manches menschlicher fügen, als es vorgesehen war.

Auch will ich gestehen, daß ein Akt von höherer Neugier den Ausschlag gab. Ich sah schon viele sterben, doch keinen im bestimmten Augenblick. Wie stellt sich die Lage dar, die heute jeden von uns bedroht und seine Existenz schattiert? Und wie verhält man sich in ihr?

Sah also gestern die Akten ein, die mit dem Urteil abschlossen. Es handelt sich um einen Gefreiten, der vor neun Monaten die Truppe verließ, um in der Stadt unterzutauchen, wo eine Französin ihn beherbergte. Er bewegte sich teils in Zivil, teils in der Uniform eines Marineoffiziers und ging Geschäften nach. Es scheint, daß er allmählich zu sicher wurde und seine Geliebte nicht nur eifersüchtig machte, sondern auch prügelte. Sie suchte sich zu rächen, indem sie ihn bei der Polizei anzeigte, die ihn den deutschen Behörden übergab.

Begab mich darauf mit dem Richter in ein kleines Waldstück bei Robinson, den vorgesehenen Ort. In einer Lichtung die Esche, am Stamm zersplittert durch frühere Hinrichtungen. Man sieht zwei Serien von Einschlägen – eine höhere der Kopf- und eine tiefere der Herzschüsse. Auf ihrem Grunde rasten, von den feinen Fasern des Bastes eingesponnen, einige dunkle Schmeißfliegen. Sie instrumentierten das Gefühl, mit dem ich den Platz betreten habe: so sauber kann keine Richtstätte gehalten werden, daß nicht etwas vom Schindanger einspielte.

Zu diesem Waldstück führen wir heut hinaus. Im Wagen noch der Stabsarzt und ein Oberleutnant, der das Kommando führt. Während der Fahrt Gespräche, die sich durch eine gewisse Nähe und Vertraulichkeit auszeichnen. Gedanke: »als ob man drinnen sitzt«.

Wir treffen das Kommando bereits in der Lichtung an. Es bildet vor der Esche eine Art von Korridor. Die Sonne scheint, nachdem es bei der Abfahrt geregnet hat; die Wassertropfen blitzen im grünen Gras. Wir warten noch eine Weile, bis kurz vor fünf, dann fährt ein Personenwagen den schmalen Waldweg entlang. Wir sehen den Verurteilten aussteigen, mit ihm zwei Gefängniswärter und den Geistlichen. Dahinter kommt noch ein Lastwagen; er fährt das Beerdigungskommando und den Sarg, der nach Vorschrift bestellt wurde: »von üblicher Größe und billigster Anfertigung«.

Der Mann wird in den Korridor geleitet; dabei ergreift mich ein Gefühl der Beklemmung, als ob es sehr schwierig Atem zu holen geworden sei. Man stellt ihn gegenüber dem Kriegsrichter, der neben mir steht, auf: ich sehe, daß ihm die Arme durch Handschellen auf dem Rücken gehalten sind. Er trägt eine graue Hose aus gutem Stoff, ein graues Seidenhemd und einen offenen Militärrock, den man ihm über die Schultern geworfen hat. Er hält sich aufrecht, ist gut gewachsen, und sein Gesicht trägt angenehme Züge, wie sie die Frauen anziehen.

Das Urteil wird verlesen. Der Verurteilte folgt dem Vorgang mit höchster, angespannter Aufmerksamkeit, und dennoch habe ich den Eindruck, daß ihm der Text entgeht. Die Augen sind weit geöffnet, starr, saugend, groß, als ob der Körper an ihnen hänge; der volle Mund bewegt sich, als ob er buchstabiert. Sein Blick fällt auch auf mich und verweilt für eine Sekunde mit

durchdringender, forschender Spannung auf meinem Gesicht. Ich finde, daß die Erregung ihm etwas Krauses, Blühendes, ja Kindliches verleiht.

Eine winzige Fliege spielt um seine linke Wange und setzt sich einige Male dicht neben seinem Ohre fest; er zeigt die Schulter hoch und schüttelt den Kopf. Die Verlesung dauert eine knappe Minute, dennoch erscheint die Zeit mir außerordentlich lang, als ob sie am gedehnten Pendel schwingt. Dann führen die beiden Wächter ihn an die Esche; der Pfarrer begleitet ihn. In diesem Augenblick vermehrt sich noch das Schwere; es hat etwas Umwerfendes, als ob starke Gewichte sich auslösten. Ich entsinne mich, daß ich ihn fragen muß, ob er eine Augenbinde verlangt. Der Geistliche bejaht das für ihn, während die Wächter ihn mit zwei weißen Stricken anbinden. Der Pfarrer stellt ihm noch einige leise Fragen; ich höre, daß er sie mit »Jawohl« beantwortet. Dann küßt er ein kleines silbernes Kreuz, das ihm vorgehalten wird, während der Arzt ihm ein Stück roten Kartons von der Größe einer Spielkarte über dem Herzen an das Hemd heftet.

Inzwischen sind die Schützen auf ein Zeichen des Oberleutnants eingeschwenkt und stehen hinter dem Pfarrer, der den Verurteilten deckt. Nun tritt er zurück, nachdem er mit der Hand noch einmal an ihm heruntergestrichen hat. Es folgen die Kommandos und mit ihnen tauche ich wieder zum Bewußtsein auf. Ich möchte fortblicken, zwingt mich aber dennoch hinzusehen und erfasse den Augenblick, in dem mit der Salve fünf kleine dunkle Löcher im Karton erscheinen, als schlugen Tautropfen darauf. Der Getroffene steht noch am Baum; in seinen Zügen drückt sich eine ungeheure Überraschung aus. Ich sehe den Mund sich öffnen und schließen, als ob er Vokale formulieren und mit großer Mühe noch sprechen will. Der Umstand hat etwas Verwirrendes, und wieder wird die Zeit sehr lang. Auch scheint es, daß der Mann jetzt sehr gefährlich wird. Endlich geben die Knie nach. Die Stricke werden gelöst, und nun erst überzeugt die Todesblässe das Gesicht, jäh, als ob ein Eimer von Kalkwasser sich darüber ergösse. Der Arzt tritt flüchtig hinzu und meldet: »Der Mann ist tot«. Der eine der beiden Wächter löst die Handschellen und wischt ihr blitzendes Metall mit einem Lappen vom Blute rein. Man bettet den Leichnam in den Sarg; es ist mir, als ob die kleine Fliege von vorhin in einem Sonnenstrahl darüber spielt.

Rückfahrt in einem neuen, stärkeren Anfall von Depression. Der Stabsarzt erklärt mir, daß die Gesten des Sterbenden nur leere Reflexe waren: er hat nicht gesehen, was mir in grauenhafter Weise deutlich geworden ist.

Source: Ernst Jünger, *Strahlungen* (Tübingen, 1949), pp. 39–42.

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