

The German Times

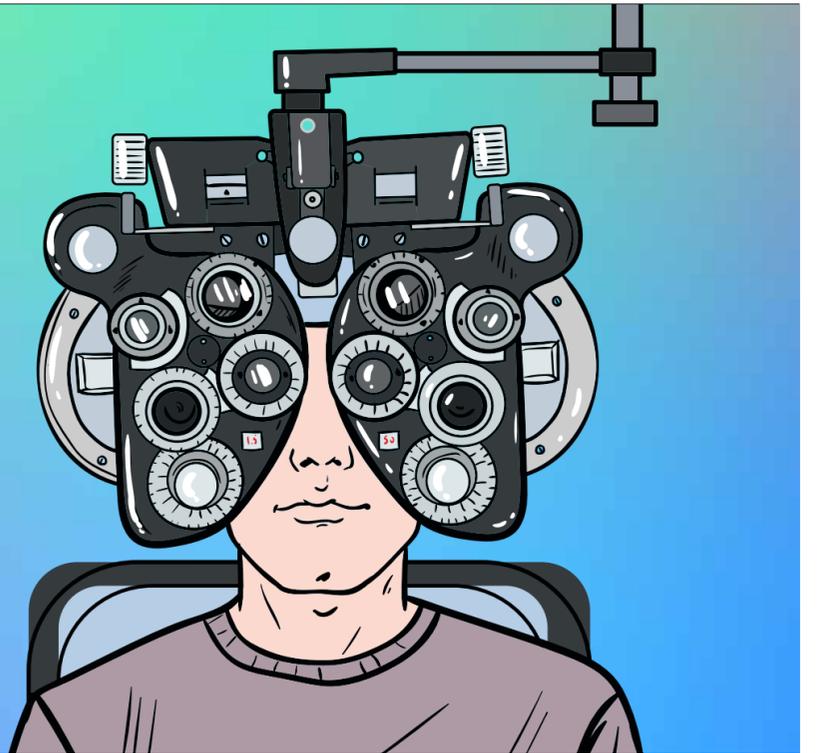
A TRANS-ATLANTIC NEWSPAPER

April 2019

ISSN 1864-3965

NEW SPECTACLES

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Enjoy the scenery and gain insight into the deep philosophical significance Germans place in the forest (page 17), and while you're there, you just might see a wolf and learn about how humans and animals can see eye-to-eye on certain issues (page 18).



A paper within the paper

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The German Times
3708 35th St NW
Washington, DC, 20016

Trading up

The European Union is trying to forge a more robust partnership with China

BY THEO SOMMER

Since 2003, China and the European Union have been committed to what is called, rather grandiloquently, a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. In this framework, their trade relationship has flourished above all others. For 17 years now, the EU has been China's biggest trading partner, while China has become the EU's second-biggest partner after the United States. In 2018, their trade volume reached an impressive \$682 billion.

In recent years, however, the Europeans have found their economic relationship with the People's Republic less and less satisfactory. They started complaining ever louder about unfair trade relations and a lack of reciprocity in investment relations while toughening their stance on Chinese business practices, such as restricted market access, forced technology transfer, unlimited industrial subsidies and limited respect for intellectual property rights. Moreover, Chinese companies buying or buying into European enterprises are facing far more stringent scrutiny than before.

"Europe must defend its strategic interests," explained EU Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker, announcing the introduction of a new mechanism for investment screening whenever a foreign acquirer raises security concerns. Characteristically blunt, French President Emmanuel Macron chimed in: "The period of European naïveté is over." The new mood was faithfully reflected in a Joint Communication by the European Union and the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, published on March 12, 2019. By the second paragraph, the document already struck a bold new tone:

"There is a growing appreciation in Europe that the balance of challenges and opportunities presented by China has shifted. In the last decade, China's economic power and political influence have grown with unprecedented scale and speed, reflecting its ambitions to become a leading global power.

"China can no longer be regarded as a developing country. It is a key global actor and leading technological power. Its increasing presence in the world, including in Europe, should be accompanied by greater responsibilities for upholding the rules-based international order, as well as greater reciprocity, non-discrimination and openness of its system. China's publicly stated reform ambitions should translate into policies or actions commensurate with its role and responsibility."

Pulling no punches, the next paragraph stated that the 2016 Strategy on China remained the cornerstone of EU engagement, yet it provided the basis "for further EU policy shift towards a more realistic, assertive and multi-faceted approach. This will ensure that relations [...] are set on a fair, balanced and mutually beneficial course." (A footnote, which must have stuck in Beijing's gullet, while confirming the EU's continued adherence to its "one China Policy," underlines its persistent commitment to developing its relations with Taiwan.)

Looking at different policy areas, the authors presented multi-faceted pictures of China. They called it:

- a cooperation partner with whom the EU has closely aligned objectives,
- a negotiating partner with whom the EU needs to find a balance of interests,
- an economic competitor in the pursuit of technological leadership,
- and a systemic rival promoting alternative models of governance.

"This requires a flexible pragmatic whole-of-EU approach enabling a principled defense of interests and values," they reason. "The tools and modalities of EU engagement with China should also be differentiated depending on the issues and policies at stake. The EU should use linkages across different policy areas and sectors in order to exert more leverage in pursuit of its objectives."

Reviewing relations with China, the Commission and the High Representative recommend that "the EU should robustly seek more balanced and reciprocal conditions governing the eco-

Trading places

The US is pursuing a protectionist agenda that breaks with its own ideals

BY ALEXANDER HAGELÜKEN

You have to give Donald Trump credit for at least one thing: He never hid his feelings about China. One year before he was elected 45th president of the United States, he wrote in his manifesto *Great Again: How to Fix Our Crippled America*: "There are people who wish I wouldn't refer to China as our enemy. But that's exactly what they are."

An erstwhile trading partner becomes a stated enemy – it's hard to imagine a greater break from the tradition of US economic policy. And in the more than two years since his presidency began, Trump has pursued this rupture as consistently as he could. He pulled out of groundbreaking trade agreements, including the TPP with Asian-Pacific states and the TTIP with Europe. He continues trying to incapacitate the World Trade Organization (WTO). And he has imposed a wave of punitive tariffs – the likes of which have not been seen since World War II – that

are directed at countries on virtually all continents.

This protectionist approach is completely new for the traditionally economically liberal United States. The policy still seems to be polling well among Trump's followers. But the actual economic and political balance sheet associated with this new approach is showing negative figures. The president is alienating countries that have been close partners for decades, thus doing tangible harm to his own country and the global economy as a whole, while also failing to meet his publicly proclaimed goals. Even the forthcoming deal with China – if it actually comes – will not be able to make up for this catastrophe.

The logic behind Trump's punitive tariffs is that by making foreign products more expensive, they will prompt US consumers to purchase domestic goods instead. However, despite the duties levied on many of its partners, the US trade deficit shot up by a whopping 20 percent to reach €620 billion in 2018. This was its highest level in 10 years. America the weak.

Even those who insist that Trump's punitive measures will begin to show a marked impact starting this year will have to acknowledge the problem: Politicians cannot simply switch on the demand for domestic products, as Trump suggested he could while addressing the frustrated industrial workers in the Rust Belt. In fact, consumers often end up buying foreign goods anyway, in spite of the customs duties, simply because those goods are of better quality, or because US products are much too expensive, or because they're not available at all. In recent decades, the US economy has relied on services, in particular on the financial industry and digital services, while US heavy industry slumped – or had bulk goods produced abroad.

In addition, the nations that are targets of Trump's punitive tariffs usually tend to strike back and increase the price of US goods in their own countries – goods that consumers then usually leave to gather dust on the shelf. In turn, this has a negative impact on the US trade balance.

In macroeconomic terms, the tariffs are also highly doubtful in the first place. We see this in the steel and aluminum sectors, where Trump took measures against his economic partners across the board. As a recent study by the Boston Consulting Group showed, this approach did indeed benefit US steel manufacturers in the short term by helping them sell more and increasing their profit margin by 5 percentage points to 14 percent. And yet, investors have little faith in such a trend because they simply don't believe in any long-term effects. As a result, despite their higher profits, the manufacturers' share prices nosedived.

Plus, much more importantly, Trump has made production more expensive for all US companies that use steel. "Metal processing and steel-dependent companies, where easily 10 to 20 times the number of people are employed than in the steel industry, face great challenges," wrote Boston Consulting in their report. "Higher steel prices negatively impact their profits and lead to lower-level competitiveness as well as job losses."

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Read & Greet

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Times Media GmbH
Tempelhofer Ufer 23-24
10963 Berlin
Tel.: +49 30 21505-400

Printed in Washington by

Comprint Printing
13501 Konterra Dr
Laurel, MD 20707

The German Times is a registered trademark of Times Media GmbH.
www.times-media.de

ISSN 1864-3965
(formerly The Atlantic Times)

Press deadline April 17, 2019

The English-language newspaper *The German Times* – A Trans-Atlantic Newspaper is a product of Times Media GmbH, Berlin-Washington, and has welcomed project funding from the German Foreign Ministry for the occasion of Deutschlandjahr USA 2018/2019 (in accordance with § 36 VwVfG).

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BY MATTHIAS NASS

Is Brexit a wash? The question is not as absurd as it once might have been, not since the European Union heads of state agreed on April 10 to once more extend the date for the UK leaving the EU.

The chaos in London, which has caused so much headshaking and frustration on the Continent in recent weeks, has an upside: the nonsense of Brexit and the full extent of its consequences has once again been laid bare before the eyes of Britons. Now ever more British citizens are asking: What in the world are we doing?

No one wins when their country becomes a laughingstock. But this is exactly what's happening. The Oxford historian and journalist Timothy Garton Ash sheds some light: "Brexit has made everyone crazy. It's a national nervous breakdown."

So it's good that the EU special summit has approved an extension of the UK's departure date to Oct. 31, 2019. The six extra months give British politics some time to come to its senses.

European Council President Donald Tusk and German Chancellor Angela Merkel entertained an even longer delay, but French President Emmanuel Macron would hear nothing of it. He fears that the poisonous British debate could cross the Channel and consume the Continent; but most of all, he would like to refocus on other, supposedly more important topics.

But a half-year is plenty of time to confront Britons – politicians and citizens alike – with the question: What is truly in the best interest of the country?

Without the lies UK citizens were served before the first referendum in June 2016 – and without the broad disinterest among young voters at the time – the first plebiscite would have turned out quite differently. Today's level of understanding of the issues is much greater, the lies have cracked and many of those who wearily declined to vote in 2016 are now highly motivated by the dysfunction of government and parliament.

The nation has peered into the abyss – and shuddered. Who today still harbors future dreams of a "global Britain"?

One great disillusionment has settled in. And perhaps this is just the right precondition to jolt some rational policy. Prime Minister Theresa May has needed almost three years to stumble her way onto the obvious path, which is to seek a compromise with the opposition over an issue of such fateful significance.

The radical principle of majority rule in British politics – winner takes all – has met with dramatic failure over Brexit. The Tories and Labour only ever



European patriot, London, April 8, 2019

Brexitravanza

More time is a blessing – for the UK and the EU both

search for consensus within their own ranks, never between the parties. But this time, the deep divide among conservatives could not be bridged.

At its root, Brexit was the result of the relentless power struggle between Tory opponents and Tory proponents of the EU. To resolve this conflict once and for all – in favor of the pro-EU contingent, so he hoped – David Cameron scheduled a referendum for June 2016. It was a colossal, historic and indeed irredeemable mistake.

Only now, much too late, has Theresa May sought a conversation with Labour, whose chief, Jeremy Corbyn, has his own agenda. Unlike a large segment of his party, he would also like to leave the EU, but to spare the country's economy from suffering too gravely and losing too many jobs, he would like to remain in a customs union with the EU.

And Theresa May is now cautiously indicating that she could imagine the same. The "soft" Brexit that this would represent, supported by a majority of MPs on both sides of Commons, is thus theoretically a possibility. May could thereby still achieve the mandated exit from the EU that she has desperately been seeking for months on end, maybe by as early May 22. This would save the UK from having to participate in the European

Parliament elections that begin a day later on May 23.

However, the political calculus of Labour runs counter to this eventuality. Why should Corbyn and his people help to victory a prime minister they disdain, even despise? And – as May has promised to resign subsequent to the UK's departure from the EU – why should they help install at 10 Downing Street a different Tory who in all probability will emerge from the hardliner camp? Given these questions, it's nigh impossible to imagine Labour helping the prime minister attain the majority she needs in Commons.

The stalled negotiations between the government and Labour are now accompanied by a political development that neither May nor Corbyn is happy to see. For the first time at least since the 2016 referendum, something resembling a pro-Europe movement is gaining steam in the UK. Around a million people took to the streets of London recently to demonstrate against Brexit. And an online petition requesting Parliament to revoke Article 50 so that the UK may remain in the EU gained more than six million supporters in just a few days.

MPs in favor of remaining in the EU have combined to form a new party in the House of Commons, The Independent Group, which includes eight former Labour deputies and three ex-Tories. The

Independent Group is striving to cast the European elections – in which the UK must participate if it hasn't yet exited the EU by May 22 – as a "soft referendum." The pro-Europeans in the UK are mobilizing – finally.

At the other end of the political spectrum, the right-wing populists are also organizing anew. Nigel Farage, the founder of the UK Independence Party (UKIP), has introduced his new Brexit party, raging that the political establishment has deliberately thwarted the British people's decision to leave the UK.

Many Europeans on the Continent have grown weary of the Brexit chaos. They think the idea of a country participating in an election to a body they will soon vacate is a farce. But in fact, it represents an opportunity for something positive for the UK and Europe alike.

This election is without precedent. In the past, European citizens have found the EU elections to be a bore; but this time they sense there's a lot at stake. Right-wing forces are mobilizing like never before, and across national borders to boot. Yet, the advance of populism and nationalism in the EU is driving centrist citizens to the ballot box in greater numbers than ever before.

British participation would heighten the importance of this election even more. It would dramatically underscore what the

election is actually about: asserting Europe's position in global power circles alongside China, Russia and Donald Trump's America. In the election, both politicians and voters must come to terms with the harm caused by populist agitators and charlatans in all the countries of the EU, not only the UK. Seen in this light, the election could become a moment of truth for Europe.

After the delay of the UK's exit date was agreed upon at the EU special summit on April 10, European Council President Donald Tusk warned the Britons that they now must *use* the time. The danger is just too great that the government and opposition – now that the time pressure has been lifted – will return to the trench warfare they have indulged in over the past months. That would be devastating.

A half-year is too little time to remedy the deficiencies of British political culture that the chaos of the Brexit debate has laid bare. But six months is indeed enough time for another calm evaluation of the pros and cons of exiting the EU. Many if not most Britons will soon realize the exorbitant price the country will have to pay.

All polling indicates that the majority-minority relationship between proponents and opponents of Brexit has flipped since the 2016 referendum. Would a second referendum – a "confirmatory vote" – deepen the divide in British society even further? Perhaps. But the vote would be the culmination of a much more thorough debate than was the case three years ago, and the public would now be informed to a degree incomparable to that in 2016. A second referendum would thus benefit from a political legitimation that is almost beyond reproach.

A British reconsideration would be in the best interest of Europe. Not only does Russian President Vladimir Putin wish to see a weakened EU; the Trump administration has engaged in a policy of open hostility towards Brussels. With a prime minister like Boris Johnson, Trump would have a united front in his campaign against the despised multilateralism emanating from Brussels. The international conglomeration of nationalists would gladly welcome the UK into its fold.

The Europeans have given the Britons a respite, and we should all be thankful that they mustered the patience to do so. For, as Philip Stephens wrote in the *Financial Times*, "Exasperation is not a strategy." There's nothing more that Europe can do for the Britons. The decision is theirs alone.

Matthias Nass is an international correspondent for *Die Zeit*.

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Trading up

economic relationship." To change the current balance, they propose 10 actions. These range from promoting reciprocity and opening up procurement opportunities in the People's Republic, to calling on China to deliver on existing joint EU-China commitments – clearly a reaction to the fact that China has been generous in making announcements and signing agreements but very hesitant to really take action; it loves to repackage undelivered old promises as new concessions. Action 10 envisages the unveiling "of security risks by foreign investment in critical assets, technologies and infrastructure."

Such unaccustomed candor must have taken the Chinese aback. It was an inauspicious backdrop to the 21th EU-China summit. Small wonder that it took the delegations in Brussels 50 hours to smooth over the differences. Looking back, President of the European Council Donald Tusk described the negotiations

as "difficult but ultimately fruitful."

Any close analysis of the seven-page final statement does not necessarily bear this out. While a breakdown was avoided, it is hard to say whether a breakthrough was achieved. It all depends on how lax or loyal China will be in following through this time.

The commitments made by both sides are more about future talks than about specific actions. Bland formulations abound – such as the EU and China "commit to ensure equitable and mutually beneficial cooperation in bilateral trade and investment"; they "agree to maintain communication"; they "welcome future exchanges"; they "agree to intensify efforts"; and they "agreed to forge synergies."

What would a win-win look like? I suggest the following:

□ Diplomatic wins for China: The EU did not make any references to China as a systemic rival, nor did it call Chinese trade practices unfair. Moreover, the EU agreed to forge synergies between China's

Silk Road Project and its own Connecting Europe and Asia program. And Premier Li could take away the assurance that Huawei will not be excluded from participating in the installation of the G5 network in the EU.

□ Diplomatic wins for the EU: China vowed to boost trade with the European Union by providing a level playing field. Premier Li Keqiang promised to broaden market access, oppose forced technology transfers and to cooperate on WTO reform concerning industrial state subsidies. Most important, however, China pledged to sign an investment deal with China "by the end of next year, or earlier." It's been a bone of contention between them for several years.

The Europeans certainly liked Premier Li's statement that Beijing was by no means trying to divide the European Union: "We emphatically support the European integration process in the hope for a united and prosperous Europe," he wrote in *Handelsblatt*, Germa-

ny's leading economic newspaper. The proof in the pudding is in the eating, of course. Li traveled from Brussels to Dubrovnik for a meeting with the 16+1 Group founded by the Chinese in 2012, comprising 11 EU members and five non-EU Balkan states. It has become the extension of China's Silk Road Initiative into Europe – and a source of worry that China would use it to drive a wedge into the EU. Li rejected this allegation forcefully. He also no longer spoke of 16+1, or 1+16, as the Chinese chose to call it, but more modestly of "Cooperation of China with Central and Eastern European countries." It remains to be seen whether that is anything more than verbal cosmetics. The same goes for Europe's future relationship with the Silk Road Initiative. Is Beijing really willing to relinquish absolute control over its worldwide infrastructure?

The Brussels summit could become a true turning point. And whatever differences remain,

Europe and China have rediscovered that they have not only problems with one another but also many significant common interests. For example, they stand shoulder to shoulder in the fight against climate change. Upholding free trade and averting protectionism is another shared interest, as is saving the Iran nuclear deal.

In the looming new world order, China is going to play a momentous role. Like other great powers, it will at times be a partner, at other times a competitor and occasionally even an antagonist. But it is not an enemy. While its relationship with Europe may remain ambivalent, precarious and arduous, the two parties can achieve many positive objectives if they concentrate on their commonalities rather than on their differences. Cooperation should be the motto, not confrontation.

Theo Sommer is executive editor of *The German Times*.



BY ERIC BONSE

A palpable spirit of optimism hung in the air at the last European elections five years ago. In 2014, many EU politicians and most voters were eager to finally leave behind the banking and euro crises that had shaken Europe for years. Conservatives and Social Democrats alike sought to put an end to highly unpopular austerity policies and focus instead on investment and growth. Some even called it the “European spring.”

Five years later, the mood has completely changed. The spring-like atmosphere in Brussels has been replaced by a cooler, winter-like atmosphere. The UK’s efforts to leave the EU and the seemingly endless negotiations overshadowing the EU elections have certainly contributed to this chilly frame of mind, as have the calls by right-wing populists and nationalists to storm the European Parliament.

The European Council on Foreign Relations estimates that “anti-Europeans could win more than one in three seats in the parliament” in the election set for late May – even though populists and nationalists clearly object to the European parliament as an institution. Germany’s right-wing Alternative for Germany (AfD) actually wants to abolish it altogether. “However, as long as laws are still being made there, we want to have a say,” says Jörg Meuthen, a leading AfD candidate, with regard to his party’s paradoxical strategy.

It looks like many right-wing parties have their sights set on moving to Strasbourg in an effort to cause a stir and disrupt the work of parliament. Until now, this approach was not a problem, as Conservatives and Social Democrats enjoyed a comfortable majority in the parliament, which left EU opponents to sulk in the corner. After the election in May, however, things might look quite different.

Although a survey published in late March by the European Parliament anticipates an increase in votes for the two large political groups, they are not expected to gain a majority. This means they would no longer be able to appoint a candidate to head up the European Commission on their own steam. They would need the support of a third party, such as the Liberals or the Greens.

“We’re going to find ourselves in a highly fragmented parliament,” warns

Dark shadows

As conservatives and Social Democrats face losing their majority, right-wing populists and nationalists are gearing up to elbow their way into the European Parliament

Manfred Weber, the leading candidate of the conservative European People’s Party (EPP). For Weber, a member of the Bavarian CSU, this could have fatal consequences. If he cannot get enough MEPs to back him, he will have very little chance of carrying out his plan to succeed European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker. Weber is determined: “We have to stop the populist wave,” he said at the start of his election campaign.

A similar goal is also being pursued by French President Emmanuel Macron, but he has chosen a different strategy. Macron has presented a plan for a radical “new start.” He wants to strengthen border protection, revise the Schengen system and introduce minimum wages throughout Europe. Macron promoted his ideas in a letter addressed to the citizens of all EU countries.

Commission President Juncker welcomed Macron’s gesture for “more Europe” and additional EU institutions. Macron also received support from the head of the Liberals, Guy Verhofstadt, who expressed a willingness to enter into an alliance with “La République en Marche!” Even Social Democrats and Greens signaled their interest in the plans emanating from Paris.

The conservative camp, however, delivered an entirely different response. In Berlin, the new CDU-head Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer, aka AKK, took up the mantle and promptly issued a rejection to Macron. “The ‘Europeanization’ of the social systems and the minimum wage would be the wrong approach,” she countered. Chancellor Angela Merkel and Austria’s Prime Minister Sebastian Kurz, too, have distanced themselves from Macron.

The Christian Democrats and Conservatives reject the dirigiste and centralist economic doctrine they see as driving Macron’s plan. “We must commit ourselves to a system of subsidiarity, responsibility and associated liability,” wrote AKK in her position paper. Her goal is not to rebuff Macron, she insisted, but instead to enter into a debate on the future of Europe. Still, the chances of this happening are slim.

Indeed, in presenting her own concept, AKK made some biting remarks regarding France and the EU – barbs perceived as unnecessary provocations in Paris and Brussels. In addition to calling for the elimination of what she views as the superfluous European Parliament presence in Strasbourg, she called on France to give up its permanent seat on the UN Security Council and hand it over to the EU, and she demanded that EU officials’

income be taxed. Budget Commissioner Günther Oettinger, himself a member of the CDU, pointed out that this taxation has long since been in place.

But AKK herself faced opposition from Paris. Richard Ferrand, president of France’s Assemblée Nationale, nicknamed AKK “Madame Non” after she flatly rejected engaging in a debate on Macron’s suggestions. Nathalie Loiseau, then France’s Minister for European Affairs, who now heads up Macron’s list for the European elections, expressed it in even harsher terms. She argued that the CDU was only thinking of themselves and had no intention of sharing with anyone.

This kind of exchange sounds less like a constructive debate and more like the hardening of positions. And it does not bode well for the era following the European elections in May. Insiders in Brussels are already warning of a power struggle underway to influence the future course of the EU, but also to gain important posts within the Union. This fall, almost the entire European political leadership – not just the president of the Commission and his commissioners – will change.

Over the course of this process, it’s possible that the leading conservative candidate, Weber, but also his Social Democratic challenger, Frans Timmermans, could lose out. If there are no clear majorities in the new European Parliament, the heads of state and government could take over at the helm and themselves determine the next Commission president. In other words, the European elections would be devalued, and the European Parliament robbed of its power.

This would mark “a huge step backward for democracy and the participation of voters,” warns Weber, the top EPP candidate. “It would lead to a conflict between the European Parliament and the Council of Heads of State and Government, and nobody wants that in this already tense situation.”

Yet this possibility cannot be ruled out. The European elections are overshadowed not only by Brexit and the advance of nationalists and populists – but also by the struggle for power among the ranks of its leading parties.

Eric Bonse is a political scientist and journalist. He works as an EU correspondent in Brussels.



The third way: Frans Timmermans and Manfred Weber are vying to become European Commission president, but Margrethe Vestager of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Party could be the surprise winner.

BY PETER H. KOEPF

The fairest internet of them all

The European Parliament has decided that commercial online platforms will have to remunerate writers, musicians and actors

Donald Trump is relentless. He continues to believe that Germans are hoodwinking the United States. It’s not enough that they’re swindling everyone else to maintain their high export surplus, he complains; they’re also still making Americans pay for their geopolitical security, something they’ve been doing for decades. The president insists that the burden be more fairly shouldered.

One of the issues annoying Europeans the most these days is the fact that a handful of market-dominating US companies – including Google, Apple, Facebook and Amazon, or GAFA – continue to make huge profits in a variety of ways while being subjected to virtually no controls or restrictions. Many even go so far as to call GAFA the “secret world government.” So far, legislators have

allowed these companies to pay hardly any taxes on their sales and earnings generated in Germany and Europe. What’s more: they make considerable sums from their users’ data and from the content generated by creatives either by providing services free-of-charge or by stealing data and content from others, such as publishers, authors, singers, songwriters, theaters and actors, who make their living by creating content.

Europeans are increasingly insisting that revenues in this area be shared. They want to put an end to GAFA’s ability to peddle content to which they have abso-

lutely no legal right. In other words, they want to stop these giants from keeping all of the advertising income they receive from the publication of third-party intellectual property without remunerating the owners of that property. Thus, at the end of March, the European Parliament voted 348 to 274 (with 36 abstentions) in favor of a copyright directive that would protect the rights of authors and creators. This directive was passed despite an extensive campaign carried out by companies and “activists” arguing that it would threaten freedom of expression on the internet.

The directive calls on companies to remunerate copyright holders in the future via the payment of license fees for the commercial use of their intellectual copyright on so-called social media. In other words, commercial online platforms should have to purchase the rights to user-generated content before they go on to make money with it. According to a recent article by Thomas Kirchner in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, we are seeing the emergence of “the idea of a fair internet in which monopolistic platforms will be required to share profits with authors and creators of content.”

It’s interesting to note that four-fifths of respondents in a recent survey conducted in Europe by Harris Interactive on behalf of the Creators for Europe initiative agreed with this approach. A clear majority of respondents also favored more regulation and more appropriate taxation of tech corporations such as Google (YouTube) and Facebook.

It is safe to say that many share this opinion, including Livia Gerster, who noted the following in an op-ed in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung*: “New freedoms require new rules; otherwise they will continue to be freedoms

designed solely to serve the strongest.” Gerster goes on to argue that anyone who still sees the internet as a self-regulated democratic ecosystem is completely out of touch. Such people “have not yet understood that the massive power held by tech giants will pose a threat to democracy and freedom if they are not forced to undergo a process of civilization. The means to achieving this civilizing process is law.”

It is now up to the European states to transform the EU directive into national law, a process that should take no more than two years to complete. When that time comes, it would mark the start of negotiations between creators – or their collecting societies – and platforms. At that point, the era of gold-digging and uncontrolled robbery on the internet will be over.

Peter H. Koepf is editor in chief of *The German Times*.

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Trading places

The fact that Trump is scaring off previous partners is also bound to have a negative economic and political impact. For decades, Europe was Washington's closest partner on the international scene. But the president failed to take advantage of the opportunity to increase US exports via the widely negotiated TTIP trade agreement as well as the chance to agree on joint technological standards that would keep their mutual global competitor, China, at a distance. Instead, Trump continues to snub Europe, accusing the former allies of playing economic tricks on the US.

By targeting the auto industry, Trump is taking aim at a sector that is particularly important for Germany. Since February, he has had a report on his desk issued by the US Department of Commerce exploring the absurd question of whether the mass of European auto exports endangers US national security. Trump now has until mid-May to impose punitive tariffs of around 25 percent on European cars. If he makes this move, it would trigger a first-ever showdown between these formerly close allies. In July 2018, after a meeting with European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker, Trump suddenly announced that an agreement was in the works; however, nothing specific has been agreed upon since.

For the past several months, the Europeans have been waiting to see what happens to the major conflict launched by the US government with China. Trump slapped unprecedented tariffs on that country, its burgeoning rival for the title of world's largest economic power. If we include the Chinese counterstrikes, the value of the goods on the list of punitive tariffs reaches \$350 billion. And yet, the US trade deficit with the Middle Kingdom nevertheless swelled to €420 billion in 2018, even though Trump kept on signaling that a monumental deal with President Xi was on its way.

In the meantime, the damage to the global economy continues unabated. The aggressive posture of the US – that former paragon of free trade – is unsettling companies everywhere on the planet. According to the WTO, global trade is likely to grow by a mere 2.6 percent this year. This is roughly half as much as in 2017, thus marking a massive drop-off. Trump's neo-nationalism is coming up against a global economy that is less nationally oriented today than ever before. Some 70 percent of global trade consists of intermediate products, auto parts and microchips headed for installment in some device. The escalation of tariffs throws a wrench into this international division of labor in manufacturing. For example, 30 to 40 percent of Germany's prosperity is dependent on this globalized economy, estimates Gabriel Felbermayr, president of the Kiel Institute for the World Economy.

Trump is, in effect, putting a match to the very economic model the US established on an international scale after World War II: open markets, open investment, transparent rules and states that see themselves as economic partners rather than political and military enemies. ■

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The base is loaded

Despite all the US president's statements to the contrary, the Americans are expanding their military presence in Germany

BY NANA BRINK

Several times a month, Anja Pfeiffer, the mayor of Weilerbach, drives to "her" construction site, she likes to say with a laugh. At the outer edge of her municipality, directly across from the US air base in Ramstein, the Americans are building a new hospital. The diminutive mayor is a welcome guest at these site consultation meetings. She knows her stuff. Since 2011, when she first learned of the project, she organized a trip to the United States. She wanted to know what an American military hospital looks like. "A hospital is better than a shooting range," thought the energetic mayor back then, and she thinks the same today. Only: "I believe it's not clear to the people here how big this UFO is that's landing in our backyard."

But big it is. So big that even the head planner, Brad Dunbar of the US Defense Health Agency that is realizing the project, sometimes gets a lump in his throat. "We've never done something this big before." It will be the largest military hospital ever built outside the US. The dimensions defy the imagination: 5,000 rooms, 42 specialty departments, nine operating rooms. The US Congress has allocated \$990 million for the new building. It's been in planning now for eight years and is set for completion in 2024 at the latest.

The new clinic will not only serve as a replacement for the hospital built in 1953 in Landstuhl, near Ramstein; the Rhine Ordnance Barracks Medical Center Replacement, as it's officially called, will be the medical facility for around 50,000 US soldiers, civilian staff and their families in Europe.

The UFO, whose landing has thus far gone more-or-less unnoticed by the public, strikes Anja Pfeiffer as sometimes uncanny. It's as if they're building Hamburg's Elbe Philharmonic beside this community of 5,000 souls in the middle of nowhere. After all, it's as big and as expensive. But the hospital is also a signal: "They've already sunk so much money into the project that they can't back out, even if they wanted to," says the mayor, who follows up with an admission of what many fear: the return home of US troops. The 53,000 residents of the Kaiserslautern Military Community centered around the air base in Ramstein are also a critical economic factor – US soldiers spend around €2 billion in the region each year.

These fears are being nourished more and more often. Just before NATO's 70th birthday this year in April, US Vice President Mike Pence ranted about what his administration feels is Germany's neglect of Alliance members' common defense. This must have consequences, he warned, and how these might look was outlined last summer by President Donald Trump, when he railed against the "ungrateful" Germans who pay a pittance for the US soldiers stationed on their soil. The *Washington Post* subsequently reported on supposed plans for a withdrawal of US troops from Germany and a partial relocation of troops to Poland. Needless to say, the article caused quite a stir in the Palatinate.

Reality, however, tells a very different story. The Americans stationed in and around Ramstein and Kaiserslautern for 70 years came here to stay – and to invest. By 2019, over a half-billion euros had flowed into the West Palatinate locations for the expansion of the largest military air-traffic hub outside the US, for new schools and for the construction of the hospital.

But the funny thing is, many people don't know this. There are no press conferences and no spectacular tape-cutting ceremonies. Most of these sorts of events occur behind barbed wire, in military no-go zones to which the locals have no access. But the UFO has not yet landed – so far, all you can see is a massive area of steamrolled earth, as if a huge piece of cake has been cut out of the green Weilerbach Forest. It's raining dollars in the Palatinate, but it's all largely invisible to the local population.

One person who has a crystal-clear view of all that the Americans are up to here sits only a few kilometers away from the construction

So why is the US government signaling otherwise? General August leans back in his chair and gives an unusually unambiguous response: "We've survived Republican administrations and Democratic administrations. We've survived Cold Wars and Hot Wars. So the strategic reach that we offer from Ramstein isn't moving anywhere else."

The same message was delivered by Roger Lewentz, interior minister for Rhineland-Palatinate, after returning from the US. He attends an annual meeting with high-level officials in the US Defense Department, and this year's date is soon approaching. It's always

In the Schlemmerscheune, a popular meeting place in Weilerbach, English is already spoken more often than German. And if any communication difficulties do arise, Sigi Degen, one of the establishment's most loyal regulars, is there to help. For almost 50 years, Degen ran a barbershop on the air base. "I had no problems finding customers. We live off the Americans; it's always been like that." And like that it shall stay.

In Weilerbach, every fourth resident has a US passport. They're not only neighbors, they're also customers and consumers. Many locals have rented out apartments to Americans and built their own

not feelings of friendship. Since 2014 – with the annexation of Crimea by Russia – the number of US soldiers stationed in Germany has consistently been on the rise. Weiler assumes that the Americans will continue to invest more, not less, in their locations in Germany.

Many people are aware of the fact that the investment windfall is not an isolated incident. A 1975 treaty based on the NATO Status of Forces Agreement stipulates who is responsible for which costs. The Americans assume all construction costs, while the Germans are responsible for planning costs and coordinating the construction.

In the case of the new US hospital in Weilerbach, the costs break down as follows: The \$990 million for the new building falls to the US. The planning costs to date of €151 million are paid for by German taxpayers. The location and size of the hospital was determined by the Americans alone. In other words, Germany is subsidizing the construction of the largest military hospital in Europe, to accommodate 50,000 US troops – and zero Germans. The 5,000 residents of Weilerbach will not be patients here.

"That's not something that's easy to communicate," admits Marc Gutenberger, of the Federal Department of Construction, which has been involved in building for the Americans for decades. Gutenberger was essential in planning another US showcase project: the 21st Century School, for 850 children of American personnel in Kaiserslautern. "You can shoot a high school musical here," he says with a chuckle, as he enters the light-flooded auditorium, which is as large as the train station in an average-sized German city.

The school is chock-full of modern technology. The lights are electronically controlled; the walls of the classrooms slide at the press of a button. Electronic chalkboards – Smartboards – are everywhere, and every seat has its own laptop. The cost? Some \$48 million, of which the Association of Planning Costs assumed €6.5 million.

As a planner, Gutenberger is often asked why the Federal Republic is in the business of building things for American children, but not for German pupils: "The answer is simple: Whoever provides the money also gets to say what gets built. But we don't exactly walk away empty-handed." The US military is planning to invest around €650 million into the new construction and expansion of its schools – with German help.

"And what would we do if they weren't here?" Many people in the area think like Weilerbach Mayor Anja Pfeiffer. Critics of the Americans are few and far between. "Ami go home" signs are a rarity, and protests against the air base in Ramstein, funded by nationwide peace initiatives, are more often than not the objects of scorn.

The concerns of the pragmatic mayor have less to do with military operations than with the daily lives of her constituents. Will the highway be widened? Heavy traffic is now a problem in Weilerbach. By the time the UFO has landed, there will be a bicycle path around the fenced-in grounds. "It'll be sitting in the middle of our forest, and we have every right in the world to peek in." ■

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Unidentified Flying Objective: a computer simulation of the planned US military hospital in Weilerbach. Below: Weilerbach Mayor Anja Pfeiffer and General Mark August, the commander of Ramstein Air Base, in his office.

site for the new hospital. From his office window, Brigadier General Mark August, commander of the Ramstein Air Base, directly overlooks one of the runways. A giant Boeing 767 – one of the world's largest transport aircrafts – is taking off. "I love that sound," he says, flashing a wide grin. "And you know why? When you look at the logistic hub that really is Ramstein – the location is strategic." It's no fluke that the US Air Forces in Europe – Air Forces Africa is headquartered here. The 1,400-hectare air base serves as the nerve center for all operations in Afghanistan and Iraq and regularly makes headlines as a result of the controversial US drone strikes that operate from Ramstein. Yet even today, no one knows exactly what goes on here.

"We're here!" says General August, drily, as if pointing out the obvious. After all, Ramstein is the epicenter of one of the largest US bases in the world. "We're not getting any smaller. There's gonna be more airmen in this area."

The Air Force general offers some details, including the fact that by 2021, 700 US airmen will relocate to the Palatinate. This is a relatively modest statement given that last fall, US Army headquarters in Wiesbaden announced that an additional 1,500 soldiers will be stationed in Germany.

about money, lots of money. This time, Lewentz is hoping for further commitments, not statements with no bite. Last year he returned brimming with good news. Some \$19 million would be spent to expand the Ramstein air hub. An additional \$100 million would be invested in new school buildings for American children in Kaiserslautern. And President Trump personally signed off on several hundred million dollars for the ongoing construction of the US hospital. In an interview with *Sat.1-Regionalmagazin*, the center-left SPD's Lewentz went out on a limb: "We're talking about two billion over the next few years, and when it's gone, no one wants to have wasted it."

Anja Pfeiffer is all too glad to hear such signals. The young Christian Democrat mayor of Weilerbach tirelessly promotes the new US hospital, even if she knows that the Americans will bring in their own personnel to run it. "We're happy with every new job we can get."

Her calculations are simple. A hospital for all US military personnel in Europe not only brings more commerce to her tranquil community, but more consumer needs as well. "They may want to spend the night off the air base now and again, or just grab a bite to eat in town."

home from the earnings. According to data collected at the base, around 40 percent of the salaries of military personnel flows into the local economy.

And the local economy has adjusted to it. Most signs in town feature both German and English. Most supermarkets sell American beer and offer a wide selection of marshmallows and peanut butter. In the arterial roads leading to Kaiserslautern, car dealers promote "German cars," which are as big as can be and with as much horsepower as possible.

Kaiserslautern's promoter of local commerce, Stefan Weiler, estimates that the US military employs around 5,000 civilian personnel from the region. And the demand is growing: "We're getting indications from industry that the Americans are looking for new venues to exploit further potential."

In contrast to the global political stage, communication between Germans and Americans at the local level have not really changed. In fact: "The Americans are seeking greater proximity to us. Here in Kaiserslautern, our relationship to our American friends is part of our DNA."

Yet he knows that US military interests cleave to strategic goals,

CRITICS OF DRONE CAMPAIGNS

The killing of alleged terrorists via US drone campaigns is controversial under international law. The role played by the US Ramstein Air Base remains unclear. Ramstein Air Base Commander Mark August denies that drone campaigns are planned or conducted from here: "There are no drones operating out of Ramstein Air Base." In 2016, however, the German government conceded that it had knowledge of a relay station. For the US to carry out drone strikes in Yemen, the radio signals must be transmitted to the destination through Ramstein. In 2015, an American ex-drone pilot declared to a National Security Agency (NSA) committee of inquiry in Berlin that Ramstein plays a central role in drone warfare.

BY LORENZ HEMICKER

Anne-Katrin Kramp-Karrenbauer, the CDU's brand-new chairwoman and a leading candidate to succeed Angela Merkel as German chancellor, has already started taking warm-up laps. At the recent "Denk ich an Deutschland" conference organized by the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* and the Alfred Herrhausen Gesellschaft in Berlin, the former minister president of Saarland mused aloud about the manufacturing of a European aircraft carrier, stating that such a project would give expression to the European Union's role as a global security power.

Statements like these not only sound resolute, they also fit perfectly with the style we've grown accustomed to hearing from German chancellors, foreign ministers and defense ministers at international conferences and in televised Sunday addresses. On these occasions, politicians profess that Germany is both willing and eager to take on more defense and security-related responsibilities, and that they are poised to do just that.

Tangible reality, however, always looks a bit different. And nothing illustrates Germany's apparent schizophrenia better than the above-mentioned statement by the new CDU chairwoman. While she spins a tale about a potential joint aircraft carrier, Germany's navy – like all other branches of the German military – continues to struggle with glaring failures and default rates among its main weapons systems. The fact that not one of Germany's once-famed U-boats was able to leave port over the course of many months is only the tip of the iceberg; in the summer of 2018, barely one-third of the U-boats were available for exercises or missions.

In early 2019, the Bundeswehr's general inspector Eberhard Zorn announced that the regular report submitted to the Bundestag by

the German Defense Ministry will henceforth be classified as "secret." And yet, according to figures from parliamentary circles, the Bundeswehr's numbers have by no means improved substantially. In addition, the labor market where the Bundeswehr is now obliged to find its young talent has been virtually swept clear since compulsory military service was tossed out almost overnight in 2011.

In this new setting, the Bundeswehr, despite its considerable efforts, is simply not able to meet increasing demand. The German army currently comprises only 182,000 individuals. In the coming years, that number should actually rise to 203,000.

The massive gap between ambitious targets and reality can also be seen in the realm of defense spending. The Federal Republic remains far from fulfilling the NATO-states' pledge to spend at least 2 percent of their GDP on the military by 2024. However, it should be noted that expenditures for the military sector in Germany have grown significantly since Russia's annexation of Crimea and the outbreak of war in Eastern Ukraine. For the current fiscal year alone, Germany's defense budget rose by roughly €4 billion to reach €42.9 billion. This is the equivalent of 1.37 percent of Germany's gross domestic product.

Still, the turnaround in military financing – the so-called *Trendwende Finanzen* – called for by Defense Minister Ursula von der Leyen (CDU) is stalling before it even gets off the ground. Against this backdrop of large and fast-forming holes in the national budget, multiple attempts by national politicians to boost their domestic profile and not least Germany's commitment to avoid any substantial new debt – a commitment now anchored in the country's constitution – Finance Minister Olaf Scholz (SPD) is now putting the brakes on spending.

According to current plans, German defense spending will

not rise to a minimum of 1.5 percent by 2024, as was promised to NATO back in December. Instead, it appears that spending is actually going to decrease again. This would bring about the exact opposite of what Minister von der Leyen had imagined for her troops. Where von der Leyen sought to achieve an upward growth curve, Scholz is planning to deliver a vertical drop.

These days, Germany's defense minister – whose position has already been weakened by several military-related scandals – hardly seems in a position to change

Defense mechanisms
The Bundeswehr is plagued by understaffing and equipment shortages, but policymakers reject a significant budget increase

the course in her favor.

Chancellor Merkel, too, is at the end of her long stint in office and apparently has no interest in jeopardizing her coalition's already fragile peace in the run-up to the European elections by issuing any kind of statement on the matter.

Throughout this entire process, German politicians seem to continue to be willing to accept the fact that NATO allies, especially the United States, tend to react to German schizophrenia with a mixture of headshaking and barely concealed anger.

And there is an additional aspect to this behavior, namely that Germany's other contributions to securing peace and international security are given little of the acknowledgment they deserve. For example, as part of Operation Resolute Support in Afghanistan, the Bundeswehr is still the second-largest contributor of troops after the US. Hundreds of German soldiers are risking their lives in Mali and also fighting against the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq. At NATO's eastern flank, the Bundeswehr is currently leading the NATO battle group in Lithuania, and since the beginning of this year, it has also headed up NATO's High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) – of that unit's 8,000 troops, roughly every second soldier is German.

Considering the changing security challenges facing Europe and the innumerable reports exposing the pathetic state of the Bundeswehr today, it is understandable that a majority of Germans now favor higher defense expenditures. However, there is very little evidence to indicate that a majority will emerge in the Bundestag that on its own could push through Germany's financial pledge to NATO in the coming years. The erstwhile conservative camp consisting of the

Christian Democrats and FDP has become too weak to achieve such a push. And a so-called Jamaica coalition of those two stalwarts plus the Greens would most likely lose any battle with a party deeply divided on the subject of military spending. There is no other government coalition that would pursue such a policy anyway. Both the right-wing populist AfD, on the one hand, and the SPD and Left party, on the other, are busy pursuing other interests. Indeed, military spending has long since ceased being an issue that can win votes in Germany.

In the past, the most effective means of bringing about an increase in German defense spending has always come from outside. And this is likely to be the case this time as well, whether it's Russian saber-rattling or massive pressure from allies. In the absence of both of these, it is highly possible that Germany will break its promise to NATO – and thereby inadvertently lay an ax to the North-Atlantic alliance, just as the man in the White House on the other side of the Atlantic would apparently love to do himself.

Lorenz Hemicker is a politics editor at the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*.



Holding the fort: the Bundeswehr during a state visit at the chancellery.

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BY CHRISTOPH VON MARSCHALL

Donald Trump is causing Germans so much emotional grief these days that they can no longer soberly distinguish what's good and bad for Germany, what poses a tangible danger to the country and what is, plainly put, just terribly annoying. At one point in time, Germans knew for certain that Russian missiles were pointed directly at them – and that it was US weapons that were protecting them from attack. Today, according to surveys carried out by YouGov and Forsa, two-thirds to three-quarters of German respondents believe that the US president is more dangerous than the dictator in the Kremlin.

Germans also used to be aware that they owed their rise to prominence as the world's fourth strongest economic power to the existence of a liberal world order. They knew this order enabled their own export surplus, which in turn helped them achieve their own security, social welfare state and social peace. They understood that they would not be able to secure this basis for their success on their own steam, but rather only via their integration into the West. In other words, it's not Germany's navy that guarantees the free movement of goods through canals in Panama and the Suez, but rather, in case of doubt, the US military.

Many Germans now regard free-trade agreements as harmful contracts; this applies not only to the agreement with the United States (TTIP), but also to the agreement with Canada (CETA). There are even some critics questioning whether Germany should see itself as part of the West; they dream instead of taking up a neutral position equidistant to the major powers in the United States, China and Russia. They ignore the fact that Germany's success is based on tangible and reliable rules of international economic exchange as well as on the NATO security pledge. A majority of Germans say they would not be willing to devote the necessary resources to defend their NATO allies against attack. This attitude puts the Germans in a very solitary position within the Alliance. In fact, views such as these are widespread among the Left and the AfD, but they are also articulated in the governing coalition parties, for example by SPD vice-chairman Ralf Stegner.

Although Germany's federal government is indeed pursuing a more realistic course, while also heading up a multinational NATO unit in Lithuania and supporting France's anti-terror mission in North Africa, the country prefers to remain silent on these foreign missions rather than praise them as evidence of how it is taking on international responsibilities. The government also refuses to entrust German soldiers with the same tasks as their fellow soldiers in France, Poland and the UK; this approach is driven by the idea that Germans should carry out transport duties and take photographs, but others should do the actual fighting.

The government also does not provide the funds necessary to ensure a functioning Bundeswehr. First, they refused to contribute the two percent of GDP they'd promised NATO to spend on defense, and now



SPD Finance Minister Olaf Scholz is even calling into question the envisaged alternative of 1.5 percent of GDP by 2024.

At the same time, global attacks on the rules-based liberal order have been increasing and becoming bolder. These attacks are coming from Russia, China, NATO-partner Turkey and from the United States, which had been the main guarantor of world order until recently. The most serious attack can be attributed to Moscow. Putin broke the European peace order as it is anchored in the Charter of Paris when he occupied and annexed Crimea. For the first time since 1945, a border in Europe was violently displaced. In Eastern Ukraine, Putin is creating a further "frozen conflict." In the Kerch Strait, he is breaking the treaty on cooperation governing the use of the Sea of Azov, while also demonstrating his ability to block all ports in Eastern Ukraine.

China, too, is attempting to expand its territorial waters and zones of influence by means of military might, for example, by transforming uninhabited reefs into military bases and ignoring the jurisdiction of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea. Among NATO and EU members, pledges of support and solidarity also seem to have only a limited binding effect. In the Syrian conflict, for example, Turkey bombarded the Kurdish militias that were fighting against IS as allies of the US. In the EU, Poland, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria have violated basic principles of several treaties, while also ignoring democratic principles and the rule of law.

In the US, we have seen the election of Trump, a president who casts major doubt on rules-based order, blocks the appointment of judges to the World Trade Organization (WTO) and unceremoniously leaves international organizations and treaties.

Can German citizens and their government finally see that we are no longer dealing with individual cases, but instead with

a dynamic that calls the entire rules-based order into question? And can they comprehend that this threatens the very basis of their own success? After the crimes and destruction of World War II, it was precisely this liberal order that enabled the Federal Republic to reintegrate into the community of nations and paved the way for its rise to the fourth-largest economy on the planet and the powerhouse behind the EU.

While it is true that Trump, too, contributes to the decay of the rules-based order, can he be said to be more dangerous to German interests than Vladimir Putin, Xi Jinping and Kim Jong-un, as many Germans have indicated in recent polls?

If Germans were honest with themselves, they would have to admit that there is an element of projection involved in their intense preoccupation with the US president. Why do they act as if he were the cause of the most pressing problems in the world? Because it distracts them from their own weaknesses. Indeed, all of the crises facing Europe today were evident before Trump entered the political stage in 2016: the euro crisis began in 2010, Russia's war on Ukraine started in 2014, the migration crisis came to a head in 2015 and the Brexit drama was launched with the referendum in June 2016.

Yes, Trump is a huge problem. However, Germans' behavior toward him is just as large a problem. They tend to ridicule him and complain about his assumptions. This is something politicians in Germany's governing parties also do on a regular basis. It is very rare that we hear sober analyses of the ways in which we could approach and counter Trump in order to most effectively defend German interests. People in Germany like to complain about the weakness of American democ-

ocracy, even though one could argue that the "checks and balances" built into the US system have actually proven mostly stable in the face of Trump so far. Courts are setting limits to the extent to which he can act; Congress regularly refuses to nod through his laws; and the media continues to show investigative zeal. Of course, these conflicts are by no means fun to watch. They are loud, messy and often repugnant. But aren't they also evidence that democracy, the rule of law and freedom of expression are alive and well?

One would like to be able to say something similarly optimistic about Germany and the EU, perhaps something along the lines that they will assert themselves against the threats facing the rules-based order, against the dangers arising from populism and "fake news." But there is very little that would allow us to utter such confident assertions. The EU is paralyzed by Brexit and other crises, and populists continue to enjoy one electoral success after the other.

Debates carried out in Germany regarding the current state of the world suffer from moral exaggeration and from low-level willingness to recognize their own inabilities as a problem and to correct their course. Society is moving right along with no tangible orientation, and the government lacks the courage to set a course forward in the right direction.

If one asks makers of foreign policy in the neighboring countries of France and Poland, in the EU capital of Brussels and in the US to speak about their image of Germany, the most frequent complaint is that Germans lack the will to think in geostrategic terms. They say that Germany's foreign policy is reduced to trade interests, for example, with regard to China. They point out that Germany enjoys a free ride when it comes to security policy, relying entirely on its allies,

while nevertheless refusing to pay the contributions it committed itself to paying – and which it should have to pay in keeping with its weight. And, finally, people say that when Germany participates in joint operations, it inevitably feels entitled to lay claim to special rules for itself.

Germans like to see themselves as being active in a manner that is in strict adherence to the law while also being pro-European and displaying admirable solidarity. It's easy to forget that they were the first to break the Eurozone Stability & Growth Pact – starting in 2002 and onwards in several consecutive years. In the migration crisis, the federal government failed to consult with others when it made the momentous decision to let one million migrants into the country. In the realm of energy, it took the liberty of pursuing unilateral national policies on several occasions, whether it was phasing out nuclear power or building the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline, which runs counter to the EU target of reducing dependency on individual supplier countries.

What are the reasons for Germany's hesitancy to come to terms with the threats facing its own success model and to explore strategies designed to enhance security? First, it's just plain habit. For decades, geostrategic thinking has neither been demanded of nor voluntarily practiced by Germans. Second, there is a sense of having been spared from international upheavals until now. When others are doing worse, they should orient themselves toward Germany. Ultimately, they think, everybody will become like us: democratic, freedom-loving fans of a state that is pacifist, climate-friendly and based on social welfare.

But the world is moving in a different direction. It is becoming more authoritarian. In Beijing, President Xi was granted full powers and is now more-or-less the new emperor of China. In Russia, Vladimir Putin is expanding his authoritarian state; dissenters are being murdered and neighbors who refuse to submit are plunged into war.

The doctrine guiding Germany's behavior should be the following: The less we Germans can rely on others to defend the liberal order, the more we should have to do so ourselves. Germany must forge alliances to save the liberal order – with Canada, Japan, Australia, New Zealand – and make the EU prioritize this goal. Germany must do much more to enforce this order than ever before.

This includes the willingness to abandon national business interests in order to facilitate a common front against China together with the EU, the US and democracies in Asia. It also includes the will to fulfill its commitments to NATO and to take on the same tasks as other allies in joint missions – just as former Defense Minister Volker Rühle suggested in 2015.

Christoph von Marschall is a diplomatic correspondent for *Der Tagesspiegel* and author of the book *Wir verstehen die Welt nicht mehr. Deutschlands Entfremdung von seinen Partnern* (We no longer understand the world. Germany's alienation from its partners), Herder Verlag, 2018.

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Trials and errors

What should Europe do with its captured IS militants?

BY GEORG MASCOLO AND RONEN STEINKE

The admonition from Washington came in loud and clear, and it made immediate waves across Europe. In late February, US President Donald Trump publicly called on European governments to finally take back citizens who had fought for the Islamic State (IS) and have since been captured. Europe's answer came only a few days later: "What we're dealing with here is the judicial processing of international terrorism, which means that it would be entirely appropriate if we were to set up an international criminal jurisdiction," said Germany's Horst Seehofer at a meeting of interior ministers in Paris. "For me, this option will always be preferable to bringing all IS fighters holding German citizenship back to Germany."

Seehofer's response basically amounted to a "No thanks, Donald." European politicians have now started calling for an international tribunal to try European IS fighters "with the involvement of the UN and the EU," as Austria's Interior Minister Herbert Kickl put it. The prime minister of Sweden is also promoting this cause, as is the Finnish minister of the interior. And most European decision-makers are arguing that this tribunal should not be located in their countries in Europe, but rather as far away as possible – in the Middle East.

This idea of a remote court came up once already in 2015, but nobody – not even the Europeans

– pushed ahead with it back then. Although governments – including Germany's – had meticulously planned the military campaign against IS, they failed to spend any significant time thinking about what to do when the war was over, and what to do with prisoners in particular.

The problem is by no means a new one. For many years now, accusations have been lodged against the United States that it continues to carry out its own form of rogue justice in Guantanamo, Cuba, for the simple reason that it does not want to try terror militants in courts on US soil. In the case of the IS fighters captured in

Syria, however, the tables have been turned, and now the US is admonishing Europeans to bring their fighters to justice in courts at home in Europe.

The idea of setting up an international court in Syria is coming rather late, perhaps too late. Decision-makers in several European capitals are only now grasping that the arduous alternative would involve taking back all European IS fighters, the move called for by the US. This would inevitably include a series of very difficult and complicated legal battles, which makes the idea of delegating the task to an international tribunal in the Middle East highly appealing.



IS fighters returned to Germany will have to stand trial there. Europe wants to set up an international tribunal for those arrested by Kurdish militias.

Victims and witnesses live in the region, and there would be fewer difficulties associated with providing evidence, something that often plagues European courts. In addition, prosecutors would have access to the larger picture. In Europe, on the other hand, the various responsibilities are fragmented. In other words, in the Middle East, the ability to prove atrocities would be easier.

From the perspective of the rule of law, a court in the Middle East isn't a bad idea either. The Kurdish militias in northern Syria, who are still holding roughly 800 European citizens in their prisons, are not putting anyone on trial at the moment.

And Bashar al-Assad's henchmen should certainly not be entrusted with the task. In Iraq, on the other hand, the justice system is prosecuting IS fighters on an almost daily basis. On one occasion, a trial that ended in a death sentence took only ten minutes. The defendant, a 42-year-old Turkish woman, had only two minutes to defend herself.

While Germany's federal government is pleased to see the Iraqi justice system move forward with trials, they are also keeping a watchful eye over things. They've already had to protest the first death sentences delivered against Germans and attempt to prevent the execu-

tions from being carried out.

There are tremendous difficulties involved in the idea of bringing a new court – one with the high standards of the United Nations – to the region. Syria and Iraq are two sovereign states, and the central governments in both Damascus and Baghdad reject such interference. Syria's Kurds, who reign with virtual autonomy in the north of that country, see things differently: They would be delighted to welcome international lawyers and have already called on the UN to set up tribunals for IS fighters in their civil-war-torn lands. If the West accepts the offer,

it would mean diplomatically recognizing them as an independent Kurdish state. Needless to say, the Europeans are reticent to offer such recognition. When asked about the situation, Germany's foreign office in Berlin responded, dryly: "We have no official relations with the so-called Kurdish self-government."

Another possibility would be for the UN Security Council to simply install a tribunal itself, without the consent of Damascus or Baghdad and without the help of those two countries, for example, in gathering evidence. A tribunal such as this could also be set up in a neighboring country or in The Hague. In fact, Swed-

ish Minister of Justice Morgan Johansson has a couple of historical models in mind: "After the war in Yugoslavia, we had a special tribunal in Europe, and after the genocide in Rwanda, there was a tribunal in Africa."

In these two cases from the 1990s, the UN Security Council went over the heads of the states concerned. As Johansson argues, "the same model could work in this situation as well." The Dutch parliament has even submitted a request to the government that they set up such a court in The Hague, where several UN tribunals are hard at work to this day.

However, this would require the consent of all veto powers on the UN Security Council. And decision-makers in Europe's capital cities are aware that this would be all but impossible to achieve. Russia stopped supporting the international justice system years ago. And since 2012, Moscow has blocked all demands to refer any Syria-related investigations to the existing International Court of Justice. Moscow's concern is that international lawyers might cause too much trouble for Russia's allies in the Assad regime. For this reason alone, Europeans are expecting no help at all from the UN Security Council in New York. Instead, they're focusing on developing ideas that could solve this issue without the UN.

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To protect and defend the constitution: the Federal Constitutional Court

BY GERTRUDE LÜBBE-WOLFF

Doing justice

The Basic Law – Germany’s constitution – at 70

Ten years ago, when Germany’s Basic Law turned 60, the birthday party in Berlin attracted hundreds of thousands of citizens. They strolled along Straße des 17. Juni where official institutions had set up their exhibition stands. They crowded in front of the Brandenburg Gate to listen to Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony, with the final melody that has become the hymn of the European Union, and to pop music afterwards. And from everywhere in the city, they watched the fireworks at night. Some weeks later, an Italian colleague and former ambassador to Germany, who had seen this on TV in Rome, told me he envied the Germans for being able to celebrate their constitution with such a public festivity.

Germans do like their constitution. In a sense, they have embraced what political scientist Dolf Sternberger had recommended in the late 1970s as an alternative to other types of affirmative national feelings that recent history had made unavailable: constitutional patriotism.

When the Basic Law came into effect on May 24, 1949, no one expected it to become so popular. It was originally intended as just a provisional framework to serve until Germany would, hopefully, be reunited and then adopt a constitution deserving the name. That is why it was called the “Basic Law,” in line with the fundamental laws of the long-defunct Holy Roman Empire.

The Basic Law was designed as a counterpoint to the barbarism of the National Socialist dictatorship, and as a bulwark against new totalitarianism, not least the communist variety. This is most clearly expressed in the first two sentences of its first article: “Human dignity is inviolable. To respect and protect it shall be the duty of all state authority.” Unlike the Weimar Constitution, the Basic Law places fundamental rights in front and only then proceeds to organize the state that is to respect them. Just like the guarantee of human dignity, this was meant to express a view on the relationship between the individual and the state. The draft of the Basic Law concluded at the Constitutional Convention at Herrenchiemsee had put it this way in its suggested opening sentence: “The state exists for the sake of man, not man for the sake of the state.”

With the fundamental rights of the Basic Law, the new order was

defined as a liberal one. There was, however, no clear decision in favor of a liberal economic order. The Basic Law protects private property, but stipulates that the use of property should also serve the common good. Due compensation provided, it allows expropriation not only in individual cases of special need, e.g. for infrastructural purposes, but also for the purpose of socializing land, natural resources and means of production. When before reunification, citizens were asked to say where they thought this article originated, most people guessed it was from the constitution of the communist German Democratic Republic.

In other respects, too, the Basic Law has a strong social component. In keeping with German traditions, it provides that the Federal Republic of Germany is to be a social state. Along with the guarantee of human dignity, federalism, democracy and the rule of law, this is one of the core elements of the constitution, immunized against abrogation by an eternity clause.

The democratic regime institutionalized by the Basic Law is of the parliamentary type. The president of the federation has almost exclusively symbolic representative functions, and none of the powers of the Reichspräsident that had paved the way for the Nazi takeover in the Weimar Republic. Various other precautions were taken against a return of “Weimar” instability. A prominent one is the stipulation that a parliamentary vote of no confidence be constructive, i.e. that Parliament can overthrow the government only by electing a new

chancellor, not just by voting out the incumbent.

The most peculiar and successful creation of the Basic Law, however, has been the Federal Constitutional Court. As a specialized constitutional court with a monopoly on judicial review of statutory legislation, it was modeled on the Austrian Constitutional Court of 1920, devised by Hans Kelsen, but its competences are much broader than those of the Kelsenian prototype. Any individual – national or foreign, natural or corporate person – whose fundamental rights are affected by an act of German authorities, including the courts, can seize the Federal Constitutional Court with a constitutional complaint when other available remedies have been exhausted. The judgements of all other courts are therefore subject to control by the Federal Constitutional Court. Statutory legislation has shaped this remedy so as to make it readily available. Proceedings are free of charge. Complaints can even be filed without a lawyer. Along with undisputed independence, impartiality and a balanced, middle-way judiciary, this easy accessibility has been the most important source of the prominence and popularity of the Federal Constitutional Court – and, what is more, of the constitution of which it is the guardian.

Unlike the United States Supreme Court, the German Federal Constitutional Court is not divided along political lines reflecting the party that nominated each judge. In most of the important cases decided by panels of eight, about 92 percent in the long-term average, decisions

come without separate opinions. When including the large number of minor cases decided in chambers of three, where only unanimous decisions are possible, the unanimity rate far exceeds 99 percent. With its collegial, deliberative, compromise-oriented mode of operation, the court has contributed to integration rather than polarization. According to German polls, only two authorities enjoy a level of trust equal to that in the Federal Constitutional Court: the Federal President and the police. As far as the police are concerned, the court has certainly contributed to their popularity. With a broad interpretation of fundamental rights, high demands on the proportionality of all authoritative interventions and a high level of relevant oversight activity, it has shaped the German republic into a state that, as a rule, presents a rather friendly face, even where it exercises powers of command and coercion.

Despite many beneficial effects, the prominent role of the Federal Constitutional Court in Germany carries a risk. A network of constitutional restrictions woven during almost 70 years of only moderately restrained constitutional interpretation may well result in less flexibility than a democracy needs to prosper. The Federal Constitutional Court, although not formally bound by precedent, has overruled its earlier case law much less often than the US Supreme Court has. However, that is rather due to institutional frameworks keeping it steadily on middle ground than to a lack of pragmatism and flexibility. Fears of fossilization would therefore seem

premature. Besides, there is always the possibility – thus far rarely and quite unspectacularly used – for parliament to “override” judicial doctrine by amending the constitution.

The Basic Law can be amended more easily than the US constitution – by a two-thirds majority in both chambers of parliament. It has been changed more than 60 times, and not always to its advantage. The Federal Republic’s federalism, weak from the outset, has on the whole been weakened even further, and many articles have lost concision.

The most important changes have not come about with constitutional amendments, at least not directly, but over the course of European integration. This has in part been accompanied by constitutional amendments. Yet the most pervasive effects of European integration are not apparent from the text of the Basic Law. Nowhere in the Basic Law is it made explicit that, subject only to some cautious reservations enounced by the Federal Constitutional Court, EU law trumps national constitutional law. In the disputes over the huge influx of refugees in 2015–16, the supersession of German constitutional law by EU asylum legislation has led to some confusion and to unjustified allegations of illegal government action. Many critics of government action, even some well-known constitutional lawyers, had failed to notice that the asylum law article of the Basic Law is no longer applicable as it stands, due to more demanding yet little known EU rules.

The 70th anniversary of our constitution may not see celebrations quite as merry as those a decade

ago. Too many things in the world at large, in Europe and in Germany itself, seem out of order. Due to a competitive economy with many specialized producers of industrial equipment and other goods for which there is a high demand in rising economies all over the world, Germany is in many respects one of the winners in the process of globalization. But in Germany, as in most of the West, the distribution of gains and losses is out of balance regionally as well as socially. Like all EU member states that, due to satisfactory economic performance and tolerably efficient governance, have been able to develop and maintain an attractive level of inclusive social security, Germany also faces especially high migration pressure. Containment depends to a large extent on extra-European rulers, sometimes sinister potentates, whose cooperation in fencing off migration routes is bought expensively. Widely diverging interests of European member states in economic, financial and migration matters, as well as the Brexit scheme, supervene.

Obviously, even a best-designed and, for the time being, best-respected national constitution cannot guarantee that everything will somehow turn out well and leave German democracy intact. But is a crisis in sight? In the 2017 federal election, 12.6 percent of the voters opted for Alternative for Germany (AfD), a right-wing anti-euro and anti-migration party that fishes in muddy waters and whose functionaries often use abusive, sometimes racist language. To prevent it from gaining more ground and, possibly, to win back those who have voted AfD not in full sympathy but just as a warning, most of the competing parties have meanwhile adjusted their course to a greater or lesser degree. They have navigated somewhat to the right, if only by no longer disparaging candid discussion of, say, problems concerning the integration of migrants. Unlike great swaths of the liberal elite, with whom I share their distaste for the AfD, I do not see the current shift in the zeitgeist as indicating or foreshadowing a crisis or collapse of the liberal and democratic order of the Basic Law. This is not the incipient demise of liberal democracy. It is how liberal democracy works. ■

THE SCARLET ROBE

Who comes up with an outfit like that? In fact, it was a costume designer at the Baden State Theater who designed the official attire worn by the justices on Germany’s Federal Constitutional Court. The robes are based on the traditional garb worn by judges in 15th-century Florence. The German judges began wearing their characteristic scarlet robes and white jabots for oral proceedings and verdict announcement starting in 1963. Previously made of a heavy duchesse fabric, the robes switched to a lighter satin blend in 1997, with every new judge inheriting a robe from their predecessor. But not everyone is a fan of the eye-catching outfits. When Fabian von Schlabrendorff was a justice on the Federal

Constitutional Court (1967–1975), he was heard poking fun at his attire, noting that it had “a theatrical flair that promptly inspires in those who behold it a desire to ridicule.” But the judge is wrong on this count; no one is making fun of his colleagues on the bench. Indeed, the judges in Karlsruhe enjoy the highest possible level of respect in Germany. And those stunning robes – whether in spite of or precisely because of their eccentric nature – succeeded in calling attention to the importance of the court as an independent constitutional body. As our author writes: “The most peculiar and successful creation of Germany’s Basic Law [...] has been the Federal Constitutional Court.”

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Otto-mobiles

Germany's carmakers must break out of their deep sleep and reinvent themselves as soon as they can

BY ULRICH VIEHÖVER

There are increasing fears that Germany's automotive industry will not be able to master the problems it faces in the future. Some experts even claim that the demise of this paragon of industries – along with its suppliers and more than 800,000 employees – is imminent, arguing that the hurdles ahead are simply too large. To make matters worse, most of the leading managers at Audi, BMW, Daimler, Bosch and others are acting as if they're in a deep sleep. Experts argue that their behavior is simply too slow and risk-averse.

For example, company heads are already stonewalling in unison on the question of whether or not battery cells should be "Made in Germany," a question that has been sold as the fulcrum determining the fate of e-mobility. These managers continue to argue that battery cells – which form the very heart of electric cars – can be obtained faster and more affordably from innovative factories in the Far East. Does this mean that the cars of the future will soon be made in Japan, South Korea and China? Will Germany lose one of its most important industrial pillars to a simple act of omission?

These concerns are by no means exaggerated. Since the 1960s, Germany has seen the loss of a dozen sectors in which the country was previously among the world's leaders. The dying-off began with the leather and fashion industry and was followed by the manufacturers of motorcycles (NSU, DKW, Zündapp, Kreidler), cameras (Zeiss, Agfa, Leitz) and watches (Kaiser, Kienzle, F. Mauthe and, in part, Junghans). In the 1980s, all of the big names in German consumer electronics (AEG-Telefunken, Grundig, Bosch-Blaupunkt, Saba, Dual, Nordmende, etc.) and in computer and office machines (Olympia/AEG, Triumph-Adler, Mannesmann-Kienzle, Nixdorf) stumbled and fell. In the 1990s, the decline could be seen first among manufacturers of communications and telecommunications

technology (AEG/TN, ITT/SEL/Alcatel, Detewe, Siemens, Tekade) and ultimately among all German mobile phone manufacturers from AEG to Bosch and Siemens. In the past decade, the rapid collapse of the solar industry – which was simply overrun by the Chinese – was largely the result of errors in political decision-making.

After that, all that remained of tens of thousands of jobs and hundreds of factories were fading brands and very few jobs in Germany. In fact, Germans have barely a presence today in the worlds of tablets, smartphones, fully digital telecommunications, solar cells and the like.

This somewhat terrifying glance at Germany's recent past proves that the factors of size, intermittent market dominance and well-known brand awareness are not enough to save companies from a full downward spiral. In fact, stories relating to the decline of entire industries reveal one recurring pattern in particular, most aptly described as a complete lack of strategic thinking and global overview on the part of the company's management. In many cases, their ability to think proactively reached only as far as their nearest domestic competitor or other Western competitors. This limited scope of vision led them to barely notice the strategies being pursued by those aggressive and emerging challengers further away on the horizon.

The biggest turning point began in the mid-1970s with the transition from labor-intensive analog technology to digital systems drawing on software and IT specialists. While German managers held on far too long to their beloved mechanical and electrical engineering, newcomers in Asia set their sights on market-dominance through the digitalization of their innovations; the result was affordable and durable mass-produced commodities on a global scale.

Today, millions of cameras, watches, computers and mobile phones are manufactured and sold worldwide. This is far more than the number of goods produced when Germans gave up and walked away from these industries. At the

time, many German companies allowed themselves to be forced into niches based on misguided price-performance policies – which were too expensive and too unimaginative – and they eventually atrophied. This fate is now also looming over German carmakers.

More than 100 million cars are sold worldwide every year. And more and more cars will most likely be built in the coming years. The only real question is where and by whom? Today, the VW Group sells roughly 10 million vehicles across the globe, with Mercedes-Benz Cars and BMW selling around 2.5 million each. In other words, from a global perspective, the Germans are already more like dwarves than giants. What will happen if Chinese auto giants start rolling onto the world market, just like they did with

essary evil, rather than as a status symbol. In large urban areas, roughly one in three residents (up to the age of 35) say that they would have no problem living completely without their own car. This is why car-sharing is now an alternative with a bright future. While the Volkswagen Group continues to make very little use of this opportunity, Daimler (car2go) has become a global pioneer in the field. However, as car-sharing is not yet a profitable area of business, Daimler and BMW are now pooling their activities, which is exactly the right path forward for strategic behavior and, hopefully, for falling prices. "Mobility à la carte" should be the affordable offer for all people on the go.

The pursuit of this option calls for both new organizational prod-

uced commodities at affordable prices than it does for Mercedes and BMW.

Simply put, auto managers have to do more. As it is, they already have enough technical challenges to deal with. In the coming years, mobility will have to be reinvented multiple times. Traditional drive systems – diesel and gasoline engines – will probably be in demand for a couple more years, which means that there is time to develop alternatives: a purely electric vehicle for metropolitan areas, medium- and long-distance hybrid vehicles with combined drives for electric, gasoline and gas as well as – hopefully in the near future – hydrogen-powered fuel cells.

Let's not forget that Daimler was already a pioneer in this area 20 years ago. The company's cooperation with BMW on the development of this drive technology is a good sign. Equally meaningful would be additional research partnerships in Germany as well as with companies abroad. The development of autonomous driving alone is set to devour billions of research dollars in the near future. Plus, there is much work to be done on new engine concepts, on multiple electronic assistance systems, on lightweight construction (new materials) and on customer-friendly mobility solutions. All of these require suitable infrastructures for charging batteries, for gas and hydrogen refueling, as well as for cross-network IT and navigation systems to control and test the autos of the future.

At this point, it should be obvious to anyone that the sheer number of major tasks involved cannot be handled by one manufacturer alone. Shared work in research labs means twice the profit, that is, fewer costs and better and faster results. A commitment to only one alternative drive – as VW seems to be planning with its focus on electric mobility – simply makes no sense. In addition, companies would do well not to curtail the fantasy and imagination of their researchers. In other words, Daimler and BMW – and even Porsche, to some extent – would be well-advised not

put any limits on the creativity of their best minds.

Are German carmakers facing the same downfall as the above-mentioned industries? If BMW, Daimler and VW were to cooperate even further – with their suppliers, too – and take a closer look at their clients, their competitors in the Far East, especially China, would find it more difficult to gain ground. This means that corporate heads need to fight more for their domestic operations.

This also applies to the job situation in factories, offices and labs. Indeed, there is no longer any doubt that technical progress and the transition from electromechanics (combustion technology) to e-mobility is going to cost tens of thousands of jobs. The incontrovertible fact is that an electric car requires roughly one-third fewer parts.

And then there is that other job killer, namely the ongoing digitalization of cars themselves as well as the rationalization of factories and offices. This process of replacing humans with machines is likely to lead to massive conflicts with workforces and unions. How many jobs will become superfluous in the medium term? 250,000? 400,000? Or more? We cannot make any accurate predictions at this time. The result depends primarily on how many new products companies can bring successfully to market and how high the added value (the company's own work share) will be in the overall system of cars Made in Germany.

Things are now in the hands of the top managers at BMW, Daimler and VW. It is their task to remain an illustrious part of the automotive world in the future. Indeed, without the industrial production of cars in Germany itself, the BMW, Mercedes and VW brands would lose their charm. In other words, they would face the same fate of all faded world brands: second-class status.

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The German leaders of the major companies, are themselves often the problem in the carmaking business

mobile phones and solar cells? Either way, China's communist party and Chinese taxpayers are ready and waiting.

And where is Germany's auto elite? The leaders of the major companies, usually merely managers for hire, are themselves often the problem in the carmaking business. They like to copy one another and enjoy buying and selling companies like sacks of potatoes. What they all seem to lack is an entrepreneurial gene. Instead of rolling up their sleeves and taking the reins – for example on the question of whether or not battery cells should be made in Germany – they hesitate and continue their drowsy sleepwalk, thereby fully overlooking the inevitable global market of cars for buyers with limited spending power – the future "car of the people."

There is already a worldwide trend of seeing cars as a nec-

essary evil, rather than as a status symbol. In large urban areas, roughly one in three residents (up to the age of 35) say that they would have no problem living completely without their own car. This is why car-sharing is now an alternative with a bright future. While the Volkswagen Group continues to make very little use of this opportunity, Daimler (car2go) has become a global pioneer in the field. However, as car-sharing is not yet a profitable area of business, Daimler and BMW are now pooling their activities, which is exactly the right path forward for strategic behavior and, hopefully, for falling prices. "Mobility à la carte" should be the affordable offer for all people on the go.

The pursuit of this option calls for both new organizational prod-

BIG MONEY

Highest-earning CEOs of 2018 in Germany

The notion that a CEO's salary may grossly outweigh the average worker's pay has long been under scrutiny on both sides of the Atlantic. Most notable in the United States is the case of Weight Watchers International, which has the highest CEO to average worker pay ratio, according to a report by *USA Today*. Weight Watchers CEO Mindy Grossman earns 5,908 times more than the company's average employee, leaving her with an annual compensation of \$33.4 million. What's more, she only ranks 21st among America's highest-earning CEOs of 2018.

Among Germany's highest-earning CEOs, Stefan Heidenreich of Beiersdorf is ranked first with a converted annual income of \$26.54 million, according to a study by the consulting firm HKP. Although it's a lot of money, Heidenreich's salary is still less than America's 25th-highest paid CEO, Josh Sapan, who makes \$29.6 million for heading AMC Networks. Hock E. Tan of Broadcom is ranked first in the US with an annual income of \$103.2 million, almost four times that of Heidenreich.

Shareholder representatives take a critical view of high salaries. "Any salary greater than €10 million is extremely difficult to square from a social perspective. This should be avoided," warns Marc Tüngler, managing director of the Deutsche Schutzvereinigung für Wertpapierbesitz, a German shareholders association. A salary exceeding this benchmark should require more than a few justifications. "The supervisory board must ensure that the salaries of the management board are appropriate; it's a big issue." Tüngler also called for a radical simplification of the system. *GT*

1

STEFAN F. HEIDENREICH

Company Beiersdorf

Annual compensation €23.45 million

Company revenue €7.23 billion

2

OLIVER BÄTE

Company Allianz

Annual compensation €10.33 million

Company revenue €130.5 billion

3

BILL MCDERMOTT

Company SAP

Annual compensation €9.97 million

Company revenue €24.7 billion

4

STEFAN F. HEIDENREICH

Company Siemens

Annual compensation €9.6 million

Company revenue €83 billion

5

BERND SCHEIFELE

Company HeidelbergCement

Annual compensation €9.43 million

Company revenue €18.1 billion

6

DIETER ZETSCHKE

Company Daimler

Annual compensation €8.26 million

Company revenue €167.4 billion

7

FRANK APPEL

Company Deutsche Post

Annual compensation €8.19 million

Company revenue €61.55 billion

8

KASPER RORSTED

Company Adidas

Annual compensation €8.16 million

Company revenue €21.9 billion

New lease on life

A Berlin initiative is calling for the expropriation of private housing companies.
A crazy idea or a necessary step?

BY TONG-JIN SMITH

Imagine you live in Berlin, one of Europe's most vibrant cities. You really love your apartment and your neighborhood. It's affordable, the people are nice, parks and grocery stores are just around the corner. In a matter of minutes, public transportation gets you to the center of town, with all its cultural and commercial offerings. Commuting to work is a snap. Why would you ever move?

Enter your new landlord, Deutsche Wohnen, a commercial property company that owns 167,000 units across Germany – 164,300 residential and 2,700 commercial. Your apartment is one of roughly 116,000 units Deutsche Wohnen has acquired in and around Berlin, making it the largest provider of rental apartments in the area. At first, you don't think much about your new landlord. After all, the building you live in has changed hands before. But then you start to notice things: when you receive your annual service bill, it's far less transparent than the ones you got from your old landlord. And everything is a lot more expensive. You start to wonder if you can still afford to live there in the future.

And when the old heater in your apartment breaks down just before Christmas, it takes days before someone responds and weeks before it's replaced. Since you end up freezing in your apartment and cannot

take warm showers for over a month, you decide not to pay the full rent – in accordance with German law. In return, your landlord sends you a warning. Then the elevator stops working and doesn't get fixed for six months.

You feel sorry for your new neighbor who had to carry everything up the stairs and who pays a lot more rent than you do for pretty much the same apartment. And when you finally read in the newspaper that Deutsche Wohnen increased its annual profits by a whopping 11 percent due to an increase in rental income, you go from being worried to annoyed to downright angry – a feeling many tenants of Deutsche Wohnen units share. And they are not alone.

Several tenant initiatives have

ARTICLE 15 [SOCIALIZATION] OF GERMANY'S BASIC LAW

Land, natural resources, and means of production may for the purpose of socialization be transferred to public ownership or other forms of public enterprise by a law that determines the nature and extent of compensation.

formed across the city to force large private housing companies to better maintain their properties and to charge affordable rent. But one initiative has gone a step further: Deutsche Wohnen & Co. Enteignung (Expropriate Deutsche Wohnen & Co.) is demanding the (re-)municipalization of rental units owned by large housing companies such as Deutsche Wohnen, Vonovia and LEG Immobilien.

They are calling on Berlin's municipal government to pass a law in accordance with Article 15 of the Basic Law, Germany's constitution, that would allow for the expropriation of private housing companies that own more than 3,000 apartments in the city. In return, the companies would be compensated at below-market prices, and the newly municipalized apartments would be managed by a public board on which the majority of decision-makers would be tenants and citizens.

Critics warn that such a solution would focus only on protecting existing rental units and not on investing in much-needed new housing projects. In addition to speculation and a massive population influx, a major cause for Berlin's rents doubling over the past decade

has been a backlog in construction, especially of rental and public housing units. And both developers and city officials share the blame. But is expropriation of commercial housing companies the answer?

Not according to urban economist Eberhard von Einem, who points to a variety of special rights the city holds that are designed to prevent speculation and provide affordable housing.

These rights cover a wide spectrum of homes for low-income to middle-class families that are currently being pushed out of the market. Instead of being stumped by rapidly rising rents and property prices, the city could make use of these rights – as it once did. "Back in the 1990s, the city created several development areas: Spandauer Wasserstadt, Eldenaer Straße, Rummelsburger Bucht. But after 1996, these were aborted before being finished – with the exception of Adlershof – without ever evaluating the experience and mistakes," von Einem noted recently in *Der Tagesspiegel*. "Since then, the city government has lost its courage – and its memory. Today, these special rights have largely been forgotten, although they are still applicable."

If applied, the city could legally bind project developers, private investors, housing societies and co-operatives to a number of terms, which would ensure good quality architecture, proper facilities as well as affordable rents and real estate prices. "In particular, all of this can be done in a more detailed way and with more legal certainty than via terms that are written into master plans or building permits," writes von Einem. Meanwhile, as municipal administrators have yet to take action, anger prevails among Berliners, who are asking: "Who owns the city?"

Haphazardly buying back apartments once privatized in an attempt to consolidate the

city's budget is certainly not a sustainable solution. Then again, neither is expropriation. After all, re-municipalizing Berlin's water supply in 2013 did not reduce costs for consumers. It seems that urban development requires new players that are not driven by capital gains, but rather by social responsibility. "Trusts and other organizations dedicated to public welfare are important catalysts for collaborative, affordable and inclusive living," says Markus Eltges, director of the Federal Institute for Research on Building, Urban Affairs and Spatial Development (BBSR). "They follow a concept with social and cultural goals. Rate of return is not central. The many models and initiatives that strengthen civil society enrich what is happening on the housing market and co-create neighborhoods."

But if they want the city to implement measures to once more make housing abundant and affordable, it would behoove Berliners to join the protests and sign the petition to have exploitative landlords expropriated. Let's hope things improve once BlackRock, MFS and other institutional investors that hold large shares of Deutsche Wohnen can no longer push for rent increases and higher returns on their investment.

Tong-Jin Smith is a freelance journalist and lecturer at the Free University of Berlin and the Dekra School of Media.



Our house, in the middle of our street: Tens of thousands of Berliners have signed a petition to expropriate the biggest commercial property companies.

Germany's Federal Administrative Court in Leipzig recently issued a significant and surprising ruling: The state should be permitted to bill professional soccer clubs and the German Soccer League (DFL) for the costs associated with police operations at high-risk games, (i.e. large commercial events with more than 5,000 visitors).

The original dispute began with a €425,000 invoice the city of Bremen sent to the DFL four years ago to cover the costs of policing at a Bundesliga match between Bremen and Hamburg. For the game on April 19, 2015,

the Bremen police deployed 969 officers, who together tallied 9,537 working hours at a total cost of €425,718.

That same year, the Baden-Württemberg Court of Audit estimated the annual aggregate cost of police operations for soccer games in Germany's Bundesliga, its second division and its three lower leagues, at €119 million.

Bremen was the first federal state to enact a corresponding state law, which has now survived a court challenge. If more cities follow with similar legislation, the Bremen ruling could end up having profound effects on the way the big business of live soccer is conducted in Germany.

The larger question is whether the state is uncon-

ditionally responsible for security in public spaces or whether it can share the costs with commercial enterprises. The matter has been definitively settled with regard to keeping the peace in the stadium during the event, but who is responsible for security before and after the match, that is, when most of the riots actually take place?

In the case of these large-scale events, the police are usually obliged to have a presence in front of the stadium, inside the stadium, in the city and at the main train station. Police officers perform such tasks as picking up drunken fans and defusing violence. Usually between 200 and 250 officers are assigned for a regular league game not deemed to be high-risk.

According to a survey conducted by Infratest Dimap in March 2019, 90 percent of the German population is in favor of passing the additional costs on to the clubs. *GT*

Keepers

Who should pay for security at pro soccer games?



Should there even be such a thing as private land? The GDR wanted to deprivatize all land, but it ended up in the care of large agricultural cooperatives. On May 1, 1960, at the mandatory Labor Day parade, farmers insisted on the unmet claim "Junker lands in farmers' hands" – a mere government slogan.

No man's land

While welfare recipients in Germany are required to disclose extensive details about their wealth and possessions before they can receive benefits, data on large-scale property owners is at best nebulous. Why the double standard?

BY RÜDIGER ROSSIG

Germans love to argue about issues of wealth and poverty. In most cases, they focus on money and taxes, that is, on wages, salaries, savings and inheritances, whether in the form of cash, savings, securities, machinery or factories. In contrast, the subject of land ownership usually only comes up when a property owner makes some sort of ill-advised move – like blocking access to a public lake adjacent to their property.

This is odd, especially when the question of who owns the land on which people live, farm and raise their livestock has for centuries served as a defining issue in every society. For example, in the pre-industrial age, when agriculture was essentially the only means of wealth, demands for the fair distribution of land were of utmost concern and responsible for most of the era's uprisings. Everyone was acutely aware of the fact that those who owned the land held the power to decide what could be done with it.

Throughout history, those who wielded this power were never the ones actually working the land. If farmers were ever also owners of their land, it didn't stay that way for long. In England – the motherland of commerce, colonialism, industrialization and modernization – masses of peasants were driven from their farms and thus from their livelihoods starting in the 10th century. Over 500 years ago, Sir Thomas More described the brutal process of "enclosure" in his seminal work *Utopia*:

"Your sheep [...] that commonly are so meek and so little; now, as I hear, they have become so greedy and fierce that they devour men themselves. They devastate and depopulate fields, houses and towns. For in whatever parts of the land sheep yield the finest and thus the most expensive wool, there the nobility and gentry, yes, and even some abbots, though otherwise holy men, are not content with the old rents that the land yielded to their predecessors. Living in idleness and luxury without doing society any good no longer satisfies them; they have to do positive evil. For they leave no land free for the plough; they enclose every acre for pasture; they destroy houses and abolish towns, keeping only the churches – but only for sheep-barns."

Sheep "devouring" people. In fact, those groups who held power – nobles, clerics and wealthy city residents – earned their money from sheep's wool, which prompted them to drive peasants out of their villages, fields and pastures, confiscating more and more space for more and more of their sheep. This process was facilitated by the United Kingdom's "land title" system, which asserts that whoever can produce the oldest title deed to a given property is the automatic owner of that property.

In the legal process of "enclosure," the rich sheep breeders took advantage of the ignorance and illiteracy of rural populations, for example, by presenting fake property deeds – sometimes even from the Roman era – and taking the land from farmers by seemingly legal means, often with the help of aristocratic and later bourgeois judges.

In an attempt to avoid starvation, those farmers who had been robbed of their land then moved to the cities, where they ultimately created the basis of the lower classes. For want of alternatives, the members of these lower classes then made up the sailors and soldiers for the ships and armies of the empire – and later the workers in the factories. Thanks to colonialism, the system of "land titles" went on to spread first to what later became the United States and then throughout the entire British Empire, which meant that similar land appropriation processes also took place in large parts of the world.

As farmers represented an obstacle to lucrative sheep breeding, their "liberation" was granted at the end of the 15th century in England. In the European regions that were to become the first German state, however, the abolition of the rural population's personal obligations with regard to aristocratic and ecclesiastical landlords began much later and did not come to an end until the 19th century.

In Europe, too, wealth was measured not by money but in terms of land ownership, and this continued well into the modern era. On the continent – including in those areas belonging to the future German states – farmers were not the owners of the land they tended; they merely had the right to use the land. This right was granted to them by their landlords and was not hereditary, that is, it could be taken back at any moment. In order to be permitted to cultivate the land, farmers had to pay levies to the landlords and serve as their front-line soldiers.

There were large differences between the regions of what would later become Germany; in many sections, large estates dominated, while others were more like patchworks comprising small or even smaller latifundia. And "common land" continued to exist for a long time, especially in areas that were less attractive in agricultural terms. This "common land" belonged to everyone and was used collectively, just as it had been prior to the emergence of feudalism. For example, in the Lüneburger Heide, all the way up to the beginning of the 19th century, farm properties were the only things privately owned; the forest and heath belonged to everyone and were shared by all, for example, for the grazing of pigs.

Although the recording of land ownership in the area that was to become Germany began in the 10th century, it was carried out solely on a regional basis and according to very different measures and norms. The first actual *Grundbücher*, or land registers, were launched in 1868, but not throughout the entire German

Empire, which was soon founded in 1871. Today, while practically every single square meter in Germany belongs to either a person or the state, there are still no meaningful figures that can answer the key question of who exactly owns what land.

While every person in Germany who applies for the welfare payments known as Hartz IV must disclose the full extent of their wealth and possessions, data on large-scale property owners is nebulous at best. Although Germany's Federal Office of Statistics has meticulously recorded how many homes were built since the end of World War II, clarity on who owns what and their current worth is elusive. Even the value of property belonging to the public sector is not known: the Federal Ministry of Finance only started gathering data to determine what belongs to the state in 2016. To this day, even church leaders – whose predecessors in feudal society were property lords similar to aristocrats – do not know the exact number of properties and buildings in their possession. In fact, as non-profit organizations, these religious communities don't even have to know.

The assumption today is that two-thirds of the area of the former West Germany is privately owned: farmers and foresters account for roughly 34 percent, private individuals 22 percent, communal owners 5.5 percent and small businesses 3 percent. Just under one-third belongs to the federal government, state governments and municipalities, and 4 percent of the land is owned by churches. The rest is shared by housing companies, banks and other companies.

Not only is this ownership structure exceedingly unfair, it also rarely changes. In fact, scarcely

more than one-tenth of one percent of property changes ownership each year. Forests, fields and meadows have sometimes been in the hands of one family for generations. These families are often of noble origin, even 100 years after the abolition of the monarchy. Today, only 34 percent of German forests belong to the state, whereas 50 percent of them are owned by roughly two million private individuals. The five largest swathes of privately owned forests are in the hands of aristocrats.

An exception to this rule is the land in the former East Germany. After 1945, the communists ruling under the Soviet occupying forces dispossessed the aristocratic *Junkers* who had, until then, played a major role in agriculture. However, the new owners of the 30 percent of the land that went to farm workers as well as small and "new farmers" – including many farm workers and displaced persons from the areas of the former German Reich that no longer belonged to Germany after the World War II – were not able to enjoy their new land for long. In 1952, the communists began to group the *Junkerland* they had just handed over to farmers into collectivized enterprises based on the Soviet model. Anyone who refused to join the new "agricultural production cooperatives" (LPGs) was either forced to do so or had to leave the GDR.

The degree to which this forced collectivization continues to shape the former East Germany to this day is clearly recognizable from a bird's-eye-view; while the land belonging to the former West Germany looks like a patchwork of small and medium-sized meadows and fields, if you look down on the five states of the former East Germany when arriving at any regional airport, you'll see huge agricultural areas dominating the landscape. The current owners of these areas are often so-called *rote Junker* (red Junkers), that is, former directors of former LPGs.

Ownership of built-up land is also distributed differently in the former GDR than in former West Germany. In the East, the rate of home ownership is just under 35

percent, while in the West it's more than 44 percent. This means that more than half of residents in both eastern and western Germany do not own the home they live in. Private ownership of real estate, houses and apartments also varies significantly from region to region. For example, almost 60 percent of Saarland residents own a home, whereas in Berlin it's only 12.7 percent.

There are historical reasons that explain why so few Germans own their homes: In World War II, almost half of the country's residential real estate was either badly damaged or destroyed. The resulting lack of an estimated six million homes was only accommodated gradually after 1945 by years of massive state support for social housing. Today, while only six to seven percent of the population lives in social housing, the residential space previously used as public housing was not sold – as one might expect – to the people living there, but instead to companies, many of which belong to wealthy individuals and families.

More and more foreign investors are also now investing in real estate in Germany; in 2015, roughly 68 percent of buyers came from abroad. Considering the widespread ignorance about land ownership described above, it will come as no surprise that here, too, there is no data with regard to who is actually buying, owning and reselling real estate in Germany.

Is property an intimate thing? Are Germany's property owners afraid? If so, who and what are they afraid of? Revenge by the dispossessed? The envy of others? Taxes? The "property is theft" argument put forth by anarchist Pierre-Joseph Proudhon certainly has a polemical touch to it; however, it is hard to refute the fact that the land now privately owned and covered in private buildings at one point belonged to someone other than the current owner. Or to no one at all. Or to everybody.

Rüdiger Rossig is an editor at Deutsche Welle.

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BY MARLENE WEISS

For a long time, climate change was a phenomenon of the future. While always more and more threatening with each new scientific forecast, its gloom and doom has remained something most of us could manage to ignore – until now. Who could really say for sure whether this particular flood or that extremely hot, dry summer wasn't just a natural event like so many others throughout history?

Today, that phase of comfortable ignorance has definitely come to an end. The last five years were the warmest on the planet since humans began recording temperatures around 1880; since then, the Earth has become roughly one degree Celsius (1.8F) warmer. This trend is unambiguous and extends far beyond anything we could explain by means of normal fluctuations. Climate change is very obviously in full swing.

According to the International Energy Agency, global energy consumption in 2018 increased at nearly twice the average rate of growth since 2010. This has tangible consequences. For example, while tropical cyclones have not increased in frequency, they have become more violent and are marked by greater wind speeds. The amount of rain they bring has also increased, owing to the fact that warmer air can absorb more moisture. In 2017, the devastating Hurricane Harvey brought more rain to the United States than any storm before it. Only two years later, Tropical Cyclone Idai followed in eastern Africa; the World Meteorological Association (WMO) called it one of the deadliest weather-related disasters to hit the southern hemisphere.

We are also seeing an increasing number of incidents having an irreparable impact on nature. For example, in 2016 and 2017, the Great Barrier Reef in Australia suffered from two consecutive years of extremely warm water that



Mother Nature calls in her loan

Severe storms are on the rise, glaciers are melting, coral reefs are dying and soils are eroding: climate change is more painfully noticeable today than ever before

resulted in so-called mass bleaching. Coral polyps live in a kind of symbiosis there with colorful algae. In their limestone skeleton, these animals provide algae with a place to live and also offer them protection; in return, the algae provide nourishment for their hosts. If the water becomes too warm, however, the algae start to produce toxins and are repelled by the coral. If the heat wave lasts too long, the coral end up starving, and the only thing that remains is their bleached calcareous skeleton.

Usually, the reefs can recover from such episodes. But the research team under Terry Hughes at James Cook University in Queensland recently examined the reef and determined that its recoup capacity has decreased dramatically. The number of coral larvae settling within the reef has plummeted to 11 percent of normal levels, the team reported in *Nature*. Simply too many parents are dead. Plus, the rate of new offspring among the species of coral that have, until now, dominated the unique ecosystem, has declined even more. Other species are taking over.

"We're not saying the Barrier Reef is doomed, but it is on a new trajec-

tory," head author Terry Hughes told *The Guardian*. "The way it's connected, the mix of species, it's all changing." And, presumably, this is a permanent change; indeed, experts say it is likely that there will be another bleaching episode before the reef has an opportunity to find its way back to its original form. In the past few decades, the gap between these marine heat waves has dropped from 25 to under 6 years.

For many scientists, the fact that such drastic events are happening more frequently is hardly surprising. After all, these are the people who have been warning us for decades that we need to keep global warming under 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7F) in this century, if possible. This is why that number appears in the Paris Climate Agreement: if we exceed 1.5 degrees, then we dramatically increase the likelihood that irreversible and global damages will take place.

Although the 1.5-degree goal is indeed mentioned in the Paris Agreement, it is noted solely as an ideal target to work toward. The nations that have signed the agreement have, in fact, officially committed themselves to only two degrees (3.6F). As long as emissions

continue to rise rather than fall, however, both goals seem equally as unrealistic. Having said that, 1.5 degrees is actually a natural border, and we are seeing at this very moment what happens when we approach that number: The planet starts sending us the bill for damages caused.

Some of the changes can be best seen from outer space. For example, in the case of the Arctic Ocean, satellite images show that minimal expansion in September has been declining at an increasingly faster pace, at the moment by almost 13 percent per decade. The Intergovernmental Panel of Climate Change (IPCC) says it is possible the Arctic will see its first ice-free summer by mid-century. This would mark a major geological break, as the Arctic has presumably been continuously frozen for roughly 2.6 million years.

As far as the concentration of CO₂ is concerned, the earth already has a level that it once had even further back in history. Since the dawn of industrialization, the concentration of carbon dioxide in the air has risen from 280 ppm (parts-per-million) to more than 400 ppm. The last time so much carbon dioxide was in the air was three million years ago, that is, in the Pliocene

era. The climate of that era was significantly different from ours today: It was two to four degrees warmer than the era before the industrial revolution; there were even trees growing in the Antarctic; and the sea level was an unimaginable 15 meters higher than it is today.

The fact that our climate has changed over the millennia is sometimes used to insist that CO₂ levels are only one aspect to consider. But this is a fatal mistake: in fact, the earth is simply very slow. Only the temperature at the surface is increasing relatively rapidly. "If you have 400 ppm CO₂ and you keep it there for long enough, then you start to get additional feedback from the slower-responding components of the system, that amplifies warming," says Alan Haywood from the University of Leeds, an expert in past climates. It takes a while until the ice sheets or the oceans change. But when the time comes, they start raising the temperature further upwards, for example, because ice-free water surfaces reflect less solar radiation. "Actually, there are already indications that these components are starting to react," says Haywood: The Arctic ice cover is shrinking, Greenland is changing, and even the huge cold

eastern Antarctic is losing ice in places.

This means that the earth could actually become a warm Pliocene climate over the long term – even if the Paris target is, in fact, met in the current century. In order to prevent that, we would not only have to reduce emissions to zero, but we would also have to take excess CO₂ out of the atmosphere, for example, by following Bioenergy with Carbon Capture and Storage principles in forestry.

Failing that, we are most likely going to have greater worries than a bit of forest in the Antarctic. Indeed, it is entirely unclear how the planet is going to react if it gets catapulted into another geological age within a few centuries – usually such processes take tens of thousands of years. This is another reason why scientists see the second and even more urgent

upper limit at two degrees: that is the temperature at which climate change becomes pretty much incalculable.

As Johan Rockström, director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research and a scholar known worldwide for his work on the planet's natural stability, notes: "Going past 2 degrees global mean temperature means pushing ourselves into the unknown: Over 3 million years, and during all of human civilization, the planet has never been warmer." And Rockström continues to watch exactly how things are developing: "For the past 15 years, change has been somewhat faster than predicted," he says, admitting that the Greenland ice shield and the Thwaites Glacier in western Antarctica are perhaps even more sensitive than expected. In fact, both have already started showing the signs of change now – right now, not in the distant future.

Marlene Weiß received her doctorate in particle physics from ETH Zurich and CERN (Geneva) and is a science editor for the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*.

BY HEIKE HOLDINGHAUSEN

For many Germans, the demonstrations held on Fridays by schoolchildren calling for climate protection have exposed a family scandal of sorts. While everyone knows and quietly accepts that the entire family has long been dumping its waste behind the house, the sudden demands made by their youngest to bring an end to the ignorance and denial seem as cheeky as they are inspiring.

While it's true that there's been a public discussion surrounding the fact that greenhouse gas emissions in Germany have not been decreasing but rather remaining constant for about 10 years now – with some sectors even registering an increase in emissions thanks to the economic boom – the vehemence of this new generation of students now calling for serious climate policy goals has nevertheless taken journalists, political parties, politicians, parents and the business lobby completely by surprise.

The German public's bewilderment regarding the protests was expressed initially with sheer speechlessness. Instead of taking the tangible climate concerns of their own offspring into consideration, the generations of parents and grandparents focused entirely on whether it was even permitted to cut class to protest in favor of climate protection. In the German tabloid *Bild*, Hans-Peter

Meidinger, head of the German Teachers Association, complained that the state was making a fool of itself by not enforcing the children's legal obligation to attend school. Meidinger argued that the demonstrations were far from "education-related" events. Christian Lindner, chairman of the liberal FDP party, took to Twitter to old-man-splain to the young students that climate protection was something they "should leave to the professionals."

Other politicians proved to be more open-minded: Chancellor Angela Merkel (CDU) and Environment Minister Svenja Schulze (SPD), for example, expressed their support and praised the political commitment of the young generation, while in no way responding to their substantive demands. The students did, however, receive momentum from 23,000 scientists worldwide who signed the Scientists for Future petition in favor of their climate concerns.

The young men and women involved in the Fridays for Future movement in Germany are now organized into roughly 310 local groups. And, like their peers in more than 100 countries, they are calling on politicians to commit to responsible climate policies. In Germany, this includes the following: a faster withdrawal from coal energy – by 2030 at the latest, rather the German government's current target of 2035 – and the fulfillment of the Paris climate goal of a maximum of 1.5 degrees



Greta Thunberg with her German counterpart Luisa Neubauer (right) in Berlin

Power to the pupil!

German youths have taken up the mantle, cutting class on Fridays to demand more effective climate protection

of global warming. In individual cases, the students are also calling for taxes on meat and measures relating to carbon-dioxide reduction, both designed to ensure more sustainability.

In Germany, as elsewhere, 16-year-old Swedish student Greta Thunberg is the face of the protests and a role model for the young protestors. Now nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize, she became known worldwide after a short speech she gave at the World Economic Forum in Davos in 2018

went viral. Still, it would be wise not to overestimate her influence. As Dieter Rucht, a sociologist at the WZB Berlin Social Science Center, determined at one of the largest demonstrations in Berlin on March 15, although Thunberg is at the heart of a growing interest in climate issues among large numbers of German youth and has even prompted many to join in demonstrating, roughly one-third of the demonstrators insisted the Swede had little to no influence on their decision to participate.

Instead, they offered concepts like "future," "climate change" and "climate protection" as the reasons for their participation.

According to Rucht, the Fridays for Future demonstrators differ from previous protest movements in one characteristic above all, namely that roughly 57 percent of participants are female. And a majority of these young women self-define as belonging to the upper middle class, with many of their parents being academics themselves. On the political map, they appear to be located mainly in the left-liberal milieu and among the Greens.

No matter what their gender, these young students are protesting at a time when the issue of climate protection has gained new political relevance. Germany's grand coalition has stated its intent to pass climate protection legislation before the summer holidays. However, the draft presented by Environment Minister Schulze caused outrage among her cabinet colleagues for a number of reasons. For one, the ministers for transport, agriculture and building would be obliged to provide a detailed portrayal of the measures they intend to take in order to save the required amounts of greenhouse gases. In addition, each ministry would also be expected to pay any potential penalties to the European Union out of its own budget.

The EU already requires Germany to emit 38 percent less greenhouse gas by 2030. If Germany doesn't achieve this goal, it will

have to pay penalties. The transport sector – a genuine problem child in Germany's overall climate and environmental policy – could be hit first. Plus, there's the threat of high fines from Brussels. Accordingly, in its draft budget for the coming years, the German federal government has already planned an annual sum of €100 million for the years 2020 to 2022.

While the coalition remains bogged down by day-to-day political minutia, the demonstrating youngsters are undeterred in proving the seriousness of their cause. These angry offspring are not letting up in their demand for change. According to a survey by the WZB's Rucht, the students see their protest as a form of "political self-empowerment." And roughly 60 percent of them are convinced that climate change can be managed by means of tangible and prescient policymaking. One of the organizers, Julia Neubauer, even announced her intention to make the European Parliament elections in May into a "climate election." For a Europe otherwise preoccupied with the rise of right-wing populists, this is hopeful and welcome news.

Heike Holdinghausen is a business and environment editor for the Berlin daily *taz*. In March, she published the book *Uns stinkt's! Was jetzt für eine zweite ökologische Wende zu tun ist* (This stinks! What we need for a second ecological transformation).

Ready for takeoff

Tom Enders parts ways with Airbus and hands the reins to Guillaume Faury

BY JENS FLOTTAU

It had to be those red cowboy boots. “My favorite shoes. Very comfortable,” Tom Enders says, raising his jeans a bit to show off his footwear. His last meeting with the media in a Munich hotel, no pressure any more. Enders is relaxed and in a good mood, his aides will confirm that this has not always been the case in past years.

He just received his first lifetime achievement award, and of course he showed up in Washington, D.C., wearing a tuxedo and the red boots. Enders also just turned 60, which in combination with the award is “a good reason to be depressed,” he says.

He either is or isn't an extremely good actor. 2019 marks a break not only in the life of the Airbus CEO, but also in the history of the company where he held a leadership role for almost 20 years. Enders retired from his position at the close of the annual general assembly on April 10. Just days after that meeting in the Munich hotel, he was replaced at the helm by Guillaume Faury, 51, who has led the commercial aircraft division as president since early last year.

He has big shoes to fill, and not just literally. Enders transformed Airbus in many ways. Created as a European project in 1969, almost exactly 50 years ago, it is now no longer strictly a European company, nor is it a company that governments have much control over any more. It is (almost) a normal company and a champion in global aerospace.

Airbus has a global footprint that includes final assembly lines in China and Mobile, Alabama.

Last year, Airbus made Canada its fifth “home country” after France, Germany, Spain and the UK, following the acquisition of the C-Series jet program from struggling Bombardier.

And another, second final assembly line for the aircraft, now called the A220 in Airbus typology, is under construction in Mobile.

“What I enjoyed

In 2012, Enders took over following the retirement of Gallois. And

only a few months into the job, he attempted to take one giant step further in dealmaking. He had quietly negotiated a merger with BAE Systems to be able to put EADS on a broader base – combining its strength in civil aerospace with BAE's exposure in defense. But much to his

most in my job was the international nature of the business. It would be hard to go back and work for a purely German company,” Enders says.

He has seen it all. In the late 1990s when he was in his late 30s, Enders was responsible for strategy as well as mergers and acquisitions at Daimler-Chrysler Aerospace (Dasa). He helped orchestrate the merger with Spain's Casa and France's Aero-spaciale to form what was then called EADS. For some years, he served as co-CEO of EADS along with Louis Gallois – the idea of a balance of power between the French and the Germans was still primary. Later, Enders took a step back and became CEO of the commercial aircraft division for five years, a business with which he was not very familiar, having earned his wings on the defense side of the equation. He wanted to get to know the unit better – by far the group's most important – before being solely in charge.

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only a few months into the job, he attempted to take one giant step further in dealmaking. He had quietly negotiated a merger with BAE Systems to be able to put EADS on a broader base – combining its strength in civil aerospace with BAE's exposure in defense. But much to his

surprise, the German government blocked the deal for fear that German jobs could be lost. Enders was furious. “Forgiven, but not forgotten,” he says about the episode today.

He has reasons to forgive. The merger failed, but the intervention by the German government scared the French government so much that it was willing to give up power in order to keep the Germans away from it, too. “In 2012, there was a very real risk that EADS would become a French-German government joint venture,” Enders recalls. In that eventuality, he would have resigned. But miraculously, a new corporate governance was agreed on – one that limited the powers of governments and gave Enders more freedom to act.

He refocused the company and gave up trying to strengthen defense. Instead, aggressive growth in civil aviation was now the target. His decision, still as Airbus Commercial CEO, to launch a re-engined version of the A320 narrowbody aircraft turned out to be a huge success. Around 6,500 aircraft were ordered since the 2010 launch decision, more than any other civil type in history. The move ensured Airbus could continue to make massive profits off its short- and medium-haul aircraft family while limiting investment.

At the same time, the A321neo, the largest version, turned out to be an airline favorite because of its long range and low costs. The A320neo family forced Boeing to quickly launch the 737 Max,

without which it would have lost a key account at American Airlines to Airbus. The Max ensured that the two would share the deal. The global Max fleet is currently grounded following two crashes. It has already lost market share vis-à-vis Airbus and the intense discussion about its safety is not making the recovery any easier.

Enders has had his share of problems, too. For years, he and his colleagues have tried to score more A380 orders. Enders was around as the program was launched in 2000, when European aerospace executives thought they had to build an aircraft to compete with Boeing's 747. What they didn't see was that the 747 was already in decline and the smaller 777 was rising. Airbus' own A350, launched in 2007 at the peak of the A380 industrial crisis, and Boeing's 787 are now eclipsing even the 777; they have lower costs per seat than even the much larger aircraft, making them redundant. Enders took responsibility and shut the program down two months before his own departure.

It was a move that made Guillaume Faury's start easier. But Enders has long come to the conclusion that it is impossible to hand over a company in perfect condition. “There is always something left to do; there is constant change,” he says.

Plus, he was initially not quite ready to leave. One of his toughest fights was against corruption. A Paris-based Airbus marketing unit was at the heart of a scandal that may cost Airbus vast sums in pen-

alties. The unit used “consultants” to help broker commercial aircraft deals. Enders and CFO Harald Wilhelm were trying to end the practice but found strong internal resistance in the unit against interference from corporate. In late 2017, the French media was suddenly full of stories about an alleged or real power struggle inside Airbus. Enders decided that the only way to end the damaging public debate was to resign.

Now, more than a year later, he seems to be at peace with his decision. And he is even more open to voicing criticism where he believes it is necessary. Airbus is looking at making its defense products as free as possible from Germany-built components in order to be able to export them in spite of the government's strict position on defense exports. But Enders is concerned that common European programs such as a new fighter aircraft may not happen with German participation if the German government is not willing to compromise on policies with its partners.

These are issues Faury now must face. Enders has been clear that he no longer wants executive jobs; he has no plans to go into consulting, but he will take board positions. And he has big plans in aviation – his career as an enthusiastic helicopter pilot is now set to take off.

Jens Flottau is a business and aviation correspondent for the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*.





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Bank, shot

The once-proud Deutsche Bank is in dire straits

BY MARK SCHIERITZ

It should have been the high point of its global conquest. In 1999, after a series of acquisitions, in terms of its balance sheet Deutsche Bank rated as the biggest bank in the world. In actuality, it was the beginning of its downfall. Today's Deutsche Bank is but a shadow of its former self. Its share price, at \$144 in 2007, is now less than \$10. The largest German bank is now smaller than the second-largest French bank.

The outlook is so grim that Germany's federal government is alarmed. It fears that the Frankfurt institution is a prime candidate for a takeover and that the fourth largest industrial nation in the world will soon be lacking an internationally successful major bank. Hence, the possible merger with Commerzbank, to save whatever might be left to be saved.

The recent history of Deutsche Bank is a history of bad decisions, missed opportunities and scandals. To understand its decline, one must first consider its rise. From the very beginning, it has always been something more than just a normal bank. In the post-war years, CEOs like Herman-Josef Abs enjoyed intimate links to political networks and were valued advisors on fiscal matters. Under Chancellor Konrad Adenauer, Abs would even take part in cabinet meetings. Plus, Deutsche Bank held considerable equity stakes in German industrial corporations such as Daimler and Krupp, making it a critical player at the heart of corporate Germany.

When the globalization and deregulation of financial markets eventually reached Germany in the 1980s and 1990s, Deutsche Bank changed its business model. It saw how much money



Ever in the (un-)making? The headquarters of Deutsche Bank and Commerzbank in Frankfurt am Main are under construction.

American and British banks were making in capital markets with bond trading, currency hedging and interest-rate transactions – and wanted to join the party. In 1990, Deutsche Bank bought the British investment bank Morgan Grenfell, and nine years later the American trading house Bankers Trust.

There was just one problem: the market was already divvied up, and getting one foot in the door required Deutsche Bank to become especially aggressive. During his time in real estate, Donald Trump was still getting loans from Frankfurt when the American banks would no longer lend to him due to his high amount of debt. Deutsche Bank became deeply involved in the

controversial shopping of American subprime mortgages during the real estate boom at the start of the new millennium. When the bubble broke in 2008, these adventures ended in heavy losses and costly legal disputes.

At this juncture, a second poor decision was made. Other banks very quickly recognized that the crisis would permanently transform the financial world. They adapted their business models to the significantly more rigorous regulatory environment. The Swiss financial services company UBS largely retreated from commercial transactions to concentrate instead on more stable realms such as asset management.

Only very late did Deutsche Bank draw the necessary conclu-

sions from the financial crisis. When CEO Josef Ackermann, who had overseen the rampant internationalization of the bank, relinquished control of the institution in 2012, Anshu Jain, one of Deutsche's trading stars, took the reins. Hopeful for a return of the good old days, he assumed that if Deutsche Bank could just hold on for long enough, it could then move in on the markets vacated by other banks.

But things turned out differently and the bank's position grew ever direr. Jain was then succeeded by the equally unfortunate John Cryan. However, only when Christian Sewing took the helm in 2018 was the long-overdue strategy discussion conducted in earnest.

Government policy during this time was hardly free of blame. While the US government forced the big American banks to accept state capital at the peak of the crisis and urged them to pursue a corrective course, the German government elected to follow a more cautious path. Berlin ultimately left it up to the banks to decide whether or not they would accept government assistance, and otherwise opted to steer clear of corporate policy.

Deutsche Bank was in fact proud of forgoing government aid, but its major clients and investors saw its insufficient capitalization as problematic, which only accelerated its demise.

The government acquired an interest in Commerzbank, which

is faring better today as a result. The difficulties undergone by Deutsche Bank are thus also a consequence of misguided government bank-rescue policy.

Another factor is that Deutsche Bank had to contend with an obstacle that every private German bank had to face: the structure of the German banking market. Germany has private banks and public savings banks as well as cooperative banks. The latter two are protected by the government, locally anchored and forbidden to make a profit. Thus they can offer conditions which private institutions can often not match. This limits profit opportunities on the domestic market while leading to a situation where, to a lesser extent than their international competitors, large German banks cannot draw on private savings deposits as a source of funding for their other commercial activities.

What does this mean for the future? A merger with Commerzbank would increase market shares on the domestic front, which could have positive effects on earnings. Moreover, the fact that the German government's stake in Commerzbank would be the equivalent to a stake in the merged entity would probably be seen by investors and an implicit state guarantee, which could reduce financing costs for the institution.

The merger would of course carry certain risks, as the new entity would be somewhat self-absorbed for several years, which the competition will be sure to exploit. But one thing is clear: simply carrying on as before is out of the question. Tough times lie ahead for Deutsche Bank. ■

Mark Schieritz is an economics editor for the weekly newspaper *Die Zeit*.

Round down

Bayer's purchase of Monsanto is giving the aspirin makers a big headache

BY WOLFGANG MULKE

The chief executive of the pharmaceutical and chemical giant Bayer is preparing for a tumultuous meeting with his shareholders. They will convey their displeasure about the company's massive loss in value to Werner Baumann at the corporation's general meeting on April 26. Their anger is understandable. While before the acquisition of Monsanto, a share of Bayer was worth €105, it currently sells for around €60. For a short time, the market capitalization plummeted below the €63 billion Bayer had paid in 2018 to acquire the controversial US-based seed producer. Within three months, Bayer became "the biggest and fastest destroyer of value in the history of the DAX," as shareholder Christian Strenger ranted in a motion to the general meeting.

Baumann views this very differently. The stock exchange tends to exaggerate trends, he claims, downplaying the crash. He maintains the acquisition was still a good idea.

This disaster is in no small part due to the 11,200 pending lawsuits filed by US citizens against Monsanto. At issue is the question of whether the herbicide glyphosate can cause cancer in humans. The courts have issued two groundbreaking rulings thus far. In each

case the plaintiff won. The first was in August 2018, when a jury awarded the plaintiff a payment of \$289 million. A higher court then reduced the penalty to \$78 million. In a test case in March of this year, a jury in San Francisco ordered Bayer to pay approximately \$80 million to a Monsanto customer who had developed cancer. The projected maximal financial risk stemming from the wave of lawsuits is a staggering \$800 billion. The worst-case scenario is nothing less than the permanent demise of the long-standing company.

While small shareholders are groaning and calling the acquisition of Monsanto a flop, the management is standing by its decision. Critical shareholders were told that "the executive and supervisory boards are convinced that the acquisition of Monsanto was the right choice." In doing so, Bayer has presumably become the world's leading agricultural company.

The executive board sees no reasons for stepping down. Indeed, Bayer will fight these verdicts using all legal means at its disposal and is certain that the herbicide glyphosate in its weed-killer Roundup, which is at the center of this legal morass, does not cause cancer. "The verdict in this case has no influence on future cases," Bayer assured the public in a press release.

Bayer continues to refer to more than 800 studies submitted in connection with the marketing authorization of Roundup in the US and Europe. These claim that the Bayer products in question are safe when used properly. Current studies have also concluded that there is no cancer risk for humans. But it's not quite as simple as that. The World Health Organization's International Agency for Research

(CBG), which counts among its activists shareholders critical of the corporation. "Glyphosate represents not only billions in sales, but also cancer, genetic engineering and a danger to biodiversity."

Critics of Bayer management will not prevail in their demand to discharge the executive board at the general meeting on April 26. The supervisory board stands firmly behind CEO Baumann. The



Corpus delicti

on Cancer (IARC) has found that glyphosate is "probably carcinogenic."

Bayer shareholders fear that the executive board has not sufficiently addressed the hidden risks of Monsanto products. "Bayer looked only at the numbers during the acquisition," claims the Coalition against BAYER Dangers

executive board has attended to its legal obligations, said Supervisory Board Chairman Werner Wenning to the business journal *Handelsblatt*. "Once more we have expressly approved this strategy."

Nevertheless, the dual messaging inherent to the acquisition of Monsanto remains a "big problem," according to the Munich-

based branding expert Alexander Biesalski. While the pharmaceuticals manufacturer would like to be known for its promotion of human health, Monsanto's herbicide may actually be making humans sick. "This contradiction alone creates distrust," observes Biesalski.

Biesalski doubts that the pharmaceuticals giant will win back stakeholders' trust by making lots of noise: "Bayer should operate much more delicately in public."

This is not the only problem facing the Leverkusen corporation. On paper, Bayer is still a behemoth. Revenues in 2018 reached nearly €40 billion, a rise of 13.1 percent over the previous year. But earnings before interest and taxes (EBIT) declined by a third to roughly €3.9 billion, mainly because of write-downs to assets.

The jump in revenue is thanks to the crop science division, which grew by almost a half to around €14 billion thanks to Monsanto. Other divisions look worse. Revenue from pharmaceuticals declined slightly, while the consumer health and animal health divisions suffered more significant losses. Still, the executive board is sticking to its goals, which foresee strong growth in years to come in terms of both revenue and profit. This worries Bayer's work force

as well. With 117,000 employees at the end of 2018, the drug company is one of the largest employers in Germany. 12,000 are slated to be let go. And of all the locations to be shuttered, the company will close up shop in the very town where its two young founders mixed their first chemicals in 1863.

The company's history began when Johann Friedrich Wesskott and Friedrich Bayer started producing dyestuffs in the industrial town of Barmen, which is now part of Wuppertal. In 1888, they added the development of pharmaceuticals to their portfolio. What has probably been the company's most famous drug is still appreciated today: aspirin. This brand's first analgesic tablet hit the market in 1899 as the company grew in leaps and bounds. But Bayer's history also has its dark sides, such as the invention of heroin and the fusion of German chemicals giants to form IG Farben, the manufacturer of the poison gas used in concentration camps.

Whether or not the whole company now goes dark will depend on the outcome of the wave of lawsuits blanketing the US. Some analysts are already predicting a takeover and breakup if the loss in value persists. ■

Wolfgang Mulke is a freelance journalist based in Berlin.

Listen up

Huawei, 5G and the new geopolitics

BY DANIEL LEISEGANG

The next generation of wireless systems – 5G – promises to revolutionize our lives. The new mobile communications technology will blow away all current wireless standards and set in place certain pre-conditions for telemedicine, driverless cars and Smart Cities. These advancements are made possible, in part, by a data transmission rate of more than 10 gigabytes per second – i.e. 20 times faster than what 4G can achieve.

Only four companies in the world can supply the components required to build the 5G network: Huawei and ZTE in China, Ericsson in Sweden and Nokia in Finland. According to industry experts, however, only the market leader Huawei possesses the most modern yet also most affordable technology. The company generated revenue of more than \$105 billion in 2018, an almost 20-percent increase over the previous year. Huawei does business in more than 170 countries and regions; approximately half its income comes from outside of China.

The United States government is currently doing all it can to prevent Huawei's growing influence. It is demanding that its allies cease awarding contracts to the company. Washington's official justification is that Beijing could force Huawei to spy on or infiltrate foreign wireless networks or sabotage critical infrastructure.

The US has thus far been unable to produce any evidence to support its assertion. This suggests that for Washington, the issue is less about cybersecurity than about thwarting China's geostrategic rise as it seeks to become the technological and political world power.

The US government is deploying some relatively heavy artiller-



ry, especially vis-à-vis the EU. At the Munich Security Conference in February, Vice President Mike Pence stressed: "We cannot ensure the defense of the West if our allies grow dependent on the East." A few days later, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo traveled to Hungary, Poland and Slovakia, where he threatened each government with the withdrawal of US troops if they fail to thwart Chinese influence in their countries. And in Berlin, a visiting US delegation attempted in December to dissuade the German government from doing any further business with Huawei.

Germany struggled to take a clear position. The country wanted neither to renounce the security guarantees of the US nor jeopardize its increasingly impor-

tant economic ties to China. In mid-February, Berlin finally announced that no providers perse are excluded from playing a role in establishing new wireless technology in Germany. Huawei technology will only be avoided when

Germany's wireless network is one of Europe's worst

building strategically significant networks.

Few were surprised that the decision fell in favor of China. In recent years, the EU has neglected to encourage the development of its own critical digital technologies. Furthermore, the yearly trade volume between China and Ger-

many currently sits at around €200 billion; for years, China has been the largest source of imports for Germany.

In mid-March, irrespective of America's threats, Italy, the third-largest economy in the eurozone,

as well as automobile companies have been working closely with Huawei for some time. The British government, usually a loyal ally of Washington, did criticize Huawei in late March for its ongoing difficulties in closing up security loopholes. However, London is reluctant to ban Huawei from the UK, as it fears additional costs ranging in the hundreds of millions of pounds.

And the German government would ultimately follow the same material economic logic. It can hardly afford to turn down Huawei's assistance. Germany's wireless network is one of Europe's worst, above all in terms of availability and coverage. Moreover, Huawei has been operating in Germany since 2005 and accounts for every second transmission tower

in the Federal Republic. No signs of industrial sabotage or spying by Chinese companies has been discovered over the last 15 years.

Nonetheless, the German government would like to minimize this risk. It is currently negotiating an anti-espionage agreement with Beijing, which would include stricter security requirements for technology companies as well as compulsory certification of their devices. Although Huawei has worked for years with Germany's Federal Office for Information Security and – unlike other providers – allows inspections of the source code underpinning its software, Huawei's transmission technology will be even more closely examined in the future.

Huawei has already indicated that it will permit more stringent measures, provided that they "apply to everyone and are technology-neutral." Thus, the US government's harsh approach could prove to have an unintended boomerang effect, as Washington presumably has no interest in tighter controls. According to the Patriot Act, US competitors like Cisco and Juniper are required to provide US intelligence services with information at their request, not least by way of manipulated hardware and software. The US seems poised to lose the great dispute with Huawei.

However, besides the US there is another loser in this game: the EU. In the struggle for global hegemony, Europe is little more than a ball batted about by the great powers old and new. For its member states, there remains but one small comfort – in the near future they'll have a downright revolutionarily fast wireless network.

Daniel Leisegang is an editor for the monthly journal *Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik*.

Uber and out

The US ridesharing company is facing considerable resistance in Germany

BY MARTIN GROPP

If you're flying from the United States to Germany and you want to use the American ride-hailing company Uber to get from the airport to downtown, there are two things you need to know: first, you're going to have to land in one of only a few German cities and, second, you should bring a lot of time to spare. While in many US cities and several countries around the world, it's completely normal to order an Uber driver via smartphone rather than wait for a taxi, this is far from the case in Germany.

Although Uber currently offers its services in Germany, it does so in only four cities: Frankfurt am Main, Düsseldorf, Munich and Berlin. And, depending on the city and the time of day, you might have to wait for your Uber driver for as long as it takes to get your luggage at the airport – 45 minutes or longer. Plus, your Uber driver is not going to be a private person in their own car – as is usually the case in other cities; instead, you'll probably get a professional chauffeur, sometimes even a regular taxi driver.

Simply put, Germany is not an Uber country. By now, the country's Uber-resistant reputation has become almost a badge of pride. The company – which investors say has a potential stock

market value of €120 billion on the eve of its public offering – has been attempting to gain a foothold in the motherland of the automobile, but all its efforts have encountered one reaction in particular: resistance.

It would appear the problem isn't a lack of private drivers interested in offering their services, as is the case in other countries. Rather, courts in Germany have prohibited Uber's standard business model from operating in their country. Other Uber offers have failed here as well: in December 2018, the company's professional chauffeur service, Uber Black, was declared inadmissible ex post by Germany's Federal Court of Justice, the highest court in the country. At the time, the federal court determined that the limousine service violated Germany's Passenger Transport Act.

The problem, at least according to the court, is that professional chauffeurs in Germany are only allowed to accept orders that have been received via a centralized dispatch office or by telephone. The Federal Court of Justice ruled that Uber does not fulfill this requirement, as drivers receive their orders via smartphone app. In other words, before they accept a new order, chauffeurs would have to first drive back to the dispatch office, because they would otherwise be in violation of German law.

Although this blue law is virtually never enforced, the ruling of the court stands.

This is why there are only two types of services Uber can currently offer: taxi drivers via Uber Taxi and professional chauffeurs via Uber X. This time, the company is making a great effort to comply with the Passenger Transport Act. At their relaunch in Frankfurt last December, the company took great pains to show how in-demand it was. In fact since January first, half a million users in Frankfurt have tried to book a ride via the smartphone app. Most of these attempts probably came from people who had just arrived at the airport, which is, after all, the largest in Germany.

"Frankfurt and Uber are a perfect match," said Christoph Weigler, Uber's managing director for Germany. Weigler noted that a constructive dialog with the city, with drivers, but also "with other mobility service providers" is crucial in the area. But these "other mobility service providers" – that is, taxi drivers in Frankfurt but also throughout Germany – are putting up quite a resistance to their competition.

In February, taxi drivers organized the first "action day" in Berlin with roughly 700 participants. The second one followed in mid-April, but was organized for all of Germany. The protests were prompted by the reform plans

submitted by Federal Transport Minister Andreas Scheuer (CSU), who was seeking to change the Passenger Transport Act, and thus repeal drivers' obligation to return to the dispatch office after completing a ride. If this reform were to pass, drivers would be permitted to simply move on to their next customer when instructed by the Uber app, rather than only by telephone. In addition, Scheuer wants to make it possible for several passengers with the same destination to ride together in these cars. This "pooling," which works in other cities using the Uber app, has also been banned in Germany.

The president of the Federal Association of Taxis and Car Rentals (BZP) recently had some sharp criticism of Scheuer's plans. "The proposals coming from the ministry are all unilaterally in favor of Uber & Co. – and at the expense of taxis. This threatens the very existence of the taxi industry."

Even the ecological transport association Verkehrsclub Deutschland (VCD) considers the current Passenger Transport Act to be outdated. And yet, without mentioning the name Uber, the association still opposes any unrestricted market access, which it considers neither necessary nor helpful: "What we need is a carefully proportioned liberalization, one in which municipalities maintain planning sovereignty over ridesharing services." Ger-



Uber alles – not: Berlin taxi drivers protesting against a potential rival in April

many's Federal Cartel Office, on the other hand, sees the increase in competition resulting from services such as Uber as a positive development. Last year, Andreas Mundt, president of Germany's highest competition authority, said that innovative business ideas in traditional sectors should be welcomed in principle: "But we need uniform conditions for ridesharing services."

It's probably going to take some time before such conditions are in place in Germany, even if Transport Minister Scheuer continues to apply pressure. Indeed, even the federal government's grand coalition agreement signed by the center-right CDU and center-

left SPD contains the following language: "New platform-based digital mobility services require a secure legal basis for their approval." The agreement also says that the Passenger Transport Act will have to be modernized.

It looks like travelers in the habit of calling an Uber when they land will still have to wait. And they'll have to have two things in hand when traveling to Germany: patience and a plane ticket to either Berlin, Düsseldorf, Frankfurt or Munich.

Martin Gropp writes about the automobile industry for the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*.

Winding north

Climate change is transforming viticulture in Germany

BY NIKOLAS RECHENBERG

Vineyards that reach the Baltic Sea? We've seen it once before – some 800 years ago. Today's climate change is bringing warmer and warmer weather to Germany. And accordingly, German winemakers have started moving even further north, all the way to the coast. Near Kiel, Germany's northernmost big city in the state of Schleswig-Holstein, the Montigny Winery now operates a vineyard on two hectares of land surrounding Hof Altmühlen. And at Germany's northernmost vineyard since 2009 – in Keitum on the island of Sylt in the North Sea – the Rheingau winery Balthasar Ress cultivates Solaris and Müller-Thurgau grapevines on a plot of 3,000 square meters.

Even the states of Brandenburg and Lower Saxony, which have never been home to winegrowing, are starting to see vineyards being established. In Lower Saxony, ten new winemakers have acquired the right to cultivate grapevines on a total of nearly 7.6 hectares. These winegrowing areas are located in the region around Hanover as well as in the nearby districts of Göttingen, Lüneburg, Oldenburg, Schaumburg, Friesland, Osnabrück and Ammerland. In the space of only a couple of years, many of these northern wines will no doubt be able to measure up to the levels of quality offered by more traditional winegrowing areas.

As it is, German growers are already well-prepared for the near future with their traditional cool-climate grape varieties: Riesling, Silvaner and Spätburgunder (Pinot Noir). Any danger that these late-maturing grape varieties will not achieve their optimal maturity has long since faded away.

At the moment, winemakers are producing around 66 percent white wine and 34 percent red wine on the country's roughly



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frost candles and even helicopters to try and drive out the frost from the rows of vines.

Climate change is also causing a growing number of winemakers to seek out higher ground. For example, higher areas along the Mosel River – the so-called “upper bars” – are once again being cultivated. Ernst Büscher from the German Wine Institute notes that “one hundred meters higher means an average temperature of one degree less.” This makes it possible to continue producing lighter white wines. Plus, in order to prevent rising temperatures from generating heavy wines like the ones in Spain and Portugal, winemakers are also trimming back the foliage on vines more aggressively; after all, those leaves produce sugar via photosynthesis, and this sugar is stored in the grapes and then converted into alcohol.

One group of Germans welcoming the higher temperatures are pests and parasites, such as the Kirchessigfliege (cherry vinegar fly), Rebzikaden (grapevine leafhoppers) and Eichenprozessionsspinner (oak processionary moths). As a result, winemakers are expanding their use of organic pest control, which can involve, for example, special attractants. In the battle against the Traubenwickler (vine moth), the use of a pheromones-based approach in more than half of the vineyards in Rhineland-Palatinate is already yielding positive results.

Climate change will also no doubt impact the taste of wines, many of which will contain significantly less acidity and be less fruity. On the other hand, it also means they'll be earthier and heavier – with the alcohol content already moving steadily upward.

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100,000 hectares of vineyards. However, the trend toward red grape varieties in all 13 growing areas between the Elbe and Lake Constance is clearly identifiable. In the medium term, winemakers in Germany are increasingly looking at red grape varieties such as Tempranillo and Merlot.

For the grape known as Trollinger, however, things are slowly getting too hot. It is already being replaced in part by other varieties, such as Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. With current trends in wine lovers' drinking habits always in mind, winemakers are proceeding with caution and now planting smaller plots of land with southern red wines.

At roughly one percent of all vineyards in Germany, the proportion of international grape varieties is still low. However, figures from the German Wine Institute (DWI) show that the area

devoted to Cabernet Franc (44 hectares), Shiraz (57 hectares) and Tempranillo (10 hectares) more than doubled from 2010 to 2014. The acreage for Cabernet Sauvignon (to 360 hectares) and Merlot (to 600 hectares) also rose by 20 percent each.

Every now and then, climate change prompts concern among otherwise relaxed German winemakers. In 2006, for example, the ice wine harvest failed completely due to an excessively mild climate.

In fact, less and less ice wine has been produced since the 2000s, as those long periods of minus-7-degree weather necessary for the late harvest of these sweet wines in winter are becoming increasingly rare.

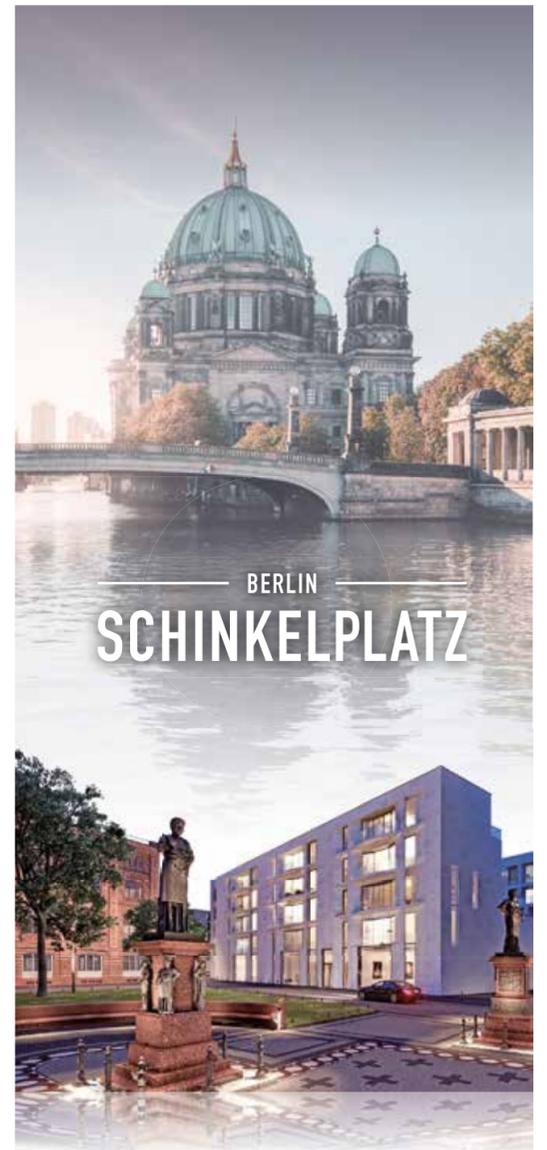
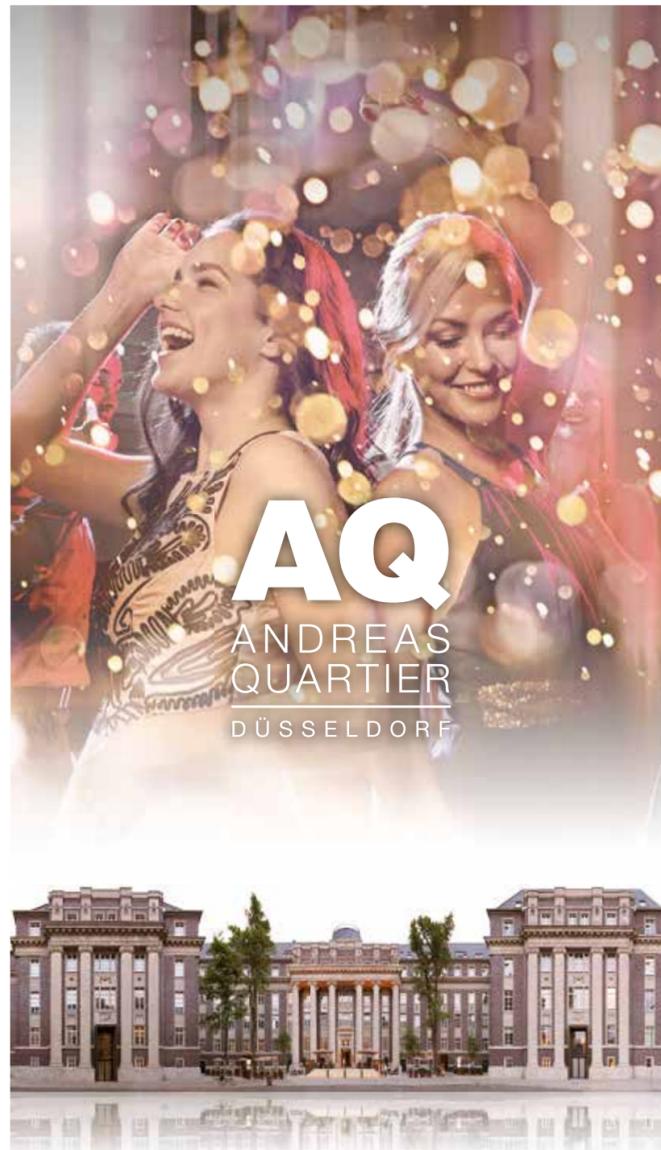
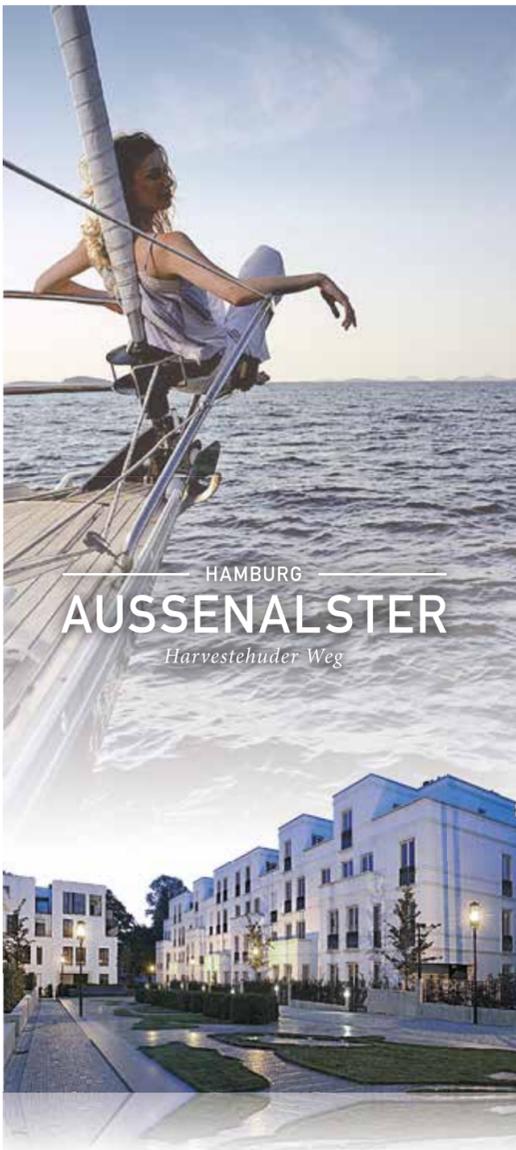
In 2007, the vines started to bloom earlier than ever before. These days, in the Rheingau region, the blooming occurs ten days earlier than it did 60 years ago. The flowering of the vines – which usually takes place in early June – now comes, on average, roughly 15 days earlier than in 1955.

This early sprouting of leaves is associated with a number of dangers: for example, night frosts can threaten young shoots, and temperatures of minus 1 degree Celsius are also dangerous to the vines. Winemakers these days are deploying measures such as small wind turbines, fan heaters,

ONE-QUARTER OF GERMAN WINE EXPORT EARNINGS IS GENERATED IN THE US

The export of German wines to the United States is on the decline, yet the US remains the most important export destination for German vineyards. One-quarter of all German wine exports is sent to the US every year. In 2018, one million of the roughly 10 million hectoliters of wine produced every year in Germany were exported: about 172,000 hectoliters worth €72 million went to the US, followed by the Scandinavian countries with 159,000 hectoliters worth €49 million and the United Kingdom with 132,000 hectoliters worth €27 million.

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Into the woods

A very special relationship, Germans and their forest

BY DIETER BORCHMEYER

Hardly any other German myth has been cited and celebrated as consistently as that of the German forest. In Jacob Grimm's 1835 publication *Deutsche Mythologie* (Teutonic Mythology), the author singled out the forest as the specific primordial site of popular belief and Germanic pagan ritual. That the myth of the forest has held firm through the irrevocable dissolution of most German myths during the apocalypse that was the Third Reich can perhaps be credited to the fact that this myth is not necessarily linked to a particular ideologically laden or politically charged location. Even National Socialism, for which the *Ewiger Wald* (Enchanted Forest, and the title of a 1936 propaganda film) – along with *Blut und Boden* (blood and soil) – served as a critical bulwark of ideology as well as an inspiration for formal forest policy and enacted legislation, could not gravely injure this myth.

Almost two millennia hence, Tacitus described Germania as a land permeated by dark forests, and cited the victory by Arminius in the Teutoburg Forest as at least partly due to the murkiness of the woodlands, where the native Teutons slew the Roman troops that were accustomed to open battle fields. The cult of the *Hermannsschlacht* – another term for the decisive battle – became the foundational myth of national identity in the 19th century, and in this context it was in particular the “German oak” that would develop into one of the essential symbols of this identity and of Germany's heroic national strength. The German forest versus the French city – no matter how one may assess the consequences of this dichotomy, it represents a cultural opposition that has defined

civilization theory and polemics since the early 19th century.

For Germans, the forest poses nothing short of a landscape of longing, the epitome of protective nature – a fact frequently met with astonishment by non-Germans. A sizable ideological dispute over its preservation and proper use continues to this day, as it receives a constant supply of oxygen from a vigorous environmental movement. The most recent demonstrations in defense of the Hambach Forest are a classic example. Commemorating the dead and the work of mourning often converge in the weighty symbolism surrounding forests – as attested by forest cemeteries and tree burials – while environment pedagogy tends to seek out woodlands, and includes institutions such as forest kindergartens. Since the mid-1970s, forest dieback – often the result of acid rain, which in recent decades has been vigorously deplored and successfully combated – has been referred to all across Europe by the German word for the blight: *Waldsterben*.

Forest consciousness in Germany is a phenomenon that has spanned all generations, social classes as well as ideological and political leanings since the Romantic period, during which painting, poetry and literature, as well as the fairy tales and legends they helped revitalize, carved out a central symbolic role for the forest. One fruit of this phenomenon has been the birth and sustenance of a constant that has pervaded and still pervades German culture – an astonishing fact considering the colossal upheavals in recent German history and the

collapse of conventional patterns of identification during and after World War II.

Despite the ideological abuse of the German forest under the Kaiser, followed by a new wave of chauvinist forest propaganda – including the organization, under the patronage of Field Marshal Paul von Hindenburg, called *Deutscher Wald e.V., Bund zur Wehr und Weihe des Waldes* (German Forest Association for the Defense and Consecration of the Forest) – Reichstag parties ranging from the Social Democrats to the far right acted in 1924 on the proposal by Reich President Friedrich Ebert to erect a (never realized) “national memorial” for the fallen soldiers of World War I in a forest, the “primordial origin” and “power source” of the Germans. This was only possible because this

memorial was to be built in a forest – preferably at Bad Berka – and not at an historical location, where political semantics would surely have provoked much dispute. One could almost recite, in a variation of the line in the 1914 declaration of war by Kaiser Wilhelm II: I henceforth see no political parties, I see only the German forest!

In his theoretical magnum opus, *Crowds and Power* (1960), Elias Canetti compared the role of forest romanticism for the Germans with that for the army:

The crowd symbol of the Germans was the army. But the army was more than just the army; it was the marching forest. In no other modern country has the forest-feeling remained as alive as it has in Germany. The parallel rigidity of the upright trees and their density and number fill the

heart of the German with a deep and mysterious delight. To this day he loves to go deep into the forest where his forefathers lived; he feels at one with the trees.

Without a doubt, one of the foremost forest romantics was Joseph von Eichendorff (1788–1857). His poetry presents the forest as a religious landscape – an “*andächtiger Aufenthalt*” (pious dwelling) for the soul with its meditative resonant spatiality in contrast to the “*geschäftige Welt*” (wild world) of the city, as made famous by Mendelssohn's musical rendering of the poet's *Abschied*: “*O Täler weit, o Höhen*” – as well as, of course, a patriotic one. A classic example is von Eichendorff's poem *Der Jäger Abschied* (Hunters' Farewell), in which the religious and meditative components harmonize with the patriotic. In the third and fourth stanzas, the forest, as conjured by the Brothers Grimm, is the primordial sphere of the legend and the loyalty expressed within it – that is, German loyalty. This must also manifest itself in active life, in the context of the Wars of Liberation, and thus on the battle field. In this light, the forest becomes a “*deutsch Panier*,” or German banner.

The forest is also the chief setting for Carl Maria von Weber's *Der Freischütz* (The Marksman), the – at least at one time – German national opera. The forest appears at once, in the tradition of Tacitus, as a *locus terribilis* and as a site of redemption. The nation's interpretation of *Der Freischütz* is above all as a musical representation of the German forest. Clear evidence of such is a remark by Hans Pfitzner, at the

outbreak of the World War I: “The main character in *Der Freischütz* is, so to speak, the forest, the German forest glittering in the sun [...] Weber's mission was nationalistic – its objective was freedom and international recognition for German culture.”

Since *Der Freischütz*, the forest has become ever more the symbolically superelevated venue for opera – Wagner's *Siegfried* (with the “Forest Weaving” arrangement in the second act), his *Parsifal* and Humperdinck's *Hänsel und Gretel* and *Die Königskinder*, just to name a few. Even after the Romantic period, “forest romanticism” lived on in the narrative literature of the 19th century and was superseded by a poetic and realistic depiction of the forest (e.g. Adalbert Stifter's transformation of the forest between his poems *Hochwald* (1841) to *Waldgänger* (1847)). And indeed, in the 20th century it experienced an unparalleled boom among writers of light fiction and sentimental films. The most significant attempt to imbue the German forest once again with a symbolic glow is Stefan Moses' series of photographic portraits titled *Menschen im Wald* (People in the forest), which sought to use the background of the forest to shift the emigrants and great forerunners of German culture into the back light of a different authenticity. Once again – and surely not for the last time – the forest appears there as a “German banner.”

Dieter Borchmeyer is Professor Emeritus of Modern German Literature at the University of Heidelberg. From 2004 to 2013, Borchmeyer was president of the Bavarian Academy of Fine Arts. In 2017 he published his 1,000-page study *Was ist deutsch? Die Suche einer Nation nach sich selbst* (What is German? A nation's search for itself).

*Wer hat dich, du schöner Wald,
Aufgebaut so hoch da droben?
Wohl den Meister will ich loben,
So lang noch mein Stimm erschallt.
Lebe wohl,
Lebe wohl, du schöner Wald!*

*Tief die Welt verworren schallt,
Oben einsam Rehe grasen,
Und wir ziehen fort und blasen,
Daß es tausendfach verhallt:
Lebe wohl,
Lebe wohl, du schöner Wald!*

*Banner, der so kühle wallt!
Unter deinen grünen Wogen
Hast du treu uns aufgezogen,
Frommer Sagen Aufenthalt!
Lebe wohl,
Lebe wohl, du schöner Wald!*

*Was wir still gelobt im Wald,
Wollens draußen ehrlich halten,
Ewig bleiben treu die Alten:
Deutsch Panier, das rauschend wallt,
Lebe wohl,
Schirm dich Gott, du schöner Wald!*

*Who has built you, you beautiful forest,
Up there, so high above?
I truly want to praise your Master,
As long as my voice shall sound.
Farewell,
Farewell, you beautiful forest!*

*The world below sends tangled sounds,
Lonely deer are grazing above.
And we go off and blow our horns,
And it echoes a thousandfold:
Farewell,
Farewell, you beautiful forest!*

*Banner, so cool aflutter!
Under your undulations of green,
How you us faithfully sheltered,
Keeper of pious legends!
Farewell,
Farewell, you beautiful forest!*

*What we lent quiet praise in the forest
We preserve afield with honor;
Our fathers remain in ever faith:
German banner, waving, rustling,
Farewell,
May God protect you, beautiful forest!*

Free radicals

What does the “new man” look like? And how will this man live in the future? 100 years ago, the Bauhaus in Weimar began to revolutionize the world of design. A new museum spotlights its work

BY KLAUS GRIMBERG

The contemporary being must begin anew, to rejuvenate himself, to achieve a new humanity, a universal life-form of the people,” wrote architect Walter Gropius emphatically back in 1919. The sentence reveals the brutal disillusionment felt by an entire generation after the horrors of World War I. Their confidence in the blessings of technology had been deeply shaken by the mechanized killing and industrial annihilation of millions of young people.

But what exactly should this “new man” look like? At a new art school known as the Staatliches Bauhaus, founded in Weimar in April 1919, Gropius – the school’s first director – joined with the group of teachers and students he had assembled, all of whom were filled with a sense of new awakening, and set out on a path to explore this “new man” of the future and render him as tangible as possible.

In the early years, the Bauhaus was a virtually unregulated playground of creativity, a boundless laboratory reveling in the joy of experimentation. The school focused on the most holistic view possible of mankind, as well as on the perception of body and movement, colors and forms, materials and contrasts via all human senses. “I am leading all creative activity back to its roots, to play. Those who fail at this in my book fail as artists or students,” argued Johannes Itten, the founder of the preliminary “basic design course” at the Bauhaus, which all students were obliged to take before they could be admitted to one of the workshops.

His colleague Oskar Schlemmer, on the other hand, sought to find universally valid “human types” in which individual features were reduced and emphasis was



Interior as Gesamtkunstwerk

placed on characteristic forms. Yet another approach was taken by Wassily Kandinsky, who searched for new harmonies between man, nature and technology by means of radical abstraction and color analysis.

Today, the exciting atmosphere and zest for life in this wild and unbridled phase of the legendary school is on display in a highly accessible form at the recently opened Bauhaus Museum in Weimar. The new building was designed by architect Heike Hanada and sets a new and distinctive tone in this city of Goethe and Schiller. Most importantly, it helps visitors understand and reinterpret the connections between German Classicism in the period around 1800 and the advent of Modernism more than one hundred years later.

The highs and lows of German cultural history collide in Weimar like in no other German city. Only minutes away from the central square, which saw the creation and presentation of great Classical literature, the gathering of the national assembly of the first German republic and the laying of the foundation of modern design and architecture at the Bauhaus, the Nazis murdered tens of thousands of people at Buchenwald concentration camp. Today, the bulky yet delicate concrete cube of the new Bauhaus Museum is an effective and eye-catching contrast to the former Gauforum, the monstrous remnant of a city planned by the Nazis.

The Bauhaus school brought art and craftsmanship together to form a hitherto unknown sym-

biosis, and the fact that it was even able to develop into such a visionary institution was largely due to the efforts of Walter Gropius. Although the first Bauhaus director on many occasions drew on the preparatory work of his colleagues for his own designs, and although he himself was never considered an architectural genius, he was nonetheless a highly gifted communicator and a tireless fighter for the Bauhaus idea.

It was Gropius who brought well-known artists such as Lyonel Feininger, Gerhard Marcks and Paul Klee to the Bauhaus alongside Itten, Schlemmer and Kandinsky, even though he knew full well that a gathering of creative egos in a small space was bound to lead to artistic friction. It was

also Gropius who from the very beginning defended the design school against bitter opposition from the political and social realm – from the left, but above all from the right.

After the school’s initial phase of discovery, which focused on finding answers to questions relating to the “new man,” a second issue came to occupy the minds of the Bauhaus teachers and students: How do we want to live in the future? It was clear that it wasn’t possible to stop or turn back the ongoing march of technology. What then arose was the idea of merging technology and art to form a fruitful unity. Running water, as well as gas and electricity delivered directly to homes, were that era’s promises for increased comfort and a new way of living,

The task then became to make everyday life easier and more beautiful by taking full advantage of modern materials and functional design.

In 1923, the Haus am Horn – the only residential building built in Weimar according to Bauhaus principles – hosted the first exhibition of designs from the school’s workshops. Many of those objects and pieces of furniture served to furnish exemplary living rooms and children’s nurseries or kitchens, and they now tell the story of the arrival of design into everyday life at the new Bauhaus Museum.

Throughout the Weimar era of the Bauhaus, the *Bühnenwerkstatt*, or “stage workshop,” remained the school’s creative center, the place where light and movement, color and body were explored in a playful manner. Oskar Schlemmer’s “Triadic Ballet” became the epitome of artistic performance – one in which human-machine figures performed the dance of the future. The merging of the “new man” with technical and artistic attributes symbolized the school’s gradual rapprochement with industrial working methods and serial production. After its politically motivated expulsion – a right-leaning party had reduced the Bauhaus budget by 50 percent – from Weimar in 1925 to a new location in Dessau, it was precisely this change in perspective that made it possible for the Bauhaus to become the highly influential design institution it continues to be to this day, all over the world.

But that’s another story – one that will be told in Dessau starting in September, when a second new museum examining the history of the Bauhaus will open to celebrate the school’s 100th anniversary.

Klaus Grimberg is a freelance journalist based in Berlin.

Meet the neighbors

The wolves are back, and Germans are debating how to reconcile the large, carnivorous predators with the rural economy

BY ECKHARD FUHR

At the turn of the millennium, the wolves returned to Germany. On a military training ground in the Lausitz region east of Berlin, a wolf pair was spotted raising pups for the first time in 150 years. In other words, the 21st century began with the reemergence of wild predators. It was not generally understood as a sign of the times, but rather a curiosity, an historical misunderstanding, something to chalk up to the backwardness of the distant German east.

Today, almost 20 years later, the wolves have claimed not only a large share of Germany as their stomping ground, but a significant amount of political and media attention as well. Political parties and interest groups are quarreling over

the new neighbors; the wolves are becoming the object of management schemes, ordinances, coalition agreements and Bundestag debates.

To become better oriented in the hustle and bustle of wolf-based politics, it’s helpful to see the world through a wolf’s eyes, and at least make a stab at just once assuming the standpoint of the wolves vis-à-vis the land they are reclaiming. What makes a densely populated industrial country so attractive to an animal species that purports to feel most at home in the wilderness?

The German landscape is marked by extensive agriculture, which introduces massive amounts of nutrients into the biosphere as a whole. This leads to a situation where an inordinate number of wild, hoofed mammals – deer, elk, fallow deer, wild boar – live as bountifully as never before. What for many insects, birds, amphibians and reptiles would be a death zone is nothing less than paradise for the large, carnivorous wolf.

Wild, hoofed animals – or ungulates – are their natural prey, and Germany boasts roughly 10 times as many wolf prey per square kilometer than does Siberia, while meeting many other needs of the wolf as well. Despite the fre-

quency with which wolves fall victim to cars or trains, they find tranquility and plenty of opportunities to withdraw from peril in our forests and fields where, unlike 150 years ago, hundreds of thousands of people no longer trudge the land for work day in and day out. A sober evaluation by this wily and adaptive predator must conclude that Germany – and all of Central Europe – is an optimal habitat.

Plus, no one is really getting in their way. The very same modernization process that led to intensive agriculture and all that it wrought is also responsible for a fundamental shift in the mindset in European societies, a shift that has given majority appeal to the idea that not only butterflies have the right to prosper, but large predators as well.

There is thus no sound claim that the wolf “does not belong in our cultural landscape,” as lupine opponents maintain. These are not strays; their return is no mistake and in no way the result of the machinations of metropolitan nature lovers imposing their whims on earnest, down-to-earth, rural populations – a myth eagerly propagated by populists, not only those in the far-right AfD party. If the wolf becomes instrumentalized as a political vehicle, it will be hard to properly address the real conflicts triggered by its return.

German and European laws provide strict protections for the wolf species. Apart from in Saxony, it is illegal to hunt wolves in Germany. But even in Saxony, the inclusion of the wolf in state hunting law does not mean that wolves can actually be hunted. It has merely added another level of bureaucracy to the issue,

as now both nature preservationists and hunting authorities are involved in the fate of the wolf. Wolves may only be killed if they cause considerable economic harm or become a security risk. And a killing may only be prescribed if more benign measures have failed or are unavailable. Current law does not permit regulating, limiting or reducing the wolf population.

One possible change to this legal framework has triggered a political dispute that is driving a wedge into Berlin’s governing coalition. The Union and the agriculture ministry are pushing for controls on the population of wolves, while the SPD and environment minister are seeking to make case-by-case decisions more legally compliant and their enforcement more effective. Anything more seems impossible. Transitioning to population control would require that the European Commission change the protection status of wolves, and at the moment this is out of the question.

The most important and – to the sober eye – singularly relevant conflict linked to wolves is the fact that they feast on unprotected livestock. Not only does this have an impact on farmers, it also presents nature conservancy with conflicting goals. Extensive grassland management through grazing is essential to maintaining the biodiversity of the cultural landscape. A downturn in this form of agriculture would make for an ecological catastrophe.

Efforts by the federal and state governments are thus filtering out all the ideological bluster surrounding wolves and focusing squarely on helping keepers of livestock protect their herds by providing

financial assistance and consulting as well as by compensating their damages to the greatest possible extent. In Brandenburg – the German state boasting the most wolves – certain ordinances were enacted that are serving as models for other states as well as for the federal government. It can be an arduous task to reconcile wolf and agriculture, but it pays off.

Powerful interest groups like the German Farmers’ Association and the German Hunters’ Federation are not content with this pragmatic route represented by the existing legal framework. “Upper limits” and “wolf-free zones” are the catchwords most used in their arguments. Wolves cannot be confined to zones and fewer wolves does not equate to less damage. Even if wolves could be hunted, it would do nothing to lessen the current imperative to protect herds. Moreover, the legal stipulations for the public compensation for losses caused by wolves and for herd protection would no longer apply if the wolf ceased to be a strictly protected species.

There are now some 80 wolf packs in Germany, in addition to territorial pairs and lone wolves. The number of individuals can only be estimated, but the figure is somewhere between 500 and 1,000 – most of whom cause us no harm whatsoever and escape our notice altogether.

Eckhard Fuhr is a journalist and hunter living in Berlin and an author of several books about wolves and hunting. His most recent work, *Jagdkunde* (Hunting knowledge), published by Matthes & Seitz, came out this month.



Brothers and arms

East Germans continue to talk about the indignities they suffered after 1989 while nurturing a victimization myth that absolves them of any responsibility

BY INES GEIPEL

Laura, age 19, studies theater at a dramatic arts academy in Berlin. Elektra is her greatest role. She stands at the front of the stage: “Hate is nothing. It eats itself up and it’s gone,” she says, directly to the audience. She hears their breathing. They hear hers. It’s one of the moments you go to the theater for. Laura stares at the people sitting in the dark and they stare back, as if time is suspended. There’s something tangy in the room, something undeniable, metallic. And it’s supposed to be there; it should not be allowed to fade.

It’s the end of October, 2018. Summer is over, but the debate over Chemnitz rages on – the fatal stabbing of Daniel H., age 35 – the hooligans and their Nazi salute – the thousands that gathered within hours – the mobilization and unification of eastern Germany’s far right. Suddenly something is plain to see, right out in the open. And that something has left the entire country on edge.

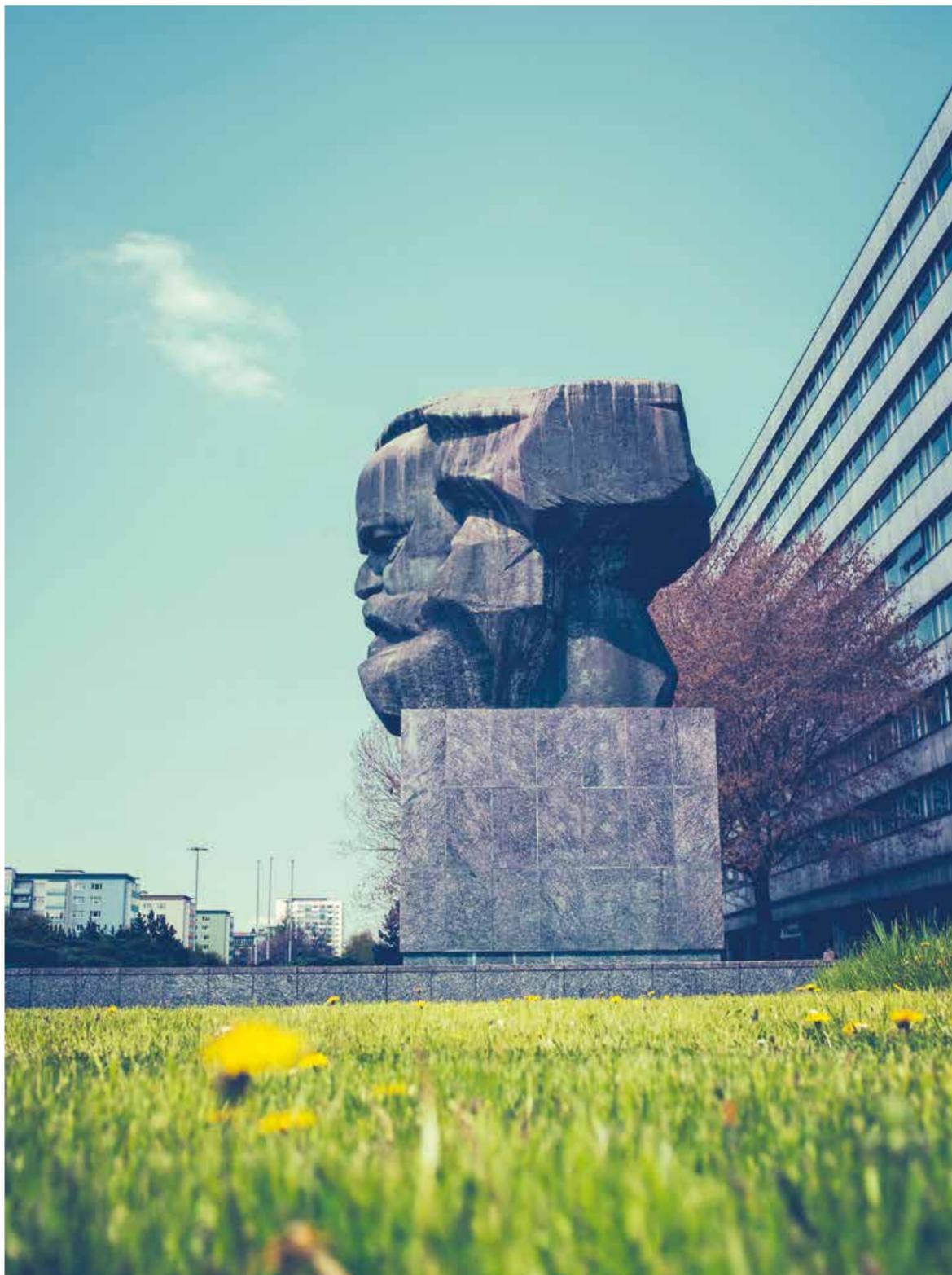
Laura and I are sitting across from each other in the theater cafeteria, just after the prolog. She says she’s from Chemnitz and just spent the last few weeks there. Something’s emerging in that town, she says. I ask about her family. The far-right party AfD could be any number of things, she says, dismissing them with a wave of her hand. We have everything at home: America haters, recluses, apoliticals, anti-globalists. One guy is swimming in politics, and the other’s a xenophobe. But more than anything, you have to be anti.

Anti-what? Anti-the system, anti-establishment, against the powers that be. Laura tells me about her grandfather, who was an East German officer stationed at the border back in the days of the GDR. When it came time to get his pension after 1989, he was unbelievably angry. That it was lower than it would have been in the West was an injustice that simply made his head explode.

The images of Sept. 1, 2018. The neo-Nazi march in Chemnitz. The excitement with which the far right mobilized forces from the AfD, Pegida, the Identitarian movement, the New Right, the Heimatreue Deutsche Jugend, illegal National Socialists and every other kind of right-wing wacko. Their unabashed public proclamation, the merging of forces. They sang the national anthem, they linked arms, they shouted chants: “We are the people!” – “Lying press!” – “Resistance!” They took over the street. For them it was a moment of cultural hegemony. They wanted it to become a symbol. A newly declared war, fought right out in the open. But what pulled them together with seemingly so little effort? What was the root of this desire to cross the red line? What’s happening in the east of Germany, where three states will hold elections this fall?

“The people in the east,” they say on the talk shows, they’ve all been left behind, they couldn’t cope with all the change. They complain about lower pay than in the west, and lower pensions. They’re afraid that all the refugees will be taking over the homes organic Germans. We hear their worries, but something tells us that something deeper is feeding their wrath, something unspoken, something elusive, something unsettling. What is it?

Laura swirls her cup of latte in her hands and speaks of her brother, who actually has a good job, but who’s also been a part of that scene since the beginning.



In September 2018, Karl Marx was forced to overlook a neo-Nazi mob on his Chemnitz square.

The Right. The Chemnitz Right is well organized. It has been from the very beginning. The Right defines the city. I don’t want to lose him, Laura says, softly.

Something clicks in me. The brothers and sisters. The fathers and mothers. The forefathers and foremothers. It’s not easy to pin it down. It’s about things that are the most difficult to crack, it’s about allegiances, about what’s familiar, about strong emotions. There are good reasons to assume there are coherencies between a political and historical minefield of denial and a familial system of denial.

While my inner film of the previous century plays in my head as a backdrop to our conversation, Laura says to me that she would love to be Swiss. Swiss? What for? Because it’s a clean slate, she says. A fresh start. Everyone understands what it means. For our generation, for those of us from the former East Germany, it’s like we’re walking through a thick fog, like through a dense forest made of ghosts instead of trees. It’s just too much history. What’s true? What’s a lie? I just can’t find my way out. It’s tough, and it’s exhausting.

That it is, I hear myself say. I actually want to say something different, because the old film has picked up speed in my head. Endless sequences. More like nightmares, of marching, cheering, falling, dying men. Taking an oath and following it, obeying it until

death, like the German fathers and sons in both world wars. 2.5 million didn’t return from World War I, creating 600,000 widows and almost a million half-orphans. And those who did return? Difficult.

25 years later, the balance sheet of carnage was just about twice as grim: 4.7 million dead, one million widows, 2.5 million fatherless children. The uncertainty over the whereabouts of fathers, uncles, sons and brothers was a heavy burden on families after the war. Years of waiting and mourning were one thing; the return of those physically and psychologically disabled was another. They became mental voids of the new societies, East and West: bewildered, neglected, traumatized and, above all, silent.

It occurs to me that those unaccounted for in the East were not permitted to be mourned after 1945. Information on the whereabouts of fathers, brothers, uncles and grandfathers could only be had in the West, by petitioning the Red Cross. Hopes for success were slim. All mail was monitored.

What does that do to a society when the wartime fates of millions of men remain unresolved? When do you give up hoping, waiting, asking, thinking, feeling? What to do with – and where to put – the interminable grief? The public denial of countless deaths coupled with the private mourning. It is merely a taboo that made the GDR the land of silence that it

was. The displaced, the refugees, the incarcerated, the murdered at the Wall.

Laura checks her phone. She senses there’s something between us. Something old that’s been lugged along. The trauma of the exiled German communists who came back to East Berlin from Stalin’s terror after 1945 and repeated this trauma as the GDR. The terror of the beginning. The false myth of Buchenwald, which lives on today as the self-misconception of the good of the East. The tilted image of America – the US as a bogeyman and a land of longing. The Easy Rider dream and the cowboys-and-indians mania. Dean Reed and Angela Davis, Pete Seeger and Bob Dylan. The inner discord and schizophrenia that America masters in one fell stroke, and how little of it was permitted to be experienced publicly. Does Laura need to know something about it all to understand herself and her time?

I ask whether she was able to speak with her grandfather. Speak? She couldn’t. She didn’t dare. He was too... hard, walled up. She regrets it now. He died five years ago from a ruptured heart.

The difficult process of un-silencing after 1989. What happened with all the tabooed living, with all that went unperceived, with all that was hidden and unheard? Why can we not succeed in differentiating between East Germany as a consensus dictatorship, socialist project,

control-saturated society or fairy tale of the GDR? Why are we so indecisive? Why is judgment of the GDR still oddly up for debate? What do we pass down to coming generations – those who have since been born in a different century – so that they can better find their way?

On one hand we have the old criminal elites in the East, whom the GDR’s abortive legal reconditioning allowed to reorganize and to generate a new clientele. Dictatorships do not let the constitutional state stand in their way. Despite death warrants, despite hundreds of murders of fleeing citizens, despite thousands upon thousands of political prisoners, and despite despotism and repression, after 40 years of the GDR only 23 people were sentenced to between three and ten years in jail.

Legally exonerated and thus innocent, they were able to acquire considerable pensions for their “lifetime achievement,” hoisted themselves into honorable posts and political positions, became organized in dubious associations and, conspicuously well-networked, and are back at it in a now unlimited “area of operations.” And moreover, the old elites are now even angling for elevation into history books. They want to be seen as having brought honor to Germany and aspire to a place in the historical sun.

Those “who had settled in the idea,” as the playwright Heiner

Müller wrote, saved themselves after 1989 almost exclusively by way of a silence comprising omission, contortion and renewed inauthenticity. The Left, the party that seems to have inherited the toxicity of the GDR, exploited them with maximal political unscrupulousness. It understood the potential of staged circumlocution as a paradigm that works. An altercation with two dictatorships simultaneously is just too much. The West, too, would be overwhelmed. And yet it needs the dual perspective.

Laura asks me whether I’ll go outside with her to have a cigarette. The school is new; it’s still a construction site. We stand between rubble and concrete – in no-man’s-land. She says she’s happy that the new building will finally mean the end of the GDR. I look around, baffled. More border, more wall – it’s hard to imagine more GDR than there is right here. It’s clear to me that I have to explain that to her. I smoke and think about the old century we drag along, about its dictate, about that which we haven’t examined, haven’t addressed, haven’t resolved. I struggle against my inner film as against a putrid river of time. The myths of the East German culture of remembrance – Buchenwald, life in the collective, the malaise of un-freedom, the renaissance of the inner Hitler, of the authoritarian. It’s about learning to breathe anew, about reenactments. And we’re smack in the middle of it.

All that stuff about families, generational tension, loyalties. The force of the upheaval in 1989, the chaos of structural rebuilding. Debates in Germany are defined by the indignities suffered by East Germans after 1989. The indignities before 1989 are not an issue. Nor is the East idiom an empty shell – the existence of the internalized victim devoid of any responsibility.

What can we do? There are no easy answers. After Angela Merkel’s 2015 summer of refugees, which in the eyes of many former East Germans nullified the principle of the welfare state, the slogan was: “Integrate us first!” That summer was understood as a cut that not only melded together

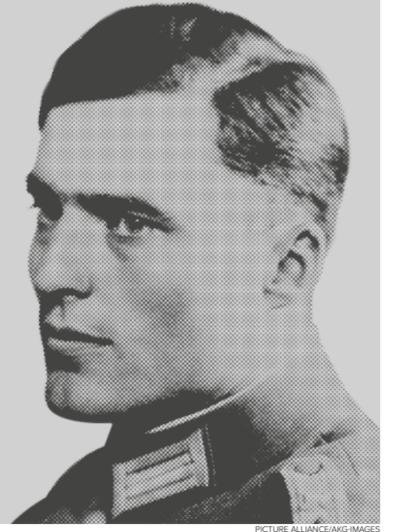
fear-driven populists of every stripe, but also invoked the full spectrum of German emotions. Fear as a political reality, as something that formed and was in a position to unite ex-Stasi people and prison victims now under the auspices of the AfD. The more trenchantly the party exploited the East’s fears of loss, the more successful it became. A policy by which it supplanted The Left in the East. Fear as a trigger, as a generator for a process of re-enacting. In this interaction, the AfD guarantees the East its encapsulated status as victim and makes its destruction the campaign issue that will keep on giving. It’s about hate, the age-old and now evermore popular political experiment.

So, what to do? A minimum prescription: The East needs a good, inner location. It needs its own narrative. It needs public recognition of its long history of pain. It needs differentiation. And its experiential force must project outward: into the political realm, into education and, above all, to the dinner table.

Ines Geipel is a writer and a poetry professor at Berlin’s University of Performing Arts Ernst Busch. Her new book, *Umkämpfte Zone. Mein Bruder, der Osten und der Hass* (Embattled zone. My brother, the East and hate) has just been published by Klett-Cotta-Verlag (Stuttgart) and has become a top-15 bestseller.

The great historical gray area

A new biography of Claus von Stauffenberg, the man who tried to kill Hitler, has reignited a long-running historical debate. It says a lot about the German state of mind



PICTURE ALLIANCE/ANG-IMAGES

BY LUTZ LICHTENBERGER

At midnight on July 20, 1944, four men are escorted to the inner yard of the Bendlerblock, the headquarters of German Army in Berlin. The glaring headlights of military vehicles cast the scene in a ghostly atmosphere. The firing squad consists of 10 petty officers. They proceed to execute four conspirators, chief among them a high-ranking officer named Claus Schenk Graf von Stauffenberg.

Earlier that day, Stauffenberg had detonated a bomb at the Wolf's Lair, Adolf Hitler's Eastern Front military headquarters – a two-hour flight from Berlin. The dictator had survived the assassination attempt thanks to a series of flukes, but primarily because hot temperatures that day caused the venue for the tactical session to be moved from the bunker, where the bomb would have caused considerably more damage, to a lightly built shack nearby.

In the ensuing hours, the conspirators nonetheless went forward with their elaborate plan to overthrow the regime in Berlin, but after the *Führer* himself called several loyal generals and officers, Stauffenberg and his men were captured and killed. With their deaths, the plot to end the Nazi stranglehold over Germany and

most of Europe was all but over. The regime did not end until ten months later, when the Allies captured Berlin and Hitler killed himself in his bunker there. The debate in Germany about the legacy of the men involved in the July 20 plot has been raging on ever since.

A controversial new biography about the coup's leader, *Stauffenberg. Porträt eines Attentäters* (Stauffenberg. Portrait of an assassin; Blessing Verlag, 2019) by Thomas Karlauf has caused tempers to flare and reignited the long-running debate.

In the 1950s, the conspirator's reputation was discredited among large groups of the population. This occurred among the remaining proponents of Nazi ideology, but more disturbingly also among former functionaries and passive adherents who wanted to discredit the initiative to end the regime, in part because they felt it was an indictment on their complacency between 1933 and 1945. Authorities denied pensions to many of the descendants of the men involved in the plot. There was also no official acknowledgement of the group of July 20.

Critics from the left have their own list of admonishments, including the following: the conspirators were mostly officers who had adhered to Nazi ideology; they did not begin to oppose Hitler until it became increasingly inconceivable that the war they

had participated in could be won; they were mostly of aristocratic origin, their values not in line with democratic norms. And, in the leftists' view, Germany had to be totally defeated by the Allies to ensure that they would not be spared from facing up to all the crimes and atrocities they committed (most of all the attempted extermination of the Jews).

Beginning in the 1970s, however, a new appreciation emerged. The Bundeswehr, looking for moral legitimization, officially adopted the legacy of July 20 as part of its identity – service men should be *Staatsbürger in Uniform*, citizens in uniform, not slavish adherents to an authoritarian state. The German army traditionally swears in new recruits every year in a big ceremony on July 20.

Now Karlauf has written an erudite and elegant biography, a reexamination of Stauffenberg's life and the formative influences on his thinking while managing to land squarely in the middle between both of today's camps. Those who declare the men of July 20 transcendent heroes as well as the left-leaning critics can read into Karlauf's book precisely what they want to hear.

The author set out to write about Stauffenberg using only sources – documents, letters, memoirs – from before 1945, that is, before the mythmaking began in earnest by both friends and detractors.

Stauffenberg was primarily influenced in his youth by the charismatic spell of the poet and – as he would be deemed today – cult leader Stefan George. George, born in 1868, had gathered around him a group of young men dedicated to poetry and male companionship imbued with at least a hint of homoeroticism. No less radical than Karl Marx, who urged philosophers not only to interpret the world but to be willing to change it, George, albeit with a different world view, spoke of poetry as a revolutionary force with the potential to overthrow existing orders. “George from the beginning considered himself to be a poet of ‘the act,’” Karlauf writes. “Conspiracy and overthrow were central elements of his world view; ‘the act’ became the decisive metaphor of his poetry.”

Karlauf traces Stauffenberg's slowly evolving thinking from romanticizing about a new Germany in the 1920s, welcoming the Nazi regime in 1933 and approving of the war until realizing that Hitler would amount to nothing but Germany's ruin.

Like many of his co-conspirators, once Stauffenberg reached this conclusion, he advanced the planning of the assassination and urged his overly cautious and scrupulous fellow officers and civilians to follow suit. By the summer of 1944, he had become so indispensable to Operation Valkyrie, as the plot was

called, that after taking it upon himself to detonate the bomb at Wolf's Lair, he flew back to Berlin where he was needed to coordinate the plan of arresting the most important Nazi figures such as Heinrich Himmler and Joseph Goebbels.

It is a very distinct point Karlauf is making. Stauffenberg was not the idealist hero his proponents to make him out to be today. His aristocratic upbringing did not imbue him with immunity against the Nazi mob. He did not try to kill Hitler because of Auschwitz, or all the other camps, or the rampant corruption, or the establishment of a police state. He did it because Hitler was losing the war.

Instead, Karlauf credits Stauffenberg with epitomizing Max Weber's concept of *Verantwortungsethik* (ethic of responsibility). After Stalingrad, the gruesome defeat of the Sixth Army in Russia during the winter of 1942–1943, Stauffenberg came to the conclusion that the war could not be won and that Hitler did not have the right to take the entire German people down with him. The man had to go. “This kind of reasoned military and political assessment,” Karlauf writes, “does not jibe with our view of July 20 as a beacon of moral outrage.”

Case in point, Sophie von Bechtoldsheim, granddaughter of Stauffenberg, responded with an impassioned critique of Karlauf's book in a speech in March.

“Categories like morals and conscience cannot be located on this side or that side of political party lines,” she wrote, “but only within a person. It should therefore actually be called an uprising of those who followed their conscience.”

Jens Jessen, also a grandchild of a July 20 conspirator, delivered a very critical and extensive review in *Die Zeit*, but drew some interesting conclusions relevant to the ongoing debate. No earlier biography had brought us so close to Stauffenberg while allowing him to remain the distant figure that he was, Jessen writes. The journalist and descendent reads Karlauf's biography as an attempt to delegitimize Stauffenberg's heroics while identifying a common tendency among Germans, the will to allocate blame equally: “There shall not have been heroes.”

What Jessen fails to grasp is that great historical gray area in which all seemingly larger-than-life yet flawed figures exist. What Karlauf makes patently clear in his copious portrait is that Stauffenberg is part of Germany's history, of both its highs and its lows, and the critical figure in a corresponding debate that cannot and should not be constrained by the affixing of ahistorical slogans.

Lutz Lichtenberger is senior editor of *The German Times*.

LUTZ LICHTENBERGER'S TRANS-ATLANTIC BOOK REVIEW

THE NEGOTIATOR

There is a whiff of Cold War nostalgia permeating Horst Teltschik's book on the geopolitical state of play. But its profound historical underpinnings form the sturdy foundation of *Russisches Roulette. Vom Kalten Krieg zum Kalten Frieden* (Russian Roulette. From Cold War to Cold Peace).

Teltschik spent his formative political years in the 1980s serving as then-Chancellor Helmut Kohl's senior foreign policy advisor. In the 2000s, Teltschik was head of the Munich Security Conference – and his experience in politics, diplomacy and international punditry serves him well in limning the contours of the current lines of conflict between the West and Russia.

It has often been said that the personal relationships between political leaders play an important role in high-stakes negotiations. Teltschik, as one might expect, would seem natural, thinks highly of Kohl; he convincingly recounts how the chancellor quietly put together a string of 27 treaties and accords between the Soviet Union and Germany in 1989 and 1990 alone. Kohl understood the Russians' political and psychological needs for security assurances, the sum of which proved “in the end to be the key to German reunification.”

Teltschik does not spare criticism of today's Russia and its misdeeds and at times nefarious behavior, but his impetus is for the West and NATO to understand how to more effectively deal with Moscow. John F. Kennedy's strategy for peace was based on first “understanding the interests of one's opponents, regardless of what one thought of them. Is there anyone who truly believes Russia will just give in without getting anything in return?”

Some of Teltschik's policy recommendations – dialogue, balancing of interests, building foundations of trust – might come across as diplomatic boiler plate, but his story has compelling historic evidence on its side.

HORST TELTSCHIK

Russisches Roulette. Vom Kalten Krieg zum Kalten Frieden, C.H. Beck, Munich, 2019

BACKWARDS

Wolfgang Schivelbusch is the great other among German historians. The 77-year-old has been living in New York and Berlin for decades; he was never associated with a university, and certainly does not write like a typical college professor. In 2001, he published *Die Kultur der Niederlage* (The Culture of Defeat: The American South 1865, France 1871, Germany 1918) – a military history mixed with an elaboration on the mentalities that dictated how societies learned to cope with military defeat – which has become a minor classic.

Now Schivelbusch has written a prequel of sorts. In his new short book *Rückzug. Geschichten eines Tabus* (Retreat. Histories of a taboo), he examines how a military retreat, whether tactical or forced, can strain armies, generals and, most of all, the public. “The experience of withdrawal sets in once an offensive movement – political, religious, economic, technical, cultural or military – encounters a dominant opponent,” he writes. To persevere would be to risk defeat, but the movement could be mistaken for the extreme version of withdrawal – taking flight.

Schivelbusch looks at Napoleon in Russia, France and the Battle of the Frontiers in 1914 as well as Great Britain at Dunkirk in 1940. His most interesting and consequential chapter, however, deals with the United States and Vietnam. The author recounts how the domino theory became the “theoretical and strategic basis for the Vietnam War” and equates it with the modern version of retreat-phobia. It is an oddity of history, he writes, “retreat-phobia afflicts Goliath, but only seldom David.” The weak are superior to the strong because they can move in any direction and have less to lose. They fight only for themselves, not for the bigger audience – the general public.

Today, in the West, withdrawal has a new name, so as not to hurt national pride. “The term ‘exit strategy’ suggests that everything – including possible failure – had been under control from the very beginning.”

WOLFGANG SCHIVELBUSCH

Rückzug. Geschichten eines Tabus, Carl Hanser Verlag, Munich, 2019

THEORY AND PRACTICE

A *New Yorker* cartoon shows a man is sitting in bed at night with his computer. His wife wakes up and asks what he's doing, typing so late? “Someone's wrong on the internet,” he says.

Werner Plumpe, a professor of economic history at the University of Frankfurt, has written a major work, the product of decades of diligent and insightful scholarship that can only be admired. And yet it reads like an 800-page answer to every not-so-smart opinion ever uttered about capitalism. *Das kalte Herz. Kapitalismus: Die Geschichte einer andauernden Revolution* (The cold heart. Capitalism: the history of an ongoing revolution) strives to distill how an economic system was able to take off after its humble beginnings in 17th-century Holland and England.

Plumpe's book is very German in its undoubtedly sincere attempt to understand capitalism as an idea or concept, not a plea for TINA (Margaret Thatcher's mantra “There is no alternative”). No reform would be possible, he says, without comprehending the foundations of the market economy.

Plumpe ticks off one theory after the next for the creation and sustainability of capitalism – technological logic, intrinsic motivation of individuals, the use of force, geography, climate or soil conditions – and refutes all of them with mountains of historical evidence.

The very short version of Plumpe's very long answer to how capitalism came to succeed: A variety of conditions were met, i.e. private property enabled market activity, and subsequently through variation and selection, created a model for material reproduction spanning the entire globe.

Plumpe is no Randian apologist; he is well aware of all the problems commonly associated with capitalism, like inequality, exploitation and the plundering of resources. If only real-world capitalism would comply more often with his ever-so-profound theoretical rationale for open and free markets.

WERNER PLUMPE

Das kalte Herz. Kapitalismus: Die Geschichte einer andauernden Revolution, Rowohlt Berlin Verlag, Berlin, 2019

The metamorphosis of ownership

Benjamin Balint has written a book about the long-running “custody battle” over Franz Kafka’s legacy

BY THOMAS SCHULER

This story begins and ends with betrayal – or perhaps redemption, depending on whose perspective you take. For years, the literary legacy of one of the world’s most celebrated writers was stored in a three-room apartment in Tel Aviv and in two bank safety deposit boxes, one in Israel, the other in Switzerland. All the while, archivists worried about the condition of the papers, fearing the damage that could be done by heat, humidity, cats and cockroaches. The papers have been the subject of a lengthy legal battle.

It’s a battle over Franz Kafka’s legacy and the question of who “owns” his work. Is it the state of Israel, the country his friend Max Brod fled to from Prague in 1939, carrying Kafka’s estate in a suitcase? Is it Germany, because Kafka wrote in German and felt a deep connection to the literary canon of German authors? Or is it Eva Hoffe, the heiress to the woman to whom Brod had bequeathed the papers? It is a complicated story with many grotesque – even Kafkaesque – twists.

The journalist Benjamin Balint has written a book, *Kafka’s Last Trial*, about what he refers to as the “custody battle” over the estate. On June 27, 2016, Balint accompanied 82-year-old Eva Hoffe (“a pale but alert woman”) and, as he writes, he was the only journalist to observe the outcome of a trial before Israel’s highest court, a dispute that had begun in 1973.

Franz Kafka died shortly before his 41st birthday in Prague, where he was also buried. Although a prolific writer, he had not finished a single novel and his stories failed to attract much attention during his lifetime. But he didn’t seem to mind. His publisher Kurt Wolff once accused him of being the most indifferent author to the fate of his writing. Wolff asked for manuscripts – yet never received one.

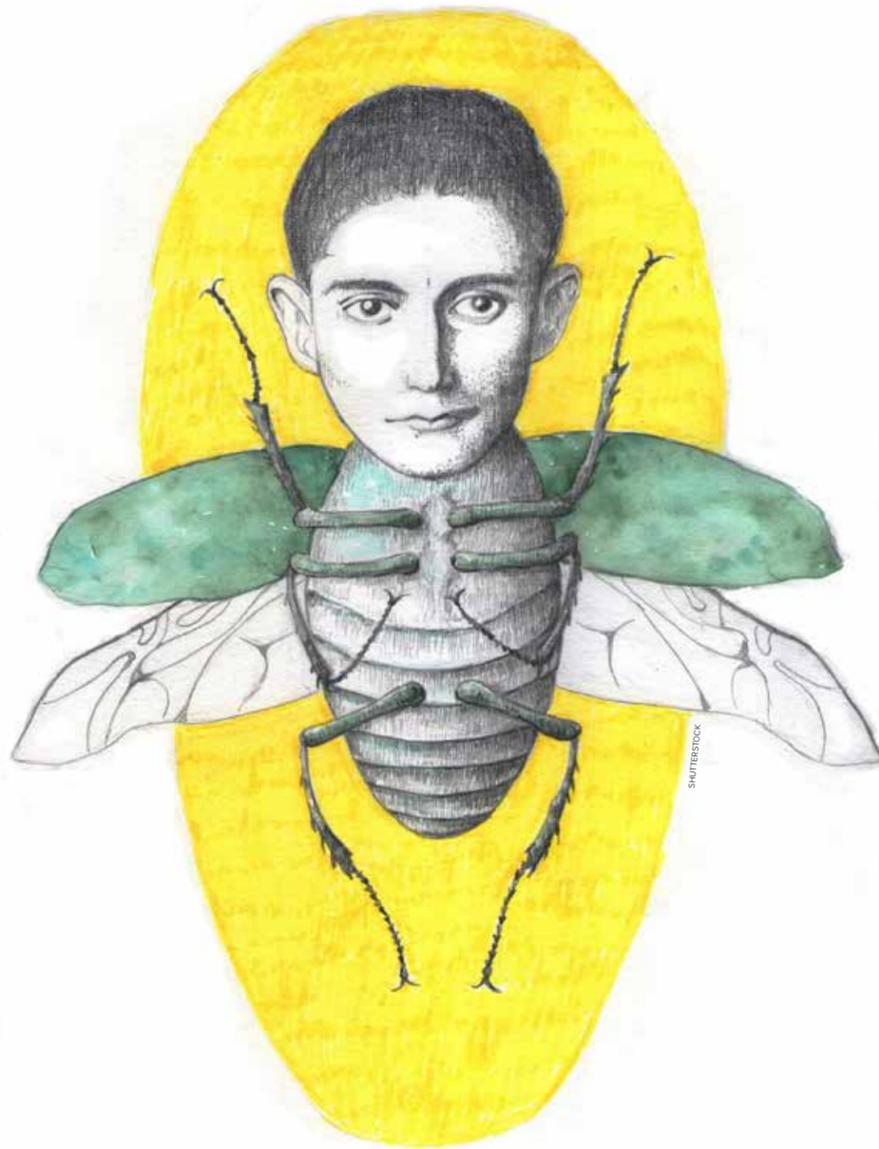
The musician and author Max Brod had been friends with Kafka for 22 years at the time of Kafka’s death. Following his funeral, Kafka’s parents took Brod to their apartment to look at the contents of their deceased son’s desk and signed a contract with him to publish the works. Brod found an extensive collection of notebooks, drafts, diaries, manuscripts and letters – along with a note from his friend requesting that Brod destroy everything he had

ever written. In a second note with an earlier date, Kafka specified a few works that he did not want trashed.

However, Brod neglected to carry out his friend’s wish, thus marking the first betrayal. He did not see himself as a traitor, believing instead that he was acting in Kafka’s true interest. After all, when Kafka had asked him in 1921 to burn everything, Brod had said that he would not comply with such a request. Brod interpreted the fact that Kafka nevertheless left him his estate as an indication of his deceased friend’s will to preserve the works. If that were not the case, Kafka would have had to appoint someone else

as executor of the will, as Brod later emphasized.

At the time of Kafka’s death, Max Brod was a successful author, but has since become nearly forgotten as a writer. Today, he is known as the companion, discoverer and executor of Franz Kafka’s estate. Throughout his life, Brod sought to get Kafka published and have his genius acknowledged. He recognized early on that Kafka was a master of modernity and did his best to make his friend’s writings accessible to the world. It is difficult to say exactly how much Brod was in Kafka’s works, Balint writes. It is clear, however, that he edited Kafka’s texts before he published them.



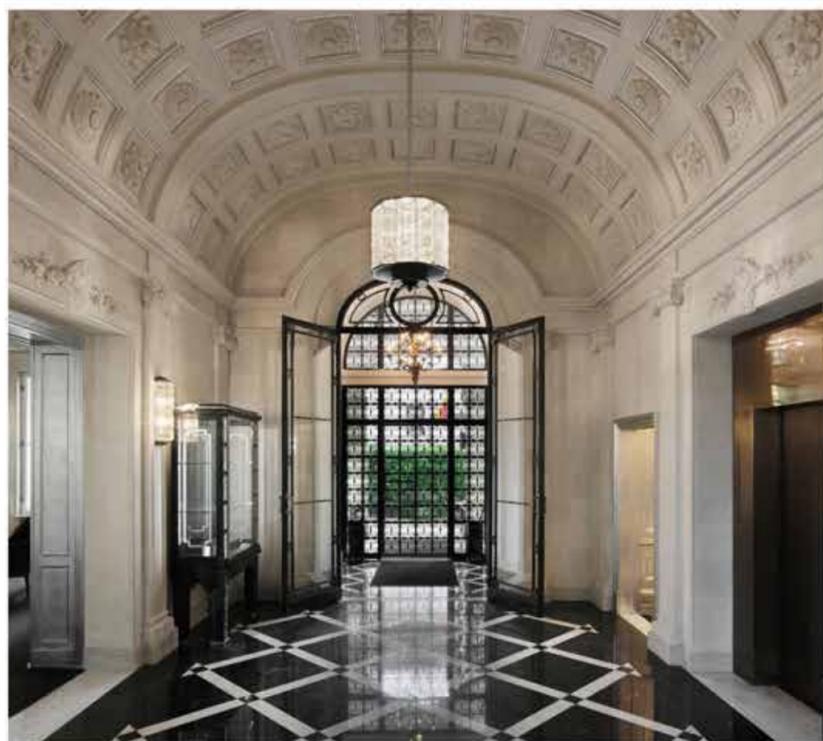
When Hoffe’s daughter inherited the remaining manuscripts and notes in 2007, the state of Israel went to trial again. On June 27, 2016, Eva Hoffe stood before the Israeli Supreme Court and, comparing her situation to that of Kafka’s protagonist in *The Trial*, argued that she felt “like an animal being led to slaughter.” She could not fathom the fact that, after all these years, everything should be handed over to the National Library in Jerusalem without financial compensation. But in the end, that’s exactly what the court ruled. For its part, the German Literature Archive in Marbach had already withdrawn from the trial so as not to be accused of appropriating Jewish national heritage.

The author of any other book might be criticized for not taking a more definitive stand on a complex issue. Not so with Balint – his restraint is one of the book’s strengths. He describes the case in its Kafkaesque twists and turns. This includes the story of Hanser publisher Michael Krüger, who, in an effort to obtain Kafka’s papers, allegedly sought to pay a lawyer in Zurich a sum of DM 100,000 just to get a glimpse of the texts. While Balint clearly expresses sympathy for Eva Hoffe, he also seeks to appreciate the arguments demonstrated by the state of Israel.

Following the court’s verdict against her, Eva Hoffe was awash in despair. She then sued – in vain – Israel’s Ministry of Justice. Feeling as though she had been betrayed and deceived, she told Balint it felt “as though I’d been raped.” Retiring from the limelight, Eva Hoffe fell ill with cancer and died in August 2018 at the age of 84. In September, employees of the National Library entered her apartment and, according to Balint, were horrified by the “bio-hazard” they found. They secured 60 boxes of papers and brought 35 to the library. In December, they also opened six cash boxes at a bank in Tel Aviv. An assessment of its contents is still ongoing.

So, who owns Kafka? The estate is now to be made accessible to all through digital means. For Benjamin Balint, this marks a peaceable end to the story, his conclusion being that Kafka belongs to none of us – and all of us.

Thomas Schuler is a freelance journalist based in Munich. Benjamin Balint’s book *Kafka’s Last Trial. The Case of a Literary Legacy* was published in the US in 2019 by W.W. Norton & Company.



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Learning to Löw again

After Germany's early exit at the 2018 Soccer World Cup in Russia, head coach Joachim Löw finally realized it was time to build a new team

BY THOMAS KISTNER

Joachim Löw got his act together just in time. After balking and bristling at calls for change, he's finally put the German national soccer team on a different track. Whether this proves effective has yet to be seen, but at least they got off to a good start with a convincing 3:2 win at the European Championship qualifier. That win was all the more satisfying as it came in Amsterdam against an exciting young Dutch team seen by many as the new standard in soccer. As recently as last fall, the Germans had lost to the Dutch by a humiliating 0:3. That game marked the final blow in a historically disastrous year for German soccer. Never before had the national team been eliminated in the group stage at a World Cup. Ever since that moment, the German Football Association (DFB) has sought to introduce a plethora of reforms. Even coach Löw had to answer for himself, and the otherwise beloved trainer came under heavy criticism from all sides.

The German team's failure to re-launch after the 2018 World Cup disaster, and especially their embarrassing elimination from the UEFA Nations League in the three-way battle with Holland and France, took place on Löw's watch and with his "old" selection of players. This was the same group led by Löw on their intoxicating journey that began in 2008 and culminated in a World Cup title in 2014. It was after that thrilling win in Rio that the problems began – as they so often do when a team reaches the zenith of its capability and success.

Even Löw couldn't just let his World Cup stalwarts go. It was also clear to these players that they would continue to be unrivaled heroes for years to come, no matter what they did. Just as the then-coach Franz Beckenbauer had prophesied in the frenzy that took place after Germany's previous World Cup title in 1990 in Rome: "If we now add the players from the GDR team, our national team will be unbeatable for years."

But things turned out differently back then, just like they did this time. Especially in the world of soccer, it's normal that young and hungry players are eager to step in and take the place of those megastars who – after enjoying tremendous success – tend to regard their position on the national team as a right rather than a privilege. And this is by no means a specifically German phenomenon. After its 1998 World Cup win, France's team sputtered out winless in the group phase four years later at the 2002 World Cup in Japan/South Korea. Italy, the World Cup champions of 2006, went bust in 2010 as the last in their group in the first round. And the same thing happened to Spain's winning team from the 2010 World Cup in South Africa; four years later in Brazil, they were eliminated early and went swimming instead.

In other words, the stunning 2018 failure of the DFB side in Russia put them in very good company in a long and deeply rooted tradition. On the other hand, shouldn't the coach have known better? Surely, he was aware of the tradition? Shouldn't he have started introducing changes to the team immediately – creating new challenges in the process – precisely because this tradition constantly repeats itself?

But Joachim Löw simply didn't recognize the signs of the times. He dragged two old heroes – Bastian Schweinsteiger and Jérôme Boateng – through the 2016 European Championship tournament, both of whom were just coming back from severe injuries. At the time, backbenchers were heard to joke caustically that these two players spent more time with their physiotherapists in between European Championship games than they did with their colleagues on the training

field. Toward the end of the tournament, it was easy to see that these two stalwarts were completely overwhelmed, with each player committing a bizarre and obvious handball in his own penalty area. In the quarterfinals, Italy took advantage of Boateng's lapse to knot the game at 1 with a penalty kick. Luckily for the DFB team, they were able to go on to win that match on penalties. When Schweinsteiger deliberately had a handball in the semifinal against France, however, they weren't so lucky. The host country's team converted the penalty kick and went on to defeat Löw's side 2:0.

Still, the soccer world and its followers have very little sense of some of the more subtle processes, such that even these alarming events were soon forgotten. Fans even went so far as to almost caricature Löw's tremendous loyalty to his men. And even when Löw won the Confed Cup in Russia in 2017 with an exciting selection of junior members of the national team, he didn't take the logical next step and place some of the young talent on the top team. Instead, the strength of his B-team simply fueled his comforting certainty that his older A-team could easily win another title.

In other words, Löw didn't bother launching any major changes in style and play in the four years between the 2014 and 2018 World Cups. He stuck to his guns in a sport that is becoming faster and faster every day. Löw rejected any inquiries as to whether he intended to rejuvenate the team with younger players, and even received a massive public scolding right before the 2018 World Cup in Russia. This reached a crescendo when he incomprehensibly left striker Leroy Sané off the final squad for the World Cup team. For Löw, the highly talented 23-year-old was too unpredictable, too headstrong – and probably too iridescent as a person. Sané, of all people. Even at the time, it was clear to everyone else that Sané already embodied the type of player Löw's group of ossified and overly self-assured veterans were going to need in Russia: a high-speed striker who can single-handedly change the course of events on the pitch and who can engage two or three opposing defenders at any time.

But Löw held on loyally to his old heroes. In the run-up to the World Cup, he tolerated them being involved in advertising spots and PR stunts and proudly allowed the team to be renamed "Die Mannschaft" (the team). Most consequentially, he entirely misjudged the division within the team that was to be driven by the scandal involving players Mesut Özil and Ilkay Gündoğan posing for a picture with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. Löw even let his men take their favorite hair-dressers with them to Russia.

The big game plan remained driven by the principle of hope. Everyone hoped that the German team's legendary mantra – in which they seem to improve with every passing game – would automatically take effect again. In terms of his own fate as coach, Löw was also able to travel to the World Cup quarters in Moscow-Watutinki with relative peace of mind, seeing as DFB president Reinhard Grindel had already extended Löw's contract until 2022 – even before seeing the results of the 2018 tournament.

The Grindel era itself came to an end in late April, when the DFB boss admitted to having accepted a luxury watch from a foreign functionary. It was the scandal that finally broke the camel's back – and it coincided with the start of Jogi Löw's second era.

Will this era prove a success? Until recently, Löw coached his old guard like an espresso-sipping life coach. In other words, he relied on affable familiarity rather than force in shaping the national team

to follow his will. And when he dared to venture into the strategic arena with his own ideas, he often fell flat on his face. Even worse than his outing at the European Championship in France in 2016 was the previous European Championship in 2012 in Poland/Ukraine, where Löw chose the wrong players and coached the team so hopelessly into the ground during the semifinal against Italy that their defeat was already secured at the halftime break. It was the first time people began questioning Löw's professional aptitude: Does this coach have what it takes?

With today's all-new DFB squad, Löw will have to do more than play the role of fraternal guardian. The 23 players he nominated for last month's European Championship qualifier against Holland were all under 30 years old – with the exception of goalkeeper Manuel Neuer. Where only recently Mats Hummels, Thomas Müller and Jérôme Boateng were strutting their stuff, nobodies like Maximilian Eggestein (22, Bremen), Niklas Stark (23, Hertha) and Lukas Klostermann (22, Leipzig) are now hard at work. It's a debutante ball, with extra strength coming from Sané and Serge Gnabry, both of whom have matured into the team's go-to strikers in record time. And, yes, there are still a couple of leftovers from the World Cup era: Toni Kroos, Joshua Kimmich and Marco Reus.

And yet, the fact that Löw feels no need to divest himself of his obsession with ball possession means that winning through ball possession will prove twice as hard – even with the new players. "We have to improve our dynamics, speed and determination," he says. "Our games had a pace that was far too slow. We have to clean that up."

In the future, Löw will have to deal with members of a new and fast-paced generation that don't play in any top league. The mercilessness with which FC Bayern Munich has reduced the Bundesliga to a kind of monopoly has now begun to palpably hurt operations at the national level. In the Bundesliga, hardly any team dares to mobilize its full forces over a full 90 minutes against Bayern Munich. Why should they when it's a lost cause anyway? As a result, Bayern ends up lacking



the experience it needs for international games. All German teams, including Bayern, were eliminated before reaching the quarterfinals in the Champions League. In the Europa League, only Eintracht Frankfurt has made it to the quarters.

The fact that Bayern Munich's monoculture is paralyzing how German soccer operates is one thing; but that it has brought about a situation in which Munich also sees Löw – the national team's coach – as a near-employee is an even bigger problem. When Löw, in March, ousted his old stars Hummels, Müller and Boateng in one fell swoop, he ran the risk of inspiring the wrath of Uli Hoeneß, whose anticipated threats loomed large. But the conflict never came, because the ousted players simply could not prove their worth to the national team, especially as Bayern failed miserably in the Champions League.

Meanwhile, across the border in Holland, Löw's wild young guns stormed onto the scene with a 3:2 victory over the Dutch team. In other words, from the bosses in Munich's perspective, this was not the moment to give Löw a public piece of their mind. Still, although he emerged unscathed from that potential battle, the national coach hasn't won anything yet. If anything, he's won some time – time to prove he's capable of learning new tricks and can step out of his own shadow.

Thomas Kistner is a sports editor at the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*.





BY ROBERT NORMEN

A typical German residential neighborhood at night, cars neatly parked in driveways, all the lights are out, everyone's asleep, yet in front of one of the houses is a hoop attached to the garage. A very tall and lanky man with a ball in his hands is standing 23 feet-nine inches away. He calmly launches one three-point shot after the next, and all you can hear is the soothing sound of the ball falling through the net: swish, swish, swish.

Eventually he misses one and the ball clanks off the rim, making a slight rattling noise. Lights everywhere immediately switch on; dogs start to bark. The young man lifts his arms, sheepishly apologizing – “Tschuldigung” – before continuing his shooting exercise, draining three after three in the wee hours of the night.

The young man in the Footlocker commercial from the early 2000s is Dirk Nowitzki, a 21-year veteran of the NBA's Dallas Mavericks, sixth highest scorer in NBA history, league MVP in 2007, NBA World Champion in 2011, 14-time All-Star, a living legend – and simply the greatest German basketball player who ever lived.

Although this list of accolades is very impressive, it is probably less effective at encapsulating what makes Nowitzki so special – as a man and as a player – than the unassuming ad.

Although he's already 40 years old, Nowitzki only recently announced his intention to retire after he finishes the current season with the Mavericks. At his last regular-season home game in Dallas on April 9th, there were very few dry eyes in the house as fans and fellow players paid tribute to the career of their beloved “Dirk Digger.”

And what a career it's been.

In early April, ESPN ran a long oral history of Nowitzki making a splash at the Nike Hoops Summit in San Antonio, a showcase game pitting US high school players against a team of youngsters from around the world. The unknown skinny German kid who had been playing for the subdivision team in his hometown of Würzburg delivered a stand-out performance with 33 points and 14 rebounds, prompting Larry Bird to say that after having only seen a tape of that game, “you'd think he's the greatest player of all time.”

Nowitzki was selected ninth by the Milwaukee Bucks in the NBA draft only two months later and traded to the Mavs on the same day. He went through the typical growing pains of an NBA rookie. Not having played in college, he was used to lacing it up in front of maybe 500 people

in small gyms with old linoleum floors. Now he was playing in front of 20,000 people, at the Great Western Forum in Los Angeles or Madison Square Garden in New York.

Nowitzki struggled on the court at first, but – cue back to the commercial – continued to work diligently on his unique brand of basketball that would go on to change the way the game is played. Nowitzki is not alone in the nighttime ad; an older man is standing under the basket, passing the ball back to Dirk. He is unrecognizable in the ad, but it can be no other than Holger Geschwindner, who met Nowitzki when the kid was 16 years old and became his personal coach. Geschwindner, himself a former basketball great who played for the German national team at the 1972 Olympics, insisted the 7-foot Nowitzki not be deployed in the post and not play as a regular center, but instead should develop a picture-perfect jump shot with no wasted motion and an unusually high arc.

Tall men regularly shooting from the outside was still uncommon in the NBA back then, yet when they can, their

shots are extremely difficult to defend. Geschwindner – a bit of a mad scientist – had programmed a computer model to calculate the perfect angle for Nowitzki's jumper. Over the years, mentor and mentee went on to develop a whole array of variations, including the most famous one: the flamingo, a one-legged fade-away that is near impossible to guard.

Nowitzki played his first All Star Game in 2002. In 2005, he led the German national team on a wholly unexpected, spectacular run to the finals of the European championships, defeating both Russia and Spain with game-winning buzzer beaters. Germany lost in the finals to Greece, but Nowitzki was voted the tournament's most valuable player, reminiscent of Lakers legend Jerry West, who was voted NBA Finals MVP in 1969 despite his team losing to the Boston Celtics.

In 2006, Nowitzki's Mavericks, which had been a cellar dweller when he got there, made it to the NBA finals, only to lose in dramatic fashion to a Miami Heat team featuring Shaquille O'Neal and Dwayne Wade. Nowitzki had played well

overall, but uncharacteristically missed several crucial free throws in the decisive game 7. After losing in the first round of the playoffs in 2007 to the then-mediocre Golden State Warriors – that season, they had won a league-leading 67 games and Nowitzki had been crowned regular-season MVP – it looked as if the story of his career had been written: Good but not great player, weak leader, unable to get his team over the hump.

That summer, Geschwindner took his protégé on a camping trip through Australia, no basketball, no phone, just books and poetry for protection. In 2008, Nowitzki led the German national team to the Olympics in Beijing and was chosen to bear the German flag during the opening ceremony, the first time a German team-sport athlete had been given that honor. “He is a superstar and yet still remained humble,” said Michael Vesper, then general director of the German Olympic Sports Confederation, echoing what has become the dominant image of Nowitzki off the court: a stand-up guy who does not put on airs.

Over the years, Nowitzki would be awarded the Silver Laurel Leaf, the highest sports award in Germany; the

Naismith Legacy Award for his contribution to the global game of basketball – the first non-American to ever receive the honor; the Transatlantic Partnership Award by the American Chamber of Commerce in Germany for the work of his foundation and his civil engagement; and the Lucius D. Clay Medal by the Federation of German-American Clubs for his contribution to German-American understanding.

But before he would amass this pile of lifetime achievement awards, there was some unfinished business to tend to on the court. In 2011, Nowitzki led his team back to the NBA Finals, and again faced Miami. However, after having traded Shaq, the heavily favorite Heat featured one of the most highly touted Big Three ever to take the court: Wade, Chris Bosh and LeBron James.

The Mavs won 4:2. Nowitzki played an outstanding series and was voted Finals MVP, but a particular moment stood out, one that is emblematic of his personality. When the final buzzer sounded, Nowitzki fought his way to the locker room. In the moment of his greatest basketball triumph, he sought out a moment of quiet away from the noise and the limelight.

The Dallas Mavericks did not contend for the NBA trophy again, having in short order sold off every major contributor from the championship team – except Nowitzki, who remained with the Mavs and did not, as has become fashionable for big stars, demand a trade to a better team. His 21-year tenure with Dallas is an all-time league record for a player staying with the same team.

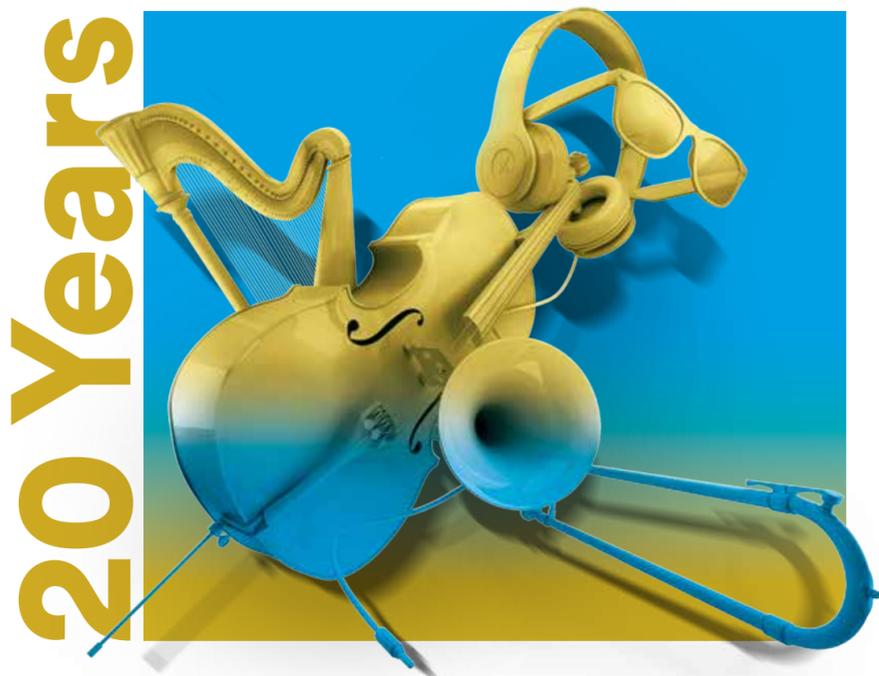
Soccer is and will always be the number-one sport in Germany. The popularity of Germany's professional basketball league could be compared to Major League Soccer (MLS) in the US: decent games, some dedicated fans, but not part of the national sports conversation. Nowitzki, however, has transcended mere basketball stardom – he has become a German cultural icon, known and beloved by people who otherwise aren't familiar with the game. The German sociologist Wolf Lepenies elevated Nowitzki to the highest order of role models; he is “bigger than the game,” on par with the boxer Max Schmeling and Fritz Walter, captain of Germany's 1954 Soccer World Cup champions.

Nowitzki has taken all the praise in stride, just as he graciously took in every tribute and every standing ovation he received this season from fans across the NBA. But it's just as easy to imagine him back in his driveway, shooting threes through the night.

Robert Normen is a sports journalist based in Munich.

Dirk of yore

After 21 years in the NBA, the great Dirk Nowitzki is calling it quits. A look back at a transcendent career



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FONDS

BY PETER H. KOEPF

For the chancellor to grace the title page of Germany's daily newspapers is nothing out of the ordinary. But the cover of the April 5 edition of the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (SZ) managed to raise a few eyebrows: Angela Merkel has two paintings by the famed German Expressionist Emil Nolde removed from her office. A government spokesperson asserted that Merkel, at the behest of the lender, the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation, will "permanently return" *Blumengarten* (Thersens Haus) (1915) and *Brecher* (1936). The author of the article, Renate Meinhof, speculates that the chancellor wanted to "get rid" of the paintings.

But why?

Five years ago, the Berlin-based art historian Aya Soika and the historian Bernhard Fulda discovered that Nolde had been a member of the Nazi Party, had made anti-Semitic statements and was committed to Hitler and to the ideology of the party. Nevertheless, the Nazis seized his paintings and presented them alongside works by other ostracized artists in the mockery of an exhibition titled *Degenerate Art*. In summer 1941, the regime went so far as to ban Nolde from displaying his art. Yet all the while, Nolde's sympathy for National Socialism held firm.

The Seebüll Ada und Emil Nolde Foundation has now, for the first time, presented Bernhard Fulda, the Fellow and Director of Studies in History at Sidney Sussex College at the University of Cambridge, with the artist's entire written estate. The fruits of the evaluation extend far beyond what was previously known of the painter.

The writings of Nolde, the painter, had never been the focus of much attention, notes Fulda. What he discovered can be examined in his collection of essays and images on Emil Nolde, a companion volume to an exhibition in Berlin. As early as 1911, Nolde had bemoaned that the leaders of the Berlin Secession, starting with Max Liebermann, were Jews, as well as the art dealers and art critics: "the entire press core was on their side, and even the art publishers were Jews." This

was thought only to be the case in Berlin, "but the movement has already stretched its wormy long arms across the entire country, just like the rot spreads beneath the red-painted floor of our cozy little room here."

Fulda quotes copiously from the written notes of Nolde (and of his wife, Ada), which provide ample testament to his hatred of Jews. Into the 1930s, Nolde's anti-Semitic sentiments are only detectable in his private correspondence. After the Nazis take power, however, Fulda reports that in summer 1933, Nolde has even formulated an "ambitious plan... of how German society can become free of Jews."

But why? Nolde, born in 1867, saw himself for decades as an unrecognized

genius, a spurned lover, a man ahead of his time, met with hostility and hate for his "devoted commitment to young and revolutionary German art" (Fulda), as a peasant's son not accepted among liberals, who more often than not were Jewish cosmopolitans. Briefly a member of the artist group *Die Brücke* at the beginning of the 20th century, and then of the *Berlin Secession*, Nolde felt himself "preyed upon by Jews, because I paint them as Jews," as he expressed in his 1934 book *Jahre der Kämpfe* (Years of struggle).

Nolde was convinced: "Jews are different people than we are." He didn't see himself as an anti-Semite, nor did he seek to defame Jews, he claimed. But "the vital interests of each race express themselves in relation to their inner vital force."

When the persecution of the Jews intensified in 1938, he showed understanding for the fact "that the process the removal of the Jews, who had penetrated so deeply into all peoples, cannot proceed without great pain."

That staunch Nazis occasionally accused him in the press of opportunism did not improve the matter. Nolde did everything he could to refute the accusations. He even wrote a letter to the Nazi Press Chief Otto Dietrich in defense of accusations levied by the media outlets echoing state propaganda: "As a long as I am an artist [...], I vow to contest the foreign infiltration of German art, the impure dealing in art and the outsized Jewish supremacy in all artistic endeavors," he wrote, considering this struggle to be among "the

Off the wall

Why Angela Merkel has banned two paintings from the chancellery

harbingers of National Socialism," alongside Houston Stewart Chamberlain and Dietrich Eckart. And when the war finally began, and Poland fell, he wrote: "We place full trust in *Der Führer*."

Even his exclusion from the Reich Chamber of Culture in 1941, which prohibited him from displaying his paintings, did not jog his reasoning. To the contrary, Nolde fancied himself a martyr. The son of a farmer, now "disregarded, persecuted and outlawed" by three governing powers – the German Empire, the Weimar Republic and the Third Reich – wrote in 1943 that he was treated with contempt for his "struggle against Bolshevism, Jewry and plutocracy."

It goes without saying that paintings by an anti-Semite and racist should not hang in the office of Germany's head of government, especially not at a time when those who feel they are being marginalized are retreating into their cultural shell and would like to cast out those who champion liberal values and cosmopolitanism. And this is the case not only in Germany.

The removal from the chancellery of the Nolde paintings means one of them, *Brecher*, can be seen in the Berlin exhibition "Emil Nolde. A German Legend. The Artist during the Nazi Regime." And what did the Chancellor Merkel choose to hang in place of the two Nolde pieces? Her choice was two oil paintings by the German expressionist Karl Schmidt-Rottluff: *Haus unter Bäumen* (1910) and *Häuser am Kanal* (1912). But now she has learned of anti-Semitic statements he made during World War I. Her new plan is just to leave the walls blank.

Emil Nolde. A German Legend.
The Artist during the Nazi Regime

Hamburger Bahnhof
Museum für Gegenwart, Berlin

Through 9/15/2019

A catalogue under the same title was published by Prestel Verlag.

Immune to reason

A spike in the number of measles cases in Germany has revived the debate over mandatory vaccinations

BY KATHRIN ZINKANT

There are, no doubt, many pediatricians and health experts in Germany today who wish they lived in France. That neighbor to the west recently added eight new names to its list of mandatory immunizations – one of which was the measles vaccination – bringing the total to 11. Even to the south in Italy, where the situation is slightly more complicated, mandatory vaccinations have nevertheless proved effective. But in Germany?

After a series of measles cases at schools and childcare facilities caught the German public's attention this year, calls for mandatory vaccinations have become increasingly louder – once again, one should say, considering numerous attempts in the past have yielded nothing concrete. Although the proposed mandatory vaccination would apply to measles alone, the indignation is still great. In fact, many experts fear that compulsory immunization would even lead to increased public resistance to an otherwise entirely reasonable health care measure.

Since early April, the homeopaths and anthroposophists who practice widely in Germany have been collecting signatures for a petition against mandatory vaccination, which they are going to submit to the federal government and the Bundestag. After only two days, the petition had one-fifth of the signatures required.

This form of resistance is palpable not only in Germany. The measles are making a comeback in the United States, too. In early April, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that the number of confirmed measles cases in the first three months of 2019 exceeded the total number of cases nationwide the previous year.

Back in Europe, it was only 10 years ago that Bulgaria was forced to learn the bitter

lesson of just how fast things can develop when an unvaccinated person travels abroad, gets infected there and – while still showing no symptoms – brings the measles back with them. After seven years without a single case of measles in Bulgaria, a man transported the virus from Hamburg to Sofia, causing the deaths of at least 24 people and prompting more than 24,000 people, including many Roma, to fall ill in that country alone. That particular epidemic eventually extended to 11 countries. And yet, in spite of stories like these, far too many people in Germany and around the world continue to ignore the facts.

The measles is not a children's disease. The virus is actually highly contagious and spreads easily through the air people breathe. And it can kill. Prior to the launch of the first vaccine 56 years ago, up to 2.6 million people died each year of the measles, most of them children under the age of five. But the measles is life-threatening to adults as well. In fact, complications related to the disease, such as the brain inflammation (encephalitis), are even especially common in old age.

Still, even though the World Health Organization (WHO) has made great efforts to eliminate the disease by means of vaccination campaigns and, in doing so, has prevented more than 21 million deaths in the period from 2000 to 2017, roughly 110,000 people still die each year from this morbillivirus. It is already clear that the goal of eliminating the measles in five of the six WHO regions by the start of the coming year will not be achieved. And Germany is playing an inglorious role in this failure, as outbreaks of the disease continue to take place in the federal republic.

A glance at vaccination rates in Germany provides little immediate evidence as to why this is the case. The most recent report issued by the Robert Koch Institute, Germany's highest epidemiol-

ogy authority, showed that German children entering primary school have a very respectable vaccination rate of around 93 percent. This is almost enough to achieve the form of indirect protection referred to as "herd immunity," which would protect non-vaccinated individuals from getting the measles. However, Germany's otherwise fine record is cluttered with a number of local and age-related gaps.

For example, it has been shown that educated and high-earning parents from Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria, in particular, are the ones who fail to vaccinate their children. At less than 90 percent, the average vaccination rate for children entering primary school in these southernmost states lie well below the national average. Add to that the fact that

Is it for reasons of convenience? Is it out of sheer ignorance?

every fourth to fifth child of childcare age nationwide – as well as many adolescents and adults – have never been vaccinated against the measles or have received the first dose only, which provides incomplete protection.

Why are people rejecting vaccination? Is it out of convenience? Or sheer ignorance? The tragic death of an 18-month-old in Berlin four years ago showed that even pro-vaccine parents can simply forget to have their children vaccinated. The scant few scientific surveys of skepticism toward vaccinations ("vaccine hesitancy") that have been conducted in Germany suggest that although the number of true anti-vaxxers in the country is low, the unease often felt by parents

is compounded by reports of supposed side effects associated with the vaccination. To make matters worse, these fears are then propagated to larger audiences via social networks, childrearing books and films such as *Eingeimpft* (Germany, 2017) and *Vaxxed* (USA, 2016).

Some families are even pursuing a special form of health awareness based partly on conventional medicine, but also on an esoteric image of physical integrity and self-healing. These families often vaccinate their children, but they tend to do so at a later date than officially recommended, that is, when they feel the child is more robust. Sometimes they base their decision selectively on the parent's own personal sense of the risks.

The key challenge is therefore by no means to silence radical anti-vaxxers. Instead, the most important goal should be to raise awareness of the extent to which non-vaccinated individuals are endangered by measles. People need to understand that non-vaccinated individuals pose a threat to their direct environment as well as to more distant ones, as the Bulgarian case has shown. This is why mandatory vaccination has long since become a political issue – far longer than since the recent spike in the number of measles cases.

While specialist politicians with expertise in the field such as Karl Lauterbach (SPD) and ministers in the CDU/SPD grand coalition regard mandatory vaccination as the correct approach, the left-wing opposition parties, including the Greens and the Left, are pro-vaccine yet want nothing to do with mandatory vaccinations.

They argue that Germany should instead pursue a policy of "persuasion" and "education" designed to stop anti-vaxxers in their tracks. Green Party health expert Kordula Schulze-Asche recently noted that mandatory vaccina-

tions would not solve the real problem; instead, she argued in favor of reaching out to parents as a means of protecting unvaccinated adults and children. What Schulze-Asche did not discuss, however, was how mandatory vaccinations for kindergarten and elementary school children would conflict with a policy of educating adults and older students.

It is not surprising that the various associations that have been providing this "persuasion" and "education" for decades now see things differently than many Bundestag members. Once again in March, the Association of Pediatricians in Germany (BVKJ) and the German Pediatrics Society (DGKJ) came out very strongly in favor of mandatory vaccination.

In the meantime, in environments at higher risk of a breakout, it has become clear that a system of mandatory vaccination anchored in law would bring great relief to schools, childcare facilities and health authorities. Indeed, whenever the virus emerges from its slumber and starts to widen its impact, the first response is to prevent the spread, which means closing schools and childcare facilities and checking the vaccination status of children and adolescents. Pupils at a Hamburg school recently had to have their blood taken to determine whether they were immune to measles or not.

A program of compulsory vaccination, like that recently passed by the Brandenburg state legislature, could prevent the virus from being introduced into childcare facilities and schools. And it might finally make it clear to adults how important it is to have vaccine protection against the disease. Not least for themselves.

Kathrin Zinkant is a science editor at *Süddeutsche Zeitung*.

The Berlin Times

A special edition of *The German Times* for the city without walls



Wedding Bling-Bling

Over the past century, this northern borough has been a getaway spot, a communist stronghold, the core of West Berlin's French sector, a sanctuary for immigrants, an artists' hub and always its own city within the city. People from over 165 countries live here today – those who have always called it home and those who've just arrived. Gritty, not glitzy, Wedding is never a bore. [pages 4-5](#)

BERLIN TIMES 1929

Jason Lutes knew next to nothing about the German capital in the Weimar era upon deciding to write and draw his epic graphic novel about the city. Read the making-of, written by the artist himself. [page 3](#)

IN A DIFFERENT LEAGUE

Union Berlin is the club of underdogs. This year the team is playing shockingly well and could win promotion to the fancy Bundesliga. So, what do the fans chant? "Shit, we're moving up." [page 6](#)

EVER IN THE MAKING

Berlin remains a startup hotspot. It's a magnet for young companies and aspiring individuals. Why? Because Berlin is still unfinished as an economic space – a place to make a name for yourself. [page 7](#)

SYMPHONY OF A METROPOLIS

Berlin's Young Euro Classic youth orchestra festival celebrates its 20th anniversary. The participants are on their way to becoming tomorrow's stars, and some have already made it big. [page 8](#)

Capital look

Coolness is the Berlin fashion scene's biggest asset

BY JULIA HACKOBER

On the eve of Berlin Fashion Week, a group of bloggers, journalists and Berlin celebrities have gathered at Colette, the brasserie run by star chef Tim Raue. They were invited by Vreni Frost, one of Berlin's first and foremost fashion bloggers. There's bœuf bourguignon and nougat mousse, and it just so happens that Sahra Wagenknecht and Oskar Lafontaine – a powerhouse left-wing couple and two of Germany's most famous political personalities – are sitting at the next table. And, as so often is the case when fashion professionals gather among themselves, what would in any other setting be an innocent question – "So, are you all looking forward to Fashion Week?" – ends up triggering an hours-long debate.

Of course, everyone is looking forward to Fashion Week. For the most part, at least. After all, a whole new and refined designer scene has established itself over the past several years in Berlin. It's a scene shaped by young people adept at drawing attention to their work through good ideas and idiosyncratic imagery, which is essential in the age of Instagram. William Fan, for example, has long since been a darling of the fashion press for his casual collections that function as something between workwear and couture. Fan almost always stages his shows as a form of conceptual art, setting up runways in such varied locations as a Chinese restaurant or a Zen garden. Among the other designers who made the leap from young talent to major player on the fashion scene are Marina Hoermanseder, Malaikarais (see picture), Rianna+Nina and Dawid Tomaszewski.

German bloggers and fashion editors look upon "their" designers

with a heavy dose of good-natured pride. They see themselves as obliged to give the Berlin fashion scene all the journalistic support they can, all the while nervously watching the evolution of Berlin Fashion Week, which was launched in 2007 and has taken place twice a year since. In the beginning, the event was jazzed up and promoted as a veritable alternative to the big shows in London, Milan and New York. But it never achieved the success it was intended to have, especially as its dates in January and July almost always overlap with the couture shows in Paris and other important international fashion fairs. It was pure folly to expect those key guests – buyers for large department stores – to make an extra trip to Berlin to catch a glimpse of a few junior labels and C celebrities.

These days, Fashion Week Berlin comes to us in a more modest form. Basically, the most important trade fairs, such as the Premium, Panorama and Seek, are garnered with additional shows and events lasting only three days. Gone are the days of the pumped-up celebrity hype associated with the tent at the Brandenburg Gate, which was abandoned after the event's main sponsor, Mercedes-Benz, withdrew in 2018. Organizers have experimented with different concepts and key show locations, such as the Eisstadion Wedding (a skating rink) and an unused department store in Mitte, only to discard them for something new. Even the "Berliner Salon," a group exhibition held at the Kronprinzpalais Unter den Linden, where young, unknown designers were able to show their collections to the trade press and buyers, has now been dissolved; the founders of that exhibition, German *Vogue* editor in chief Christiane Arp and event manager Marcus Kurz, announced in March 2019 that they had not been able to develop the format in a competitive way.

Fewer shows, less hype. In other words, after its first semi-successful iteration, Berlin Fashion Week is starting over again from scratch. The question now occupying the fashion cosmos is: What, if anything, remains? We know what Berlin fashion is capable of, but how do we get the word out to the rest of the world without any noteworthy, large-scale fashion event to speak of? How can Berlin assert its position as a fashion capital? These questions revolve not only around how many Fashion Week parties and cocktail receptions have to be canceled; the issue is a far more existential one: How to draw the attention of international buyers, those department stores and boutiques in London, Paris and Singapore, to German brands?

Fashion Council Germany – a lobbying body populated by various industry players (editors-in-chief and economic associations) that also supports select labels through elaborate funding programs – hopes to gain assistance from policymakers. The Fashion Council's oft-repeated mantra is that "fashion must finally be acknowledged as a cultural and economic asset in Germany."

Fortunately, the Fashion Council has found in Dorothee Bär, State Minister for Digitalization, a contact within the government willing to commit to the fashion industry. In fact, last year she even invited a delegation from the Berlin fashion scene to visit the federal chancellery, where Angela Merkel just happened to stop by. In January 2019, Bär also held a pep-talk at a roundtable discussion organized by the Fashion Council and *Icon* magazine where she assured listeners that supporting the fashion industry was indeed one of the federal government's priorities – even if the act of associating with fashion lobbyists was still considered a bit suspicious in Germany: "Some of my colleagues prefer to sit down with the nuclear

lobby." Bär's tip to fashion industry representatives is to spotlight themselves more effectively and take even better advantage of the opportunities provided by digitalization.

To be sure, Instagram has completely transformed the fashion industry in recent years, with direct-to-consumer communications already becoming an integral part of many labels' business strategy. Especially for small companies, this opens up entirely new opportunities, because they can attract a highly fashion-conscious community without having to invest in expensive exhibition stands or pay rent for a boutique.

The Berlin shoe brand Aeyde, for example, orchestrated its success story on the internet. The company was founded in 2015 by Luisa Krogmann and Constantin Langholz-Baikousis, two industry veterans who learned their craft at the largest German fashion startup, Zalando. Leveraging digitalization to scale their company from the start, they first built a functioning online shop and then worked on Instagram with major fashion influencers like Camille Charrière and Lucy Williams. After that, the doors to those highly competitive sales areas in major European concept stores opened up automatically.

In fact, there are many

young Berlin labels that have Instagram to thank for their success: Jeanne de Kroon, founder of Zazi Vintage, has her upscale hippie dresses sewn by women in NGO projects in such places as Uzbekistan, India and Afghanistan; Marke GmbH (German for: brand) – yes, that's the firm's name – made the leap to the prêt-à-porter shows in Paris with its underground aesthetic; the jewelry designer Lilian von Trapp brought her sustainable gold jewelry to actress Emma Watson via the internet; the founders of Wald Berlin rescued pearl jewelry from its old-fashioned reputation; and the grande dame of the Berlin fashion scene, Leyla Piedayesh, led her label Lala Berlin to international splendor with the help of 100,000 Instagram followers.

Capital city fashion brands also find digital support in Berlin's lively blogger network. Women like Vreni Frost (neverever.me), Jessica Weiß (journelles.com), Lisa Banholzer and Tanja Trutschnig (bloggerbazaar.com) use their websites and

Instagram accounts to promote the entire range of Berlin-based fashion offerings while staying true to the ideas behind "support your local dealer."

The closely networked Instagram scene has produced a regular stream of viral fashion hypes that now shapes the external perception of the "Berlin Look." Such phenomena take their inspiration from the city's vibe, that is, a way of life that continues to make Berlin a place so many people want to be a part of thanks to its club culture, the intellectual bohème, the clash of milieus and mentalities – all of which, taken together, inspire the fashion scene. Issues such as sustainability and fair production are also on the minds of many labels. Plus, Berliner style is never limited to just being



continued on page 2

continued from page 1
Capital look

“edgy,” as they say in the fashion world; it always embodies the city’s current zeitgeist as well. Recently, for example, the EUify hoodie created by the artists collective known as Souvenir made a splash on the internet. The blue sweatshirt features the EU circle of stars with one star missing – a conscious challenge on behalf of the designers to get their fans to reflect on European identity. The hoodie was worn by hip Louis Vuitton designer Virgil Abloh as well as by Germany’s Minister of Justice Katarina Barley.

To this day, coolness continues to be the Berlin fashion scene’s greatest capital. And, in keeping with its nature, the biggest and most successful trends make do without institutionalized events. In fact, it’s possible that the creative drive and ability of Berliners to turn ideas into good business models is thwarted only by too the excesses of well-meaning patronage. Those who rely too much on help from above can end up paralyzing themselves. And even Fashion Council Germany can’t afford to offer anything more than help with self-help.

While it’s true that many Berlin designers and labels still operate on a small scale, this isn’t necessarily a bad omen. On the contrary, the era of large major German fashion brands that helped shape the fate of the international fashion scene is long gone. These days, digitalization offers incredible growth opportunities that are better suited to small and agile startups rather than lumbering corporations.

At the moment, Berlin is witnessing the emergence of a highly modern fashion middle class. The hipster attitude of many other projects should not distract us from this fact. Berlin design is making its way upwards. Taking a number of unexpected detours, it’s slowly but successfully staking its claim in the international fashion scene – with a work ethic resting on medium-sized company values and access to good Wi-Fi. And no worries, there are still more than enough parties, pop-up store openings, dinners and panel talks going on outside of the erstwhile Fashion Week schedule – places and spaces where fashion professionals can continue to do their “networking.” There’s no need to fear that Berlin will run out of events any time soon.

Julia Hackober is deputy director at Iconist.de, a digital lifestyle magazine belonging to the Welt Group.

Perfectly suited

Berlin designer Patrick Hellmann is preparing to take Manhattan

BY CLAUDIA VON DUEHREN

German perfection, French charm, Moroccan temperament and American modernity – these are the characteristics Patrick Hellmann (64) uses to describe his own designs. But they are also an apt description of this Berlin designer himself. His father was a Berlin fashion merchant, his mother was Spanish and he was born in Casablanca in 1955. The language spoken at his father’s studio was Italian, and the family spoke French at home. When Hellmann was nine years old, his family moved to the United States, and in 1978 they moved to Berlin.

His mother still lives in Cincinnati, and Hellmann is planning to visit her there this month to celebrate her 90th birthday. “For me, it’s still like coming home,” he explains. Although he holds only a German passport, he does possess a coveted US Green Card. And now, Hellmann is looking to establish even more connections with his former home, this time via business ties.

Having had a shop-within-a-shop at Barneys in Manhattan until the US financial crisis in 2008, Hellmann is eager to return to the city that never sleeps. “The city has an unbelievable positive energy,” he gushes, “you can feel it as soon as you get off the plane.” Hellmann also sees Los Angeles as a perfect potential location for one of his stores. Of course, he already knows “there’s nothing anywhere that doesn’t already exist in the US.” But he’s still convinced that his collection will be able to make a mark on the American fashion market. Indeed, in keeping with the credo of his company, he has “the power of a perfect suit.”

With the help of this motto, Hellmann made his way to the top of the fashion



Patrick Hellmann (middle) with Alec Völkel aka Boss Burns (left) of The BossHoss and Till Lindemann (right) of Rammstein at a Schloßhotel party

industry. He now owns and operates eleven stores from Berlin and London to Moscow, Dubai and Baku, each designed in his characteristic black, white and silver. With the exception of the two in Berlin, all of Hellmann’s stores are operated as part of a franchise. Russians even rank his luxury brand PHC label higher than Brioni and Tom Ford.

And now it’s time to add a store in the US. The perfect fit of a Hellmann suit makes every man look good: “New Yorkers are very fashionable, so they’ll appreciate that,” he argues. He himself rarely goes shopping on any of his regular trips to New York. “I always wear the same thing,” the designer admits – a black sweater (cotton in summer, cashmere in winter), dark blue jeans, ankle boots – and done. Hellmann is less interested in himself and much more interested in making his clients look their best. Stars like Rammstein lead singer Till Lindemann (56) and German national soccer player Jérôme Boateng (30) are big fans of his work.

Hellmann also recently translated his perfectionist sensibilities to the realm of

interior design. In 2017, he bought Berlin’s legendary Schlosshotel in the Grunewald, which was built in 1914 and lies in a verdant and elegant part of the city. A number of hotel chains had already tried their luck with the hotel and failed, even though German fashion czar Karl Lagerfeld himself had given it a thorough restyling. It is entirely possible that Hellmann, a successful entrepreneur, assumed the risk for sentimental reasons. Indeed, when he first came to Berlin in 1978, Hellmann was invited shortly thereafter to a reception at the Schlosshotel in the Grunewald: “I immediately fell in love with this wonderful place,” recalls the designer.

The Renaissance-style hotel was also where German actress Romy Schneider (1938–1982) got married – twice. And its famous Jugendstil bar was often the last stop of the night for beloved German comedian and enthusiastic drinker Harald Juhnke (1929–2005), who lived just around the corner. In 2006, Germany’s national team stayed at the five-star hotel during the Soccer World Cup.

Hellmann has now re-designed 22 of the 53 total rooms and suites (starting at

€180/night). He even gave the bar a fresh new outfit: there’s herringbone from his suit collection on the chairs, and the curtains feature pinstripes facing out and violet tie-silk facing in – his favorite color. “Each room tells a story taken from my own life,” says Hellmann, explaining the personal touch at his exclusive hotel. His international guests appreciate this individuality to such an extent that “some even want to spend every night in a different room,” says the hotelier, grinning.

There is only one room at the hotel that Hellmann will most certainly not be redesigning, and that is the personal suite of Karl Lagerfeld. The famed Chanel designer, who passed away in February, equipped the room with personal furniture and art objects. “We are very proud that Karl Lagerfeld set up this suite, and the most we will ever do is refresh it a bit,” insists Hellmann, who attaches great importance to maintaining his hotel’s reputation for fashion. This coming summer, he also intends to reopen the 5-star hotel’s restaurant, Papillon, where upscale international cuisine will be served.

According to Hellmann, his hotel snuggled within the tranquil Grunewald forest is ideal for “guests who want a true sense of privacy.” The entrepreneur himself, who lives with his wife and five-year-old son in Berlin-Mitte, has been designing the interiors of private homes for years, and also created the Laliue Suite (€16,000/night) for the five-star Hotel Prince de Galles in Paris. This means there’s only one thing this Berlin designer is still missing: “Of course, I would love to redesign a hotel in New York.”

Claudia von Duehren is a culture editor at *Bild* and *BZ* in Berlin.

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DRAWING ON BERLIN

“I decided in that moment that my next comic book would be about Weimar Berlin, and that it would be 600 pages long.”

Jason Lutes tells the story of how he came to write his epic graphic novel on Germany in the last years before Hitler

I graduated from art school in 1991 with no clear idea of what to do with my life. I was interested in “alternative” comic books – which is to say, comic books that were not about superheroes – and I knew that the best-known publisher of such books was based in Seattle, Washington. On the off chance that I could land a job with this publisher, I drove the 3,000 miles from Providence, Rhode Island, to the Pacific Northwest. I had no idea that, in doing so, I was joining a mass migration of recent college graduates who would catalyze Seattle’s local music scene into an international phenomenon before stepping into entry-level jobs at Amazon, Adobe and Microsoft.

I landed the job, but swiftly became disillusioned with the comics publishing scene, and after a year I left to work for a free weekly arts and entertainment paper called *The Stranger*. The art director invited me to write and draw a weekly page of comics for the paper, and I jumped at the chance. I knew I wanted to tell a long story, but had no idea how to go about it, so I decided to just make it up as I went. The films of David Lynch, Jim Jarmusch, and Richard Linklater were my touchstones. I chose the title *Jar of Fools* the way a band might choose its name: something enigmatic but suggestive, open to interpretation. After two years, I had written and drawn 128 pages of story, which together formed my first “graphic novel” (a marketing term which had just been coined in hopes of selling more comic books to adults).

Jar of Fools was my self-education in the comics medium. I had read and studied hundreds of comics, but only through making a book-length story myself did I begin to comprehend how text and image in juxtaposition interact to create a unique form of expression, something greater than the sum of its parts. With this newfound knowledge, I was electrified by a sense of possibility – the feeling that comics was a boundless medium, and that I could tell any kind of story I wanted. In my early twenties, I had struggled to find something to say, but now I wanted to say *everything*. What subject could possibly grant me that possibility?

It was in this state of mind that I was flipping through a magazine and happened across a half-page advertisement for a book of photographs called *Bertolt Brecht’s Berlin: A Scrapbook of the Twenties*. I foggily recall one line of evocative ad copy: “And the jazz bands played on as the world spun out of control.” I knew next to nothing about Berlin in the 1920s, beyond having heard my parents’ 1958 double LP of *Die Dreigroschenoper* (*The Threepenny Opera*) once or twice as a child, and fragments

of dodgy VHS copy of the film *Cabaret* as it played in the background during a party back in art school. Despite – or, as I now believe, because of – this lack of understanding, I decided in that moment that my next comic book would be about Weimar Berlin, and that it would be 600 pages long.

It was 1994. I was 26 years old. I did the math and figured, given my rate of production on *Jar of Fools*, that I could wrap up this new project by the time I turned 40.

I mail-ordered *Bertolt Brecht’s Berlin* immediately. It was the first of a collection of over a hundred Berlin-centric books I would amass over the following years, as I made weekly rounds of the used-book stores in the greater Seattle area in an effort to acquire every English-language source upon which I could lay my hands. In the map room at the University of Washington, I found the 1928 Pharus Plan of the city, had a copy made and pinned it up over my drawing table. I had quit my day job and was making a go of it as a starving artist, living off meager royalties and freelance work while I consumed book after book, taking notes and making sketches as I went. My goal was to immerse myself in the time and place, to put myself on the streets of the Prussian capital and imagine what it was like to be at ground level while momentous events unfolded in real time. After two years of research, having never set foot in the actual city of Berlin, I felt I was ready to start.

I had come up with two main characters: Kurt Severing, a jaded Berliner and journalist writing for *Die Weltbühne*; and Marthe Müller, an ingenious young woman from Cologne who has come to study art in the big city. My strategy was to follow these two into the metropolis, improvising the story one scene at a time, peeling off to pursue any secondary char-

acters that interested me, finding my way between the tent-poles of major historical events: Bloody May, the Crash of 1929, the Reichstag elections of 1930.

I had a publisher, and each chapter would be published as an individual comic book. I sent Kurt and Marthe to arrive in Berlin at Potsdamer Bahnhof on a train from the west, and then followed them into the city to see what they would find.

At some time around the year 2000, Carlsen, a publisher out of Hamburg, offered to translate and print *Jar of Fools* in Germany. They invited me over to promote the book at a comics festival in the town of Erlangen and, aware of my work-in-progress, arranged for me to spend a few days in Berlin. At that point, I was roughly 200 pages into the story, and had never set foot in the actual city. I was terrified.

What if the real place was so different from the one in my book that it would render all of my work useless? What if I had been devoting the past six years of my life – writing and drawing in a basement in Seattle, about as far away from Berlin as a person can get – to an elaborate lie? As I boarded the train at Erlangen I felt more and more convinced that I would be shown to be a fraud.

I remember when the first buildings on the outskirts started to drift past by the window. The sun was setting; abandoned industrial buildings were dappled in golden light. Absurdly, I was not prepared for the fact that everything would be in *full color* (my comic is drawn in black-and-white), and in particular how *green* it was. Springtime in Berlin, to someone who has only known the city through old photographs, is astonishing.

I got off the train (as Kurt and Marthe had done in the first chapter of my book) and wandered aimlessly. I was in a heightened state of awareness, where every

façade was cut from diamond and the patterns of paving stones were fractals of wonder. There was something in the air – was this the same *Berliner Luft* that people had inhaled in 1930? This place was, of course, very different from the one I had been trying to capture, but also very similar to it. And in that word – “capture” – I recognized the arrogance with which I had undertaken this project. One could never *capture* the vibrancy and complexity of a city so alive.

A sudden gulf opened between my imaginary Berlin and the real Berlin now surrounding me. There was a vast distance between these two places, and in that distance my anxiety evaporated. There was – of course – *no way* I could capture this place, or any place. My Berlin was a city in a shoebox; the real Berlin is alive, infinite and irreducible. I had aspired to create a portrait of the city and its people, but in the wake of that aspiration I began to decipher a self-portrait.

I flew back to Seattle with a sense of relief, intent on staying as true to the real Berlin as I could, but accepting that I would never get it right.

In the end, including those first two years of research, the project took me 24 years to complete. I missed my original deadline by 10 years, drawing the last page a few days before my 50th birthday. The book ends in 1933, with the ascension of Adolf Hitler to the chancellorship, and I wrote and drew that portion in Vermont, while the 2016 presidential election was unfolding. The resonance between the story I was telling and the present-day ascension of authoritarianism was powerful and stupefying. At first I thought it a strange and unfortunate coincidence. Now I’m not so sure.

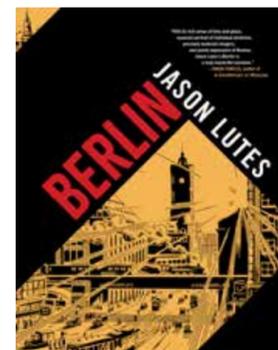
I chose the subject of Weimar Berlin in 1994, on impulse. With some distance now from the finished book, and through

speaking about it in public, I’ve managed to peel back the layers underlying that impulse. The first thing I came to understand is that what felt like a random decision at the time actually came out of a powerful unconscious need to educate myself about the circumstances leading up to World War II and the Holocaust (an unfortunate void in my poor public school history education). Beneath that, I was trying to come to terms with the (largely) male capacity for dehumanization, oppression and mass slaughter. Beneath that, I was trying to process my own country’s history of atrocities, and to what degree I personally am implicated in that history. It turns out that only by looking far away in time and space could I begin to look at myself.

Over all of the years I worked on this book, most of my various studio spaces were subterranean – basement rooms, often windowless. I would make my morning coffee and walk downstairs to write or draw about Berlin between the years 1928 and 1933. I was writing about the Bloody May while the WTO protests of 1999 were happening outside my front door in Seattle; I was writing about the Crash of 1929 during the global financial crisis of 2008; I was writing about the rise of fascism in the late 1920s during the rise of global fascism in our current moment. When I walked down those stairs I was traveling back in time and descending into my own unconscious, but I was also listening.

I don’t have any special talent in this regard. I believe anyone able and willing to take the time out of their life to listen can sense the greater trajectory of human civilization. I can draw pictures fairly well, and comics is a narrative art form currently enjoying some popularity, so I’m privileged and fortunate enough to be able to make half a living reporting back from my underground listening post.

The real question now, for me, is what to do with these messages.



Berlin, Jason Lutes
Drawn and Quartered,
Montréal, 2018, 580 pages



My big fat world

The district in north Berlin is in the process of reinventing itself

BY JULIA BOEK

It's a typical afternoon in Berlin-Wedding, not far from Leopoldplatz. The radiant early-spring sun is shining down, so much so that the Turkish barber has put a rack of wet towels out on the sidewalk to dry. In contrast, the cigarette smoke at Café Morena hangs heavy in the air. Wolle, the tavern's retired proprietor, and Paule, one of his regulars, are drinking their morning beer in the still-empty pub. The huge ashtray on the large table in front of them contains a good dozen cigarette butts, and the radio is blasting saccharine German *Schlager* music. At 12 o'clock sharp, Wolle disappears behind the bar. It's time for his first "blood thinner," as the regulars call their vodka. These men spend their days sitting around together in the tavern, after all, "whadya expect us to do, look out the window the whole time?"

As he lights his next cigarette, Wolle sets out on a journey to the past. He recalls how he opened his tavern here in the early 1970s, after winning it in a gambling match. Its name back then was Sexmuffel II – which can be loosely translated as "Sex Curmudgeon II." Wolle explains that it was an "erotic film bar" that attracted customers from all walks of life in West Berlin, including political party functionaries, workers from the nearby Osram light bulb factory and French soldiers from the Allied barracks at Kurt-Schumacher-Platz. Today, the 82-year-old sports a wide grin at the thought of that bygone era. These days, the clientele at Café Morena is more along the lines of plumbers and construction workers, many of whom show up for their after-work beer. But he also hosts weekly teachers' get-togethers, artists and members of the Left Party.

Today, more than 86,000 people live in the nine-square-kilometer area in northwest Berlin known as Wedding. Once referred to as "red Wedding," the area was a legendary workers' district until it was forced to look on as those jobs moved elsewhere. After World War II, the district became part of the French sector, and Wedding residents soon began receiving a special allowance designed to compensate them for having to live along that East-West death strip known as the Berlin Wall.

In the 1970s, large numbers of so-called *Gastarbeiter* – the German term denoting workers recruited from abroad – moved into the area, especially after Germany and Turkey signed a labor agreement in October 1961. Many of these foreign workers stayed, and even more joined them. These days, people from 165 nations call Wedding their home. In fact, one out of every two residents here has a "migration background."

In the 1980s, a number of big Wedding-based factories, such as AEG, Osram and Rotaprint, closed their doors, most likely because West Berlin's status as an isolated island within East Germany had rendered it unprofitable as a location for industry. Many workers lost their jobs, which meant that all the shops along the large boulevards of Müllerstraße and Badstraße also lost their customers.

The district never quite recovered from that setback. To this day, in some areas you'll still find casinos lining the streets alongside junk shops. Both the unemployment rate and the crime rate are high. And yet, Wedding has started to change. In the past several years,

as rents in Berlin's inner-city districts continue their explosion, Wedding has started to see more students, hipsters and young families on its streets. The newcomers have opened up vegan cafés, organic flower shops and hip bars. In fact, Wedding is now even home to a Michelin-starred restaurant and a number of shops belonging to organic supermarket chains.

Wedding encapsulates the world in one urban district. And this isn't just talk, it's an everyday reality, even as some misguided opinion-makers still insist that the coexistence of people of different origins, cultures, religions and mentalities has yet to be tested in this country. In Wedding, this coexistence has been a fact for decades. This is why Wedding is an excellent illustration of the most prominent social phenomena underway in Germany today – and perhaps in Europe, too. These include, for example, issues surrounding migration and integration, the competition for housing, demographic change and the growing gap between the rich and the poor. In other words, the focus is on the fundamental question of how we want to live with one another in the future.

For Les Schliesser, Wedding is a classic *Ankunftsstadt* – arrival city. While it is indeed a very poor district, it is nevertheless a very friendly one that attracts people from all corners of the world. Word is out that all are welcome to try their luck here in the northwest part of the capital. In fact, it's still possible to find affordable space here to rent an apartment or build up a small existence – even if it's getting harder and taking longer these days.

Schliesser is a visual artist and himself a "migrant" from southern Germany. He made his way in the mid-1990s to Berlin-Mitte and later to Wedding. One day back in early 2000, he and fellow artist Daniela Brahm happened upon the stacked concrete cubes that made up the former Rotaprint printing press manufacturer on Gottschedstraße. The 10,000 square-meter site with its 11 factory and office spaces was completely abandoned, except for a couple of tenants. The last small offset printing machine had been taken offline in the late 1980s. Brahm and Schliesser immediately saw the potential of the complex. But they also noticed that many of the nearby residents were welfare recipients who had little access to work or any sort of education or training.

Sitting in his atelier, Schliesser recalls how back in the 2000s, Berlin was forced to sell 6,000 properties to the highest bidder. The Berlin real estate bubble had just burst, property prices were in the dumps and the city was looking to reduce its debt. The Rotaprint complex was also up for sale, and there was already an Icelandic investor on board who wanted to build loft apartments there. What ensued was a true real-estate poker match. The most effective card Schliesser and Brahm had up their sleeves – along with their 11 fellow shareholders in their newly founded gGmbH company – was their idea for a never-before-seen mixed-use concept for the site alongside a sophisticated financing model. In 2007, with the help of an instrument known as the *Erbbaurecht* (heritable building right), which gave the gGmbH a 100-year lease, they were able, together with two foundations, to acquire the former printing press site for €600,000, thus rendering the re-sale of the complex prohibited. The transaction was based on the mutually binding premise of "no profit by ownership." ExRotaprint was born.



Worldwide Wedding

self – with the help of its residents from more than 165 countries

Looking back, Schliesser is convinced that their success can be a role model for how to approach Berlin's urban development in a manner that doesn't revolve around profit. In his words, their approach is "proof that renters can refurbish and develop a complex by themselves by means of self-management." Today, he co-manages ExRotaprint's business operations with Brahm. The complex is at 100-percent capacity and several of the site's buildings – all of which are now historically protected monuments – have been refurbished with the help of two architects, a building loan and income from rent.

The co-managers rent out the space based on a strict allocation philosophy: one-third of tenants are tradespeople, including carpenters and the like; the second third are organizations that perform social work, such as a German school for migrants; and the final third of the space is rented out to artists and creatives, including ateliers and 17 rehearsal rooms for musicians.

"The district desperately needs jobs, educational opportunities and social support," says Schliesser. By making specific choices when it comes to renting out their space, he explains, they can decide who sets up shop on their site and how Wedding can profit from their work. These days, their vision of a non-profit real estate company – the ExRotaprint team refers to itself as a "social sculpture" – has become more important than ever. Even in Wedding, money is now starting to play an increasingly large role, as Schliesser is well aware. In some places, rents have increased fourfold within a year, and the gentrifying tendency of pushing out people with less money has long since been underway.

In the small dressmaking shop for women's and children's clothing Cosa on the ground floor of a residential building on Tegeler Straße, Nuray Anadolu and her 24-year-old daughter Ipek Yeşildağ are very busy these days. April is a very popular month for Muslim weddings. Ramadan is in May this year, which means no one marries in that month. Hoş geldiniz! Welcome to Turkish Wedding! Or maybe it would be more accurate to say "Welcome to German-Turkish Wedding!" Indeed, just like in the districts of Kreuzberg and Neukölln, the Anatolians are among those Berliners who have lived in Wedding the longest.

Anadolu moved to Wedding in 1992, and her daughter Ipek was born in the district. A professional fashion tailor from western Turkey, Anadolu sports a very fashionable bob, her hair is dyed purple and she has a tattoo on her lower arm. Wedding is her home. It's where she can speak Turkish to people from her home country on every corner; it's where she can celebrate Muslim holidays with members of her community; and it's also where she can find mosques right in her neighborhood. And even though she spends most of her time in her sewing shop, she's quick to note that these surroundings give her tremendous strength.

And yet, living alongside her compatriots presents certain challenges and complications. As the 48-year-old Anadolu points out, many of the older people, especially those from eastern Turkey, are highly conservative. "They stay among themselves, only visit Turkish doctors, go to Turkish supermarkets and even keep a distance from other Muslims," she says. And by "other Muslims," she means women such as Nuray Anadolu and Ipek Yeşildağ, that is, women who don't wear headscarves yet still pray to Allah for several minutes every night before going to bed.

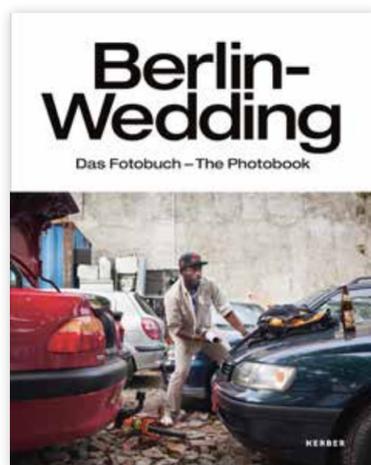
Religion and politics are themes that both women try to keep out of their fashion business. After all, there are so many other things to talk about. "Tradition or not, Turkish weddings are total bling bling," says Ipek, whose name translates as "silk." For most of the brides who come to the mother-daughter duo, the women create baroque "Sisi-type" dresses with lots of tulle, rhinestones and lace, as well as matching dresses for the bridesmaids. Up to 10 women – mothers, sisters and aunts – have been known to come into their workshop to discuss every detail of the bride's dress.

Anadolu recalls that her own wedding, which took place in Turkey in the early 1990s, was also a large-scale affair; however, it was an event the then 21-year-old didn't have much of a say in.

She has since divorced her husband. Indeed, her life path – which took her from the position of textile workshop manager at a Berlin-based company to her current status as a businesswoman who says what she thinks and makes her own decisions – did not jibe with her ex-husband's image of women. "After 17 years of marriage, it was a difficult decision to divorce," says Anadolu, sighing, yet with a look of satisfaction. Her daughter Ipek will soon be completing her BA in fashion management and hopes to join her mother's business at some point. For Nuray Anadolu and Ipek Yeşildağ, the district of Wedding is the perfect place to pursue a good life based on traditional values and a self-determined future.

Wolle, the 82-year-old pub owner, also foresees a dazzling future for Wedding. He even goes as far as to predict "a cultural revolution." There are more and more well-educated people moving to the district, he says. For his own part, he'd like to stay "until they have to carry me out." That makes sense, seeing as Wolle was born in his grandfather's Schultheiss pub just a few blocks away.

Julia Boek is co-publisher of *Berlin-Wedding – The Photobook*.



For more information, visit www.derwedding.de/das-buch



The world in one city district: residents with a multifaceted range of social and cultural backgrounds live side-by-side in an area of north Berlin called Wedding. Together, these people contribute to the district's distinct character, making it a locality brimming with diversity and contrasts. Two such residents are Wolfgang and Anna Dumkow (below left), managers of the Wiesenburg, a protected landmark that began in 1886 as a shelter for homeless women and men and today is a haven for art and culture. Other residents include members of the city's African community, many of whom come from Egypt, Cameroon and Nigeria and gather on Sundays at the Evangelische Freikirchlichen Gemeinde (Evangelical Free Church) to sing gospel songs and recite bible verses to the point of ecstasy. With roughly

5,500 members, Wedding's African community is by far the largest in Berlin.

Journalist Julia Boek and art director and photographer Axel Völcker have been focusing for years on the stories and sensations of everyday life in the district in their magazine *Der Wedding*. In 2017, they took up a new approach to their storytelling, this time based entirely on photographs. To create their illustrated book *Berlin-Wedding – Das Fotobuch* (Berlin-Wedding – The Photobook, from which some of the pictures shown here are taken), they enlisted photographers from Ostkreuz, a well-known Berlin-based agency, to spend a year wandering through the district taking photos in bars, living rooms, mosques, studios and the job center.





Fan lingo: U.N.V.E.U. – short for (in German): And never forget: Iron Union.

Union representatives

Union Berlin is a soccer club of underdogs, but only the well-behaved, honest and open-minded kind

BY ANNETT GRÖSCHNER

It's a Saturday afternoon in late March. Our destination is a home game at the Alte Försterei stadium, deep in the east of Berlin. The further the S-Bahn takes us in the direction of Köpenick, the more crowded it gets, and the more red-and-white scarves and other gear we see on fans of the 1. FC Union Berlin soccer team. The atmosphere is relaxed, and the crowd is made up mostly of older men interspersed by all variations of red-and-white striped families and their kids. Women are definitely outnumbered, but they nevertheless have a presence here. All the parking spaces around the stadium are full and the S-Bahn trains are bursting at their seams, as are the trams. The exit at S-Bahnhof Köpenick station is too narrow for the masses of people, but the police are relaxed, standing at their post next to the sausage stand in the station. Today's opposing team is SC Paderborn 07, a worthy opponent, but not a team known for its rabid fans. Things are quite different when a team like SV Dynamo Dresden travels to the stadium; those games require an increased level of security.

1. FC Union Berlin is known for its working-class tradition and underdog status but also for its sense of solidarity and spirit of

political resistance – that reaches back to the days of the divided city. And there's always something to these labels, even if many elements of the team's reputation have already become the stuff of myth, including the legend of the 11 locksmiths on the field and the battle cry "Eisern Union" (iron union). At 1. FC Union, every player is a soccer god. Union represents the east, too, and above all Köpenick, the city district whose sheer obstinacy was able to preserve its municipal autonomy well into the 20th century. It also stands for a deep-rooted Berlin dialect that no one on the other side of Berlin speaks anymore.

The Alte Försterei's location at the edge of a wooded area called the Wuhlheide means that the path to each home game is part of a ritual that includes a walk through the forest. In the past, the walk back from the stadium was often the march of a losing team, sometimes even of a sorely beaten one. As the Union joke goes: "When god created the world, he spoke to the stones and said: 'Do you want to become Unioners?' And the stones said 'Yes, but we're not hard enough.'"

Back in the GDR, Union was an "elevator team," that is, a team that went up and down between the first and second leagues, while their much-hated East Berlin rival, BFC Dynamo, the favorite club of the Minister of State Security, won one

championship after the next. Suffice it to say that there were often what you might call "inconsistencies" at play in that era. These days, Dynamo plays in a division two leagues below Union.

In 1968, Union had one of the first women's soccer teams in both Germanys. This was at a time when women in West Germany were still kept from playing soccer in clubs due to the preposterous idea that women's bodies and souls would

Even if your entire existence is wavering, the stadium at the Alte Försterei remains a reliable home

suffer if they did – and because such public displays of their bodies would supposedly offend standards of decency and propriety. In East Berlin, this brought about great mirth and shaking of heads.

For their part, the fate of Union's men's team serves to illustrate many of the upheavals of the postwar period in East Berlin: relegation, ascent, renewed relegation down to the fourth division, debt, the struggle to stay alive and a brush with bankruptcy. The same was true for the fans, too, many of whom were well-educated and

skilled workers. After the two Germanys unified, 22,000 jobs were lost at the nearby Oberschöneeweide industrial area, the equivalent of one full Union stadium. With them went the livelihood of entire families. The career paths of some of Union's older fans also mirror this experience: pre-reunification training in shift-based systems at large-scale GDR factories, unemployment after the fall of the Wall, various transitional jobs, some even outside

of Germany, re-training, additional training, jobs at companies that went bankrupt, failure to be paid by dodgy entrepreneurs – the whole kit and caboodle.

Soccer is a great anchor, though. Even if your entire existence is wavering, the stadium at the Alte Försterei remains a reliable home, no matter what division the team is in. Union fans now come from all over. There's even a "Union in English" online portal for English-speaking enthusiasts.

Much has been said about the undying love Union fans hold for

their club: they donated blood and gave the proceeds to the club; they emptied their piggy banks to purchase shares in the team; they refurbished the stadium themselves; and they invented the often-copied annual Christmas Caroling event at the stadium, which 30,000 people attend every year on Dec. 23. Nowadays, Union fans even buy pricy beer in their stadium.

However, the bonds that tie the club to its fans are occasionally put to the test. Having made an official commitment to tolerance and open-mindedness, the club and its economic council have implemented a number of programs, including a job network for refugees, that have not been well-received by all Union fans. Yet when an anonymous fan made anti-Semitic comments online about the Ingolstadt player Almog Cohen just a few weeks ago, the response was unanimous in its condemnation. The club reacted immediately and called on Union fans to fight all forms of racism.

People still disagree when it comes to determining the best Union era. Was it when the team still played for only 600 people and fans could sit on the curbstones and chat? Or is it better today, when almost every game is sold out and there are almost as many club members as seats in the stadium? Either way, the thing that matters most is something else, and it can be summarized as follows: "We're not

going to just any soccer game, we're going to Union."

1. FC Union Berlin has been playing in the second division since 2009. At the moment, the club is in third place, which means their ascent to the first division, the Bundesliga, is entirely possible. This also means people in Berlin are increasingly hearing the typical Union phrase "Scheiße, wir steigen auf!" (Shit, we're moving up!). It's a statement that perfectly captures Union fans' ambivalence toward reaching a higher division. After all, what happens when big companies get involved and start making their own decisions for the team?

On this particular Saturday, as before all games, fans add the word "Fußballgott!" (soccer god!) after each player's name is announced over the loudspeaker. This time, however, they have an extra "Fußballgott" for the Paderborn coach, Steffen Baumgart, a former Union captain. Fans don't forget things like that here. Even when Baumgart's Paderborn team manages to put a stop to Union's 20-game undefeated streak – in their own stadium, of all places – Union fans celebrate their former captain anyway.

Annett Gröschner is a novelist and professor of journalism at the University of Arts Berlin – and a passionate fan of Union Berlin.

The turn of a century

Why Berlin should apply to host the 2036 Olympic Games

BY FRANK BACHNER

It was a happy and joyful big-time sports event. "A time to make friends" was the motto of the 2006 Soccer World Cup in Germany. The stadiums were full, the weather was sunny for weeks and the German fans were giddy despite their team losing in the semi-finals.

The world saw a very tolerant, empathetic country that summer, and there could soon be an opportunity for it to happen again. Berlin's Senator for the Interior and Sport, Andreas Geisel, has proposed that Berlin apply to host the 2036 Summer Olympics – with the added symbolic significance of being one hundred years after the Nazis turned the 1936 games into an ignominious propaganda campaign.

As of yet, there are but musings, yet the potential push to host the

games is already proving divisive. Udo Wolf, the chairman of the Left Party delegation in Berlin's parliament considers the idea "a bad joke." Berlin's Senator for Justice, Dirk Behrendt, of the Green Party is also strongly opposed.

This is all understandable. By 1936, Hitler's terror regime had been in operation for three years. One year earlier, the Nuremberg Race Laws had downgraded Jews to second-class citizens, and opponents of the regime were already disappearing to concentration camps. The dictator exploited the Olympic Games, which had been awarded to Germany in 1931, as a propaganda platform without equal. The largest sporting event on the planet was intended to show the world that Germany was a peace-loving, economically aspiring country. And now, a hundred years later, the idea has been floated for the Olympic Games to take place again in the very sta-

dium where Hitler once lorded over the competition from his privileged box? In this epic architectural monument to Nazi megalomania?

Quite a few people would agree with Geisel and Wolf. But their views are short sighted. It might even be desirable to draw parallels to 1936. The result could only be that Germany is found to be a peaceful, cosmopolitan country – as the world already experienced at the Soccer World Cup in 2006. 2036 would simply be a continuation of that.

This is true, however, only under precisely the condition that history is never to be forgotten; it is imperative that the victims are remembered appropriately. It would be a fatal flaw for Germany to present itself as a country for which National Socialism is a mere historical footnote.

The decision-makers in this country and the absolute majority

of society are set to carry out this process. Thomas Härtel, president of the Berlin Sport Federation, set the tone: "One hundred years after the Olympic Games of 1936 is the right date to again confront the eventful history of our country. By looking back, we can set an example as to how far Germany has come in its development into a democratic, peaceful and cosmopolitan country." Kaweh Niroomand, a native of Iran and vice president of the German Olympic Sports Federation, has a similar argument. "1936 is a sensitive topic," he admits. "But it is also a huge opportunity, especially at this time, to present our democratic country as an antithesis to what it was 100 years ago."

Frank Bachner is a metro editor for the Berlin daily *Der Tagesspiegel*.



RAH! TALENT!



A company is founded every 20 minutes in Berlin

BY MAGDALENA THIELE

Daniel Stammler and Janosch Sadowski came to Berlin by way of Karlsruhe, the city in southwest Germany where they founded Kolibri, their gaming startup. Stammler and Sadowski see the town as having been an ideal springboard for their business, especially thanks to its proximity to the Karlsruhe Institute for Technology (KIT) and all the creative minds studying there. “However, in order to take things to the next level, we had to move to Berlin,” says Sadowski. “For one thing, a large part of the German games industry is at home in Berlin; and then after the move, it was much easier to fill our job vacancies with great international talent. Berlin has a completely unique pull on people.”

As has been the case for several other startups, Germany’s capital city provided Kolibri its stomping grounds. The company’s turnover is now roughly €100,000 per day, half of which is generated through advertising. “Our move to Berlin was one of the best decisions we ever made,” says Stammler.

Berlin is still a magnet for young companies and, above all, for young talent. This fact was

proved once again in the latest Berlin Startup Monitor (BSM), an annual study published by the German Startups Association in cooperation with Google for Entrepreneurs. The findings of the study are based on the German Startup Monitor, which surveys 1,550 startups and their 3,763 founders and 18,000 employees.

The latest figures show that Berlin remains Germany’s startup hotspot. At 15.8 percent, Berlin is home to more than twice as many startups as Hamburg, the number two among startup cities in Germany, at 7.2 percent. Berlin also leads the nation in terms of the percentage of women employed at startups, although 16.2 percent is still far too low. The typical Berlin founder is male, in his mid-30s and holds a university degree in business or economics.

Although the formerly divided city of Berlin is often described as “unfinished,” it continues to attract people for a number of reasons, two of which are its sheer diversity and openness to newcomers. This is also reflected in the overall employee structure at startups. As the BSM notes, “A glance at the origins of employees at young companies in the capital shows that almost 50 percent are foreign-born, which makes Berlin considerably more internationally oriented than most other regions in Germany.”

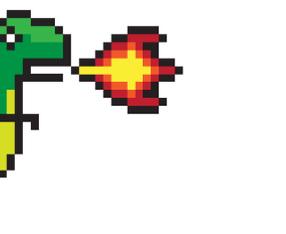
Kolibri co-founders Stammler and Sadowski have no doubt that Berlin will continue its reign as Germany’s startup capital. The many networks and institutions created there to support founders and young companies will further consolidate this status, they argue. However, young founders throughout Germany –



and in Berlin, too – are quick to complain about the complicated nature of local bureaucracy, in particular when it comes to hiring foreign workers. According to the BSM, for roughly two-thirds of all founders, acquiring visas is a particularly difficult challenge, and many lose whatever remaining patience they may have when confronted with all the social security conditions and provisions.

And yet, Berlin continues to draw large numbers of people. What does the city have that others don’t? “International flair

and a big-city atmosphere on the one hand, and the familiarity of each distinct urban neighborhood on the other,” explains Stammler. He also notes that Berlin’s large pool of employees – particularly in the tech scene – makes the city “entirely unique on both a personal and an entrepreneurial level.” All of this in spite of the



fact that Berlin weather is often gray and Berliners themselves quite gruff, says Sadowski, with a grin. What matters to him much more: “We’ve been able to triple the size of our team since we moved here.”

Yet another factor that should not be overlooked is the fact that there’s good beer to be had in Berlin. “We were astonished to discover that people in Berlin like to drink Rothaus, which is a beer from our home town. Rothaus will always have a special place in our fridge at Kolibri Games.” And it’s true – even when it comes to

food, Berlin is better known for its international cuisine than for its local dishes.

“Berlin’s got a buzz,” says Jan-Niklas Schroers, associate director and team leader office agency at property consultant Savills in Berlin. Schroers backs up his claim by noting that the capital city has a pleasant business climate and a myriad of opportunities, plus the cost of living is not nearly as high as that seen in other European cities. He also explains that while the German capital is not yet a tech hub, it is most definitely a talent hub, a trend that fuels the city’s rapid ongoing development – in Berlin, a new company is founded every 20 minutes.

Berlin can already claim to be Germany’s strongest FinTech location. All the big players, including the online banks Solaris and N26, the company builder Finleap and the FinTech ventures Lendico and Fundingcircle, are based in Berlin. Even Rocket Internet, the company considered to be the pioneer among startup launchers, grew out of Berlin.

It is fascinating that even 30 years after the fall of the Wall, the German capital is still “unfinished” and “unorganized.” But it appears to be precisely this state of affairs that makes Berlin so interesting. “In general, I think it’s very good – even exciting – to

be ‘unfinished’ as a city and economic space,” argues Schroers. “It opens up so many more opportunities for young and aspiring individuals than an established and less permeable structure would. Right now in Berlin, anything is possible.”

But these things alone will not be enough for Berlin to maintain its leading status in the long run amid competition from other international cities, notes Schroers. He argues that Berlin is going to have to expand its infrastructure, particularly by means of a major international airport – or even two international airports, if necessary (and if the local business community has its say). At the same time, however, Berlin will have to maintain that inimitable “unfinished” charm. As Schroers puts it: “Become a new Bay Area but still keep that Kreuzberg spirit. That’s the challenge in a nutshell.”



Magdalena Thiele is a freelance economics journalist based in Berlin.



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Playing for the future

Time to celebrate the 20th anniversary of Berlin's Young Euro Classic festival – as well as a number of former participants who've made it big

BY PETER UEHLING

One of the most successful concepts in classical music is turning 20 this year. Back in 2000, the youth orchestra festival known as the Young Euro Classic (YEC) took place for the first time ever in Berlin. From that first year onwards, the YEC team under Gabriele Minz was able to fill the Konzerthaus am Gendarmenmarkt to the brim almost every evening – with performances by well-known German and international youth orchestras, but also by lesser-known regional ensembles. The festival takes place each year in the final weeks of Berlin's official theater holidays, which means it profits from having fewer cultural events to compete with as well as from the sheer charisma of the youth orchestras themselves. Far from the service-oriented mentality of some professional orchestras, these young musicians inevitably play with a special intensity and give audiences hope that this youthful élan will be preserved in the future. The suggestive slogan of the Young Euro Classic is "Hier spielt die Zukunft," which can be loosely translated as "This is where the future plays."

But what does that future actually look like? In other words, what happens to young musicians after they've performed at Young Euro Classic? If one is looking to portray the festival's success at promoting young talent, then oboist Viola Wilmsen is the poster child. After winning competitions for her trumpet playing and also displaying her talent for piano and vocals, Wilmsen chose to study the oboe in Lübeck and later in Paris and Berlin. While still in secondary school, she played in the German National Youth Orchestra, and later, while at university, in the

Junge Deutsche Philharmonie. As part of the orchestra's participation in the YEC starting in 2004, Wilmsen held the position of solo oboist. In 2010, she became solo oboist in the orchestra of Berlin's Deutsche Oper, and three years later she was named solo oboist at the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester, one of Germany's best. For many musicians, this would be enough of a career and plenty to keep them busy; but Wilmsen also performs regularly as a soloist in oboe concerts, plays chamber music in several ensembles and has even recorded CDs with them.

When asked to what extent Young Euro Classic contributed to her success, Wilmsen describes a more indirect impact: "Participating in the YEC has a mostly indirect effect on players," she argues. "I think what's most important is the sense of achievement and positive feedback one gets from conductors in youth orchestras. That's what gave me strength and motivated me on my path to becoming a professional musician." As she notes further, the pressure and excitement of performing at the Konzerthaus in Berlin and in a series with other youth orchestras acted as an "incentive to be especially well-prepared and to give absolutely everything in every concert."

Youth orchestras indeed gain motivation by performing in famous concert halls, but most of all they benefit from the experience of working with established conductors. Students studying orchestra conducting can also learn a lot, for example, by working as assistants. Up-and-coming conductor Kerem Hasan, who was born in London in 1992, accompanied the European Union Youth Orchestra (EUYO) on its tours starting in 2012, and also played in Berlin. At the time, he was studying piano and conducting in Glasgow and played piano in the orchestra, but mostly

he worked as an assistant to conductors Dirk Brossé, Krzysztof Urbanski and Thomas Søndergard. His work as an assistant involved such tasks as checking the tonal balance of the instruments and rehearsing works with individual orchestra groups.

Although a young conductor can learn a lot by engaging in such work, it won't make him famous. According to Hasan, Young Euro Classic was less important for his career than his work with the EUYO, with whom he also rehearsed independently starting in 2014. Ultimately, what was most decisive were his achievements at various competitions: after pursuing his studies further in Weimar and Zurich, Hasan was a finalist in 2016 at the Donatella Flick Conducting Competition in London and was named associate conductor of the Welsh National Opera. As a winner of the renowned Young Conductors Award at the Salzburger Festspiele, he was also appointed to the position of principal conductor of the Tiroler Symphonieorchester Innsbruck. But Hasan will only take up that position starting in the fall, because for the current season, he is still studying as an assistant under Bernard Haitink in Chicago and Amsterdam.

The Young Euro Classic most likely exerts its strongest promotional impact on behalf of composers, rather than for young orchestra members. Almost all youth orchestras perform a new work by a composer from their home country, which then competes with others for the European Composers Prize decided by a public jury. In 2015, the National Youth Symphony Orchestra of Turkey presented the work "Hafriyat – Earthwork" by the then-30-year-old composer Sinem Altan. Of the three musicians presented here, she is the only one who mentions the Young Euro Classic on her CV. This speaks volumes



Viola Wilmsen



Sinem Altan

later she oversaw family concerts with intercultural undertones at the Rundfunk-Sinfonieorchester Berlin, for which she also composed several musical dramatic works. Fostering dialogue between German and Turkish culture is the idea behind her chamber music ensemble Olivinn; for example, they perform Schubert's "Winterreise" using Turkish instruments. Her work also involves a tangible turn toward the public, and she is currently working as the musical director of the Gorki Theater in Berlin. So, as important as it was for her to win the European Composers Award – previous recipients include Magnus Lindberg, Niels Klein and Agata Zubeł – Sinem Altan's schedule of engagements was already full before she received the composers' prize.

In other words, the benefits of taking part in Young Euro Classic remain relatively minimal for individual musicians. Viola Wilmsen notes that the event fails to support the networking of musicians from different orchestras and cultures. Still, the competitive nature of the festival has prompted the youth orchestras to reach breathtaking heights of musical quality; for example, Stravinsky's "Sacred Prayer" which required tremendous effort to play 100 years ago, is now easily mastered by regional youth orchestras. Indeed, modern music education plays a decisive role in the upswing in performance and quality, and the developments fostered by the Young Euro Classic also serve to inspire individual musicians to reach new heights.

Peter Uehling is a music critic for the daily *Berliner Zeitung*. This year's Young Euro Classic will take place in Berlin from July 19 to Aug. 6.

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