GEOPOLITICAL TRANSFORMATION AND NOSTALGIA: LITERARY RETURN
VISITS TO FORMER EAST PRUSSIAN HOMES

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By

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines literary return narratives by German expellees and their descendants revisiting former familial homes located in the historical East Prussian region (contemporary northern Poland and Kaliningrad, Russia). In particular, I analyze Arno Surminski’s East Prussian trilogy, *Jokehnen oder wie lange fährt man von Ostpreußen nach Deutschland?* (1974), *Polninen oder eine deutsche Liebe* (1984), and *Grunowen oder das vergangene Leben* (1989); Elisabeth Schulz-Semrau’s autobiographical prose texts, *Suche nach Karalautschi. Report einer Kindheit in Königsberg* (1984) and *Drei Kastanien aus Königsberg. Tagebuch einer Reise in das heutige Kaliningrad* (1990); and finally Stephanie Kuhlmann’s novel *Hoffnung heißt Nadjeschda* (2010). Together, these works depict the memory and affective dimensions of such return visits as well as encounters with contemporary inhabitants from West German (Surminski), East German (Schulz-Semrau), and contemporary European (Kuhlmann) perspectives. In my analysis, I examine the affective feature of nostalgia, a central dimension of these visits, and contextualize my investigation within each writer’s distinct socio-political moment. Each text sheds light on the complexity of nostalgia and return within the discourse of German flight and expulsion – a discourse that has shifted overtime, but in each case nonetheless denotes problematic assumptions with regard to nostalgic sentiments. In the past, nostalgia has been instrumentalized toward revisionist
and revanchist political ends and to a large extend maintains this reputation as it is treated with suspicion and as a regressive engagement. By drawing upon Svetlana Boym’s concepts of restorative and reflective nostalgia, Michael Rothberg’s multidirectional memory, and theoretical considerations located within the “affective turn,” I argue that nostalgia does not necessarily indicate revision and revanchism. Instead, the analyzed literary return narratives invite an opportunity to reflect upon the complexity of nostalgia as having multiple potentials: in some cases problematic, but in others as encouraging empathy and understanding.
I would like to thank my mentors, family, and friends for their unending support throughout the research and writing process. Special thanks to Prof. Friederike Eigler for her continuous helpful guidance, feedback, and encouragement. Thank you to the Georgetown German Department faculty for enabling me to pursue this opportunity and for opening my mind to new perspectives. Finally to Travis – thank you for your partnership, love, and patience.

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INTRODUCTION

With the contemporary influx of refugees in Europe, Germany’s own history of forced migration has come to the fore. Indeed at the inaugural memorial day dedicated to Germany’s victims of forced migration on June 20th, 2015, German president Joachim Gauck called attention to the relevance of this history in light of the ongoing refugee struggle. In spite of the very real xenophobic backlash and sentiments pervading the headlines, Gauck’s speech promotes a more hopeful and humanitarian future – to encourage empathetic understanding and support: “Vor siebzig Jahren hat ein armes und zerstörtes Deutschland Millionen von Flüchtlingen zu integrieren vermocht. Denken wir heute nicht zu klein von uns,” he pleads.¹ His call for the acceptance of newly arriving migrants appeals to the German memory of forced migration, which includes the millions of ethnic Germans who fled or were expelled eastward in the wake of the Second World War. It also draws upon affect. In his speech, he largely centers on the topic of Heimat and loss of Heimat, as a wound that only heals superficially “und immer wieder aufbricht.”² He attempts to turn this shared feeling of loss into empathy, as he explains: “Heute weiß ich: Wer die Gefühle des anderen abwehrt, der wehrt auch eigene Gefühle ab.” Suggested here is the idea that an understanding along emotional, affective lines can serve as key to understanding.

Gauck himself recalls in his speech that he too empathized with his fellow East Germans who came from territories that after World War II ceased to be a part of Germany. Forced to migrate westward after the war, these Germans from places, such as

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¹ Joachim Gauck, “Gedenktag für die Opfer von Flucht und Vertreibung,” Der
² Gauck, n.p.
East Prussia, Lower and Upper Silesia, and other historical regions, continued to express sentiments and forms of “Heimatliefhe.” The songs that played in the radio like “das Ostpreußenlied,” he explains, evoked even in himself “die Sehnsucht nach dem ‘Land der dunklen Wälder und kristall’nen Seen,’” despite the fact that he did not originate from there.\(^3\) As such, it seems, understanding can emerge interpersonally and intergenerationally from empathetic feelings of loss, but it can also develop with regard to nostalgia. The italicized “Land der dunklen Wälder und kristall’nen Seen” signifies a pervasive nostalgic expression encompassing the historical region of East Prussia. The fact that, as Gauck conveys, he empathized with this sentiment is a testament to the strength of this deeply felt emotion. In my dissertation, I seek to examine the functions and meanings of nostalgia within literary return visits by German expellees and their decedents to former East Prussian homes. By employing different strategies, the authors under analysis indicate the function of nostalgia to heal and console.

My consideration of nostalgia within the context of German forced migration after the Second World War is an attempt to contemplate the role of emotions as an integral part of memory and human experience. The so-called affective turn has in different ways challenged the dominance of rationality and “consciousness” as directing human activities to instead focus on the role of the body and sentiment as also affecting perceptions, decisions, and practices. Within the context of German forced migration after WWII, the affect of nostalgia is frequently evoked within Heimat memories and discourse, but becomes a politically sensitive issue, as it is assumed to take part in historically revisionist and territorial revanchist positions. The particularities of this

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\(^3\) Gauck, n.p.
historical context and connotations that nostalgia receives are further explored in chapter one. In this introduction, I seek to present the structure of this dissertation, the selected literary texts, and overarching questions raised.

In chapter one, I set the stage for my literary analysis by presenting the history of the East Prussian region, the arrival of ethnic Germans in the newly demarcated postwar Germany, as well as the developing political shifts in East and West Germany with regard to the arriving expellees. The unique contexts of East and West Germany created the conditions for differing attitudes toward nostalgic sentiment and longings for the former Heimat, which had an effect on the ways in which expellees and their cultural works were perceived both publically and in scholarship. The historical and socio-political contexts are important to recall in order to shed light on the particularities of the East Prussian region as unique from other expellee communities and prepare for a reading of the literature with its regional orientation in mind. Chapter one also begins to introduce problematic associations with nostalgic affect to demonstrate the political complexity of its evocation within narratives of German suffering.

Chapter two continues the discussion with theoretical considerations of nostalgia and an introduction of the genre of literary return visits. This genre, signifying both imagined, fictional returns as well as renderings of physical tourism trips, is a pervasive, albeit, underexplored genre within the context of German forced migration. In the past, studies have largely focused on narrative, plot features and the biographical insights that can be gathered through the text about the author. My attempt is to focus analysis on the themes of return and nostalgia to demonstrate the multiple possibilities that nostalgic affect can pose. In a decontextualized form, centered upon architectural sites of nostalgic
significance, nostalgia can lead to damaging, prejudicial attitudes. However, nostalgia also presents opportunities to console and create moments of empathy. This distinction relates to Svetlana Boym’s concepts of restorative and reflective nostalgia, however within the literature under analysis, the two forms intersect which complicates clear distinctions between these notions.

While chapter two begins to think about the affective turn and theoretical possibilities that it may offer, the remaining chapters, three through five, all examine selected literary return visits within three different contexts. Chapter three presents Arno Surminki’s East Prussian trilogy (*Jokehnen, Polninen, and Grunownen*) published within West Germany of the 1970s and 80s. Chapter four analyses Elisabeth Schulz-Semrau’s East German prose works of the 1980s (*Suche nach Karalautschi* and *Drei Kastanien aus Königsberg*). Finally, chapter five investigates the writer Stephanie Kuhlmann’s return visit within contemporary Europe (*Hoffnung heißt Nadjeschda*). The selection of these texts is motivated in part by an interest in considering previously under acknowledged literary works. As Karina Berger points out in her 2015 monograph, much of the critical inquiry into literature on the topics of German flight and expulsion has emphasized a small “‘standard’ canon of texts” – Christa Wolf, Siegfried Lenz, and Günther Grass stand out in this regard. Surminski, Schulz-Semrau, and Kuhlmann’s writings, moreover, enable a contemplation of the issues over time: Surminski and Schulz-Semrau, writing in the 1970s and 80s, emerge during the heyday of tourism to former homes (called *Heimwehtourismus*), which serves as a fitting starting point for this study interested in nostalgic affect and revisiting. A reading of their texts allows for an additional layer of

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analysis, namely, a comparison of attitudes and perceptions within East and West German literature. The inclusion of Kuhlmann demonstrates an ongoing interest in former familial homes and offers thought-provoking insights into the engagements of the second generation. Since beginning this research, I have become aware of additional literary return narratives that could be considered for expansion. Some examples include Helga Lippelt’s trilogy (1980s/90s), Ulla Lachauer’s novels (1990s/2000s), and Walter Kempowski’s 1992 *Mark und Bein*.

The three authors’ works under analysis in this dissertation nonetheless provide interesting insights with regard to nostalgia’s complexity and potential. One of the central concerns in this dissertation is to uncover the complex negotiations surrounding nostalgic affinities. How do the authors contemplate their longing? Which strategies do they employ to avoid revisionist desires? In which ways do they depict the empathetic and constructive role that nostalgia can play? In this dissertation, I view nostalgia as an emotion with multiple possibilities and potentials. I argue that it neither evokes revisionist desires nor does it necessarily incite a reclaiming. Rather the nostalgic return to past places and communities involves a looking back in time in the interest of negotiating points of contention, difficult subject positions (e.g. victim/perpetrator dichotomies), and to invite a consideration of emotional realities. I am interested in examining how these works maintain affective nostalgic attachments while promoting the establishment of collaborative and empathetic communities. With the contemporary refugee crisis and enhanced global mobility, these questions are timely and necessary. Before addressing these future oriented concerns, the first chapter will look to the past
and contemplate how nostalgia became a suspect emotion and how it figures in to particular East Prussian and German contexts.
CHAPTER 1

HISTORICAL CONTEXT: EAST PRUSSIA, FLIGHT AND EXPULSION, AND THE SITUATION OF EXPELLEES IN POSTWAR GERMANY

Forced relocation and displacement during and after the Second World War mark one of the most turbulent moments in the twentieth-century. Soldiers, prisoners of war, Holocaust survivors, civilian deportees, evacuees, and expellees of various nations were forced to find new homes in the hostile, postwar landscape. During this time, the over 12 million ethnic German refugees subjected to flight and expulsion had to confront the unlikelihood and for many the impossibility of returning to their homes in Central and Eastern Europe.\(^5\) For centuries, Germans had inhabited historical territories east of present day Germany, such as East and West Prussia, Lower and Upper Silesia, Pomerania, and Brandenburg.\(^6\) Yet after World War II, Germany’s unconditional surrender and the redrawing of borders at the Tehran Conference in 1943 and Potsdam conference in 1945 required Germany to give up this land to Poland and the Soviet Union, and created the conditions for the heightened expulsion of ethnic Germans from eastern regions to the redrawn Germany west of the Oder-Neisse line.

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\(^6\) German speakers began inhabiting eastern territories as early as the Carolingian period in the ninth century. They migrated to places such as Pomerania, Poland, Silesia, Bohemia, and Moravia, Danzig/ Gdański, and Transylvania. Cf. Stefan Manz’s monograph, *Constructing a German Diaspora: The ‘Greater German Empire,’ 1871-1914* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 21. This list does not include the communities of ethnic German minorities in other historical areas of Poland, the Czech Republic, and Russia among others. For more see Krista O’Donnell, Renate Bridenthal, and Nancy Reagin, eds., *The Heimat Abroad: The Boundaries of Germanness* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005).
These historical places, nonetheless, maintain importance as symbolic sites of German historical, cultural, and familial heritage. In particular, the city of Königsberg, the capital and administrative region of what was once East Prussia and known today as Kaliningrad, a Russian exclave (or oblast), serves as a key representative site of Germany’s intellectual and cultural legacy in the Baltic region. In recent years, Kaliningrad has begun to publically recognize and commemorate the city’s East Prussian past. Even though local regional historians, artists, and architects unofficially pursued the preservation and incorporation of East Prussian historical remnants and memory at least since the 1980s, it was only after the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 that reconstruction plans publically established historical continuity between Königsberg and Kaliningrad. A symbolic turning point occurred in 2005 when Kaliningrad officially celebrated the city’s 750th anniversary connecting the contemporary city to a longer, East Prussian past. According to historians Stefan Berger and Paul Holtom, the anniversary “endorsed the adoption of Königsberg’s material and symbolic heritage in Kaliningrad today, but linked it to the Russian present and implied a Russian future.” The restorations of cultural heritage sites and commemorative practices in Kaliningrad have crafted an image of the region in national terms as one with a particularly German past.

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and Russian present. They have frequently neglected the inclusion of additional nations with ties to East Prussia and its former capital Königsberg. Tellingly, neither the Polish nor Lithuanian head of state was invited to the 750th anniversary celebration opened by Russian President Vladimir Putin and then German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder.9 Moreover in German media, emphasis during the anniversary celebration was placed on “the memory of a German city and territory that had ceased to be German in 1945,” which Berger and Holtom explain as “a missed opportunity for both the Europeanization and regionalization of Kaliningrad’s spatial identity.”10 While the anniversary and restoration projects signify a turning point with regard to Kaliningrad’s urban development and official self-image, which includes East Prussia as a part of a regional identity, it neglects the city’s and region’s multicultural past by more aptly highlighting linkages to German history than to other East Prussian counterparts. It does, however, indicate the continued mnemonic significance of East Prussia for both Germans and Russians in Kaliningrad. The literature under analysis in this dissertation invites alternative perspectives by imagining multicultural, multidirectional possibilities.

In the past, literary scholarship has discussed the multicultural depictions presented in literary works thematizing the East Prussian region. In her analysis of Masuria as a spatial topos, Magdalena Sacha discusses the regional multicultural and multiconfessional character presented in literature by the authors Ernst Wiechert, Siegfried Lenz, Hans Hellmut Kirst, and Arno Surminski (all originally from East Prussia). She furthermore argues that East Prussia became mythologized as a lost paradise of childhood: “zu einem Land, das ausschließlich in der Erinnerung bewahrt

9 Ibid., 22, 30.
10 Ibid., 30.
werden konnte.”11 An earlier publication by the Polish Germanist Tadeusz Namowicz similarly discusses East Prussian literature’s focus on regional ethnic plurality – Germans, Masurians, Poles, and Lithuanians shared East Prussian spaces, he explains, and literature by East Prussian authors demonstrate this as a part of everyday lived reality.12 As such, Jens Stüben argues that East Prussia was more than a geographical space; it was also a cultural one comprised by more than a single national culture. It is important, he claims, to read East Prussian literature as not only German, but also with regional particularities in mind – as a “Literaturlandschaft” and a part of a regional culture with its own particular collective, cultural memories.13 This literature, especially in comparison to other contemporary, public mnemonic practices within the context of German flight and expulsion, frequently includes multiple voices, cultural identities, and multidirectional memories. As Friederike Eigler explains, novels “have played a major role in challenging reductive or politicized responses to the lost Heimat in the East – not by avoiding these topics but by tackling the politically sensitive issues of flight and expulsion in innovative and nuanced ways.”14 She examines novels that reimagine place and belonging in terms of diversity and fluidity – they “unsettle in innovative ways

traditional notions of Heimat that tie identity to a particular territory – without abandoning place-based notions of belonging altogether.”

In this dissertation, I am interested in examining nostalgia – a politically contentious issue and affective category that has been reimagined and considered in literary return narratives, but has received little systematic attention in literary research within the context of German forced migration. The aforementioned scholars of East Prussian literature – Sacha, Namowicz, and Stüben – all mention the presence of nostalgia in literary works by German expellees from East Prussia without critically examining the meaning or function of nostalgic affect in literary works. Sacha, while praising the potential for East Prussian regional affiliations to facilitate an understanding between German, Polish, Russian, and Lithuanian people, comments on the mythologization of East Prussia as providing a nostalgic view of Masurian everyday life. This she claims has created a static image of Masuria as a lost childhood paradise, not a “real” place, affecting the ways in which it is seen in the present day. Namowicz likewise mentions the presentation of the “mythical Heimat” as an idyll. Stüben, in his analysis of Helga Lippelt’s Popelken novels (these thematize Lippelt’s childhood home in contemporary Kaliningrad), describes the place of her childhood home as a “verlorene Paradies.” Descriptions of former homes in terms of a paradise, idyll, and myth all indicate the presence of a nostalgic mood. While literary scholarship has frequently identified the manifestation of nostalgia in literature about former homes, the majority

15 Ibid., 179.
16 Sacha, 86-87.
17 Namowicz, 78, 84.
has not examined the meaning, function, and possibilities that nostalgia poses in this literature in a nuanced way. In this dissertation, I seek to explore the complexities and potentials that nostalgia can pose through an analysis of literary return journeys to former East Prussian homes. While on the one hand the affect of nostalgia can feed prejudicial attitudes and problematic political goals, alternative manifestations thereof can console, enable mourning and the expression of desires, as well as inspire empathy, creativity, and understanding.

When evaluated, nostalgic presentations within literature on the topic of German forced migration and former homes have often been perceived as a regressive form of expression. Hubert Orlowski, for example, argues in his definition of literature thematizing flight and expulsion as “Deprivationsliteratur” (literature focused on loss) that a strong sense of the lost home as nostalgic, idyllic, and mythical developed. In East Prussian Deprivationsliteratur, he writes, there is a move “‘Weg von der Stadt zurück nach Ostpreußen,’ als das gesunde, mythisch geschichtslose ‘Land der dunklen Wälder und kristall’nen Seen…’ mit synthetisch geschichtsgeprägten Ortschaften wie Suleyken, Jokehnen, Grunowen, Kalischken oder Maulen.” Such assessments, however, overshadow the critical aspects and considerations of history within literary works by authors such as Arno Surminski and Siegfried Lenz referenced here by Orlowski through

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the listed place names. In recent years, literary scholars have reassessed literature thematizing flight and expulsion to explore its innovative and critical dimensions. Some examples include Eigler’s spatial analysis that demonstrates innovations with regard to dynamic Heimat conceptions,21 Bill Niven’s introduction of numerous GDR works thematizing flight and expulsion (previously thought to have been non-existent and highly taboo),22 and Karina Berger’s examination of literature on the topic of German suffering as more complex and historically critical than previously thought (even those within “popular literature”).23

In terms of nostalgia within this body of texts, few literary scholars have attempted to reexamine the assumption that nostalgia indicates regression. Two exceptions are Angelika Bammer and Brangwen Stone, who both analyze Christa Wolf’s Kindheitsmuster as exemplary of a critical work that includes nostalgia. They see Kindheitsmuster as employing what Svetlana Boym terms “reflective nostalgia” – a form that combines longing and critical thinking and serves as “a form of deep mourning that performs a labor of grief both through pondering pain and through play that points to the future.”24 Bammer argues that Wolf and Günther Grass (in his Beim Häuten der Zwiebel) both “recognize nostalgia as a force,” but “make a conscious effort to distance themselves from it personally.”25 Drawing upon reflective nostalgia, Grass and Wolf both share a

23 Karina Berger, Heimat, Loss and Identity: Flight and Expulsion in German Literature from the 1950s to the Present (Bern: Peter Lang, 2015).
sense of nostalgia’s creative potential, but maintain a subjective focus on their own experiences.\(^{26}\) Along similar lines, Stone argues that *Kindheitsmuster* reflects a mourning for the former home, but maintains a focus on German culpability and avoids revisionist claims.\(^{27}\) In their contributions, Bammer and Stone complicate the presumed association between nostalgic sentiment toward the former home and historical revisionism. The defense of nostalgia within this literary context has not tackled the theoretical underpinnings of nostalgia to reconceptualize the term, its meaning, and function, but has instead tried to highlight the literature’s use of “reflective nostalgia” instead of a more problematically perceived “restorative nostalgia,” which Boym describes as “at the core of recent national and religious revivals.”\(^{28}\) Through interdisciplinary considerations, especially drawing upon current research in social psychology on nostalgia as well as the notion of multidirectional memory in memory studies, this dissertation seeks to reconsider and reconceptualize nostalgia and its meaning-making potential. I argue that nostalgia’s presentation in literature does not necessarily reflect a regressive engagement with history and geopolitical changes, but through historical and multidirectional contextualization the sentiment of nostalgia can inspire constructive self-awareness and interpersonal bonds. Before turning attention to a discussion of nostalgia in the next chapter, this chapter seeks to set the stage by considering the historical and political context of East Prussia, German forced migration, and post-World War II political expellee discourse. A familiarity with this history is necessary in order to contextualize

\(^{26}\) Ibid., 122, 126.


\(^{28}\) Boym, xviii.
the socio-political complexity surrounding nostalgia and ideas of return thematized in
literary return narratives, and to read the subsequently analyzed literature vis-à-vis their
historical backdrop.

This chapter will investigate the multicultural history of East Prussia in order to
avoid an oversimplification of the region’s complexity in mononational terms. It
discusses the history of Königsberg, East Prussia, and German flight and expulsion from
the region to establish a historical context within which the region, post-World War II
political discourse by expellee organizations in Germany, and later cultural works can be
considered. Although perceived as a particularly German city in Kaliningrad and German
public discourse as Berger and Holtom suggest, Königsberg and the larger East Prussian
region actually have a very long, fluctuating transcultural past, having been a part of
different jurisdictions and nations over time and home to multilingual and multiethnic
groups for centuries. It is important to shed light on the particularities of East Prussian
and Königsberg’s socio-cultural history and identity in order to avoid the region’s
conflation with different expellee groups from other diverse societies, cultures, and
histories. This also serves to contextualize German experiences of forced migration after
the Second World War to not view them in exclusive terms as had often been propagated
within expellee political circles. The flight and expulsion of Germans from this territory
is a part of a centuries-long, European history of border changes and population
movements, which in different ways the literature under analysis in this dissertation take

29 Cf. Berger and Holtom, “Locating Kaliningrad and Königsberg in Russian and German
Collective Identity Discourses and Political Symbolism in the 750th Anniversary
Celebrations of 2005.”
30 Karina Berger, “Expulsion Novels of the 1950s: More than Meets the Eye?,” Germans
as Victims in the Literary Fiction of the Berlin Republic, eds. Stuart Taberner and Karina
Berger (Rochester: Camden House, 2009), 42.
into account. As the historian Christopher Clark contends: “Prussia was a European state long before it became a German one.”\textsuperscript{31} In addition to this contextualization, this chapter turns its attention to the topic of “return” as a common, albeit differently treated and understood, theme in Germany’s political discourse and cultural works. The consideration of the theme of return and its connections to nostalgic sentiments in the postwar period sets the stage for my analysis of literary return journeys in the later chapters.

I. HISTORY OF KÖNIGSBERG, EAST PRUSSIA, AND FLIGHT AND EXPULSION

The German history of East Prussia harks back to the Middle Ages, when during the crusades, Teutonic Knights fought against the predominantly Pagan, Prussian tribes in the area, labeled a threat to Christians residing in the Polish Kulmerland region (Ziemia Chelmińska).\textsuperscript{32} In exchange for securing the area, the Order received the Kulmerland and subsequently conquered additional Prussian territories, enabling them to establish their own state, the State of the Teutonic Order (\textit{Staat des deutschen Ordens} or \textit{Ordenstadt}), with capitals at Marienburg (1308-1454) and later, after armed conflicts with Poland and Lithuania, Königsberg (1454-1525).\textsuperscript{33} Königsberg, the then strongest fortification in the


\textsuperscript{32} Aleksander Pluskowski, \textit{The Archaeology of the Prussian Crusade: Holy War and Colonisation} (New York: Routledge, 2013), 2. This is a part of the larger eastern settlement movement (\textit{Ostsiedlung}) of Christian, German-speaking groups into Slavic, pagan, eastern regions, particularly during the Crusades. Ibid., 91.

\textsuperscript{33} The peace treaty (The Second Peace of Thorn) negotiated by a papal legate of the Holy Roman Empire, that ended the Thirteen Years’ War between Poland, Lithuania, and the Order required the order to give up West Prussia, Kulm and the castles Marienburg, Elbing, and Christburg to Poland. As a result, Königsberg became the new capital and permanent residence of the Order’s leadership. Ibid., 15, 21-22, 140.
Order’s state, flourished into a key Hanseatic city and center of Lutheran teachings in the region during the reformation period. In the aftermath of the Polish-Teutonic war, the last Grand Master of the Teutonic Knights, Albert of Brandenburg-Ansbach, redefined the Order’s territory by establishing the Duchy of Prussia in 1525 (assuming his title as Duke of Prussia), founding the Königsberg University in 1544, and by welcoming Lutheran preachers to address the public in Königsberg (this supported his own attraction to Lutheranism and the Reformation).\(^\text{34}\) In order to establish his new position, Albert took an oath to the king of Poland, situating the Duchy of Prussia as a fief under the Kingdom of Poland – an arrangement that lasted until 1618 when the territory was inherited by the Hohenzollern dynasty via marital agreements and became known as Brandenburg-Prussia.\(^\text{35}\)

The seventeenth century political transformation of the region marks the slow decline of the Polish king’s control in Prussia and a change in the territory’s makeup: the Duchy eventually became a Swedish fief following the Thirty Years War in the 1656 Treaty of Königsberg, only to again come under the Elector of Brandenburg’s governance in 1663.\(^\text{36}\) The landowning Junker class, which had by this time built up extensive estates (often ranging between 5,000 and 7,000 acres of land), had benefited

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\(^\text{34}\) Ibid., 23. During this time a new elite class surfaced, namely, the Junker class, which later in the nineteenth century defined the Prussian military elite, replaced the knights of the Teutonic Order. Ibid., 353-354.

\(^\text{35}\) Clark, 9. Since the last Duke of Prussia, Albert Frederick, did not father any sons, his daughter Anna of Prussia was married to John Sigismund of the Hohenzollern family, thus linking their territory, Brandenburg, with Prussia in the north. Ibid., 10-14.

from a diffuse system of governance, and it was imperative for them to regain control and reignite agricultural production disrupted by the Thirty Years War. With the establishment of Brandenburg-Prussia, however, the Elector attempted to enforce a more centralized governance structure, reducing the independence of the landowning class. In particular, he imposed new and unpopular taxes to raise a standing army, leading to the establishment of Brandenburg-Prussian absolutist rule and the reputation of strict militarism for which it is known.\textsuperscript{37} Tensions rose amongst members of the landowning class, who continued to see the Polish king as the protector of their centuries-old privileges – not the new Brandenburg-Prussian Elector. The Elector sought to construct a more cohesive political community by convincing the estates that they belonged to a single entity of governance and common political community. However, this was an “alien” way of thinking to the estate owners, who did not see themselves as bound “horizontally to each other.”\textsuperscript{38} Instead, they continued to appeal their grievances to the Polish king, and numerous uprisings took place in urban centers, such as Königsberg, against the new, Brandenburg-Prussian ruler.\textsuperscript{39} Local urban leaders struggled, albeit unsuccessfully, to maintain the city’s political and economic independence from the


\textsuperscript{38} Clark, 55-56.

\textsuperscript{39} Karin Friedrich, \textit{The Other Prussia: Royal Prussia, Poland and Liberty, 1566-1772} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 169. Clark, 55-56. Davies, 363. An example of an uprising includes that led by Hieronymus Roth, an alderman in Königsberg, whose widespread revolt against Frederick William resulted in his subsequent arrest. Clark, 56. The popular figure Christian Ludwig von Kalkstein is another example of Königsberg’s nobility revolting against the monarch. He like his contemporaries demanded the same privileges they enjoyed under the Polish king. Andreas Kossert, \textit{Ostpreußen. Geschichte und Mythos}, 3\textsuperscript{rd} ed (München: Siedler Verlag, 2005), 74.
ruler, as “the struggle between the urban authorities and the Berlin administration [home of the Hohenzollern residence] was especially bitter.” For decades, Königsberg had been a wealthy, Baltic trading city, and despite the geographical and jurisdictional unification with Brandenburg, local urban elites rejected identification and union with Brandenburg-Prussia and its leader, which complicates a seamless, national narrative of the territory as having been “German” since the medieval period.

This medieval and early modern history of East Prussia is important to note because of its lasting significance as markers of Germanness in the region and for its importance in German national histories on the development of the German state as well as subsequent territorial claims. For example, many of the medieval architectural structures, such as the Teutonic Order’s iconic red brick castles in Marienburg (today’s Malbork, Poland) and in today’s Kaliningrad as well as remaining medieval churches – key sites of international tourism in today’s Kaliningrad – are seen as markers of “Germanness” in the region, especially by tourism marketing agencies. According to historian Stefan Berger, many German accounts of Königsberg/Kaliningrad also continue to refer to the Middle Ages as the era when the explicitly German city Königsberg was founded without considering what “German” meant in the medieval empire. This history is too far removed from national categories that caught on in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and cannot be easily seen as a part of a single national history. As historian Karin Friedrich claims, a resilient nineteenth-century myth developed around Prussia as “the ‘maker of Germany’, whose every move was supposedly aimed at

40 Clark, 149.
German unification and the ultimate triumph over the legacy of the Holy Roman Empire.\textsuperscript{42} Gregor Thum similarly explains that German national history narratives, “presenting the Hohenzollern state primarily as a German state of reason,” have neglected its “de facto binational, German-Polish character.”\textsuperscript{43} In the twentieth century, this German national history of Brandenburg-Prussia and of the Teutonic Knights was instrumentalized and mythologized by National Socialist leaders who praised their military power and presence, and, as Berger explains, saw themselves as the heir of the Prussian legacy as justification for their militant and expansionist actions in the supposed interest of the German state.\textsuperscript{44} Historically speaking however, it is difficult to see the East Prussian region and Königsberg as solely German. Geographically, German lands have been in a state of territorial fluctuation, and for a long time, lacked a strong centralizing authority, instead consisting of a collection of dukedoms, principalities, free cities, and clerical fiefdoms, within which the majority neither spoke a dialect of German nor saw themselves in terms of a single German national community for the bulk of the region’s history.\textsuperscript{45} East Prussian multiethnic, multilingual, and varying territorial statuses demonstrate its complexity as an interwoven area of regional cultures, and its history as tied not only to Germany, but also to today’s Poland, Lithuania, and Russia.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{43} Gregor Thum, “‘We are Prussia Today’: Polish-German Variations on a Vanished State Germany, Poland, and Postmemorial Relations: In Search of a Livable Past,” eds. Kristin Kopp and Joanna Niżyńska (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 267.
\item \textsuperscript{44} Stefan Berger, “Prussia in History and Historiography from the Nineteenth to the Twentieth Centuries,” \textit{Modern Prussian History: 1830-1947}, ed. Philip Dwyer (Essex: Pearson Education Limited, 2001), 28-29.
\item \textsuperscript{45} Stefan Berger, \textit{Inventing the Nation: Germany} (London: Arnold Publishers, 2004), 1-2.
\end{itemize}
Prussian regional identities based on locality – local customs, languages, and cultures – persisted and remained the most influential cornerstones of social life for many communities.\textsuperscript{46} Luther’s most important works, for example, were translated into Polish, Lithuanian, and Prussian languages, exemplifying the lasting importance and presence of multilingual, multiethnic groups within the Königsberg and eastern Prussian areas.\textsuperscript{47} It is important to view Brandenburg-Prussia (the later Kingdom of Prussia) as a central player within a larger, pluralistic European history and “conduit between East and West: between Slavic, Germanic and Baltic peoples, between Pagans, Catholics, Protestants, the Orthodox and Jews.”\textsuperscript{48} Unique local identities in this Baltic region continued to be the central markers of identification for many individuals long after the establishment of the German state in 1871 and even beyond their flight and expulsion from the region. As the variety of postwar expellee organizations show, many individuals continue to see themselves as members of their unique regional communities and less so as specifically or solely German, in terms of a single cohesive national group. Regional affiliations, not only ethnically or nationally bound, are a key marker of postwar expellee notions of belonging. “German” appears here as pluralistic – with multiple possibilities not

\textsuperscript{46} In the Baltic region at least until the end of the nineteenth century, there existed a highly diverse population of regional identities, such as so-called “Old” or “Baltic Prussians,” Kashubians, Masurians, Prussian Lithuanians, Jewish populations as well as other ethnic groups from today’s Estonia, Latvia, Russia, and even Sweden and Finland. Native and newly arriving ethnic groups were further diversified by religious devotions: Protestant, Roman Catholic, Jewish denominations, and Orthodox faiths. Cf. Piotr Eberhardt. \textit{Ethnic Groups and Population Changes in Twentieth Century Central-Eastern Europe: History, Data, and Analysis}. Armonk: M.E. Sharp, 2003; and, Helmut Walser Smith, “Prussia at the Margins, or the World that Nationalism Lost,” \textit{German History from the Margins}, eds. Neil Gregor, Nils Roemer, and Mark Roseman (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 69-83.

\textsuperscript{47} Pluskowski, 144, 354.

\textsuperscript{48} Friedrich, \textit{Brandenburg-Prussia}, 2.
necessarily neatly confined within definitive nation-state lines.\textsuperscript{49} Though considered to be “ethnically German,” many expellees referred to their regions as markers of cultural identity. This makes sense given the area’s long history of fluctuating borders and diverse demography, where regional communities provided the closest links to commonality and stability in everyday life.

Despite the pervasiveness of diverse regional affiliations, nineteenth-century German historical accounts of East Prussia Germanized the region, and constructed “one of the most strikingly successful examples of the survival of a historical myth.”\textsuperscript{50} Along with the Teutonic Knights and creation of Brandenburg-Prussia, another milestone often propagated within German national narratives is the eighteenth-century establishment of the Kingdom of Prussia: In 1701, the Elector Frederick III of Brandenburg, after advocating on his own behalf to the Holy Roman Emperor, was crowned in Königsberg as “King in Prussia,” thereby establishing the kingdom.\textsuperscript{51} Though often seen as a step forward in the development of the German nation-state, the East Prussian elite class at the time perceived the political shift in unpopular terms. They were not consulted in the matter, but nonetheless had to abide. Largely through diplomatically deliberated marriage deals in the 1750s and 60s, animosity toward the crown dissipated and slowly a sense of unity did form between the East Prussian elites and Brandenburg, especially along

\textsuperscript{49} Pluralistic notions of “Germanness” have been recently considered within the “Turkish-German” context. See for instance Tom Cheesman’s overview “Extending the Concept of Germanness” in his monograph, \textit{Novels of Turkish German Settlement: Cosmopolite Fictions} (New York: Camden House, 2007), 12-32.
\textsuperscript{50} Karen Friedrich, \textit{The Other Prussia}, 3.
\textsuperscript{51} In exchange for his elevated status, the Emperor received military support from the Hohenzollern. Clark, 67, 71, 103.
This is particularly the case after the Seven Years’ War (1756-1763) during which Frederick the Great, claiming to be a defender of Protestantism in the north (in juxtaposition to Hapsburg Catholicism), gained some popular traction as individuals began expressing patriotic sentiments toward the king and Prussian Kingdom. Churches and literary patriots encouraged this public enthusiasm, albeit predominantly publishing to a mass audience in the German language. This, however, did not speak unanimously to the whole public. While a sense of solidarity with the monarch along religious lines spread to particular Protestant circles, the feeling was not universal among all ethnic and religious groups in the Kingdom (now including partitioned portions of Polish lands, which Frederick II called “West Prussia”), especially among Catholics in eastern Prussian territories (the majority located in Ermland, today’s Polish Warmia). The landowning “Junker” class also continued to avert their support of “monarchical centralism,” which signals the lack of a cohesive political community. Additionally at the grassroots level, identification with the crown and his kingdom were slow to follow, as the region became increasingly diversified though the widening of industrial development and skilled labor after the Seven Years’ War. Economic development in the eighteenth century strengthened the kingdom’s financial and political positions, yet, it also encouraged an expansion of the population’s multiplicity as economic migrants came from other places in Europe, further diversifying the region culturally and linguistically.

52 Ibid., 157.
53 Literary examples include: Thomas Abbt, Christian Ewald Kleist, and Johann Wilhelm Ludwig Gleim. Ibid., 221-222.
54 Dwyer, 4.
55 Agencies opened in cities, such as Hamburg, Frankfurt am Main, Regensburg, Amsterdam, and Geneva to recruit skilled laborers to work in the growing industries: wool spinners came from Saxony, skilled laborers came from Lyon and Geneva to work
The influx of economic migrants as well as the Seven Years’ War transformed the geopolitical make-up of the region once more: Poland was partitioned three times following the war (in 1772, 1793, and 1795) leading to its dissolution as a de facto state.\textsuperscript{56} It is also during this time that Russia began to respond to its perception of the Kingdom of Prussia as a rival in the Baltic region, and the Kingdom’s eastern expansion as a block to its aspirations of western expansion. Despite efforts to create a more homogenous, Prussian society in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (particularly by promoting German language use), it largely remained a “linguistic and cultural patchwork:” The largest linguistic minority groups, as Clark clarifies, were the Poles of West Prussia, Posen, and Silesia; groups of Masurian communities in southern East Prussia and Kashubians in the Danzig hinterland, who also spoke various dialects of Polish; and additional French, Russian, Czech, Latvian, Lithuanian, as well as ancient Slavic dialect speakers in other places of East Prussia.\textsuperscript{57} Despite the widespread influence of the French Revolution (1789-1799) in Europe, which promoted liberal desires of democracy and freedom (especially of interest in Königsberg) and the presence of external threats (predominantly from the Napoleonic army), within the Prussian kingdom a pervasive feeling of unification among the linguistically and ethnically diverse groups did not emerge.\textsuperscript{58} Following the Napoleonic wars in the Vienna Peace Congress of 1814-
15, Prussia conceded additional territory to Russia (much of the Polish territory that Prussia had seized during the partitions of Poland), and Prussia received instead the northern half of the Kingdom of Saxony, Swedish ruled western Pomerania, and Rhenish Westphalian territories. With the changing of borders yet again, new linguistic and ethnic groups entered the Prussian kingdom, while others now became part of the Russian Empire. In the nineteenth century, multiple groups within the Kingdom of Prussia clashed, as identities based on national ties become more widely asserted: Poles supporting causes in the remnants of their kingdom (Posen), Prussians asserting a level of loyalty to the king (esp. so-called “governmental conservatives” occupying political positions), developing German nationalism, and Lithuanians expressing national sentiments and calling for the creation of their own state. In sum, the Kingdom of Prussia hardly reflects a unified state of citizens and leaders. The city of Königsberg, largely characterized by the university in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, was also home to German, Polish, and Lithuanian students and intellectuals alike, further reflecting the diversity of the East Prussian region.

As such, developing national identities existed side-by-side in East Prussian lands. Aristocrats and intellectuals began to consider national politics by disseminating and

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60 To appease the now expanded Polish population, the Prussian king declared linguistic incorporation in the monarchy – Polish, along with German, was to be used in all public functions: in official communications, in court, and in elementary and secondary education. Yet soon, criticism from Polish communities emerged, protesting the use of German in schools, the lack of Prussian officials in the region that could speak Polish, and the absence of a Polish division of the Prussian army. Clark, 409-411.
promoting political ideals related to liberalism and democracy in the mid-1800s. However as articles in the Königsberger Zeitung maintained, many Prussian advocates of German unification even continued to sustain the notion, “that Prussia must retain its own autonomy within a united Germany.” Nonetheless, both East and West Prussia were absorbed into the 1871 German Empire under Otto von Bismarck. With the founding of the nation-state, more systematic Germanization efforts ensued, particularly directed toward the suppression of non-German languages in the empire, and included policies to reduce Catholic societal influence and Polish and Lithuanian national sentiments. However, the persistence of Polish print media, trade unions, political parties, and cultural unions prevented the outright Germanization of the entire imperial German territory. Over the course of the nineteenth century, the Estonian and Latvian peasantry also developed distinct feelings of national belonging and identity leading to the establishment of independent nation-states after World War I. Nationalization efforts

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63 Clark, 544, 547.
64 Organizations, such as the Historischer Verein für Ermland, Altertums-Gesellschaft Prussia, and Litauische literarische Gesellschaft, formed to maintain the unique cultural identities, dialects, and histories of the centuries old communities in the East Prussian region. These organizations as well as the development of Heimatsforschung, Heimatkunde in schools, and Heimatbücher emphasized the importance of maintaining regional customs and local culture. Baltic German intellectuals also took part in this effort by preserving Latvian and Estonian languages. Jutta Faehndrich, Eine endliche Geschichte. Die Heimatbücher der deutschen Vertriebenen (Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 2011), 49-55. Berger, Inventing the Nation, 93-94.
65 Lithuania in 1918, Latvia in 1918, and Estonia in 1920 broke away from Prussian and Russian rule to become independent sovereign states. Andres Kasekamp, A History of the Baltic States (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 76-80. Berger, Inventing the Nation, 81. Kossert, Ostpreußen, 156. Interestingly, the historical legacy of the Teutonic knights also emerges during this time, with the 1882 rebuilding of Marienburg, as a part of Germanization efforts. Its rebuilding “was a conscious attempt to remind the public of the medieval colonization of Eastern Europe through the Order of the German Templars,”
during the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries included the practice of expulsion and relocation of minorities, which, according to historian Matthias Beer, culminated in a common and internationally sanctioned practice in European politics.\textsuperscript{66} Within the German empire before World War I, a variety of ethnic, religious, and political minorities were targeted, including German Jesuits and Social Democrats.\textsuperscript{67} Though the terms “flight and expulsion” (\textit{Flucht und Vertreibung}) typically refer to the fate of ethnic Germans after WWII, it is important to note that geopolitical shifts and territorial politics throughout European history resulted in the flight and, particularly within the context of rising nation-states, expulsion of various religious and cultural communities.\textsuperscript{68} The flight and expulsion of Germans from East Prussia and other eastern regions after WWII is a part of this longer history.

As historian Wolfgang Mommsen explains, plans to systematically and forcefully remove the termed “fremdethnische Bevölkerungsgruppen” from the German nation-state already developed during the First World War.\textsuperscript{69} Political thinkers of the far right, such as Heinrich Claß (president of the right-wing Pan-German League, 1908-1939) promoted

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{66} Beer, \textit{Flucht und Vertreibung}, 33, 36.
\textsuperscript{67} Matthew Fitzpatrick, \textit{Purging the Empire: Mass Expulsions in Germany, 1871-1914} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 2. It is important to note that the expulsion of religious minorities had been a part of European politics for centuries. Cf. Rey Koslowski, \textit{Migrants and Citizens: Demographic Change in the European State System} (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000), esp. chapter 3.
\textsuperscript{68} For a discussion of the terms flight and expulsion (\textit{Flucht und Vertreibung}) see Beer, \textit{Flucht und Vertreibung}, 13-22. Also see Eigler’s chapter 3, esp. 51-54.
\end{footnotesize}
forced migration as well as the formation of “möglichst reiner Nationalstaaten” as political tools to prevent “Nationalitätenstreitereien” – an idea supporting the development of “pure” nations, which expanded during the Second World War. Radical organizations founded in the nineteenth century, such as the Pan German League (est. 1891), the Society for the Eastern Marshes (1894), the German Union (1895), and the Navy league (1899), promoted this nationalistic perception of the newly formed nation-state and largely supported Germanization efforts predominantly in education and language. A key feature of German unification is the role of Heimat as a “mediator between the local place and the nation.” As Alon Confino contends, the local Heimat visualized as the nation created an “imagined community” in the interest of construing a feeling of national belonging. Nationalistic usages of the local, often rural space of Heimat contributed to the term’s conservative connotation – the representation of the German nation state in terms of the local, rural Heimat in National Socialist “Blut- und-Boden-Poesie” particularly reflects the troubling use of Heimat criticized in later periods. Though problematic images of Heimat persisted in the post-WWII period, more recent scholarship has reevaluated Heimat representations in literary and cinematic works, discussing the thematization of spatial, gender, community, and memorial

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70 Mommsen, 149, 161.
72 Confino, 97-98.
73 Ibid., 97.
Aside from literary Heimat depictions, historical narratives and so-called works of Ostforschung also functioned to construct a German national identity with texts, such as Heinrich von Treitschke’s Das deutsche Ordensland Preußen (1862), narrating German national history as one originating with the medieval Teutonic Knights and resulting in the eventual national unification of Germany as a triumph over the east.76

Within Ostforschung, writers created images of the east in stereotypical terms, which along with emerging Volksgeschichte, interpreted the past “to provide mental weapons to effectively advocate the ‘legitimate’ cause of the German nation.”77 Images of the German nation as Heimat beginning in the nineteenth century created a more homely, sentimental picture and attachment to the nation as “home” with the mission to support and defend it if necessary.

The above-mentioned conservative organizations and published perspectives were influential in forming a sense of German national identity, but remained unreflective of Prussia’s demographic diversity. Prussia instead became a discursive, and in the world wars an actual, battleground of competing national identities: German and Polish historians each narrated Prussian local history to establish their incongruent “legitimacy of the Polish state and the ‘Germanness’ or ‘Polishness’ of specific regions”

75 Some recent studies of Heimat that reevaluate its various usages in different contexts include: Elizabeth Boa and Rachel Palfreyman, Heimat - A German Dream: Regional Loyalties and National Identity in German Culture 1890-1990 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Nick Hodgin, Screening the East: Heimat, Memory and Nostalgia in German Film since 1989 (New York: Berghahn, 2011); Johannes von Moltke, No Place Like Home: Location of Heimat in German Cinema (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005); and the edited volume Heimat at the Intersection of Memory and Space, eds., Friederike Eigler and Jens Kugele (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2012).

76 Confino, 154.

respectively. Following World War I and the Treaty of Versailles, Poland would too become an independent nation-state: Germany conceded the territory known as the “Polish Corridor” – the stretch of land including the areas of Posen (Poznań), most of Pomerania (previous areas of “West Prussia”) – used to reestablish an independent Polish state and again changed Prussia’s geographical territory. This move affected the political rhetoric and geopolitical aims of the Second World War. The post-WWI disconnected territory of East Prussia remained a part of the German state, but bounded by Poland and Lithuania, was now detached from the rest of German lands. This created the conditions to instrumentalize fear and mutual distrust, especially between Germans and Poles.

As geographers Alexander Diener and Joshua Hagen explain, Germany worried it would lose its sovereignty over the exclave, and Poland feared that Germany would use the exclave to militarily undermine Polish independence. Germans for their part demanded the return of the lost territory in order for East Prussia to “be restored to what they saw as its rightful and natural contiguity with Germany.” Support for territorial revision developed amongst East Prussians after WWI and was conveyed via a culture of

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78 Stefan Berger, “Prussia in History and Historiography,” 26.
79 Jerzy Lukowski and Hubert Zawadzki. A Concise History of Poland. 2nd edition (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 274. Poland also retained areas of eastern Galicia and Danzig became a free city. During the war, “the Poles destroyed the West Ukrainian Republic and occupied eastern Galicia, and thereby confirmed in the minds of the many local Ukrainian patriots that Poland was the main enemy of their nation.” Lukowski and Zawadzki, 224. This is important to note as a part of the Ukrainian memories contributing to the expulsion of Poles out of Ukrainian Galicia after World War II.
80 Alexander C. Diener and Joshua Hagen, “Russia’s Kaliningrad Exclave: Discontinuity as a Threat to Sovereignty,” Borderline and Borderlands: Political Oddities at the Edge of the Nation-State, eds., Alexander C. Diener and Joshua Hagen (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2010), 127.
loss and mourning as exemplified through a popular book, published in 1920 and printed over 100,000 times with the title, *Was wir verloren haben – Entrissenes, doch nie vergessenes deutsches Land* (1922). This text, along with other works by popular East Prussia *Heimatschriftsteller* such as Fritz Skowronneck (1858-1939), his brother Richard (1862-1932), and William von Simpson (1881-1945) exemplify literary efforts to preserve and “save” a way of life as well as values associated with East Prussian provincial areas in light of geopolitical transformation. This type of remembrance and literary displays of mourning in the form of *Heimatliteratur* has been researched within the context of post-WWII forced migration and loss of home, but appears to have already existed in the post-WWI era.

*Was wir verloren haben* reminds of some of the problematic, public displays of mourning with underlying revanchist messages also found in the post-WWII period. The title already evokes the recent experience of loss and longing for the territories no longer part of Germany, and it includes black and white, sketched images of famous and sentimental sites (predominantly cathedrals, castles, the landscape, and images of village life) in places, such as Elsass, Straßburg, Posen, the Memelland, and southern Tirol among others. Accompanied by sentimental poetry and descriptions of the lost territories, this book appears as a precursor to the later *Heimatbücher* and picture books published by expellees after WWII. Though mourning the loss, *Was wir verloren haben*

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also clearly situates the territorial changes as an improper violence inflicted upon the
German state. This is exemplified in the book’s opening pages by a map of the larger
German territory with the now conceded regions colored in black and the title “Unser
Vaterland mit den geraubten Gebieten.” The following page clearly makes an appeal to
German readers: “Deutsche, vergesset nie das Verlorene!” – this “mantra” is repeated
throughout the book at the beginning of each new section featuring a particular lost
territory.\(^8^4\) While the book engages in mourning and remembrance, it also demonstrates a
revanchist discourse of return. Indicatively, the publisher claims the importance of
maintaining: “die erwachende Sehnsucht nach dem, was unser war und was nach ewigen
Rechten unser bleibt und wieder unser werden muß.”\(^8^5\) An excerpt of a poem, “Die
deutschen Städte,” by the nineteenth-century patriotic poet, Max von Schenkendorf, at
the end of book confirms the mood conveyed in the text with the lines:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Es kommt ein Tag der Rache} \\
\text{für aller Sünder haupt,} \\
\text{dann sieget Gottes Sache;} \\
\text{das schauet, wer geglaubt.} \end{align*}
\]\(^8^6\)

This call for revenge alongside the sentimental longing and fond remembrance of the
picturesque lands conveyed throughout the book, couples aggression with nostalgic
desire. It exemplifies the potential of nostalgia to be used toward problematic political
ends, as was also the case within post-WWII political expellee discourse. It furthermore
illustrates the hostile attitudes expressed in some conservative circles within post-WWI
Germany – one that would continue after WWII.

\(^8^4\) Ibid.
\(^8^5\) Ibid.
\(^8^6\) Ibid.
The National Socialist platform capitalized on such sentiments, projecting an aggressive nationalism geared toward the territorial expansion of the nation-state and establishment of a “vision of a racial utopia.”\textsuperscript{87} This included the murder and deportation of those excluded from the racialized nation as well as the systematic repopulation of annexed areas with ethnic Germans.\textsuperscript{88} Hitler and Stalin agreed on terms and territories from Polish and Baltic regions to incorporate into their respective states, which included the German annexation of western parts, such as the Polish Corridor (“West Prussian” area), and Soviet takeover of Baltic states.\textsuperscript{89} Additionally, German-Soviet negotiations included relocation agreements to remove Slavic minorities from the German empire to the Soviet Union as a way of fulfilling the goal to create a “purified” German empire.\textsuperscript{90} This decision exemplifies the use of forceful removal of populations along national and racial lines as recourse within European international politics.

Within East Prussia various conservative associations emerged, culminating in the establishment of the \textit{Bund deutscher Osten}, a right-wing organization that worked toward the deepening of Germanization in East Prussia by especially advocating for the elimination of Lithuanian and Polish language use and by reporting pro-Polish and pro-Lithuanian individuals to the state’s secret police. The linguistic landscape of East Prussia changed as village names, forests, and lakes were Germanized.\textsuperscript{91} In general, East Prussia played an increasingly important and prominent role with Hitler’s rise to power.

\textsuperscript{88} Ibid., 126-127.
\textsuperscript{90} Beer, \textit{Flucht und Vertreibung}, 43-45.
\textsuperscript{91} Kossert, \textit{Ostpreußen}, 280-281.
and establishment of the third empire. The National Socialist party, for example, appropriated Prussian symbols and history in order to bolster stronger links between the German and Prussian states. Propaganda also depicted Hitler as a successor to the “great” Prussian statesmen: from Frederick Wilhelm I, Frederick the Great, Bismarck, to Hindenburg. Additionally, political statements inferred that the party stood for Prussian ideals and symbols conveying the “Prussian spirit.” The changing of names and instrumentalization of Prussian history overshadowed East Prussian multicultural and multilingual realities in favor of constructing East Prussia as more strictly and nationally German, explicitly denying visible markers of the region’s multilingual and multiethnic tradition and heritage. Though Prussia remained a geographical label on a map, it already ceased to exist as a de facto independent state in 1933, when the Prussian Landtag was dissolved and regional administrations in East Prussia came under the direct control of the German empire.

After the war, Germany’s unconditional surrender and deliberations at Potsdam in 1945 led to the latest chapter of territorial fluctuation and population transfer: the northern half of East Prussia became a part of the Soviet Union (now the Kaliningrad Oblast), while the southern portion formed the newly demarcated Polish state. Remaining German populations in these now conceded areas – those who did not flee from advancing hostilities during the war – were forcefully expelled westward to the newly redrawn Germany. In the case of Kaliningrad, Germans remained and worked in

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92 Clark, 645-646. Also see Stefan Berger, “Prussia in History and Historiography,” 21-40.
93 Clark, 647-648.
94 Eberhardt, 30, 61-62. Beer, Flucht und Vertreibung, 13-17. Of the around 12.5 million German refugees in postwar Germany, 8 million resided in West Germany and 4.5 million in East Germany. Beer, Flucht und Vertreibung, 129.
the territory for years until their eventual transfer – by which time many had already been
advocating for permission to leave, while others (unsuccessfully) sought to gain Soviet
citizenship. Initial train transports began in 1947 and were officially concluded in
October 1948.95 Soviet soldiers and Holocaust survivors constituted the first citizens to
repopulate the now Kaliningrad territory.96 The majority of the newly arriving population
consisted of Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians, beginning the process of
Sovietization, and as Olga Sezneva argues, Russification of the territory. The majority of
newcomers in Kaliningrad, she explains, were Russian speakers, and other non-
Caucasian populations (e.g. central Asian nationalities, such as Tajiks, Kazakhs, Uzbeks,
Turkmen, and Kyrgyz) did not permanently settle.97 Officially, the Prussian state was
confirmed as dissolved in 1947 by the Allied Control Council under Law No. 46 on the
“Abolition of the State of Prussia.” Prussia’s reputation as an absolutist, particularly
militaristic state can be seen as contributing to post-World War II legal considerations.
As such, the Allied Control Council used this image as rationale for Prussia’s de jure
abolition, explaining that the Prussian state: “from early days has been a bearer of
militarism and reaction in Germany.”98 Prussia indeed experienced a centuries-long
military history, not unlike its European neighbors, but, according to Clark, was uniquely

95 Per Brodersen, Die Stadt im Westen. Wie Königsberg Kaliningrad wurde (Göttingen:
Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2008), 78, 81, 83.
96 Eckhard Matthes, Als Russe in Ostpreußen. Sowjetische Umsiedler über ihren
Neubeginn in Königsberg/Kaliningrad nach 1945 (Ostfildern vor Stuttgart: Edition
tertium, 1999), 26, 34, 36.
97 Sezneva, “Dual History,” 60.
98 Edmund Jan Osmańczyk, Encyclopedia of the United Nations and International
see Clark, xii-xiii and Dwyer, 1.
implicated into “a national teleology of German guilt.” Though contemporary commemoratory culture, especially in Germany, tends to link East Prussian figures as well as cultural and architectural remnants with the German nation-state, this historical overview attests to the region’s European multilingual, multicultural cultural status and long history of geopolitical transformation. This stands in contrast to the perception of East Prussia as a solely German territory.

For many historians, the flight and expulsion of Germans from what is today Kaliningrad, serves as the point of departure for their inquiry into the history of Prussia, a historical state that is often remarked upon as no longer existing. It is precisely its non-existence that sparks the interest and impetus for many historical investigations into the region, its people, politics, and culture. Rather than seeing East Prussia and Königsberg as “dead,” which was widely proclaimed in postwar German society, the shift of Königsberg to Kaliningrad can also be located within this long, European history of population transfers, border changes, and transmissions of territorial ownership. The above-mentioned examples also detail aspects typically associated with post-WWII culture, such as sentimentalized depictions of lost territories as well as calls to reclaim them (already evident after WWI). The examples demonstrate the possibility of a politicized nostalgic discourse coupled with sentimental depictions of former homelands to be used to sway public opinion in the interest of achieving ideological desires. When appropriated in the manner detailed above, as a part of a violent nationalistic rhetoric and platform, one can see how affective categories and forms of remembrance pose potential

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99 Clark, xii-xiii.
100 Recent examples include: Dwyer, ed. Modern Prussian History 1830-1947; Kossert, Ostpreußen; and Clark, Iron Kingdom.
101 Brodersen, 11.
avenues for problematic ideological appropriation. Can literature provide opportunities for reflection upon this potential and pose alternative models for affective engagement? How can nostalgic affinities present constructive possibilities as imagined within literature?

II. POLITICIZED NOSTALGIA AND HEIMKEHR NOTIONS IN POST-WWII WEST GERMAN EXPELLEE PUBLIC DISCOURSE AND WRITING

The history of East Prussia is important to recall as a way of contextualizing the region, its history, and communities and highlight its diversity and cultural, historical legacy that reflects a complexity not simply located within a single national narrative. The myth of East Prussia as a particular German territory to justify a supposed German national right to conceded territory (e.g. formerly Prussian lands) is already visible after WWI as exemplified by the Heimatbuch discussed above. According to Friedrich, this perception continued in post-WWII Germany through the narratives of Vertriebenenverbände, “organisations of those expelled from West and East Prussia in 1945, who were more interested in venting political claims and expressing a sentimental attachment to their village or home town than in studying the history of the whole region.”102 Along with the afore mentioned historical examples, their often decontextualized and sentimentalized approach to former homes has left a troubling mark on nostalgic affect and desires to return.

The longing to return during the postwar period is understandable given the experience of loss coupled with housing, nourishment, and economic shortages after the war. In the aftermath of WWII, the issue of providing for the newly arriving populations

102 Friedrich, The Other Prussia, 2-3, 5.
(ca. 12 million) signified a substantial undertaking.\textsuperscript{103} While many were housed within existing camps, public infrastructures, and homes in rural areas, authorities also placed others within rooms in private houses, often against the owner’s wishes.\textsuperscript{104} This created a contentious environment within which animosities and negative stereotypes about the new arrivals from the east soon emerged. Some began to call for the prompt removal and return of expellees, often regarded as dirty, primitive, lazy, dishonest, and different in appearance and dialect.\textsuperscript{105} Many expellees themselves in the 1940s and 50s also held on to hopes that they would be able to return to their homes, which had been possible, for instance, during World War I with Hindenburg’s victory at Tannenberg.\textsuperscript{106} This desire is not inconsequential when considering early postwar expellee expectations and the ensuing Recht auf Heimat demands vocalized by newly forming expellee organizations. Given the context and dire material situation, nostalgic memories of a better life in the old Heimat were easily exploited toward political ends.

The West German political party, Block der Heimatvertriebenen und Entrechten (BdHE), emerged after Konrad Adenauer was elected into office in 1949 and served as the official political party advocating for expellee affairs.\textsuperscript{107} Their vocalized platform

\textsuperscript{103} Mathias Beer, \textit{Flucht und Vertreibung}, 101.
\textsuperscript{104} Pascal Maeder, \textit{Forging a New Heimat: Expellees in Post-War West Germany and Canada} (Göttingen: V&R unipress, 2011), 96-97.
\textsuperscript{106} Paul von Hindenburg, whose decisive win at the Battle of Tannenberg drove the Russian army out of East Prussia during WWI, became a “savior” to many East Prussians. The event allowed them to return to their homes from which many had fled, and Hindenburg became seen as a replacement of the now defunct monarch. Clark, 610. Anna von der Goltz, \textit{Hindenburg: Power, Myth, and the Rise of the Nazis} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 26.
\textsuperscript{107} Initially, the allied forces had banned the formation of expellee political parties. In 1945, the allied powers required groups seeking to form political parties to apply for licenses in an attempt to control the creation of a “democratic character of the new
promoting the expellees’ right to return home left a perception of expellees within and outside of West Germany as a possible threat to peaceful relationships. This is also true of developing East Germany, which viewed the BdHE, Vertriebenenverbände, and umbrella organization Bund der Vertriebenen in right wing and revanchist terms. Despite the fact that the material situation for expellees was slowly improving through a number of laws passed to provide aid, the BdHE received 23.4% of the vote in 1950. Though, as historians Mathias Beer and Andrew Demshuk explain, support of the group soon declined as individuals established new lives. By the 1960s, only a minority of expellees continued to espouse a desire to return, which is furthermore reflected in the decline of the party’s existence by 1966. One of the widely discussed proclamations related to return is expressed in the Charta der deutschen Heimatvertriebenen, a document issued in 1950 that specifies the goals and demands of the expellee interest groups, presented as an umbrella for all expellees. It includes the widely referenced passages about expellees and their lost homes. An excerpt of this document declares:

parties.” Four main federal parties established their positions: the Social Democratic Party, the German Communist Party, the Christian Democratic Union, and the Free Democratic Party. Fulbrook, 120.

108 Beer, Flucht und Vertreibung, 115.
110 Fulbrook, 120-121. The three central laws that were passed to provide aid to expellees include the 1949 So forthilfegesetz, the 1952 Lastenausgleichgesetz, and the 1953 Bundesvertriebenengesetz. Kirsten Möller, “Flucht und Vertreibung. Einleitung,” Handbuch Nachkriegskultur. Literatur, Sachbuch und Film in Deutschland (1945-1962), eds. Elena Agazzi and Erhard Schütz (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2013), 244.

The Charta, circulating within various expellee publications, presents the deeply felt loss of home as a collective suffering that all expellees experienced. Here, home denotes a right divinely given to humans and as necessary for a sense of belonging, for without it, one is destined to remain a “foreigner on Earth.” Neither mentioning the suffering of others caused by the National Socialist regime nor recognizing German culpability, the document espouses German loss of home as a major tragedy and an injustice, and it is furthermore unspecific as to which home, the old or the new, one has a perceived right. The right to Heimat discussion emerging during this time, as such, resulted in a multitude of interpretations: some using the Charta to demand a revanchist reclaiming of the territories lost, while others perceiving the message to connote the right and commitment to build new lives in the new Germany and Europe.


Nonetheless, the Charta was circulated and reprinted in works of Ostforschung and in Landsmannschaften tracts with at times misleading translations, distorted for revisionist purposes. The assumption, Demshuk explains, was that this right constituted a physical return to the places lost, however to most expellees, it composed the right to establish new homes in the west. Heimkehr or return “more often meant a figurative return to an idealized world of the past” through memory, which Demshuk refers to as the “Heimat of memory.” The physical post-1945 territory and changed Heimat, which Demshuk calls the “Heimat transformed,” was no longer seen as the home to which expellees sought return. Instead, stories about and visits to the changed Heimat frequently encouraged recognition of their loss and acceptance of new homes in West Germany as permanent. The instrumentalization of the Charta by conservative expellee organizations to support both a return to the places lost and compensation for this loss, though, created a damaging image of expellees as revanchist within the public sphere. It also made it difficult to write about and to fondly or nostalgically remember former homes in cultural texts without evoking this specific political context and debate.

This difficulty is emphasized by the fact that conservative organizations also drew upon literature to support their political rhetoric of return and especially appeal to emotional ties to former homes and nostalgic memories thereof. One author’s work that stands out in this regard, both because of its contentious reception and instrumentalization in East Prussian expellee politics, is that by the Königsberg writer August 1950,” Bonn-Warschau 1945-1991. Die deutsch-polnischen Beziehungen: Analyse und Dokumentation, eds. Hans Adolf Jacobsen, Mieczysław Tomala, and Dagmar Kunesch-Jörres (Köln: Verlag Wissenschaft und Politik, 1992), 74.

Demshuk, The Lost German East, 94.


Demshuk, The Lost German East, 13, 21-22.
Agnes Miegel. Popular before and during the 1930s, Miegel’s reception among literary critics generally includes commentary on her problematic though uncertain ties to nationalism and the Third Reich, and her categorization as a *Heimatdichterin* and poet of the East Prussian landscape.\(^{118}\) Although she had expressed that her *Heimat* no longer exists, recognizing it as a part of contemporary Russia, her published work circulated within expellee periodicals and her public persona was largely crafted to meet conservative expellee politics.\(^{119}\) David Blackbourn explains that her work projects a specific, decontextualized narrative of East Prussian victimization: “as if all had been pastoral harmony until the Red Army marched west, as if the mass flight of Germans had fallen out of clear blue sky. … the message was clear: Germans were victims, like the once fertile land they had created.”\(^{120}\) Dubbed the *Mutter Ostpreußens*, Agnes Miegel was a celebrated guest at East Prussian *Landsmannschaft* meetings, commemorated with streets named after her, popularly published in official East Prussian publications, and came to personify the East Prussian *Heimat*.\(^{121}\) With poems such as “Mutter Ostpreußen,” “Alte Heimat,” “Wagen an Wagen,” “Es war ein Land,” she expresses a sentimental mourning and longing for the lost home and memory of German suffering that is not


devoid of conservative ideology in her renderings. She consistently links, for instance, nostalgic descriptions of Heimat with the motif of motherhood (i.e. presents the feminized German Heimat as a mother), which according to scholar Eva-Maria Gehler, evokes a “Blut-und-Boden” ideology that circulated during the Third Reich. Her poetry, conveying a sentimentalized narrative of loss and suffering, could be framed to support the rhetoric and images purported by expellee organizations.

Such nostalgic sentiments of Heimweh and return, as well as idealized memories of the past, were narrated selectively within expellee publications to fit a conservative political rhetoric. The circulation of their official memory discourse and political platform in expellee-sponsored publications and periodicals further deepened this commonly held perception. In the postwar period, evocations of loss, nostalgic remembrances of past landscapes and homes, as well as expressions of Heimweh proved useful to political expellee organizations to establish a narrative of German victimization and suffering as a way of gaining sympathies and support for their cause. Expellee literature of the 1950s into the 60s can be seen as contributing to this discourse. According to Karina Berger, many early novels exhibit revisionist tendencies (though only few were “genuinely revanchist”) by focusing on German suffering “coupled with idyllic memories of what was left behind,” without tackling German responsibility or including non-German perspectives. With West Germany’s Ostpolitik and formal recognition of the Oder-Neiße border, the political influence of the Bund der

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122 Gehler, 147.
123 Ibid., 112, 119, 124, 137. Helbig, 97.
124 Blackbourn, 317.
125 Demshuk, Lost German East, 26-27.
"Heimatvertriebenen" and East Prussian Landsmannschaft significantly waned in the 1960s and 1970s, but continued to publically announce territorial claims over Germany’s former eastern territories and call for a return.\textsuperscript{127} By the mid-1960s as expellees established new lives and actively participated in the development of postwar West German society, they experienced less stigmatization as a separate social group, yet, the contentious political history and rhetoric of expellee organizations left a perception of expellees’ political views as anachronistic.\textsuperscript{128} This certainly affected cultural perspectives as well as the reception of flight and expulsion literature for years to come. It especially made a troubling impact on receptions of nostalgic utterances toward the lost home.

III. EAST GERMAN TREATMENT OF EXPELEES AND PERCEPTIONS OF WESTERN EXPELLEE ORGANIZATIONS

In East Germany, return also became a highly contentious issue, but for slightly different reasons. One of the key goals in the GDR was to assimilate expellees, referred to as \textit{Umsiedler}, into postwar German society as quickly as possible. Due to its geographical location, the Soviet Zone of Occupation received the bulk of refugees traveling westward – already 2-2.5 million refugees in the summer of 1945.\textsuperscript{129} A central motive in the GDR was its diplomatic ties to socialist \textit{Bruderstaaten} and the Soviet

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Union, which influenced policy decisions and the official treatment of expellees from eastern territories. The dominant perception in the GDR presented expellees as successfully integrated members of society, whose needs were met without political expellee organizations and rallies that took place in the Federal Republic of Germany.\(^{130}\) Politicized notions of return, as they existed in West German politics, did not find recognition in the East. The GDR officially accepted the new eastern border to Poland as “a prerequisite for peace,” and avoided commemorative practices related to German forced migration to prevent its association with revisionism.\(^{131}\) By 1952, GDR officials declared that the “Umsiedlerproblem” had been solved through the successful integration of all East German citizens into a new, socialist Heimat.\(^{132}\) However, this attitude led to a silencing of the expellee experience within the public sphere.\(^{133}\) In contrast to West German public commemorative practices, East German expellee memory retreated to private and familial circles. The cultural realm provided an additional avenue within which authors could engage in public remembrance of individual narratives and former homes.\(^{134}\) In both German states, literature enabled a sharing of personal memories contributing in the formation of flight and expulsion discourses.

By 1949, the SED had outlawed expellee organizations in an attempt to prevent the contentious discourse regarding the former Heimat, loss, and return that pervaded in the West.\(^{135}\) The prohibition of expellee organizations, however, did not fully stop

\(^{130}\) Niven, 2-3.
\(^{131}\) Niven, 3.
\(^{132}\) Beer, Flucht und Vertreibung, 119.
\(^{134}\) Niven, 3.
\(^{135}\) Schwartz, 49.
individuals from “secretly” meeting under the guise of garden clubs and church associations. Some individuals were penalized for their participation in such meetings, even though this was neither simple to control nor easily preventable by East German leadership. A negative perception of expellee interest groups and political organizations developed in the East and was in part used to construct an image of the West in terms of fascism vis-à-vis itself as a progressive alternative. As such, nostalgic attachments and sentimental remembrance of former homes, which were a part of official expellee commemoration and memory, were perceived in problematic terms earlier in the East than they were in the West (Ostpolitik in the 1960s and 70s shifted perceptions in the West). In the GDR, Soviet and East German leaders acknowledged expellee groups as neo-fascist and revanchist organizations, and went as far as to disseminate this image in mainstream society though media outlets. Particularly, the West German Bund der Vertriebenen was depicted as a militaristic, fascist organization. The dissemination of such images sought to discourage interest in expellee groups in an attempt to subdue ties to the lost homelands and instead establish the GDR as the new Heimat. The goal was to replace the loss of the former home with a feeling of belonging to the new East German society, in large part to establish and legitimize the developing GDR and its constituency.

The absence of grassroots mobility created a reliance on centrally governed institutions to provide for expellees’ welfare and establishment of new lives in the GDR. It furthermore reflects the desire to channel integration and the establishment of new

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136 Ibid., 54-55.
roots through the “visions and programs of socialism.”\textsuperscript{138} At the institutional level, particular policies encouraged expellees to replace attachments to their old homes with the acceptance of East Germany as their new home. The Zentralverwaltung für deutsche Umsiedler (ZVU), already established in 1945, led this process by implementing and overseeing programs to instill this sense. Initially, this involved the coordination of housing, medical attention, sustenance, and officially registering newcomers, while also disseminating the term Umsiedler as the appropriate label for arriving expellees. This implies the perception that German refugees had found a new, permanent home in East Germany.\textsuperscript{139} The ZVU also used media outlets, particularly the press and radio, to encourage assimilation and convince refugees that a return to their old homelands was impossible. A new publication, Neue Heimat, first issued in January of 1947, aimed to popularize integration and plant the perception of refugees as having always been a part of the German nation: Although they were only now housed within the postwar border, they were always members of the shared German Heimat. This was an attempt to instill a feeling of belonging amongst expellee populations.\textsuperscript{140} Equally important was the GDR discourse on the new border between East Germany and now socialist Bruderstaat, Poland. To counteract the circulation of negative attitudes toward and non-recognition of the Oder-Neisse border, the GDR organized public parades and displays that defined the new border as a Friedensgrenze and officially recognized the border in the 1950 Treaty.

\textsuperscript{138} Niven, 19.


\textsuperscript{140} Niven, 2.
of Görlitz. Relative to the West, these actions reflect an accelerated normalization of the situation and establishment of international relations with eastern states. By 1948, the ZVU was integrated into the interior ministry of German affairs (Deutsche Verwaltung des Inneren) with the expressed desire of no longer wishing to see the “Umsiedlerproblem” as a “Sonderproblem,” exemplifying the desire for rapid assimilation.

Nevertheless, problematic perceptions of nostalgic and sentimental practices directed toward former homes emerged in the East as well. For instance, the SED used the 1960 Tag der Heimat (an emotionally charged event that can be seen as simultaneously remembering former homes while lamenting their loss) organized by the Bund der Vertriebenen in West Germany as justification to refuse entry to East Berlin without a required permit. The sentimental practices of expellee organizations generated skepticism in the East as it did later in the West, and East German narratives of western revanchism went as far as to in part serve as pretext for the building of the Berlin Wall. According to historian Manfred Wilke: “The Tag der Heimat in Berlin provided an ideal excuse for the SED to implement its new mechanisms of control over the movement of people to East Berlin and, as the ‘anti-fascist’ – and therefore the sole legitimate – German state, to demonstrate that the GDR was no longer willing, in its own words, to silently tolerate ‘revanchist activities’ in West Berlin.” In an August 4th, 1961 press release in the Berliner Zeitung, socialist leadership released an official statement to

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141 Kossert, Kalte Heimat, 220.
142 Wille, 52.
144 Ibid., 191.
justify the division of Berlin and subsequent building of the wall. It declares that the state must protect its citizens from “dem Treiben der westdeutschen Revanchisten und Militaristen.” This refers to the West German expellee organizations, but also to the larger West German government, seen as revanchist for their call to reunify with the now East German territory as well as with the places further east of the Oder-Neisse. The notion to protect the GDR and its citizens from “Revanchepolitikern und Agenten des westdeutschen Militarismus,” now prohibited from entering East Berlin, served as pretext for the subsequent building of the Berlin wall. The political program of return promoted by expellee organizations coupled with aesthetics of Heimweh placed nostalgic attachments and desires in a politically contentious light. East German press releases in the 1960s and 70s reflect the ongoing association between affective attachments and a desire to regain territory as a part of a western imperialistic mode. Along with the perception of Heimweh as associated with revanchist western imperialism, a 1974 article in the GDR newspaper Neue Zeit describes nostalgia as a western “distraction” and as a “Modewort der spätbürglerlichen Gesellschaft” in the GDR. In these examples,

147 Ibid, Wilke, 193.
148 An article by Helmut Dressler aptly reflects this attitude in its discussion of the protestant church and nationalism’s role in West Germany. “Heimweh und Sehnsucht nach der Landschaft” are aligned with revanchist aims of expellee organizations in part supported by the Protestant church in the BRD. See Helmut Dressler, “Die Kirche und das Vaterland. Protestantismus und Nationalismus in Westdeutschland,” Neue Zeit, 2 July 1966, p. 5.
149 “Neue Zeit kommentiert. Übereinstimmende Interessen,” Neue Zeit, 29 September 1973, page 2. Ostalgie often written about in the context of the GDR, but attitudes toward nostalgia within the GDR less so. – also see Hans Pölko, “Reflexe einer düsteren Zeit.
nostalgia takes part in the construction of an East German value structure and, similar to
the activities of expellee organizations, is seen as oppositional to progressive, socialist
society.

IV. A DIFFERENT KIND OF RETURN: HEIMWEHTOURISMUS AND REVISITING
FORMER HOMES

While the rhetoric of expellee organizations and their politicized nostalgic
strategies did not result in a physical return of former territories and homes, a different
form of return began to take shape in the 1960s and 70s. So-called Heimwehtourismus
(“homesick tourism”), also referred to as “nostalgia tourism,” constituted a major travel
phenomenon undertaken by expellees and their descendants. According to Tourism
Studies scholar Sabine Marschall, Heimwehtourismus “refers to journeys undertaken by
German travelers to places in Eastern Europe to revisit the homes from which they or
their (grand)parents were evicted in the wake of the Second World War.”150 Both East
and West German expellees participated in such visits. The development of renewed
diplomatic relations between West Germany and East Germany (the new Ostpolitik of
Willy Brandt’s SPD-led government) as well as West Germany’s signing of the 1972
Treaty of Warsaw in official recognition of the Oder-Neisse border, helped to
“normalize” relations between West Germany, East Germany, and Poland.151 As a result,
the numbers of West German visitors to Poland increased from 27,000 in 1965 to around

Notizen zur Berliner Ausstellung ‘Realismus – Sachlichkeit,’” Neue Zeit, 22 June 1974,
page 4.
150 Sabine Marschall, “‘Homesick Tourism’: Memory, Identity and (Be)longing,” Current
151 Fulbrook, 175-177.
36,000 in 1970 to over 250,000 in 1975.\textsuperscript{152} East Germans also traveled to Poland, especially between the years 1972 and 1980 under visa free travel regimes, in even higher numbers. Between 1960 and 1971 around 65,000 GDR citizens went to Poland, where as many as 6.7 million traveled in 1972.\textsuperscript{153} These numbers show a large amount of traffic between the states with a significant percentage of \textit{Heimwehtouristen} as participants.\textsuperscript{154}

For East Prussian expellees seeking to revisit former homes, areas in Poland served as common destinations. Travel to Kaliningrad during this time was difficult, as it remained a military zone of occupation that only became more accessible for western visitors in the 1990s after the fall of the Soviet Union. Citizens within the Soviet Union were at times able to visit Kaliningrad for vacation already in the 1960s. According to Per Brodersen, tourism had an important function in the Soviet Union – to incorporate via travel the more “exotic” places (such as Kaliningrad) as a part of the larger union within public imaginaries.\textsuperscript{155} German citizens wishing to visit Kaliningrad required a difficult-to-obtain special permission and rarely visited prior to the 1990s. The majority of \textit{Heimwehtouristen} did however travel to former homes located in Poland already in the 1960s onward.\textsuperscript{156} \textit{Heimwehtourismus} served various functions for expellees and their descendants, but is largely conceptualized as a form of “personal memory tourism” to revisit the places of one’s own or parental past. The term itself already reveals the

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\textsuperscript{155} Brodersen, 211.
\textsuperscript{156} Elisabeth Schulz-Semrau discusses this in her \textit{Drei Kastanien aus Königsberg. Tagebuch in das heutige Kaliningrad}. 
particular affective dimension of this type of journey as one involving a sentimental and nostalgic mood. The literary return narratives discussed in this dissertation thematize this form of memory travel and consider their own nostalgic sentiments, while demonstrating an awareness of the troubling perceptions of return and nostalgia in public discourse. Many literary representations of return visits present individually planned travels, even though group bus trips organized by tourism agencies were especially popular amongst **Heimwehtouristen**.\(^{157}\)

A number of tourism agencies specializing in such return trips emerged to support and capitalize on **Heimwehtourismus** endeavors, with some continuing to operate today. In many ways, tourism agencies tug on nostalgic longings and personal connections as a part of their marketing strategies by promising to bring visitors close to the historical places.\(^{158}\) Agencies still operating today, such as Rautenberg Reisen, Schnieder Reisen, Adebar Reisen, and Greif-Reisen A. Manthey, all offer trips to “Ostpreußen,” “Masuren,” and “Danzig” among other historically named places.\(^{159}\) The use of German place names reflects their travel focus as directed towards the past – an aspect of **Heimwehtourismus** upon which numerous historians, cultural studies, and tourism scholars have commented.\(^{160}\) They see **Heimwehtourismus** as a travel back in time directed by personal

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\(^{157}\) Felsch, 161.


\(^{160}\) Cf. Elisabeth Fendl, Rainer Schulze, Albrecht Lehmann, Stanislav Burachovič, Henning Süssner, Marianne Hirsch and Leo Spitzer, Andrew Demshuk, and Corinna Felsch.
and familial memories. Burachovič defines *Heimwehtourismus* as profiting from “Inszenierungen der Heimat” as well as from longings: “Der Heimwehtourismus ist Ausdruck des großen Verlangens, mittels materieller und geistiger Requisiten zumindest für kurze Zeit die Vergangenheit lebendig zu machen, die Vergangenheit, an die wir so gerne zurückdenken, da wir uns in ihr wohlfühlten.” Marketability is a function of nostalgia identified by cultural theorists, such as Fredric Jameson, who conceives of nostalgia as a part of postmodern, post-industrial consumer society. For German expellees, the return to the past often implies a more detailed reflection upon past experiences and memories, a search for feelings of belonging, and a sharing of one’s former life with future generations. Nostalgia’s usage in the marketing of trips may encourage and motivate travel, but as is frequently reported, the trips themselves usually result in self-reflexive considerations, the establishment of new personal contacts with contemporary residents, and a realization that the former *Heimat* remembered no longer

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162 Burachovič, 228.  
exists as such.\textsuperscript{164} One can see the commodification of a German East Prussian past and cultural heritage as a move to attract western tourism, as Berger argues in the case of Kaliningrad.\textsuperscript{165} This is evidenced by the marketing strategies of German tourism agencies as well. Yet at the individual level, as Hirsch explains, travel abroad is also a personal endeavor that combines “ambivalence, self-affirmation, nostalgia, and curiosity,” and in the case of intergenerational travel, a “desire to pass on a sense of Heimat” to the next generation.\textsuperscript{166} Indeed, the former home appears as part of individual identity, and return visits constitute a means through which one can rekindle and maintain connections.

\textit{Heimwehtourismus} and revisiting trips are often thematized in literature by expellees and their descendants, which particularly proliferated during the 1970s, ‘80s, and ‘90s when tourism became an option. Literary works include travelogues, travel reports (often circulated in expellee publications/press), picture books, novels, short stories, and poetry. Previous scholarship has typically examined documentary works rendering return trips, and only few literary scholars have examined fictional narratives of return in the past.\textsuperscript{167} In subsequent chapters, I analyze autobiographical writing as well as fictionalized, imagined return narratives, both as a part of this literary corpus, with a particular focus on nostalgia. The combination of return, sentimentality, and considerations of complicated pasts and present-day communities in narratives of return creates an opportunity to reevaluate historically perceived problematic notions, especially the affective dimension of nostalgia in literature. \textit{Heimwehtourismus} was marked by

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\item \textsuperscript{164} Felsch, 243–26. Demshuk, \textit{Lost German East}, 186.
\item \textsuperscript{165} Stefan Berger, “A City and its Pasts,” 294.
\item \textsuperscript{166} Hirsch and Spitzer, 82.
\item \textsuperscript{167} E.g. Helbig, Niven, Stone, Bammer. Chapter two continues the discussion of literary representations of return in narratives of return.
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expellee politics as an expression of revanchist desires, as the initial responses by members of host states reflect.\textsuperscript{168} Politicized nostalgia as well as the perception of expellees as revanchist led to concerns that revisiting constituted a potential reclaiming of former homes and conflict, which too affected later literary representations thereof. Fendl, Burachovič, and Lehmann all argue against the idea that Heimwehtourismus persisted in the interest of revanchism.\textsuperscript{169} Though not conducted in the interest of reclaiming former homes, Heimwehtourismus was still perceived as a part of a nostalgic enterprise and in a sense regressive.

In terms of assimilation, this form of tourism goes against the expectation of shedding “collective memories and identities of the former home to successfully settle into postwar Germany.”\textsuperscript{170} This is a common attitude across multiple moments of migration within which “successful immigrants” appear as adapted to the new home by eliminating referential ties to former ones. However as Demshuk argues, revisiting can assist in the process of identifying new homes in the postwar Germanys as the permanent ones. Revisiting in the form of “homesick tourism became the most intense and ultimately effective way to dislodge the lingering fantasies about return,” Demshuk explains.\textsuperscript{171} The confrontation with what he terms the “Heimat transformed” (the contemporary changed place) encourages expellees to realize that they could never return to the places they remember – the so-called “Heimat of memory.”\textsuperscript{172} Demshuk defends

\textsuperscript{168} For more on this attitude in the case of Kaliningrad see Berger, “German Pasts in a Russian City,” 202. Burachovič discusses this in the case of Sudetendeutsche revisiting. Fendl mentions the same in her “Reisen in die verlorene Vergangenheit.”
\textsuperscript{170} Schulze, 369.
\textsuperscript{171} Demshuk, The Lost German East, 186.
\textsuperscript{172} Ibid., 17-18, 159, 186.
both Heimwehtourismus as well as nostalgic memories of former homes as having productive potentials to “accept the impossibility of physical return” and assist in the process of dealing with loss.\textsuperscript{173} This attitude is reflected within the literary return narratives under analysis in this dissertation, but they extend their considerations of nostalgia to reflect upon deep-seated emotional ties and possibilities afforded through nostalgic longing in writing. Additionally, they contextualize their experiences alongside those of others, especially Polish and Russian citizens who they encounter during their time abroad. In this way, they construct a multidirectional memory discourse and avoid perceptions of German suffering and German forced migration in exclusive terms. Nonetheless, nostalgia constitutes a significant dimension of their experience and is an emotion that they grapple with in their writing.

V. CONCLUSION

In this first chapter, I have sought to set the stage for my analysis of literary return narratives by presenting the multicultural history of the East Prussian region, German forced migration, politicized notions of return deploying nostalgic sentimentality, and the ensuing practice of Heimwehtourismus. This discussion helps to situate and contextualize the complexity surrounding the theme of return and nostalgic affect that I will examine in literary return narratives. This chapter introduced three types of return, all of which involve nostalgic affect: return as a politicized, revanchist desire instrumentalizing nostalgia to garner support for ideological aims, return visits within Heimwehtourismus that both commercialize nostalgic affect and draw upon personal nostalgic feelings, and

\textsuperscript{173} Ibid., 9.
finally literary return narratives that contemplate the meaning and function of nostalgia in personal and public situations. This third kind of nostalgia expressed in narratives enables a consideration of creative and productive potentials further explored in the following chapters. In general, the literary return narratives under analysis envision multidirectional and multicultural possibilities reflective of East Prussia’s long history of demographic diversity and border changes. A consideration of East Prussia’s regional past helps to contextualize these works within both East Prussian and German “Literaturlandschaften,” as they traverse East Prussian memory and their specific German present. Aware of nostalgia’s problematic usage in the past, the authors under analysis are careful to contextualize their experiences to avoid a perception of German forced migration in exclusive terms, as they introduce additional possibilities that nostalgia may pose.

Finally, the contextualization of return and nostalgia within public discourse helps to explain how and why these were and in many cases continue to be received as suspect, regressive categories. In this dissertation, I aim to differentiate literary manifestations of nostalgia in selected narratives of return from the historical problematic uses of nostalgia within ideological politics. Nostalgic expressions in literature do not in every case indicate regressive and revanchist desires, but instead reveal an underlying affective dimension that can be seen as a part of human experiences. This argument is in line with the above-referenced research that has sought to separate individual expellee activities and perspectives from those championed by political expellee organizations and leaders. The next chapter aims to define and reconsider conceptualizations of nostalgia through interdisciplinary insights gathered from critical theory and social psychology research,
which can be located within the so-called “affective turn.” Literary return narratives present an opportunity to reflect on affective and mnemonic dimensions of nostalgia within (forced) migration experiences. In the following chapters, I consider how literary return narratives demonstrate the role that former personal and/or parental homes can play within identity constructions and memorial endeavors without reversion to animosity and problematic desires to reclaim.

In which ways can they enable imaginations of positive interpersonal potentials and constructive self-awareness?
CHAPTER 2
LITERARY RETURN NARRATIVES AND NOSTALGIC AFFECT

Travel, in the form of return visits, has been frequently thematized in a number of literary works by expellees and their descendants. Often involving nostalgic elements, narrative renderings of Heimwehtourismus facilitate the consideration of affective linkages to and memories of former homes within a myriad of genres: travel reports, picture collections, Heimatbücher, personal essays published in expellee organization newspapers, memoirs, diaries, documentary and fictional films, poetry, short stories, and novels. In different ways, return visits depicted in these various genres provide images of what Demshuk terms the “Heimat transformed” that often encourage expellees to realize that their Heimat remembered no longer exists. The Heimat they remember exists only in the mind and in memory. While traveling back on the one hand can remove “lingering fantasies about return,” revisiting, on the other hand, also inspires new desires: the discovery of the changed place, contact with contemporary residents, an experience of the place as a tourist and visitor, and an active confrontation with personal and often painful pasts. In his analysis of personal travel accounts, Demshuk demonstrates how Heimwehtourismus had assisted in a process of healing and circulated new images of the region amongst expellee groups. Return visits attempted to fulfill a curiosity and longing to “re-experience” one’s past located in territories outside of post-WWII Germany.

174 Demshuk, Lost German East, 123-124, 175 Ibid., 187, 189.
Fictional and autobiographical literary return narratives reflect similar practices, but also imagine multicultural potentials and preserve memories of former homes and communities in narrative form. While “lingering fantasies about return” in terms of permanent resettlement subsided, literary return narratives demonstrate that expellees did not entirely “move on” from former homes. They indicate that the former Heimat continued to play a role in the present, especially as a constitutive part of identity, community, and memory. An analysis of literary return narratives considers how former homes remained constructive parts of identity and belonging for expellees in their recollection and narrative construal of past places, experiences, and communities. Nostalgia appears as a central feature of this process, and its manifestation in literary return narratives invites further contemplation of its meaning and function as a personal affective and mnemonic dimension. This second chapter continues the discussion of return and nostalgia, begun in chapter one, and seeks to define and reconsider nostalgia, its meaning and function, within this context.

Nostalgia, a mnemonic and sentimental attachment to past places and times (signifying the longing to return home), is involved in both literary and travel endeavors. Readers and visitors may embark on their own investigations into personal and collective pasts within which a level of nostalgia serves as an affective motivator into familial and cultural inquiry. Despite (or perhaps because of) nostalgia’s pervasive presence in notions of return, as introduced in chapter one, it has often been received with a level of skepticism and suspicion. An analysis of literary return narratives in this dissertation seeks to demonstrate that not all forms of nostalgic recall within the context of German forced migration and memories of the former Heimat involve politically suspect desires.
Before discussing nostalgia and questions raised by the so-called “affective turn” with regard to emotions and cultural studies research, the following introduces the genre of literary return narratives within the context of German forced migration.

I. DEFINING LITERARY RETURN NARRATIVES

Literary return narratives, also referred to as *Wiederbegegnungsliteratur*,\(^{176}\) can be seen as a form of travel writing that thematizes journeys undertaken by expellees and their descendants to the places of their own and/or parental pasts. The term refers to both literary renderings of physical trips as well as imagined return visits narrated in fiction. The location of the former *Heimat* in memory has led to its frequent depiction in literature, which allows former places and communities to “come alive” in stories and personal descriptions. Literary return narratives often include recounted memories of past places, events, and people, but also consider the meaning of the past in the author’s contemporary context and include envisioned possibilities for the future. In terms of structure, literary return narratives often begin with a conflict, major life event, or unexpected sentimental reminder of the former home that prompts the protagonist’s return visit. The narratives include a description of border crossings, modes of transportation, and initial impressions gathered upon arrival. Within the context of German forced migration, protagonists frequently seek the location of former familial homes, even if no longer physically present or in ruins, and describe their experiences with regard to the new host culture as they attempt to reconstruct aspects of the past via memory and imagination. This process, in narrativized form, sheds light on the self-

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\(^{176}\) Lehmann, 144.
reflexive aspects of such journeys and invites an empathetic understanding of the
experiences of loss, longing, and lingering affective connections. While this dissertation
discusses literary return narratives within the context of German forced migration after
WWII, the genre of literary return narratives can be seen across various migration
contexts that warrant further attention in future studies.\textsuperscript{177}

Literary scholar Louis Ferdinand Helbig in his 1988 seminal introduction to flight
and expulsion literature as a literary corpus of study, titled \textit{Der ungeheure Verlust. Flucht
und Vertreibung in der deutschsprachigen Belletristik der Nachkriegszeit}, identifies
literary return narratives as a distinguishable genre. Referring to them as a
\textit{Wiederbegegnung}, or, a reencounter with the lost home, Helbig writes: “Werke, in denen
sich die Wiederbegegnung oder Erstbegegnung mit den alten Heimaten niederschlägt,
stellen inhaltlich einen neuen Prosa- und Lyriktyp dar,” which emerged alongside
physical tourism and return trips once they were allowed and conducted.\textsuperscript{178} According to
Helbig, this literature has diverse functions: it can constitute an imagined return to revisit
the places and time of childhood, a search for linkages to the contemporary place, a

\textsuperscript{177} In the 21\textsuperscript{st} century, revisiting places of personal and familial heritage has become
commonplace amongst so-called “heritage” or “roots tourists” (those even visiting
ancestral origins), and it has found way within literary and cinematic representations.
These take place across multiple ethnic and cultural contexts and include films, such as
Seyhan Derin’s \textit{Ich bin die Tochter meiner Mutter} (1996), Fatih Akin’s \textit{Auf der anderen
Seite} (2007), Yasemin and Nesrin Şamdereli’s \textit{Almanya – Wilkommen in Deutschland}
(2011), as well as literary works, like Emine Sevgi Özdamar’s \textit{Mutterzunge} (1990), \textit{Das
Leben ist eine Karawanserei, hat zwei Türen, aus einer kam ich rein, aus der anderen
ging ich raus} (1992), Monika Maron’s \textit{Pawels Briefe} (1999), W.G. Sebald’s \textit{Austerlitz}
(2001), Stefanie-Lahya Aukongo’s \textit{Kalungas Kind} (2009), and Sabrina Janesch’s
\textit{Katzenberge} (2010). The particularities of forced and voluntary migration within these
return narratives would be worth considering.

\textsuperscript{178} Helbig, 264. \textit{Wiederbegegnung} texts emerged during Helbig’s defined “third stage” of
flight and expulsion literature, “die dichterische Phase” (264). The first two he defines as
the “Erlebnisphase” (occurring during the first decade after the war) and the ca. 1955-1975
“Erinnerungsphase” (103).
pursuit for that which was lost or traces of the past, to gain biographical and/or cultural insights, and finally for some, return attempts can also result in the realization of its actual impossibility (i.e. the places of the past no longer exist). While these individual, personal considerations are frequently present in narratives of return, also included are encounters with the new inhabitants and diverse responses to historical events. Literary return narratives, as such, combine personal inquiries with individual and collective memories, demonstrating shifts in attitudes and perspectives arising from the travelers’ specific, contemporary socio-political contexts.

While literary scholarship has delved into topics related to German suffering and victimization in literature, reevaluating the supposed taboo-status of the topic of German forced migration after WWII, issues related to expellee memory and loss, and Heimat, only some research has been devoted to the literary analysis of represented “Heimweh-trips,” their function and potential. Two recent studies stand out with regard to literary return narratives, both attempting to briefly define the function of the genre and how it

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came to be. In his 2014 *Representations of Flight and Expulsion in East German Prose Works*, Bill Niven introduces what he terms “novels of revisiting” as a response to an expressed need to revisit former homes. Within GDR literature, he explains, a number of prose works in the 1970s and 1980s addressed this compulsion.\(^{181}\) He explains that novels of revisiting shift “between past and present” and “reflect on past and present lives in turn.”\(^{182}\) As such, they are “semi-autobiographical, more introspective, more interested in exploring issues of individual biography and trajectory than in painting a broad social canvas.”\(^{183}\) While the literary return narratives under investigation in this dissertation largely reflect an autobiographical engagement with personal pasts, I do see them as equally interested in the “broad social canvas:” the contemporary changed places, relevant socio-political issues, and a desire to locate the self within historical memory and present-day situations. Furthermore, I see their portrayals as aptly linked to nostalgic affect and as inviting a consideration of emotional linkages, whereas Niven regards homesickness as a lesser-addressed issue. “Homesickness,” he writes, “is only occasionally explicitly addressed, but emotional bonds clearly do connect the characters of these works to their past homelands.”\(^{184}\) I am interested in analyzing the emotional bond in terms of nostalgic affect and as a pervasive part of literary return narratives (and *Heimwehtourismus* more broadly).

Another recent monograph titled, *Heimkehr? Narratives of Return to Germany’s Former Eastern Territories 1965-2001*, by Brangwen Stone, attempts to situate return narratives as a part of German literature and film from the postwar period to the

\(^{181}\) Niven, 97.
\(^{182}\) Ibid., 98.
\(^{183}\) Ibid.
\(^{184}\) Ibid., 119.
In this book, she traverses different historical moments: the postwar period, the Czech lands after the Velvet Revolution, and two 21st century films displaying visits to contemporary Poland, to demonstrate how “the history of World War II continues to dog the eastward journey.” As she argues, return “summons memories of idyllic childhoods and later traumas,” but reveals that one can never return to the place left behind (though not referenced, this is inline with Demshuk’s argument and the “Heimat of memory”). The manifestation of nostalgia, Stone claims, demonstrates “a longing to be at home in the world. In some of the texts, this nostalgia is not just for the mythologized childhood, but also a longing for a multi-ethnic past that can in retrospect seem almost utopian.” This perception of nostalgia as indicating a desire located in the present (i.e. seeking to “be at home in the world”) has been introduced by scholars, such as John Su and Linda Hutcheon, who both argue that nostalgic expressions reveal aspects of social life that are lacking or missing in the present. According to Su, nostalgia “facilitates an exploration of ethical ideals in the face of disappointing circumstances;” they articulate “disappointments with present social conditions.” In her earlier discussion of nostalgia and irony within postmodernism, Hutcheon argues that “nostalgic and utopian impulses share a common rejection of the here and now.” By contrast, I see nostalgia as a particular form of emotional recall that occurs in the present, but is not necessarily an escape from “the here and now.” It is, moreover, a particular way of capturing the past in

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185 Stone, Heimkehr?, 22.
186 Ibid.
187 Ibid., 22, 183-184.
the now. It enables one to construct a sense of belonging by looking to the past, but neither (necessarily) avoids contemporary realities nor historical complexities. The literary return narratives by Arno Surminski, Elisabeth Schulz-Semrau, and Elisabeth Kuhlmann tackle historical and emotional complexities head-on in an attempt to rectify personal sentimental ties to childhood Heimat places without losing sight of their particular historical and present-day contexts. In this way, they demonstrate a constructive possibility that nostalgia can pose.

Revisiting is an important facet of the expellee experience, a way of maintaining ties to former homes, establishing feelings of belonging, and processing individual affect and memory. Whether through tourism encounters of past places or in forms of literary rendering and imagination in fictional works, revisiting involves a level of nostalgia on the part of participants – both expellees engaged in the act as well as audiences consuming such publications. Recent research has recognized that representations of German suffering do not necessarily convey revisionism and revanchism, but can be seen as “an invitation to reflect on the sequencing of the ‘German’ experience: Germans as aggressors, Germans as perpetrators (with occasional acts of moral righteousness), Germans as victims of the furious response provoked by their aggression, Germans as members of a vanquished nation.”190 However, the mentioning of a nostalgic tone in literary engagements often continues to imply a regressive undertaking.

In which ways can literary works negotiate the complexity of nostalgia within the context of forced migration and return visits to former East Prussian homes? What is the

role of nostalgia in revisiting? Can it provide a creative and motivational impulse without politicized revisionist desires?

II. REVISITING EAST PRUSSIAN REMNANTS AND NARRATIVES OF RETURN

In chapter one, I sought to introduce the issues associated with mononational perspectives of the East Prussian region as a part of a politicized nostalgic platform promoted, for instance, by expellee organizations and their leaders. Politicized nostalgia can also be observed within return narratives, which is important to keep in mind as a part of the larger literary discourse and problematic potential of sentimentality directed toward former homes. Not all return narratives are works of fiction, but originally appeared, as Albrecht Lehmann explains, in daily newspapers and expellee periodicals alongside picture collections and travel descriptions, which locates them within documentary modes of representation. Fictionalized narratives, beginning to emerge in the 1970s, respond to these earlier accounts by contextualizing and at times countering documentary claims. Some travel reports, especially those issued in official expellee publications, frequently utilize a politicized nostalgic mode to lament the decay and general disarray of former German homes and towns in a decontextualized fashion. This link to conservative, politicized desires to return and reclaim past homes and drew upon racist images of eastern “others.”

One such example is a 1977 travel report issued by the Landsmannschaft Ostpreußen of a travel undertaken by the then editor-in-chief of the Hamburger Tageszeitung, Helmut Peitsch (originally from Groß Sausgarten, today’s Berjosowka in

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191 Lehmann, 144.
192 Ibid., 12, 23.
Kaliningrad). It particularly reveals that accounts of destruction and decontextualized mourning did prevail within some publications. Though documentary in tone as a travel report, it conveys a sentimental mourning for loss and neglects key components of the region’s history, namely its multiethnic and multicultural past as well as a privileging of German suffering over on awareness of perpetration. The journey, conducted in 1976, took Peitsch across the southern portion of former East Prussia (the northern part, now Kaliningrad, was off limits as the booklet makes clear). The booklet’s front and back covers feature black and white prints of famous cultural sites for which East Prussia is known and remembered, many of which Peitsch visited, e.g. the Danzig town hall (in Gdańsk, Poland), Marienburg castle (in Malbork, Poland), and church of the Teutonic Order in Lyck (today’s Elk, Poland) among others. They are superimposed on a map of East Prussia that is clearly divided in half, indicating the inaccessibility of the northern Kaliningrad portion. The booklet’s back, similarly featuring famous sites now in Kaliningrad, e.g. the Trakhener horses, Königsberg castle, seaport etc., evokes a sentimental longing with the subscript:


This portrayal heightens emotional sensitivities to loss through its account of the impermeable border preventing visits to the “rest” of East Prussia. Though Kaliningrad

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193 Per Brodersen explains that by the 1960s Kaliningrad became a tourist destination for some Soviet citizen, primarily from Moscow, Leningrad, the Ural and Caucasus regions, Belarus, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan. Brodersen, 212.

194 Helmut Peitsch, Reise nach Ostpreußen. Das ist die Heimat heute (Landsmannschaft Ostpreußen – Abteilung Kultur, 1977).
did become a tourist site for Soviet citizens, this description assigns the place to the space of dreams.\textsuperscript{195} It can be revisited in memory. This nostalgic longing for what was is mirrored in the travel report’s text, which additionally serves to highlight the now disarray and destruction of the remembered places and to confirm what Peitsch states toward the end of his report: “Ostpreußen war immer ein deutsches Land, gegründet von den Ordensrittern, besiedelt mit deutschen Bauern und Handwerkern aus allen Ländern wie auch aus Salzburg, die Keimzelle Preußens, fester Bestandteil des Reiches.”\textsuperscript{196} This reflects a common mononational revisionist narrative espoused by political expellee organizations in the interest of promoting the return of the lost Heimat as well as a construal of East Prussia as particularly German.\textsuperscript{197} It fails to take the centuries-long multicultural and multiethnic make up of the Prussian territories into account (cf. chapter one), while similarly neglecting Germany’s shared responsibility in its damage.

The described mismanagement and continued decay of the famous sites described in the travel report further this rhetoric. Inserted descriptions next to photos of contemporary places are particularly telling. In Marienburg (today’s Malbork), Peitsch writes: “Vom anderen Nogatufer aus gesehen wirkt die mächtige Burg düsterer als früher, woran nicht nur die fehlenden leuchtenden, farbenprächtigen Dachziegeln schuld sind,” and later comments: “Die einstige Idylle des reizvollen Marktplatzes [in Marienburg] mit den Vorlaubenhäusern ist dahin. Stattdessen flutet jetzt der Durchgangsverkehr durch eine häßliche Hauptstraße.”\textsuperscript{198} These comments exemplify the typical commentary found

\textsuperscript{195} Cf. Per Brodersen’s section on “Kaliningrad als Exkursions- und Reiseziel,” 211-222.
\textsuperscript{196} Peitsch, 40.
\textsuperscript{197} Pertti Ahonen, “German Expellee Organizations: BetweenRevisionism and Reconciliation,” \textit{Archiv für Sozialgeschichte} 45(2005): 354.
\textsuperscript{198} Peitsch, 9-11.
in publications sponsored by political expellee organizations. Without recognizing Germany’s involvement in the destruction of these famous places, such comments implicate the new inhabitants’ fault in their disarray. The travel report in large part serves the political interests of the *Landsmannschaft Ostpreußen*: it promotes the historical place and cultural remnants as particularly German and is coupled with the paternalistic message that they would be better served under German administration. Part of the rhetorical strategy is to emotionally appeal to readers by evoking nostalgic longing – the historical sites serve as signifiers of collective nostalgic desire. While nostalgic longing itself appears as a common response to this type of deeply felt loss, its framing in this manner demonstrates how nostalgia can be used toward problematic ends. This example of *Wiederbegegnungsliteratur*, a travel report, demonstrates the potential of nostalgia to be used toward ideological goals. The rendering of the *Heimweh*-trip in this public report combines return and nostalgic affect as parts of a politicized narrative and participates in the creation of a dominant image of expellees as revisionist.

Revisiting, however, also presents alternative potentials. An earlier, self-published report by Ernst Meyer, a self-described East Prussian revisiting his former home in 1964 after having been gone for almost twenty years, paints a much different picture. He visited the region for business negotiations and decided to share his own experiences abroad in his report. In the past, Meyer returned on various occasions and shared his experiences and photography of the historical and contemporary place at independently organized, public, open-lectures.  

199 His photography is posted online at the Bildarchiv Ostpreußen: http://www.bildarchiv-ostpreussen.de/; http://www.bildarchiv-ostpreussen.de/cgi-bin/bildarchiv/suche/show_quelleninfos.cgi?id=122. In 2016, he gave a lecture and
Landsmannschaft sponsored travel report, Meyer’s demonstrates that not all expellees shared the mindset of political expellee organizations and leadership. His report, in comparison to the former, does not display resentment toward the new Polish inhabitants, whom he describes as “äußerst liebenswürdig, hilfsbereit und aufgeschlossen.” Rather than lamenting decay, Meyer mentions how surprised he was that so much was actually in the process of being rebuilt. He lists various sectors of society, for example, and evaluates their status in positive terms: the cities he encountered as currently being reconstructed, industry as increasingly operational, the ports as restored, energy availability as maintained, the major trains as operational, the streets as repaired, livestock industries as functioning, and the agricultural production as “besser als erwartet.” To emphasize these points raised, he states that “die Situation dieser Bewohner in vielen entscheidenden Fragen eine andere ist, als das der landläufigen Vorstellung und insbesondere früheren Reiseschilderungen entspricht.” He sees the situation in contemporary Poland in much more positive terms and with regard to progress and productive potential.


Ibid., 4-5, 18.

Ibid., 18.
how they too experienced a great hardship: “Es gibt kaum eine polnische Familie der Intelligenzschicht, in der nicht Angehörige ermordet oder verschleppt und verschollen sind.”\(^{203}\) In this way, his report creates points of connection and understanding. He considers the German historical role and mentions that, even though he sensed a tension on the part of the new inhabitants toward Germans, he describes the hospitality that he experienced while visiting.\(^{204}\) By describing the experiences of Polish citizens now residing in the former Heimat, Meyer’s report reflects a form of “multidirectional memory” discourse – one that attempts to dialogically interact with multicultural memories in the interest of understanding.

Michael Rothberg introduced the concept of multidirectional memory to counter competitive constellations of memory, that is, perceptions of memory in exclusionary terms as “a zero-sum struggle” for narrative dominance. To Rothberg, different memories of trauma and violence, such as the Holocaust and those of slavery and colonialism, do not “block” one another from view “in a competitive struggle for recognition,” but can help to articulate each other.\(^{205}\) Multidirectional memory as “subject to ongoing negotiation, cross-referencing, and borrowing, as productive and not privative”\(^{206}\) can help to narrate memory’s intercultural complexity and take different experiences of one event (or, alternatively in the case of Holocaust and colonial memory, similar experiences of different events) into account. The inclusion of a multidirectional memory discourse is one of the key features that distinguish Meyer’s report from Peitsch’s. Meyer witnesses

\(^{203}\) Ibid., 5-6.
\(^{204}\) Ibid., 6.
\(^{206}\) Ibid., 3.
the contemporary place as changed and as one with inhabitants who share similar experiences of hardship and forced migration as a point of connection between German and Polish citizens. Though drawn by his curiosity and nostalgic longing to revisit his former home, he conveys a hopeful tone for a productive future in contrast to the report issued by the *Landmannschaft Ostpreußen*, which conveys a revisionist mononational memory of a German East Prussia.

Nostalgia is a part of both return visits, but in the later serves to inspire curiosity, interaction, and empathy with the new settlers, and in the former is used toward problematic political ends. It is directed toward architectural signifiers of collective nostalgic desire without attempts to understand the situation of contemporary inhabitants or German culpability. For a long time, German expellees had been stigmatized by such representations and politicized calls related to a “right to return” (a revanchist call to regain lost territories and return to pre-1945 borders).\(^{207}\) Recent scholarship has sought to distinguish between the viewpoints vocalized by expellee political leaders and the wider expellee populations. Often, the two diverged, which helps to explain the fact that politicized calls to return failed to inspire the desired support and declined by the 1960s.\(^{208}\) The reports by Peitsch (sponsored by the *Landmannschaft*) and Meyer (independently published) demonstrate the differences in expellee viewpoints and opinions. While these travel reports evoke nostalgic sentimentality and reveal different interests while abroad, fictionalized and autobiographical literary return narratives expand the discussion of nostalgic affect within the context of return visits. They draw


\(^{208}\) Demshuk, *Lost German East*, 64.
overt attention to the nostalgic elements of one’s experience, inviting reflection and contemplation of emotional realities. This dissertation contributes to this larger research trend in its attempt to examine the particularities of “everyday” experiences and perspectives of individual expellees. Literary works invite an examination of the emotional lives and affective bonds expressed by authors of literary return narratives.

The combination of nostalgic sentiment and damaging revanchist, revisionist rhetoric by expellee political organizations resulted in a lasting skepticism, not only toward nostalgic or sentimental expressions toward the former Heimat, but also toward expellee literature more generally – so much so that the first comprehensive scholarly engagement with this literature did not emerge until Helbig’s Der ungeheure Verlust in 1988. His monograph makes a case for studying flight and expulsion literature and especially confronts the idea that flight and expulsion had been taboo topics in the postwar period. The supposed “taboo nature” of the topics existed on the side of scholarship, he suggests, not within the mainstream public, which had published a wealth of literary works and materials. Literary scholarship, he argues, has been reluctant to engage with it out of fear that a new revisionism would present itself in research. As Eigler explains, scholarship on the history of German suffering and this literature gained traction after 1989 with the end of the Cold War, shifting public and political discourse, and increased access to archives and research opportunities. New historiographical approaches, she explains, have aimed to confront problematic ideological viewpoints fostered by decontextualized approaches to flight and expulsion, and literary analyses have sought to examine the literature with more nuance – some examining aesthetics,

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209 Helbig, 30-33.
210 Eigler, 51.
memory, transgenerational trauma, with others applying methodologies that cross disciplines and national boundaries. Berger, exemplifying a current approach to flight and expulsion literature, has recently argued that this literature is more differentiated and complex in form than often thought. Mainstream publications and popular works that have especially contended with a revisionist and revanchist reputation, she demonstrates, are not all devoid of critical self-reflective content and a number of popular works “do address questions of guilt and imply historical responsibility, or even complicity.” Only a small minority of expulsion novels in the early postwar period can be seen as genuinely revanchist, she claims. Wolfgang Schneiß, evaluating the evolution of the topic of flight, expulsion, and loss of home in literature over time, also argues in his earlier monograph that not all literature supports revanchist rhetoric – many make clear that a Rückkehr is not possible. These works exemplify the move to rehabilitate the reputation of the literary corpus thematizing flight, expulsion, and loss of home, and especially Berger’s study presents some under-acknowledged popular works on the subject. My analysis of literary return narratives focuses attention on lesser-known authors and on a lesser-examined, albeit quite pervasive genre in the German forced migration literary corpus with its key affective feature, nostalgia. In different ways, the works by Surminski, Schulz-Semrau, and Kuhlmann invite reflection upon affective memories directed toward the historical East Prussian region. They in particular shed light on the complexity of nostalgic affect and how members of the first and second generation continue to grapple with the history of German forced migration,

211 Ibid., 56, 61.
212 Berger, Heimat, Loss and Identity, 27.
personal/parental experiences, and linkages to the changed place within different contemporary contexts (West Germany, East Germany, and contemporary Europe).

Perhaps the best known literary return narrative to past homes in the former German east is Christa Wolf’s *Kindheitsmuster* (1976), which narrates the return to the places of childhood under National Socialism from three narrative vantage points: the protagonist Nelly located in the past, the narrator traveling in the diegetic present, and the author detailing the story. This postmodern autobiographical novel is an opportunity for the author to critically evaluate her own experience within the realm of fiction.215

*Heimweh* and nostalgia figure in to this literary return narrative as points of discomfort and struggle, which Stone argues is a feeling that the narrator tries to resist, as she “struggles to disentangle her feelings of homesickness, of longing for her hometown, from the politically suspect notions she associates with *Heimat*, and the desire to return to the *Heimat*.216 Angelika Bammer, in her discussion of Wolf’s *Kindheitsmuster* and Günther Grass’s *Beim Häuten der Zwiebel* (2006), also presents the difficulty associated with sentimental feelings and longings for home within the context of post-WWII German suffering. At the outset of her contribution, she rhetorically asks: “Had Germans forfeited their right to a ‘feeling of home’ in these places or to grieve their loss because these attachments had been rendered illegitimate? Had Nazi crimes cancelled Germans’ right to nostalgia?”217 Nostalgia had been “sharply politicized,” and according to Bammer, “the taboo on nostalgia was a virtual mandate amongst politically progressive

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216 Stone, “Visiting the Hometown,” 599.
217 Bammer, 110.
Germans.” Bammer demonstrates how Wolf and Grass respond to this apparent ethical dilemma: Though the authors “make a conscious effort to distance themselves from it personally,” they do “affirm ‘the longing itself’ – the desire for a connection to the places in which our earliest and most primal experience of self was formed – as not only legitimate, but a creative force.” Bammer highlights the problems associated with nostalgic affinities and memories, particularly those writing about flight, expulsion, German suffering, and lost homes. Yet since nostalgia comprises a central component of expellee discourse, memories, and narratives, it warrants further scrutiny. The selected literary return narratives in this dissertation provide an opportunity to examine nostalgia and its potential within the context of German forced migration more closely.

In which ways do the works under analysis avoid revanchist messages, but nonetheless reflect a type of nostalgic attachment to personal and familial homes, past people, and childhoods? In the following, I seek to examine how these texts remember past communities and ways of life, but also consider the meaning of their former homes within the protagonists’ socio-political contexts. How are they concerned with getting to know the changed places and contemporary inhabitants? Which future possibilities for understanding, new connections to past homes, and sentimental ties do they imagine? Nostalgia in many cases appears unexpectedly and attempts are made on the part of the authors to try to suppress this affective attachment, even though it serves as a creative and motivational impulse to revisit past places and times. It seems that even on the part of these authors, nostalgia evokes an uneasiness and discomfort, despite the fact that it comprises a central component of the expellees’ experiences.

218 Ibid., 112.
219 Ibid., 121-122.
III. RECONSIDERING NOSTALGIA

Within literary research, scholars studying literature that addresses flight and expulsion, lost homes, or the former German East have to a large degree treated nostalgia cursorily, implying a problematic, politically suspicious view of nostalgic affinities and memories of former homes. Bammer’s and Stone’s considerations of Grass and Wolf, respectively, are exceptions to the typical cursory mention of nostalgic affect within literary return narratives. They both locate Grass and Wolf within what Svetlana Boym has termed “reflective nostalgia” (which, “does not pretend to rebuild the mythical place called home”\(^ {220} \)) and see their nostalgia as not engaged in revisionist longings.\(^ {221} \) As discussed in chapter one, the linkage between nostalgia and revision can been seen as emerging from political expellee calls to return and the political foci of each respective German state. In West Germany, the problematic view of expellees and nostalgic expression emerged in the 1970s and 80s with the dawn of a new Ostpolitik and formal recognition of the Oder-Neisse border. In East Germany, this already existed in the postwar period with the goal of integrating all members into a new socialist Heimat. The perception of expellees as revanchist also placed expellee depictions of Heimat and nostalgia in a precarious position, as they were often criticized as Heimattümelei or in terms of a suspicious sentimentalization of Heimat.\(^ {222} \) Heimattümelei, “eine schwärmerische, unkritische Begeisterung für den eigenen Wohnort, ohne Kenntnisse über dessen Geschichte und über spezifische volkskulturelle Eigenheiten,” is used to criticize representations of Heimat that are politically suspicious, sentimentalized,

\(^ {220} \) Boym, 49.
\(^ {221} \) Bammer, 121-122. Stone, “Visiting the Hometown,” 608.
nostalgic, and decontextualized.²²³ Embedded within this understanding is a devaluation of emotional, affective attachments in favor of critical reflection. While I do not wish to defend unreflected, revisionist proclamations denying German culpability (such departures indeed existed within political discourse as well as in literature), I do rethink emotional, nostalgic encounters within this context as an important part of expellee experiences and not in merely dismissive, regressive terms. Bammer and Stone begin to reevaluate nostalgia as “reflective,” but in other cases, scholarship continues to maintain the assumption of nostalgia as a regressive force.

Berger, while demonstrating in her work that literature on the topic of German suffering are more complex and historically critical than previously thought, exemplifies an uncritical assumption about nostalgia. In her discussion of novels from the 1970s and 80s, she writes:

Certainly, many ['popular texts'] exhibit pronounced anti-modern attitudes, and evoke nostalgic and idealized images of the pre-war, and pre-industrial, world in Silesia, East Prussia or Pomerania, focusing on the simplicity of life and the beauty of the countryside. . . . most focus on the time before the expulsions, painting a somewhat idyllic picture of everyday life. Predictably, the often nostalgic portrayal of the former homelands in these popular novels runs the risk of idealization, creating an idyllic and perhaps all-too-pure view of German life in the former eastern territories.²²⁴

Distinguishing between “elite literature” and “popular novels” she locates the sentimentality toward the home within popular texts. As Bammer and Stone demonstrate, “elite literature” (e.g. Wolf’s Kindheitsmuster, which Berger also analyzes) is not necessarily “immune” to nostalgic affect, nor are popular texts necessarily conveying


²²⁴ Berger, Heimat, Loss and Identity, 71-73.
nostalgic sentimentality in problematic ways. In a sense, Berger includes this evaluation as a “disclaimer” prior to her analysis of the selected literature’s critical aspects, which indicates the precarious position that nostalgia and sentimental longings for home seem to entail. While the term “normalization” has been used to describe the mnemonic shift to represent Germans as both perpetrators and victims — in other words, to include the memory of German suffering as not mutually exclusive of the memory of the Holocaust — how “normal” can such endeavors be if a rejection of certain emotional sentiments persists? Does a “normalized” engagement with the past include an open expression of emotional ties? How does one make peace with one’s nostalgia without revanchist declaration?

In the following chapters, I reconsider nostalgia, its functions, meanings, and possibilities as presented in what could be considered “popular” literature by the authors Surminski, Schulz-Semrau, and Kuhlmann. Along with Boym and her concept of reflective nostalgia, I see nostalgia as having a critical function, but I seek to reevaluate it as a part of an interdisciplinary discussion located within the so-called “affective turn.” The affective turn has encouraged a reconsideration of the role of embodiment and has complicated the dichotomies of affect/discourse and body/cognition. A reassessment of nostalgia through such an approach expands understandings of nostalgia in terms of positive/negative types, and instead stimulates an attention to complex possibilities and multiple potentialities. In other words, how does nostalgia affect “what we do” — our perceptions, decisions, and actions?

\[225\] Ibid., 4.
In her article, “The Turn to Affect,” Ruth Leys explains the importance of taking the affective dimension into account:

we human beings are corporeal creatures imbued with subliminal affective intensities and resonances that so decisively influence or condition our political and other beliefs that we ignore those affective intensities and resonances at our peril – not only because doing so leads us to underestimate the political harm that the deliberate manipulation of our affective lives can do but also because we will otherwise miss the potential for ethical creativity and transformation that technologies of the self designed to work on our embodied being can help bring about.226

Leys, as well as other scholars writing within the affective turn (e.g. Margaret Wetherell and Patricia Clough), tend to criticize the traditional insistence on rationality over emotion and seek to address the ways in which affect, emotion, and embodied knowledge can influence social life.227 Within the context of German flight and expulsion, nostalgia and sentimentality toward the former home constitute key affective forms of engagement. Following Leys’s logic, it important to raise critical awareness of the “internal,” emotional dimension in order to be mindful of the ways in which they can “move” or “sway” us. This processing can take place within writing, and literature can provide opportunities for understanding the ways in which emotions, such as nostalgia, can affect us. Before discussing the theoretical prospects afforded and questions raised by the affective turn in more detail, the following introduces current conceptualizations of nostalgia within social psychology and cultural studies to shed light on its treatment over time. This helps to demonstrate the relevance of reevaluating nostalgia as an emotion integral to the experience of German forced migration.

Though now more commonly associated with affective and cultural mnemonic expressions, nostalgia was initially coined a medical illness in the seventeenth century. In 1688, the Swiss physician, Johannes Hofer, coined the term nostalgia from the Greek words *nostos* (return home) and *algia* (pain) to describe a new illness emanating from “the sad mood originating from the desire to return to one’s native land.” He conceptualized nostalgia in terms of homesickness and as a medical ailment that took a toll on one’s physical body.\(^{228}\) Symptoms included physical markers, such as “bouts of weeping, irregular heartbeat, and anorexia” as well as “persistent thinking of home” and “smothering sensations.”\(^{229}\) These affective and physical signatures of nostalgia as “homesickness” largely describe it in negative terms as adversely affecting one’s emotional and physical well-being. The cure for nostalgia, according to Hofer, is to return to one’s homeland.\(^{230}\) From its initial usage as an illness, nostalgia is linked to notions of return and to the remembered home. With the arrival of new medical discoveries, nostalgia was no longer seen as a physical disease, but was considered a psychiatric disorder. As a mental, medical condition it was seen as continuing to present physical symptoms, such as “anxiety, sadness, and insomnia,” but was more aptly regarded, within the framework of psychoanalytical investigations of the twentieth century, as a “repressive compulsive disorder” expressing a “subconscious desire to return to an earlier


life stage.” In these early stages of nostalgia’s conceptualization, it was regarded a medical ailment and as having a negative effect on one’s physical and emotional, mental state. Linked to a desire to return to either a past home or past moment of life, nostalgia is seen here as a response to something absent or lost, “a variant of depression, marked by loss and grief.”

Psychology took a particular interest in nostalgia in the late twentieth century, and research located within social psychology continues to study the meaning and effect of nostalgia. Within psychology, researchers began to distinguish between nostalgia and homesickness, identifying nostalgia as also emerging in response to people or “any object that symbolized aspects of their past.” Places, people, objects, and past moments in time can all evoke nostalgic longing. While regarded as a negative ailment for the majority of its existence, nostalgia in the late twentieth century came to be regarded as a “bittersweet emotion” – “not simply an unpleasant emotional state akin to depression. It was also a pleasurable feeling.” Social psychology’s interest in emotion research expanded understandings of nostalgia’s complexity in the twenty-first century. It can be seen as arousing a positive mental state, one that can console, establish a sense of belonging and location in history, while simultaneously instilling a sense of sadness through knowledge of the fondly recalled past’s irretrievability. One response to nostalgia within the context of German forced migration has been the desire to return and revisit the places and time of one’s past through travel and imagination. In a way, this return

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231 Constantine Sedikides, Tim Wildschut, Jamie Arndt, and Clay Routledge, 304.
232 Ibid.
234 Ibid.
reverts back to the 17th century model introduced by Hofer with his notion of return as a “cure.” The conceptualization of nostalgia, however, as an emotion in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries demonstrates that nostalgia is not necessarily something that one “overcomes” or “heals.” Instead it is a common emotive state and a part of human experience that on an individual level can provoke positive associations with the past as well as sorrow with regard to the recognized absence of nostalgic signifiers that one recalls in memory.

This sentimental, “bittersweet” longing for one’s past has been treated differently within cultural theory and social psychology research – two discourse areas that have taken a particular interest in nostalgia’s social effect. Within cultural studies, scholars, such as Frederic Jameson, Susan Stewart, and Linda Hutcheon, have critically evaluated nostalgia as a phenomena located within memory and negatively impacting critical, intellectual pursuits. On the other hand scholars, such as Svetlana Boym, John Su, Angelika Bammer, and Andrew Demshuk have attempted to defend nostalgia’s productive social potential. In both cases, nostalgia as an emotional state is linked to memory, but its social effects are viewed in quite different ways. Jameson, Stewart, and Hutcheon, all writing about postmodern society, perceive nostalgia in terms of “illness.” Stewart writes that nostalgia is “a social disease . . . a sadness without an object, a sadness which creates a longing that of necessity is inauthentic because it does not take part in lived experience.”235 Stewart’s definition of nostalgia as a part of “ideological reality” (i.e. outside the realm of embodied physicality) stands in contrast to current discussions within the affective turn, interested in seeing the mental and physical as

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Stewart’s treatment of nostalgia dismisses it for a supposed “immateriality,” even though the “unseen internal” can have as much bearing in reality as physical acts. Similar to Stewart, Jameson refers to nostalgia in terms of a social ill: “a history lesson,” he writes, “is the best cure for nostalgic pathos.” Finally, Hutcheon, contemplating the relationship between irony and nostalgia claims that it serves a commercializing function: it “teaches us to miss things we have never lost.” The postmodern elements of culture, she argues, “are aware of the risks and lures of nostalgia, and seek to expose those through irony.” In sum, these scholars take issue with nostalgia’s inauthenticity – as providing an improper feeling of historical cohesion and accuracy, even though nostalgic longing, forms this perspective, merely provides an idealized picture and incorrect memory of the past.

In her seminal work, The Future of Nostalgia, Svetlana Boym counters this notion of nostalgia and attempts to explain its constructive potential through the concept of “reflective nostalgia.” She writes that “nostalgia can be both a social disease and a creative emotion” – the social disease refers to her termed “restorative nostalgia,” whereas the creative emotion is called “reflective nostalgia” (within which Hutcheon’s “ironized nostalgia” and other perceived productive nostalgic forms may fit). Boym explains how frequently nostalgia is used in a dismissive sense to indicate a type of “guilt-free homecoming” or “an abdication of personal responsibility.” Though as she shows, “reflective nostalgia,” encourages mourning for that, which was lost, but not to

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236 Cf. Leys, Clough, and Wetherell.
237 Jameson, 156.
238 Hutcheon, 204-206.
239 Boym, 353.
240 Ibid., xiv.
reclaim it or reject responsibility. Instead, reflective nostalgics know that the “mythical place called home” cannot be rebuilt. A second kind, her termed “restorative nostalgia” is of the more suspicious variety. It “characterizes national and nationalist revivals all over the world, which engage in antimodern myth-making of history by means of a return to national symbols and myths.” Within literary scholarship, defensive analyses of nostalgia tend to identify “reflective nostalgia” as that presented within cultural works. As mentioned, Bammer, for instance, locates Grass’s and Wolf’s literature within reflective nostalgia, “in which revisiting the past – the return to a time before their German home became Poland – is enacted in memory and imagination, not in terms of territorial politics.” Stone’s analysis of Wolf’s *Kindheitsmuster* too locates it within reflective nostalgia, “for the past and the former home is constantly balanced with historical responsibility.” However, in the case of *Kindheitsmuster*, the author does recreate her past in narrative form (not in a teleological sense, but in terms of reconstructing events), just as the literary return narratives under analysis in this dissertation also embark on a reconstruction of past places, communities, and events textually and in memory. In a sense, they restore.

Within the context of German forced migration, Demshuk has argued that expellees have often employed both restorative and reflective nostalgia simultaneously: “the case of expellees demonstrates the difficulty of separating what Boym identifies as ‘reflective nostalgia’ (individual savoring of details and memorial signs) from ‘restorative

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241 Ibid., 50.
242 Ibid., 41.
243 Stone’s and Bammer’s discussions exemplify this point.
244 Bammer, 122.
nostalgia’ (the serious yearning to reconstruct what had been) . . . They crafted surrogate Heimat space out of text and stone, because they knew that the home they had known could never be restored in the physical spaces of the lost East.”

Literary return narratives indeed craft “surrogate Heimat spaces” in text in order to contemplate past experiences, locate one’s self in history, and fondly recall past communities. Nostalgia serves as a creative motivator in the process, demonstrating how “nostalgia might be mobilized toward productive ends.” However, it does not necessarily occur in the sense of reflective nostalgia, which “delays the homecoming.” The literary return narratives analyzed in this dissertation all embark on a return journey and, without revanchist longings, seek out a “homecoming,” understood not only in terms of a place, but also a community. For many familial as well as localized expellee groups nostalgia for the lost home served the interests of community formation. It created an impetus for individuals originating from former German territories to share stories and memories. As Henning Süssner explains, the construction of regional home communities through images of peaceful, idealized, prewar worlds created a sense of belonging and solidarity among individuals. This was an important part of their “right to home,” that is, to remember home and pass on “the group’s collective memories to new generations.” The reconstruction of former homes in memory and text is a common element of literary return narratives, which makes the term “restorative nostalgia” somewhat misleading.

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246 Demshuk, The Lost German East, 18.
247 Bammer, 122.
248 Boym, xviii.
250 Süssner, 19-20.
within this context. Literary return narratives at times do seek a restoration of what was, albeit within memory and narrative. Restorative and reflective nostalgia, although seen as two different categories of nostalgia by Boym, interact and intersect within literary return narratives. Boym again explains their differences in terms of different focal points: “Restorative nostalgia puts emphasis on nostos and proposes to rebuild the lost home and patch up the memory gaps. Reflective nostalgia dwells in algia, in longing and loss, the imperfect process of remembrance.” However, both can be seen as negotiated within literary return narratives and, as Demshuk explains, expellee communities more broadly. They are not distinctly separate, but do not necessarily give in to politicized revanchist desires either.

Rather than conceptualizing nostalgia in these oppositional terms, recent research located within the affective turn may offer alternative theoretical categories through which nostalgia may be considered. The turn to affect within critical theory has emphasized the role of the body and emotion within social relationships. Not only cultural theory and social psychology, but also political science and historiography have begun to analyze the role of affective states and their significance. Within cultural studies, the affective turn has been understood in different ways leading to diverse scholarly foci. On the one hand, scholars such as Patricia Clough have understood the turn to affect as “a substrate of potential bodily responses . . . in excess of consciousness” – as transcending the organic body “to exploring non-organic life.” From this perspective, the affective turn constitutes a consideration of the ways in which

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251 Boym, 41.
technologies “produce affective bodily capacities beyond the body’s organic-physiological constraints.” On the other hand the turn to affect has constituted an attention to human emotive states and “feelings” that affect human interactions, behaviors, and perceptions. My interest in this dissertation is the latter. Similar to Leys, I see emotions as affecting social interactions. How does nostalgia, in particular, affect interpersonal relationships, practices, and memory in the selected literary texts?

In her monograph on affect and emotion, Wetherell explains that the affective turn “attempts to understand how people are moved, and what attracts them, to emphasize repetitions, pains, and pleasures, feelings and memories.” She finds this approach to be particularly helpful in “thinking about nebulous and subtle emotions like Schadenfreude, or mixed and ambivalent phenomena such as reluctant optimism, intense indifference, or enjoyable melancholy.” Nostalgia would also fit this description as a complex or “bittersweet” emotion evoking mixed feelings of joy and sadness simultaneously. In order to understand the effects of emotions, Wetherell introduces “affective practices” as a theoretical category that “focuses on the emotional as it appears in social life and tries to follow what participants do.” Cultural works and literature enable a consideration of the practices and attitudes emerging from different affective states. As Leys suggests, literature and visual images can create affective experiences “below the threshold of meaning and ideology” – they communicate through feeling. This turn to affect, as

253 Ibid., 2. This line of thought, has for instance, been of important in the discourse of “posthumanism.”
255 Ibid.
256 Ibid., 4.
such, considers the ways in which audiences may receive and respond to literary works, visual images, and other artistic forms. How does this take place within return narratives and cultural artifacts important within the context of German forced migration? In her analysis of family photos, for example, Tina Campt examines the ways in which physical images create affective responses. They “move people,” she argues, and create “affective resonances and attachments.”

258 Literary renderings of former homes can arguably create similar affective engagements that potentially “move people.” How can such images presented within literary return narratives constitute an affective, embodied practice arising from nostalgia? In which ways does this strategy appease the longing for past places, historical moments, and communities? Which potentials does nostalgia afford within literary return narratives?

Nostalgia as a complex and multifaceted emotion has been scrutinized in research, as previously detailed, with both constructive and regressive potentials. It can be played upon in a politicized fashion to support ideological goals, but it can also serve interpersonal functions to create a sense of belonging, point of contact, creative impulse, console, and invite empathetic understanding. The framing of nostalgia and its usage within discourse can help to determine in which ways it is, employed. Nostalgia is an emotion that we carry with ourselves, and without an awareness of its presence in our emotional, lived reality, we may become targets of its problematic potential. By making nostalgia explicit, as the literary return narratives discussed in this dissertation do, we can proceed with conscious awareness of its presence. In this way, an analysis of nostalgia

within literary return narratives can support the development of emotional intelligence. The turn to affect can assist in the promotion of emotional literacies.

IV. CONCLUSION

Even though nostalgia can present constructive mnemonic possibilities, for a long time it has been seen in negative and derogatory terms across multiple disciplines. The historical usage of the term reveals shifting notions and understandings of nostalgia as a signifier for illness, a mental disorder, a way of remembering (including an ahistorical engagement with the past), a desire, and emotion. Nostalgia, conceptualized within the affective turn as a complex emotion with multiple affective practices, opens up a consideration of which possibilities this emotion may pose. As an emotion, it can affect memory, provoke a sense of belonging, solidarity and empathy, it can console, or even result in discomfort or a perceived need to suppress it. Nostalgic affect can motivate (consciously and unconsciously), articulate present day concerns, affect engagements with others (e.g. new populations in the former Heimat), and serve the purposes of problematic movements. On the one hand, nostalgia can express a personal mood, but emotions such as nostalgia can also be used in a public setting and directed to support various ideological causes. The difference between nostalgia’s instrumentalization and its contemplation as a personal, emotion lies in its framing. An awareness of nostalgia’s affective practices can help to raise consciousness with regard to its various functions and help encourage emotional literacies. Contextualization, an interest in multidirectional memory, and an awareness of multicultural realities, within the discourse areas of German suffering and forced migration, frequently reveal critical and constructive
engagements in the presence of nostalgic emotions. Alternatively, objects and sites of collective nostalgic significance fixated on notions of loss and suffering appear to emerge along side mononational understandings and less intercultural, dialogical potential. While it can be problematically employed, the reality of nostalgia as an emotion within the context of German forced migration cannot be ignored. Instead, attention to its presence within literary return narratives can help reveal understandings of the affective potentials and practices associated with this complex emotion.
CHAPTER 3
REVISITING CHILDHOOD, FAMILIAL PLACES, AND THE ROLE OF NOSTALGIA IN ARNO SURMINSKI’S EAST PRUSSIAN TRILOGY

In 2014, the Ostpreußisches Landesmuseum Lüneburg celebrated the writer Arno Surminski’s 80th birthday with an exhibit titled “Erinnertes Leben – Gelebte Erinnerung” featuring his biography and work. The author of over twenty fictional and non-fictional texts has received recognition across Germany, Poland, and Russia through this exhibit as well as some of his translated works in circulation. Not only have some of these been translated into Polish and Russian, but the museum exhibit was also displayed to public audiences at various locations in Poland and at the Museum Friedländer Tor in Kaliningrad in 2015. As a writer, he is known for his literary constructions of East Prussia, which often thematize pre-World War II village life as well as experiences related to flight and expulsion from the region, even though his oeuvre also includes

works not centered on the Second World War.\textsuperscript{260} Despite his international recognition and overall positive reception in Germany, particularly for his first novel \textit{Jokehnen oder wie lange fährt man von Ostpreußen nach Deutschland?}, he has not received considerable scholarly attention beyond attempts to categorize his work through descriptions of his narrative plots and biographical information. Mentioned within literary histories of East Prussian literature, flight and expulsion literature, as well as postwar German literature, he has been seen as a writer of the East Prussian \textit{Heimat} with “nostalgic ties,”\textsuperscript{261} but with little inquiry into the meaning and function of nostalgia in his works. In this chapter, I seek to address nostalgia as a specific feature of affect and memory in his writing through an analysis of his East Prussian trilogy, consisting of the novels \textit{Jokehnen} (1974), \textit{Polninen oder eine deutsche Liebe} (1984), and \textit{Grunowen oder das vergangene Leben} (1989). In particular, I discuss these novels as return narratives engaged in the literary construction of revisiting past familial and/or personal homes and analyze the role of nostalgia within this endeavor. These three novels are narratively diverse and, unlike typical trilogy collections, are not connected through their depiction of the same characters over a period of time. Instead, they represent a collection that revolves around a common dynamic, namely, return visits to lost homes in the former German East.

Out of all of his novels, these three specifically thematize the return to places of personal and/or familial significance. These travels to former homes are not only

\textsuperscript{260} Some of these include: \textit{Fremdes Land oder als die Freiheit noch zu haben war} (1980), which narrates his experiences in Canada where he worked as a forester, \textit{Malojawind} (1988) about alcoholism and a troubled marriage, \textit{Kein schöner Land} (1993) is a novel about German reunification, and \textit{Amanda oder ein amerikanischer Frühling} (2009) tells the story of a student traveling in the United States.

\textsuperscript{261} Helbig, 133.
journeys to another place, but also to a different time: In *Jokehnen*, the author returns to his own childhood fictionalized through the narrative of a young boy growing up in an East Prussian village between the years 1934 and 1946 – the year the Soviet army deported him and other villagers to West Germany after sending his parents to a labor camp. Surminski’s own childhood village, Jäglack, East Prussia (today’s Jegławki, Poland), serves as the inspiration for *Jokehnen*. *Polninken*, alternatively, turns its attention to a second generation West German’s visit to his parents’ former home in a remote village along the Polish border to contemporary Kaliningrad. There, he encounters not only the local population, but also visitors from the GDR as he learns more about his familial past. In this novel, the author imagines the possible experiences and attitudes toward familial origins that future generations may have. Finally, *Grunowen* reflects upon the diversity of affective attachments to homes in the former German East by narrating the return visit of two characters from the same village. Although age and class status separate these characters in their former village, both experience the loss of home and family members after the Second World War and reflect upon the past both individually and in communication with each other.

In all three, travel to former homes signifies an exploration of personal histories within which memory is central, and a common feature of memory that appears is nostalgia. Within the context of German flight, expulsion, and literature by expellees, nostalgia is received with a tone of skepticism and suspicion, particularly resonating from postwar, West German expellee politics. Political appeals to a *Recht auf Heimat* initially circulated in the “Charta der deutschen Heimatvertriebenen,” and for the more conservative members, constituted a right to return to Germany’s former eastern
This disseminated a problematic image of expellees as revanchist and simultaneously created suspicion toward sentimental expressions of former eastern homes. In the following, I consider Surminski’s trilogy vis-à-vis the situation of nostalgia emanating from postwar, expellee political discourse as presented in chapter one, which helps to explain the lasting concern with which nostalgic and sentimental memories of home are met for decades to come. More precisely, I seek to differentiate between politicized nostalgia and alternative, personal expressions of nostalgia as found in Surminski’s work. In his trilogy, he contemplates the reality of nostalgia’s affective presence within individual and collective memory discourses amongst expellees, but not to incite a reclaiming of lost territory or historical revisionism as politicized nostalgia would suggest. Nostalgia can also constitute a more personal function to both remember and mourn that which was lost, while contributing to an expellee collective memory discourse, prompting the Erfahrungsgeneration to share individual experiences through stories. In each novel, nostalgic utterances highlight the irreversibility and permanence of what was lost, and yet narratives also create the potential to imaginatively revive past places and people without necessarily rousing physical reclaiming and revival. In the following, I examine the various manifestations and functions of nostalgia that Surminski presents in an attempt to consider the diverse purposes and meanings that nostalgia can have within German expellee discourse. In which ways can we regard nostalgia in a critical and productive light? Does a reevaluation of nostalgia affect our perception of expellee literature revisiting former homes?

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262 Demshuk, *The Lost German East*, 94.
I. RETURN VISITS TO FORMER HOMES AND NOSTALGIA IN SURMINSKI’S TRIOLOGY

In all three novels, Surminski situates his narratives in pre- and post-1945 rural villages, named after the novels’ titles: Jokehnen, Polninken, and Grunowen, formerly located in East Prussia, but now in Poland along the border with Russia’s Kaliningrad Oblast. In his evocation of the village, he presents common tropes of Heimatliteratur, particularly the rural village as signifying a predominantly pre-modern, agricultural, and traditional society. In this way, he continues to portray agricultural spaces often associated with East Prussia prior to 1945 that initially found literary expression in works by three often-cited postwar writers from East Prussia, Ernst Wiechert, Siegfried Lenz, and Johannes Bobrowski, who are known for their fictional representations of flight and expulsion, lost homes, and for constructing the East Prussian village into a literary space of memory.263 Surminski’s rendering of the rural Heimat has led some scholars to categorize his literature as “nostalgic retrospection,”264 “modern Heimatromantik with nostalgic ties,”265 and representative of a mythologized Masurian Heimat,266 without,

264 Barniškienė, 10.
265 Helbig, 133.
however, evaluating or explaining the function or potential of this nostalgia. Within the context of flight and expulsion literature, these descriptors of Surminski’s work may suggest a suspicious sentimentality and give the impression that idyllic renderings overshadow contextualized accounts of the past. According to Frauke Janzen in her chapter on Ruth Hoffman’s *Die schlesische Barmherzigkeit*, attempts to make meaning (“Sinnstiftung”) in *Heimatliteratur*, due to *Heimat*’s evocation of ideology and emotion, are often confused with revisionism and revanchism. A close reading of such literature, though, can help to distinguish between different types of *Heimatliteratur*, showing that not all imply revisionist desires, and to rehabilitate the term’s use in flight and expulsion literature.\(^{267}\) Pejorative reactions to *Heimatliteratur* in this context demonstrate in part distrust toward the term *Heimat*, because of its usage in National Socialist rhetoric, and also reflect weariness with regard to emotionality toward lost homes. *Heimat*, after all, evokes affective linkages and memories often in the vein of nostalgia.

Nostalgia and sentimentalization have been seen as key affective features of *Heimat* conceptualizations within the discourse of *Heimatliteratur*. This perception of *Heimat* has led toward its perception as a non-rational, less critical category – one that has, however, changed in recent years. According to Norbert Mecklenburg in his study of *Regionalliteratur* in his 1986 monograph, *Die grünen Inseln*, regional provincial spaces became a part of “nostalgischer Erinnerung” in the 19\(^{th}\) century during the period of industrial and economic development. Regional areas, as the spatial foil to expanding

\(^{266}\) Sacha, 85-90.
urban centers, connote in literature the image of an “utopische[m] Vor-Schein, illusionäre[m] Schein, nostalgischer Erinnerung, desillusionierendem Wirklichkeitsschock, mimetischer Annäherung.” Regional provincial spaces signify “Zurückgebliebenheit,” he explains.\(^{268}\) As the before mentioned historical examples in chapter one (e.g. usage in post-WWI and post-WWII mourning discourse and political movements) demonstrate, *Heimat* can be used toward regressive political ends as a means of gaining sympathies and support for ideologically driven goals. As such, nostalgic utterances of rural *Heimat* spaces and homes can appeal to affective attachments in the interest of swaying public opinion in favor of a, for example, revanchist discourse. However, this is not the only potential that either *Heimat* or nostalgia can pose.

In particular, spatial approaches to *Heimat* depictions in literature and film have demonstrated that *Heimat* presents multiple potentials. Mecklenburg points to the idea of multiple possibilities in his discussion of *Heimat* represented “nicht als etwas Auffindbares, sondern als etwas Herzustellendes.”\(^{269}\) Here, he refers to *Heimat* as a construction, not a static place, indicating a multiple potentiality. In her study of literature responding to memories of flight and expulsion, Eigler demonstrates through a spatial approach to the topic of *Heimat* the ways in which novels by selected German and Polish authors present dynamic, transnational manifestations of belonging, “engendering multidimensional notions of space.”\(^{270}\) By considering the intersection between local, national, and transnational realms within particular historical moments, authors can envision “alternatives to exclusionary notions of place,” reflecting “changing notions and

\(^{268}\) Mecklenburg, 8, 34.
\(^{269}\) Ibid., 40.
\(^{270}\) Eigler, 178.
connotations of Heimat.271 Literary return narratives can also participate in innovative constructions of *Heimat* in their reconsideration of the changed place (Demshuk refers to this dynamic as the “*Heimat Transformed*”). In the process, they can also reveal or reflect upon affective, emotional attachments. In his trilogy, Surminski constructs rural *Heimat* spaces and reveals the presence of nostalgic attachments through the narrated stories of “the little people” and communities similar to the one he left as a child. Nostalgia is intricately linked to childhood memories of home, and memories of the formerly German eastern *Heimat* often evoke nostalgic attachments.

Yet, despite the presence of emotion in this relationship and within his literature, sentimentality is downplayed in the descriptions marketing Surminski’s works as well as in book reviews thereof. The reception of Surminski’s novels reflects the perceived problems associated with nostalgia and affect when writing about homes in the former German east. Surminski’s first novel *Jokehnen*, reprinted for the 7th time in 2014, continues to be marketed in terms that reject the novel’s emotional ties, and as such neglect the affective relationships present in his work. The novel’s back cover, for example, describes the narrative as “unterkühlt und unsentimental, dennoch farbig und mitreißend.” It furthermore praises the novel’s description of the village idyll and its downfall as “ebenso objektiv wie aufwührend.” This description promotes the novel for its supposed authenticity and lack of sentimentality, despite its recognition of an idyll. This attitude is consistent with the novel’s initial reception in *Die Zeit* in 1974, which acclaims *Jokehnen* as: “ein erstaunlicher Erstlingsroman. Das liegt an der unsentimentalen Darstellung eines emotionsbeladenen Themas, an der Genauigkeit der

271 Ibid.
Sprache, der Schönheit der Bilder.”

An article released on his 80th birthday, additionally states that his work is not about “sentimentale Vertriebenenliteratur und nicht um Revanchismus … nicht um einen langen Abschied, sondern um eine lange Ankunft.”

The author, positioning himself in line with these comments, remarks: “Ich habe mein Buch [Jokehnen] dagegen bewusst aus der Perspektive eines Kindes verfasst, um einfach nur schildern zu können, was war und wie es war.”

These comments implicitly downgrade emotional, nostalgic attachments and position them alongside regression, in opposition to a forward-looking “Ankunft.” By marketing and promoting his work for its supposed lack of emotionality, the comments evidence a perception of what is appropriate when engaging with lost homes in the German east. These reviews overshadow the very real sentiments and nostalgia present in the novels and suggest that emotional attachment when coupled with Heimat in the context of German flight and expulsion is problematic and possibly suspicious. This can be seen as stemming from nationalistic uses of Heimat, appealing to individuals’ nostalgic sentiments and longings toward a national German homeland, and from postwar expellee political discourse, employing such desires in support of reclaiming the lost German east. In both cases, politicized nostalgia, instrumentalized toward political ends, does not do justice to the literally expressed nostalgia in Surminski’s narratives. His engagement with the past Heimat presents an inquiry into the collapse of his rural community and loss of its

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members, which includes his parents in Jokehnen. This is emotional, but neither devoid of critical thought nor supportive of revanchist redirections to claim a right to the lost home.

This inquiry into nostalgic sentiments and memories continues to be relevant within expellee discourse. Surminski’s recent comment on his own work as somehow “objective” can been seen as a strategic attempt to distance himself from the historical revanchist rhetoric as well as contemporary politicized engagements by organizations like the controversial Bund der Vertriebenen. In an interview, Surminski explains his rejection of the Bund der Vertriebenen’s invitation to support their Zentrum gegen Vertreibungen (proposed in the 1990s), which had been criticized for its decontextualized presentation and over emphasis of German suffering. Its 2010 exhibit, “Erzwungene Wege – Flucht und Vertreibung im Europa des 20. Jahrhunderts,” has been seen as projecting the impression that the expulsion of Germans was the most extreme and unjust example of forced migration in the 20th century. It is this type of discourse that Surminski has sought to evade. Highlighting emotional images of loss and suffering

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275 In his chapter, Karl Cordell discusses the history, contemporary status, activities, and controversy of expellee organizations like the Bund der Vertriebenen and the Landsmannschaften. See Karl Cordell, “Prisoners of the Past?: German Refugee Associations Today,” War and Displacement in the Twentieth Century, eds., Sandra Barkhof and Angela K. Smith (New York: Routledge, 2014), 247-268.

276 Arno Surminski, “Das Interview: 'Die Vertreibung hat mich gerettet',” Die Tageszeitung, interview by Frank Keil, Sept. 28, 2013, http://www.taz.de/!5058202/. The Zentrum gegen Vertreibung was a proposed establishment to provide information about the expulsion of ethnic Germans and their lost Heimat, but with a decontextualized focus that did not take the broader historical and European issues into account. For more, see Pawel Lutomski, “The Debate about a Center against Expulsions: An Unexpected Crisis in German-Polish Relations?” German Studies Review 27.3 (2004): 449-468.

exemplifies the use of a politically instrumentalized affect to gain sympathies. The *Bund der Vertriebenen* continues to employ emotionality in its victim discourse in its current traveling exhibit (initially began in 2012), “HeimatWEH – eine Trilogie,” organized in the sections: “Die Gerufenen – deutsches Leben in Mittel- und Osteuropa,” “Erzwungene Wege – Flucht und Vertreibung im Europa des 20. Jahrhunderts,” and “Angekommen – die Integration der Vertriebenen in Deutschland.” Based on the exhibit’s supporting text, this exhibit continues to project the centrality of German suffering and expulsion without a balanced inclusion of examples related to German perpetration. The first section, describing early German settlement in the east for example, neglects the often-violent situation that such settlement entailed (for instance in the well-known case of the Teutonic Knights in East Prussia). Furthermore, the Holocaust only makes up a small portion of the second section on European examples of forced migration in the 20th century, and stands in stark contrast to the third section exclusively devoted to German hardships resulting from postwar deportations. The title itself, “HeimatWEH,” already indicates the mood and direction of the exhibit, namely, the nostalgically connoted loss of home as collective suffering particularly for expelled Germans.²⁷⁸

It is understandable why Surminski would distance himself from this controversial organization. The *Bund der Vertriebenen* has been seen as inappropriately instrumentalizing suffering (even visually equating expellees to concentration camp victims, according to a *Süddeutsche Zeitung*’s article) and as presenting a suspicious “Heimweh-Gestus” in its exhibits.²⁷⁹ Surminski’s trilogy steers readers in a different

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²⁷⁹ Zekri, np.
direction by supporting a discourse of conciliation and multidirectional memory that neither positions one group’s suffering over another, nor tries to present German experiences of flight and expulsion as exceptional cases.\textsuperscript{280} The problematic privileging of German suffering stands in stark contrast to Surminski’s literary works, which instead attempt to contextualize German flight and expulsion within the history of National Socialism as well as then contemporary issues facing West Germany and Europe, particularly the Berlin Wall and divided Germanies (\textit{Polninnen}) as well as the meaning of this history within a European community (\textit{Grunowen}).

The continued controversy, vis-à-vis political expellee organizations and the problematic use of politicized nostalgia, sustains skepticism toward this emotion directed at former homes within the context of German forced migration and its literature. However, the lack of attention to nostalgia in Surminski’s works neglects a cornerstone of his East Prussian trilogy and thought. In these novels, he engages with and considers the emotional reality of nostalgia within memories of flight and expulsion and the lost home. Moreover, I argue that this nostalgia does not constitute a regressive fantasy, nor does it serve to express a violent reclaiming of what was lost. It serves a creative function, prompting members of the first generation (characters in the novels and himself as the authors of these tales) to share their memories in stories and mourn that which was lost. The novels also critically investigate the affect of nostalgia itself. Rather than fixate on lost territories per se, as was the case within conservative expellee organizations, his characters direct their nostalgic utterances toward people and communities no longer present. Similar to Demshuk’s argument that expellees came to the realization that their

\textsuperscript{280} For a discussion of Rothberg’s multidirectional memory see chapter two.
remembered *Heimat* only existed in memory, Surminski’s works highlight the remembered past and place as irreversibly lost, existing only in memory and narrative.\(^\text{281}\)

II. *JOKEHNEN*: RETURN TO THE CHILDHOOD IN A HISTORICAL NOVEL WITH AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL TIES

Arno Surminski was born in 1934 in Jäglack, East Prussia (today’s Jegławki, Poland close to the Kaliningrad border) to a family in the clothes tailoring business.

When he was a child, he experienced village life under National Socialist rule and states his involvement in the movement as a *Pimpf* – a section of the Hitler Youth for young children – as a part of his childhood schooling.\(^\text{282}\) After the war when he was eleven, his parents were deported to the Soviet Union (presumably to a labor camp, though this is unspecified), and he was transported to West Germany along with other villagers. One family from the village adopted him after settling in Schleswig-Holstein. As an adult, he worked in law, as a forester in Canada, and in the insurance industry before becoming a journalist and then full-time author after the success of his bestselling debut novel, *Jokehnen*.\(^\text{283}\) In 2009, he received the Andreas-Gryphius-Preis, which recognizes authors working on topics related to formerly German territories in the east as well as understanding between its past and current inhabitants.\(^\text{284}\)

\(^{281}\) For more on the relationship between political expellee organizations and the ways in which expellees themselves felt/responded, see Demshuk, *The Lost German East*. Here, p. 13.


\(^{283}\) Herman Ernst Beyersdorf, *Erinnerte Heimat. Ostpreußen im literarischen Werk von Arno Surminski* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1999), 5.

In his novel *Jokehnen*, he reflects upon many of his childhood experiences in Jäglack, the end of the war, and of his relocation to West Germany. This historical novel draws upon many of his own memories of the place and its people, and is described as his most autobiographical work. In 2003 and again in 2015, Surminski released a *Heimatbuch* titled, *Jokehnen oder ein Dorf in Ostpreußen* with the subtitle Jäglack – *Jokehnen – Polninen – Jeglawki*. This subtitle confirms the linkage between the place of his childhood and the setting of the first two novels in his trilogy, signaling possible autobiographical ties. While this link is additionally enhanced by autobiographical similarities between the author and protagonist Hermann Steputat, a young boy also born in 1934 to a master tailor in the village, it is not understood as directly autobiographical and documentary of the author’s own life. An early scene in the novel draws our attention to the autobiographical dimension, but moves beyond it through a discussion of names. After Hermann is born at the beginning of the novel, his parents, debating what name to give him, mention both the popularity of the name “Arno,” because of the famous East Prussian-born poet Arno Holz (1863-1929), and “Hermann” after the East Prussian dramatist and novelist Hermann Sudermann (1857-1928). These two authors, representatives of East Prussian culture, separate the extradiegetic author from the protagonist via their first names – the protagonist is named Hermann instead of Arno. This scene indicates to readers that, despite some autobiographical overlap and basis on the author’s own experiences, the novel is more aptly historical fiction and a work of

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critical *Heimatliteratur* within which he explores the village’s role in global events of the 1930s and 40s as well as their feelings of nostalgia vis-à-vis return.

The mentioning of the authors Arno Holz and Hermann Sudermann in this instance is also suggestive of the author’s direction in the novel, which complicates the categorization of *Jokehnen* only as a *Heimatroman* as it is often received. Holz and Sudermann are both proponents of literary Naturalism, who seek to use art as a means of displaying reality – to see, as Holz explains, “ein Stück Leben wie durch ein Fenster.”

287 Holz is particularly well known for his formulation of “Kunst = Natur - x,” which summarizes his concept of Naturalist literature. Ideally, the author limits “x,” the possible artistic and subjective “distortions,” in favor of creating art that mirrors nature. 288 Sudermann, on the other hand, is known for using his memories of youth and home (esp. his Prussian-Lithuanian surroundings) as the impetus for his writing. 289 Surminski’s nod to this literary tradition in his *Jokehnen* shares insight into his concept of writing and aim in the book. Although Surminski uses his childhood *Heimat* as the setting of *Jokehnen*, he also reflects various aspects of literary naturalism by depicting a particular social milieu (agricultural villagers), their living space and language, way of life, and thinking in the 1930s and 40s. He attempts to remove unreflected sentimental descriptions of his past home to provide a sobering view of how the villagers experienced National Socialism, the war, and postwar deportations as a way of more critically investigating the village’s

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288 Ibid., 348.
mentality and postwar fate within its historical context. However, his memories of this distanced past and of childhood from which the novel is constructed are not free of nostalgic affinities. The novel can neither be seen solely in terms of objectivity for which it is praised, nor for portraying a longing and “Nostalgie nach einer friedlichen, idyllischen, ‘guten, alten Zeit,’ die keinen Ort kennt,” as Helbig claims.\(^{290}\) Jokehnen more aptly reflects Elizabeth Boa and Rachel Palfreyman’s assessment of *Heimat* representations within which “Heimat and Naturalism often mix ambiguously in an interplay of utopian ideal and harsh reality.”\(^{291}\) In his rendering of his childhood *Heimat*, he presents an ideal of community and kinship that disintegrated along with the village itself in 1945 without depicting an uncritical, peaceful idyll that was suddenly disrupted by war.

Surminski disrupts idyllic images of *Heimat* on numerous occasions: his thematization of the fate of the “betrogene Kinder Nazi-Deutschlands,”\(^{292}\) contemplation of the political and social circumstances leading to the village’s destruction,\(^{293}\) and problematic gender and class relationships within the village. This is especially emphasized early in the novel with the maltreatment of a young Catholic woman from Ermland, who is sexually assaulted and impregnated by the village’s de facto leader, the “Major” (called as such for his leadership role during the First World War). As a result, she commits suicide, and the reader is left with the problematic lack of consequences against him. His actions are described as typical: “So war der Lauf der Welt in

\(^{290}\) Helbig, 134.
\(^{291}\) Boa and Palfreyman, 25.
\(^{292}\) Schneiß, 181.
\(^{293}\) Beyersdorf, 192.
Jokehnen,” problematizing the perception of the village as idyllic. This instance couples problematic gender relationships with a patriarchal class structure that allows wealthy men, i.e. the Major who is the landowner of Jokehnen, to commit illicit acts without penalty. It also indicates the passive, near apathetic attitudes of the villagers, who think they maintain their innocence by minding their own business. This problematized mentality continues in Surminski’s depiction of the village’s transformation within a new era and political moment under National Socialism. Recalling critical Heimat literature, which Elizabeth Boa and Rachel Palfreyman describe as setting “regional values against the centralizing tendencies of an aggressive nationalism” and treating the “Heimat theme with critical skepticism,” Jokehnen demonstrates a criticism against the social patriarchy and its trajectory in the village.

Unlike decontextualized accounts of German flight and expulsion in literature, Jokehnen spends time contemplating the village’s role in global history during the 1930s and 40s. Surminski describes the villagers without question as patriotic: “Deutschnational und hindenburgtreu waren sie alle bis auf die Knochen,” supportive of Großdeutschland: “für ein großes Deutschland, groß genug, um die Kosaken von Königsberg fernzuhalten. Hier im Grenzland kommt es nur darauf an, ein guter Deutscher zu sein,” and celebratory of East Prussia’s supposed return to Germany: “Sieg! Ostpreußen kehrte heim ins Reich, vom Adolfche heimgeholt.” In his portrayal of the village and shifting political discourse, Beyersdorf argues that Surminski clearly shows a naïve acceptance of and trust

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294 Surminski, Jokehnen, 36, 41.
295 Boa and Palfreyman, 8.
296 Surminski, Jokehnen, 20-21, 69.
in a criminal ideology.\textsuperscript{297} Indeed, Surminski describes “Die Verfärbung Jokehnens von schwarz-weiß-rot in braun,” the rallies and political processions, replacement of their loyalty from Hindenburg to Hitler, institutionalization of new political symbols of the Third Reich, and targeting of Jews through the murder of the textile merchant Samuel Mathern.\textsuperscript{298} Aside from two outspoken supporters of National Socialism, the Melker August and Gutsinspektor Blonski, the villagers are all too passive and uncritical of the changes. Only after the war, prior to their flight, do some of the villagers begin to question their predicament, and feeling betrayed they realize: “‘Ich glaube, die haben uns angeschissen,’ sagte Steputat. ‘Die ganze Zeit über angeschissen,’”\textsuperscript{299} but do not feel guilt or responsibility for the events: “er [Steputat] fühlte keine Schuld. Er hatte niemand etwas getan. In diesem Glauben marschierte Karl Steputat von Jokehnen nach Sibirien.”\textsuperscript{300} Karl Steputat, Hermann’s father and the mayor of Jokehnen, represents the larger attitudes of the villagers in the novel, and time and again reflects passivity toward the changes occurring around him. Surminski includes this to highlight the vector’s unquestioning obedience and acceptance of National Socialism without consideration of their own actions as problematic.

Although the latter third of the novel focuses on the flight and expulsion of Jokehnen’s surviving villagers to postwar Germany, it does not exclusively focus on German suffering. All present in the village, regardless of class, nationality, or political inclination, were targets of violence during the phase of the “wilde Vertreibungen” at the

\textsuperscript{297} Beyersdorf, 35.
\textsuperscript{298} Surminski, \textit{Jokehnen}, 22-26, 42, 44, 52, 104-105, 117-124, 495
\textsuperscript{299} Ibid., 316.
\textsuperscript{300} Ibid., 381.
The flight of the villagers levels the village’s class hierarchy: “‘Die feinen Leute sind auch nichts Besseres!’ schrie eine Frauenstimme aus der Dunkelheit,” as the villagers, rounded up by Red Army soldiers during their flight, await their fate. Symbolic of their lost power, the wealthier villagers are stripped, not only of their material valuables, but also of their horses. As Hermann learned as a young child, the world is divided between those who ride on horses and those who walk on the earth: “Das Pferd ist nicht nur ein Mittel zur Fortbewegung, sondern zur Erhöhung.” The Red Army troops are the only ones riding horses, up high enough to look down on everyone else at the end of the war, which shows the transfer of power. In terms of nationality, ethnicity, and politics, not only Germans and supporters of National Socialism were targeted. At different instances, Heinrich finds the Masurian laborer Heinrich, the only communist in Jokehnen, and two French prisoners of war shot, presumably by Red Army soldiers. “Das ist alles Zufall,” Hermann thinks, “…da zählt nicht, was einer gedacht oder getan hat.” These examples of suffering by members of different classes, nationalities, ethnicities, and political inclination evoke a multidirectional memory discourse by not centering only on or privileging instances of German suffering.

This memory discourse is extended to the humanization of the Russian soldiers, particularly in their treatment of Hermann and his friend Peter. One soldier in particular, Iwan, takes a particular liking to the boys, who remind him of his own two sons. We find

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301 “Wilde Vertreibungen” refers to the time up until after the Potsdam Conference. Beer, Flucht und Vertreibung, 58, 76.
302 Surminski, Jokehnen, 342.
303 Ibid., 33.
304 Ibid., 400.
305 Ibid., 349, 364, 371.
306 Ibid., 371.
out that he is not in contact with his children and not sure if they are even still alive.\textsuperscript{307}

Prior to their expulsion, Iwan offers to adopt Hermann, but his friend Peter convinces Hermann to stay with him. Iwan gives him a handful of money before he goes, which ends up saving Peter and Hermann from starvation after they arrive in postwar Germany.\textsuperscript{308} In this way, the novel complicates absolute understandings of who is “good and bad” / “friend and enemy” and instead highlights the complexity and messiness of war. In his humanizing depictions and inclusion of multiple suffering narratives, Surminski situates flight, expulsion, and German suffering within a larger European frame that neither isolates the events from historical context nor portrays German victimization as an exceptional case. This tendency is exemplified in a short passage, when Hermann finds the remnants of a map of Europe in the old school house before their deportation: “Europa war zerfetzt und zerrissen, war einfach hin. Da fehlten ganze Stücke, da waren Länder untergegangen und Meere herausgerissen. Sie galt nicht mehr, die alte Geographie der Jokehner Dorfschule.”\textsuperscript{309} While East Prussia and Jokehnen clearly belong to the “missing pieces” that no longer exist as such, it is Europe as a whole that lies in shambles.

This critical inquiry into the village’s experiences, their location within global history, and criticism of passive attitudes appears more in line with a type of unsentimental literary naturalism, but the novel also engages another dimension of the villager’s experience that is highly emotional, namely, their return to Jokehnen. Return is a hope that the villagers carry throughout their flight experience, and they express their

\textsuperscript{307} Ibid., 413, 441. \\
\textsuperscript{308} Ibid., 448, 450-451, 473. \\
\textsuperscript{309} Ibid., 370.
expectation to return on numerous occasions as if it were a certainty.\(^{310}\) One of the elderly characters, for example, claims: "‘Nun geht es bald zurück,’ meinte die alte Markowsche zuversichtlich, ‘1914 war es auch zurückgegangen’."\(^{311}\) The novel repeats this sentiment at various moments with reoccurring statements, such as “nur nach Hause” and desires to go “nach Hause.”\(^{312}\) Many nostalgically recall their homes, fields, animals, and possessions that they left behind: “Nur nach Hause. Die Heizung reparieren. Ein bißchen nähen. Nach der Schneeschmelze den Garten umgraben. … Nach Hause.”\(^{313}\) The simple statement, “nach Hause,” conveying the hope of the villagers, is tragic to the reader aware of the impending events. This repeated hope carries a major significance for the villagers and establishes a means for their survival. They mention the return home to keep the spirits of others as well as their own alive. During a bleak moment of their flight when Soviet soldiers round them up to inspect them and their possessions, Karl Steputat tries to spread hope by exclaiming: "‘Erst mal nach Hause’, sagte er laut. Er sagte es so, als sei es gewiß, daß zu Hause alles besser werden würde … Ja, es würde irgendwie weitergehen. Es wird Frieden geben. Die Menschen werden zurückkehren zu ihren Häusern.”\(^{314}\) In these instances, the novel contemplates the meaning of return and home to those fleeing. The return home signifies a return to normalcy and peace, which was especially important to maintain hope as they confronted hardships during their westward trek.

\(^{310}\) Ibis., 258, 321, 324, 336, 345, 346, 347, 352, 356-357, 371.
\(^{311}\) Ibid., 324.
\(^{312}\) Cf. for example Ibid., 336.
\(^{313}\) Ibid.
\(^{314}\) Ibid., 345-346.
Rather than maintaining and upholding this nostalgic hope to return, the novel asks why return was so important: Why wander all the way back to a place that no longer exists, it asks. “Sind es die alten Bilder, die die Menschen zurücktreiben? Die alten Erinnerungen, die sich von der Wirklichkeit gelöst haben und ihr Eigendasein führen: Pferde in der Schwemme, die Vesperglocke vom Gut, Sommerabende am Teich, schwankende Erntewagen.”  

He, the author questions the motivations to return and the nostalgia involved in this endeavor. At the same time, though, Surminski reveals some of his own nostalgic attachments in the descriptions of old memories. He recognizes the reality of nostalgic affect and its powerful potential as a motive, but disrupts the possibility of becoming carried away in a clear statement: “Aber das alte Leben ging nicht weiter.”  

Indeed, the surviving villagers do return to Jokehnen after their flight and are greeted by an empty place that was soon marked with a Cyrillic town sign indicating the final transfer of the village to the Soviet Union.  

Even within view of his old home, Hermann also remarks on the fact that he feels Heimweh: “Deshalb hatte ihn auch plötzlich das Heimweh überfallen, als er im Gras lag und über den Teich zu seinem Haus blickte. Heimweh, und nur einen Kilometer von zu Hause entfernt.”  

Although his home and the landscape looked the same from a distance, he knows that it is not longer the place he knew. Here, his homesickness has everything to do with the lost people, especially his now deported parents, and less with the place itself. After realizing that his parents would not return, he decides to join his friend Peter and other villagers to migrate to postwar Germany. After arriving, though, the nostalgic sentiments toward

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315 Ibid., 390.
316 Ibid., 390.
317 Ibid., 359, 373.
318 Ibid., 398.
village life do not subside. He fantasizes about a possible new home in a village in Schleswig-Holstein or Thuringia – the “grüne Herz Deutschlands” as Hermann is told – with his friend Peter: “‘Hinter dem Wald ist ein Dorf,’ phantasierte Peter im Fieber. ‘Richtig mit Bauernhöfen.’ ‘Da gehen wir hin, wenn du wieder laufen kannst,’ sagte Hermann. ‘In dem Dorf kriegen wir alles,’ flüsterte Peter.”

They nostalgically remember their village and how well provided for they were there. Not even during the height of war did the villagers suffer food shortages due to their agricultural self-sufficiency. The village is a safe space to which the boys longingly seek to return – not necessarily Jokehnen per se, but a place with the same community and atmosphere that they had lost. The longing to return is maintained until the end of the novel, since they are uncertain where they will end up exactly: “ins grüne Herz Deutschlands, wo die Berge voller Apfelbäume sind? Oder nach Schleswig-Holstein. Vielleicht auch zurück nach Jokehnen.” However, his friend Peter dies of typhus before they make it to their new settlement, indicating the end of their East Prussian village once more, and encouraging Hermann to realize the impossibility of return: “Nein, weiter. Nach Thüringen oder Schleswig-Holstein,” he thinks.

In terms of nostalgia, Jokehnen demonstrates the real nostalgic attachments to the East Prussian village that the villagers felt, but it does not purport a revanchist message. Instead, it shows the impossibility of returning to what was lost. The novel investigates the reason behind this loss and how the experiences of the villagers fit into global, European history. It contextualizes their loss within the turbulent European history of the

319 Ibid., 491.
320 Ibid., 492.
321 Ibid., 493.
twentieth century and National Socialism, indicating that German suffering and loss is one narrative among others. While not proposing or evoking nostalgia in the interest of supporting expellee politics, Surminski shows us the reality of nostalgia’s presence. *Jokehnen* is an opportunity to recognize the reality of nostalgic affinities and its function to provide hope while also providing an outlet for mourning for that which was lost, especially for people and community.

III. **POLNINKEN: RETURN JOURNEYS TO PARENTAL PASTS IN CONTEMPORARY POLAND AND DIVIDED GERMANY**

The second novel of Surminski’s Trilogy, *Polninken*, shifts focus to engagements with former East Prussian homes within the context of divided Germany in 1980. During this time, return visits to the East were already well underway with many companies promoting *Heimwehtourismus* on the market. So-called *Wiederbegegnungsliteratur* developed alongside such travels, often discussing travel impressions, descriptions of former homes in their contemporary form, and picture collections. As Albrecht Lehmann explains, this literature had a marketing function, at times encouraging people to go visit the places themselves, but also prompting understanding and conciliation through contact with contemporary inhabitants and by seeing how places had changed. In many cases, experiences of past homes in their contemporary form encouraged visitors to identify more closely with the new homes created in West Germany. The changed place, Demshuk’s “Heimat Transformed,” no longer fit the “Heimat of memory,” causing memory to become more idealized and the actual contemporary place “all the more

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322 Lehmann, 144.
323 Ibid., 144, 151.
324 Ibid., 119.
wretched.” According to Demshuk, homesick tourists felt alienated and experienced Boym’s observation that returnees no longer felt at home but were unsettled in the places they used to call home. Witnessed changes, however, at times also created disappointments and even resentments that spurred anger and blame. Perceived disorderliness and denigrations of past villages and homes were often attributed to hurtful stereotypes about eastern inhabitants. Surminski explores this uncanny experience and how nostalgic memories at times fed prejudice, but in other cases also encouraged solidarity and positive exchanges in Polninen, through depictions of the Erlebnisgeneration. However, he does so through the lens of an observant second-generation visitor investigating his parental past to critically explore nostalgia’s reality and function. This turn to the second generation additionally prompts readers to consider the meaning of German flight, expulsion, loss of home, and nostalgia to future generations within the context of contemporary situations – in this case divided Germany.

How does this past shed light on the protagonist’s present moment?

Polninen tells the story of Ingo Majewski, a young man from Lübeck, who travels to his parents’ old village now located in Poland along the border to Kaliningrad. Prior to his visit, Ingo is largely disinterested in his familial past and apathetic toward contemporary political situations. While crossing the border into the GDR at the beginning of the novel, he for example wonders why he is going east – the place and its history are “alles Schnee von gestern” and not his own history, since his history began in

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325 Demshuk, The Lost German East, 22.
326 Ibid., 230.
327 Lehmann, 110.
1952 in Lübeck. He furthermore thinks of his journey east as a “Verlegenheitsreise, weil ihm nichts Besseres eingefallen war.” Indeed, his mother put him up to it. He would rather spend his time in Spain with his girlfriend at the beach. This indifferent attitude presents itself vis-à-vis East Germany as well: “Ihm bedeutete die Grenze nichts. Als er geboren wurde, war die schon da, was hinter ihr lag, ging ihn nichts an, er hatte keine Verwandten drüben und keine Erinnerungen.” This apathetic, unattached attitude to contemporary political situations eerily reminds of that problematized in Jokehnen through the villagers during the 1930s and 40s. As the novel progresses, Surminski reverses this attitude by confronting Ingo with two main figures, Irene – a teacher in the GDR also visiting Polninken out of curiosity for her family’s history, with whom he falls in love, and Kasimir – an older Polish man who has lived in the village since 1939 when he arrived as a forced laborer. These two figures as well as political conflicts thematized in the novel, such as the Solidarność strikes at the shipyard in Gdańsk and direct confrontation with East-West German border relationships preventing Ingo from seeing Irene, confront Ingo’s initial apathetic worldviews and politically distanced outlook on life. They especially encourage Ingo to see his parents’ past and his present as a part of a longer European history, and himself as an actor in it. Nostalgia figures in as a particularly strong affective dimension experienced by both German and Polish figures that he encounters. On the one hand, nostalgia drives the alienation toward the “Heimat Transformed,” much in the way that Demshuk discusses, but on the other hand also spurs

329 Ibid., 8, 13.
330 Ibid., 7.
331 Ibid., 98, 116, 211, 244.
many positive engagements in the interest of improving interactions between individuals in contemporary Europe. In *Polninken*, a more superficial nostalgia for the place is juxtaposed with nostalgia for the people lost, the latter of which results in empathy and positive action in a humanistic vein.

A number of characters in the novel reflect a superficial nostalgia for past places that leads to prejudicial attitudes and utterances directed at contemporary inhabitants. At the beginning of the novel, Ingo’s mother presents this problematized response. Not wanting to revisit her old home personally, she urges him to visit in her stead to satisfy her curiosity. She recalls the old village in clear nostalgic tones:

*dort steht der alte Kruschkenbaum … Über das Katzenkopfpflaster klabasterten früher immer die Pferdewagen … Da hinten im Poggenteich haben wir uns so schön die Schlorren vollgeschöpf … Zu unserer Zeit gab es noch ein Schwannennest … Na, und erst die Störche, Ingo! … Sei bloß nicht enttäuscht, wenn du die vielen alten Häuser siehst und es nicht ganz sauber ist.***

It is this type of nostalgia, which superficially idealizes the landscape, that Surminski sheds critical light on through her son. He doesn’t understand her emotional attachment: “Gewiß war es nicht so, wie die Mutter meinte,” he thinks.*** At the campground in Poland where Ingo stays during his visit, he meets two couples (two brothers and their wives) originally from the region, but now residing in East and West Germany respectively. They explain that their old village is the only place where they can see each other on account that one of the brothers is in the East German army and is prohibited from western contact. Together, they reminisce about the past and reiterate Ingo’s mother’s attitude, but in more racist terms, that “diese[r] Polnische[n] Wirtschaft” is to

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332 Ibid., 13-15.
333 Ibid., 13.
blame for shortages, in their case a lack of beer. Later, they lament a perceived unkemptness of the landscape and fields, but explain: “Bloß die Natur, die können sie nicht verändern. … nur wegen der Landschaft lohnt es sich noch hinzufahren. Die Landschaft kriegen sie nicht kaputt.” Ingo, not interested in their attempts to connect with him, excuses himself from their offer to show him pictures “von früher.”

Throughout the visit, the four, who do not seem to ever leave the campground, try to tell an unconcerned Ingo stories of what the place used to be like. These glimpses into their memories only contain images of the landscape: “Damals Schloß, heute Ruine. Damals blühender Acker, heute Distelfeld. Damals stattliche Bäume, heute Kahlschlag,” and like his mother, refer to places possessively: “unser Dorf” or later in the novel, “unser Königsberg.” In every case, they attribute hardship and change to hurtful stereotypes. Surminski displays this type of damaging, decontextualized nostalgia of the landscape, not located within a particular historical time (only “damals”), as leading to prejudicial statements and attitudes. Ingo’s discomfort and dissociation with the two couples highlights them as problematic. He instead develops friendships with a local man and a woman from the GDR, who confront his apathetic attitude toward the past and present by helping him see himself as a part of them.

A different type of nostalgia, directed toward memories of past people, emerges through Ingo’s exchanges with Kasimir. At first, Kasimir presents a nostalgic memory discourse similar to the ones that Ingo had encountered before: “Alle großen Bäume, die

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334 Ibid., 29-33.
335 Ibid., 60.
336 Ibid., 60.
337 Ibid., 29, 40, 60, 64, 81.
338 E.g., Ibid., 98, 117.
du siehst, sind gepflanzt in deutscher Zeit. Die Allee, die du gekommen bist, die Straße mit den vielen Linden für Kasimirs Bienen, ist aus deutscher Zeit. Die Pflastersteine, die Häuser und Friedhöfe, alles deutsche Zeit . . .”

However, then tells him a story about the Straßenwärter Majewski (Ingo’s grandfather), who was in charge of maintaining the road, which sparks Ingo’s interest. Kasimir’s fond memories of the past are directed toward the people who used to live there, which is interesting given Kasimir’s own forced migration experience. He initially came to Polnínken as a laborer in 1939, but clarifies that he worked as one amongst the farmers in the village and was able to live freely – not even the Russian prisoners of war were treated poorly in the village he explains. After 1945, he chose to stay in Polnínken, because his home village had become Russian. Kasimir recalls the village, which had been his home for decades, and its community from his past with empathy and dignity. In the novel, he represents a humanistic ideal: “Pole, Russe, Deutscher, was ist da viel zu sagen? Hauptsache, man ist Mensch.” With great interest, he tells Ingo and Irene stories about the village’s past, “aus deutscher … polnischer … und russischer Zeit.”

His references to the time in terms of “national time” signifies the place’s progression and transfer and is used to contextualize the place within particular historical moments. Kasimir, showing Ingo and Irene around the village and telling stories about events, helps them both uncover their families’ pasts. Not only did he also collect and save many German books that people left behind, but he found a diary written by the village’s teacher between 1888 and February 1947.

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339 Ibid., 73.
340 Ibid., 73.
341 Ibid., 92-93, 163.
342 Ibid., 92-93.
343 Ibid., 57.
the diary to Ingo, Kasimir states: “Einige werden nur herauslesen, was sie gern lesen möchten. Aber du bist jung, du kannst lesen wie in einem Geschichtsbuch und daraus lernen.” Kasimir puts faith in the next generation to improve relationships and learn from individual historical experiences, but Ingo is not yet ready to accept this responsibility and see himself as affected by historical and political events. This changes when he experiences traces of his family’s past in the village first-hand and begins to imaginatively construe their lives and day-to-day interactions. His imaginations of his family members in the village evoke a nostalgia directed toward the people lost.

A turning point occurs in the schoolhouse when Ingo sees his father’s name with the year 1920 carved into a wooden windowsill. At this point, Ingo begins to imagine his father, the potential experiences that he had in the village, and even what his own life could have been like had they stayed. As Kasimir narrates his recollection of events, Ingo tries to imagine and picture his father and grandfather. While earlier he comments that the landscape is “zu schweigsam,” he now creatively constructs imagined snippets of his family. He is able to connect with his family’s past through Kasimir and actual material remnants still present. After his encounter at the schoolhouse, he has a dream of his father for the first time since his passing ten years ago: “Warum überfiel ihn [Ingo] das alles hier, wo er es am wenigsten erwartet hatte?” Hesitantly, but as if compelled to do so, he drives to his grandfather’s old house in the middle of night, and has a vivid sensory imagination. “Was hast du hier zu suchen, Ingo Majewski,” he thinks at first, but then imagines his grandfather in minute, mundane details smoking a pipe that he can

344 Ibid., 59.
345 Ibid., 71-72.
346 Ibid., 46.
347 Ibid., 85.
suddenly smell: “Es roch nach Tabak aus Großvaters Pfeife. … In schlechten Zeiten streckte er ihn mit trockenen Kleeblüten, in guten Zeiten genehmigte er sich zum Sonntag den teuren Überseetabak aus Bremen.”348 The past comes alive to Ingo now wherever he goes in the village as he imagines the experiences and activities of his family who once lived there.

Kasimir’s stories of places and people help Ingo gain proximity to his family’s past, particularly through his own imagination resulting in an affective experience. Though not nostalgic for what was, since he did not experience the events personally, he does project nostalgia for what could have been – for that which he constructs imaginatively. It is a type of “postmemorial nostalgia” (to borrow Marianna Hirsch’s concept of postmemory) – a nostalgia that the “generation after” can have to a place and time of the generation that came before.349 Hirsch’s concept of postmemory describes the ways in which members of the second generation recall parental experiences “by means of stories, images, and behaviors . . . these experiences were transmitted to them [the second generation] so deeply and affectively as to seem to constitute memories in their own right.”350 “Postmemory’s connection to the past,” Hirsch explains, “is thus actually mediated not by recall but by imaginative investment, projection, and creation.”351 The affective transmission of postmemory in Hirsch concept refers to traumatic experiences, but in Surminski’s novel appears connected to nostalgic attachments as well. According to Kristin Kopp and Joanna Niżyńska, postmemory can contribute to a “culture of

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348 Ibid., 99-100.
350 Ibid.
351 Ibid.
reconciliation” but left unreflected can also “lead to violence.”

352 “Fictional reconstructions,” they argue, “are one of the ways in which the individual and the collective can work through the traumatic legacy and enter the realm of self-reflection.” The processing of nostalgic attachments within the context of German forced migration appears as equally pressing. In Polninen, Ingo’s postmemorial nostalgia is a reflected form that he acquires through imaginations derived from Kasimir’s stories. In other words, Kasimir’s storytelling enables Ingo a connection to the past that, in his sensory construction of projected past events, results in an affective nostalgic engagement. In particular, Ingo revels a sentimental longing for his father, who has already passed away, and for his grandfather, whom he never knew. It leads him to picture sensory-laden images of the past and find “Berührungspunkte” in the former parental home: how his parents met, the lively multiculturalism of the village, the everyday realities of life in a small village without access to modern medicine, the arrival of the train, the work his grandfather did to maintain the roads – ordinary, everyday activities. 353 “Die Landschaft hat uns verzaubert,” sagte Ingo, . . . ‘Nie habe ich mich für Geschichte interessiert, aber hier geht sie mir plötzlich nahe’. 354 The sensory imaginations of the place and community enliven the past.

While nostalgic utterances of the first kind, focused on decontextualized memories of the landscape “damals,” lead to hateful attitudes toward contemporary inhabitants in the novel, the nostalgic sentiments offered by Kasimir and Ingo create

353 Surminski, Polninen, 115. Also cf. 102-103, 105, 136, 143.
354 Ibid., 136.
empathy and understanding. Kasimir’s fond memories help him share the village’s history with Ingo and Irene, and Ingo’s nostalgic postmemorial imaginations lead him to connect with his family’s past. Through his personal experience and narratives, Kasimir also reminds readers of Polish experiences after the war. He too lost his home and family and recalls: “Nein, es ist den Polen, die von Osten kamen, nicht besser gegangen als den Deutschen, die den Osten verließen.” Along with Poles, he also remembers Ukrainians, Lithuanians, and Belarusians, who arrived to resettle Polninken and not in every case willingly: “nicht weil sie es gern wollten, sondern weil man sie geschickt hat.” Many of them also lived in constant uncertainty and fear for their security and well-being.\(^{355}\) Here, Kasimir reminds of the many experiences of forced migration in the twentieth-century, evoking a multidirectional memory discourse. However, the novel’s temporal location in 1980 prompts additional questions regarding the meaning of this history in the context of divided Germany.

The star-crossed love story between Ingo and Irene, which largely reflects a Romeo and Juliet tale, adds a further obstacle. As Helbig argues, the “Graben der DDR-Ideologie” is much too deep and prevents them from coming together.\(^{356}\) Throughout the novel, Irene maintains that she wants to avoid political topics in their conversations. Later in a letter to Ingo, though, she changes her position from a convinced supporter of GDR ideology, which she in part maintained because of her teaching profession, to adopt a less rigid stance: “Wir wollen einfach nur Menschen sein, keine Westdeutschen, keine Ostdeutschen, keine Polen, keine Russen, einfach nur Menschen. Wir wollen auch keine Kommunisten sein, keine Kapitalisten, keine Sozialisten oder Nationalisten, nur einfache

\(^{355}\) Ibid., 219-220.

\(^{356}\) Helbig, 135.
Menschen . . .”\textsuperscript{357} This quote reveals a humanistic (and perhaps naïve) desire that wishes for an escape of rigid national divisions. As Beyersdorf explains, the two refer to the region of their families’ old village as paradise, because there, it was possible for two people from two ideologically opposed states to meet and fall in love.\textsuperscript{358} Their story reflects the hardship of strict division during the time and is coupled with stories of perilous border crossings. After Ingo returns to Lübeck, he begins to take interest in the politics and current events surrounding the East-West border. He especially takes notice of flight attempts presented in the news. Even though they had always been there, he thinks: “Plötzlich war alles anders, jagten ihm solche Nachrichten einen Schrecken ein.”\textsuperscript{359} In the later portion of the novel, a few inserted news reports of flight attempts tell of the current dangerous border situation – in two out of three cases mentioned only one was successful with the other two ending in injury or death.\textsuperscript{360} Ingo, interested in learning more, visits an archive where he finds out that since 1961 at the inner German border 176 people lost their lives, 72 of which at the Berlin Wall.\textsuperscript{361} The inclusion of this history demonstrates the continuation of flight in Europe long after the Second World War and borders as a continued space of anxiety, conflict, and violence: “In ganz Europa erhöht sich der Pulsschlag der Menschen, wenn sie sich Grenzen nähern, und bei den Grenzen nach Osten steigt der Blutdruck gewaltig an.”\textsuperscript{362} This idea is enhanced through the novel’s ending when Ingo finds out that Irene, shot during a westward flight attempt to be with him, dies along with their unborn child. His loss prevents him from moving forward.

\textsuperscript{357} Surminski, \textit{Polninken}, 320.
\textsuperscript{358} Beyersdorf, 61.
\textsuperscript{359} Surminski, \textit{Polninken}, 312.
\textsuperscript{360} Ibid., 312, 320, 329.
\textsuperscript{361} Ibid., 323.
\textsuperscript{362} Ibid., 329.
at the end of the novel: “Er brachte es nicht mehr fertig vorwärtszugehen … Also rückwärts, Schritt für Schritt und sehr langsam.” The move backward reflects the political situation of strict nation-state border divisions, robbing Ingo and Irene of their personal happiness and union, as regressive and preventing society from moving forward. The rural village, described as an idyllic space to which Ingo longingly seeks to return – described as a “paradise” – alternatively, represents an ideal for which to strive.

The novel evokes the past village and its community as one where the various people of Europe can meet – East and West Germans, like Ingo and Irene as well as the two brothers, but also other groups, such as Poles and Russians. Kasimir becomes a father figure to Ingo and refers to Ingo and Irene as “seinen Kindern” at the end of their visit, revealing the establishment of a new multicultural “family.” Their return visit abroad within the context of divided Germany encourages considerations of the future of Europe, highlighting the violence that continues to result from the (re)establishment of national borders. Ingo’s nostalgic sentiment, revealed in his imaginative constructions of the village, past family members, and community, on the other hand, leads him to take a critical interest in the past and his present day situation.

IV. GRUNOWEN: RETURN AND AFFECTIVE RECALL – THE ERLEBNISGENERATION’S DIVERSE ATTACHMENTS TO FORMER HOMES

Surminski’s third novel of the East Prussian trilogy, Grunowen, centers on a return journey undertaken by two members of the Erlebnisgeneration, who experienced the war and later loss of home and family. This novel, in particular, juxtaposes two

363 Ibid., 368.
364 Ibid., 192, 233.
possibilities of nostalgia expressed by the first generation – a reluctant nostalgia burdened by guilt and an openly displayed nostalgia commemorating the former home. Since he experienced the events as a child, Surminski imagines the affective attachments and affective practices of his parents’ generation in Grunowen and especially explores the relationship between guilt and nostalgia by those who experienced the war and forced migration as adults. Werner and Felix represent two different responses to the German loss of home reflected in their mnemonic engagements: Felix reconstructs cultural aspects and his space to commemorate the former village, whereas Werner appears to have moved on and only reluctantly remembers his childhood place. As Boym explains, nostalgia is often perceived as a “guilt-free homecoming.”\textsuperscript{365} However in Grunowen, nostalgia and guilt intertwine as the center of the characters’ affective engagements. During their return journey, both characters affectively recall the past and confront their feelings of guilt emanating from troubling, tragic aspects of their histories: Felix’s loss of his wife Anna and assistance in Werner’s father’s suicide at the end of the war, and Werner’s involvement in the army and resultant rift in his unreconciled relationship with his father. Their return allows them to contemplate unanswered questions and revive memories that had been forgotten, filling in mnemonic gaps along the way. Indeed, this third novel’s Leitmotif consists of Werner’s lack of knowledge of his father’s fate after the war.

During their return visit, Werner learns to reconnect with his childhood Heimat and its community through short narratives that Felix tells him of the former place and people. Through Felix’s stories of former villagers, the past comes alive and constitutes

\textsuperscript{365} Boym, xiv.

Felix’s short stories infused with third person narration in an otherwise first-person account tell humorous and heartfelt stories of the villagers’ everyday life (comparable to Siegfried Lenz’s *So zärtlich war Suleyken*). In many ways, they evoke a nostalgic affinity to the now foregone community, but simultaneously demonstrate the irretrievability of the physical place. As the novel demonstrates, the village and its community are only accessible through memory and narrative, in line with Demshuk’s claim that “expellees knew that the *Heimat of memory* only existed in the tenuous spaces of their own minds.”

Similar to *Polninen*, revisiting constitutes mnemonic recall and imaginative reconstruction of the past, but in *Grunowen* Surminski directly confronts the *Erlebnisgeneration*’s nostalgic and sentimental ties to former homes as a complex endeavor. This novel, in particular, imagines the affective attachments and affective practices of Surminski’s parents’ generation and especially explores the relationship between guilt and nostalgia by those who experienced the war and forced migration as adults.

The protagonist Werner Tolksdorf, a West German lawyer, returns to the village Grunowen with his family’s former coachman, Felix Maltoka, after the two reconnect at Felix’s eightieth birthday celebration. Felix reflects an open commemoration and nostalgic expression of his former home as is evidenced from their first encounter in the

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367 Demshuk, *The Lost German East*, 17.
novel at his birthday. The celebration resembles a type of *Heimat* gathering, designed to create a sense of their former village’s culture and customs: “es sollte so sein wie früher, er wünschte sich heimische Gerichte und Getränke, dazu die heimischen Menschen.”\(^{368}\)

While Felix practices his nostalgia openly and in his everyday life by recreating a sense of the village *Heimat* in his spatial constellations, Werner appears as a successful “forward looking” West German lawyer, engaged in the writing of legal opinions for the German Parliament. As he considers the policy implications of the European free movement of services on sales and distribution structures (to commence in 1992), he receives a call from Felix’s daughter, “Mariechen,” who invites him to join them and the Grunowen village community in the Lüneburger Heide to celebrate Felix’s birthday.\(^{369}\)

Though Werner convinces himself that his childhood village has little significance to him, that his house in the city is more meaningful to him than his family’s former estate in Grunowen, he begins to nostalgically recollect the place.\(^{370}\) This indicates the manifestation of unfinished business and unprocessed affective ties. In a way, Werner attempts to suppress his interest and nostalgia for the past, but is unable to fully block his affective ties from emerging. After receiving Mariechen’s call, for example, Werner realizes that it is snowing outside and remembers the snow in Grunowen as a “Kunstwerk in weiß.”\(^{371}\) He longingly remembers the landscape: a place covered in white, snow as piling up along the trees on the main road, laborers constructing a wooden walkway to continue their forestry work, and the cancelation of school allowing him to enjoy the outdoors with friends. He admits that the presence of snow in his present, “malte mir

\(^{368}\) Surminski, *Grunowen*, 19.

\(^{369}\) Ibid., 5-9.

\(^{370}\) Ibid., 33.

\(^{371}\) Ibid., 8.
Bilder aus einem vergangenen Leben."³⁷² This evocation of his past Heimat in the present leads him to contemplate his relationship to his past life. He realizes that he has forgotten the majority of it, which troubles him. While the majority of people “erinnern sich an die Begebenheiten ihrer Jugend überdeutlich, trugen Namen und Daten von damals im Kopf,” he realizes that his past has slipped away from him: “unter einer Schneewehe begraben. Grunowen hieß das Nest, der Name stand in meinem Personalausweis. Ich kannte kein Mariechen und keine anderen Namen aus Grunowen, nur Schneewehen türmten sich in der Erinnerung.”³⁷³

Whereas Werner’s nostalgia and almost melancholic sense of forgetting, is reserved to his private thoughts, Felix displays his affective ties to East Prussia and Grunowen publically. When Werner first encounters Felix at his birthday party, he describes the party room as having been transformed into an “Ostpreußenmuseum” complete with:


This description of the party room with decorations reveals the presence of a number of East Prussian nostalgic artifacts. Indeed, the room is constructed as a Heimatmuseum, and the celebration itself reflects a Heimat gathering with guests either personally from Grunowen, married to someone from Grunowen, or the children of someone from the

³⁷² Ibid., 8.
³⁷³ Ibid., 9.
³⁷⁴ Ibid., 24.
The affective practice of reconstructing the former home in the public space of the meeting room reveals one possibility of nostalgic remembrance. It crafts a sense of belonging for the participants with affective ties to the former village. However, Werner is an outlier in the scenario as is exemplified in a scene of Felix introducing the guests to him. Felix provides each guest’s background by briefly narrating his or her role in the former village to Werner. Each guest already knows who Werner is, as the son of the village’s landowner, but he does not recognize a single guest and feels alienated from them and the display of nostalgia present. The people here “waren anders,” he thinks. To them, he would always be “der junge Herr” taking the place of “der alte Herr,” his father. “Würde ich hundert Jahre alt, ich bliebe der junge Herr. . . . als gäbe es noch die alte Gemeinschaft zwischen dem Gutsherrn und seinen Leuten.” Werner perceives this nostalgic attitude toward the past and the old village’s customs in problematic and regressive terms, with which he himself does not identify.

Especially revealing is a moment between Werner and the son of a man from Grunowen, who instructs him on the maintenance of an inheritance list compiled by members from the former village. His comments reflect the attitude typically assigned to proponents of a regressive return discourse. “Auch Sie, Herr Tolksdorf, dürfen Ihr Erbe nicht aufgeben,” he states, “Ihr schönes Gut Grunowen, es steht Ihnen nach Recht und Gesetz zu, niemand kann es Ihnen nehmen. Und wenn später, vielleicht in hundert Jahren, Ostpreußen wieder deutsch wird, brauchen wir Dokumente.” The inheritance lists as well as letters from former landowners in Grunowen are to serve as said

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375 Ibid., 26.
376 Ibid., 20.
377 Ibid., 32.
documentation. This man’s father wrote a letter in his will to his son affirming the transfer of his former home to him. The son exclaims: “Die Kette soll nicht reißen, sie soll weitergereicht werden von Generation zu Generation. Wir geben nicht auf.”

Taken aback, Werner mentions that this man with supposed inheritance in Grunowen is not even from there, implicitly inquiring as to why he would even be interested in the property. The son responds: “Aber meine Eltern kommen aus Grunowen, erwiderte er. Ich fühle mich dort zu Hause, nur dort.” Though this novel does not explore the internalized nostalgic affinities imparted onto the second generation through postmemory, it does indicate in these lines that it is possible for the second generation to maintain this discourse of reclaiming and is motivated via a nostalgic affect. Though this revanchist Recht auf Heimat discourse resonated within expellee political circles, Surminski dismisses it as a serious concern through Felix’s explanation: “Wenn es Ernst wird, geht keiner. Die meisten haben im Westen Häuser gebaut und verleben hier ihre Rente.”

Their inheritance list appears as another affective practice used to create a sense of belonging related to that which they lost without actual interest in reclaiming. Werner, furthermore contemplating the nostalgic affect and Heimat linkages displayed, considers the actual harm of such attitudes: “Warum ihnen ein Gefühl nehmen, an dem sie hängen? Warum sie heimatlos machen vor der Zeit?” he asks. As they are causing no physical harm, should we leave them with their “Gefühl für Heimat und Deutschland,” he wonders. With these questions, Surminski evokes an empathetic consideration of this group of people, but distances his protagonist from such decontextualized, uncritical

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378 Ibid., 32.
379 Ibid., 33.
380 Ibid., 33.
381 Ibid., 36.
nostalgic affinities. Despite the fact that this group is not interested in causing physical harm or actually reclaiming the properties, the revanchist discourse evoked in these instances indicates how nostalgia could possibly serve the interests of revanchist movements. Though not taking the next steps to mobilize, this type of nostalgic foundation has the potential to be problematically appropriated, and as such, it is important to also maintain a critical stance. Werner’s sensed alienation derived from the displayed East Prussian artifacts as well as the attitudes and mentalities encountered indeed position this form of nostalgic remembrance in a regressive light and does not excuse the revanchist attitudes as overtly harmless. “Während wir nach Europa aufbrechen, ich meine Gutachten über die Angleichung des europäischen Rechts schreibe,” Werner thinks, “wollen die nach Deutschland zurück, ja noch weiter, sie wollen heim nach Preußen.”

His sensed longing is of another kind that does not seek reclamation, but is interested in processing his personal past and sensed guilt.

Werner and Felix return to Grunowen together after Felix receives the resources for the return trip as a gift from his children. Werner agrees to accompany Felix in the hopes that he may help him answer the questions he has about his father: “Was tat mein Vater nach 1940?” he wonders. He has nothing in his possession that reminds him of his father – not even a letter or photograph. In fact, Werner does not possesses any artifacts or objects from his childhood past, except for a photograph of his mother before she took ill in 1938. He keeps this image out of view in his desk drawer as if to conceal this part of himself. Hesitant whether or not they should actually take the trip, unsure

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382 Ibid., 33.
383 Ibid., 7.
384 Ibid., 10-11.
of which emotions and memories will emerge while abroad, Felix asks: "Mein Gott, wollen wir diese alte Geschichte wirklich noch einmal aufrühren, Herr? fragte er leise. Da steckt so vieles drin, sie liegt abgeschlossen und verwahrt wie in einer Gruft, aber wenn wir hinfahren, wird die Tür aufgehen, und wir werden sie noch einmal erleben."  

Their return journey signifies a painful return to past experiences, but is infused with pleasant recollections that emerge through Felix’s narratives of the past people and community. He recalls for instance the agricultural labor of the village conducted by Masurian and German workers and the songs they used to sing, Felix’s wife Anna caring for Werner as a child, Anna and Felix’s marriage, and endearing stories of individual villagers. They are, however, contextualized alongside the recalled rise of National Socialism as Werner attempts to locate his experience as a soldier. This contextualization is coupled with the depiction of the village as an irretrievable place of the past within which politicized nostalgic notions to reclaim former homes are ill suited. The expressed nostalgia in literary form toward former people and community, participates in the maintenance of memory on an affective level. For Werner, this is a complex process within which he negotiates the feelings of guilt alongside nostalgia.

Both Werner and Felix reveal the affective dimension of nostalgia as a part of their experience, yet Werner in particular demonstrates a discomfort toward nostalgic longing and memory. His concerns largely arise out of the guilt that he feels toward his own past as a soldier and damaged relationship with his father. The coupling of German culpability with suffering creates a complex picture and exemplifies Surminski’s stance.

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385 Ibid., 41.
387 Ibid., 203, 239, 242.
against revisionism and returns that are interested in revanchist reclaiming. He depicts the village Grunowen from the outset as a place that no longer physically exists – for one, it cannot be located on even old East Prussian maps.\textsuperscript{388} This becomes more evident during their travel to the village described as a trip “in die alte Welt Masurens, ein Menschenleben zurückfahren zu den Uhren, die anders klingen . . . Der Weg steht im Kopf geschrieben, die Namen sind unvergessen.”\textsuperscript{389} The trip is one to a past time that no longer physically exists, as the title additionally suggests, a trip to a past life (\textit{das vergangene Leben}). The notion of the place as located in the past is confirmed when they finally do arrive in the village:

Unter uns die vollkommene stille. Wir sahen keine spielenden Kinder, hörten kein Hundegebell. Weder Pferdewagen klapperten, noch sahen wir Arbeiter auf den Feldern .... Gab es überhaupt noch Gärten? ... nicht einmal Rauch gaben die alten Schornsteine her. Aber plötzlich, wie verabredet, erhoben sich die Krähen aus den Parkbäumen. Der Schwarm überflog das Dorf.”\textsuperscript{390}

This initial impression of the village describes it as a graveyard. It is not a lively place similar to the one narrated in Felix’s stories, but instead one devoid of human life and symbolically inhabited by crows. This image of the place is alienating to Felix as it did not conform to his idealized memories of the former place. He says to Werner:

“Vielleicht sollten wir gar nicht mehr hinfahren, sondern es so behalten, wie es gewesen ist.”\textsuperscript{391} This painful arrival serves to depict the contemporary place as permanently changed and the one remembered as only located in memory. As such, Surminski confronts decontextualized nostalgic utterances directed towards endeavors to return and reclaim, as presented at Felix’s birthday celebration at the beginning of the novel. Their

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{388} Ibid., 9.
\item \textsuperscript{389} Ibid., 141.
\item \textsuperscript{390} Ibid., 156.
\item \textsuperscript{391} Ibid., 162.
\end{itemize}
journey signifies a return of another kind – one that constitutes a reflection upon a painful past, guilt, and possible conciliation. After their journey, Felix states: “Zehn Tage unterwegs und keinen getroffen, aber wenigstens ins reine gekommen mit deinem Vater, du und ich.” During the journey, Felix shares the answer to Werner’s central concern – the motivation to travel abroad – regarding his father’s fate at the end of the war.

Rather than accompanying his wife Anna and their three children during their flight from the village, Felix stayed behind with Werner’s father, the owner of the estate in Grunowen. Werner’s father asked Felix to help end his life so that he may be buried next to his wife in their yard. This is the guilt that Felix carries with him: “Mir ist es einerlei, ich habe so oder so schuld daran. Ich hätte ihn in Stricke legen und mit ihm davonfahren sollen.” Werner, however, does not blame Felix: “Ich konnte ihnen nichts vorwerfen, dem Vater nicht und nicht dem alten Mann [Felix], der sich hinter mir in der Dunkelheit versteckte.” Instead, Werner feels his own guilt for aligning himself with National Socialist ideology and rejecting his father’s attempts to convince him otherwise. When they visit Werner’s old family home, Werner recalls the final conversation that he had with his father. His father urged him to stop fighting and specified the realities of the Holocaust to him in detail to encourage him to realize the criminal system that he as a soldier supports. Werner replied that he cannot stop now: “Nur nicht schlappmachen, nicht wieder weich werden wie ihr in Jahre 1918. Das habe ich vor dreundvierzig Jahren meinem Vater gesagt. Nun hängen die Worte hinter den vernagelten Fenstern jenes alten

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392 Ibid., 347.
393 Ibid., 320.
394 Ibid., 326.
395 Ibid., 327.
Houses und können keine Ruhe finden.”\(^{396}\) Ashamed by his response, self-righteous indignation, and participation, Werner thinks that he will not overcome his guilt. Instead: “Wir kommen nicht davon los. Zu schönen Landschaften und sonnigen Erinnerungen können wir nicht mehr reisen, wir sind immer unterwegs zu unserer Geschichte.”\(^{397}\) His nostalgia directed toward his family members, caretaker Anna (Felix’s wife), and the community of villagers in the town is consistently interrupted by the guilt that he feels toward this past. As such, nostalgia appears to be a part of his affective experience, but one with which he is not fully at ease.

According to Beyersdorf, *Grunowen* is Surminski’s most pessimistic work: “denn es scheint, daß der ehemalige deutsche Osten sogar in den Gedanken der letzten überlebenden Figuren endgültig verloren ist.”\(^{398}\) The novel ends with Felix and Werner parting ways to neither see each other nor their past village again. At the end of their journey, Felix states the realization: “Wir sind von Deutschland nach Ostpreußen gefahren und nicht angekommen. Ostpreußen ist versunken, es lebt nur noch in unseren Köpfen,”\(^{399}\) which signifies the lack of a physical space to reclaim. It ends with Werner’s lines: “In die Lüneburger Heide [to Felix] bin ich nicht gefahren. Auch nicht nach Ostpreußen, um die alten Bücher zu holen.”\(^{400}\) Beyersdorf sees this as a “pessimistische und resignierende Grundhaltung, die besonders stark das Ende des Romans prägt, mag zur Zeit seines Erscheinens (1989) manchen Lesern den Eindruck vermittelt haben, Surminski habe mit dem Roman endgültig mit dem Vertriebenenthema

\(^{396}\) Ibid., 247.  
\(^{397}\) Ibid., 251.  
\(^{398}\) Beyersdorf, 81.  
\(^{399}\) Surminski, *Grunowen*, 347.  
\(^{400}\) Ibid., 348.
abgeschlossen.”

The ending, however, can be seen in juxtaposition to the notions raised at the beginning of the novel with regard to the politicized potential of nostalgic expression as considering affective practices and potentials. In Grunowen, Surminski directly confronts politicized nostalgic endeavors geared toward reclaiming former homes, depicted through some characters at Felix’s birthday party, by demonstrating that the physical place has ceased to be. Instead, personal nostalgic sentiments can signify another possibility and nostalgic potential, namely, to maintain affective linkages in narrative form as a part of one’s mnemonic experience without revanchist aspirations.

V. CONCLUSION

Together, the three novels in Surminski’s East Prussian trilogy present a reflection on nostalgic affect and return journeys. They consider the functions and possibilities of nostalgia by depicting different complex scenarios within which members of the first and second generation may experience nostalgia as a part of their return visit experiences. The act of revisiting as well as the rendering of such journeys and memories of past communities in narrative form constitute some of the prevalent affective practices portrayed in Surminski’s trilogy. By focusing on small, rural locales, Surminski draws attention to lesser-known sites also affected by the war and stays true to his own autobiographical experiences. Jokehnen fictionalizes the author’s historical experiences, memories of his childhood Heimat and forced migration, arrival in West Germany, and the role of return. The narrative is a personal introspection of the past time and place that contributes to the collective memory of the former German east and forced westward

\[401\] Beyersdorf, 81.
migration. In *Jokehnen*, Surminski demonstrates how nostalgia was intricately linked to notions of return during the villagers’ flight and largely served to console and provide hope, even though the protagonist realizes the impossibility of actual return early on. *Polninken* narrates the story of a second generation West German, who returns to his parent’s former *Heimat* and develops a sense of belonging through his interactions with Kasimir and Irene. Nostalgia’s complexity emerges through Ingo’s interactions with members of the *Erlebnisgeneration*, who reveal an uncritical, decontextualized view of the place. Ingo, instead learns about the past through Kasimir and develops a sense of postmemorial nostalgia for his past family members, indicated in his imaginative construction of their experiences in the village. Here, nostalgia serves to reconnect and reinvigorate interest in the past through affective means. Finally, *Grunowen* reflects upon different forms of nostalgia that take on new complexities. In the case of the protagonist Werner, nostalgia appears as an uncomfortable part of one’s affective experience when coupled with guilt. In this novel, Surminski juxtaposes Werner’s contextualized sentiments with uncritical nostalgic expressions purported by other former villagers and their descendants. In sum, the trilogy presents numerous possibilities that return and nostalgic sentiments pose. Here, the longing for *Heimat* and nostalgic, sentimental memories do not in every case present a desire to reclaim former homes, but can instead serve to share personal imaginations, desires, and feelings without revisionist claims. The trilogy portrays the reality of nostalgia’s presence as a mnemonic and affective feature of forced migration experiences and encourages readers to consider the multiple, non-revanchist possibilities that it can pose without losing sight of this problematic potential.
CHAPTER 4

ELISABETH SCHULZ-SEMRAU’S ‘KARALAUTSCHI’: NOSTALGIC RETURN VISITS WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF EAST GERMAN PROSE WRITING

With his 2014 publication, *Representations of Flight and Expulsion in East German Prose Works*, historian Bill Niven readdresses the issue of German suffering, Lost *Heimat*, and flight and expulsion within East German literature. In his presentation of a wealth of GDR texts thematizing these issues, he confronts the perception that flight and expulsion were entirely taboo subjects in East Germany and instead shows that these topics are richly depicted and considered in East German literary works. One area of particular interest in my dissertation is his introduction of “Novels of Revisiting,” among which Christa Wolf’s *Kindheitsmuster* (1976) stands out as the most famous example. Other revisiting narratives presented in his monograph include Helga Schütz’s *Vorgeschichten oder schöne Gegend Probstein* (1971), Gertrud Bradatsch’s *Sommerreise* (1976), Armin Müller’s *Meine verschiedene Leben* (1978), Maria Rauchfuß’s *Fische auf den Zweigen* (1980), and Elisabeth Schulz-Semrau’s *Suche nach Karalautschi* (1984).

Within these novels of revisiting, Niven argues, “‘unfinished business’ is key: revisiting the former homeland holds out the promise, or at least hope, of an answer.” Revisiting narratives, however also, present a possibility to consider and reflect upon the affective dimensions related to former homes and communities, as exemplified by Elisabeth Schulz-Semrau’s works analyzed in this chapter: *Suche nach Karalautschi. Report einer Kindheit in Königsberg* (1984) and *Drei Kastanien aus Königsberg. Tagebuch einer Reise in das heutige Kaliningrad* (1990).

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402 Niven, 119.
Both examples of autobiographical writing, these texts reveal Schulz-Semrau’s considerations of and attachments to her childhood Heimat Königsberg, its meaning to her in her contemporary moment, and interest in the changed place, now Kaliningrad. Together, these works invite a comparison of imagined and physically conducted return trips, presenting different kinds of nostalgic affinities toward her former childhood place. In Suche nach Karalautschi, the author embarks on an imagined trip to the historical Königsberg and time of her childhood. She constructs topographical “mental maps” of her childhood city and traverses the space imaginatively by mentally revisiting and remembering important moments of her childhood located within different places around Königsberg. Here, “mental maps” refer to text-based cognitive processes by which the author reconstructs the topographical layout of the city linguistically in her writing as a means of reorienting herself and creating a network of referential places important to her. As Niven suggests, her physical return to contemporary Kaliningrad in Drei Kastanien aus Königsberg enables her to compare her mental maps to the changed, contemporary place. The term “mental map,” popular in behavioral geography, typically refers to either “an image of the environment held in the mind to aid wayfinding or spatial orientation” or it can “denote physical artifacts recording how people perceive places” – an affective view of one’s environment. Schulz-Semrau’s mental maps reflect both of these functions – spatial orientation and affective affinity – as she reveals places that evoke nostalgic memories and sentiments in her topographical construction. Her mental map enables the possibility of maintaining an orientation of her childhood place, which is

403 Niven, 175.
spatially restored in her writing, and does so in an affective way. At the outset of her
_Suche nach Karalautschi_, she describes her fear of forgetting and losing this piece of her
past. She was neither able to visit Kaliningrad prior to writing _Suche nach Karalautschi_
in 1984 nor was she able to find the places important to her depicted in other
publications.\(^{405}\) Her nostalgic recollections enable her to work against this fear and
prompt her mnemonic construal.

The second text, _Drei Kastanien aus Königsberg_, narrates the author’s physical
return visit to Kaliningrad in 1988 – a visit that was allowed as a result of a special
permission that she received through her Kaliningrad-based author friend, Juri Iwanow.
During her two week-long trip, she experiences Kaliningrad as a tourist (a
_Heimwehtourist_), visiting significant architectural sites, the location of her former
familial home, traversing memories, and getting to know contemporary Kaliningrad
citizens (some she already met through her writing profession; others she encounters for
the first time). In some ways _Drei Kastanien_ reflects upon _Suche nach Karalautschi_ as
she comments on her motivations for writing this former work and concerns that she had
with regard to its publication in the GDR. The topic of Königsberg, Schulz-Semrau
explains, was taboo in the Soviet Union, but as Niven’s study attests, literature enabled
the preservation and recollection of former homes despite political interests.\(^{406}\) As
discussed in chapter one, GDR officials in the postwar period promoted the integration of
their citizens into a new East German _Heimat_, rendering nostalgic longings toward the

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\(^{405}\) Kaliningrad remained a restricted military zone until the 1990s. Elisabeth Schulz-
Semrau, _Suche nach Karalautschi. Report einer Kindheit in Königsberg_ (Leipzig:
Mitteldeutscher Verlag, 1984), 8-9, 19.

\(^{406}\) Elisabeth Schulz-Semrau, _Drei Kastanien aus Königsberg. Tagebuch einer Reise in
former home as oppositional to progressive socialist society. Although as cultural works show, the former *Heimat* continued to play a role in the new. The popularity of her *Suche nach Karalautschi* is likewise a testament to the important role that literature can play in creating mnemonic spaces to commemorate former homes. Her autobiographical text was immensely successful in the GDR, with its publication in three editions and hundreds of additional requests made to her personally for a copy of the book.\(^{407}\) The central mnemonic role of such literature is further exemplified by letters that she received from readers who share their own memories of home and postwar experiences. The inclusion of letter excerpts in *Drei Kastanien* demonstrates the possibility of literature to create constructive mnemonic spaces and a sense of community.\(^{408}\) Schulz-Semrau clearly states that in the many letters she received from her readers they wished to convey without revanchism “dass man die Heimatstadt liebe, ihre Landschaft wiedersehen möchte, aber sie heute als in der Stadt Kaliningrad ‘aufgehoben’ akzeptiere.”\(^{409}\) The fact that she includes this explanation indicates the presence of problematic impressions with regard to expellees and sentimental affinities toward former homes. In her *Suche nach Karalautschi* and *Drei Kastanien*, Schulz-Semrau creates a space for the consideration of affective, nostalgic realities and demonstrates constructive possibilities, especially pertaining to German-Soviet-Russian relations as well as the maintenance of personal memories and nostalgic expressions.

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\(^{409}\) Ibid., 149.
This focus on nostalgia presents an area of continuity between Schulz-Semrau’s and Surminski’s work (discussed in chapter three). Both authors appear as writing against problematic assumptions related to nostalgia and sentimental memories of the former home. Even though East and West German literature are typically analyzed in terms of difference and discontinuity, this chapter’s investigation of nostalgia within GDR discourse and Schulz-Semrau’s works seeks to find points of connection to West German counterparts read in conjunction with the previous chapter on Arno Surminski’s East Prussian trilogy. Certain attitudes did traverse the “Iron Curtain” with assumptions and perceptions regarding nostalgia as a case in point. Schulz-Semrau and Surminski’s works do differ in their treatment of certain topics affecting their contemporary moment, such as inter-German relations/the Berlin Wall and considerations of a larger, interconnected European community (issues not discussed in Schulz-Semrau’s writing as such, however, prominent in Surminski’s texts, esp. Polninen and Grunowen). Despite these differences, though, there are striking similarities: their humanistic portrayals of Polish and Russian citizens, evocation of a multidirectional memory discourse, the depiction of German suffering as a part of a larger WWII context, and similar affective dimensions. Nostalgia, in particular, is an affective and mnemonic feature that pervades both of their East and West German texts, as they also employ a similar narrative genre – literary return narratives – to contemplate their respective ties to former homes.

This chapter examines Schulz-Semrau’s considerations of nostalgia, return, and her former Heimat Königsberg within the context of East Germany of the 1980s. Her works, both examples of autobiographical prose writing, include the experiences of flight

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from Königsberg as a child, but take return and revisiting as well as their affective and mnemonic dimensions as central points of reflection. Within scholarship, as literary scholar Stacy Hartman explains, “there is little research about nostalgia in the GDR prior to 1989.” After 1989, Ostalgie became the topic of many studies, but little is known of the role of nostalgia within GDR discourse. Schulz-Semrau’s autobiographical prose narratives demonstrate that nostalgia, as well as reflections upon former homes, did indeed exist within East German literature, even though these were presumed politically suspicious. Through writing, she attempts to come to terms with her sentimental attachments and maintain the memory of her past. It is a self-constructive process and exemplifies the turn away from Socialist Realism – the dominant literary concept pervading the early years of the GDR.  


412 This does not seek to overlook or negate the fact that literature within socialist realism also includes subjective modes and is indeed more complex than previously regarded in literary scholarship. As Niven and Brockmann both discuss, even in the early years of literary production in East Germany there were authors who tested socialist realism’s limits. According to Niven, reconstruction literature of the 1950s and 60s (the dawn of socialist realist conceptions of art as the GDR’s literary program), “has to acknowledge the personal histories, concerns, contradictions, and vacillations of its characters if it is not to lose all credibility.” This suggests that literature always already included subjectivity. Brockmann’s 2015 monograph further explores the complexity of this early East German literature including examples of subversion and contestation. My focus here with regard to Schulz-Semrau’s literature, appearing in the 1980s, though draws attention to a conscious and explicitly pronounced departure from Socialist Realism’s program, typically seen in conjunction with Christa Wolf’s essays and literary works, e.g. *Nachdenken über Christa T.* (1968) and *Kindheitsmuster* (1976). Cf. Niven, 56 and Brockmann, *The Writers’ State*.  

I. SCHULZ-SEMRAU AND AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL PROSE WRITING WITHIN GDR LITERARY DISCOURSE

Similar to Arno Surminski, Elisabeth Schulz-Semrau left East Prussia as a child, experiencing both WWII and eventual flight toward the end of the war. In the GDR, she was both well-known, read, and received: she was a teacher at the literature institute in Leipzig, married to the well-connected author and some time director of the institute Max-Walter Schulz,413 consistently mentioned/featured in the press as a promising writer within the so-called “Junge Prosa 75,”414 and winner of two literary awards – the 1974 Förderungspreis des Mitteldeutschen Verlags und des Institutes für Literatur “Johannes R. Becher” and Kulturpreis der Stadt Leipzig in 1981.415 “Junge Prosa” became a signifier at the annual literature festival, Tage der jungen Literatur, organized by the GDR writers association, central committee of the Free German Youth (Freie Deutsche Jugend, an official organization for teenage youth in the GDR), and GDR publishing houses.416 Prose signifies an important style within East German literary discourse that took on new forms, as it shifted in the late 1960s toward more overt subjectivity. This is a turn away from socialist-realist conceptions of literature (aiming to present an “objective

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416 “Kulturnachrichten,” Berliner Zeitung, September 26, 1962, p. 6. Behrend, p. 4. The other publishing houses include: Aufbau-Verlag, Hinstorff-Verlag, Kinderbuchverlag, Verlag neues Leben, Mitteldeutscher Verlag, and Städtische Theater Karl-Marx-Stadt – helped to organize the literary days to promote the works of GDR writers.
reflection of reality”) and shift toward overt subjective construals. Schulz-Semrau makes the subjective mode explicit in her works through her first person narration, inclusion of a character called “das Kind,” and naming of her childhood Heimat – Karalautschi. Her stylistic choice to write in prose, understood here as “thought to be the ‘natural’ way to write” (especially in contrast to lyrical poetry) and conveying messages in more ordinary linguistic forms, nonetheless maintains the official function of literature within the GDR seen as fulfilling a pedagogical role. In this way, she does not divert entirely from GDR literary norms, but does reflect the shift toward new cultural developments taking place in the 1970s and 80s.

Prose, as the dominant style of many East German works, fits within the concept of literature developed in the early years of the state. In East Germany, literature constituted an important area of social life and was regarded as a pedagogical medium engaged in the simultaneous development and realization of socialist society. According to Stephen Brockmann: “Within socialist culture there was a strong push to develop the socialist epic, an epic that would situate the individual within his or her social context and convey the essence of society’s development from capitalism to socialism.”

Literature became a key avenue through which the dissemination of societal ideals, such as humanism and socialist values related to work ethic and an awareness of the collective, took place. In order to reach a mass readership, literature would need to be linguistically and conceptually accessible. The first cultural minister and GDR writer,

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419 Brockmann, 17.
420 Wolfgang Emmerich, Kleine Literaturgeschichte der DDR, 4th ed. (Berlin: Aufbau, 2009), 41.
Johannes R. Becher, after whom the literature institute was named, coined the term *Literaturgesellschaft* to encompass a conceptualization of literature that existed as a part of a collective and was “not a purely individualistic affair.”[421] This concept helped to direct perceptions of literature’s social and political function for years to come. It was also influential within the cultural policy of the central governing committee, the SED (*Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands*), directing censorship practices and the publication of acceptable literature. According to Wolfgang Emmerich: “Die Formel zielte auf das ideale Leitbild einer umfassenden ‘Demokratisierung’ (natürlich unter sozialistisch-autoritärem Vorzeichen),” and gave literature an “aufklärerisch-utopische Spitze, indem er [Becher] die Literatur dafür prädestiniert sah, die Vervollkommnung eines Volkes und des Gattungswesens Mensch herbeizuführen.”[422] Not only content, but also literary form was seen as a part of literature’s “sozialpädagogisch-erzieherische Mission.” Fixed canons and aesthetic norms were officially preferred over aesthetic experimentation, which in some cases, was seen as even destructive to literature’s pedagogical role.[423] Prose, as the more “ordinary way to write,” appears to meet the demands of literature’s pedagogical function due to linguistic accessibility through the use of “everyday,” spoken language.

In her autobiographical works, Schulz-Semrau employs prose as a linguistic style of writing, not only in the interest of furthering the socialist pedagogical project (which she appears to have supported as both a teacher and member of the writers’ union), but to also reflect upon her own, subjective experiences and share her history through personal

421 Brockmann, 338. Emmerich, 41. 
422 Emmerich, 41. 
423 Ibid., 41-42.
memories. In this way, she sheds light on the historical Königsberg and the ways in which global history affected her own personal life and community. This overt attention to personal experience reflects a shift taking place in both Germanies in the 1970s/80s, which touches upon new ideas related to the function of literature, writing, and the role of the author. In West Germany, what was termed “neue Subjektivität” reflected a “pronounced interest in subjective forms of writing and a thematic concern with personal experience and the nature of individual identity.”\footnote{Joanne Leal, “New Subjectivity,” Encyclopedia of Contemporary German Culture, ed. John Sandford (London: Routledge, 1999), 445.} West German New German Cinema, for instance, reflects this subjective focus as found in various films thematizing the reflection upon personal experiences and memories of the past. Many film producers embarked on a process of so-called Vergangenheitsbewältigung, critical explorations of issues related to identity (e.g. gender, class, inclusion/exclusion), and inquiries into cinema’s potential.\footnote{Sabine Hake, German National Cinema, 2nd ed., (London: Routledge, 2008), 154.} This aesthetic shift, reflecting the 1968 student movement’s seminal call to see the personal as political, led to “an unprecedented surge of autobiographical expression” found in literature and film in both Germanies.\footnote{Kosta, 1, 6.} The political moment of 1968 affected aspirations for democratization and liberalization across the Western world, East Germany included.\footnote{Mary Fulbrook, “Popular Discontent and Political Activism in the GDR,” Contemporary European History 2.3 (1993): 271.} Despite the lack of disseminated grassroots protest movements in the GDR as they existed in the West, GDR citizens nonetheless held and expressed similar worldviews and perspectives to their Western counterparts. They “embraced not just a New Left politics but also an accompanying
cultural revolution of lifestyle, mores, and sensibility." Particularly the 1968 Prague Spring, a period of political reforms to liberalize and democratize Czechoslovakia, was influential in the GDR. Its crushing by Soviet forces “represented the supreme moment of cognitive dissonance in which the contradictions in the state’s claims of democracy and humanism were exposed” and “fueled the aspirations of those hoping for democratization of East German socialism from within.” This form of mobility from within is found in GDR literary discourse, which similar to western aesthetic shifts, reflects a turn toward overt subjectivity and the construction of personal memory and self within literature. The turn to subjectivity, in terms of memory, complicates singular, linear (monodirectional) accounts of historical events to instead showcase the effect of global events on different and perhaps intersecting individual experiences.

Christa Wolf’s 1968 essay “Lesen und Schreiben” serves as a textual marker of this conceptual development and presents a new approach to GDR literature. In this essay, she calls for a new type of prose and conceptualization of writing as a part of a subjective process of “Selbstverwirklichung.” Clearly indicating this shift, Wolf delineates a “Tabula rasa” and the emergence of the self in writing: “Denn ich, ohne Bücher, bin nicht ich.” Her departure from conventions and traditional literary forms redefines notions of the self, but also epistemological “reality.” Seeing acts of writing as

430 Brown, 191, 194.
432 Ibid. 210-211.
subjective processes, she pursues “die neue Realität des Buches” with the appeal: “Lassen wir Spiegel das Ihre tun: Spiegeln. Sie können nichts anderes. Literatur und Wirklichkeit stehen sich nicht gegenüber wie Spiegel und das, was gespiegelt wird. Sie sind ineinander verschmolzen im Bewußtsein des Autors.” Her critical understanding of prose writing highlights the subjective nature of writing. As she explains, reality is always construed subjectively through the imagination of the author – a concept later summarized in an interview with Hans Kaufmann as “subjektive Authentizität.” This can be seen as a direct departure from socialist realist conceptions of writing, and an introduction of “new prose” as a viable GDR style thereof. The move toward prose writing as a self-constitutive literary process is reflected in Schulz-Semrau’s works, within which the author attempts to rectify, find meaning in, and connect to her childhood as a means of self-construction. Though not frequently discussed in literary scholarship alongside canonical authors, such as Wolf or Christoph Hein, Schulz-Semrau is located within this historical literary shift toward subjectivity as reflected in Suche nach Karalautschi and Drei Kastanien aus Königsberg, two autobiographical prose narratives thematizing return and nostalgic affect.

This shift and Christa Wolf’s essay are important to highlight as they begin to summarize Schulz-Semrau’s own concept of writing. In her texts, she is interested in coming to terms with her nostalgic sentiments and accepting her former Heimat as a part of her self and identity. In some ways, her works reflect Wolf’s project in

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433 Ibid. 225, 229, 230-231.
*Kindheitsmuster* to ruminate on the protagonist’s past experiences and present realities within the context of revisiting the former home. Yet, Schulz-Semrau takes her nostalgic sentiments to be the core of her motivation, and simultaneous struggle, to revisit. On the one hand, her longing for her former home and family emerge as a result of nostalgia, but on the other hand, there is a sense of discomfort – that she “should” in a way suppress her nostalgic feelings. Along with her conveyed fear of forgetting, she also works against a supposed fear of nostalgic sentiments. In *Drei Kastanien*, she tellingly remarks:

> Hatte ich nicht jahrelang brav meine Heimatgefühle verdrängt, mich nicht als Flüchtling, sondern als Umsiedler bezeichnet? Jedem, der es hören und nicht hören wollte, erzählte, daß ich voll akzeptiere, daß uns diese Stadt nicht mehr gehöre, wir sie verspielt hätten, für all’ das Furchtbare, was wir russischen Menschen angetan haben.  

This narrative of loss as a result of German aggression is commonly found within East German writing on the topic of German suffering, but this quote also sheds light on the problematic attitudes toward nostalgic emotions, or, “Heimatgefühle.” Schulz-Semrau suggests the presence of an inability to express affective ties to the former *Heimat* – an issue also indicated in Christa Wolf’s *Kindheitsmuster*. Wolf’s novel is worth recalling here to shed light on Schulz-Semrau’s undertaking, which appears to continue some of the issues raised by Wolf.

In *Kindheitsmuster*, Wolf’s protagonist revisits her childhood *Heimat “L.”* (referring to Wolf’s own birthplace Landsberg an der Warthe, today’s Polish Gorzów Wielkopolski), which is a journey back in time to childhood and youth. It provides an opportunity to reflect upon personal experiences during National Socialism as well as the process of memory itself. Indeed, Wolf marks her novel as a subjective construction

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436 Cf. Niven, 105.
through the introduction of “das Kind,” who in the initial pages “zum erstenmal in seinem Leben in Gedanken zu sich selbst ICH sagt.”437 The status of this “ich” in Wolf’s novel is a point of debate, as the self appears divided not least through the inclusion of three different diegetic times and figures (the earlier childhood, the traveling protagonist’s present, and the narrative voice).438 A part of Wolf’s considerations of self and memory in Kindheitsmuster concern affect and emotion, and is helpful to recall as a part of the larger discourse regarding memory and affect into which Schulz-Semrau writes. In chapter two of Kindheitsmuster, Wolf remarks in a meta-reflectional statement on memory in which she recalls a scene of her family: “Diese Mischung, Freude und Mitleid, wird das Bild im Gedächtnis verankern.”439 Here, she considers the ways in which emotions, such as joy and sympathy, can “lock-in” or solidify mnemonic recall. The protagonist, out of touch with her childhood self, memories, and emotions, in the same chapter, remarks: “Angst ist nämlich . . . Also Angst ist, weißt du . . . Nelly ist wohl ein bißchen unnahbar geworden. Ein bißchen verschlossen.”440 The protagonist indicates her distance to her former self (Nelly), which in a sense also has to do with memory and affect demonstrated through the ellipses – i.e. her inability to explain what these emotions meant to Nelly. Furthermore she later states: “Wichtig wäre zu wissen, woher die fünffjährige Nelly nicht nur wußte, sondern fühlte, was der Führer war . . . wie man sich

439 Wolf, Kindheitsmuster, 46.
440 Ibid., 54.
mit allen eins fühlen konnte, wenn man den Führer sah.”441 These instances introduce the linkage between memory and emotions, both having an integral part in self-understanding. Indeed a part of her journey abroad entails the following contemplation: “Was man da gedacht und gefühlt haben mag, ohne selbst davon wissen zu wollen: Dies wäre es, was du gerne wüßtest.”442 As Niven explains, the protagonist had long suppressed her emotions and denied “her true feelings to herself.”443 In many ways, as Niven remarks, the protagonist ruminates on the discrepancies between “what she remembers and how she is expected to remember.”444 It seems that affect too is a part of this equation when Niven asks: “Is she [Wolf] hinting at a self-denial resulting from the SED’s political stigmatization of ‘homesickness’ for the lost territories as an emotion fanning the flames of revanchism?”445 Indeed, the narrative voice in Kindheitsmuster states: “Du wolltest es aber erklären. Daß du niemals Heimweh gehabt hättest, hast du ja nicht behauptet.”446 Wolf leaves open the possibility of nostalgic sentiment and conveys that this longing had been a part of her protagonist’s experience. Kindheitsmuster, Niven argues, “does not reject the restraints in articulation and feeling, but it examines the workings of them with painful precision.”447 According to Bammer, the desire to return is motivated by a longing “to recover a particular feeling of who we once were.”448 Suche nach Karalautschi and Drei Kastanien take up these questions related to nostalgic

441 Ibid., 58.
442 Ibid., 66.
443 Niven, 105.
444 Ibid., 106.
445 Ibid., 112.
446 Wolf, Kindheitsmuster, 69.
447 Niven, 112.
448 Bammer, 115.
sentiment by displaying the reality of this emotional state to the individual self and the ways in which it can encourage community formation and empathy.

Similar to *Kindheitsmuster*, Schulz-Semrau’s texts make her subjective mode explicit from the beginning through the use of first-person narration and cover page subtitles. The work’s subtitles: “Report einer Kindheit” and “Tagebuch einer Reise,” reflect “subjektive Authentizität.” Though they do not use “meiner” in the titles – a more obvious autobiographical indicator – they do each assign a documentary or seemingly “authentic” status to the texts with the genre inscriptions “Report” and “Tagebuch.” The use of “einer” presents her trip and childhood as subjective renderings and leaves room for other possibilities – i.e. hers is one of possible many other depictions. The subtitles mark a level of authenticity, but each text signals only one, subjective take. Within each work, she furthermore makes her subjective mode explicit through first-person narration and evocation of an “autobiographical pact.” This “pact” constitutes a generic feature of typical autobiographical writing presented through the shared identity of name between the author, narrator, and protagonist of a text. “The autobiographical pact,” Lejeune writes, “is the affirmation in the text of this identity, referring back in the final analysis to the name of the author on the cover.”

In both texts, Schulz-Semrau enters into an autobiographical pact with readers through her use of the personal pronoun, I, to discuss her memories and experiences throughout. However, her works are not traditional autobiographies, since she includes fictional dimensions that create a distance in both works. Primarily, she achieves a distance through her inclusion of a fourth narrative layer – a character called “das Kind” (similar to Wolf’s usage in *Kindheitsmuster*) – and by

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naming her childhood *Heimat Karalautschi*, not Königsberg, inspired by its Lithuanian name. These strategies create a space within which she can imaginatively traverse her childhood and past *Heimat* through memory.

In both texts, she narrates her experiences and reflections of herself and her past in the first person, but these are occasionally interrupted by either briefly mentioning or telling stories of “das Kind.” In his discussion of the autobiographical genre, Lejeune leaves room for autobiographies written in the third person: “this figure must not be understood as an indirect manner of talking about the self, which would be used in contrast to the ‘direct’ character of the first person. It is another way of achieving, in the form of a *splitting*, . . . the inescapable duality of the grammatical ‘person’.”

The use of the third person “draws attention to itself in a provocative way.” Schulz-Semrau’s inclusion of “das Kind” reveals a discomfort that she has toward her childhood – a “splitting” that she seeks to rectify. In *Suche nach Karalautschi*, she explicitly addresses this issue by stating:


These lines reveal her uneasiness towards her childhood and motivations for writing the first autobiographical prose text, *Suche nach Karalautschi*. Reflective of Lejeune’s described “splitting,” Schulz-Semrau presents a conflict that she processes in her autobiographical writing: her initial desire to reject her childhood, but realization that it is

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450 Ibid., 33.
451 Ibid., 35.
452 Schulz-Semrau, *Suche nach Karalautschi*, 42.
a part of who she is and, for this reason, she decides she cannot simply cast it off. In the subsequent lines she wonders: “War meine Kindheit glücklich? Wohl kaum. Und dennoch . . . Vielfältig waren die Wege des Kindes,” which suggests there may be other (perhaps more positive) points of connection to her childhood.\textsuperscript{453} In \textit{Suche nach Karalautschi}, she details her life with a strict father and largely absent mother, but in remembering and writing, not only about her negative childhood associations related to her family and the war, she tries to reconstrue the meaningful and hopeful moments from her childhood. Indeed, the narrative injections of “das Kind” typically involve happy memories that she has of her childhood that take on a nostalgic tone. While not indicative of an authentic “truth,” the narrative of “das Kind” suggests a subjective dimension through which she reconsiders her childhood in the interest of self-understanding.

In many ways, “das Kind” is intricately linked to the place Königsberg making it difficult to separate the figure from her spatial environment, which is true for her second autobiographical prose work, \textit{Drei Kastanien}, as well. Though she does not refer to her childhood Heimat as Königsberg, she instead uses what she explains to be the Lithuanian name, Karalautschi – a “fast vergessenen Namen” used by a Lithuanian neighbor of theirs.\textsuperscript{454} The use of Karalautschi to narrate her childhood experiences avoids the politicized names Königsberg and Kaliningrad, already a part of national discourses of the territory. It furthermore exemplifies her turn toward subjectivity. Her construction of the Lithuanian indicates a phonetic mixing: the Lithuanian name of Königsberg is

\begin{footnotes}
\item[453] Ibid., 43.
\item[454] Ibid., 11.
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“Karaliaučius” not “Karalautschi.” Her “Karalautschi” indicates a German phonetic construction of the Lithuanian name, which does not conforms to official national names. The designation of Karalautschi, instead, signifies her subjective space of memory, location of childhood, and Heimatstadt. It is “her own personal childhood image and experience of the city.” Together, the usage of “das Kind” and “Karalautschi” indicate the character and plane of her nostalgic affective ties, which she frames as subjectively authentic to her own self-understanding. This can be seen as a strategic move to distance herself from nationalized discourses related to the territory and revisionist longings for home. Yet, it is not an outright rejection of nostalgic sentiment – she instead considers how she can recognize and come to terms with her affective ties and experiences. Is it possible to maintain affective attachments to former homes and sites of childhood, such as Königsberg, now (in her case) a part of the Soviet Union? How can the narrative layer of “das Kind” reveal a simultaneous recognition of and uneasiness towards the nostalgic and sentimental longing that she feels? Does her distancing enable a reflection upon sentimental longing and nostalgic memories that appears more “cautious?” Schulz-Semrau’s autobiographical prose works thematizing return visits help to shed light on the complexity of the affective and mnemonic dimension of nostalgia similar to Surminski. They exemplify the simultaneous possibility of literature to afford such an undertaking, while also maintaining critical awareness of the reality, yet difficulty, that nostalgia can pose.

455 For a discussion of place names, see for instances Tomasz Kamusella, *The Politics of Language and Nationalism in Modern Central Europe* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 181.
456 Niven, 115.
II. SUCHE NACH KARALAUTSCHI: IMAGINED LITERARY RETURN TO THE PLACES AND TIME OF CHILDHOOD

In an interview, Schulz-Semrau discusses her motivations for writing *Suche nach Karalautschi* and reveals: “ich war froh dabei, wie bei keinem meiner Bücher. Und traurig auch.”457 During her time at the literature institute, she realized that writing afforded her the opportunity to bring things to light that she otherwise “sonst niemandem zu erzählen traute.”458 Her description summarizes nostalgia’s simultaneous evocation of solace and sadness – an affective dimension under scrutiny in her work – and the possibility of processing such attachments in literature. In *Suche nach Karalautschi*, she returns to her childhood Heimat Königsberg and narrates her memories of childhood, family, and the place as subjective links important to her self-understanding and self-construction. Published in 1984, Schulz-Semrau explains that for the first time, she was not concerned with the criticism or reviews her works would receive, positioning *Suche nach Karalautschi* as quite personal and written in part for herself. The popular acclaim of this work, a bestseller in the GDR, indicates that others were moved and perhaps also inspired by her descriptions of childhood and place. Without evoking a politicized nostalgic discourse, she processes her own past home and childhood located in Königsberg in an attempt to accept and in a sense “normalize” her relationship to her childhood, Heimat, and felt nostalgia.

One strategy that she employs to avoid her alignment with problematically politicized nostalgic forms is her avoidance of the term *Nostalgie* in both texts. She

458 Ibid., 54-55.
instead uses the term *Sehnsucht* on numerous occasions to express this particular affective longing. For example, describing her love of strawberries, which reminds her of those from her aunt Ella’s garden and her birthday celebrations: “Lange Jahre in mein Erwachsenein hinein hat mich diese Sehnsucht begleitet, aber nie konnte ich sie zu meinem Geburtstag erfüllen.”\(^{459}\) Or in another example expressing her desire to revisit the now contemporary Kaliningrad while at the train station in Riga, Latvia: “Vier Züge fuhren. Zwei tagsüber, zwei am Abend. Und ich habe mit mir gerungen, ob ich nicht wenigstens eine Fahrkarte kaufe. Eine Fahrkarte nach Kaliningrad. Die Sehnsucht war wie eh, aber etwas begann [sie] zu relativieren.”\(^{460}\) Unable to travel to Kaliningrad, she explains that she would travel to Riga to satisfy this longing. During her fourth trip to Riga, she realizes: “Ich nahm das Leben in der Stadt Riga anders wahr als bei den drei Besuchen zuvor. Ich war näher dran, ich wusste es als Teil des Lebens in Kaliningrad heute, und ich wollte es bewusst so wahrnehmen.”\(^{461}\) Treating Riga as type of surrogate *Heimat*, she begins to see the similarities between Riga and her remembered Königsberg: they are both seaside cities, “mit ihren historischen Bauwerken, Kirchen, engen Gassen, alten Häusern, durchzogen von dem Fluß Daugava [in Königsberg/Kaliningrad there is the Pregel], Brücke darüber, Hafengelände, Speichern.”\(^{462}\) There are also the trains taking people to the beaches, “während die Königsberger, nun die Kaliningrader, in ähnlich kurzer Zeit gleiches tun können.”\(^{463}\) In all of these examples, she reveals her nostalgic longing for her childhood *Heimat* and curiosity directed toward Kaliningrad, as she is

\(^{459}\) Schulz-Semrau, *Suche nach Karalautschi*, 17.
\(^{460}\) Ibid., 68.
\(^{461}\) Ibid.
\(^{462}\) Ibid., 69.
\(^{463}\) Ibid.
careful to not loose sight of the contemporary place and inhabitants. In *Suche nach Karalautschi*, Schulz-Semrau primarily sheds light on the experiences of Soviet citizens through her writer friend Juri Iwanow, a Russian author of the book *Von Kaliningrad nach Königsberg: auf der Suche nach verschollenen Schätzen* (1991), who arrived in Kaliningrad in 1945. Her interests here are not directed toward reclaiming through exclusionary means, but instead, she wishes to satisfy her own nostalgic longing, her described *Sehnsucht*, and maintain her childhood *Heimat* within the spatial designation *Karalautschi* – the site of her nostalgic childhood memories.

Her imagined return is initially prompted by the recent passing of her aunt Ella, in large part depicted as her chosen mother figure. She expresses that since her aunt’s passing she has been trying to gain her own proximity to her origins. To Schulz-Semrau, Ella constitutes: “der gute Geist meiner Kindheit, und sie war die Mittelsperson zwischen mir und meiner Stadt . . . Karalautschi.”\(^{464}\) The intricate linkage between her aunt Ella and her childhood place is confirmed in the final chapter, which states: “Wo Ellachen war, war Karalautschi, wie Böhmen am Meer. Also Karalautschi in der Altmark.”\(^{465}\) Her consistent references to Ella in this fashion display a nostalgia for the person, but also to a space. “Böhmen am Meer” intertextually refers to the location of a fictional place famously used within a Shakespearian play, *The Winter’s Tale*, but has also appeared in other literary works, such as Ingeborg Bachmann’s poem “Böhmen liegt am Meer” (1964) or the GDR writer Franz Fühmann’s 1962 short story “Böhmen am Meer.” Bohemia, a landlocked historical territory, and not along a seacoast, refers to a utopian space – one that does not exist in reality. Its reference here highlights Schulz-Semrau’s

\(^{464}\) Ibid., 11.
\(^{465}\) Ibid., 212.
Karalautschi as a fictional realm, not a physical territory but rather an imaginative one, within which she constructs personal planes of memory through the narrative of “das Kind.” It is the place of her nostalgic longing, and its manifestation in literature designates a space to which Schulz-Semrau can continuously return. This “Heimat of memory,” using Demshuk’s term, is loaded with images and instances of nostalgic longing: the places where she would play as a child, reconstructions of the city’s topography according to her memory, childhood songs such as “Över de stillen Straßen” or “Ähnnchen von Tharau,” and above all else her fond memories of her aunt Ella.

The construction of this imaginative space in literature is a key strategy that she employs to distance herself from politicized nostalgic notions. She explicitly states: “Überhaupt ist mein Karalautschi sicher ein anderes als das Königsberg von anderen Leuten, die einst dort gelebt haben.” Here, she makes clear that Karalautschi is her own subjective imagination, separating it from the actual referential place Königsberg (and from the memories of others). Karalautschi affords her the possibility of a return that is sentimental and avoids problematic political associations. At the outset of her narrative, she describes a trip she took with three other authors in the Lapland region of northern Scandinavia – one during which she initially recognizes her longing for her childhood place: “Nun hast du deine ehemalige Heimatstadt von allen Seiten her eingekreist. . . . Bis

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466 Cf. previous chapters one and two, pp. 41, 55, 59.
467 Schulz-Semrau, Suche nach Karalautschi, 56, 64-65, 123, 146-147.
468 Ibid., 43, 48, 51, 53, 123, 147, 165.
469 Ibid., 31.
470 Ibid., 103.
471 Ibid., 18.
Lettland, schließlich bis Litauen habe ichs geschafft,” but never to “die Stadt.” She has traveled to all possible places along the Baltic, but never to Kaliningrad. Her imaginative revisiting takes the place of this “missing link” – one that is later fulfilled in 1988 and depicted in Drei Kastanien. She recognizes the fact that the physical place has changed from the one remembered and maintains: “trotzdem treibe es mich, Spuren meiner Anfänge zu suchen. Und sei sie anders geworden, die Stadt, selbstverständlich, ich bin es ja auch.” The inclusion of a separate fictional character “das Kind” depicts herself as changed similar to Wolf’s novel. However, whereas Wolf seeks distance from the past, Schulz-Semrau attempts to gain proximity. While the narrative of “das Kind” allows Schulz-Semrau to construct positive memories of childhood and home in Karalautschi, she in her present considers her affective ties within her contemporary context. She does not deny her longing to revisit: “Es wird mir ein glücklicher Tag sein, wenn ich eine dritte Ansicht dazu hängen kann: Kaliningrad, wie auch immer es mit meiner Kindheitsstadt Karalautschi korrespondiert.” Important in her conceptualization of the former home is that she does not pretend to return to the past place as she remembers it. Her Karalautschi is the memorialization of her past, and she does not treat her experience as a narrative of suffering that pertains to all Germans from Königsberg – it is clearly her own subjective construal.

Additionally, she avoids the treatment of German suffering in exclusive terms through her evocation of a multidirectional memory discourse constructed through her recollection of Jewish citizens and her friend Juri Iwanow’s experiences. As discussed in

472 Author’s emphasis. Ibid., 9.
473 Ibid., 18.
474 Bammer, 113.
475 Schulz-Semrau, Suche nach Karalautschi, 22.
chapter two, multidirectional memory refers to Rothberg’s conceptualization of memory in terms of “negotiation, cross-referencing, and borrowing.” It encourages us to consider memory, not in terms of competition, but as a complex network of overlapping and intersecting narratives. This helps to contextualize German suffering along side other narratives of victimization, but Schulz-Semrau also includes the German-Soviet past of perpetration as well. She presents a complicated negotiation of perpetration and suffering as a part of both German and Soviet histories. This is interesting given East Germany’s relationship to the Soviet “brother state,” but Schulz-Semrau nonetheless addresses this dimension in her writing in brief and subtle ways.

Perhaps most telling in this regard is her indirect allusion to her aunt Ella’s rape after the war. She recalls having ideological disagreements with her aunt, particularly when she was studying to become a teacher in East Germany in the 1960s: her “politisches Besserwisserei” and “dilettantischen marxistischen Kenntnisse” clashed with her aunt’s “religiösen Ansichten,” as she explains. In an argument, her aunt (it is not explained exactly why) brings up her postwar experiences and shares how “ihr infolge des Krieges als Frau Schänden zugefügt worden waren.” While she does not go into detail, she does imply with the term “Schänden” the rape of German women such as her aunt by Soviet soldiers after the war, which according to Niven is one of the discourse areas that is only addressed in a limited fashion in East German literature. He explains: “Unsurprisingly, rape by the Red Army and other acts of inhumanity by Soviets, Poles,

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476 Rothberg, 3,6.
477 Schulz-Semrau, Suche nach Karalautschi, 132, 134.
478 Ibid., 134.
and Czechs against Germans were rarely openly confronted in GDR prose works.\textsuperscript{479} Schulz-Semrau’s inclusion here indicates, however, how such issues may have been addressed in subtle and implicit ways. She continues the mention of her aunt’s experience with a recalled conversation that she had with a Russian friend, Jewgenia Katzewa, whom her husband met while in Moscow. Their mutual discussion of violence committed onto citizens by both sides creates a multidirectional memory constellation centered on perpetration. While again Schulz-Semrau does not include the content or details of their discussion, she does indicate the possibility of negotiating such complex positions.

Schulz-Semrau explains that Katzewa has her own military background as a WWII sailor in the Baltic Fleet and radio operator, and due to her German language knowledge, served as a translator from 1945 to 1949 in the Soviet sector of Berlin. Their mutual interest in German language authors (e.g. Heinrich Böll, Max Frisch, and Hermann Kant) served as the basis of their friendship.\textsuperscript{480} In a heated debate, they confront the troubled German-Soviet past and the violence inflicted on both sides: “Wir wurden erregt, schrien uns an, stritten um die moralischen Haltungen der Männer des vergangenen Krieges in einer uns sonst nicht eigenen brutalen direkten Sprache.”\textsuperscript{481} While this does take a normative stance with regard to perpetration as conducted predominantly on the side of men, it

\textsuperscript{479} Niven, 8.
\textsuperscript{480} Schulz-Semrau, \textit{Suche nach Karalautschi}, 136. Literature seems to have connected German and Soviet authors especially in the 1970s and 80s on in a spirit of conciliation. One famous example is the friendship between Heinrich Böll and Lew Kopelew. Cf. for example their interviews and conversations documented in \textit{Warum haben wir aufeinander geschossen?} (München: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1981); or their Letters (dating back to 1962) presented in \textit{Heinrich Böll – Lew Kopelew: Briefwechsel}, ed., Elsbeth Zylla (Göttingen: Steidl Verlag, 2011). The Russian language poet Sem Simkin is another exemplary figure in this regard: Interested in uncovering the traces of the German Königsberg, he collected poetry by Königsberg poets in his 1993 Russian-German language volume, \textit{Свет ты мой единственный} / \textit{Du mein einzig Licht}.
\textsuperscript{481} Schulz-Semrau, \textit{Suche nach Karalautschi}, 137.
nonetheless invites a consideration of German-Soviet perpetration as a mutual point of connection in need of processing. Nonetheless, this “unblutige Schlacht, die wir gegen und miteinander führten” as she refers to it, results in a productive exchange and strengthening of their relationship with Schulz-Semrau stating: “sie räumte in mir aus, was inzwischen zu ungesunden Komplexen geworden war.”  

The multidirectional memory discourse that she crafts in *Suche nach Karalautschi* includes both narratives of suffering and perpetration, which serves a constructive contextualization and dialogical function.


She then contrasts his experience of hardship and survival with that of her aunt Ella, both stories occurring at the same time in the later half of 1945. For Ella, she narrates, it was:

„dort wohl die schwerste ihres Lebens . . . Leichen aus den Trümmern buddeln, sie namenlos, im Wettkampf gegen Epidemien, irgendwo in die Erde bringen. Tödliches hatte für mich vorgeherrscht. Und da nun nach Jahren kommen die Erlebnisse meines sowjetischen Kollegen auf mich. Der junge Juri war in die Stadt gekommen, wenige Monate nachdem ich sie verlassen hatte.“

Without Juri’s story of survival in Kaliningrad, she would continue to picture the place in terms of death and destruction. The multidirectional memory of Juri’s and Ella’s experiences narrated here in juxtaposition to each other create a complicated picture of

482 Ibid., 137-138.
483 Ibid., 22.
484 Ibid.
postwar events and forced migration. For the orphan Juri, the experience constitutes a hope for new beginnings, whereas for Ella it signifies a violent end. According to Niven, “as Schulz-Semrau *reimagines* Karalautschi, so she *imagines* postwar Königsberg and Kaliningrad, in a layering that acknowledges and ultimately merges German and Soviet experience and history.”485 In her layering, she is also able to work through the contours of her memory and affective dimensions in a contextualized fashion. In general, her text does not shy away from the German past, but instead lays it bare: she describes the National Socialist rallies that took place in the city (as a child she too attended such events),486 the euthanasia conducted under National Socialism,487 pogroms against Jewish citizens and establishments,488 and the Holocaust and additional racism toward Poles (Ella’s husband Anton was Kaschubian).489 Her memories and descriptions of events taking place during National Socialism help to contextualize German suffering after the war. She frames neither flight and expulsion nor her childhood *Heimat* in exclusively German terms, instead indicating the multiple attachments and events as a part of a larger German-Soviet history.

In an explicit move to not dwell on her memories of suffering and hardship, she juxtaposes her memories of 1944 (their flight from the city through the Pillau) with earlier memories of her childhood in her Karalautschi. These memories reveal a sentimentality that functions to help her satisfy her longing to return while also finding positive points of connection to her past. In these instances, narratives of “das Kind”

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485 Niven, 116.
487 Ibid., 158-159, 163.
488 Ibid., 160-162.
489 Ibid., 59-60.
appear prominently as well as imagined topographical “mental maps” of the city. “Das Kind” signals a distance, indicating that she is narrating a different time and place, but also demonstrates a discomfort with her nostalgic ties. As she traverses her memories and constructs her literary, imagined return, she employs a topographical structure, instead of a chronological one. Her “mental map” begins at her family’s house, Tragheimer-Kirchen-Straße 17, and moves on from there to describe the larger city, as if she were giving directions from her house to various places.\(^{490}\) In this way, her family’s home remains the point of orientation as she takes readers across the city, narrating memories related to particular spots. This is important to her, since as she explains: “Die Plätze meiner Kindheit, die mir wichtig waren, finde ich in keinem Buch als Sehenswürdigkeit angepriesen.”\(^{491}\) Along these lines, she also avoids descriptions of famous landmarks, instead focusing her attention on the places important to “das Kind.” She states, for examples, that she only remembers the Königsberg castle well, because her father used to go to a Stammtisch there, but she does not recall the Königsberg food that was served.\(^{492}\) These are deliberate moves that she employs to distance herself from a politicized or sensationalized memorial engagement with the place to rather focus on her own personal linkages.

One example in particular demonstrates her usage of mental maps to construct her Karalautschi and recall positive connections to her childhood. She explains:

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\text{Vier Monate mindestens ist die Mutter in jedem Jahr verreist. Das ist für das Kind schmerzhaft, aber es gibt auch Freiheit. . . . Hat sich die Wohnungstür wieder einmal hinter der Mutter geschlossen, die Tränen versiegten und die Erschütterung über ungewohnte Umarmungen läßt nach, da rennt das Kind durch die Wohnung,}
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\(^{490}\) Ibid., 14.
\(^{491}\) Ibid., 19.
\(^{492}\) Ibid., 19-20.
Here, she details the difficult relationship that she had with her mother, however, immediately juxtaposes this memory with a redeeming one: that she was afforded quite a bit of freedom as a child. She does not dwell on her feeling of abandonment, but construes the memory to emphasize her opportunity for adventure, search, and play. “Das Kind” begins the journey through Karalautechi by walking in the direction of train station and going to the corner of the Tiepoldstraße, by the Tierklinik – an important place to her since she as a child wanted to be a veterinarian. Her topographical constructions, the mental maps, locate “das Kind” within Karalautechi, presenting the places of subjective importance. Another significant place to “das Kind” is the Rummel – a market place and fairground in the city. Moving on from the animal clinic, the narrative of “das Kind” continues: “Nun hat das Kind endlich sein Ziel, die Ecke, erreicht, die Tragheimer Kirchenstraße stößt auf die Wrangelstraße. Da muß es die Straße überqueren, denn dort ist . . . Aber es blieb erst mal stehen, starr vor Schreck, schwach vor Enttäuschung. Der Rummel?” Here, she recalls the destruction of the market place by aerial bombs in 1944, signaled by the ellipsis. Despite the physical destruction of a favorite childhood place, Schulz-Semrau narrates the market place in detail to fill the gap through a narrative of “das Kind.”

The market place was one that the child frequently visited in “seinen Träumereien” – constructing a story that she lived there in a small trailer. “Das Kind”

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493 Ibid., 43.
494 Ibid., 44.
495 Ibid., 51.
participated in everyday life at the Rummel, which appears to be a childhood “utopia.” She, “Hat sich abwechselnd in Würfelbuden, Karussells und solchen Vorführtheatern betätigt, am Abend unter tausenden bunten Lichtern, zwischen Musik, Lachen und Reden.”496 “Das Kind” finds solace at the market place in Karalautschi: “Nirgendwo auf der Welt, wußte das Kind, hatte es Glück. Nur auf dem Rummel.”497 Switching back to first-person narration, Schulz-Semrau reveals a negative association with the Rummel. She once bought a glass bowl for her mother, who did not like the glass on account that it was “bloß Preßglas, so ein Tinnef kommt mir nicht ins Zimmer,” her mother complained.498 She thinks: “so versuchte ich mir die Zuneigung meiner Mutter zu erkaufen. Oder wie soll ich es sonst nennen? Es mußte mir doch gelingen, daß sie mich gern hatte, wie andere Mütter ihre Kinder auch.” The juxtaposition of her memories in the first-person and those narrated through “das Kind” demonstrate a mnemonic strategy to reevaluate her childhood in positive terms. Without forgetting hardships, she nonetheless attempts to find positive linkages to her childhood past, located in her Karalautschi.

Another example and detailed narration of “das Kind” traversing Karalautschi has to do with a major shopping center in the city, the Spirgatis. Along with the market place and fairgrounds, the child also finds excitement and joy at Spirgatis. Constructing the topography of her Karalautschi, Schulz-Semrau describes the child’s movements:

Es sprintet zurück in seine Straße, an seinem Haus vorbei, über die Hohenzollerstraße, Wallsche Gasse, kurz darauf steht es atemlos vor dem Schaufenster dieses Spirgatis, eines endlosen Ladens, besser wohl Kaufhauses,

496 Ibid., 51.
497 Ibid., 52.
498 Ibid., 52-53.
Furthermore constructing her mental map of Karalautschi, Schulz-Semrau spatially locates the shopping center: “Verließ man den Laden auf der anderen Seite, stand man auf dem bewegtesten Teil des Steindamms. Links erhob sich, von etwas Rasen umgeben, die graue Steindammer Kirche, die älteste wohl in dieser Stadt, schon 1258 erwähnt. Ihr gegenüber lag das Kino.” On the one hand, such topographical descriptions construct her imagined Karalautschi space, but in reference to actual streets and place from Königsberg, they can also evoke a nostalgic mnemonic engagement with the actual place. This can have a particular effect on readers from the former Königsberg with one reader, for example, writing to her: “Es gibt kaum eine Straße, die Sie erwähnen, durch die ich nicht unzählige Male gegangen wäre. In der Kaplanstraße wohnten meine Großeltern, in der Tragheimer Kirchenstraße hatte der Bruder meines Vaters eine kleine Schneiderwerkstatt. Meine Eltern und ich wohnten in der Krugstraße…Ich ging Jahre lang täglich durch die Fließstraße…” This letter demonstrates the effect of her literally construed mental maps on some readers with their own personal memories of the city. This memorial engagement may encourage and empower other readers to recall and reconstrue their own topographical mental maps of the city – their own Karalautschi. The attention to the place does not suggest any interest in reclaiming, but does reveal the development of a mnemonic network of the author and readers collectively keeping the memory of their former home alive. In *Suche nach Karalautschi*, Schulz-Semrau focuses on the meaning of sites to “das Kind.” At Spirgatis, for example: “Das Wichtigste aber

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499 Ibid., 53.
500 Ibid., 53-54.
waren die Verkaufsschätze. Zeitlos konnte das Kind hier herumträumen, und wenn es Geld hatte, abwägen, was am günstigsten zu kaufen war."

Other sites of importance were: “Seine drei Reiche – Balkon, Hof, Grabsteingarten – regierte das Kind mit ortsspeziellen Spielen.” There “das Kind hatte auch sein Paradies. . . . Das Kind konnte damals vieles hinter sich lassen.”

In the description and topographical construction of Karalautschi, Schulz-Semrau narrates the positive sites from her childhood past. “Das Kind” traverses the places of importance and nostalgic longing. While as Bammer contends Wolf “recognizes nostalgia as a force” but makes an effort to distance herself from her nostalgia personally, Schulz-Semrau demonstrates ownership over this emotion and employs strategies to maintain it while avoiding revanchist reclamations.

In the absence of a physical return, the author construes her childhood place as a subjective mnemonic site in her autobiographical prose writing. She attempts to find positive connections to her past to reevaluate and accept it as a part of herself. The memories of 1944, their flight, as well as those of her difficult family life, particularly through her relationship to her mother, are constant reminders of the hardships that she endured. Her inclusion of the third person figure, “das Kind,” creates points of reflection for her to attempt to positively redeem her childhood in her self-constructive literary process. This positive redemption tied to her aunt Ella and childhood Heimat, Karalautschi, is an attempt to make peace with and accept the past experiences, place, and nostalgic affective attachments as parts of her self-understanding. She clearly positions Karalautschi and “das Kind” as her own subjective constructions,

502 Schulz-Semrau, Suche nach Karalautschi, 54.
503 Ibid., 145-146.
504 Bammer, 121.
contextualizes her experiences within history and multidirectional memory, and reminds us that not only Germans experienced hardships. This shatters revanchist illusions without fully negating the fact that some of the past places in Königsberg – rendered as her Karalautschi – are still a part of her self.

III. DREI KASTANIEN AUS KÖNIGSBERG: TOURISM TO KALININGRAD

Das Kind and Karalautschi continue to manifest in her second autobiographical prose work, Drei Kastanien. In this text published in 1990, six years after Suche nach Karalautschi, Schulz-Semrau narrates her experiences and thoughts derived from a tourism trip that she undertook to Kaliningrad in 1988. While “das Kind” and thoughts of Karalautschi emerge during her visit to the changed place, her focus is less so on the construction of these imaginative sites and figures and more aptly centered on finding new points of connection that look to the future. Throughout her trip, her imagined Karalautschi and “das Kind” appear as mnemonic features accompanying her in the city. She imagines das Kind as traversing Karalautschi in the process of her physical tour of the contemporary place, bridging both past and present times. In this way, she reveals the presence of nostalgia as she travels, but also a conscious awareness of her sentimental ties that she continues to negotiate. According to Demshuk, such Heimweh tourism exchanges helped expellees to realize their lost homes as permanently changed.505 Schulz-Semrau already details her recognition of her physical childhood Heimat as changed and lost in Suche nach Karalautschi, which prompts her imaginative construction of past place and time in that work. In Drei Kastanien, she revisits the place

505 Demshuk, Lost German East, 123-124.
much as a tourist in order to establish new relationships to contemporary inhabitants and contemplate the possibility of Kaliningrad as a German-Soviet site of memory. Toward this end, she continues her construction of multidirectional memory and moreover contemplates her simultaneous feelings of nostalgia alongside guilt and culpability, which becomes more pronounced in this later work. Along with the continuation of these affective contemplations, Schulz-Semrau details the activities of contemporary inhabitants and their interest in rediscovering the historical German Königsberg within the cultural sphere. In this way, Schulz-Semrau conveys a sense of German-Soviet friendship and partnership with regard to a shared regional past, albeit one that is in a process of negotiation. Issues related to German-Soviet victimization and guilt remain ongoing matters of concern.

Nostalgia appears in the opening lines of Drei Kastanien through a poem, “Am Gartenzaun” by Agnes Miegel, and various Heimatbilder that she finds among her aunt Ella’s belongings, indicating the mediated role of memory and the ability of sentimental objects to elicit emotional responses. Schulz-Semrau explains that she reads the poem as one that depicts Russians and Germans as neighbors: “die einander genug bekämpft hätten, nun aber verständnisvoll und friedlich nebeneinander Leben sollten.” Further commenting on this in her afterword, she explains: “Ich habe dieses Gedicht als eine Art poetische Idee in mein Reisetagebuch eingebaut, hoffe, dass es mein Verlag akzeptiert.” Framing her travel account with this poem featured at the beginning and end indicates her intention with the report to instill a sense of German-Russian friendship, while maintaining an indication of her own nostalgic sentiments. Here,

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506 As mentioned in chapter 2, Tina Campt discusses this idea with regard to photos.
507 Schulz-Semrau, Drei Kastanien, 217.
nostalgia does not exclude one’s ability to move forward. Indeed, she attempts to establish friendship ties and new connections, all the while maintaining an awareness of her own affective mode.

In an example from her time in Kaliningrad, she shows the potential of nostalgia to lead to positive, conciliatory contacts. While walking in the city with a new friend of hers, Julia – a teacher she met in Kaliningrad, she stumbles upon old streetcar tracks. “Mein Gott,” she thinks, “das gibt es noch? Das ist doch die Straßenbahnlinie zu Tante Ella! Ich glaube, das ist sie. Muß sie sein! . . . Die kleine Marjell beginnt aus mir herauszuklettern . . .”508 Using a now outdated East Prussian term for girl, “Marjell,” Schulz-Semrau reveals a sense of her nostalgia and childhood that comes to mind. She narrates the images of the past with regard to herself and Ella through “das Kind,” which eventually lead her to find Ella’s old house: “ES IST DAS HAUS!”509 Her meeting with the contemporary owner, a woman who arrived in Kaliningrad in 1946, prompts dialogue and a sharing of stories that bring Schulz-Semrau “zwischen Heulen und Lachen…,”510 displaying the complexity of nostalgic emotion. In Drei Kastanien, Schulz-Semrau continues her contemplation of the reality and role of nostalgia begun in Suche nach Karalautschi: Her train ride to Kaliningrad from Moscow initiates a nostalgic mood with her use of the term “Kondukteurin,” to which she comments: “ich weiß nicht, warum ich auf diese nostalgische Bezeichnung komme.”511 Furthermore, at the outset of her trip she recalls nostalgic spaces and sounds, such as songs form her childhood: “mir kommt, weiß

508 Ibid., 91.
509 Ibid., 93.
510 Ibid.
511 Ibid., 14.
ich’s warum, eine Kindheitsmelodie.” Expanding the discourse on nostalgia in *Drei Kastanien*, Schulz-Semrau details the expectations that contemporary Soviet citizens have of her – she is expected to feel nostalgic. Her friend Juri, who helped arrange her visa, writes to her that her trip would be:

schwierig (das Herz betreffend). Seelisch . . . Ich stelle mir vor, wie Sie die Zähne zusammenbeißen werden müssen, wie Sie Tränen in den Augen haben werden, wenn Sie, Elisabeth, wenn Sie mit dem Fuß die Erde betreten werden, auf der Sie als Mädchen gingen. Und es wird Sie froh stimmen, daß etwas erhalten blieb, und bitter, daß so viel verloren ging.

Almost in a cliché like fashion, this form of nostalgia for the place as a painful return is expected. However in her journey, Schulz-Semrau diverts from this nostalgic model directed toward sites of nostalgic importance to instead focus on contemporary people and possibilities for a collaborative and conciliatory future. As becomes evident during the trip, however, these remain ongoing processes as she experiences both symbolic gestures of conciliation in juxtaposition to interpersonal, deeply felt moments of collaborative memory work.

Not only Juri, but also others in Kaliningrad have expectations of her as someone from the former Königsberg. Exemplary of a symbolic gesture, she is asked to conduct an interview with a local Kaliningrad film crew by the cathedral ruins. Tellingly, the crew

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512 Ibid., 15, 16.
513 Ibid., 13.
514 In a way, this is similar to what I have discussed elsewhere with regard to Robert Thalheim’s film *Am Ende kommen Touristen* (2007). In both cases, a symbolic (and somewhat superficial) memorial culture is presented as inhibitive to interpersonal conciliation. Thalheim’s film stresses the importance of personal communicative exchange as an integral part of memory work. This is similar to Schulz-Semrau’s depiction. Cf. Meghan O’Dea, “Reflecting on the Present Burdened by the Past: German-Polish Relations in Robert Thalheim’s Film *Am Ende kommen Touristen* (2007),” *German Politics and Society*, Special Issue on “German-Polish Border Regions in Contemporary Culture and Politics: Between Regionalism and Transnationalism,” eds., Friederike Eigler and Astrid Weigert, 31.4 (2013): 40-58 (here esp. cf. 47, 49).
films the interview in front of the statues of two medieval figures, a knight and one of an Orthodox Christian saint Euphemia, with a Latin quote containing “vom ewigen Frieden.” The figure of Euphemia symbolizes the act of speaking out against injustice – she is remembered as a martyr who publically denounced the torture of Christians in the fourth century.⁵¹⁵ The interviewers ask Schulz-Semrau to recount her childhood in Königsberg and to comment on the “Frieden dieser Euphemia” and how it relates to the “Frieden der Welt.”⁵¹⁶ The symbolic gesture for peace is, however, juxtaposed with points of contention between Schulz-Semrau and her local guide Rita. This demonstrates a still troubled sense of understanding, and the interview with its spatial orientation as somewhat superficial. Schulz-Semrau explains that she had never seen the statue before: “Rita entrüstet sich darüber, schließlich müsse man seine Heimat doch kennen!” She is expected to be an expert in East Prussian, Königsberg remnants, even though she as a child had other interests: “Ich habe mich damals mehr für meine Puppen und meinen Roller interessiert, antworte ich. Rita schüttelt den Kopf über so viel Ignoranz.”⁵¹⁷ This attitude towards Schulz-Semrau reveals a still problematic sense of interpersonal understanding and outside expectations placed upon her as a member of the Erfahrungsgeneration. She is both expected to react in certain ways and also have a particular “insider” knowledge of the former place. In terms of peace, Schulz-Semrau states in her interview: “dass diese Stadt für mich wie nichts auf der Welt sichtbar mache, welch grauenhafte Folgen Kriege haben!”⁵¹⁸ To this Rita responds: “Aber Elisabeth, Sie

⁵¹⁶ Schulz-Semrau, Drei Kastanien, 76.
⁵¹⁷ Ibid.
⁵¹⁸ Ibid.
sollten doch auf den Frieden in der ganzen Welt eingehen!"\(^{519}\) Not seeking to make overgeneralized statements pertaining to global peace (within this context especially between socialist „brother states“), Schulz-Semrau maintains her focus on her own subjective experience and viewpoint. Her interest is more aptly located at the individual level and initiating interpersonal dialogue as a means of working towards conciliation and understanding.

In different ways, feelings of guilt and German-Soviet culpability enter interpersonal dialogues and are a part of Schulz-Semrau’s multidirectional memory construction. She is, however, hopeful for a constructive future and positive relationships. Realizing the unreliability of her own memory, for instance, she anticipates that people will help her: “Ich würde nach wie vor meine Schwierigkeiten haben, Vertrautes wiederzufinden. Aber es würden Menschen geben, die mir dabei halfen.”\(^{520}\) One of her key interactions abroad with regard to German guilt occurs during her visit with the local teacher Julia and her family. Julia’s mother is Jewish, and Julia (a teacher of German) translates her mother’s story. During her visit, Schulz-Semrau wonders: “Waren vielleicht aus eben dieser Wohnung [Julia’s apartment] Juden zur Deportation angeholt worden, oder hatte man sich, wie ich es bei meinen Eltern erlebte, flüstern über das Unrecht der Judenverfolgung empört?”\(^{521}\) She recalls the pogroms against Jewish people that she witnessed as a child: the yellow star, the long lines at the stores since they would only sell to Jewish people between certain hours. She states: “es hat in mir ein Schuldgefühl zurückgelassen. Ich erzähle ihnen davon.“ Julia responds that also in their

\(^{519}\) Ibid., 77.
\(^{520}\) Ibid., 22.
\(^{521}\) Ibid., 78.
country “so viel Unheil” occurred. In Schulz-Semrau’s recollection of German perpetration, Julia and her mother point to Soviet culpability as well, in particular to the treatment of Germans after the war. Julia writes to her in a letter about a German family who lived in their neighborhood after 1945 and struggled to sustain themselves. She too contemplates her own feelings of guilt. Later in *Drei Kastanien*, Juri also raises the question of Soviet culpability, to which he clearly states: “Das ist schon richtig, Elisabeth, Stalin – das war unsere Zeit des Faschismus!” Schulz-Semrau thinks: “ähnliches hatte ich vorher nie gehört, aber mein Wissen darum, dass Juris Vater ein Mitkämpfer Lenins, ermordet worden war, seine Mutter 1946, nach ihrer Rückkehr, an den Folgen eines politischen Lagers starb, ließ mich die Behauptung Juris akzeptieren.” These examples reveal the contemplation of multidirectional memory along intersecting memories of German-Soviet perpetration. In *Drei Kastanien*, these issues are raised as points of reflection and consideration, but, with the exception of her conversation with Julia’s family, provide little detail and elaboration. In this way, limits to multidirectional memory appear, albeit as points for further scrutiny. Nonetheless, important with regard to her return visit abroad are the interpersonal encounters and opportunities for dialogue that the trip affords. The troubled past emerges in these instances, but remains to be issues of further negotiation. Schulz-Semrau’s nostalgia toward her childhood place, which she continuously refers to as her imaginative “Karalautschi” (neither Königsberg nor Kaliningrad), persists as an affective component that is negotiated alongside the memory of German guilt and culpability. The Soviet

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522 Ibid., 79-80.
523 Ibid., 89.
524 Ibid., 185.
memories that she encounters abroad are new points of consideration that constitute a complex multidirectional memory constellation.

A final contribution to the multidirectional memory discourse in *Drei Kastanien* is the inclusion of possible German-Soviet shared sites of nostalgic evocation. During a visit with Julia in Cranz (today’s Zelenogradsk in Kaliningrad), Schulz-Semrau narrates the juxtaposition of her and Julia’s sensed nostalgia. Schulz-Semrau recalls visiting Cranz as a child, and Julia shares that she was born there – as such, for both, memories of childhood emerge. “Diesen weiten Landschaft,” Schulz-Semrau thinks, “ansteigend und abfallend in sanften Wellen. Würde ich hier Leben, fände ich vielleicht wieder zu Gedichten . . .”¹⁵²⁵ She feels herself growing poetic with regards to the landscape, signaling a typical form of nostalgia. Yet, she interjects her affective considerations by including Julia’s. Julia shows her where she lived with her family and played as a child. Schulz-Semrau remarks: “Julia wird ganz aufgeregt. Sehen Sie Frau Elisabeth, dort, wo die Tür aufgeht, habe ich gewohnt. Mit Mutti und Oma. Um den Wasserturm haben wir als Kinder gespielt. Oh, hier ist der schönste Ort auf der ganzen Welt!”¹⁵²⁶ At dinner later that day, her guide Rita remarks: “Das war aber komisch in Selenogradsk [Cranz/ Zelenogradsk], meint Rita. Nicht als ob Sie, sondern Julia nach 43 Jahren ihre Heimat wiederzuentdecken suchte…”¹⁵²⁷ Nostalgia, as such, appears connected to childhood in general – as an affective mnemonic dimension experienced by many. Schulz-Semrau furthermore thinks: “Mir scheint, es ist psychologisch zu erklären. . . Immerhin lebt sie mit ihm [her childhood place] 37 Jahre. Bei mir waren es nur dreizehnhalb. Wessen

¹⁵²⁵ Ibid., 60.
¹⁵²⁶ Ibid., 61.
¹⁵²⁷ Ibid., 74.
Heimat ist es also mehr …”\textsuperscript{528} As such, it is not something quantitatively determinable and not a competition, but something shared and ever present. This inclusion in a sense “normalizes” nostalgic affect and presents the possibility of German-Soviet shared nostalgic spaces.

Contemplating her journey at the end of her trip Schulz-Semrau thinks: “Eines stimmt wirklich, die grüne Stadt Kaliningrad lehrt mich wieder sehen – allerdings auch sehnen . . .”\textsuperscript{529} She learns to she the place as it is in its contemporary changed form, but to also reconcile with her nostalgic affective longing. Through her imagination of Karalautschi, her nostalgic past can remain without conflating it entirely with the changed place. In the final pages of \textit{Drei Kastanien}, Schulz-Semrau reflects upon her trip a year after her return. She lists her Russian friends and the work that they are doing in the city to keep a memory of Königsberg alive. She refers to the city as “unsere Stadt” – “Ich weiß, was ich schreibe, wenn ich dieses kostbare Possessivpronomen unsere für diese Stadt verwende,”\textsuperscript{530} she writes. Though nostalgic affect and sentimental ties to her Karalautschi accompany her through her tour of Kaliningrad, she maintains open to new encounters and connections. Her inclusion of multidirectional memory linkages enable her to show intersecting points of German-Soviet past relations. She appears hopeful for future collaborative work.

\textsuperscript{528} Ibid., 74.
\textsuperscript{529} Ibid., 144.
\textsuperscript{530} Ibid., 150.
Similar to the reception of Surminski’s literature, reviews of Schulz-Semrau’s texts also convey the suspicious and regressive perceptions of nostalgic ties to former homes. Tellingly, positive assessments of her works remark on its lack of sentimentality, which is an attempt to showcase her writing as a critical intervention vis-à-vis supposed regressive sentimentality. Such reviews, though, overshadow the emotional dimension present in her prose. One of the first reviews of *Suche nach Karalautschi* appeared in 1985 in GDR press, shortly following its publication. It initially describes the work as a “schmerzliche, aber mehr noch eine mit der Zeit bewältigte Erinnerung an eine Landschaft und an ihre Menschen,” and concludes with the lines: “Von Bewältigtem und Bleibendem ist die Rede, gefühlvoll und doch unsentimental, von der Suche nach einem Karalautschi als einer Lebenslandschaft, in der heute Frieden und Glück gut aufgehoben sind.”531 This review contains contradictory remarks in its description of the work as painful and full of feeling, yet unsentimental. In an attempt to market her work favorably, this review promotes her writing above all else as unsentimental and, as such, downplays her emotional undertaking. It reflects the troubling status of sentimentality toward former homes as well as the preferred mode of writing (unsentimental). The use of the descriptor “bewältigte” and term “Bewältigtem,” furthermore, indicates a central concern with “moving on,” that is, overcoming former homes and painful memories. Moving on and integration were key facets of the GDR’s understanding of, policy, and treatment toward German forced migrants. This is largely reflected through the use of the label *Umsiedler* to refer to expellees, which suggests permanent, and even voluntary, resettlement. Aside

from indicating the suspect status of sentimentality and nostalgia toward former homes, this review also reflects the socio-political project of integration, which in this case, appears to devalue memories and affinities toward the old *Heimat*.

As previously discussed, nostalgic attitudes were assigned to the west as a part of revanchist politics seeking to reclaim former homes. In the GDR, the old home in earlier literature of the 1950s and 60s is presented as “an illusion” and “those committed to retrieving the old *Heimat* are revanchists of the worst kind and a threat to peace.”

This perception of nostalgia appears to have continued into later decades within which Schulz-Semrau writes. Nostalgia appears to be a regressive memorial engagement that impedes social progress, and with proper integration, it would cease to be. This stands in contrast to Schulz-Semrau’s writing, within which she continues to take an interest, even a nostalgic one, in her former *Heimat*. She is after all a well-integrated member of mainstream GDR society as a teacher and bestselling author. Her interest in her childhood home, as such, complicates this understanding of integration. It demonstrates that integration does not in every case imply a forgetting of former homes and cultural communities – one does not necessarily replace the other, as it may be a more complex process of negotiating positions of plurality. Bammer argues with regard to Wolf and Grass that:

> both authors distance themselves from the past: they cast their young selves in the third person as if they had once been someone else and give names to the places of their childhood in ways that reflect their historical, not personal significance. As these distancing strategies comfortably match the political stance that both authors espouse, they seem to have succeeded in staving off nostalgia.

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532 See chapter one, pp. 48-50.
533 Niven, 73.
534 Bammer, 114.
Similar to Grass and Wolf, Schulz-Semrau employs a third person figure “das Kind,” but rather than signifying the former *Heimat* in terms of historical significance, Schulz-Semrau crafts an imaginative site of memory that is highly personal and nostalgically sentimental. This does not diminish the reflective and critical aspects of her writing. On the contrary, it enables her the possibility of maintaining the former *Heimat* as a personal site of memory while maintaining her integrated status in the GDR and an awareness of problematic perceptions of nostalgic expression.

Reflecting upon her nostalgic affinities, she asks herself in *Suche nach Karalautschi*:

> Nun mag man mich fragen, was ich damit bezwecke, die Bilder hervorzuholen, sie sogar herumzuzeigen. Selbst wenn sie aus subjektivster Sicht geschossen wurden [sic], enthalten sie doch unverrückbare Realien. Bereite ich damit nicht Menschen, die wie ich aus dieser Gegend stammen, Schmerz? Will ich aufreißen, was an heilender Haut darübergewachsen ist? Einstimmen in Klagelieder solcher Vertriebenenvereine? 

These questions raise the issue of nostalgia’s complexity and typical alignment with expellee organizations, explicitly deemed revanchist and militaristic in the GDR press. She furthermore states that she would be lying if she claimed that her “Sehnsüchte wären einem notwendigen Vergessen anheimgefallen.” Her goal in writing is to do exactly the opposite, namely, work against forgetting. She states: “Denn ich will, daß es bleibt und nicht vergessen wird, was geschehen, also ein Teil unserer Geschichte ist! Aber Geschichte ist nun eben auch, daß heute dort sowjetische Menschen strandwandern oder gehen.” In these early passages, Schulz-Semrau reveals a discomfort with her nostalgic

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535 Schulz-Semrau, *Suche nach Karalautschi*, 76.
536 Cf. chapter one.
537 Schulz-Semrau, *Suche nach Karalautschi*, 76.
538 Ibid., 76-77.
longings and memories and an awareness of nostalgia’s problematic perception, but at the same time cannot deny their existence. She mirrors this understanding in *Drei Kastanien* when asked to share childhood memories and her feelings toward Königsberg during her meeting with the writers’ union in Kaliningrad. “Man verargt mir meine Sehnsucht nach Heimat nicht,” she thinks, “fühlt sich nicht bedroht durch mein Suchen nach Ehemaligen oder vermutet gar revanchistisches Zurückholenwollen [sic].” Schulz-Semrau’s writing exemplifies an opportunity to critically probe her nostalgic affinities and try to accept her emotional ties to her childhood *Heimat* as a part of her personal experience of loss without conveying reactionary desires. She restores her *Heimat* in the imaginative space of Karalautschi and maintains a connection to her former childhood self as part of her own self-construal.

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539 Ibid., 148.
CHAPTER 5

RETURN VISITS TO KALININGRAD IN THE EUROPEAN PRESENT:
POSTMEMORIAL ENCOUNTERS AND SECOND GENERATION NOSTALGIA
IN STEPHANIE KUHLMANN’S HOFFNUNG HEÎßT NADJESCHDA

With the 2004 incorporation of the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Cyprus, and Malta, the European Union began expanding into southern and eastern Europe, ending its existence as an institution of western European countries in the post-Cold War period.\(^5\) With twenty-eight member states, the EU currently extends from the Baltic to the Atlantic and Mediterranean Sea.\(^4\) For many, this border reconfiguration symbolically marks the end of a European Cold War divide, as the now inducted formerly communist central and eastern European states celebrated their so-called “return to Europe.”\(^5\) However, the shift of the European periphery further east has also raised particular security concerns, especially for countries sharing a border with a non-EU state – not least exemplified by the most recent and ongoing conflicts in Ukraine and Syria. Pro-Russian separatism in Ukraine, in particular, has again raised questions regarding Russia’s relationship to Europe and has brought the


\(^{541}\) While the UK voted to leave the EU in what has been termed “Brexit” in June 2016, they remain to be a de facto member. The conditions for their separation from the union are not yet clear and are pending further negotiations. Cf. Ongoing coverage by The Economist: www.economist.com/brexit.

region of Kaliningrad to the fore.\footnote{Thorsten Benner, “Europe, the US and the Russian-Ukrainian Conflict,” Global Public Policy Institute, March 19, 2015, http://www.gppi.net/publications/peace-security/article/europe-the-us-and-the-ukrainian-russian-conflict/} As recent news reports on Russia and Ukraine highlight, Kaliningrad’s location as a Russian exclave surrounded by European Union member states generates worry that it will serve as a strategic military post for Russia by serving to station weapons and Russian troops at the EU border.\footnote{Kaliningrad is said to have an important role in the stationing of the Iskander short-range missile launching system and over 30,000 Russian troops. See Florian Hassel, „Anlauf zum Wettrüsten,“ Süddeutsche Zeitung, June 16, 2015; Frank Nienhuysen, “40 neue Atomraketen,” Süddeutsche Zeitung, June 17, 2015.}

Although these security issues tend to dominate current discussions of the region in Europe, Kaliningrad’s peculiar geographical situation spurs alternative socio-cultural possibilities. The 2004 EU enlargement by encircling Kaliningrad with EU member states, for example, created a perceptual shift among citizens in Kaliningrad. Not only has this change evoked a feeling among many in Kaliningrad of being a link between Russia and Europe due to its close proximity to the EU border, it has also stimulated a reevaluation of Kaliningrad’s German legacy and East Prussian heritage.\footnote{Berger, “A City and Its Past,” 301. However, this has not come without cost, especially with regard to visas and travel. Prior to the European Union membership of Poland and Lithuania, citizens of Kaliningrad could travel to Russia proper visa free, which became a concern for the union due to its internal Schengen agreement requiring Kaliningrad residents to obtain official, internationally recognized passports. See Cornelia Bolesch, “Kaliningrad-Pass soll Brücke bilden,” Süddeutsche Zeitung, September 19, 2002.} As Olga Sezneva explains, both pro-Russians and advocates for the official recognition and inclusion of the German East Prussian past in representations of Kaliningrad are “fueled by the understanding of the mutual need to acknowledge and interpret the history of Königsberg.”\footnote{Sezneva, “Dual History,” 64-65.} The revitalization of the past, she argues, subverts the state’s ideological
Sovietization and Russification of Kaliningrad, particularly characteristic of the post-World War II period, and instead functions to legitimize Kaliningrad citizens’ own, unique sense of belonging in European history.\textsuperscript{547} It is, however, also fueled by pragmatic desires to enhance the region’s autonomy by promoting its cultural uniqueness, repair its cityscape through architectural revitalization projects, and improve its global image.\textsuperscript{548} On the one hand, this has important economic implications in terms of attracting foreign investment and tourism to the region. On the other hand however, the rediscovery and revitalization efforts also work to rectify a concern expressed by local intelligentsia, namely, a “coming to terms with the past” in the interest of “historical justice and the desire to work for reconciliation.”\textsuperscript{549} In part, these efforts to reinvigorate the presence of the East Prussian past in contemporary Kaliningrad can be attributed to nostalgic sentiments on the part of Germans and local Kaliningrad citizens. Artistic engagements, restoration projects, and reconstructions of regional histories that take East

\textsuperscript{547} Ibíd., 67, 83. Sezneva explains how in the 1970s and 1980s, the state produced a shallow vision of Kaliningrad’s past by eradicating the city’s German culture in the interest of reorienting Kaliningrad from its roots in European history to the communist future. Sezneva, “Dual History,” 69-70.
\textsuperscript{549} Berger, “How to be Russian with a Difference,” 352. In Kaliningrad, a number of individuals have worked toward historical justice in various ways, even during the Soviet era. Cf. Olga Sezneva, “Living in the Russian Present with a German Past: The Problems of Identity in the City of Kaliningrad,” \textit{Socialist Spaces: Sites of Everyday Life in the Eastern Bloc}, eds. David Crowley and Susan E. Reid (Oxford: Berg, 2002), 47-64. The writer Alexandr Popadin also contributed to the remembrance of Königsberg by collecting popular stories and legends of the city in his \textit{Mestnoe Vriem ‘ya}; Sezneva 76-77. Yury Kostyashov’s scholarship has similarly worked towards these ends and includes a multidirectional focus on Russian settling in Kaliningrad after the war. The remembrance of Königsberg in the contemporary city also takes place in the Kaliningrad photographer Dmitry Vyshemirsky’s work (www.vyshemirsky.com).
Prussia into account can demonstrate the ways in which second and subsequent generations imagine and affectively connect to the historical Königsberg.

According to Sezneva, members of the local intelligentsia already expressed a nostalgic sentiment towards Königsberg in the 1980s. Those interested met as an “underground society” called “the Prussian Club” (*Prusskii Klub*) and sought to collect East Prussian material remains and establish connections to former Königsberg citizens. They furthermore created popularized images of the historical Königsberg largely through their own imaginations of the past place, which “romanticized and idealized the no longer extant city of Königsberg.”\(^{550}\) This romanticization by “a new generation of Kaliningrad residents,” Sezneva explains, served as “an escape, thought at times unconscious, from a forced identification with the ‘Soviet subject’,” positioned Kaliningrad “into the history of the West,” and “began to imagine the city *into* an imagined European community.”\(^{551}\) East Prussian material traces served to inspire new stories and points of connection to the city that largely emerged through imaginary construal motivated by nostalgic sentiments. Sezneva refers to this affective longing as a “nostalgia of the unknown.”\(^{552}\) It signifies what I have referred to as postmemorial nostalgia – a nostalgia that the “generation after” can have to a place and time of the generation that came before.\(^{553}\) As postmemorial, this form of nostalgia is derived from “stories, images, and behaviors” as well as from experiences transmitted “so deeply and


\(^{551}\) Ibid., 56, 61.

\(^{552}\) Ibid., 48.

affectively as to seem to constitute memories in their own right.” Imagination is a key facet of postmemory, and the affective dimension of nostalgia can stimulate the engagements of later generations with postmemorial ties.

In their discussion of postmemorial relations, Kristin Kopp and Joanna Niżyńska emphasize postmemory’s potential to contribute to a “culture of reconciliation,” characterized by processes of “differentiating reductive master narratives and national stereotypes, of pluralizing identities within national collectives, and of drawing new lines of interpersonal juncture that intersect national borders.” The case of Kaliningrad invites a consideration of strategies enabling (and perhaps limiting) such a diversification. Postmemory, Kopp and Niżyńska explain, “has its own affective charge,” which can in some cases debilitate one’s ability to construct an individual identity separate from the memories of the Erfahrungsgeneration; it may also lead to violence. As such, this affective charge, which I discuss in terms of postmemorial nostalgia, has the potential to lead to detrimental and problematic engagements, or, alternatively can encourage constructive relationships and inspire empathy. Stephanie Kuhlmann’s 2010 autobiographically motivated novel, Hoffnung heißt Nadjeschda, illustrates the potentials of second generation, postmemorial nostalgia within the context of contemporary Europe and a return visit to the parental former home in Kaliningrad. Through displayed postmemorial nostalgic linkages, she highlights the possibility for second generation Germans and Russians to contribute to transnational, conciliatory understandings without losing sight of their distraught history.

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555 Kopp and Niżyńska, 9.
556 Ibid., 10.
This chapter turns its attention to Kaliningrad in contemporary Europe, the rediscovery of the region’s East Prussian history, and the role of tourism as important facets linking individuals from Germany and Kaliningrad and their cultures. As Kuhlmann’s novel shows, one area where conciliation between Germans and Russians can take place is at East Prussian cultural heritage sites in Kaliningrad. While second generation visitors in her novel largely experience their return to the places of parental pasts as tourists, the presence of postmemory and postmemorial nostalgia create a unique interaction abroad. This is marked by a closer affinity and sentimentality towards historical artifacts and places that differ from the experiences of other tourism encounters. Kuhlmann’s depiction can be seen in terms of second generation Heimwehtourismus – a “Heimweh” perceived in postmemorial terms. In her novel, Kuhlmann imagines the potential for German-Russian collaborative work at East Prussian heritage sites in Kaliningrad as a joint European effort.

Does this signal a departure from nation-state centered perceptions and historical narratives? Where are the limitations? In recent years, Kaliningrad has become a symbolic site for Germans particularly with East Prussian heritage as well as for Russians interested in expressing Kaliningrad’s historical, cultural uniqueness and link to Europe. It is a place to work through the historical legacy of forced migration for both Russians and Germans, and a space for uncovering and articulating previously “erased” aspects of East Prussian life that play a role in Germany’s and the region’s identity. How do

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557 One early work on the forced relocation of Russians to Kaliningrad after the removal of ethnic Germans is Juri Kostjaschow’s conducted oral history collection published in German as Als Russe in Ostpreußen. Sowjetische Umsiedler über ihren Neubeginn in Königsberg / Kaliningrad nach 1945, ed. Eckhard Matthes, trans. Arne Ackermann et al. (Ostfildern vor Stuttgart: edition tertium, 1999). This publication emerged out of a
return visits by expellees and their descendants further historical rediscovery and its negotiation? In what way can this process create conciliatory possibilities and establish a new sense of community? In the following, this chapter explores these questions in two parts: through an analysis of Kuhlmann’s autobiographically inspired novel and through a consideration of a tourism exchange project, a *Lesereise*, that took place in 2012 of which Kuhlmann and her novel were a part. This *Lesereise* was organized by the *Ostpreußisches Landesmuseum Lüneburg* and *Russland Reisen Romanova* and included, along with Kuhlmann, the authors Arno Surminski and Hans Graf zu Dohna (a history writer and member of a former, East Prussian noble family), who read from their works at various stops during the group visit. This makes the novel a particularly interesting example with regard to travel and revisiting East Prussian material remnants and, furthermore, demonstrates the opportunity for literature to “move” and inspire. Prior to my analysis of Kuhlmann’s novel, I will examine the tourism project as a contemporary example of group travel to Kaliningrad and analyze its discourse on East Prussian, German, and Russian heritage. In which ways does this *Lesereise* construe German-Russian relationships? How does it relate to Kuhlmann’s novel? Although the *Lesereise* and novel display the ways in which return visits can aid in fostering healing and understanding as well as a processing of flight and expulsion history, do they also reveal certain limitations?

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research project conducted by Kostjaschow and his team of history researchers at the Kaliningrad State University (now the Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University) between 1990 and 1991. Although the manuscript was completed in 1992, it was not published until 2002 in Russian (2000 in Poland); Kostjaschow, 12-15. Berger, “German Pasts in a Russian City,” 196-197.
I. REDISCOVERING GERMAN EAST PRUSSIAN CULTURE IN KALININGRAD AND COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS

According to architectural historian Markus Podehl, there is a continuing tendency to idealize the past East Prussia and its capital Königsberg often featured on postcards, book covers, and in reports. Allusions to the past Königsberg find expression in contemporary Kaliningrad in various and perhaps unexpected ways: from black and white images of the historical Königsberg postered around the city, to examples within consumer culture (such as the production of Königsberg style marzipan and confection by the historical East Prussian brand Pomatti), or via the presence of a Kaliningrad bakery chain titled Königsbäcker. Commemorative culture also displays the East Prussian past as a part of Kaliningrad’s regional history, for instance, through restored East Prussian heritage sites (e.g. the centrally located Königsberg cathedral, Fisher’s Village, King’s Gate), the 2010 naming of the University as the “Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University” (memorializing the respected philosopher), and museum exhibits presenting Königsberg history and culture at places such as the Friedland Gate Museum and Kaliningrad Regional Museum of History and Arts. The textbook series used in local schools to teach regional history (titled “The History of Western Russia”) equally includes Königsberg as an important part of the regional narrative and even features images of well-known East Prussian sites. Many present-day travel guides and

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559 See included images from personal trip in the Appendix.
560 Friedland Gate Museum: http://fvmuseum.ru. Kaliningrad Regional Museum of History and Arts: http://www.westrussia.org. The original title of the textbook series is История Западной России. This title as well as the inclusion of so much of what is considered to be “German history” was quite controversial during its publication.
tourism advertisements, especially geared toward German tourists, evoke nostalgic ties through these same images of East Prussian cultural sites.\(^{561}\)

Within the tourism context, this type of nostalgic appeal serves to attract German visitors to contemporary Kaliningrad, since nostalgia is an affective part of expellees’ experiences, and literary return journeys play a part in this endeavor. They serve to simultaneously offer insight into expellees’ experiences of loss, nostalgic reconnection, and reflection while also encouraging others to visit the places described. Their dual function is not devoid of a marketing strategy to attract travel to the region. While such activities transform the perception of local Kaliningrad citizens to envision a new regional narrative and considerations of a unique, local Kaliningrad identity – one that Stefan Berger describes as “Russian with a difference” – they also affect Germans’ view of the contemporary place.\(^{562}\) Rediscovery efforts have led to a number of collaborative projects between Germans and Russians that seek to enhance dialogue and improve relationships in the European present.

In recent years, cultural programs and projects have worked toward the normalization of relationships between Germans and Russians by opening up dialogues and by recovering and restoring cultural objects and narratives associated with German

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Personal Correspondence: Andrey Levchenkov, Associate Professor at the Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University. August 10, 2016.

\(^{561}\) See for instance the following travel agencies and their websites: Schnieder Reisen (http://www.schnieder-reisen.de/kaliningrader-gebiet/), BalticTravel (http://www.baltictravel.de/kaliningrad.html), BaltTours (http://www.balttours.de/de/kaliningrad/), Russland Reisen Romanova (http://www.romanova-reisen.de/staedtereisen/kaliningrad_koenigsberg/sehenswertes/) among others. Also cf. major travel guides, such as Gunnar Strunz, Königsberg – Kaliningrader Gebiet (Berlin: Trescher Verlag, 2014). The East Prussian architectural and cultural remnants are typically promoted as the main tourism sites.

\(^{562}\) Stefan Berger, “How to be Russian with a Difference,” 361.
culture and identity important to the region. After decades of Sovietization programs in an attempt to establish a level of Soviet Russian legitimacy in the postwar and Cold War periods, Kaliningrad citizens began to turn their attention to their region’s German past in the interest of further constructing their regional character and establish their position within Russia and Europe.\(^{563}\) Although this process has created fears of separatism in Kaliningrad and concerns of “re-Germanization” or even German revanchism among officials in Moscow, academics and members of the public intelligentsia have stressed the importance of recognizing and maintaining Kaliningrad’s German East Prussian legacy as a part of the region’s own identity. Even in the immediate postwar period and despite Sovietization campaigns, many citizens of Kaliningrad supported the idea of building upon rather than rejecting the heritage of Königsberg, often referring to the city as “Kenig” or “Kenigsberg” instead of Kaliningrad.\(^{564}\) The official renaming of Kaliningrad (titled after the Soviet President Mikhail Kalinin) continues to be a topic of local debate, but has lost momentum in recent years. In a 2011 article, the regional scholar Andrey Levchenkov advocates for the return to the city’s historical name, but doubts that the proper political support exists to carry out this change.\(^{565}\) This is not to say that citizens of Kaliningrad wish to separate from Russia. However, one can see the emergence of a type of identity among Russians who feel uniquely linked to Europe.\(^{566}\) New possibilities to explore this culturally and historically diverse region, appeared in the post-Cold War period with the opening up of borders, European enlargement, and desire

\(^{563}\) Berger and Holtom, 16. Berger, “How to be Russian with a Difference,” 360.


\(^{566}\) Berger, “How to be Russian with a Difference,” 361.
to attract tourism and international commerce. German tourism, German-Russian restoration efforts, and collaborative academic and cultural programs in the region participate in the process of readdressing German-Russian history to improve relationships.

A significant turning point occurred in 2001 (the same year in which Gerhard Schröder and Vladimir Putin established a German-Russian discussion forum called the *Petersburger Dialog*) when a local writer and city council member in Kaliningrad, Aleksandr Popadin, proposed that the city celebrate its 750th anniversary in 2005, thus situating Kaliningrad in continuity with the historical Königsberg as mentioned in chapter one. Despite opposition from the region’s Communist Party and veterans’ organizations, the event took place with federal funding and political support. For the occasion, the famous Königsberg Royal Gate was restored with Russian federal funds and was overlaid with the Russian flag as the official symbol of the anniversary. The use of the gate along with the arrangement of the three day celebration – day one: “One City-One History,” day two: “a Russian City in the Heart of Europe,” day three: “Kaliningrad-Meeting Point of Russia and Europe” – highlighted the East Prussian past of the city, its incorporation into the Russian present, and its unique link to Europe. Depicting

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569 Even though I mention the anniversary in the introduction to chapter 1, it is worth recalling again (in more detail here) since the anniversary is so often seen as an important official shift. It is important with regard to German-Russian relations and interesting since it largely maintains a focus on national identities. Berger and Holtom, 17-18, 26.
570 Berger and Holtom, 18-19.
Kaliningrad as a place with an East Prussian past and a Russian future, raised questions of Russia’s relationship with Europe and how the shared German-Russian past could potentially contribute to positive exchanges and encounters in the future. Although many anniversary participants hoped to display the regional character of Kaliningrad, the event in large part located Kaliningrad within the Russian nation-state rather than showcasing its uniqueness. The event’s visual positioning of the Russian flag over the Königsberg Royal Gate is telling in this regard by showing the Russian nation’s appropriation of the famous East Prussian site as its own. As Berger and Holtom describe: “The events reinforced the opinion … that the federal authorities were not planning a celebration of 750 years of history of the city of Königsberg/Kaliningrad, but rather using the anniversary as an opportunity to confirm that the city and surrounding territory is Russian.” In this way, it limited the representation of a diverse regional Kaliningrad identity to focus on its positioning within a Russian national one.

To many Germans, however, the celebration positively verified Kaliningrad’s willingness to incorporate the German past of their city as an integral part of their present. Yet in German media too, Berger and Holtom explain, there was also a tendency to situate Königsberg within German national history. Instead of reflecting upon contemporary Kaliningrad, many reports focused on the historical Königsberg and its East Prussian past as specifically German. It is important to note that the region’s Polish and Lithuanian heritage was largely absent in both Russian and German reports. During the celebration events, President Putin hosted the then French president, Jacques

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571 Berger and Holtom, 17-18, 20.
572 Berger and Holtom, 22.
573 Ibid.
574 Ibid., 26.
Chirac, and German Chancellor, Gerhard Schroeder, but did not invite Polish and Lithuanian leaders.\textsuperscript{575} This reflects a tendency to focus more prominently upon German-Russian and western European relations. Despite this gap and the city’s incorporation within nationally oriented historical narratives, the celebration nonetheless marks a turning point in German-Russian understanding. It encourages both sides to begin considering each other’s ties to the region, inspires new discussions considering the future of Kaliningrad and its relationship to the German East Prussian past, and motivates the development of conciliatory ties currently predominantly located within academic and cultural circles. Some examples include joint German-Russian excavations of material artifacts in Kaliningrad,\textsuperscript{576} connections through the university,\textsuperscript{577} archival collaborations,\textsuperscript{578} and joint funding structures to maintain East Prussian material

\textsuperscript{575} “Kaliningrad Marks Key Anniversary,” \textit{BBC News}, July 3, 2005, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4645447.stm. An exception to this German-Russian centered discourse can be found in Ramūnas Janušauskas’s \textit{Four Tales on the King’s Hill: The “Kaliningrad Puzzle” in Lithuanian, Polish, Russian and Western Political Discourses} (Warsaw: Institute of Political Studies Polish Academy of Science, 2001).

\textsuperscript{576} In 2001, the German magazine \textit{Der Spiegel} funded a Russian-led excavation at a former castle near Kaliningrad. Later in 2003, a German-Russian team led a dig at a mid-first to eleventh-century cemetery at Berezovka on the northern Sambia Peninsula, which has been greeted as a “landmark in ‘building bridges’.” Pluskowski, 8.

\textsuperscript{577} The Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University currently participates in multiple European university programs through Erasmus exchanges and its EU Centre (which offers a summer school on EU related topics to both Russian and international participants), partnerships with Göttingen University, Kiel University, and the University of Greifswald, and annually hosts multiple DAAD visiting lecturers. Additionally, the university offers a Russian language school, conferences, workshops, and joint training projects with German partners in areas of international relations, law, and academic research. G.M. Fedorov, M.A. Gorodkov, and I.I. Zhukovsky, 36-37.

\textsuperscript{578} The Kaliningrad regional archive has agreements with Polish, Lithuanian, Swedish, and German archives (esp. with the \textit{Preussisches geheimes Staatsarchiv} in Berlin). http://www.gako.name/mainsite/about-us/ourhistory. In 2013, the Kaliningrad regional archive also partnered with the \textit{Bundesarchiv der Bundesrepublik Deutschland} to publish a handbook that inventories both archives’ holdings regarding the post-World War II history of Kaliningrad (1945-1955).
remains. Such research and cultural endeavors create a collaborative environment and reflect a common interest in uncovering the region’s multifaceted past as a part of both German and Russian history. In many ways, these projects can be seen as driving an important tourism industry in Kaliningrad, significant to Kaliningrad’s economy, and serves as a means of gaining “entrance into the economic space of contemporary Europe.” Economic realities encourage the expansion of affective tourist encounters within which nostalgia serves as a particularly strong emotional factor. *Heimwehtourismus* has been one of the important ways in which German expellees and their descendants sought to reconnect with their former familial homes, and alongside contemporary Russian and other international tourists, continue to visit Kaliningrad. In the following, tourism is explored as a means through which individuals come into contact with one another on a personal level. This type of personal proximity gives

http://www.bundesarchiv.de/imperia/md/content/bundesarchiv_de/oeffentlichkeitsarbeit/aktuelle_meldungen/kaliningrad-inventarvii.pdf. In particular, the introduction to the handbook highlights the postwar time period as one within which Germans and Russians both experienced forced migration: Ethnic Germans removed out of Königsberg were replaced by Soviet citizen (primarily Russian) to resettle the new Kaliningrad. Alla Fedorova, *Sachthematisches Inventar zur Nachkriegsgeschichte des nördlichen Ostpreußen (Kaliningrader Gebiet) 1945-1955* (Koblenz/Kaliningrad, 2013), http://www.bundesarchiv.de/imperia/md/content/bundesarchiv_de/oeffentlichkeitsarbeit/aktuelle_meldungen/kaliningrad-inventarvii.pdf (accessed September 1, 2015).

579 German organizations, such as the *Zeit* foundation, the *Stadtgemeinschaft Königsberg*, and the *Landsmannschaft Ostpreussen*, regularly support architectural restoration projects in Kaliningrad by donating funds. Mariusz Czepczyński and Michał Czepczyński, “Heritage resurrection: German heritage in the Southern Baltic Cities,” *Theory and Practice in Heritage and Sustainability: Between Past and Future*, eds., Elizabeth Auclair and Graham Fairclough (New York: Routledge, 2015), 141-143. Kant’s tomb has become a particularly popular site and is often the background for wedding pictures in Kaliningrad – in most other Russian cities Lenin’s monument serves as the background.

individuals the opportunity to participate in the establishment of postmemorial relations, feel a connection, and create community first hand. An examination of the Lesereise of which Kuhlmann’s novel is a part reveals the possible strengths as well as limitations of the group travel exchange.

II. LESEREISE TOURISM TO THE KALININGRAD REGION

The Lesereise took place from September 27 to October 2\textsuperscript{nd}, 2012 and consisted of around fifty, primarily German tourists with familial ties to or a strong personal interest in the former East Prussia. Three authors associated with East Prussia and the Kaliningrad region, Stephanie Kuhlmann, Arno Surminski, and Hans Graf zu Dohna, accompanied participants and read from their works as the group toured Kaliningrad.\textsuperscript{581} The expressed goal of the project was to create mutual understanding between Germans and Russians through personal encounters. After the readings, German visitors and attending Russians had the opportunity to discuss the texts with the authors and each other. Literature, with its potential to evoke emotional responses and create moments of identification and empathy between characters and readers, has the ability to inspire reflections on new possibilities. This, in combination with historical sites as reading locations, would seem to create opportunities for emotional responses and empower individuals to viscerally sense a place’s significance. In a personal travelogue, one German participant describes his encounters as enabling him to “feel” the place whence

his mother came. As one of the accompanying authors, Kuhlmann describes the exchange as having been enriching and emotionally moving for the participants. There is little detail, however, as to how participating Russians responded to the texts and encounters. It is also unclear as to whether or not their diverse memories and narratives were also shared. This lack of equal representation limits dialogical possibilities and gives the perception of a one-sided, German oriented tourism exchange.

This is additionally reflected in the description of a German participant, who remarks that the literary readings at times led to fruitful conversations and at other times to silence. One such silence resulted most notably after Surminski’s reading of his short story “Aus dem Nest Gefallen” (1976) about the deportation of East Prussian Jews to Treblinka. He read this text at the Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University in Kaliningrad to the tourism participants, students of German at the university, and members of the public. The German participant reports in his travelogue: “Niemand von den Studenten kann mit dem Namen ‘Treblinka’ etwas anfangen! Darunter leidet dann der Rest der Fragestunde, denn kein Student traut sich mehr, eine Frage zu stellen, obwohl sie offenbar mit ihrer Dozentin etwas vorbereitet hatten.” This shows a continuing difficulty and discomfort with openly discussing Holocaust memory. In her analysis of the contemporary Fisher’s Village in Kaliningrad, Sezneva has similarly remarked that traces of the Jewish past in the former Königsberg are strikingly omitted. This, she argues, “is indicative of the kind of political fixing that is specific to Kaliningrad. . . . the contemporary Russian state sanitizes itself of violence and thus


583 Stephanie Kuhlmann, Personal Email Exchange.

584 Kaufmann, “Persönliches Tagebuch.”
symbolically exonerates its war-time adversary, the German state, of responsibility for the Holocaust.”

The Holocaust, however, is addressed during the Lesereise visit through the readings of Surminski’s novel Winter 1945 oder die Frauen von Palmnicken (1997), which reminds of the thousands of predominantly Jewish women from the concentration camp Stutthof who lost their lives in 1945 at the coast in Palmnicken (today’s Yantarny in Kaliningrad). A local German teacher with her class as well as news reporting teams visited the on-site reading of Surminski’s work. Though the Holocaust, in large part, seems to be a gap within Kaliningrad memory discourse, the Lesereise brought this history to the fore to visiting Germans as well as local citizens attending the readings (one of the tour guides served as a Russian translator when needed). In this way, the group trip also created an opportunity to raise awareness of perhaps lesser-known historical issues that are a part of, albeit neglected aspect, of the East Prussian and Kaliningrad regional past.

The participant remarks in his travelogue that he thinks that Surminski’s readings provided an important stimulus for the students and that overall the trip afforded him the possibility to get to know a new generation of young, critically minded Russians, who are beginning to identify with their region’s East Prussian past. However in his travelogue, he includes little to no detail about the thoughts, feelings, and stories of the Russians the group met. The fact that the trip was organized by two German organizations, the Ostpreußische Landesmuseum Lüneburg and Hamburg based travel organization Russland Reisen Romanova, leads further to its perception of a German-centered exchange. After all, the tour consisted primarily of typical tourist destinations in

586 Kaufmann, “Persönliches Tagebuch.”
Kaliningrad that confirm German cultural ties to the area: a walk through the historical Königsberg, a visit to the cathedral with a Lutheran mass service, the amber museum (former Dohna Turm), the Kurische Nehrung, Cranz (today’s Zelenogradsk), Palmnicken (today’s Yantarny), Rauschen (today’s Svetlogorsk), Kant University, and the German-Russian house (a cultural center established by Russian-Germans). Additionally, the trip’s program (see image 2) privileges the German names of the sites by listing them with the contemporary Russian ones in parenthesis. This too places a clear emphasis and appeal to German tourists. In a sense, it appeals to nostalgic sentiments related to the German East Prussian past to attract visitors.

This Lesereise demonstrates how tourism exchanges can limit cross-cultural understanding by structuring programs exclusively from a German perspective for German tourists, and thus remain centered upon national memories. While the tourism project opens the possibility of improved personal relationships between Germans and Russian, apparent gaps in discourse come to light that remain to be negotiated (e.g. Holocaust memory in the region). The exchange does not appear to have fostered the discussion of the problematic regional past. Similarly, it is unclear as to how much of the Russian narrative and perspective was incorporated into this exchange. On the other hand, it encouraged the afore-mentioned participant to continue to get to know the region and its people – a desire to pursue postmemorial relations. In his travelogue, he expresses an aspiration to continue communications with the Kaliningrad citizens that he met during his time abroad. This reflects the start of dialog on a personal scale that possibly

creates conciliation and solidarity between Russian and German individuals. Although work remains to be done, the initial return visits, if little more, attached a face and personality to contemporary Kaliningrad gleamed via individual interaction and opened the door for continued personal interest and involvement. There is an openness to new possibilities and understanding demonstrated by the presence of German visitors and interested Russian participants. Kuhlmann picks up these ideas in her novel, but includes extended reflection upon the experience and memory dynamics of the second generation visiting contemporary Kaliningrad.

III. POSTMEMORY, NOSTALGIA, AND HEIMWEHTOURISMUS IN HOFFNUNG HEIßT NADJESCHDA

Kuhlmann, the daughter of an East Prussian expellee, initially visited the place of her father’s former home in 2003 and continues to regularly visit Russia to this day.588

_Hoffnung heiβt Nadjeschda_, is her debut novel, which is based on an online travelogue series of her own trip to the Kaliningrad region. Her series appeared in 2010 in both German and Russian on the websites _Reisemobil Interaktiv_, a magazine for travelers, and the _Königsberger Allgemeine_ newspaper, a German-Russian publication that informs its readers about current events in Kaliningrad with an emphasis on memorial concerns, culture, and travel.589 A trained journalist and proficient in the Russian language, Kuhlmann has also written for additional publications, the German-Russian news agency

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588 http://www.nadjeschda.eu/de/vita/nad_russland/
RUFO, internet newspaper *Russland-Aktuell*, and German travel magazine *Merian*. Her positive emphasis on travel as well as her novel’s incorporation in the *Lesereise* comes, therefore, as little surprise. Interesting, however, is her involvement as a descendent of an East Prussian expellee in improving German-Russian relations and establishing personal ties in Kaliningrad. In her autobiographically motivated novel, she not only presents her experiences in Kaliningrad to a mainstream, primarily German audience (the novel has not been translated into Russian) to portray the contemporary region and its rich German East Prussian legacy, but she also processes her own memories – that is postmemories – as well as her affective postmemorial nostalgic ties.

In her novel, Kuhlmann portrays her own experiences in Kaliningrad through the fictional protagonist, Sarah, also the daughter of an East Prussian expellee, who fled with his family when he was a child. As an autobiographically motivated work, Sarah shares Kuhlmann’s background, but the novel breaks the “autobiographical pact,” defined by Philippe Lejeune, through the *Namensidenität* (identity of name) – that is the commonality created by the shared name of the author, protagonist, and narrator – and through the descriptor “novel” under the title. Thus, her novel is not set up to be understood as directly autobiographical, but instead as a work of fiction within which she can consider the role of second generation expellees, like herself, and their relationship to

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590 http://www.nadjeschda.eu/de/vita/nad_vita/. RUFO (Radio, News, Foto, Internet) is the first German-Russian news agency and has been reporting from Moscow since 1989 and has maintained a web presence since 1998. They regularly work with German print media like *Der Spiegel* and *Focus*, as well as with radio servers and daily newspapers in Germany and Switzerland; http://www.rufo.ru/. Russland-Aktuell is a publication also offered by RUFO and has been published online since 1998; http://www.aktuell.ru/.
parental pasts. In her novel, she also illustrates her wish for the future, indicating a desire to create a new sense of belonging, community, and collaboration in Kaliningrad.

Similar to the *Lesereise* exchange, the protagonist Sarah visits popular German tourist destinations in the exclave: the Kurische Nehrung (Curonian Spit, a sand dune nature area between Latvia and Kaliningrad along the coast), the Insterburger Schloss (a castle built by the German Teutonic Order in 1336 in today’s Chernyakhovsk, Kaliningrad), the Trakehner horses at Georgenburg (famous East Prussian horse breed housed at another castle established by the Teutonic Order in today’s Chernyakhovsk, Kaliningrad), the city Chernyakhovsk (Insterburg), town Bereschkowskoje (formerly Waldhausen where her father lived), and the beach in Svetlogorsk (formerly Rauschen). The protagonist, as a member of the second generation, indicates that she is aware of her status as a “tourist.” Her experience abroad, she realizes, differs from that of the first generation participants: “Diese Leute hier sind mir fremd, sie stammen aus einer anderen Zeit. Es ist ihr Stein und ich bin nur zu Besuch.” Her consistent memories of her father and imaginations of what his experience in East Prussia may have entailed indicates her postmemorial relationship to the place in contrast to the first generation visitors. Nonetheless, her imaginations and postmemories are imbued with nostalgic affect demonstrating the possibility for the second generation to feel emotionally tied to parental pasts and places. In the novel, there is little description of the places and their meaning, and as such, it assumes a certain readership and audience. The reader is expected to already have background knowledge of the sites’ significance to Germans. In

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592 Her online entries are reprinted in the novel at the end in both German and Russian. Kuhlmann, *Hoffnung heißt Nadjeschda*, 224-287.
593 Ibid., 126.
this way, the appeal is more specifically to a German audience, devised of either first generation expellees or those with a close relationship to the area and its East Prussian heritage and interested in what has become of the old East Prussian culture, structures, and sites. While this reflects a German-centered approach, her inclusion of friendship formations with young Russians, on the other hand, gleams a sense of hope for the future (as the title suggests) and moves in the direction of multidirectional memory between members of the second generation. During her journey she meets Russians of her own generation: Valentina (a Kaliningrad citizen preserving and maintaining the Insterburger Schloss), Wolodja (a personal and group tour guide in Kaliningrad), and Sasha (Russian friend that she met in Moscow), who are interested in maintaining the memory of Kaliningrad’s East Prussian history and working with Germans to do so. Conciliation, understanding, and solidarity form, as such, not merely through historical sites and their maintenance, but through personal dialogues, collaboration, and a sense of responsibility driven by postmemorial nostalgia.

Although the visited sites refer mainly to East Prussian material culture, the novel reminds the reader of the more recent history of German forced migration from Kaliningrad by infusing memories that Sarah’s father imparted onto her and a narrative of finding her father’s old home. The novel’s plot centers on Sarah’s search for the place of her father’s past, his old childhood home, and the encounters she has along the way with contemporary Kaliningrad citizens. This reflects a typical narrative of return genre structured around a search and the experience of the places where family members once

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594 Ibid., 224-287.
lived. As Marianne Hirsch and Leo Spitzer explain, exiles or refugees often return to their former home to fulfill a longing and curiosity, pass on their origins to their children, or for self-affirmation. The second generation’s experience incorporates the “need to repair the ruptured fabric of a painfully discontinuous, fragmentary, history,” they describe. Postmemorial nostalgia is another motivation for the second generation to return. As Sabine Marschall explains in her discussion of Heimwehtourismus, homesick tourism is travel undertaken by individuals with personal memories or a strong sense of “second-hand memories” – postmemories as I explain in chapter 2. Longing, memory, and emotions encourage a search for tangible and intangible traces of a personal past to come to terms with unresolved aspects or even with one’s sense of nostalgia.

Kuhlmann’s novel shows how homesick tourism can be multigenerational, particularly through the inheritance of nostalgic, parental memories that motivate a homesick longing for a home not personally experienced by members of the second generation.

Sarah’s experience in Kaliningrad in the novel is indeed shaped by her father’s passed down memories. In the absence of her father, Sarah embarks on the return visit with her partner Georg in search of material remnants of her father’s past, and as such, relies on her father’s stories to inform her travels. This leads to the emergence of a number of gaps that highlight her absent, personal connection to the place: she is only able to narrate her family’s stories in pieces, she cannot decipher the various material objects that they find, and she has difficulty finding the site of her family’s old house.

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596 Hirsch and Spitzer, 82.
597 Marschall, 4-5.
Before her journey, she describes feeling connected to the East Prussia presented in her father’s narrated memories and tales, but when confronted with the physical, contemporary place of Kaliningrad, she realizes that she must confront the idealized memories that her father passed on to her. Along with his stories of East Prussia, she “inherits” a sense of nostalgia for the place, and becomes aware of her idealized images when confronted with contemporary realities. A turning point occurs when she finds her father’s childhood house, which lies in ruins. She thinks: “Die Kindheit meines Vater liegt zerbrochen vor meinen Füßen.” Her “homecoming” is not the expected, romanticized one that she imagined through stories. Instead, the house lies figuratively and actually broken as she is accosted by an unwelcoming presence: “Überall sitzen Mücken auf meinem Körper und piesacken mich. Ich muss hier raus,” she thinks. During her journey, she realizes that her encounters do not match the idealized images held within her postmemory. This leads her to direct her affective sentiments, her postmemorial nostalgia, towards other endeavors, namely the establishment of personal connections and her own sense of belonging. She accepts Kaliningrad as a changed place with a new present of which she is a part. Her return visit plays an integral part of establishing new linkages and contributing to the uncovering of a shared German-Russian history (not resembling the mythical, idealized homeland of her father’s stories). Kuhlmann depicts the importance of the second generation to work through nostalgic postmemories in order to develop personal connections and acceptance of the changed, contemporary parental homeland.

598 Kuhlmann, Hoffnung heißt Nadjeschda, 90.
599 Ibid., 91.
In the novel, the protagonist Sarah negotiates three important aspects: her father’s childhood, often nostalgic memories of his past home, her subsequent idealized imaginations of the places and of his experience, and the realities that she witnesses during her return visit. In this way, the novel demonstrates the work that members of the second generation, who grew up hearing stories about their parents’ former home in the East, undergo. Her recollections demonstrate the deeply felt affective transference of parental experiences indicative of postmemory. As Hirsch explains, such memories are passed on so deeply and affectively that they appear to constitute memories, but are in fact mediated by imagination, projection, and creation.\textsuperscript{600} In the novel, Sarah has to consciously remind herself that her “memories” of the past are her own projections and not based on her experience: “Mal sehe ich mich in einem Spielfilm, dann wird die Vergangenheit real, obwohl ich sie nur aus Erzählungen kenne.”\textsuperscript{601} Here, she shows her deeply felt involvement in her father’s past – she often feels as if she were there, but reminds herself that she was not. Her deep connection reflects her postmemorial nostalgia directed towards her father. Postmemory results in a visceral and affective relationship to objects and places of parental pasts that were not necessarily touched or visited personally, including nostalgic longing and negative, critical recollections.\textsuperscript{602}

In \textit{Hoffnung heißt Nadjeschda}, the protagonist’s postmemorial nostalgia emerges from her father’s imparted sentimental relationship toward his remembered past home in East Prussia. As a child, he and his family fled from their home in Waldhausen (Bereschkowskoje) when he was five years old. In his recollection of their flight in

\textsuperscript{600} Hirsch, 5.
\textsuperscript{601} Kuhlmann, \textit{Hoffnung heißt Nadjeschda}, 189.
November 1944, he remembers his mother crying, but did not understand why: “Für mich war es ein großes Abenteuer,” he says. The powerful memories he imparts on Sarah are more idealized versions of his childhood home. She inherits a nostalgic relationship to the place of her father’s past that is already shaped by postmemory before she visits it herself during her return in the contemporary period. During her visit, she uncovers objects and narrative pieces of the town’s and her father’s history, but realizes that her postmemories of the place are fragmented and do not hold up to its reality, leading her to seek out her own links to the present day people and sites in Kaliningrad to maintain a personal connection. From the outset, the novel depicts Sarah’s father’s nostalgic, childhood memories in the prolog:


As she explains, he passed down a love of nature and animals as well as his sensory, visceral memories of East Prussia to her. The details he shares and “besonderen Glanz” in his eyes marks his restorative sense of nostalgia, which according to Svetlana Boym conveys “a perfect snapshot” that “has to be freshly painted in its ‘original image’ and remain eternally young.” His stories rarely contain conflict or complication nor do they remark upon any possibility that his childhood place may have changed. Instead, his recall serves another function, namely to console him, most notably when he was in the hospital before his passing: “Lass uns über was Schönes reden, über Ostpreußen!” he

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603 Kuhlmann, Hoffnung heißt Nadjeschda, 78.
604 Ibid., 17.
605 Boym, 49.
exclaims from his hospital bed. Rather than dwelling on his painful present, he turns to his childhood past to escape to a perceived better place and time. Nostalgia, Boym defines as, “a longing for a home that no longer exists or has never existed . . . a sentiment of loss and displacement, but it is also a romance with one’s own fantasy.” It is not only a romanticization of a place, but also of a time: “the time of our childhood, the slower rhythms of our dreams.” Hirsch and Spitzer similarly explain that the absent place can at times seem “better, simpler, less fragmented, more comprehensible, than its existent alternative in the present.” Although his nostalgia leads to what Boym describes as the “danger of nostalgia” – i.e., it “tends to confuse the actual home and the imaginary one,” it has an important, therapeutic function for him personally. His nostalgic recovery of the past is a wish to return to comfort to an idealized time that is spatialized in his former East Prussian home. It is also a way for him to visit his childhood home with his daughter through his narratives and memories. Thus, the snapshots and stories about East Prussia, the sights and smells of the fields, animals, leather for the horse saddles, and memories of collecting berries in the forest, shape Sarah’s postmemory of the place in a particular way. Her postmemory as a result takes on a nostalgic character and a desire for an irretrievable place (idealized East Prussia) and time (her father’s childhood). It is this nostalgia that generates her interest in the place, motivating her visit.

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607 Boym, xiii.
608 Ibid., xv.
609 Hirsch and Spitzer, 82.
610 Boym, xvi.
Sarah’s inheritance of her father’s nostalgic feelings, demonstrates how postmemory not only results from powerful memories of loss and trauma, but can also result from strongly idealized ones. This expands understandings of postmemory, which in that past has been associated with trauma (e.g. Hirsch as well as Kopp and Niżyńska). Nostalgic sentiments and idealized images can have an equally profound effect on postmemorial encounters and expectations. In Sarah’s reflection of her father’s narrations, for example, she describes her translation of his memories into fairy tale-like imaginations: “In meiner eigenen Vorstellung entstand ein märchenhaftes Bild, das ich seit Kindheitstagen wie einen Schatz hütete.”611 It became a place that she cherished, treasured, and felt a part of even though she had never seen it herself. Since she was unable to visit Kaliningrad as a child due to Cold War restrictions, she reserved this longing for the future: “Doch einmal ins ehemalige Ostpreußen zu reisen, blieb lange ein Traum.”612 Her translation of his memories into her own fairy-tale-like pictures reflects Hirsch’s description of postmemory since it gives way to images of a place that predispose reality to subjective constructions and images. During her return visit, she consistently infuses her experience of a place with imaginations of her father as a child there: images of him with his mother walking the streets of Insterburg or jumping around in their family’s house, for example. She loses herself in her own imaginations and as such becomes a temporary part of them. As she explains with regard to her father’s stories: “Ich ging völlig in seinen Erzählungen auf und wurde selbst ein Teil von ihnen.”613 Her nostalgic postmemory is further depicted through her longing and need to visit:

611 Kuhlmann, Hoffnung heißt Nadjeschda, 17.
612 Ibid., 18.
613 Ibid., 66-67; 93.
Ich muss dort unbedingt hin, ich fühle mich wie von einem Magneten angezogen,” she explains. While her nostalgic postmemory provides an impetus for travel, her imaginations function to fill her gaps in memory as a way of establishing a sense of continuity and connection to a time and place that is not her own. The connection, however, is only temporary as she is constantly drawn back to the present reality. Her nostalgic postmemory and subsequent imaginations clash with the realities that she encounters in contemporary Kaliningrad, often leading to frustrations and negative, unhomely feelings. This leads her to realize the need to establish her own present-day link to the contemporary place during her visit, to no longer fixate on the differences (esp. between her expectations and reality) that she discovers, but to also get to know and learn to love the place in its changed form.

This engagement of the second generation goes beyond Demshuk’s theoretical concepts of the “Heimat of memory” and “Heimat transformed.” In his constellation, he describes the process through which German expellees came to terms with their loss through encounters with the contemporary changed place that did not conform to the Heimat pictured in memory. Indeed, Sarah’s father refuses to accompany her on her return trip for the same reason that she is also concerned, “dass es Ostpreußen nur als Fantasie in meinem Kopf gab. Jetzt habe ich Angst, die Wirklichkeit könnte mein schönes Bild zerstören. Angst, dass ich am Ende gar nichts mehr habe, was mir ein gutes Gefühl meiner Herkunft verleiht.” Her father’s refusal to return indicates his desire to maintain his nostalgic image of his “Heimat of memory.” Sarah’s postmemorial nostalgia, on the other hand, encourages her to reconnect with (not reject) the “Heimat

614 Ibid., 99.
615 Ibid., 59.
transformed” and in a sense reformulate the Heimat that she holds in memory. She learns the she must confront her nostalgic postmemories in the interest of finding contemporary connections to the place of her familial origins. Although she tries to consolidate her father’s narrative of home with the reality she witnesses, she realizes that they are “zwei Teile unterschiedlicher Fotos, die nicht zusammenpassen.”616 As a result of her nostalgic postmemory, she goes back and forth during her journey between feeling at home and feeling alienated and disappointed with her discoveries.

Disappointment indeed arises when the realities do not support her already postmemorially shaped imaginations of the place. This results in her lack of connection and alienated feeling. Upon arriving at the border of Kaliningrad, for example, she already feels threatened by the Cyrillic alphabet and laments that she did not learn Russian. In this moment, she is reminded of the fact and admits to herself that the place is a foreign one to her – that she only knows it through stories.617 Highlighting her disconnection are the stereotypical images of Russia that she describes: her partner Georg thought of Russia as a place with cold winters and vodka, her judgment of the female border guards dressed in miniskirts and high heels as hardly like German ones, their outdated “altmodischen” computer, and the fee they have to pay – because after all Sarah thinks: “Was wäre eine ordentliche russische Kontrolle ohne Gebühren?”618 These clichés along with the anxiety that they experience at the border show that they are out of touch with the place and in desperate need of understanding. Instead of improving, the situation worsens once they cross the border. The place is darker: “Die Sonne scheint genauso wie

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616 Ibid., 60.
617 Ibid., 19.
618 Ibid., 19-25.
in Litauen und doch sieht die Landschaft grauer, fast neblig aus,“ and their car can barely hobble across the potholed, asphalt street.\textsuperscript{619} The opening images of Kaliningrad and the fears associated with entering the country reflect Sarah’s uncertainty and own “fogginess” with her journey. It is not a homely encounter with a familiar place, but instead a confrontation with one the she desires to get to know, but of which she is unsure. Already, her encounter at the border confronts the described “fairy tale image” that she had pictured, causing her anxiety.

In later moments, however, she feels at home. Initially, her “homely” feeling arises from familiarities that she did experience growing up. This includes the guesthouse in Kaliningrad, which reminds her of her parent’s home. It too was also covered in pinewood, a caribou fur hung on the wall, and also had a black leather couch. She recalls sitting with her father on their couch, and while looking at pictures, listening to his stories of his old home, which she admits sounded like a “Märchen, idyllisch und zugleich unerreichbar.”\textsuperscript{620} She begins to think more critically about her preconceived imaginations based on his stories, which over the course of the novel are confronted. In this way, she realizes that she will have to create her own sense and connections to the place and people, but nonetheless can’t help feeling at home when having dinner at the guesthouse: “Fast fühle ich mich wie zu Hause, in einem gemütlichen Ausflugslokal im Sommer, genauso befreit von allen Sorgen.”\textsuperscript{621} Later in the novel, her homely feeling transfers from moments of seeing familiarity to one that emerges from positive encounters with individuals in Kaliningrad. This notably happens after her initial disappointment with the

\textsuperscript{619} Ibid., 25-26.  
\textsuperscript{620} Ibid., 30.  
\textsuperscript{621} Ibid., 39.
unrestored church in Didlacken (today’s Telmanovo) where her grandparents were married. A man in Telmanovo runs over to them, recognizing them as German tourists, and shows them where the church and Latin inscriptions are. Touched by his kindness she thinks: “Doch nachdem ich die Offenheit dieses Menschen erlebt habe, empfinde ich keine Enttäuschung, sondern nur Zuversicht und Freude.” Here, she begins to look past the rubble and disappointments when her expectations are not met and instead realize the place as a changed and as one with people worth getting to know. In the end, she learns to appreciate the past, but also the importance of finding a place in the present: „Die Vergangenheit zu kennen ist wichtig, doch in ihr zu verharren mitunter gefährlich. Wenn man aber die Verbindung zur Gegenwart erhält, lernt man besser zu sehen, wo es im Leben hell und wo es dunkel ist.” She decides to engage actively in the present, to let the past rest, and make peace with her nostalgic fixations and idealized expectations. It is this confrontation that leads to her understanding and acceptance of contemporary Kaliningrad and its people. Only then can she begin to interact and form a community of friendship and understanding with other Kaliningrad citizens.

The development of a collaborative, German-Russian community is most notably exemplified by Sarah’s relationship to Valentina, a Kaliningrad woman in charge at the Insterburger Schloss. Valentina is particularly interested in expanding the exhibit at the memorial site and happily accepts Sarah’s donation of her family’s rediscovered porcelain collection buried by their old home. The porcelain, both proof of her family’s existence there and confirmation of her family’s stories’ validity, also establishes her

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622 Ibid., 105.
623 Ibid., 120, 203-204, 212.
624 Ibid., 185.
joint work with Valentina to preserve and share the memories of Germans from East Prussia. There is an important moment of exchange between the two when discussing the history of the region. Valentina does not shy away from detailing the Soviet destruction of German structures, like the castle, nor does she worry about sharing her own family’s story. Here, she establishes a multidirectional memory discourse to Sarah’s family’s past, as well as to German expellee narratives generally, by narrating the story of her grandmother’s forced migration to Kaliningrad from her home in Omask, Russia in 1945. This inclusion raises an important point of contact between Sarah, Valentina, and the other visiting Germans at the castle by reminding of a shared, indeed larger and multifaceted, narrative of forced migration in the wake of World War II. Valentina explains that for this reason she feels a personal tie to the East Prussian legacy in Kaliningrad and as a part of a generation: “in der die jungen Leute nach den Spuren der Vergangenheit suchen. Wir fühlen uns verantwortlich.” They feel a responsibility to share the East Prussian history of Kaliningrad as a part of not only the region’s heritage, but of a larger European one. For Valentina this is also an important part of Kaliningrad’s establishment of its own unique, regional identity that is neither fully a part of Russia nor of Europe, she explains. During their conversation, Sarah’s imaginations wander from picturing her father’s experience to considering Valentina’s grandmother’s and how strange and sad the transition must have been for her. In this way, the novel demonstrates the role of the second generation in establishing transcultural ties, and

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625 Ibid., 117.
626 Ibid., 116.
627 Ibid., 122-123.
through travel, as able to establish personal, communicative, and collaborative links to the contemporary place and people.

The return visit becomes an unexpected transformative one for Sarah, where she realizes her own disconnection and desire to develop her own sense of home in Kaliningrad. It is a feeling of home that is neither based on nationality nor ethnicity, but instead one centered on memory – her father’s nostalgic memories of his childhood home as well as her own experiences abroad. She feels connected to her father in a way that is new. No longer seeing herself as a part within his idealized past, she instead describes herself as a silent observer: “Vor mir glaube ich, einen kleinen Jungen neben seiner Mutter laufen zu sehen. Ich stelle mir vor, sie kamen gerade aus Insterburg und seien auf dem Weg nach Hause . . . In Gedanken fühle ich mich als stille Beobachterin, folge den beiden, ohne sie zu stören.”

She wishes to neither disrupt the memories from her father nor reject his idealized stories. Instead, she decides to bear witness to his account, but also construct her own. By separating herself from his nostalgic memory and by collaborating with Valentina, Sarah illustrates Kaliningrad as site of memorial connection between Russians and Germans. Though differences persist and gaps within shared aspects of the past remain, it is a site where negotiation and dialogue can begin. Postmemorial nostalgia remains to be characteristic of Sarah’s experience abroad until the end. Her nostalgic postmemory takes on the dimension of reflective nostalgia: it does not “rebuild the mythical place called home,” but instead is aware of the fragmentary, nostalgic narrative and irretrievable time.”

In the end, Sarah holds on to her nostalgic postmemory and imaginations based on her father’s stories as reminders of him without

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628 Ibid., 201-202.
629 Boym, 49-50.
losing sight of the present. His nostalgia was one of a lost, former home that no longer exists, and hers is one of her recently passed father and the memories of the place he held so dear.

IV. CONCLUSION

Kuhlmann’s novel presents experiences related to the mnemonic and affective dimensions of the second generation and highlights the ways in which postmemory and postmemorial nostalgia can shape expectations and images of parental pasts and former homes. The protagonist’s deeply felt attachment to the former home of her father demonstrates how a longing and desire for this home can take on multigenerational dimensions and guide her Heimwehtourismus experiences abroad. By working through her nostalgic postmemory, Sarah employs a reflective sense of nostalgia to maintain a connection to her father and establish her own friendships and ties in Kaliningrad in the present. The novel furthermore invites a consideration of Kaliningrad to serve as a place of mutual identification and memory between Russians and Germans. Recent cultural events in Russia, the 2005 anniversary celebration, joint German-Russian projects, academic endeavors, as well as tourism, demonstrate an interest in establishing positive relationships between Germans and Russians in Europe in light of the troubled past. Searching for and maintaining the German East Prussian legacy as a shared responsibility in Kaliningrad is a step forward in a constructive direction. However, a discursive transformation to include German and Russian narratives more equally, perhaps through multidirectional memory constellations as the novel presents, as well as the inclusion of
Polish and Lithuanian ones, can help to construct a more multifaceted and transnational understanding of the shared East Prussian past and contemporary European memory.
CONCLUSION

My dissertation has examined the emotion of nostalgia within different moments of Germany’s 20th and 21st century history. Within the context of German forced migration after World War II, we see the difficulty that nostalgia poses. It creates to some an ethical question, as Bammer suggests, a question of rights. Do Germans have a right to long for the places conceded at Potsdam? Or, was this given up? The authors under analysis in this dissertation demonstrate that this is a sensitive and complex issue. Yet at the same time, nostalgia pervades their experiences and emotional realities and cannot be simply disregarded or overlooked. In different ways, they negotiate and employ strategies in their literature to come to terms with their emotional reality without losing sight of its problematic potential. From its instrumentalization in political discourse to consideration in literary return narratives, nostalgia is presented as a key affective dimension of the German forced migration experience. A disavowal of this deeply felt sense of longing would be a disservice to the self and a denigration of the constructive potential of this emotion to inspire empathy and understanding. The rendering of both physically conducted trips as well as imaginative revisits in writing constitute affective practices, and literature provides an opportunity to reflect upon the ways in which nostalgia can affect perceptions, decisions, motivations and interpersonal relationships. Unique to their respective socio-political contexts, each author contemplates the possibilities that nostalgic emotions can pose. They furthermore demonstrate the ability to express nostalgic sentiments without engaging in revisionism and revanchism.
Chapter one introduced the historical difficulty of nostalgia as apart of problematic political platforms. In some cases, literature served the interest of political expellee organizations conveying sentimental longings to readers on an affective level to support a revanchist rhetoric of return. This became highly problematic in the 1970s and 80s in West Germany with the official recognition of the Oder-Neisse border and renewed relationships with eastern neighbors. East German policy foci, on the other hand, conveyed the message that nostalgia and sentimental attachments to the former Heimat were oppositional to East German progressive socialist society from the postwar period on. GDR officials sought to create a new socialist Heimat with “brotherly” ties to other socialist states, and a model of integration based on the replacement of the old home with the new. The West German author Arno Surminski and the East German author Elisabeth Schulz-Semrau both write against the problematic assumptions directed toward nostalgia. In their representations of Heimwehtourismus, they both depict nostalgia as a part of their protagonists’ emotional experiences and seek to find a way of coming to terms with this sentiment while not losing sight of the possibility for it to become instrumentalized.

In his East Prussian trilogy, Arno Surminski traverses his own childhood memories located in the East Prussian village Jäglack. In Jokehnen, he recalls his experiences of the place and the war, demonstrating how rural locals were affected by global events. Return and nostalgia emerges particularly during the villagers’ flight and subsequent arrival in postwar Germany. Nostalgia serves as the affective feature of hope, which encourages them to survive. Even though the young protagonist Hermann senses that the place has permanently changed – that they can never truly return – he maintains a
nostalgic recollection of the rural landscape, which gives him hope to find a new home in Thuringia, the “grüne Herz Deutschlands.” In Jokehn, it is not nostalgia that appears problematic, but rather political apathy and the maintenance of troubling patriarchal structures (esp. through the figure of the major). Political apathy is presented again in Polninken within which Ingo learns to see himself as affected by global politics during his return visit to the former Heimat of his parents. In light of violence perpetrated at the East-West German border, he is encouraged to see his parents’ rural Heimat as an ideal, a “Paradies.” It appears as a possible future site of European memory within which the various citizen of Europe with different nationalities can meet. This nostalgic longing for the place, with a conveyed hope for the future, also becomes a point of empathetic connection between himself and his family members, which is largely motivated by postmemory. Finally in Grunowen, Surminski demonstrates the difficulty of nostalgic longing alongside feelings of guilt. The main character Werner’s “homecoming” is anything but “guilt-free.” Werner appears as highly conflicted between his guilt, emerging from his memories as a soldier in the army, this guilt inhibits his nostalgic longing. This novel above all sheds light on nostalgia’s problematic potential to lead to a culture of reclaiming – Werner’s stronger sense of guilt throws this into relief.

Problematic assumptions with regard to nostalgic sentiment very much pervade Schulz-Semrau’s considerations in Suche nach Karalautschi and Drei Kastanien as well. Feeling a strong “Sehnsucht” for her childhood and a desire to find positive points of connection, Schulz-Semrau restores a surrogate Heimat in the form of her imagined “Karalautschi.” She in particular asserts her sense of nostalgia as a part of her self-understanding and identity. Within the context of the GDR, this can be seen as subverting
public discourse on the issue of the former Heimat and its meaning to the self. She crafts a space in memory that she can continuously revisit without any interest of reclaiming the physical, changed place. Her restorative nostalgia intersects with a reflective form that enables her to come to terms with her emotional sensibilities. Unlike Wolf, she seeks proximity, not distance. In many ways, this surrogate Heimat space, Karalautschi, and past self, “das Kind,” appear in Drei Kastanien during her return visit in Kaliningrad. However while visiting, she engages much more in the discourse of German culpability and presents multidirectional memory constellations to contextualize her nostalgia and memories. Her interest is in establishing German-Soviet friendships thorough interpersonal encounters and dialogue. In her writing, she negotiates the possibility of maintaining her nostalgic feelings while fully avoiding revanchism.

Finally, Kuhlmann’s Hoffnung heißt Nadjeschda contemplates the relationship of the second generation to the parental Heimat. This novel picks up the discussion of postmemorial nostalgia initiated with respect to Polninken in chapter three, and notions of German-Russian friendship and conciliation prompted in Schulz-Semrau’s writing. Revisiting her father’s home, now in Kaliningrad, the protagonist Sarah seeks her own points of connection abroad. In the process, she reveals that her nostalgia is a postmemorial nostalgia directed toward the historical East Prussian Königsberg and serves as a point of connection between Sarah and contemporary Kaliningrad citizens, whom she encounters. This is particularly the case with Valentina, who is in charge of the museum at the Insterburg Castle. Valentina, also a member of the second generation, recalls her family’s history of forced migration to Kaliningrad, and the two establish a multidirectional memory exchange. In the end, Sarah’s postmemorial nostalgia serves to
help her maintain a connection to her father. She imagines him as a child in the city and what his life may have been like, but their connection is also maintained along affective lines through a shared sense of nostalgia.

In these novels, restoration occurs largely through imagined reconstructions of past places, people, and communities. It is a restorative nostalgia that recreates what was, albeit mnemonically. Yet, these texts avoid a sense of “nationalist revival,” which according to Boym is a part of restorative nostalgia. In large part, the construction of multidirectional memory constellations – according to Rothberg a non-competitive form of memory – serves to contextualize German memories of suffering and sentiments toward the former Heimat. Their presentation indicates an interest in the changed place and desire to dialogically interact with contemporary inhabitants in the interest of conciliation and understanding. These texts complicate Boym’s distinctions between restorative and reflective nostalgia and instead present multiple possibilities that the affect can motivate. The theoretical position of the affective, insisting on the equal consideration of “rational/mental” and embodied forms of knowledge encourages one to take the affective dimension of human experience seriously. Emotions, such as nostalgia, can influence social interactions, perceptions, and practices. Without neglecting nostalgia’s problematic potential, the literature analyzed in this dissertation also demonstrates the possibility for nostalgia to inspire hope, motivation as well as influence empathy and understanding.
APPENDIX

Königsberg in Kaliningrad Urban Space
(All images by Meghan O’Dea, 2016)

Images of the historical Königsberg appear in unexpected places around contemporary Kaliningrad.

Figure 1 – Black and white image of the Pregel in Königsberg at the ship yard in Kaliningrad.
Figure 2 – Black and white image of the historical Königsberg posted on a building wall.
Figure 3 – Images of the historical Königsberg surround a newsstand in Kaliningrad.
Figure 4 – The historical Königsberg is featured on an ice cream cooler.
Figure 6 – This mural, located outside of Kaliningrad’s urban center in Yantarny, serves as an homage to the region’s historical amber production.
Figure 7 – A Kaliningrad beer establishment. Some locales and stores carry Germanophone place names. Another example (not featured here) is a local bakery chain titled “Königsbäcker.”
Figure 8 – Kaliningrad’s restored *Fischerdorf* displays a prominent German East Prussian architectural style.

Figure 9 – Kaliningrad’s restored *Fischerdorf*. 
Figure 10 – The restored Königsberg Cathedral is a popular destination for visitors. It famously houses Kant’s tomb.
Figure 11 – The King’s Gate was rebuilt for the 2005 anniversary celebration.


Czepczyński, Mariusz and Michał Czepczyński. “Heritage resurrection: German heritage in the Southern Baltic Cities.” *Theory and Practice in Heritage and


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