CHAPTER 1

Heimat, Renewal, and Life after Death in a Rhenish Metropolis

In the aftermath of the war, few German cities in the western zones resembled the carefree world of Heimat films. Prolific rubble scenes defined the landscapes of larger cities, including Hamburg, Bremen, Berlin, Dortmund, Essen, Duisburg, Hannover, Nuremberg, Frankfurt, and Stuttgart. The same could also be said of many middle-sized cities like Aachen, Mainz, Münster, Mannheim, Würzburg, Kiel, Kassel, Paderborn, Pforzheim, or Braunschweig. Rubble landscapes could also be seen in many smaller towns like Pirmasens, Friedrichshafen, Zweibrücken, Freudenstadt, Jülich, or Düren, among others. For denizens of these places, the emotions of Heimat centred not around abstract rural places where milkmaids pranced through forests in regional costumes. Instead, it represented a personal geography in ruins. Its colours were more grey than green, while the millions who did live in rural evacuation pined less for verdant landscapes and more for specific sites of home.

This certainly applied to the Rhenish city of Cologne, whose city centre had been mostly destroyed by 1945 (Figure 1.1). Few of the remaining locals recognized the city landscape. Most historical sites had been left in rubble, making it all the more astonishing that the city's foremost symbol, the Cologne Cathedral, suffered only minor damage and remained towering over the ruins. The Gestapo headquarters, only a short walk away, also remained standing, with the scratchings of tortured prisoners etched into its basement walls. Few in the first months after the war, however, were there to see the local landscape at all, with 95 percent having been evacuated.[1] Many who pined for home set back on foot and often returned to find destroyed homes, disappeared communities, and vanished landscapes which they described in terms of lost Heimat. The author Heinrich Böll, who would spend subsequent decades calling for greater confrontation with the Nazi past, recounted his tears upon seeing

[1] Gerhard Brunn, "Evakuierung und Rückkehr," in *Nachkriegszeit*, ed., Dülffer, 129.

Figure 1.1 Cologne in ruins, April 24, 1945.
Source: National Archives (US), Photographs of American Military Activities, NAI-521287/111-SC-206174.

these sites. Rubble Cologne, he argued, had something pre-war Cologne never had: a look of "seriousness."[2] Many further noted the strange silence of this new world. While bombing raids had filled the city with the deafening sounds of air sirens, the war's end brought what the amateur artist Heinrich Schröder described as the peculiar "soundlessness of the rubble world." His sketches of the silent ruins appeared in a volume entitled "*Colonia Deleta*" which relayed the fate of their hometown to dislocated locals.[3]

This soundlessness did not last for long, as can be seen in an article in the *Kölner Kurier* in August 1945 entitled *"Heimatliche Melodie"* (Heimat-like melody). The meagre four-page weekly newspaper – the only one in

[2] Heinrich Böll, "Stichworte," in *Werke: Kölner Ausgabe*, vol. 14, eds., Árpád Bernáth and Jochen Schubert (Cologne, 2002), 312.
[3] Schröder, *Colonia Deleta*, 68–74.

circulation at the time – contained a relation from a Cologne citizen who arose one morning to the sound of a neighbour cleaning a carpet out of an open window. The writer confessed to being baffled that such a sound existed. What would normally be perturbing, he wrote, struck his ears as a most melodious sound that he had not heard since before the war – a "Heimat-neighbourly household melody" that triggered within him an "unusual feeling of newly won, no, more, a newly gifted sense of Heimat (*Beheimatung*)."[4] The seemingly unremarkable sound of everyday life was anything but unremarkable to the ears of denizens who hungered for new civilian lives. Over the course of the ensuing months, Cologne saw a flood of returnees, who poured back into the city and similarly expressed their deep desires for Heimat and its role in finding new lives. Discourses on local Heimat came to fill newspapers, magazines, journals, and a range of other sources in the rubble city, many of which noted that a Heimat renaissance was underway.

This chapter examines the appeal to local Heimat as a site of imagined renewal in early post-war Cologne. The history of this revival conflicts not only with the misconception that Heimat was taboo after the war but also with notions that Heimat in the period was only about tending to a sense of victimhood.[5] Cologners, like locals in many other towns and cities, also described Heimat as a site of healing, community building, and new beginnings. This begs the question of why so many described Heimat as a site of healing and why they appealed to local community rather than national *Volksgemeinschaft* to find new lives. Why, moreover, did Cologners devote so much energy to writing about Heimat, creating new localist publications, founding Heimat societies, and reviving local traditions? Should we see such local communities of reconstruction as simply small-scale *Volksgemeinschaften* or something else?

This chapter takes up these questions but putting them in context necessitates a brief examination of the earlier history of the Heimat movement and the preceding Nazi years in particular. The chapter begins by exploring how the regime promoted certain strains of thinking about Heimat while discouraging others. The regime insisted on understanding Heimat as about funnelling local sentiments into national struggle, while repressing strains of thinking about Heimat which were too inwardly focused or out of step with state goals. The war, however, undermined

[4] Ull Tuerk, "Heimatliche Melodie," *Kölnischer Kurier,* August 14, 1945.
[5] Confino, *Germany as a Culture of Remembrance.*

local place attachments, while the homesickness of Cologne soldiers and evacuees represented a continual problem for the regime.

The chapter then turns to the early post-war years and explores proliferating local discourses on Heimat generated by destruction, evacuation, and return. In taking on arguments that Heimat was only about promoting a sense of victimhood, the chapter shows how discussions about Heimat as a site of new life pulsated throughout a host of local works including newspapers, Heimat journals, Heimat books, event speeches, eyewitness accounts, and localist songs, poetry, and prose. The chapter then turns to an analysis of the renaissance of local Heimat culture. Its sheer scale was remarkable. Cologners described local Heimat culture as a tool in repairing community bonds, gathering energies for reconstruction, healing torn biographies, and compensating for the lost built environment of the city. As we shall see in Chapter 2, local culture also offered a means to reshape narratives about local identities.

While it would be tempting to dismiss such local communities of reconstruction as "*Volksgemeinschaften*" in miniature, the chapter argues that the script of finding new life through local Heimat was decidedly different. While the *Volksgemeinschaft* idea had promised new lives through national mobilization for mass violence, post-war visions of renewal through local reconstruction involved finding new lives by turning away from national struggle and embracing civilian life. While this redounded to the benefit of cultural demobilization, the Heimat movement had substantial failures, several of which will be explored in Chapter 2. This chapter concludes by exploring one failure which the dynamics of reconstruction particularly aggravated, namely conservative gendered understandings about Heimat.

From "Coordination" to Defeat

The Heimat movement in Cologne was hardly a product of the post-war years. As in many other German regions and cities, its history extended back to the nineteenth century and was a testament to the extent of Heimat sentiment for urban centres. Local Heimat feeling could be found as much in late nineteenth-century Cologne, Berlin, or Vienna as in rural places like the Eichsfeld or Bavarian Swabia.[6] As one urban Heimat

[6] Jenkins, *Provincial*; Sándor Békési, "Heimat in der Metropole? Zur Urbanität der Heimatschutz-Bewegung um 1900 am Beispiel Wiens," in *Zwischen Emotion und Kalkül. 'Heimat' als Argument im Prozess der Moderne*, ed., Manfred Seifert (Leipzig, 2010).

enthusiast rhetorically asked in 1902: "Do we love our Heimat less, because we grew up on the cobblestones of a large city?"[7] In Cologne, urban Heimat enthusiasm grew substantially during the late nineteenth century. The First World War, meanwhile, saw attempts throughout Europe to funnel local loyalties into the war effort. In Central Europe, this was best displayed in the practice of creating wooden sculptures of local heroes into which purchasers of war loans drove nails, therein covering them with a sheet of armour.[8] In Cologne, locals hammered nails into the "*Kölsche Boor,*" the symbol of the free city of Cologne, while soldiers in the field pined for their Heimat.

Urban Heimat enthusiasm grew and remained politically diverse in the turbulent Weimar years, which saw foreign occupation of the Rhineland and separatist efforts to create a Rhenish Republic. Publication of Heimat journals in Weimar Germany grew significantly. Under Konrad Adenauer, the city mayor, locals also began planning for a Rhenish Heimat museum. Weimar-era localists emphasized being above political partisanship, though, as a predominantly Catholic city, the confessional Centre Party remained prominent, which was partly responsible for the Cologne-Aachen district having the lowest level of votes for the National Socialists of any district in Germany in the 1932 and 1933 elections.

The Nazi regime evoked Heimat in propaganda while discouraging strains of thinking about it that generated excessive homesickness or were out of tune with national expansion. Federalist forms of regionalism had little place in the regime, even if it was not as centralist as Mussolini's Italy or Franco's Spain. Neither the construction of competing power centres in the bureaucracy nor the appointment of *Gauleiters* from Berlin represented federalism in a classic sense. Hitler notably declared that the regime would eliminate federalism and praised how technologies of movement would level regional differences.[9] Nazi orthodoxy maintained that a correctly understood Heimat idea was about devoting local resources and energies to national struggle. As Hitler himself argued in a speech on his own "Heimat" after the *Anschluss*, narrow spaces were irrelevant without being subsumed into broader ones.[10] Still, the regime unquestionably engaged

[7] Hugo Jüngst, "Los von Berlin," in *Heimat deine Heimat*, ed., Jürgen Liebig (Darmstadt, 1982), 39.
[8] Gerhard Schneider, "Zur Mobilisierung der 'Heimatfront:' Das Nageln sogenannter Kriegswahrzeichen im Ersten Weltkrieg," *Zeitschrift für Volkskunde* 95 (1999): 32–62.
[9] Jeremy Noakes, "Federalism in the Nazi State," in *German Federalism,* ed., MaikenUmbach (Basingstoke, 2002), 113–145; Michael Kissener, "Nationalsozialismus und Widerstand," in *Heimat*, ed., Weigand, 210–211.
[10] Adolf Hitler, "Meine Eigene Heimat," in *Heimat,* ed., Liebig, 71–72.

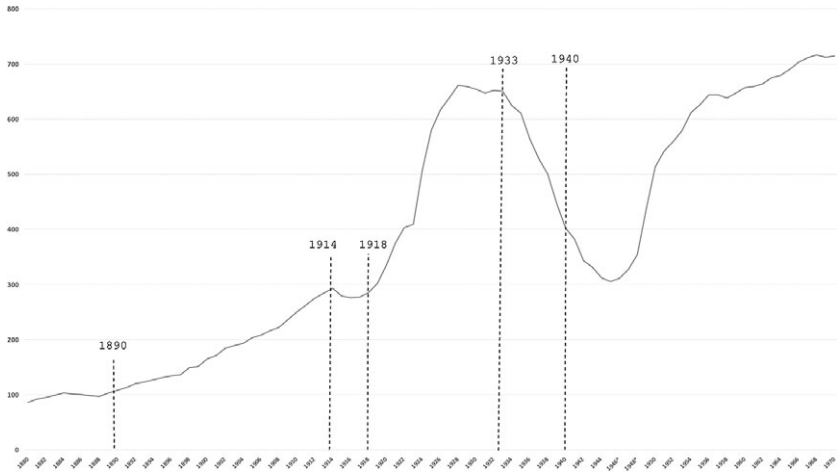

Figure 1.2 Heimat journals published in the territories of West Germany (including the Saarland, but not West Berlin) from 1880 to 1970. Tallies compiled from analysis of Mechthold's index of Heimat journals. Rudi Mechthold, *Landesgeschichtliche Zeitschriften 1800–2009. Ein Verzeichnis deutschsprachiger landesgeschichtlicher und heimatkundlicher Zeitschriften, Zeitungsbeilagen und Schriftenreihen* (Frankfurt, 2011).

Source: Jeremy DeWaal, "Regionalism and Its Diverse Framings in German-Speaking Europe across the Long Twentieth Century," in *Regionalism and Modern Europe: Regional Identity Construction and Regional Movements from 1890 to the Present Day*, eds., Xosé Núñez Seixas and Eric Storm (London, 2019), 178.

with regional identities in propaganda, while Gauleiters appealed to regional identities to solidify their power bases.[11] The regime engaged with Heimat when politically expedient and often evoked a delocalized concept in propaganda. At the same time, the regime shuttered many Heimat societies and centralized others, while decreasing focus on the local aspect of *Heimatkunde* and publication of Heimat books.[12] A numerical analysis of Heimat journals reveals how the regime slashed their numbers almost in half from 1933 to 1940 after decades of unwavering growth (Figure 1.2). One Nazi pedagogue went so far as to argue that they should only teach history rooted in spaces of "national destiny." Historical views based on "Heimat," he argued, were products of a "liberal" worldview that must be scrapped.[13] For others, it was more about ensuring that local energies were firmly oriented towards national goals.

[11] Umbach and Szejnmann, eds., *Heimat.*
[12] Julia Faehndrich, "Entstehung und Aufstieg des Heimatbuchs," in *Heimatbuch*, ed., Beer, 62–72.
[13] Dietrich Klagges, *Geschichtsunterricht als nationalpolitische Erziehung* (Frankfurt, 1937), 165–167.

In the Rhineland, ideologically receptive Heimat societies like the Rhenish Society for Historic Preservation were easily integrated. The society was an elite organization with historically close ties to the Prussian state.[14] Less receptive societies, like the *Heimatverein Alt-Köln,* were forbidden to publish. Heimat journals discontinued by the regime included *Alt-Köln* as well as the journal *Jung-Köln*, edited by the local school board.[15] The regime was more than willing to shape extant plans for a Rhenish Heimat museum for its own purposes. Heimat activities rarely emerged as a site of resistance. Coordination of the Cologne Carnival, for example, saw only brief conflict over local societies' independence and fleeting threats of a boycott in the face of coordination plans, followed by mutual accommodation.[16]

Coordination of the Heimat journal, the *Rheinische Heimatblätter*, offers insight into the regime's approach to strains of thinking about Heimat which were too locally focused. In the Weimar years, the publication consisted of chiefly antiquarian regional cultural pieces. In 1933, the journal was removed from the editorship of Heimat societies, renamed the *Rheinische Blätter* (without the term Heimat), placed under the control of the Militant League for German Culture, and filled with decorative runes. The new editors dramatically scaled back regional pieces to make way for non-regional propaganda and declared in the first edition the "revaluation" of earlier values.[17] The remaining regional sections took on new themes including the Rhineland's "war front legacy," the artificial nature of the western national border, ancient Germanic histories, "German *Lebensraum*," denunciations of separatism, and the importance of regional economic output for the nation. As one large-printed quotation in the journal maintained: "Work is Heimat!"[18] The overwhelming rural idealism of the journal stood out, given the prominence of the Rhineland as a landscape of cities. The theme of a "national community of struggle," absent in the pre-1933 publication, saturated the post-1933 periodical. The goal of such propaganda was to force the local focus of Heimat towards expansion. As the newly inserted Cologne mayor, Robert Brandes, argued in a 1933 speech that criticized histories of "petty statism"

[14] Rudy Koshar, *Germany's Transient Pasts: Preservation and National Memory in the Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill, 1998), 41.
[15] Universität- und Stadtbibliothek zu Köln (USBK)/Rheinkasten/3939, *Neunzig Jahre Heimatverein Alt-Köln*, Pamphlet (1991).
[16] Marcus Leifeld, *Der Kölner Karneval in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus* (Cologne, 2015).
[17] Kampfbund für Deutsche Kultur, "Aufruf," *Rheinische Blätter* 10 (1933): 405–407.
[18] Quotation, Heinrich Lersch, *Rheinische Blätter* 19 (1942): 295.

in the Rhineland, it was their duty to be a national bulwark and emphasize "German cultural will" to such an extent that it would "radiate" across the western border.[19]

The outbreak of the war represented an inflection point in Nazi engagement with Heimat, with local attachments challenged by destruction, death, and dislocation. The anti-regime Catholic cleric Alfred Delp, a Kreisau Circle member, reflected on this in a 1940 sermon on "Heimat." Amidst the war, he argued, they had forgotten Heimat and become a people "on the road" in "war trips," "work trips," and "settlement trips." Brushing against the grain of Nazi ideas of Heimat as abstract and delocalized, Delp described it as a specific "experiential world," which could not be Heimat without places of memory and social connections.[20] The Nazi regime's plans to uproot and resettle millions in the East illustrated particular disinterest in preserving connections to specific places of home. As they confronted soldiers' homesickness, the regime made great efforts to shield them from knowledge of the home front's fate. Cologne soldiers' excessive expressions of homesickness particularly perturbed Nazi authorities, who banned them from singing the famous song "Homesickness for Cologne."[21] The regime, meanwhile, sought to use regionalism to digest newly conquered territories to the West. In Cologne, they used events like the "German-Flemish Festival" to underscore the cultural similarities of the Rhineland with the Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg.[22]

During the war, propagandistic engagement with Heimat focused almost exclusively on mobilizing local resources. As the *Westdeutscher Beobachter* declared, "Heimat and front are one" and formed an "indissoluble community of fate."[23] The bombings, however, made the collapse of the front and Heimat a reality in a way that shocked locals. Nazi propaganda denounced the British "terror attacks" and sought to generate anger towards the British "mass murderers" based on the destruction of their Heimat and Cologne's famous twelve Romanesque churches.[24] Such appeals had mixed results as two private letters from 1943 illustrated.

[19] Robert Brandes, "Der Kampfbund im Rheinland," *Rheinische Blätter* 10 (1933): 909–912.
[20] Alfred Delp, "Heimat," in *Gesammelte Schriften. Band II*, ed., Roman Bleistein (Frankfurt, 1983), 249–269.
[21] Wilhelm Staffel, *Willi Ostermann* (Cologne, 1976), 84–85.
[22] On events, see *Rheinische Blätter* 7 (1940).
[23] "Heimat und Front sind eins," *Westdeutscher Beobachter*, May 3, 1940; "Front und Heimat werden zur unlösbaren Schicksalsgemeinschaft," *Westdeutscher Beobachter*, December 18, 1944.
[24] "Von den britischen Kulturschändern vernichtet," *Westdeutscher Beobachter*, June 1, 1942; "Vergeltung für Köln," *Westdeutscher Beobachter*, June 1, 1942; "Churchills Krieg gegen Frauen

While one woman from Cologne wrote that saying "Heil Hitler" after the bombings would likely get one slapped, a father wrote to his son in the field about how seeing the statue of the "*Kölsche Boor*" in the ruins filled him with desire for vengeance.[25] By 1944, as the Allies approached the German border, propaganda denounced the "false Heimat loyalties" and "apish love" of Heimat of locals who refused evacuation and praised the "true Heimat loyalties" of Cologners who left home and sacrificed their lives for the nation on the battlefield.[26] Unlike other wartime European states, the regime made little effort to keep evacuated citizens close to home, resulting in unusual moments of protests driven by homesickness and illegal return.[27] In Cologne, the Gauleiter reported that many locals tried to circumvent evacuation orders by making basement ruins liveable or by lying in wait in the nearby countryside, while evacuee accounts revealed increasing emotional preoccupation with their hometowns.[28]

While many at the end of the war had a deep hunger for post-war lives, Nazi propaganda emphasized that there would be no civilian life of Heimat after defeat. As the *Westdeutscher Beobachter* maintained, the Allies would permanently decimate the city, drive out its inhabitants, give the Rhineland to France, and enslave Rhinelanders far from their Heimat.[29] As the Allies approached Cologne, Nazi forces ultimately withdrew across the Rhine, reporting that they were abandoning the "rubble pile Cologne."[30] Their detonation of the city's bridges behind them generated tremors that shook the nearby Cathedral, sending tons of vaulting crashing to the nave floor. As American forces captured Cologne, sounds of artillery ceased, leaving the city in an odd silence. The few remaining citizens in the ruins wrote of their fears that their hometown had been irrevocably destroyed.

The idea of national *Volksgemeinschaft* ultimately outshone that of Heimat in the Third Reich. Scholars continue to debate whether the final

und Kinder," *Westdeutscher Beobachter*, June 2, 1942; "Die britische Kulturschande," *Westdeutscher Beobachter*, June 7, 1942.

[25] Letters in Martin Rüther, *Köln im Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Cologne, 2005), 290–291.

[26] "Gefährdete Heimat," *Westdeutscher Beobachter*, December 28, 1944; "Kölner auf einsamen Stützpunkten," *Westdeutscher Beobachter*, April 5, 1944; "Von rechter und falscher Heimattreue," *Westdeutscher Beobachter,* January 18, 1945.

[27] Torrie, *Evacuations.*

[28] Michael Krause, *Flucht vor dem Bombenkrieg. 'Umquartierung' im Zweiten Weltkrieg und die Wiedereingliederung der Evakuierten in Deutschland 1943–1963* (Düsseldorf, 1997), 124.

[29] "Was soll aus dem Rheinland werden?," *Westdeutscher Beobachter*, October 16, 1944; "Gefährdete Heimat," *Westdeutscher Beobachter*, December 28, 1944; "Köln, die Frontstadt," *Westdeutscher Beobachter*, October 19, 1944.

[30] Schäfke, *Köln*, 8.

war years saw a decline in the *Volksgemeinschaft* idea and how it may have left imprints on post-war memory cultures or notions of being a "community of fate."[31] Dismissing local communities of reconstruction as subterranean *Volksgemeinschaften*, however, risks marginalizing the most defining element of the *Volksgemeinschaft* idea: mobilization of the national community for mass violence.[32] The fact that one form of community called for renewal through national struggle and violence and another through local reconstruction and finding new civilian existences made them different. By the end of the war, one thing was clear: the nation had been eliminated as a sovereign actor and the *Volksgemeinschaft* ceased to offer a viable source of renewal.

Emotional Homecomings

Few studies of Heimat have failed to note how preoccupation with the concept has historically resulted from its loss. It was no coincidence that so much writing about Heimat came from the pens of the displaced who reflected on the loss of familiar communities, human relationships, and coherent life stories. Multidisciplinary scholars have noted how local place attachments are often deeply intertwined with a sense of biography and how emotive focus on them often comes to the fore amidst their disappearance.[33] Recognition of how loss often triggers preoccupation with Heimat makes it all the more surprising that many have assumed it to be taboo after the Second World War, which generated so much displacement and destruction.

In Cologne, growing preoccupation with local Heimat could be seen in the late war years as denizens surveyed the local ruins or left for evacuation. Evacuating Cologners often described the bombing of their city as a self-shattering experience. This could be seen in many veins of local discourse, but the popular genre of dialect poetry offers a good example. While dialect poetry has a connotation of "kitsch," such pieces were saturated with serious themes of loss and recovery. In one poem, a local doctor wrote

[31] Kershaw, "Volksgemeinschaft," in *Visions*, eds., Steber and Gotto, 29–42; Bessel, "The End of the Volksgemeinschaft," in *Visions*, eds., Steber and Gotto, 281–294; Malte Thießen, "Erinnerungen an die 'Volksgemeinschaft.' Integration und Exklusion im kommunalen und kommunikativen Gedächtnis," in *'Volksgemeinschaft'*, ed., Schmiechen-Ackermann, 319–334.

[32] Bessel "Eine 'Volksgemeinschaft' der Gewalt," in *Volksgemeinschaft*, ed., Schmiechen-Ackermann, 357–360.

[33] Barbara Brown and Douglas Perkins, "Disruptions in Place Attachment," in *Place,* eds., Altman and Low, 281–301; Renos Papadopoulos, "Home: Paradoxes, Complexities and Vital Dynamism," in *Home*, eds., Bahun and Petric, 53–69.

of the surrealism of seeing the bombed places where he had spent his entire life and his desire to see, prior to his death, not a rebuilt Germany but rather the rebuilt city of Cologne.[34] Willy Klett, a middle-aged evacuated Cologner wrote about being overwhelmed with the disintegration of a local place of friendships, family, and familiarity. Klett's lyrics ended not with national reflections, but with declarations that they could not let "Colonia" disappear.[35] Another dialect poem entitled "Cologne, my Heimat" held that, despite being a rubble pile, the city must not fall asunder. After relating the sadness of evacuation, the author insisted that he would hold tightly to his local Heimat.[36]

With the end of the war, hundreds of thousands of citizens cascaded back into the city at a stunning rate, often reporting about how desire for Heimat drove them back. Only 40,000 of 770,000 Cologners were left in the city and few inhabitable structures remained. No experts, in turn, foresaw the precipitous return of 400,000 denizens in the first eight months after the war.[37] Administrators confessed themselves flabbergasted at the behaviour of returnees, who would have been materially better off staying in evacuation. According to numerous independent reports, the localist song, "Homesickness for Cologne" achieved cult status on their treks, which many undertook on foot. The melancholic Weimar-era song described a Cologner being overcome with homesickness and walking home to Cologne. The songwriter Willy Ostermann could hardly have expected the lyrics to take on literal dimensions. On their approach to the city, many returnees recounted enthusiasm at seeing from afar that the Cathedral was still standing – a sentiment that dissipated as they entered the city and saw the extent of destruction. Accounts like that of Maria Harff were common. The former secretary recounted being filled with homesickness and walking two weeks from Bamberg to Cologne, ultimately finding a hole where her house stood.[38]

Returnees and the local press repeatedly described the flood of returnees as a barometer of desires for Heimat. In the first post-war newspaper, one article insisted that, in spite of prolific destruction, Cologners were "loyal

[34] Peter Felten, "Erinnerungen eines achtzigjährigen Kölner Arztes" (1943), *Alt-Köln* (November 1951): 53–55.

[35] Willy Klett, "Ming einzig Kölle" (1943) in Reinhold Louis, *Kölnischer Liederschatz* (Cologne, 1986), 174.

[36] Unknown author, "Kölle ming Heimat" (1943) in Louis, *Liederschatz*, 172.

[37] Peter Hasenberg, *Ist das erst 15 Jahre her? Die Ersten Nachkriegsjahre im Spiegel der Zeitung* (Cologne, 1960), 13.

[38] Anja vom Stein, ed., *Unser Köln: Erinnerungen 1910–1960* (Erfurt, 1999), 61–63; Peter Fröhlich, *Kölle noh '45* (Cologne, 1972), 10.

to Heimat" and would rather live in basement ruins in their hometown than in a perfect house in evacuation.[39] In 1946, a newly founded newspaper described the sentiments of evacuees by pointing to the relation of one who responded to the suggestion of going elsewhere: "No, it must be Cologne!"[40] An article in the *Westdeutsche Zeitung* in 1949 echoed these sentiments, asking: "Are these large cities of our time, in particular the large rubble settlements, Heimat in a deeper sense to those people who reside within them?" The question was rhetorical, and the article argued that the flood of returnees to Cologne provided the answer.[41]

Those forced to remain in evacuation similarly expressed deep homesickness. Evacuees throughout occupied Germany often insisted on their continued membership in local communities through displays of Heimat sentiment from afar.[42] In Cologne, the mayor received a barrage of letters from evacuees recounting their homesickness and inquiring about return, while Cologners created Heimat societies in evacuation, like the "*Heimatverein Colonia*" in the town of Haltern.[43] This was not unique to Cologne. As one recent study of citizens' letters in the early post-war years has found, state ministers across the western zones were similarly inundated with letters recounting citizens' homesickness. Throughout these letters, the theme of finding Heimat was less about restoring the past than about imagining new personal futures.[44] Evacuees also turned to other venues like local periodicals and newspapers to convey their hunger for Heimat.[45] Returnees to Cologne also pressed the local administration to ameliorate the evacuee problem, with the city subsequently creating a caritative evacuee agency.[46]

Compared to evacuees, POWs had been away from home much longer and demonstrated a similar yearning for Heimat. Their fellow locals described Heimat sentiment as a tool in transforming them from soldiers into civilians. German POWs, as Frank Biess has demonstrated, pined for homecomings which they conceived not as a return to the nation but to a specific locality. Their feelings of lost Heimat, however, were often

[39] "Köln wird auferstehen," *Kölnischer Kurier,* April 9, 1945.
[40] "Nein, es muß Köln sein!," *Kölnische Rundschau,* October 11, 1946.
[41] "Lob für ein Amt," *Westdeutsche Zeitung*, January 19, 1949.
[42] Schroeder, "Urban," 307–324.
[43] Krause, *Flucht*, 250.
[44] Michaela Fenske, *Demokratie erschreiben. Bürgerbriefe und Petitionen als Medien politischer Kultur 1950–1974* (Frankfurt, 2013), 176–177.
[45] "75000 Kölner wollen nach Hause," *Kölner Stadtanzeiger,* February 3, 1950; "Ein Dokument inniger Verbundenheit," *Kölner Almanach* (1951/52): 340.
[46] "Holt die Evakuierten heim!," *Kölner Stadtanzeiger,* January 24, 1951; Statistischen Amt der Stadt Köln, ed., *Verwaltungsberichte der Stadt Köln, 1954/55* (Cologne, 1955), 83.

heightened when they encountered the ruins. As Biess has shown, their fellow locals often sought to reintegrate them without compelling them to interrogate their culpability for war crimes – a pattern which can be seen in Cologne.[47] Cologne POWs exhibited a deep preoccupation with return to local civilian life. As one wrote, he craved a lost local existence, seeing the Cathedral, going to the Hänneschen Theater, and shopping at the *Aldemaat*.[48] Reports further noted communal singing of "Homesickness for Cologne" on POW rail journeys back to the city.[49] An account from the Cologne mayor Ernst Schwering reflected the perceived role of Heimat in demobilizing soldiers and called for POW "*Heimatkehrer*" (Heimat returners) to feel a connection to their "Heimat city."[50] It remains a matter of debate whether this "forgiving" approach was needed to win over former soldiers for a new state.[51]

Throughout these accounts, it was clear that "Heimat" was a specific site of biography and community rather than a cinematic trope or empty signifier of nation. Some Cologners explicitly noted how Heimat could be found neither in generic depictions nor in abstract rural tropes. As the early post-war localist Joseph Klersch argued, "Heimat" was an "inner experience" of place and did not correspond to preconceived tropes or aesthetic stereotypes. He further argued that they must expiate the National Socialist notion that the small village was a fountain of health that contrasted with the "ill cities."[52]

The "Life-Affirming" Hometown and Repairing Ruptured Lives

One would hardly expect denizens in a city of ruins to describe their hometown as "life-affirming." "Apocalyptic" would be a better term to describe the scenes of post-war Cologne – whether it was the image of the lone Madonna standing over the shattered remains of St Columba or the imposing beams of the Hohenzollern bridge which plunged into the Rhine

[47] Biess, *Homecomings*, 65–69. See also Burghard Ciesla, "Auf Schienenwegen nach Hause," in *Heimkehr*, ed., Kaminsky, 64.

[48] Heinz Weber, "Ich mööch noch ens" (1943/44) in *Kölsche Verzällcher för Hären un Mamsellcher* (Cologne, 1964), 205.

[49] Fritz Franz Florian [pseud., Hans Schmitt-Rost], *Köln am Rhein* (Cologne, 1955), 8; Günther Hochgürthel interview in *Unser Köln*, ed., vom Stein, 80.

[50] "Die Stadt ehrt ihre Heimatkehrer," *Kölner Stadtanzeiger,* February 8, 1954.

[51] On veterans' support of the new republic, see Jörg Echternkamp, *Soldaten im Nachkrieg. Historische Deutungskonflikte und westdeutsche Demokratisierung 1945–1955* (Munich, 2014).

[52] Joseph Klersch, "Vorwort" and "Volkstumspflege und Volkskunde," in *Volkstumspflege und Volkskunde*, ed., Joseph Klersch (Cologne, 1952), 5, 12; Joseph Klersch, "Volk und Heimat," *Unser Köln* 5/6 (1952): 33–35.

midstream. And yet, descriptions of Heimat as "life-affirming" filled local discourses. As a 1948 article in the Heimat journal *Unser Köln* argued, out of feelings of lost Heimat grew a sense of "life-affirming desire for the future."[53] For Heinrich Böll, such associations explained Cologners' precipitous return home. Many, he argued, viewed return as the "only opportunity to have hope."[54] Localists like Klersch similarly combined themes of "Heimat" and "life-affirming optimism" in writing about forthcoming reconstruction. Heimat feeling, he argued, would provide moral and material support for rebuilding, allowing Cologners to say "yes to life."[55]

There were many reasons why locals in war-torn cities associated Heimat with new beginnings. One was the need for repaired local communities to take on reconstruction. Heimat in its unobliterated form was also associated with intact social relationships, a sense of protection, familiarity, and orientation – all things for which denizens hungered. Another factor which Cologners often cited was the role of Heimat in repairing biographical rupture. Scholars have noted how Germans after 1945 confronted "dissonant" lives and a sense of temporal disorientation.[56] It was no coincidence that diary writing peaked in these years as many grappled with biographical disorientation.[57] The role of the local in confronting biographical rupture, however, has received less attention. Heimat, in many ways, emerged as the primary site where denizens both sensed rupture and sought its repair. The dynamics of local place attachment offer some clues as to why this might be the case. Such attachments, as multidisciplinary scholars have demonstrated, often represent holistic relationships perceived as an "extension of the self" which offer security, predictability, social connections, dense sites of life memory, and a personal sense of "continuity of being" whose loss is often felt to be a self-shattering experience.[58] An illustration from a work of rubble dialect poetry succinctly illustrates how Heimat acted as a vessel of personal life narratives (Figure 1.3). The image depicted the life cycle from birth to

[53] "Das Amt für kölnisches Volkstum," *Unser Köln* 5/6 (1948): 13.
[54] Heinrich Böll, "Stichworte," in *Werke,* vol. 14, eds., Bernáth and Schubert, 314.
[55] Joseph Klersch, *Volkstum und Volksleben in Köln. Ein Beitrag zur historischen Soziologie der Stadt* (Cologne, 1965), 26–28.
[56] Fulbrook, *Dissonant;* Hans Gumbrecht, *Nach 1945. Latenz als Ursprung der Gegenwart.* (Frankfurt, 2012).
[57] Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann, "Gazing at the Ruins: German Defeat as Visual Experience," *Journal of Modern European History* 9 (2011): 332.
[58] Marco Antonsich, "Meanings of Place and Aspects of the Self: An Interdisciplinary and Empirical Account," *GeoJournal* 75 (2010): 119–132; Low and Altman, "Place Attachment," in *Place*, eds., Altman and Low, 10; Brown and Perkins, "Disruptions," in *Place*, eds., Altman and Low, 281–301; Papadopoulos, "Home," in *Home*, eds., Bahun and Petric, 53–69.

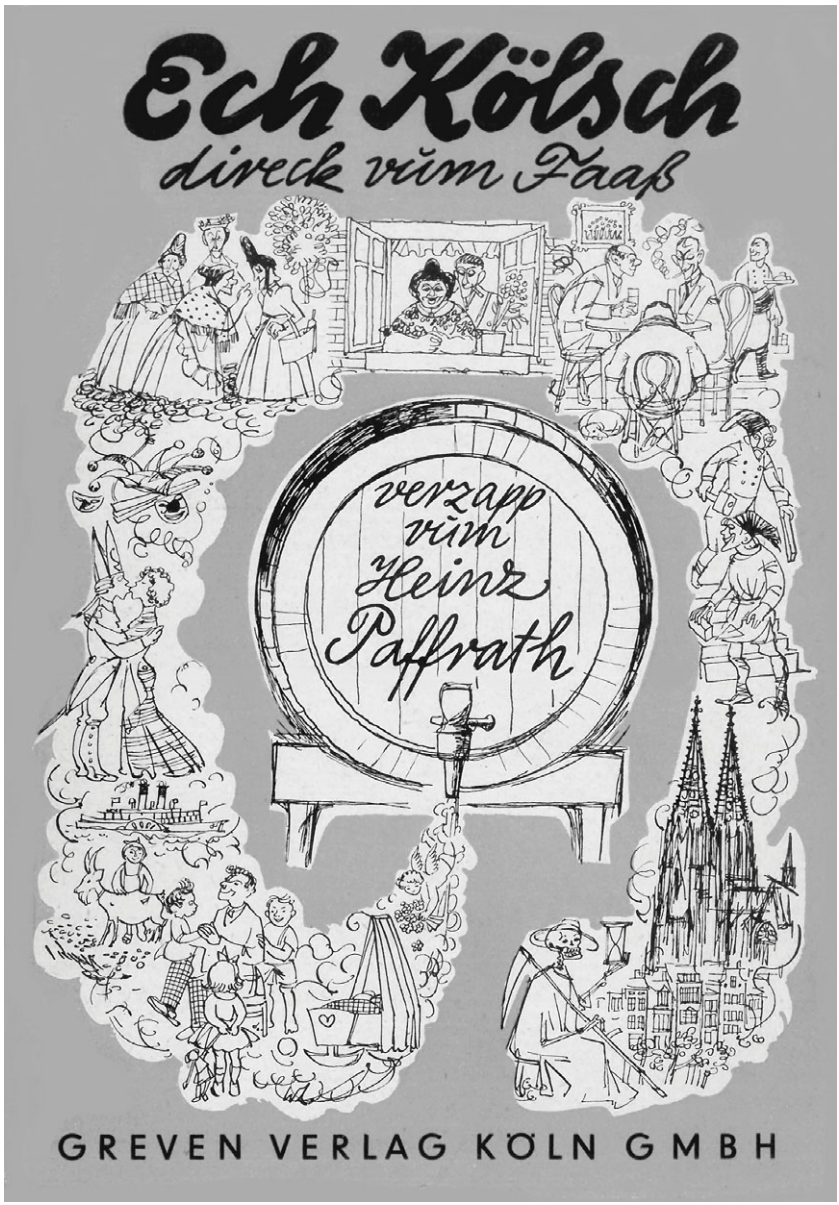

Figure 1.3 Heimat as a container of life narratives. Book cover, Heinz Paffrath, *Ech Kölsch direck vum Faaß* (Cologne, 1949).

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childhood, courtship, and marriage, to decline and death, as a localized process. The local situatedness of personal life is symbolized by the crib (a historic topos of Heimat), the Cologne carnivalist, everyday life on the Rhine, the *Heinzelmännchen* of local folklore, and the figure of death juxtaposed against the Cologne Cathedral. The final of these, the relationship of Heimat to death, is a much neglected topic. The grave and the cemetery frequently appear as topoi of Heimat, with the deceased wishing to maintain a connection to places of local experience beyond death.[59]

The dual function of Heimat in sensing and healing biographical dissonance can be seen in a salient thematic matrix which suffused Heimat discourses in the rubble. Its three interwoven topoi progressed chronologically from i) description of a lost local world to ii) equation of destroyed hometowns with individual plights and finally to iii) restoration of future life through Heimat regained. Within this matrix, a crucial binary of Heimat came to the fore. Heimat represented, on the one hand, an actual lost place of former life, while on the other hand containing images of more ideal relationships between individuals, places, and communities.

Recounting feelings of loss certainly played an important role in these discourses, with many Cologners writing of how they first sensed biographical rupture when encountering the ruins. The rubble of their hometown was the veritable embodiment of the "uncanny" (*das Unheimliche*), the inverse of Heimat both phenomenologically and, in German, etymologically.[60] As one Cologner wrote, "foreign, very foreign, appeared that most familiar," though he insisted that love of Heimat would not break during these "apocalyptic times."[61] Another local recounted how seeing the vanished sites of his former life overwhelmed him with the sense that his "youth had withered away." He felt perplexed that no one from his former community was there to greet him and expressed fears that "Heimat" was no more.[62] The local author Goswin Gath wrote in 1947 that underneath the rubble lay a world of former neighbours, gabled houses, and elements of a personal world that had vanished.[63] Another local similarly recalled a lost life and personal relationships buried in the

[59] Ina-Maria Greverus, *Der territoriale Mensch. Ein literaturanthropologischer Versuch zum Heimatphänomen* (Frankfurt, 1972), 376–379.
[60] Sigmund Freud, "Das Unheimliche," in *Gesammelte Werke,* ed., Anna Freud (Frankfurt, 1999), 227–278.
[61] Carl Sasse, ". . .dass Sehnsucht ich nach Köln hab. . .," *Unser Köln* 6/7 (1949): 53–54; Carl Sasse, "Ein Kölner Vater an seinen Sohn," *Unser Köln* 5/6 (1950): 54.
[62] Anton Stille, "D'r Letzte Ress," and "No lange Johre," in *Kölsche Blömcher* (Cologne, 1960), 17.
[63] Goswin Gath, "Erinnerunge," in *Draum un Spill* (Cologne, 1947), 39.

ruins. "Youth and beauty are gone, . . . that on which my heart hung," he continued, "has all been destroyed." He did not, however, seek to wallow in suffering. To counteract loss, he argued, Cologners must rebuild so that no one would ever say: "Cologne – once upon a time."[64]

The thematic progression from lost Heimat to rupture and recovery particularly filled dialect poetry. The Heimat society *Alt-Köln* reported that the genre gained tremendous popularity in the rubble years, with many presenting dialect poems at their events which recounted a lost world of Heimat.[65] The genre offered lay citizens a medium to process destruction in a language steeped in familiarity. Almost in formulaic fashion, such poetry recounted lost local-personal worlds, followed instantly by rebuilding Heimat and securing a "life-affirming" future. Lyrics that elucidate these patterns include titles such as "Cologne you can never perish" (Joachim Henning, 1945), "My Heimat" (Karl Jahn, 1946), "Cologne, my Cologne, you will never fall asunder" (Rudolf Roonthal), "My splendid Cologne" (Jupp Schmitz, 1947), and "Cologne then and now" (Wilhelm Stumpf, 1949). Such pieces typically began by recounting disappeared childhoods, erased sites of memory, and cyclical markers of a past life including celebrating Carnival, taking family walks in the city, or the companionship of friends. Henning emphasized in the opening of his lyric that Heimat churned up memories of a world that was gone. Jahn recounted a lost private past, symbolized by evaporated childhood places. Schmitz recounted how, amidst the rubble, no one hung onto "Heimat" like Cologners, but he subsequently asked, "Where are your streets? Where is my house?"[66]

Such pieces invariably ended by imagining local recovery. Roonthal's lyrics transitioned from lost private life to reconstructing the city in spirit, even if it would be physically foreign; local sentiment, he insisted, remained strong. Jahn and Henning's lyrics shifted from loss to argue that Cologne nonetheless remained "Heimat" and would be rebuilt. "Desire," drove him back to his "Heimat Cologne on the Rhine;" Cologne could not "fall asunder," and all would help rebuild "until our Heimat Cologne is

[64] Albrecht Bodde, "Kölle–es war einmal" (1945), reprinted in Louis, *Liederschatz*, 188.
[65] "Vorträge im Heimatverein Alt-Köln," *Unser Köln* 2 (1948): 4.
[66] Joachim Hening, "Köln du kannst niemals untergehn"; Karl Jahn, "Ming Heimat"; Rudolf Roonthal, "Köln, mein Köln, du wirst wiedererstehn"; Jupp Schmitz, "Ming herrlich Kölle"; all in Louis, *Liederschatz*, 176, 178, 187, 189; Wilhelm Stumpf, "Kölle, domols un jetz," *Rheinische Zeitung,* February 9, 1949.

again standing."[67] Waldemar Cosson's rubble verse followed his reflections on destruction with a local "vow of fidelity." Denizens, he argued, would turn away from afflictions towards a future when "new life" would bloom from the ruins.[68] The local poet Lis Böhle drew on the same themes. Her writings in the late 1940s conveyed personal disjuncture represented by vanished people and places, while rapidly turning to local Heimat as a site of "affirmation of life" which would unify old and new memories. Seeking to overcome disjuncture, she later wrote a series of poems taking leave of her memories attached to disappeared places.[69] Parallel themes can be found in other genres, including rubble picture books. Those like the work *Colonia Deleta* did mourn loss and showed citizens the extent of destruction. After presenting the ruins as a site of "desert-like absence of Heimat," however, the work concluded that within Cologne's "motherly depths slumber the seeds for new life."[70] This theme of animating invisible forces underneath the rubble appeared repeatedly in localist discourses.[71]

Not all locals were of an age where they could anticipate a long future in a new city. Many elderly Cologners, however, expressed hopes to see their rebuilt Heimat before their death. In the late 1940s, the local humourist Laurenz Kiesgen, in his late seventies, recounted his Cologne childhood, his inner conflict in an unfamiliar world, and his hope for local rebirth.[72] Peter Felten, a Cologne doctor nearing his eighties, wrote during evacuation of his Cologne childhood, memories of a familial past inscribed on local places, and lost people. "Heimat no longer exists," Felten wrote. He expressed the desire to see the rebuilt city before he died and to be interred in Cologne's *Melaten* cemetery with his wife and children.[73] The Cologne ophthalmologist, Paul Boskamp, also of advanced age, expressed his disbelief at lost sites of a personal past. Addressing Cologne as a

[67] Hening, "Köln du kannst niemals untergehn"; Jahn, "Ming Heimat"; Roonthal, "Köln, mein Köln, du wirst wiedererstehn"; all in Louis, *Liederschatz*, 176, 178, 187, 189.
[68] Waldemar Cosson, "Treuschwur," in *Kölsche Klaaf* (Cologne, 1951), 6.
[69] Lis Böhle, "Widder doheim," *Kölnischer Kurier,* August 14, 1945; Lis Böhle and Willy Key, *Skizzierte Erinnerungen* (Cologne, 1947), 31; Lis Böhle, "Domols un hück," in Lis Böhle, *Jeck op Kölle* (Cologne, 1955), 192; Lis Böhle, *Kölsche Saison* (Cologne, 1963), 107–112.
[70] Heinz Fries, Introduction to Schroder, *Colonia Deleta*, 5–6.
[71] For other examples, see Carl Jatho, *Urbanität. Über die Wiederkehr einer Stadt* (Düsseldorf, 1946), 67; Johannes Leptien, "Hanseatische Pole: Gedanken über zwei alte Städte," *Unser Köln* 5/6 (1948): 10–11.
[72] Larenz Kiesgen, "E Leed vum ale Kölle" (Late 1940s), printed in Heimatverein Alt-Köln, ed., *Kölsche Deechter un Gedeechte* (Cologne, 1973), 95; Laurenz Kiesgen, "Alt-Kölle," in Kiesgen, *Vum Ale Kölle*, 38.
[73] Peter Felten, "Erinnerungen eines achtzigjährigen Kölner Arztes," *Alt-Köln* (November 1951): 53–55.

personified figure, he wrote: "What for Muslims is Mecca, what for Hindus is Benares, what for the Christian is Rome, and what for the world is Jerusalem" – "so were you to me."[74]

Few believed reconstruction would be easy, and three-quarters of West Germans in the mid 1940s believed it would take decades.[75] Convincing themselves that reconstruction was feasible led Cologners to a surprising tool: memories of darker periods of local history. By evoking local histories of death, misery, and destruction, locals sought to depict reconstruction and overcoming trauma as a local tradition itself. A Cologne dialect theatre piece from 1948, entitled "The Ghost at the Shooters Festival," provides but one example. Looking at the history of the plague in Cologne, the piece argued that Cologners must harness local histories for rebuilding and insisted that an era of mass death could be overcome through local community.[76] Two years later, at the 1900-year city anniversary, Adenauer reflected on episodes of local destruction from the early Middle Ages and insisted that it demonstrated the city's ability to rebuild, Cologners' "will to live," and their love of Heimat.[77]

As Cologners faced the task of clearing thirty million cubic metres of rubble, Heimat sentiment again offered a useful tool. Even traditions like Carnival came to be about generating reconstruction fervour.[78] City projects like "*Kölle Bliev Kölle*" (Cologne will remain Cologne) used emotive posters, many of them in dialect, to attract volunteers. One poster from the project well illustrated the means and aims of local reconstruction, presenting neither redemption through national action nor utopian futures (Figure 1.4). Depicting the desolate grey landscape around St Gereon's Church in one corner, a dream-like frame presented a colourful image of everyday civilian life on a local stage that could be achieved by an immediate focus on rebuilding.

Such sources demonstrate how Heimat was connected to broader desires for post-war "normality." What normality meant and how desires for it influenced reconstruction, however, remain subjects of debate. Some have described the term as a misnomer since the period did not see the

[74] Paul Boskamp, "Köln, Du alte heilige Stadt," *Alt- und Neu-Köln* (1946): 3.
[75] Merritt and Merritt, *Opinion*, 11.
[76] Wilhelm Hoßdorf, "Et Gespens om Schötzefeß," in *Rheinische Puppenspiele,* ed., Amt für kölnisches Volkstum (Cologne, 1948), 64.
[77] Historisches Archiv der Erzbistum Köln (hereafter HAEK), MK-2278, Konrad Adenauer, "Ein Vorort des Abendlands," *1900 Jahre Stadt Köln, Sonderausgabe des Rheinischen Merkur zum Kölner Stadtjubiläum.*
[78] Hans Jonen, "Alt Kölle," *Alt- und Neu-Köln* (1946): 5; Louis, *Liederschatz,* 10.

Figure 1.4. "Cologne will remain Cologne" (1947).
Source: Kölnisches Stadtmuseum, Plakat-1986/265.

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reestablishment of earlier socio-economic conditions, while others have argued that it burdened democratization by distracting from focus on national politics.[79] Post-war denizens, however, described normality as less about literal restoration and more about recovering a local world of private life which would not be subjugated to wartime imperatives. The argument that such desires inhibited democratization, moreover, would seem to suggest that democratization would have benefitted from early post-war Germans turning to national political struggle to address their plight. Transforming underlying mindsets would take decades, and one could just as easily argue that desires for "normal" life aided achievement of the type of cultural demobilization which had proven so elusive after the First World War. As we shall see in Chapter 2, many who wrote about Heimat and democracy in the aftermath argued that democratization itself required a realignment between the boundaries of the political and the private in favour of the latter.

"Wild Growing" Heimat Culture

Images of the reawakening of high culture in the ruins of post-war Germany have often proven iconic – whether they be of Beethoven concerts performed amidst the vaulting of destroyed churches or performances of open air theatre pieces by Goethe or Schiller.[80] The remarkable revival of local culture, by contrast, has often been overlooked.[81] Cologne offers only one example. Within only a year after the war, Cologners in the ruins established a wide range of new Heimat publications, created new Heimat societies, and expended much effort to begin teaching local studies in schools. They revived ritual Heimat traditions, their local Kirmes, Corpus Christi processions, and other local events, all of which they auspiciously celebrated in rubble landscapes. They hastily rebuilt dialect theatres, held dialect congresses, and other outdoor localist theatre events. They also began planning for other major events steeped in local sentiment which took place in the first years after the war. Already by 1946, the city

[79] On desires for normality, see Friedrich Tenbruck, "Alltagsnormen und Lebensgefühle in der Bundesrepublik," in *Republik*, eds., Löwenthal and Schwarz, 289–310. On normality as misnomer, see Lutz Niethammer, "'Normalisierung' im Westen: Erinnerungsspuren in die 50er Jahre," in *Ist der Nationalsozialismus Geschichte?: Zur Historisierung und Historikerstreit*, ed., Dan Diner (Frankfurt, 1987), 153–184; On such desires as burdening democratization, see Boehling, *Priorities*; Schildt, *Moderne*.

[80] Hermann Glaser, *Kulturgeschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland. Zwischen Kapitulation und Währungsreform 1945–1948* (Munich, 1985).

[81] For a notable exception, see Palmowski, *Heimat*.

administration reported how a "wild growing" Heimat cultural revival had gripped the city as citizens sought sources of "new life."[82] Many other observers similarly noted that a renaissance of local Heimat culture was taking place. No revived tradition, however, proved as iconic as Cologne Carnival, a febrile five-day celebration of local community which involved hundreds of thousands of participants.

Cologners in the aftermath ascribed an impressive number of functions to local culture. One such function explored in Chapter 2 was its role in reshaping local identities. But Cologners also described it as helping to compensate for the lost physical landscape of Heimat, repair biographical ruptures, and mend community bonds. Communities hardly emerged from the rubble intact, with some describing the period as a "wolf time" defined by individual struggle for survival and the spirit of the black market.[83] Denizens, however, simultaneously sought to repair them. Scholars have posed the question of how the social fabric of such "post-catastrophic cities" has been reconstructed.[84] In the post-war German case, Heimat and local culture offered important tools. Cologners often remarked on how such local cultural practices would forge therapeutic communities and bring together locals to prepare for reconstruction.[85]

Excavating the local cultural revival also offers a means of assessing the actors involved in the post-war Heimat movement. Did its impulses come from above or below? What role did local institutions play? The question of the Catholic Church's role looms large given Cologne's status as a majority Catholic city. How, moreover, does the relationship between the Heimat movement and state institutions compare with East Germany where the hand of the state intervened in nearly all Heimat activities?

The city's report in 1946 on the "wild growing" nature of the local cultural revival reflected how its impulses began at the grassroots. No one from above had to tell everyday Cologners to think of "Heimat" as they

[82] Statistischen Amt der Stadt Köln, *Verwaltungsbericht der Stadt Köln, 1945/47* (Cologne, 1947), 50; "Lob für ein Amt," *Westdeutsche Zeitung*, January 19, 1949.

[83] Harald Jähner, *Wolfszeit. Deutschland und die Deutschen, 1945–1955* (Berlin, 2019); Zierenberg, *Schwarzmarkt*; Paul Steege, *Black Market, Cold War: Everyday Life in Berlin, 1946–1949* (Cambridge, 2009).

[84] Martin Kohlrausch and Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann, "Post-Catastrophic Cities," *Journal of Modern European History* 9, 3 (2011): 308–313. See also Couperus and Kaal, eds., *Reconstructing Communities*.

[85] On community corrosion and countervailing search for therapeutic community in post-catastrophic communities, see Kai Erikson, *A New Species of Trouble: Explorations in Disaster, Trauma, and Community* (New York, 1994); Judith Lewis Herman, *Trauma and Recovery* (New York, 1997), 51–70.

gazed at the ruins of their hometown or resided in evacuation. A large network of popular Heimat societies and publications emerged from 1945 to 1949, including the reconstituted *Heimatverein Alt-Köln*, the Rhenish Society for Historical Preservation and Heimatschutz, the Working Group of Rhenish History Societies, the Cologne Working Group for Heimat Care, a Rhenish Union for Folklore, and Heimat magazines including *Alt-Köln* and *Unser Köln*, and restoration of the youth Heimat publication *Jung-Köln,* closed in 1933. Everyday Cologners also founded scores of Carnival societies, which traditionally served as hubs of local community and held year-round events which Cologners described as promoting community togetherness and helping to overcome trauma.[86]

The surge of Heimat publications in Cologne was not unique. As historians of the press have noted in passing, local Heimat publications proliferated in early post-war West Germany.[87] In the immediate aftermath, a dearth of economic resources, Allied restrictions, and disorder did delay the recovery of the type of formal and regularized Heimat journals that can be found in compiled indexes. Instead, these early years often saw the publication of short-term effervescent journals, Heimat books, and works in self-publication. The first edition of *Alt-Köln* in 1947 elucidated the purpose of such publications, declaring that it sought a "mental reorientation" (*Rückbesinnung*) to local Heimat to gather energies for future challenges. The Lord Mayor Hermann Pünder and Konrad Adenauer both praised the journal, while Pünder urged spreading "Heimat thoughts" and giving children a sense of Heimat. Adenauer, whose house in Rhöndorf was decorated with historic images of Cologne, praised Heimat sentiment as one of the few things Cologners had left.[88] Articles in the new journal often emphasized the importance of rebuilding community and its therapeutic value. As a representative article by a local dialect expert argued, local culture and tradition provided mortar for repairing local bonds. Forging cohesion amongst old and new Cologners, he believed, was the primary duty of the hour.[89]

Newspapers – traditionally known as forces of cultural levelling – also contributed to the surfeit of writings about Heimat. The editor of the

[86] Hans Jonen, *16 Tage Fürst* (Cologne, 1949), 57–58.
[87] Kurt Koszyk, "Presse und Pressekonzentration in den 50er Jahren," in *Modernisierung*, eds., Schildt and Sywottek, 441.
[88] "Zum Geleit," *Alt-Köln* (August 1947): 1.
[89] Adam Wrede, "Um die Erhaltung Kölner Eigenart," *Alt-Köln* (March 1948): 10.

Kölnische Rundschau insisted on journalism's obligation to promote a sense of local community and the local past.[90] A newspaper representative noted how the city's destruction triggered a surge of local sentiment, with a resultant demand for Heimat literature. The paper's considerable inclusion of such pieces, he argued, was not a business venture, fulfilling instead their paper's role as a "guardian of Heimat."[91] Articles in his newspaper, like one entitled "On Heimat," emphasized how the "warmth" of Heimat comforted individuals and brought them out of loneliness.[92] Such local sections of newspapers, as early post-war statistics tell us, were the most frequently read throughout West Germany.[93]

While the Heimat movement was not a top-down phenomenon, Heimat enthusiasts enjoyed a cooperative relationship with the city administration. The administration responded to the "wild growth" of Heimat activities by extending their support, creating a city office on local culture in 1947, called the Office for Cologne Folklore (*Amt für Kölnisches Volkstum*). The term "Volkstum" in its title deserves careful consideration given the problematic conflation of the different terms "Volkstum" and "völkisch" in recent scholarship on Heimat.[94] It was no coincidence that lexica historically treated the terms separately and defined "Volkstum" or "volklich" as the culture of the common people in contrast to the elite, while defining "völkisch" as explicitly about racial ideas of nation. While Johann Hübner's 1828 lexicon defined "Volksthum" as the culture of the "servile classes" in contrast to elites, a century later the 1938 *Brockhaus* defined "völkisch" as nationalism rooted in the "racial principle" and separately defined the term "Volkstum" as going back to Herder and referring to the "uniquenesses" and "life attitudes" of a people.[95] While the word "völkisch" was tainted after 1945 and did not regularly appear in Heimat discourses, "Volkstum" held appeal to groups in the early post-war years, arguing against centralizing power in the hands of elites. In their 1945 party platform, the Berlin SPD, for example, called for

[90] Reinhold Heinen, "Introduction," in *Erbe der Vergangenheit. Zeitung und Mundart. Aufgabe der Gegenwart,* ed., Peter Hasenberg (Cologne, 1951), 2.

[91] Peter Hasenberg, "Hüter der Heimat," in *Im Schritt der Zeit,* ed., Peter Hasenberg (Cologne, 1953), 58–59.

[92] Johannes Kirschweng, "Über die Heimat," *Kölner Rundschau,* January 20, 1949.

[93] Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann and Erich Neumann, *Jahrbuch der öffentlichen Meinung, 1947–1955* (Allensbach, 1956), 56.

[94] Steber, *Ethnische*; Oberkrome, *Heimat.* Such works could benefit from greater attention to *Begriffsgeschichte* and how their connotations evolved in the later post-war years.

[95] F. A. Rüder, *Johann Hübner's Zeitungs und Conversations-Lexikon, vierter Teil* (Leipzig, 1828), 831; *Der Neue Brockhaus,* Bd. 4 (Leipzig, 1938), 606, 611.

"volkstümlicher" cultural reconstruction, while some Rhenish Heimat enthusiasts wrote on the need for a democracy that was "volkstümlich" and not controlled by elites.[96] Displaying how it was anything but "völkisch," the Amt für Kölnisches Volkstum by the 1960s emerged as one of the foremost advocates for embracing immigrants.

The proponents of the city office held that popular Heimat activities were crucial to reconstruction and should have a centre point. The office was not to have "policing control" over private societies, providing only moral guidance and information on local history. The city chose Joseph Klersch, a highly active Heimat enthusiast, as the office head. Born in 1893, Klersch began researching local history in the Weimar years as a member of the *Heimatverein Alt-Köln*, largely ceased publishing during the Third Reich, and emerged as an advocate of democracy after 1945. Under his leadership, the office supported a wide range of local cultural activities, while tending to evacuees by holding "Heimat evenings" outside Cologne and sending them localist publications. Local reception of the organization proved largely positive.[97]

In contrast to the GDR, Heimat enthusiasts in Cologne had relatively little direct contact with national government organizations and more cooperative relationships with local ones. As Palmowski's study of the GDR demonstrates, East Germans similarly revived local cultural practices, though they were caught up in a field of tension between official state narratives and private meanings which locals retained beneath the surface.[98] That is not to say that Cologners did not have conflicts with local political institutions. Such conflicts particularly revolved around how their hometown would be rebuilt.

Popular groups and Heimat societies pressed for more historic reconstruction from the very beginning.[99] Cultural loss from the bombings was staggering, with an index of destroyed historical sites in the North

[96] Glaser, *Kulturgeschichte*, 108–109; "Besprechung und Hinweise, Adolf Gasser: Gemeindefreiheit als Rettung Europas," *Rheinische Vierteljahrsblätter* 15/16 (1950/51): 505–510.

[97] "Lob für ein Amt," *Westdeutsche Zeitung*, January 19, 1949; Max-Leo Schwering, "Sinn und Aufgabe großstädtischer Volkstumspflege," *Kölner Almanach* (1957/58): 66; Statistischen Amt der Stadt Köln, *Verwaltungsbericht, 1945/47* (Cologne, 1947), 54–55 (hereafter abbreviated "Verwaltungsbericht" and year); *Verwaltungsbericht, 1949/1950*, 77–78; *Verwaltungsbericht, 1950/1951*, 82–83; *Verwaltungsbericht, 1951/52*, 90–91; *Verwaltungsbericht, 1952/53*, 98–99; *Verwaltungsbericht, 1953/54*, 110; *Verwaltungsbericht, 1954/55*, 116; *Verwaltungsbericht, 1955/56*, 131; *Verwaltungsbericht, 1956/57*, 145.

[98] Palmowski, *Heimat*.

[99] Jeffry Diefendorf, *In the Wake of the War: The Reconstruction of German Cities after World War II* (Oxford, 1993).

Rhineland containing over fifty pages of listings for Cologne, reporting that virtually all the old city was gone.[100] The general planner for Cologne, Rudolf Schwarz, like many West German city planners, exhibited an indelicate enthusiasm for how mass destruction offered a unique chance to build cities from a blank slate.[101] This contrasted with the sentiments of lay locals, like those in Cologne-Riehl, who derided how planners created places where citizens lived in parallel rather than in connection with one another; the city, they argued, should convey a feeling of "Heimat."[102] Such tensions reflected a broader pattern throughout West German cities.[103] In Cologne, Heimat society meetings on reconstruction were well attended, while in neighbouring Düsseldorf, Heimat societies banded together to battle what they called the "dictatorship of the planners."[104] Planners, however, openly remarked about how the dire plight of homeless denizens meant they had little leverage in pushing back against their proposals.[105] Heimat enthusiasts ultimately proved unable to move them, with Cologne fitting the frequent West German pattern of reconstructing only select identity-laden structures.[106]

Contemporary historians have criticized local desires for historic reconstruction from both ends, arguing that they were either too restorationist or inadequately "authentic." The art historian Gerhard Vinken, looking at Cologne and using a strict idea of authenticity, accuses local preservationists of ahistoricism and having Nazi-like desires for "cleansing" the local landscape of non-regional styles.[107] This appraisal sits oddly with the reputation of the post-war city as having seen little historic reconstruction and more rebuilding in the style of "exposed concrete." Many localists, moreover, argued for a balance between preservation and creation. In a 1946 work, the Cologne essayist Carl Oskar Jatho reflected such arguments in a fictional dialogue between four historic Cologners. The piece argued that preservation, development, and renewal must be held in

[100] Heinz Peters, ed., *Die Baudenkmäler in Nord-Rheinland. Kriegsschaden und Wiederaufbau* (Kevelaer, 1951), 290–342.
[101] Rudolf Schwarz, "Das Neue Köln," *Atlantis* 5 (1955): 235–238.
[102] "Die Riehler haben Sorgen," *Kölner Stadtanzeiger*, February 7, 1953.
[103] Diefendorf, *Reconstruction*; Koshar, *Preservation*.
[104] "Aussprache über den Wiederaufbau unserer Stadt," *Unser Köln* 1 (1948): 7; Koshar, *Preservation*, 233.
[105] Scharnowski, *Heimat*, 106.
[106] Diefendorf, *Reconstruction*; Georg Wagner-Kyora, "Wiederaufbaustädte der Bundesrepublik im Vergleich, 1950–1990," in *Wiederaufbau europäischer Städte. Rekonstruktion, die Moderne und die lokale Identitätspolitik seit 1945*, ed., Georg Wagner-Kyora (Stuttgart, 2014), 105–141.
[107] Gerhard Vinken, *Zone Heimat. Altstadt im modernen Städtebau* (Berlin, 2010).

harmony, falling neither into rigid historicism nor sweeping away the past and building on "non-human scales."[108]

Even before reconstruction began, many locals noted that the lost city landscape would never be fully recovered and that local cultural practices could help compensate for the loss. In 1946, a schoolteacher and the Cathedral Capitular jointly wrote about how Cologne would never physically be what it was, and that the old city must be brought into the new one through local language, memories, and culture. Adenauer also insisted that Colognes needed local culture and that they must teach their children "what a Heimat is, what a Heimat means, and what Cologne is."[109] Klersch reflected on how the "exterior image of Cologne" had been a pillar of Heimat sentiment and how local tradition could compensate for its loss. Reviving local culture, he argued, would prevent "yesterday and tomorrow" from being "ripped apart in today."[110] Dialect poems similarly juxtaposed Heimat's destroyed physicality and the city's "Heimat-like character" rooted in cultural practices.[111]

The use of dialect in such expressions reflected how the sounds of Heimat could help compensate for the lost familiarity of the built environment. As one local wrote, dialect represented "mother language," "father language," "Heimat language," and "childhood language," and reminded one of past lives.[112] In 1945 and 1946, locals hastily rebuilt two historic dialect theatres, the *Millowitsch Theater* and the *Hänneschen Theater,* which represented major discursive sites about local identity. Locals petitioned the American occupiers in May 1945 to rebuild the former.[113] Dialect poetry proved an even more accessible genre, with the city hosting dialect poet congresses in the rubble years. As Klersch argued at such a congress, the extent of destruction and the fact that their Heimat was "no

[108] Jatho, *Urbanität*, 23–25, 67–68.

[109] "Dr. Robert Grosche, Domkapitular," "Dr. Konrad Adenauer," and "Hans Jonen," *Alt und Neu-Köln: Heimatblätter für kölnische Kunst, Sprache und Eigenart* (1946): 2; Konrad Adenauer, Speech, January 4, 1951 (excerpt), in *Quellen zur Geschichte Kölns in Neuester Zeit, 1945–1960*, ed., Peter Hasenberg (Cologne, 1960), 37–38.

[110] Joseph Klersch, "Unsere Heimat-Vereine," *Alt-Köln* (August 1947): 4; Klersch, "Volkstumsfplege und Volkskunde," in *Volkstumspflege,* ed., Klersch, 33.

[111] Detmar Sarntzki, "Köln," *Jung-Köln* 8 (1951/52): 236; Albert Schneider, "Klingendes Volkstum," *Kölner Almanach* (1951/52): 286.

[112] USBK/RhKGb1b/1K833, Ohm Willi, "Alaaf der kölsche Klaaf," in K. G. Köllen, *Alt Köllen im Wort und Bild,* 101; W. M. Esser, "Sterbende Mundart?," *Alt-Köln* (April 1949): 13–14.

[113] *Verwaltungsbericht, 1947/48*, 47; *Verwaltungsbericht, 1949*, 59; Joseph Klersch, "Zur Einführung," in *Rheinische Puppenspiele,* ed., Amt für kölnisches Volkstum, 3; Willy Millowitsch, "Mein Köln: Erinnerungen," in *Die Stadt in alten Bildern*, ed., Stefan Pohl (Cologne, 1993), 20; Peter Alter, "Die Briten am Rhein: Die frühen Besatzungsmonate in Köln," in *Nachkriegszeit,* ed., Dülffer, 84.

longer beautiful," made it even more important to emphasize local feelings among all generations, including the youth.[114]

Such evocation of the youth touched on fears about how children were coming of age in war-torn landscapes.[115] To bridge the chasm and give children a sense of Heimat, many locals argued for teaching about local culture and history by introducing *Heimatkunde* into the school curriculum.[116] Heimatkunde achieved prominence in Cologne schools already in the late 1940s, with organizations including the *Kölnische Rundschau* heeding calls to provide resource-strapped schools with Heimat publications.[117] The youth Heimat journal, *Jung-Köln*, offers a glimpse into the content of early Heimatkunde. Founded in 1949, the journal bore the same name as the youth Heimat publication shut down by the Nazis in 1933. In the first edition, its editors situated the journal's recreation within a larger revival of "Heimat traditions" in the city.[118] *Jung-Köln* harnessed useable local histories, like that of the industrious Cologne Renaissance burgher, whose spirit they argued could be useful for reconstruction.[119]

Throughout these revivals, one would perhaps expect the Catholic Church to play a significant role. A closer examination, however, reveals a more ambivalent relationship. The Heimat movement historically emphasized local cohesion over division, while Cologne's Catholic milieu had been weakened after both world wars.[120] After the Second World War, the number of Catholics in Cologne stood at 66 percent.[121] Nor was Cologne known for being the most orthodox Catholic city. As Heinrich Böll noted, Cologne Catholicism had historically been more "liberal" than elsewhere in Germany, and he believed the milieu had further declined

[114] Joseph Klersch, "Aufgaben und Möglichkeiten der Rheinischen Mundartdichtung," in *Die Rheinische Mundartdichtung. Aufgaben, Ziele, Möglichkeiten,* eds., Josef Lenzen and Joseph Klersch (Cologne, 1949), 19–21.

[115] Werner Jüttner, "Vor fünfzig Jahren," *Jung-Köln* 5 (1951/52): 135–139.

[116] "Niederschrift über die Jahreshauptversammlung," *Rheinischer Verein für Denkmalpflege und Heimatschutz Mitteilungsblatt* 2 (1953): 10.

[117] "Heimatdichtung in der Schule," *Kölner Stadtanzeiger,* January 23, 1950; Peter Hasenberg, "Zeitung und Mundart in Köln," in *Erbe,* ed., Hasenberg, 4.

[118] Untitled introduction to first edition, *Jung-Köln* 1 (1949/50): 1.

[119] Werner Jüttner, "Bürgerliches Leben in Köln um das Jahr 1530," in *Köln: Werden-Wachsen-Wirken,* ed., Ernst Mömkes, *Jung-Köln,* Sonderheft 1 (Cologne, 1950), 126.

[120] Christoph Schank, *"Kölsch-Katholisch." Das katholische Milieu in Köln (1871–1933)* (Cologne, 2004). On debates over post-war confessional milieus, see Mark Ruff, "Integrating Religion into the Historical Mainstream: Recent Literature on Religion in the Federal Republic of Germany," *Central European History* 42, 2 (2009): 307–337.

[121] Erzbischöfliches Generalvikariat Köln, *Handbuch des Erzbistums Köln*, 26th ed., vol. 2 (Cologne, 1966), 18.

after the war.[122] That is not to say that the Catholic Church was irrelevant to Heimat. Since at least the late nineteenth century, churches of both confessions cared for the displaced.[123] In order to reconstruct a Catholic milieu, church leaders after 1945 supported the attempts of dislocated Catholics to return. Cardinal Joseph Frings took up the evacuee and POW causes with alacrity and sent clergy to far-flung places to provide pastoral care. Frings visited POWs, conveying to them that their Heimat had not forgotten them, while reporting back to locals about POW homesickness and their desires to help rebuild their "Heimat."[124] Church efforts, however, often failed, with clergy reporting that dislocated citizens displayed more interest in coming home than in religion.[125]

This ambivalent relationship could also be seen in church publications and public events. Articles in the church newspaper oscillated between supporting desires for Heimat and warning against excessive focus on *worldly* Heimat. As the chief editor argued, they should also focus on heavenly Heimat.[126] Some church articles emphasized that citizens could never really find "Heimat" on earth, as the only "true Heimat" was in the afterlife.[127] The church presented this argument to expellees with added thickness.[128] The idea of the real Heimat as heavenly, however, made little headway in lay Heimat discourses, while Heimat enthusiasts resisted clerical efforts to bind localism to a narrow confessional identity. This could be seen, among other places, at the Cathedral Jubilee, where Heimat enthusiasts and the city administration diverged from the church's efforts to depict Cologne as a "loyal daughter" of Rome, arguing instead for Cologne as a historic centre of European "Christianity."[129]

[122] Heinrich Böll, "Weil die Stadt so fremd geworden ist," in *Werke*, vol. 25, ed., Conrad and Jung, 213–214; Heinrich Böll, "Nachwort 1985 zu Ansichten eines Clowns," in *Werke*, vol. 23, ed., Bernhard, 489.

[123] Hitzer, *Zuwanderer.*

[124] Joseph Kardinal Frings, "Hirtenwort zum Gebetstag für Gefangene und Flüchtlinge," *Kirchlicher Anzeiger für die Erzdiözese Köln* (November 15, 1946): 293–295; Joseph Frings, *Zwei Hirtenworte des Kölner Erzbischofs* (Cologne, 1946), 5–15; Norbert Trippen, *Josef Kardinal Frings (1887–1978)* (Paderborn, 2003), 164–209.

[125] For a study with examples from Cologne, see Thomas Brodie, "The German Catholic Diaspora in the Second World War," *German History* 33, 1 (2015): 80–99.

[126] Peter Pauquet, "Was ist des Menschen Heimat?," *Kirchenzeitung für das Erzbistum Köln*, January 23, 1949, 13–14.

[127] Agnes Peth, "Die Gattin und die Mutter," *Kirchenzeitung für das Erzbistum Köln*, July 6, 1947, 84; "Brief an einen Gefangenen," *Kirchenzeitung für das Erzbistum Köln*, December 25, 1947, 170.

[128] Oscar Feige, "Die Not der heimatlosen Seele" in Leaflet, "Predigtmaterial zum Bonifatiustag 1952," ed., Generalvorstand des Bonifatiusverein, leaflet included in *Kirchlicher Anzeiger* (May 15, 1952).

[129] Kölnische Rundschau, ed., *Der Domes Ruf. Gesamtbericht der 700 Jahrfeier* (Cologne, 1948), 36–38.

The church supported local traditions with religious aspects but complained about their inadequate religious reception. Corpus Christi processions, observed in Cologne since the thirteenth century, were enthusiastically revived, replete with sumptuous decorations, parades, and boat processions on the Rhine, though Cologners talked about them more in terms of local community than religion.[130] The church openly attacked the reawakening of the Cologne Carnival, having already sought to scrap the tradition in the Weimar years.[131] Carnival, however, ultimately outshone Catholicism in the city's reputation. As one later poll revealed, West Germans associated Cologne far more with local humour and sociability than "piety."[132] Few events saw more febrile engagement with Heimat.

Local Ritual Tradition and Therapeutic Community

Since at least the nineteenth century, Cologne Carnival represented a five-day celebration of local community. The tradition, however, had even deeper origins and was a prime example of reinvention of tradition.[133] Understood in the Late Middle Ages as a metaphor for the fallen state of man, by the nineteenth century, denizens described the tradition as a fountain of healing and a cornerstone of local community feeling. The role of Carnival in Rhenish regional culture was unique, and its reduction of interpersonal distance, permission of exuberant emotional expression, and participatory nature made it uniquely suited to facilitating a sense of *communitas*. The modern tradition involved endless communal singing of local songs, countless self-portrayals of local community, and frequent use of dialect and localist humour. Its annual reoccurrence also made it a site of memory. All these facets made it appealing as a site of therapeutic community in the aftermath.

[130] "Fronleichnam in Köln," *Kölnische Rundschau*, June 18, 1946; Lis Böhle, "Fronleichnam en Kölle," *Kölnische Rundschau*, June 12, 1952; "Schmucken des Prozessionweges," *Kölnische Rundschau*, June 4, 1953; "Festliche Gottestracht-von 100,000 gesehen," *Kölnische Rundschau*, June 6, 1953.

[131] Joseph Frings, "Warnung vor verwerflichen Vergnügen," *Kirchlicher Anzeiger* (February 15, 1948): 41–42; Joseph Frings, "Fastenhirtenbrief," *Kirchlicher Anzeiger* (February 3, 1950): 82–93; Schank, *"Kölsch-Katholisch,"* 326–368.

[132] Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann and Erich Neumann, *Jahrbuch der Öffentlichen Meinung, 1965–1967* (Allensbach, 1967), 69.

[133] On reinvention as opposed to invention of tradition, see Jeremy DeWaal, "The Reinvention of Tradition: Form, Meaning, and Local Identity in Modern Cologne Carnival," *Central European History* 46 (2013): 495–532.

The reawakening of Cologne Carnival again reflected the popular roots of the local cultural revival. Not only did the church oppose its revival, the city administration also protested its early reintroduction and refused to sanction events until 1949. The British occupiers, for their part, removed restrictions on the tradition, with a pre-war Jewish carnivalist helping to convince them that it was not a military demonstration.[134] Cologners in the ruins remarked on the tradition's deep connection with local Heimat feeling. As the carnivalist Hans Jonen argued, the tradition "embraces the entire Heimat complex" and conveyed a sense of local family. His own Carnival society, he argued, reflected "Heimat thought" and refused to concede the concept to a "fanatic-brutal dictatorial statist idea." Jonen's statement is among the rare early post-war references to Nazi use of the concept. He held his Carnival society to be an expression of a "loyal Rhenish sense of Heimat" – a reference that insisted on Heimat as a subnational place.[135] His comments on Carnival as embodying the entire "Heimat complex" reflected how the tradition brought together many different themes of the Heimat movement and projected them through a carnivalistic megaphone.

Fleeting histories of Carnival in the ruins have tended to miss this dynamism, sometimes gesturing to celebrations as reflecting how life in the rubble was not as gloomy as subsequently remembered.[136] Such accounts have neglected the depth of sources on Carnival as a site of healing and overlooked its use to rebuild local community cohesion. The number of people who flocked to the tradition was considerable. Sightings of the first spontaneous Carnival processions in the snow-covered ruins became iconic in the post-war city, with unofficial but well-attended revivals taking place from 1945 to 1948. Members of one Carnival society recounted in 1946 that trauma, while keeping some away, mostly drove crowds to the tradition.[137] In 1947, despite the city forbidding parades, masked balls, and costumed events, spontaneous processions again made

[134] Arthur Vieke, *Die Geschichte der Großen Allgemeinen Karnevalsgesellschaft von 1900,* vol. 3 (Cologne, 1988), 421–428; Günter Ginzel and Sonja Günter, "Juden in Köln," in *Zuhause in Köln*, eds., Günter Ginzel and Sonja Günter (Cologne, 1998), 136.

[135] Hans Jonen, *Fünfzig Jahre Ruppedidup. Korpsgeschichte der Ehrengarde der Stadt Köln* (Cologne, 1952), 12, 117, 124. For another account of Heimat as the foremost aspect of Carnival, see J. Werner, "Das Karnevals-Lied," *Unser Köln* 1/2 (1952): 4.

[136] Jähner, *Wolfszeit*, 11, 121–147.

[137] Grosse Karnevalsgesellschaft Närrischer Insulaner, *Festschrift. 25 Jahre* (Cologne, 1952), 45.

their way through the rubble. Reports noted that attendance at Carnival that year was bursting at the seams.[138]

The theme of local community as a therapeutic resource proliferated throughout early celebrations. Klersch particularly pointed to celebrations amongst denizens with prosthetic limbs as reflecting Cologner's "desire for life."[139] His fellow carnivalist and businessman Albrecht Bodde described Carnival as providing "healing water for wounded souls" and embodying a local desire to live.[140] Newspapers described the therapeutic community feeling at celebrations for those injured in the war, insisting that the tradition effected a temporary return of positive emotions.[141] A range of other locals offered similar descriptions of Carnival as about local community, healing, and coping with the city's destruction.[142] The theme of local community as a therapeutic resource could also be found throughout scores of Carnival songs. As one from 1946 maintained, Cologners would help one another to overcome difficult times, bringing "fresh courage to face life."[143] As another Carnival song similarly insisted, despite miserable circumstances, they would set aside their "existential crisis," maintain local humour, and bring their city back on its feet through "Cologne loyalty."[144]

Carnival further offered a moment for organizing mass local reunions with dislocated locals, which other non-Rhenish cities facilitated by scheduling more sober evacuee days.[145] During the first celebrations endorsed by the city in 1949, the administration scheduled special trains to bring evacuees home, who reportedly sang "Homesickness for Cologne" in groups at the main station, while locals thematized the evacuation issue in Carnival processions. Local papers reported that events conveyed feelings of "old Cologne" and the connections between "Mother Colonia" and

[138] Kölsche Grielächer, *25 Jahre Karnevals-Gesellschaft* (Cologne, 1952), 6; Jonen, *Korpsgeschichte*, 66–67, 99–109.
[139] Joseph Klersch, *Kölner Fastnachtsspiegel* (Cologne, 1948), 134–137.
[140] Albrecht Bodde, "Zum Geleit," in Klersch, *Fastnachtsspiegel*, I; Albrecht Bodde, "Rheinland-Kölle-Karneval," *Kölner Almanach* (1951/52): 280.
[141] "Närrisches Parlament," *Rheinische Zeitung,* February 9, 1949; "Krütz un queer," *Kölner Stadtanzeiger,* February 4, 1950; "Krütz un queer," *Kölner Stadtanzeiger,* February 6, 1950; "Prunksitzung der Kriegsbeschädigten," *Kölner Stadtanzeiger*, March 1, 1954.
[142] Johannes Leptien, "Alaaf die Köllsche Gecke," in Klersch, *Fastnachtsspiegel,* iii-iv; Gebhard Ebeler, "Auftakt zum närrischen Spiel" and "Der närrische Philosoph," in *16 Erfolgreiche Rheinische Büttenreden und Zweigespräche namhafter Karnevalisten*, vol. II, ed., Ebeler (Cologne, 1953), 5, 24; Jonen, *Korpsgeschichte*, 77–78.
[143] "Nur so, mein Köln, wirst du wieder erstehn," (1946) in Louis, *Liederschatz*, 206.
[144] USBK-Rheinkasten/12, Liederheft 1949, *Karnevalsgesellschaft Große Kalker,* 3, 11.
[145] On Nuremberg, see Gregor, *Haunted*, 59.

her dislocated "children."[146] For those unable to return, Carnival became a moment of yearning for their Heimat. Carnival princes received stacks of mail from evacuees, expressing homesickness and the emotions stirred by hearing the "Heimat sounds" of Carnival on the radio. Reports of Cologne Carnival celebrations beyond the city trickled in from places throughout Germany and as far away as North America, where former locals conveyed their wishes to help rebuild their "Heimat."[147]

The theme of local community as a therapeutic resource continued into the city-sanctioned Carnival events after 1949. The first official post-war Carnival theme reflected this, entitled in dialect, "We are here again and will do what we can," which the *Westdeutsche Zeitung* described as an expression of a "right to exist."[148] A report from that year maintained that the tradition provided a few hours in which the "optimism of the Rhenish people" cleared their souls of the rubble. Their eyes, used to greyness and squalor, "bathed joyfully in the variegated play of colours" of the celebrations.[149] Rubble piles served as bleachers for much of the first post-war Rose Monday parade. City officials warned against celebrating on rubble piles, though few other places were available. Given the lack of indoor spaces, locals held many street celebrations, with some noting how the outdoor space added to their community feeling.[150] Several carnivalists that year described events as conveying feelings of "life affirmation" or being "a single large family."[151]

Such extravagant emphasis on local "life affirmation" should not lead us to a false conception of the rubble world as a rosy place of harmony and smooth processes of healing. It was, quite to the contrary, shaped by death, loss, ongoing division, lack of basic resources, and what many described as an absence of positive emotions. As a Swiss journalist reported, Cologne in 1945 was a site of ubiquitous destruction, peopled by denizens with poor diets who had lived among the smell of bodies rotting underneath the

[146] "Stoßseufzer eines Fastelovends-Redakteurs," *Rheinische Zeitung*, February 7, 1949; "Sonderzug," *Rheinische Zeitung,* March 2, 1949; "Kölle wirklich en Dur un Moll," *Rheinische Zeitung,* February 6, 1951; "Rosenmontag," *Kölner Stadtanzeiger,* February 6, 1951; "Triumphfahrt des Rosenmontagszug 1954," *Kölner Stadtanzeiger*, March 2, 1954.

[147] "Ein Prinz aus feinen Landen," *Rosenmontagszeitung,* Weiberfastnacht, 1949; "Karl Berbuer als Fastelovendsdiplomat," *Kölner Stadtanzeiger,* February 10, 1955; Alfred Neven-DuMont, *18 Tage Narrenfürst* (Cologne, 1955), 23; Jonen, *Tage*, 51–57.

[148] "Mer sin widder do. . .," *Westdeutsche Zeitung,* February 28, 1949.

[149] "Rückblick auf den Karneval 1949," *Unser Köln* 3/4 (1949): 25.

[150] Statistischen Amt der Stadt Köln, ed., *Verwaltungsbericht 1949*, 59; Interviews: Ferdi Hartmann, Günther Hochgürtel, and Hans Georg Paßmann, in *Unser Köln*, ed., vom Stein, 124–126.

[151] Theo Röhrig, "Vorwort," (Letter to Jonen, April 19, 1949) in Jonen, *Tage*, 4, 6–7, 25, 39, 43.

rubble.[152] It was reaction to such experiences that shaped the extravagant tones of Carnival and its temporary inversions. Given that the tradition had been banned during the war years, it is understandable that celebrants described its revival as "the first representative of a beginning time of peace."[153] In some respects, exuberant reflections on reconstruction during Carnival reflected what cultural anthropologists have called the "euphoric stage" of post-catastrophic communities, in which many take leave of previous fears of their community's complete destruction and thematize rebirth.[154]

Though few places outside of the Rhineland had a single public event that so defined local culture, the revival of Carnival reflected a penchant in rubble cities for local festivals. As one Rhenish Heimat enthusiast noted, their popular attraction derived from how they conveyed community feeling.[155] In addition to Carnival, Cologners sought out other ritual traditions and events. The *Kirmes,* a summer festival, was among those revived, with one Cologne dialect expert insisting on its "community-forming powers."[156] From 1946 to 1950, Cologners celebrated three other far-reaching events filled with discussions about Heimat. The first of these, the Cologne Culture Days in 1946, as we shall see in Chapter 2, gave locals an opportunity to weave narratives about Cologne as a "European" city.[157]

Two years later in 1948, Cologners celebrated the 700-year Cathedral Jubilee, which received wide press coverage. The jubilee was striking in how it reformulated the structure's symbolism. Only a half century earlier, the Cathedral Completion Celebration in 1880 underscored its nationalist symbolism. In 1948, locals instead described it as a symbol of local Heimat and Europeanness. Mayor Pünder did include the question of national unity in a long list of potential themes, though it went largely unheeded.[158] The idea of the Cathedral as a symbol of reconstruction and a new time of peace was also to be emphasized.[159] Locals were aware they were transforming the Cathedral's symbolism. Prior to the jubilee, reports in the *Rhein Echo* and the local church newspaper noted how the

[152] "Besuch in Köln 1946," *Südkurier*, July 9, 1946 in *Die Niederlage, die eine Befreiung war*, ed., Ilse Brusis (Cologne, 1985), 90.
[153] "Auf dem Thron der tollen Tage," *Kölner Stadtanzeiger,* February 17, 1954.
[154] Erikson, *Species,* 235.
[155] Matthias Zender, *Heimat und lebendiges Brauchtum* (Neuss, 1955), 4–5.
[156] Adam Wrede, "Köln-Standhafte Stadt," *Kölner Almanach* (1955/56): 34.
[157] Wolfgang Braunfels, "Die Ausstellungen bildender Kunst in den Kölner Kulturtage," in *Der Rhein und Europa. Kölner Kulturtage*, ed., Hermann Pünder (Cologne, 1947), 87–89.
[158] Jürgen Brügger, "Das Kölner Domjubiläum," in *Köln*, ed., Dülffer, 221–225.
[159] Johann Koch, *700 Jahre Dom zu Köln* (Cologne, 1948), 103.

events would affect the "de-Prussianization" of the Cathedral, whose fashioning as a national symbol was to be reversed; few, the *Rhein Echo* reported, wanted national monuments.[160]

In the final days before the August 1948 events, locals rushed to repair the long inert lighting system of the Cathedral which had plunged into darkness every night for nearly a decade. The flooding of the structure in 100,000 watts of light the night before festivities was to symbolize rebirth.[161] The next morning, thousands watched as the relics of the three kings, evacuated during the war, returned in a procession back into the city. Large crowds crammed into the square to hear speeches in front of the Cathedral, which was draped in the city colours of red and white. Among the speeches, the new mayor, Ernst Schwering, emphasized the structure as a European, Christian, and local symbol.[162] The meanings projected onto the Cathedral, as one Rhenish art historian in the year of the jubilee noted, proved "inexhaustible" and underwent transformation amidst crisis as Germans and Rhinelanders engaged in an ongoing process of "self-discovery."[163] References to the Cathedral's national symbolism, while minor, did appear. One such reference came from the expellee societies' words of greeting.[164]

After the events, the Catholic Church noted with dismay that few saw the jubilee in religious terms. The archbishopric analysed hundreds of newspaper articles on the jubilee and noted that the themes of Cologne localism and European unity proved prominent, while that of Cologne's Catholicism took a backseat everywhere but in the Catholic press. The Eastern bloc press, for their part, depicted it as part of a capitalist plot.[165] Most Heimat enthusiasts were ultimately more interested in promoting community cohesion than narrow confessional identity. The *Kölnische Rundschau*, in turn, reported that Cologners perceived the jubilee as a supra-confessional festival of their local family, for whom the Cathedral was part of their "private existences."[166] Local publications, letters, dialect songs, and event booklets described the Cathedral less as a Catholic or national symbol than as a symbol of Cologners' "determination to live"

[160] HAEK-MK/2283, Heinz Wolf, "Kölner Dom vor der Entpreußifizierung: Keine Konjunktur für Nationaldenkmäler," *Rhein Echo*, June 8, 1948; Michael Becker, "Von Dom zur Kathedrale," *Kirchenzeitung für das Erzbistum Köln*, July 25, 1948.
[161] HAEK-MK/2282, "100000-Watt strahlen den Dom an," *Kölnische Rundschau*, August 12, 1948.
[162] HAEK-MK/2282, "Rede des Oberbürgermeisters"; Kölnische Rundschau, *Domes Ruf*, 43.
[163] Heinrich Lützeler, *Der Dom zu Köln in der deutschen Geschichte* (Bonn, 1948), 5, 78–79.
[164] Kölnische Rundschau, *Domes Ruf,* 44–45; See also Schnipenkötter, Letter to School Directors, *Kirchlicher Anzeiger für die Erzdiözese Köln* (September 15, 1948): 266–267.
[165] HAEK-MK/2282, Rode, "Einleitung." [166] Kölnische Rundschau, *Domes Ruf,* 5–6.

(*Levvensmot*), evacuee homesickness, and Cologners' Heimat feeling.[167] Cologne newspapers argued that the Cathedral conveyed "local patriotism" regardless of whether one was Catholic, Jewish, or Protestant.[168] Tellingly, a West Berlin paper reported that the expression of Cologners' desires for Heimat during the jubilee reflected similar feelings of Berliners for their own city.[169]

Finishing off the series of special events, Cologners observed the 1900-year city anniversary in 1950 with much fanfare. Adenauer first promoted the anniversary in the *Kölnischer Kurier* in 1945, insisting that they should use it to reawaken Cologne's inheritance as a city of Rome, Europe, Germany, Christendom, and humanism.[170] The event was filled with localist feeling and a relative absence of national symbolism. Adenauer's words of greetings emphasized local traditions, rebuilding, and rejecting nationalism.[171] Locals celebrated events with theatre pieces on local history, special Carnival celebrations, exhibitions, and special publications, many of which presented Cologne's 1900-year history as an inspiration for rebuilding.[172] Locals again acknowledged how such local cultural events helped to compensate for the loss of the city's tangible heritage. As a special newspaper article printed for the anniversary argued, after the bombings, what remained of Cologne could be found only in immaterial things which could not be destroyed by "explosives and phosphorous."[173]

Gender, Heimat, and Reconstruction

Turning to local community and reconstruction to find new post-war lives was certainly preferable to visions of redemption through national struggle. Prevailing conceptions about reconstruction, however, reveal substantial

[167] W. Henkels, "Brief an eine Kölnerin, das Heimweh betreffend" and Liz Böhle, "Flucht und Heimat," in *Köln und sein Dom*, ed., Stadt Köln (Cologne, 1948), 11–14, 23–24; Hans Vogts, "Die Schicksalstunde der Rheinischen Kunst," in *Der Kölner Dom*, ed., Zentral-Dombau-Verein (Cologne, 1948), 50; August Schnorrenberg, "Am Dom zo Kölle" (1948) reprinted in Louis, *Liederschatz*, 246.

[168] HAEK-MK/2283, Heinz Wolf, "Kölner Dom," *Rhein Echo*, June 8, 1948; Nr. 2284, "Der Dom als Wahrzeichen," *Rheinische Zeitung*, August 14, 1948; Zintgraff-Große, "Köln und der Kölner Dom," *Der Ruf*, August 15, 1948.

[169] HAEK-MK/2283, "Über Trümmern das alte Herz," *Telegraf-Berlin*, August 3, 1948.

[170] "Köln wird auferstehen," *Kölnischer Kurier,* April 9, 1945; Konrad Adenauer, "Kölner, Kölnerinnen!," *Kölnischer Kurier,* July 3, 1945.

[171] Jeffry Diefendorf, "Das Stadtjubiläum 1950 und die Selbstdarstellung Kölns," in *Köln,* ed., Dülffer, 239–250.

[172] "Meer sin noch do," *Kölner Almanach* (1951/52): 324–335.

[173] "Köln ist wieder da," *Kölnische Rundschau, Sonderbeilage zum Stadtjubiläum,* June/July, 1950.

shortcomings. While more of these, including prolific memory failures, will be examined in Chapter 2, persisting gendered ideas about Heimat warrant attention here. Men particularly perceived restoring Heimat as involving the re-establishment of a sphere of domestic life which should be tended to by wives and mothers.

Putting these trends in context requires a brief glimpse at broader scholarly debates about gendered understandings of "home" and "Heimat." Clear parallels can be found between the German- and English-language debates. In English-language debates, earlier writings of white heterosexual middle-class feminists of the second wave often argued for eliminating "home" as a means of liberation, while later third-wave feminists criticized the way this orthodoxy ignored how home has often served as a site of protection, healing, and resistance for oppressed minorities.[174] Others further argued that viewing home as irreversibly gendered falls into gender essentialism, while failing to answer questions about what rejecting home means in practice and erasing the possibility of queer desires for a protective place of home.[175] Third-wave feminists, in short, have been more likely to lay claim to the possibility of an anti-patriarchal idea of home. Though the term "Heimat" has not represented a keyword of feminist debates in the German context, the discourse reveals a similar divergence. Looking at Heimat through a Freudian lens, Gisela Eckert's work has argued that Heimat is essentially gendered, bearing an immovable "oedipal trace."[176] Others, including Elisabeth Bütfering, have argued for a vision of anti-patriarchal ideas of Heimat, underscoring how patriarchal understandings have often rendered women *heimatlos* (without Heimat).[177]

Gendered understandings of Heimat long preceded the early post-war years. The concept's gendering amidst the growing nineteenth-century cult of domesticity paralleled developments in British or American understandings of "home." In German, the term's gendering could be seen in a

[174] On these debates, see, among others, Mary Douglas, "The Idea of Home: A Kind of Space," *Social Research* 58, 1 (1991): 287–307; Gillian Rose, *Feminism and Geography* (Cambridge, 1993); Blunt and Dowling, *Home*, 16–20; bell hooks, *Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics* (London, 2015), 41–49.

[175] Matt, "Understanding Home," 75–76; Morley, *Home*, 75; Matt Cook, *Queer Domesticities* (Basingstoke, 2014).

[176] Gisela Eckert, ed., *Kein Land im Sicht. Heimat-weiblich?* (Munich, 1997).

[177] Elisabeth Bütfering, "Frauenheimat/Männerwelt: Die Heimatlosigkeit ist weiblich," in *Heimat*, ed., Cremer, 416–436. See also the special issue "Women Writing Heimat in Imperial and Weimar Germany," *German Life and Letters* 72, 1 (2019). On the growing trend towards Büterfing's reading, see Oesterhelt, *Heimat*, 105–114.

change of its grammatical gender from the neutral "*das*" to the feminine "*die*" in the early nineteenth century. Portrayal of Heimat as feminine also dovetailed with gendered understandings of public vs private and the gendered encodings of caritative emotions. Gendered ideas about Heimat could be seen in representation, normative ideas about who should work to cultivate a sense of Heimat, and whose visions of Heimat were privileged over others. Feminine representations of Heimat appeared most visually in the use of female figures in traditional dress to represent specific regions. While the Rhineland lacked such a figure, "Mother Colonia" was a trope figure often evoked in local spectacles. Gendered representations could also be seen in language and the network of terms evoked in conjunction with "Heimat." Reference to the "mother's lap," for example, represented a stock phrase regularly used in metaphorical descriptions about Heimat until the late twentieth century. Cologners in the rubble continued to evoke motherly metaphors. As one wrote on his own loss of Heimat, Cologne "was mother to me."[178] Such gendered representations were historically re-enforced by experiences of mothers as the primary caritative figures. The pedagogue Anton Heinen, active in the years of the Second Empire and the Weimar Republic, reflected this in his writings on Heimat which a West German pedagogical journal reprinted in 1948: "Where a mother is," Heinen wrote, "there is Heimat." He continued by reflecting on how his own mother stood at the centre of his Heimat feeling: "In her lap and in her arms, I felt the feelings of the most perfect security and protection." His mother, with her patience and dedication, he concluded had "opened up Heimat" for him.[179]

In looking for anti-patriarchal visions of home and Heimat, the early post-war years hardly offer fertile ground. Throughout western Europe and the United States, desires for a return to domestic life after the war re-enforced the conservative gender politics of the era. In the West German case, such desires were augmented by the perceived "crisis of masculinity" in the wake of defeat.[180] After periods of warfare, women were often ascribed the role of healing wounds and reintegrating men into society.[181] For post-war West Germans, women were to facilitate such healing first and foremost by providing men with domestic warmth. As one Cologne woman wrote in the local church paper in 1947, women, within family

[178] Paul Boskamp, "Köln, du alte heilige Stadt," *Alt-und Neu-Köln* 1,1 (1946): 3.
[179] Anton Heinen, "Mutter und Heimat," *Pädagogische Rundschau* 2 (1948): 286.
[180] Biess, *Homecomings*.
[181] Karen Hagemann, "Home/Front," in *Home/Front: The Military, War and Gender in Twentieth-Century Germany*, eds., Karen Hagemann and Stefanie Springorum (Oxford, 2002), 29.

and marriage, would provide a "healing and protective home" for their husbands in times of uncertainty. Through her trust, understanding, happiness, and warm-heartedness, she argued, women could strengthen men who confronted the "gruelling struggle" outside of the home.[182] Similar attitudes could be found in national women's periodicals. As one woman wrote in *Die Welt der Frau* in 1946, a destroyed people would find healing by "returning home to mothers" who "ruled" over a sphere of peace.[183] Another article in the women's journal *Der Regenbogen* argued that women must address the "dire straits of our Heimat."[184] The journal editors themselves insisted that the love of mothers would form the gate under which those bereft of Heimat must pass to find renewal. Without peace and reconciliation of human hearts, they insisted, Heimat could not be found.[185]

Returning soldiers and POWs, as Frank Biess notes, maintained "male fantasies" of Heimat centred around a domestic sphere tended to by wives and mothers.[186] In Cologne, this could be seen in letters between a Wehrmacht soldier and his wife. After writing to her husband about how she could only bear her loss of "Heimat" by knowing she still had him, her husband responded by rhetorically asking what "Heimat" meant. For him, he continued, where she was, would always be his "Heimat."[187] Male desires for the warmth of home dovetailed with efforts to transfer ideas of masculinity from militarized contexts to the domestic realm.[188] Conservative ideals of home, however, contrasted with the actual struggles of reintegrating men into family units. These struggles partly informed the wave of divorces and remarriages throughout the early post-war years. Single women, many of whom were widowed during the war, were also increasingly couched as a problem.[189] In Cologne, the idea that women required men to have a secure place of Heimat was most vividly taken up in Heinrich Böll's novel, *A House Without Guardians*. The novel recounted the desperation of two Rhenish families after the loss of their fathers in the war.[190]

[182] Agnes Peth, "Die Gattin und die Mutter," *Kirchenzeitung für das Erzbistum Köln*, July 6, 1947.
[183] "Zum Geleit," *Die Welt der Frau* 1, 1 (1946): 5.
[184] Angelika Thinnes, "Ersehnte und erfüllbare Frauenberufe," *Der Regenbogen* 1, 4 (1946): 6–7.
[185] "Wir denken an euch alle," *Der Regenbogen* 11, 1 (1946): 3.
[186] Biess, *Homecomings*.
[187] Letters of Anneliese Hastenplug and Andreas von Kann, in Rüther, *Köln*, 723.
[188] Frank Biess, "Men of Reconstruction – The Reconstruction of Men: Returning POWs in East and West Germany, 1945–1955" in *Home/Front*, ed., Hagemann and Springorum, 335–358.
[189] Elizabeth Heineman, *What Difference Does a Husband Make?: Women and Martial Status in Nazi and Postwar Germany* (Berkeley, 1999).
[190] Heinrich Böll, *Haus ohne Hüter* (Cologne, 1954).

The West German state increasingly framed a return to traditional gender roles and private domestic existences in Cold War terms, contrasting it with the East German state's encouragement of female labour as a supplement to her ascribed domestic roles. The use of female labour for reconstruction was thus cast as temporary.[191] By the 1950s, the new-found resources of the Economic Miracle offered the means for many to pursue imagined domestic ideals, while the West German state promoted female consumerism so long as it remained within the context of tending to the domestic sphere.[192]

For thinkers of home and gender, like the philosopher Aziever Tucker, the hallmark of patriarchal understandings of home is the belief that "the place of the woman is at the home of the man, *not her own home*."[193] This belief can easily be found throughout sources on gender and Heimat from early post-war West Germany. Women, as we have already seen, hardly described loss of Heimat through bombings or dislocation as liberating and often expressed deep homesickness. At the same time, efforts to reconstruct a place of home were embedded in asymmetrical "power geometries" in which men's visions were privileged above those of women.[194] Historic privileging of male homesickness over that of women also persisted.[195] Perhaps few sources reflected these trends as clearly as one agony aunt letter written by a West German woman to the journal *Constanze* in the early 1950s. In her letter, she recounted her deep homesickness after her husband moved the family to England. She wanted to return to her family and "Heimat," but her husband adamantly refused given that their life would not be financially as comfortable. His adamance led her to consider divorce. The editor's response maintained that she likely saw her Heimat too much through rose-coloured glasses. She should make a short visit to her Heimat, the editor argued, which would probably lead her to realize that her *real* Heimat was where "her husband is."[196] Such marginalization of women's visions of home was widespread. When presented with the scenario of a married couple fighting over where they lived, for example,

[191] Robert Moeller, *Protecting Motherhood: Women and the Family in the Politics of Postwar West Germany* (Berkeley, 1993).
[192] Erica Carter, *How German is She?: Postwar West German Reconstruction and the Consuming Woman* (Ann Arbor, 1997).
[193] Tucker, "Home," 185.
[194] On place, gender, and power geometries, see Doreen Massey, *Space, Place and Gender* (Minneapolis, 1994).
[195] On earlier disregard of female homesickness, see Oesterhelt, *Heimat*, 105.
[196] "Das Große Heimweh," *Constanze*, 7 (1954): 6.

58 percent of West Germans in the early post-war years, including a majority of women, agreed that men should have the final say.[197]

Some women in the aftermath argued that their role in reconstruction should establish their rights of citizenship in a future democracy. As one woman related in 1946 in *Der Regenbogen*, by rebuilding "Heimat, livelihoods and family," women would prove their rights for equality.[198] Such hopes would go largely unfulfilled, and it would take decades for gendered ideas of Heimat to be challenged.[199] In the early post-war years, understandings of democracy as entailing gender equality remained weak – both in West Germany and throughout many other western democracies.

Conclusion

The revival of local culture in Cologne and appeals to Heimat as a site of healing both conflict with narratives about the concept as either taboo after 1945 or as only about magnifying a sense of victimhood. Its appeal could be found instead in its association with recovery. For Cologners who pined for Heimat, moreover, it was neither the generic rural trope of film nor an empty signifier of nation. It was a specific site of personal memory, community, and local identity that had been shattered. While loss triggered emotive focus on these personal geographies, Heimat simultaneously represented a site of imagined future life. Denizens described local community as a tool of reconstruction and a therapeutic resource. Heimat was also the primary geography where they felt a sense of dissonant lives and sought to mend them.

The lack of a Heimat "taboo" after the war can also be traced, in part, to the Nazi regime's selective use of Heimat, combined with a denunciation of those strains of thinking about the concept which it perceived as too disconnected from national struggle. While the regime appealed to local loyalties to channel them towards expansion, it simultaneously curtailed and centralized Heimat publications, envisioned mass resettlement plans, and denounced the "apish love of Heimat" of those who refused to evacuate or fight on the front. While the National Socialist *Volksgemeinschaft* promised new post-war lives through the outpouring of mass violence and national victory, the post-war script of finding new life through Heimat involved

[197] Noelle-Neumann and Neumann, *Jahrbuch (1956)*, 207.
[198] Johanna Krüger, "Das weibliche Staatsbürger," *Der Regenbogen* 1, 7 (1946): 2.
[199] On such challenges, see Miriam Kanne, *Transformationen klassischer "Heimat"—Konzepte bei Autorinnen der Gegenwartsliteratur* (Sulzbach, 2011).

leaving behind national struggle to focus immediately on reconstruction, rebuilding local communities, and finding new civilian lives. Though this redounded to the benefit of cultural demobilization, it also reinforced conservative gender norms and intersected with the cult of domesticity of the post-war era. As we shall see, it also aggravated failures to acknowledge the suffering of the true victims of National Socialism.

An examination of the renaissance of local Heimat culture in Cologne demonstrates how its early impulses came from below, though city institutions came to play a supporting role. In contrast to the GDR, Heimat enthusiasts had little direct interaction with national institutions and more harmonic relationships with local ones, with conflicts revolving around questions of physical reconstruction. Denizens in the ruins described local culture as a means of rebuilding communities, compensating for the city's lost tangible heritage, facilitating therapeutic moments of togetherness, and bridging across biographical rupture. As we shall see in Chapter 2, engagement with local culture also offered a means to rethink ideas about local identity at a time of turbulent change.