FEATURES

EUROPEANIZING GERMAN HISTORY

Eighteenth Annual Lecture of the GHI, November 18, 2004

Ute Frevert
Yale University

Let me start with some observations from my new life at Yale University. On the first day of class—I am currently teaching a survey course on Modern German History—I asked the students about their ideas of Germany. I got interesting responses ranging from classical cultural stereotypes (like sausages, *Oktoberfest*, fast and expensive cars) to political images (like goose-stepping soldiers, Auschwitz, and the Berlin Wall). The answer that surprised me the most was given by a young woman: She insisted on associating Germany with the blue, multi-starred European flag. For her, modern Germany is part and parcel of a broader European community and is closely tied to the European Union and its institutional and value system. I did not expect this remark—although, at second sight, there is much out there to confirm it. Any U.S. citizen arriving at Frankfurt airport cannot help noticing that the primary distinction made is not between Germans and non-Germans, but between EU- and non-EU citizens. Lining up at immigration control, you are greeted by the European flag instead of the German colors. You pay with Euros instead of Marks. License plates again show the European flag. And cities welcome their visitors with signs proudly presenting long-standing ties and friendships with other European cities.

So the student's comment was actually not completely out of the blue, at least in so far as it referred to recent and present developments. But what about the past? Can Germany's history, too, be "Europeanized"? And suppose it can—should it be? What would we gain?

I.

First things first: what do I mean by "Europeanization?" I use the term here to highlight the complex set of relations that Germans have maintained with other Europeans during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Although European encounters and relations can be traced back far beyond the late eighteenth century, the modern period stands out as an exceptionally dynamic and concentrated phase.[1] Transnational interac-

tion and communication have greatly intensified as personal contacts and the exchange of goods, ideas, and institutions have expanded. This held particularly true for Germany, which shared borders with several countries and thus possessed a great variety of "contact zones." The presence of other Europeans took many forms (personal, structural, imagined) and was not evenly distributed. It could have positive connotations, but it could also be used as a negative frame of reference.

What, then, are the benefits of applying a "Europeanizing" perspective to national history? There are, as far as I can see, at least two worth mentioning. First, the approach offers a different framing of national developments and opens new avenues of interpretation. After decades of research on nation-states and nationalism, we might embark on a more outward-looking track.[2] We now know a lot about the difficulties of domestic nation-building, about internal divisions and tensions, about national monuments promising unity and concealing strife. We have learned about regional and religious diversity, about nationalist movements and local perceptions of *Heimat*. And we have even seen some fine comparative studies of how national identities were shaped and constructed. All this research has successfully managed to debunk older myths about the uncontested nature of the German nation-state. At the same time, however, it has solidified the concept of the nation as a focal point of historical development and investigation. By deconstructing the nation and drawing attention to the strenuous and highly artificial work of nation-building, it strengthened the idea that nations—and in turn, national history—are the center of the universe.

In some ways, this approach was, as we remember well, a useful and necessary reaction to the reemergence of nation-states and national conflicts in the aftermath of 1989. What happened in the dissolving Soviet Empire and in Yugoslavia—and in other parts of the world, like Southeast Asia, as well—gave rise to a new interest in visions, concepts, and practices of nationhood. At the same time, however, this interest tended to blur the fact that nations were closely linked by a multitude of interactions, interventions, and networks in the past, and that they remain so in the present. The process of nation-building itself is thoroughly informed by comparisons with and borrowing from others. Transfers of knowledge and technology, of administrative rules and methods, of political concepts, have been a recurring feature of European development throughout the modern period. For Europeans, the models that were either adopted or rejected came mostly from other European regions. The major non-European influence has been the United States, which has posed a critical challenge to the self-images of European societies since the late nineteenth century and has thus figured as an important creator of Europeanness.[3]

This is not to say, of course, that nation-states do not matter as agents of historical action and change. To loosen the grip of a narrowly conceived national history is not to deny that nations have been indispensable units of citizenship and entitlements. Even in the European Union, where the process of supranational state-building is relatively far advanced, the member states have not lost their importance in managing and protecting citizens' rights and obligations. But, as the EU also tells us, they increasingly share this role with non-national structures, be they sub- or supranational. Fifty years of economic, social and political integration have left their mark on the framing of national identities. Above all, the process of integration has accelerated and increased the permeation of transnational trends, ideas, and movements within European societies.[4]

The transnational flow, however, did not start with the 1950s. This observation runs against a growing tendency to divide German history into a "national" and a "European" part. Throughout most of its modern history, so the story goes, the German nation-state was preoccupied with establishing its defining characteristics and, more than once, overstressing them to the detriment of its European neighbors. After 1945, defeated Germany was integrated into a larger setting where it lost its aggressive self-centeredness and gratefully accepted the blessings of Western, especially American, civilization.

This view—widely held among social scientists and politicians—is much too narrow and short-sighted. In fact, the approach that I favor shows that "Europeanization" occurred long before the founding fathers set out the framework of European integration. It thus takes the steam out of the contention that the EU was opening a completely new chapter of history. Instead, it pays attention to the long-term processes of communication and interaction that shaped German politics, society, and culture long before there were conscious steps and high-level policies of institutional integration.

The critical edge of the Europeanizing approach should thus be evident. Furthermore—and this might be seen as its second merit—it is meant to contribute to a new history of Europe that appears to be urgently needed. As the EU currently undergoes dramatic changes, politicians and intellectuals are desperately searching for common European elements in culture and economics, social values, and political organization. Many try to find them in the past, in an alleged European heritage, in traditions and experiences that seem to be both shared and specific to Europeans. They come up with lofty claims about Greek-Roman-Jewish roots, legal cultures, or European values as the essence of Europeanness.

In place of such wishful thinking, I would suggest conceiving of Europeanness as a web of communication and interaction. This web dis-

plays different degrees and patterns of involvement, shifting centers and margins, uneven and asymmetric relations, and competitive, often violent encounters. It translates "Europe" into a dynamic experience rather than defining it in abstract geographical or cultural terms. The crucial questions then involve the kind and number of transnational experiences available to people (of different generations, genders, classes) at a given time and in a given region of Europe. If we manage to answer these questions in detail for many countries, we will make a big step toward a European history that is more than a compilation of national histories and does not rest upon value-ridden assumptions about the Occident.[5]

Some people might say that the goal is too modest: Why limit the approach to modern Europe? Why not include the wider world?[6] First, I am well aware that there is an exciting premodern chapter of the European story, but I do believe that the nineteenth and twentieth centuries added both quantitatively and qualitatively to its acceleration, density, and inclusiveness. Second, I do not want to imply that Germany's interests and communication networks were restricted to Europe. They never were, and a globalizing perspective is surely important and much needed. But I would like to start with Europe, as the continent ranked— and still ranks—foremost as a defining sphere of mutual influence and interdependence. Unlike other European countries that built and administered huge empires outside of Europe, Germany remained focused on Europe. There was an increasing demand for *Weltpolitik* beginning in the 1890s, but those policies were mainly carried out, after 1914 and again after 1939, in Eastern Europe, not in Africa or Asia. Although some younger scholars have recently turned to German colonial designs and projects which they interpret as a crucial feature of the *Kaiserreich* and beyond, I still have doubts as to how powerful the colonial impact actually was.[7] Europe—East and West alike, though in different ways—seems to be of much greater importance when it comes to transnational encounters and interest.

So, even if "Europeanization" falls short of global ambitions, the claims are pretty high. At stake is more than an embedded type of national history. But as usual, claims have to be transformed into the humble work of empirical research. In the remaining part of my lecture, I want to present some fields where the approach can prove its merits. These examples concern wars (and the memories of war), policymaking, and elite culture.

II.

Let us start with wars, which are inter- and transnational events par excellence.[8] Seldom, however, are they perceived as such. In historical scholarship, wars figure as primary examples of nation-building.[9] This

holds true both in an external and internal sense. The wars of 1866 and 1870/71 are seen as wars of German unification: They set the external borders of the new nation-state and defined the territory in which domestic nation-building could then take place. World War I is presented as an exercise in national unity and disunity—from the Kaiser's promise of non-partisanship in August 1914, the *Burgfrieden* policy of Social Democracy to the infamous Jew count of 1916 and the strikes of 1918. Emphasis is laid on the new "totality" of war, on the intimate links between the "home front" and the troops. The dominant narrative of 1914–1918 is one that focuses on social relations, domestic policies, and national propaganda. Virtually absent is any account of the experiences that this war—like others before and after—brought about in terms of foreign encounters and transnational communication. For most rank-and-file soldiers, wars offered an unforeseen opportunity to go abroad. Crossing borders, being confronted with different customs, languages, food, and architectural styles, was an experience that could leave a lasting impression. Some men assiduously took notes and wrote home about what they observed; to them, a military campaign resembled a kind of educational grand tour.[10] Others made friends or even found wives while serving as occupying soldiers or being held as prisoners of war.

One of my students told me how his family history was shaped by wars in a peculiar fashion: His great-great-grandfather was a French soldier from Bordeaux who was taken prisoner in 1870 and lost his heart to a Rhenish girl. The student's great-grandfather then served as a German soldier in the First World War, was wounded, and then taken prisoner. In a Red Cross hospital in Switzerland he became engaged to, and eventually married, a Swiss woman whose father was in charge of the interned Germans. One generation later, the student's grandfather served as a German soldier in the Second World War. He fell in love with a Polish woman and, during the final stages of war, hid in her village. After the war, they married and lived in Legnica (Liegnitz) in Silesia until 1962, when the family emigrated to Düsseldorf.[11]

This family history may seem exceptional in its transnational quality, but who knows how many similar stories can be told? Wars held the potential, in a positive as well as in a negative way, to forge relationships across national borders. What makes these relationships special for historians is the fact that they were not restricted to social elites. We will see later on that men (and women) of the upper and educated classes were highly privileged in their ability to experience "Europe." Wars, however, extended this "privilege" to all social classes.

In talking about wars as transnational encounters, we are usually inclined to focus on their destructive elements, and for good reasons. But despite the national propaganda during World War I that transformed

adversaries into eternal enemies, there was a great deal of respect, some-
times even solidarity, between soldiers ordered to kill one another. "They
are fighting like lions," "they are like us": Such notions of a common fate,
of common traits of character and skills, testify to a widely shared feeling
of connectedness, which was expressed in humane gestures like sponta-
neous ceasefires, personal assistance, and exchanges of cigarettes, not to
mention the famous Christmas celebrations on the Western front in 1914.
It also found expression in postwar meetings of veterans and veterans'
associations. Even in cases like Stalingrad, where both sides engaged in
merciless fighting and killing during World War II, survivors (and their
children) were able to meet and share memories—memories that zoomed
in on the common experience of hardship, deprivation, fear, and com-
radeship. Long before Chancellor Kohl shook hands with President Mit-
terand at the vast graveyards of Verdun or before Chancellor Schröder
was invited to celebrate D-Day with the Allies, veterans found ways of
remembering the war as a unifying experience. This was probably the
most ambivalent "Europeanizing" experience ever. Taught to kill, fearful
for their own lives, the soldiers clearly had space to discover the enemy
as a doppelgänger who was as human—and inhuman—as themselves.

But what about the nationalist language that prepared and accom-
panied warfare? What about the brutalization of images, the dehuman-
ization of the opponent that became prevalent in the twentieth century
(but was already visible a hundred years earlier)? Did this not prevent
feelings of solidarity or sameness? Unfortunately, we still know very little
about the effect that propaganda had on soldiers. It definitely helped
them to justify what they were doing. But to what extent it made them see
things and people exclusively through the lens of official ideology is
difficult to determine. Propaganda images usually compete with others,
and they do not completely preclude contrasting views. German soldiers
who fought on the Eastern front during World War II did not always
draw on Nazi stereotypes of beast-like Bolsheviks, Jewish commissars,
and filthy peasants. They had other perceptions of their own—
perceptions of cultural difference, but also of human similarity.[12]

In some ways, propaganda itself provided information (however dis-
torted and biased) on other countries and populations. The so-called
ideas of 1914 that took shape in German intellectual discourse during
World War I were meant as a blunt refutation of the French ideas of 1789.
By juxtaposing Western civilization and German *Kultur*, the German
population was nevertheless familiarized with crucial components of
French and British culture. Instead of being sealed off against the rest of
Europe, Germans were thus prompted to actively engage in comparing and
evaluating their enemies' mindset. They could even read the foreign press

(if they had a command of the language) and use it to form their own ideas about the war, about the justifications for and the goals behind it.[13]

To sum up: Wars—normally seen as markers of national policies and identities—turn out to be transnational events both in the realm of images and ideas and as direct, personal experience. In war, people of different nationalities came face to face with one another, and although this confrontation was mostly negative and often lethal, it offered some opportunities for positive bonding and reflection. War memories in particular held the potential for bridging gaps between nations, although they could also be used to do the opposite.

Moreover, wars served as an impetus to conscious change in international relations and their social underpinnings. Both the First and the Second World War triggered strong movements of Europeanization, especially (but not solely) in Germany. The 1920s saw the emergence of a multitude of Europeanist clubs, associations, journals, speakers' series, and conferences. Activists voiced different ideas about how to solve the European problem, defined as loss of world power and continuing internal conflict. But they agreed on the need for multilateral European communication and peace-keeping. Some campaigned for a political federation called the United States of Europe, a proposal that even made its way into the 1926 Social Democratic Party program. For most of those involved in the Europeanist movement, the First World War was a watershed event that disrupted the closely-knit fabric of European relations and stripped Europe of its internal cohesion and networks. Now Europe needed a dedicated effort to rebuild its broken bridges and restore its former glory.[14]

III.

This leads us to a second field of European connectedness: international policy negotiation and cooperation. Again, we can trace this back to the experience of war. The nineteenth century saw a deepening concern about the conduct of war. In most European countries (and in the United States), lawyers were busy setting up rules to restrict military violence and civilize warfare. The founding of the Red Cross, the signing of the Geneva Conventions regulating the treatment of wounded and, later, prisoners of war—all these events were of pan-European importance. The same is true of the conferences on armaments control and arbitration in international conflicts that took place in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Interestingly, these negotiations, conferences, and agreements were not confined to the realm of diplomacy. Of course, diplomacy by definition has always been a forum for international exchange and encounter. What was new was the extent to which high-level international relations were supplemented and expanded by communi-

cation beyond the channels of professional diplomacy. The modern codification of international law, to mention just one example, entailed the active involvement of a great number of legal scholars who formed organizations like the Institute of International Law in Ghent (1873), who set up joint commissions and who put forward their proposals to European governments. Similar trends can be observed in domestic areas, above all in legal policy. Most European states codified their penal and civil law only after carefully examining how others had dealt with those matters. Differences and similarities in legal traditions were set out systematically and taken into account.

Close observation also took place when it came to enacting new state policies, particularly in the field of social welfare. Before starting their ambitious social insurance policy, German officials and lawmakers toured other European countries and reported on schemes that seemed to work well. They convened international conferences which drew participants from broad sections of society, including entrepreneurs, mayors, and economists. While this area of international cooperation and mutual learning is well known, it may come as a surprise that similar consultations occurred in military and colonial affairs, which are normally taken to be highly competitive and mutually exclusive. Military administrators collected information on different European recruiting methods and results; military journals showed ample evidence of international networking by printing articles on developments, debates and innovations abroad. European conferences on colonial policy discussed and compared best practices in colonial rule, education, administration, and trade. Again, these conferences were attended not only by government officials, but also by academic experts and local practitioners.

The argument here is twofold: First, national policies since the nineteenth century were modelled with considerable attention to foreign patterns—be it to copy "best practices" or to draw clear lines of distinction. Second, knowledge in this field was shared broadly, not only among diplomats and administrators, but also among scholars, journalists, and professionals. They met at international conferences, in multilateral commissions, and in institutions that coordinated national policies on a European scale, or even on a worldwide scale, as in the case of negotiations over time zones, metric systems, or postal services.[15]

IV.

This kind of international traffic, which basically focused on Europe, but increasingly included the United States from the late nineteenth century on, was replicated in the field of education. Universities were a central location for transnational, intra-European communication since the early modern period, and this role intensified during the nineteenth century.

Germany in particular turned out to be an international magnet. Due to the rising prestige of German science and scholarship, universities from Freiburg to Berlin attracted increasing numbers of foreign students and scholars. Friedrich Paulsen's book on German universities was immediately translated into English. Professors like Hermann Helmholtz went on extended lecture tours abroad, and his house was always besieged, as his wife reported, by visitors from "all parts of Europe, not mentioning the Americans."[16] Anna Helmholtz had gained first-hand experience of foreign manners and styles by attending a French boarding-school and then, as a young woman, spending many months in her aunt's Paris household and travelling in England. She shared this cosmopolitan education with many daughters of middle-class families. Sending teenage girls abroad emerged as a steady pattern of cultural transfer, and sometimes led to international marriages. From one generation to the next, families would often host one another's daughters and cousins, thereby forging long-term relationships that sometimes survived into the 1950s or even beyond.

Boys and young men, too, were sent abroad, especially in entrepreneurial families. Their task was not confined to learning languages and getting to know a different way of life; they were also supposed to expand their economic knowledge and interests. In addition, they were expected to stabilize business contacts and social connections that could prove beneficial to economic success. Hans Fürstenberg, the son of a Berlin banker, supplemented his apprenticeship with short-term positions in London and Paris; adding a third year in New York was prevented by the outbreak of war in 1914. After the war, he married a Russian refugee, thus continuing a family tradition (his mother came from Warsaw).[17] My own husband's great-grandfather, son of a merchant family, met his future wife during his clerking years in Britain, and took her (and a large dowry) home to Saxony; their eldest son then spent many years in England, and two of his brothers and sisters decided to settle there for good. Other branches of the family nurtured strong ties with France, and my husband's father went to university in Paris and Geneva. For this family, Eastern and Southern Europe did not seem to be equally attractive (except Italy, for tourism). Others reached out to East and West alike, as, for example, Werner Siemens, the successful inventor and entrepreneur. He installed one of his brothers in St. Petersburg to run the family business, and there was quite a traffic between Germany and the Baltics, too.

The German economic and academic elites were fairly cosmopolitan throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; both *commercium* and *connubium* connected them to the larger European world (although these ties were not evenly distributed). In their aesthetic interests,

they were not confined to national tastes, either. Just as artists and architects, musicians and novelists went back and forth with great ease and frequency, their products were consumed by a Europe-wide audience. Works of literature were quickly translated into other European languages; music did not need translation, and neither did architecture, sculpture, or paintings. Even if some conservatives tried to reserve museums for German art, French impressionists made it into the new German National Gallery before the turn of the century. Berlin then started to compete with Paris as Europe's cultural capital. In the 1920s, Berlin was considered a hotbed of avant-garde movements and drew attention from all parts of the continent.

This attention did not stop in 1933. Foreigners continued to visit Germany, though perhaps for other than aesthetic reasons. Whereas tourist offices in major German cities had counted around 500,000 foreign visitors in 1926 and nearly 1 million in 1930, there were more than 2.3 million in 1936/37. The Olympic Games drew huge crowds, as did the many international conferences that convened in Berlin, Munich, Dresden, and Heidelberg during the early years of National Socialist rule. Germans in turn went abroad in greater numbers, too, facilitated by the newly launched *Kraft durch Freude* programs that enabled even lower-middle-class families to spend some vacation time cruising Norwegian fjords or hiking in the Austrian Alps. Mass tourism, of course, was still far from being a reality, and Italians had to share their gorgeous beaches and cities only with well-to-do travellers, mainly from Britain and Germany.

Having experienced the era of mass tourism, we might be rather cautious in judging the effects of transnational travel. Nowadays, not many would wholeheartedly subscribe to Friedrich Naumann's enthusiastic comment in 1900 when he visited Paris and its Universal Exposition. Encounters of this kind would, he noted confidently, foster "mutual knowledge and respect" and bridge the gulf of ignorance and distrust between nations.[18] But the strong networks of cultural and economic exchange that existed among European middle and upper classes before 1914 did not prevent the outbreak of hostilities, and the Europeanist movements did not deter German political and economic elites from engaging in a new war in 1939.

Still, it would be inappropriate to dismiss Germany's European ties because they could not prevent war. Their significance lies not in what they could not accomplish, but in what they managed to achieve. These achievements should not be sought in short-term events, but in long-term developments. While nation-states worked energetically to assert themselves, they were also nurturing strong and diverse bonds of communication and interaction with one another. They accumulated knowledge about what went on abroad, and they permitted personal as well as

formal relationships that enabled the mutual transfer of ideas, goods, people, and institutional arrangements. These transfers, to be sure, did not rule out distinct national patterns of development. Much of what was imported changed by way of adaptation to a new environment (fashion and food are good examples). But despite these changes, transfers still allowed for a high degree of structural affinity between European societies. A great deal of what foreign visitors encountered in Germany (and vice versa) was recognizable, even if somewhat different from home. That this affinity had to be artificially played down in times of political crisis only testifies to its real strength and perceived impact.

V.

It is still very much an open question to what extent the First World War changed or overthrew this pattern. Although some international organizations banned Germans from attending in the postwar years, others did not; especially scientists remained well-connected. There was still considerable interest in the policies of other European governments, for example, policy on disabled veterans.[19] Politicians as well as members of social and professional groups kept in touch across borders. The same held true for the numerous internationalist movements that had formed during the second half of the nineteenth century: Socialists, feminists, pacifists, Zionists. At the same time, the Europeanist network of the 1920s and 1930s took great pains to stress a common European heritage, spirit and mission. Their effort was clearly set against what they perceived as severe threats to European power: the emergence of the United States as a global player; the Soviet Union as a revolutionary regime attractive to other societies; and the rise of colonial independence movements. Confronted with these challenges, Europe west of Russia was called upon to bury its national rivalries and resume its quest for world supremacy.[20]

This appeal turned out to be the radically new element in public discourse after World War I, and it continued to play an important role. It even entered National Socialist propaganda, which used it as a means to rally support for the German assault on Soviet Russia. The war in the East was marketed as a European crusade against Bolshevism, and some sturdy Europeanists eagerly endorsed it as a struggle for Europe's defense and unification. Nazi Germany here claimed to act on behalf of true European values against an alien power opposed to them. This propaganda reflected and built on the strength that the Europeanist discourse had attained during the interwar period. It isolated the basic element of this discourse—the threat to Europe from non-European forces—and relocated it so as to serve the end of constructing a Greater German Empire.[21]

To some extent, this argument remained effective even after 1945, with two major differences: First, the United States was now part of the European or rather Western alliance and played a hegemonic role. Somewhat ironically, it went from being a challenger of European power to serving as the protector of (West) European autonomy. Second, Germany had given up all ambitions to pursue a course of its own in European politics. The visions of German domination over Central Europe that had inspired public opinion since the late nineteenth century were not—and could not be—revitalized. Even more important, the elites lost their appetite for an Eastern colonial empire. Long-held ideas of German superiority (and supremacy) with regard to culture, race, or state organization were likewise abandoned. The only constant element was anti-communism, which helped West Germany forge a close alliance with other West European countries.

In more than one way, then, the loss of the Eastern provinces and the partition of the remaining German territory helped the Bonn Republic to redraw the map of its interests. It favored the western-leaning elements of transnational communication, and it strengthened the role of those border areas that had long maintained special relations with neighboring countries. It is not accidental that many of the politicians who initially navigated the process of Western European integration came from precisely those contact zones: Konrad Adenauer from the Rhineland, Robert Schuman from Lorraine/Luxemburg, Alcide de Gasperi from Trent. Their efforts of supra-national institution-building were backed by an equally long (though troubled) history of economic cooperation rooted in the post-World War I period. They were supported by Europeanist activism that gained momentum in the immediate aftermath of World War II.

I will resist the temptation to take a closer look at the accelerated process of Europeanization as it unfolded under the umbrella of the integrationist project. Let me just briefly mention two major innovations that are of crucial structural importance. First, the project of European integration offered a strong institutional backbone to a long-standing, but fluid and decentralized culture of transnational communication. These institutions were tied both to interests and values. They provided a space to negotiate converging as well as conflicting interests in a framework of cooperation and trust. Second, this framework proved viable and sustainable for two reasons. On the one hand, it compensated for the material and immaterial losses that most member states had experienced during the 1940s and 1950s. Germany was undoubtedly the biggest loser, but Italy followed right behind, and France, Belgium, and the Netherlands all mourned the dissolution of their colonial empires. Against this background of general decay and powerlessness, the Western European proj-

ect promised comfort and consolation, along with a vision of recovery and stability. This vision was, on the other hand, utterly defensive. It did not aim to regain world power, but was meant to strengthen Western Europe against the Soviet Empire. The pressures of the Cold War thus contributed heavily to bridging conflicting views and policies among EU member states.

It remains to be seen, of course, how the integrationist project will develop now that this pressure is gone. Although I do not want to downplay the many difficulties that are currently haunting the EU, it seems that during the last fifty years an institutional and mental environment has developed in which multilateral deliberation, decision-making and learning can continue to flourish. The fact that this environment is not restricted to Brussels Eurocrats but extends to multiple initiatives within civil society and a growing number of "multinational" citizens, contributes to its viability and vividness. The institutional framework in turn helps to sustain networks of transnational communication and makes them less vulnerable to political crises.

As historians, we have a great opportunity to look at European transnationalism, and, to start with, at Germany's European connectedness, both before and after the integration process was launched. We can retrieve a largely hidden history of interaction that involves personal and family relations as well as social movements and institutions. We can reconstruct communication channels and follow their directions, rhythms, and outcome. We can examine structures that either encouraged or complicated exchange. Within German history, this approach would redirect attention to border areas and their peculiar web of interaction. But it would also take a fresh look at broader connections (both of elites and non-elites) and assess their impact on social, economic, political and cultural developments. Within European history, the approach, if extended to other countries, would eventually provide an empirical basis for, or critique of, claims about European identities, common features, and shared experiences. It would allow us to detect connections as well as ruptures, asymmetrical as well as symmetrical communication.

In conclusion, we might ask ourselves to what extent such an approach embodies a tendency of "normalizing" German history. Is it perhaps too harmonious a way of looking at Germany's recent past? Does it polish that past to a degree that its dramatic peculiarities, its catastrophic edges, are no longer visible? What about the shadow lines (to use Thomas Nipperdey's expression) of European encounters and networks? Where do xenophobia, national hatred, and negative stereotyping fit in? Is not the persistence of anti-Semitism—genuinely fueled by allegations about Jewish internationalism—a powerful argument against any attempt to discover Europeanist currents and increasing cross-national traffic? And

what becomes of the Holocaust, as one of the crucial moments and defining features of Germany's twentieth-century history, if viewed with Europeanizing eyes?

These are urgent and tantalizing questions that do not lend themselves to quick and easy answers. Generally speaking, the Europeanization of German history has to be constantly and thoroughly aware of the Janus-faced ambiguity of transnationalism, which has never been congruent with harmonious relations of mutual respect and understanding. Transnationalism in the modern period has always existed within a framework of nationalism and strong nation-states that pose limits and restrictions. In many instances, like wars, the negative experience far outweighed the positive effects (without dismissing them altogether). Even tourism very often tends to strengthen rather than weaken national identities and nationalist urges of demarcation. On the other hand, national identities are not fixed and stable entities, and they coexist with other identities that transcend national boundaries (like religion, class, ethnicity, or gender). The politics of nation-states that have been shaping European history throughout the nineteenth and most of the twentieth century are stamped by foreign influences and comparison. Intellectual and political movements like racism and anti-Semitism likewise have a Europe-wide history; any intellectual history that would trace their channels of communication and entanglement would thus contribute greatly to our understanding of Europeanist networking. The extent to which anti-Semitism can really be seen as a reaction to internationalism should be reconsidered; at the very least, the absence of similar cricitism of the aristocracy as a highly international class integrating all parts of Europe raises some doubts as to the validity of this interpretation. The Holocaust, finally, is already widely perceived as a "European" experience. Although there can be no contestation of its German origins, its victims were mainly non-Germans, and the mass murder of European Jewry has left its mark on every European society. Moreover, German perpetrators relied heavily on the active and passive collaboration of non-Germans who either willingly or through force aided in the repression, deportation, and killing of their Jewish neighbors and compatriots. Europeanizing the Holocaust is thus not about relativizing German authorship, responsibility, and guilt, but about acknowledging European cooperation and participation. As such, it might ultimately form the cornerstone of a European memory focusing on the (unevenly) shared experience of utter destruction and inhumanity in Germany's and Europe's darkest hour.

By this point, it should have become clear that the Europeanizing perspective will do more than just produce an "embedded" type of national history. It will not, to be sure, replace national history with anything like European or even global history. It gives credit to the fact that

nation-states were, and still are, powerful historical players. They evolve and develop, however, in an international environment that is highly competitive, comparative, and relational. Moreover, the approach draws attention to the existence of non-state agents like professional groups, border regions, or social movements that have established their own transnational ties and networks beyond and below the scope of national politics. These networks connected various parts of Europe on cultural, economic, and social levels that need closer scrutiny. The extent to which they were affected by international crises and the degree to which they themselves were capable of influencing "high politics" are interesting and altogether unexplored questions. By asking these (and other) questions, the Europeanizing approach sets out to restore Germany's relational features and properties, its history of entanglement with other parts of Europe. Applied to other countries, it could eventually produce an integrative European history worthy of the name.

Notes

[1] For early modern examples see Martin Krieger, " 'Transnationalität' in vornationaler Zeit?" *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 30 (2004): 125–136.

[2] See the discussion in *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* since 2001, esp. Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmermann, "Vergleich, Transfer, Verflechtung," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 28 (2002): 607–636; Felicitas Becker, "Netzwerke vs. Gesamtgesellschaft: ein Gegensatz? Anregungen für Verflechtungsgeschichte," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 30 (2004): 314–324. Different approaches (comparison, entanglement, transfer) are discussed in Deborah Cohen and Maura O'Connor, eds., *Comparison and History: Europe in Cross-National Perspective* (London, 2004).

[3] Alexander Schmidt-Gernig, *Reisen in die Moderne: Der Amerika-Diskurs des deutschen Bürgertums vor dem Ersten Weltkrieg im europäischen Vergleich* (Berlin, 1997); Claus Offe, *Selbstbetrachtung aus der Ferne: Tocqueville, Weber und Adorno in den Vereinigten Staaten* (Frankfurt, 2004).

[4] As to the "convergence" of European societies, see Hartmut Kaelble, *A Social History of Western Europe, 1880–1980* (Dublin, 1989); Göran Therborn, *European Modernity and Beyond: The Trajectory of European Societies, 1945–2000* (London, 1995).

[5] For critical reviews of recent "European" historiography, see Heinz-Gerhard Haupt, "Auf der Suche nach der europäischen Geschichte," *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 42 (2002): 544–556; Stuart Woolf, "Europe and its Historians," *Contemporary European History* 12 (2003): 323–337.

[6] As to this claim, see Jürgen Osterhammel, "Europamodelle und imperiale Kontexte," *Journal of Modern European History* 2 (2004): 157–182.

[7] Sebastian Conrad, "Doppelte Marginalisierung," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 28 (2002): 145–169; Sebastian Conrad and Jürgen Osterhammel, eds., *Das Kaiserreich transnational: Deutschland in der Welt, 1871–1914* (Göttingen, 2004).

[8] For (sweeping) definitions of "international" and "transnational" see Jürgen Osterhammel, "Transnationale Gesellschaftsgeschichte: Erweiterung oder Alternative?" *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 27 (2001): 464–479, esp. 471–474.

[9] Nikolaus Buschmann and Dieter Langewiesche, eds., *Der Krieg in den Gründungsmythen europäischer Nationen und der USA* (Frankfurt, 2003); Jörg Echternkamp and Sven Oliver

Müller, *Die Politik der Nation: Deutscher Nationalismus in Krieg und Krisen 1760–1960* (Munich, 2002).

[10] Examples in Ute Frevert, *A Nation in Barracks: Modern Germany, Military Conscription and Civil Society* (Oxford, 2004), 30.

[11] My thanks to Daniel Brückenhaus for sharing this information with me.

[12] Klaus Latzel, *Deutsche Soldaten—nationalsozialistischer Krieg? Kriegserlebnis—Kriegserfahrung 1939–1945* (Paderborn, 1998).

[13] Steffen Bruendel, "Negativer Kulturtransfer: Die 'Ideen von 1914' als Aufhebung der 'Ideen von 1789,' " in *Kulturtransfer im 19. Jahrhundert*, ed. Marc Schalenberg (Berlin, 1998), 153–171; Steffen Bruendel, *Volksgemeinschaft oder Volksstaat: Die "Ideen von 1914" und die Neuordnung Deutschlands im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Berlin, 2003).

[14] Ute Frevert, *Eurovisionen: Ansichten guter Europäer im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Frankfurt, 2003), 112–114; Boris Schilmar, *Der Europadiskurs im deutschen Exil 1933–1945* (Munich, 2004).

[15] See Martin H. Geyer, "One Language for the World: The Metric System, International Coinage, Gold Standard, and the Rise of Internationalism, 1850–1900," in *The Mechanics of Internationalism*, ed. Martin H. Geyer and Johannes Paulmann (Oxford, 2001), 55–92.

[16] Actually, she did not mind this hotel-like atmosphere, but she complained about what she described as the innate taciturnity of scientists which made her task as hostess to keep conversation going rather difficult. Anna von Helmholtz, *Ein Lebensbild in Briefen*, vol. 1 (Berlin, 1929), 336.

[17] Hans Fürstenberg, *Erinnerungen* (Düsseldorf, 1968), 19.

[18] Friedrich Naumann, "Pariser Briefe," in Naumann, *Werke*, vol. 5 (Cologne, 1964), 378.

[19] Deborah Cohen, *The War Come Home: Disabled Veterans in Britain and Germany, 1914–1939* (Berkeley, 2001),16, 27, 59.

[20] Katiana Orluc, "Decline or Renaissance: The Transformation of European Consciousness after the First World War," in Bo Strath, ed., *Europe and the Other and Europe as the Other* (Brussels, 2000), 123–55; Guido Müller, "Jenseits des Nationalismus? 'Europa' als Konzept grenzübergreifender adlig-bürgerlicher Elitendiskurse zwischen den beiden Weltkriegen," in Heinz Reif, ed., *Adel und Bürgertum in Deutschland II* (Berlin, 2001), 235–68; Karl Holl, "Europapolitik im Vorfeld der deutschen Regierungspolitik: Zur Tätigkeit proeuropäischer Organisationen in der Weimarer Republik," *Historische Zeitschrift* 219 (1974): 33–94

[21] Frevert, *Eurovisionen*, 122–127.