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Strategies of Remembrance: The Public Negotiation of National Identity
in Germany and Canada

by

Michael Lane Bruner

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

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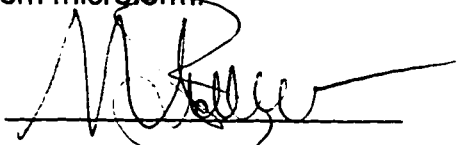
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Abstract

**Strategies of Remembrance: The Public Negotiation of National Identity
In Germany and Canada**

By Michael Lane Bruner

**Chairperson of the Supervisory Committee: Professor Barbara Warnick
Department of Speech Communication**

Nationalism is perhaps the most potent contemporary political force in the world, and yet the discursive means by which collective identity is created, maintained, and transformed are under-explored. This study comparatively analyzes rhetorical dimensions of national identity construction in Germany and Canada to better understand the discursive processes at work in the public negotiation of national identity. Through rhetorical analyses of dramatically rejected discourse, the study begins development of a theory designed to identify the narrative absences (strategies of remembrance) that accompany articulations of collective national identity. As ideology critique, this study's principal goal is to investigate relationships among nationalism, the politics of memory, and radical democracy. The rhetorical analyses of German and Canadian political discourse are accompanied by chapters dealing with the history of nationalism and nationalist ideology in both settings. Specifically, the West German pre-unification public speeches of Richard von Weizsäcker, Helmut Kohl, and Philipp Jenninger

are analyzed, and the public discourse of Québécois secessionists Jacques Parizeau and Lucien Bouchard related to the 1995 secessionist referendum is explored. Chapter one draws upon critical theorists and contemporary political philosophers to establish the theoretical basis for the investigation, and chapter two outlines a critical theory of national identity. My argument is that collective identities are negotiated between advocates and publics through a never ending, agonistic dynamic, and that the notion of "limit work" can be fruitfully applied to the analysis of dramatically rejected public discourse in order to isolate what I refer to as "strategies of remembrance." Chapters three through six argue that pre-unification West German national identity depended upon the strategic absence of discourse about the causes and responsibility for, and the lasting socio-political influences of National Socialism, while Québécois national identity during the 1995 secessionist referendum depended upon the strategic absence of discourse related to neo-racist and economic issues. The study concludes with a discussion of the ramifications of various types of strategic narrative absences on democratic processes.

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Chapter One

The Public Negotiation of National Identity

National identity has played a significant role in the modern world, oftentimes taking priority over other, more specific identities (Jusdanis; Poole; Toulmin, *Cosmopolis*), and yet investigations into the rhetorical processes related to national identity construction are surprisingly limited.¹ While some forms of nationalism have played a key role in the unequaled violence of the twentieth century, other forms of collective identity have minimized rather than exacerbated international and intranational conflicts. Unless the warning signs of dangerous strains of nationalism can be detected, or unless critics can learn to recognize the differences between various kinds of national identities, such violence will undoubtedly be repeated in the future. This study seeks to investigate the rhetorical dimensions of national identity in order to come to a better understanding of the process of national identity construction.

Theodore Adorno suggested that critics should become aware of the “few durable propaganda-tricks” used by despots who would attune their messages to take advantage of the “psychological disposition” in people that leads them to engage in state sponsored violence (Bitburg 124). Such a suggestion resonates with Kenneth Burke’s call for rhetorical critics to discover the formula for the National Socialist “medicine . . . that we may know, with greater accuracy,

exactly what to guard against, if we are to forestall the concocting of similar medicine in America” (Philosophy 329-330).

Nationalism is constructed through discursive resources available to rhetors seeking to build group identifications, and as is well known, such nationalist identifications have played a central role in the military horrors of the twentieth century. Modernization has led to an increased mobility that has undermined traditional forms of local cultural identification (Anderson; Toulmin, *Cosmopolis*), and yet the contemporary “world order” of various forms of nation states seems to have created different “spaces” for new forms of mass identification. Today, individuals find themselves thrown into an increasingly complex social world often characterized by harshly hierarchized disciplinary practices. Simultaneously, as individuals find themselves increasingly mobile and unrooted from traditional forms of community, the task of creating identities has increasingly fallen upon the state (Gellner, *Nations*, 36-38).

Edwin Black argues that “Few of us are born to grow into an identity that was incipiently structured before our births. That was, centuries ago, the way with men, but it certainly is not with us. The quest for identity is the modern pilgrimage” (*Persona* 113). One form of mass identification that has satisfied this “quest” is national identity, and the powerful influence of this form of identity has been, and continues to be, displayed in a wide variety of “patriotisms” around the globe. Ross Poole points out that, “National identity is conceived to be inescapable in that failure to answer its call is counted as a betrayal . . . [s]o it is

a matter of some importance to discern the social forces which have given rise to and sustained this form of identity” (16). Nonetheless, as noted above, the social construction of national identity is an underdeveloped area in rhetorical studies. Maurice Charland's research on the “Québécois” and Québec's 1980 national referendum is one of the few instances of research directly focusing on national identity appearing in major speech communication journals in the last two decades.

This lack of development in rhetorical studies related to national identity construction is rather surprising and lamentable given that national identity is constructed, at least in part, through rhetorical processes, and that currently there are global transformations in national and international arrangements that undoubtedly will have a profound impact on the configuration of the future world community. Gregory Jusdanis, for example, points out how “the spectacular explosion of cultural nationalisms today” is partially in response to the rapid disappearance of cultures as we move closer and closer to an interdependent global economy (50-51), and Stephen Toulmin argues that the global community is now moving into a “third phase of modernity” where nation-states stand in the way of an increasingly global economy (Cosmopolis 195). Additionally, philosophers such as Theodore Adorno, Henry James, Randolph Bourne, John Dewey, Michel Foucault, Jürgen Habermas, and Homi Bhaba have collectively been dealing with problems related to nationalism for over a century.²

The discursive and social construction of identities has certainly not gone unexplored in recent years (Foucault, *Archaeology*; Shotter and Gergen; Taylor, *Sources*; Butler), and the phenomenon of national identity in particular has been addressed in recent years by prominent historians (Gellner, *Nations*; Anderson), but none of these studies have focused specifically on the rhetorical dimensions of national identity construction. This study, then, begins by arguing that the discursive construction of collective identities should be a central concern for rhetoricians (McGee and Martin; McKerrow, *Critical Turn*), but that actual studies related to the construction of these broad and abstract identities are sorely lacking within the field of rhetorical studies. If some forms of nationalism (and certain types of narratives) foster the healthy maintenance of culture and the recognition of certain rights and duties in virtue of shared membership in a cultural community (Balibar and Wallerstein; Laclau and Mouffe), while other forms foster and encourage unhealthy patterns of identification based on xenophobic arguments and the suppression of important political realities through constrictions on the public sphere (Anderson; Hedetoft), it would clearly be a significant theoretical advance if rhetorical critics could determine the nature of publics and their relative potential to manifest the characteristics of either form.

While there is a paucity of research and theorizing related to national identity construction in rhetorical studies, there is a considerable body of research outside of the field of speech communication that has much to offer

rhetoricians who are interested in exploring national identities and the ways in which they exemplify modern collective identities. By “collective identities” I mean identities that are more general than those tied to the acquisition of specific roles and skills. “Being” a computer programmer is a more specific identity than “being” a mother, while “being” a mother is more specific than “being” female. Collective identities are those that constitute the most abstract levels of identification, such as gender, race, ethnicity, class, and national identities. While rhetoricians have theoretically explored various aspects of “publics” (Black, Persona; Bormann; McGee, People; McGee and Martin; Browne), and “constraints” (Bitzer; Jamieson and Campbell; Blair and Cooper), there have been no comparative studies by rhetoricians of the ways in which national identity is discursively constructed, and while rhetoricians have certainly analyzed speeches indirectly related to issues of patriotism and state allegiance, Charland’s studies are the only ones to appear in major speech communication journals directly related to the construction of national identity per se.

Furthermore, Charland’s work was limited to an analysis of the ways in which one principal text attempted to “constitute” a Québécois public. In this study, I will investigate a variety of discourses (e.g. public addresses, newspaper accounts, television broadcasts) concerned with the construction of national identity in both pre-unification West Germany and 1995 secessionist Québec to see what kind of “medicines” are being concocted by public leaders. In doing so, I hope to extend notions of “public” and “constraint” in ways that allow rhetorical

critics to explore fruitfully the rhetorical dimensions of national identity construction.

In order more fully to explicate the potential contribution of this study, as well as to outline the presuppositions that frame it, the following section briefly describes contemporary rhetorical perspectives that can be related to the construction of national identities, and is followed by an introduction to the general theoretical framework guiding this study. My argument is that collective identities are negotiated between advocates and publics through a never ending, agonistic dynamic, and that the notion of "limit work" can be fruitfully applied to the analysis of dramatically rejected public discourse in order to isolate what I refer to as the "strategies of remembrance." These strategies, or "codes of the unsayable," maintain the fictional centers of various manifestations of collective national identities, and through the identification of these strategies rhetorical critics can begin working toward the development of a conceptual framework for "diagnosing" socially constructed publics.

Rhetorical Theories of Identity Construction

In recent rhetorical studies, Edwin Black (*Persona*) and Michael McGee (*People*) have specifically focused on the ways in which discourse works to construct abstract identities, and Maurice Charland has been concerned specifically with national identity. There has also been a long tradition in the field

of speech communication concerning the ways in which speakers, audiences and situations impose a variety of constraints on advocates.³ Arguably, these two extended scholarly conversations variously related to publics and constraints represent the most salient contributions within the field of rhetorical studies to the study of collective identity construction in general, and national identity construction in particular.⁴ While this study will extend these concepts in rather dramatic fashion, a brief introduction to the notions of publics and constraints provides a useful starting point for the following investigations.

One of the earliest essays in speech communication concerning the role of discourse in the construction of identity is Edwin Black's "The Second Persona." In that essay, Black's primary concern is to suggest a possible relationship between "dimensions of discourse" and "a corresponding form of character" (110). Black's essay is relevant to this study because it is one of the earliest discussions in American rhetorical studies to explicate the ways in which discourses imply character, and the theoretical perspective guiding this study suggests that public discourses related to national identity have implications for "national character." Building upon Wayne Booth's narrative theory, in particular Booth's distinction between real authors of texts and implied authors embedded within texts, Black argued "that there is a second persona also implied by a discourse, and that persona is its implied auditor" (111). Black also argued that when critics focused on "discourse alone," implied auditors could be linked to an ideology, and that "the most likely evidence" of this implied auditor/ideology

relationship could be found by focusing on “stylistic” features within texts (112). Black’s perspective sheds light on the ways in which “forms of character” are implied by various articulations of national identity. In this study I assume that some national identities reveal a form of character more conducive to Toulmin’s “third wave of modernity” whereas others are nostalgic for the older, more violent forms of national identity exemplified in second wave modernity.⁵

Michael C. McGee extends Black’s work concerning the way in which discourse promotes ideology by persuasively arguing that “the nation,” or “the People,” is socially constructed (People). Following Ernest Bormann’s work on “fantasy themes,” McGee argues that “the People” may be a “strictly linguistic phenomenon introduced into public argument as a means of ‘legitimizing’ a collective fantasy” (239). According to McGee, rhetors transform “old longings” into political myths that actualize an audience’s predisposition to act (241). McGee outlines four stages for such transformations. In the first stage, there always exists a pool of cultural resources (aphorisms, maxims, commonplaces, historical episodes) available to rhetors for the creation of public identities.⁶ The potential “abuse” of these “resources” is, in effect, what concerns Theodore Adorno when he discusses the potential misuse of history for political ends (Bitburg). In the second stage of the social construction of a “people,” according to McGee, “advocates organize dissociated ideological commitments into incipient political myths . . .” (243). In other words, the second stage occurs when rhetors actually create identities (e.g. for political purposes) out of the

available pool of cultural resources. In the third stage, individuals begin to respond to the identities offered up by the advocate, and in the fourth and final stage there is a “rhetoric of decay,” when the political exigence passes and the ideological commitments are once again dissociated.

Other theorists have pointed out that national audiences are “interpellated” in and through public discourse and that rhetoric is “constitutive” of national identity (Althusser; Charland; Hall). The term “interpellation” basically refers to the way in which discourse “hails” subjects. Perhaps the clearest example of interpellation is simply when someone calls our name, we recognize our name, and we respond. In just such a way, public leaders attempt to “call the name” of citizens in a way that they can “identify” with. Subjects “recognize themselves” in subject positions offered by advocates. In this study, I assume that public discourses “interpellate” subjects by offering subject positions, but I also hold that “interpellation” is a process that occurs between subjects who negotiate these offerings.

Louis Althusser argued that identity and ideology are sustained through a variety of “ideological state apparatuses” (e.g. churches, schools, factories, and armies) that supply the pool of available subject positions from which individuals may choose. Such a perspective resonates with John Shotter’s observation that we are all embedded within a dominant social order which we must “continually reproduce in all of the mundane activities we perform from our place, ‘position’ or status within it . . .” (142). But whereas Althusser’s notion of the ways in which

subject positions are “supplied” by ideological state apparatuses, in this study, interpellation will primarily be considered as a process whereby the subject position of national identity is negotiated between “official” advocates and “publics.” In other words, in this study I will be considering not only the ways in which public leaders “hail” audiences, but also the ways in which other public leaders (e.g. parliamentarians, editors) respond to those articulations.

As Stuart Hall indicates, “there is no experience outside of the categories of representation and ideology” (105) and the construction of these categories is a function of discourse. According to Hall, “Ideologies are the frameworks of thinking and calculation about the world -- the “ideas” which people use to figure out how the social world works, what their place is in it and what they ought to do” (99). Hall also argues that:

[A] particular ideological chain [of discourse] becomes a site of struggle, not only when people try to displace, rupture, or contest it by supplanting it with some wholly new alternative set of terms, but also when they interrupt the ideological field and try to transform its meaning by changing or re-articulating its associations, for example, from the negative to the positive (112).

Finally, Hall states that ideology also “set[s] limits to the degree to which a society-in-dominance can easily, smoothly and functionally reproduce itself” (113). Referring to this process as the “class struggle in language,” Hall indicates how there is a constant struggle over the ways in which collective

identities are to be understood. These “struggles” would be found in McGee’s second and third stages of the social construction of “the people,” where identities are offered by advocates and then responded to by individuals within the addressed publics.

Maurice Charland is one rhetorical critic who has focused specifically on national identity, and has argued that discourse “textualizes audiences” through the creation of “transhistorical and transindividual subject positions” (147). Drawing primarily upon the work of Kenneth Burke, Louis Althusser, and Michael McGee, Charland focuses on how supporters of Québec’s quest for political sovereignty in 1980 “addressed and attempted to call into being a *peuple québécois* that would legitimate the constitution of a sovereign Québec state” (134). Charland’s work is concerned with the ways in which “identification occurs through a series of ideological effects arising from the narrative structure of constitutive rhetoric” (147).

Charland’s work on the Québécois is based on the analysis of narratives constructed by advocates supporting Québec nationalism and the ways in which a key government document issued by the Québécois separatists attempted to “hail” Québec citizens. That is, Charland analyzes the kinds of subject positions offered by “official” texts rather than the negotiation of subject positions between official and unofficial texts, or public addresses by state leaders and public reactions to those addresses. Following Burke’s notion of identification (*Rhetoric of Motives* 19-27), Charland argues that texts offer subject positions that

individuals are invited to take on, a process which he refers to as “constitutive rhetoric.” For Charland, the term “constitutive rhetoric” refers to the way in which narrative discourse constructs “coherent unified subjects out of temporally and spatially separate events” (139). More importantly for this study, Charland also points out that “not all constitutive rhetorics succeed” (141). Simply stated, Charland’s work focuses primarily on the ways in which texts related to Québec’s possible secession offered subject positions, whereas this study is concerned with the reasons why certain constitutive rhetorics fail. Indeed, while Black’s (Persona), McGee’s (People), and Charland’s work focuses primarily on the ways in which texts offer subject positions, interpellate subjects, and invite them to accept certain ideological commitments, and Louis Althusser’s work seems to hold that individuals are “cultural dupes” who are controlled by ideological state apparatuses, this study argues that collective identities are negotiated between advocates and publics through a never ending dynamic and agonistic relationship. Therefore, this study could be said to focus both on McGee’s second and third stages of the social construction of collective identities (where identities are offered and publics respond to those offerings).

The potential contribution of this study, then, is to begin working towards the outline of a rhetorical practice that would provide critics with a means for “diagnosing” publics in part through the analysis of the rhetorical processes that create, sustain, and/or transform them. Furthermore, this study will extend theoretical perspectives on the social construction of “publics” and Charland’s

work on “constitutive rhetoric” by gathering together the multiple insights on identity construction from fields outside of rhetorical studies, combining them with insights in rhetorical studies concerning “publics,” and exploring the ways in which national identities are negotiated between public discourses.

To summarize, I maintain that national identity is a dominant collective identity that has the potential to override lower order identities and serves as a powerful motive, or predisposition, for action. More importantly, these collective identities are negotiated in an ongoing agonistic relationship between advocates and publics. By comparing West German and Québec national identity negotiation, I hope to show how various articulations of national identity are based on narrative characterizations centered around significant absences, and how comparing the kinds of absences around which collective national identities revolve provides a way of diagnosing constructed publics. Additionally, I argue that by analyzing both speeches that attempt to articulate national identities and the responses to them, the agonistic processes whereby national identities are negotiated can be fruitfully explored. Black’s notion of an implied auditor, McGee’s notion of the second and third stages of the social construction of collective identities, and Charland’s notion of constitutive rhetoric, provide a useful framework for beginning to think about collective identity construction. I seek to extend such theorizing by showing how collective identities are maintained by narrative fictions, fictions held together by “codes of the unsayable,” and by showing how these “codes” maintaining national identities

are based on variously egregious absences. Ultimately, the analysis is intended to contribute to the rhetorical study of collective identity construction.

Constraints, Limits, and Strategies of Remembrance

American rhetorical studies focusing on the notion of “constraint” have frequently been limited by conceptual frameworks assuming that situational constraints could be overcome by the artful and intentional rhetor. Such frameworks, I maintain, are usefully complemented by poststructural theories of the subject. In particular, my argument is that certain aspects of Foucault’s theories related to subject construction, Jon Simons’s notion of “limit work,” and poststructural understandings of the notions of “transgression” and “limit” transform the speech communication literature on constraints. Basically, I maintain that state leaders articulate visions of what it means to be a citizen of the state or a member of a national community through narratives based upon what I refer to as codes of the unsayable, or strategies of remembrance. These narrative strategies place constraints on public articulations of national identity, and public speakers are punished whenever they transgress these strategies. Furthermore, I maintain that dramatic negative reactions to articulated national identities are sites for identifying the dominant strategies of remembrance at work within any particular state.

The notion of “constraint” is intimately related to Foucault’s understanding of the process of subjectivation, or the process by which individuals become subjects. Subjects are constrained according to the kinds of narrative characterizations with which they identify, or by the institutional subject positions they find themselves obligated to fulfill. In addition, different kinds of identities (e.g. national identities) are based upon different kinds of absences that in turn could have various effects on people’s attitudes about themselves and others.⁷ That is, different narrative characterizations of national identity could result in the creation of different kinds of motives for action in the world. Raymie McKerrow (Critical Turn) clearly summarizes the primary distinctions between the “traditional” notion of the subject and Foucault’s:

Foucault’s sense of the subject . . . is antithetical to the traditional conception of persuasion as grounded in the acts of rhetors. The study of public address assumes autonomous subjects acting on scenes – agents capable of discerning the requirements of a rhetorical situation and responding in a fitting or appropriate manner. [For] Foucault . . . the subject emerges as an effect Thoroughly historicized, the subject that acts does so as a being already interpellated within a set of social practices (52).⁸

Even more significantly, McKerrow points out that the subject “is not reducible to symbolic constructs . . . [because] the subject’s own telos also participates in the act of self-constitution” (60), indicating one reason why identity should be

conceptualized as a negotiation. Shotter also discusses the ways in which “shared ways of making sense” both enable and constrain “accountable action” (142). Both McKerrow’s and Shotter’s positions resonate with Foucault’s perspective concerning the process of subjectification, for Foucault also understands the construction of subjectivity to be an ongoing agonistic relationship between the limits imposed on subjects and the transgression of limits by the subjected. In fact, according to Foucault, “It is the agonism of permanent resistance that guarantees freedom” (Subject and Power, 222-3).

The notion of constraint, then, in this study, refers to the limits imposed upon individuals by the ways in which those subjects are hegemonically articulated (Laclau and Mouffe). Furthermore, these constraints are assumed to be generally inaccessible to the constrained (Shotter 141-2). Ultimately, though, I argue that the limits of subjectivity, and in the case of this study the limits of national identity, are constantly being negotiated as long as publics are free to respond to “official” interpellations and as long as a politically motivated narrative absences are available for reflexive critique. For the purposes of my investigation, limits (constraints) are narratives maintained by codes of the unsayable, or strategies of remembrance, that seek to maintain fictional monocultural identities, whereas transgressions are narrative acts that violate those strategies/codes. Dramatically rejected public discourse related to national identity is a site of such transgressive narrative acts, and by analyzing the

reasons for a discourse's dramatic rejection I hope to reveal the outlines of dominant strategies.

More "traditional" notions of constraint have been a part of rhetorical theory and criticism for some time. For example, as early as 1925 Herbert Wichelns noted that "rhetorical discourse is, in a sense, perpetually in bondage to the occasion and an audience" (28). Such early conceptions of the terms "audience" and "occasion" were understandably general, with "audience" defined as those individuals present at an event and "occasion" defined according to the generally accepted purpose for the speech event. In 1968, Lloyd Bitzer developed further the notion of occasion when he argued that "the situation [is] so controlling . . . that we should consider it the very ground of rhetorical activity" (5). According to Bitzer, the "rhetorical situation" is comprised of three constituent elements: an exigence (or combination of exigences), an audience "to be constrained in decision and action [by the rhetor], and the constraints which influence the rhetor and can be brought to bear upon the audience" (6).

In many respects Bitzer's article was the first in American rhetorical studies to seriously attempt explicating the various constraints that come to bear on speakers and audiences, but the notion of constraint, introduced by Bitzer as a technical term for analyzing "rhetorical situations," stands in stark contrast to the critical theories of Foucault and the poststructural notions of transgression and limit. Bitzer argued that:

[E]very rhetorical situation contains a set of constraints made up of persons, events, objects, and relations which are parts of the situation because they have the power to constrain decisions and action needed to modify the exigence. Standard sources of constraint include beliefs, attitudes, documents, facts, traditions, images, interests, motives, and the like; and when the orator enters the situation, his discourse not only harnesses constraints given by the situation, but provides additional important constraints -- for example his personal character, his logical proofs, and his style (8).

In addition, Bitzer argues that there are two classes of constraints: those managed by the rhetor and his method, and those within the situation itself. Bitzer, following Aristotle, labels the first class "artistic proofs" and the second "inartistic proofs" (8).

For the purposes of this study, Bitzer's conceptualization of constraints is inadequate. For example, the complex of "persons, events, objects, and relations" remains conceptually vague.⁹ I seek to concretize these concepts through the identification of strategies of remembrance. Furthermore, I am not interested in "artistic proofs" in Bitzer's sense. That is, I am not as concerned with the ways in which rhetors instrumentally make use of cultural resources in order to persuade so much as the ways in which rhetors and audiences participate in the discursive formation of national identity and yet are constrained by codes of the unsayable that may or may not be available for reflexive

analysis. More specifically, I am interested in constraints as strategic absences undergirding the negotiation of collective national identity because of their potential impact on the quality of the public sphere.

Less than a decade after the appearance of Bitzer's article, Kathleen Jamieson and Karlyn Kohrs Campbell further developed the concept of "rhetorical situation" by exploring Bitzer's pronouncement "that tradition itself tends to function as a constraint upon any new response to the form" (Bitzer 8). A conference was held at the University of Kansas on "'Significant Form' in Rhetorical Criticism" where the call for papers stated: "The phrase 'significant form' is intended to refer to recurring patterns in discourse or action including, among others, the repeated use of images, metaphors, arguments, structural arrangements, configurations of language or a combination of such elements into what critics have termed 'genres' or 'rhetorics'" (Jamieson and Campbell 3). By the end of the 1970s, rhetorical critics were engaged in various forms of "genre criticism" that included neo-Aristotelian and dramatistic methods. The fundamental limitations, though, in many of these studies continued to be the persistent focus on the rhetor instrumentally, the conscious adaptation to the situation, and the vagueness of the notion of "genre."

More recently in the field of speech communication, rhetorical theorists have continued to develop and problematize notions related to constraint that move beyond "rationality" and instrumentality, and the notion of "genre" has been helpfully problematized by conceptualizations of "discursive formations" and

“systems of governmentality.” Perhaps the most dramatic evidence of the shift away from the management of constraint is the recent incorporation of Foucault’s (Archaeology) “archaeology” by theorists such as Carole Blair and Martha Cooper.¹⁰ Most basically, Foucault’s archaeology is a conceptual framework for the identification of discursive forces that determine objects of truth, subject positions within games of truth, and strategies and concepts used by subjects within and between discursive formations or systems of governmentality (institutional disciplinary practices). Blair and Cooper maintain that it is through the identification of constraining forces that rhetorical critics are able to make sense of discursive choices. Significantly, Blair and Cooper argue that Foucault’s “archaeology,” as a theory of constraint, extends notions of situation and genre in order to make those concepts more amenable to non-subject-centered modes of investigation, and that the conceptual scheme outlined in Foucault’s Archaeology of Knowledge serves as a sophisticated vocabulary for focusing on aspects of speech events not revealed by other forms of genre criticism.¹¹

This study, then, rethinks the traditional notions of genre and constraint in the field of speech communication by building on the terminology found in Foucault’s archaeological theory and assumes that the human subject is decentered by discursive forces. For methodological starting points, this study seeks to continue the process of conceptualizing the notions of “public” and “constraint” by leaning heavily on the poststructural notions of transgression and

limit, and on Jon Simons's explication of Foucault's "ethics of resistance" (Simons 81-94). According to Foucault, the objective of his work was "to create a history of the different modes by which, in our culture, human beings are made subjects" (Dreyfus and Rabinow 208). In what follows, I hope to reveal how humans are made subjects to states through articulations of national identity that are based upon variously egregious narrative absences, and I hope to accomplish this in a way that sidesteps many of the conceptual problems associated with intentionalist rhetorical theories of publics and constraints.¹²

Foucault's theories were designed to analyze the process of subjectification, or how subjects are constituted through discourse, just as this study seeks to explore the ways in which public leaders articulate various characterizations of what it means to "belong" to a nation in order to determine the variously egregious absences that accompany those articulations. Basically, Foucault argued, discourse creates, sustains, and transforms identities, and these identities both empower and constrain. That is, identities impose limits on behavior in ways that enhance human capacities and at the same time constrain choice. Problems occur when limits become unavailable for reflective analysis, and this is where Foucault's notion of an "ethics of permanent resistance" comes into play. Simons summarizes this "ethic" well when he states that "an ethic of permanent resistance . . . [is a] constant activism . . . to prevent enabling limits from congealing into constraining limitations and to generate new limits that constitute selves and polities" (22). I refer to this ethic as limit work (Bruner,

Toward; Producing), and the basic notion behind this ethic is that disciplinary constraints are illegitimate unless they are available for reflexive critique on the part of the constrained. Again, the following analyses are an attempt to perform such an ethic by isolating dominant nationalist narratives based on significant absences, and then seeking to expose those absences in order to make them available for reflexive critique.

Strategies of Remembrance and the Analysis of Dramatically Rejected Speech

Rhetorical discourses, according to a framework informed by an ethic of resistance, are assumed to be in a particular relationship with the “conditions of possibility” (that is, there are limits which constitute the boundaries of what will be considered “truth” within any particular discursive formation). As Jon Simons points out, “Limitations are . . . conditions of possibility” (3).¹³ Basically, a discursive formation can be identified by analyzing discourse in order to discover what is considered to be “true” about an “object of truth,” who is authorized to speak the “truth,” and what concepts and strategies are relevant within that discursive formation, or game of truth (Foucault, *Archaeology*, 31-39). A hegemonic articulation of a national identity constitutes a kind of discursive formation: the object of truth is the dominant narrative characterization of national identity, the concepts and strategies that maintain that dominant narrative are the strategies of remembrance, and those who fail to conform to the

narrative strategy are not “authorized” to “speak the truth” about the national identity.¹⁴ Furthermore, I assume in this study that discourse only “makes sense” in relation to these discursive formations, and that there is a permanent and thoroughgoing relationship among rhetoric, knowledge, power, and ethics.¹⁵ Finally, the audience and speaker are assumed to be largely unaware of the limits which constitute the conditions of possibility, and “strategies” of remembrance are not necessarily assumed to be intentional strategies (although they may be intentionally deployed by some individuals).

In part, I seek to analyze both the ways in which discourse invites audiences to accept “national” subject positions, and the ways in which audiences respond to these interpellations. Another aim of this study is to focus on how these articulated subject positions are based upon variously egregious absences. In order to accomplish these tasks, I will analyze speeches related to national identity that have been dramatically rejected. By “dramatically rejected” I do not mean to imply that there was something intrinsically wrong with the speeches themselves. Rather, I argue that the speeches were rejected because the audiences to whom they were addressed rejected the national identities that were articulated in the speeches. While the tendency in rhetorical criticism has often been to focus on “touchstone” speeches, or “masterpieces,” this study takes the perspective that whenever public speech leads to dramatic consequences, positive or negative, rhetorical scholars should be drawn to analyze the reasons for its particular influence.

Two speeches that exemplify the kind of “dramatic failure” that generated enough responsive discourse to allow for an extended analysis and yet are sufficiently different to allow for a genuinely comparative analysis are Philipp Jenninger’s address to the German Bundestag on November 10, 1988 on the fiftieth “anniversary” of the pogroms against the Jews known as the *Reichskristallnacht* and Jacques Parizeau’s speech to the “Québécois” people on October 30, 1995 upon the defeat of the referendum on Québec’s possible secession from Canada. These speeches, primarily dealing directly with issues related to national identity, may be viewed as dramatic failures because they were followed by the forced resignations of Jenninger and Parizeau, both principle government statesmen for their respective states. Additionally, these two speeches generated a tremendous number of responses from their respective audiences, so they provide useful examples of the public negotiation of national identity. Also, while the speeches were similarly dramatically rejected, they differ significantly in that West German national identity was motivated by the desire for reunification with East Germany, while Québec national identity was motivated by the desire for secession and independence from the Canadian federation. I believe that a close analysis of these two speeches and reactions to them will provide a useful starting point for the development of a theory of national identity construction based on the notion of strategies of remembrance. They are useful, I argue, because they constitute

examples of dramatically rejected speech in two rather different settings:

Jenninger's address was part of a larger set of discourses designed to justify the reunification of West Germany and East Germany, while Parizeau's address was part of a larger set of discourses designed to justify secession from the Canadian federation.

As Charland notes, "Subjects within narratives are not free, they are positioned and so constrained" (140). As alluded to earlier, when individuals "accept" identities or find themselves already identified, such identifications both enable and constrain their field of action. Therefore, the theoretical perspective of this study assumes that political action requires identification, and that identities both enable and constrain. I hope that an extensive analysis of the interpellations (e.g. preferred subject positions) offered both in the speeches and the responses, along with an exploration of the history of nationalism in both countries, will indicate the ways in which collective national identity is negotiated in enabling and constraining ways.

The principal goal of this comparative study is to develop a rhetorical theory that can determine how collective identities, in this case national identities, are negotiated. More specifically, building upon McGee's (People) theory of the construction of publics, the following analyses explore how national identities are constructed out of a pool of available cultural resources that are deployed in a way that depends upon the forced absence of variously important historical facts. The study will also investigate how the notion of constraint (and

genre) can be rethought by building upon Foucauldian archaeology and the notion of limit work, or the limit attitude. In particular, I hope that a detailed analysis of two speeches and responses to speeches, framed by the historical context of national ideology in the respective case studies, will reveal the “object of truth” known as national identity, the strategies of remembrance that constrain articulations used for maintaining the illusion of homogenous “national” identity, and the strategies that are available to those negotiating and/or contesting these dominant articulations.

Such analyses may begin to provide a critical theoretical framework with which rhetorical critics can diagnose publics. Once again, I assume that some forms of national identity are more productive than others, and that some national identities constrain more than they enable,¹⁶ and such assumptions lead to a variety of specific research questions. First, can the discursive formation of national identity be identified through the analysis of dramatically rejected speeches and public responses to those speeches? Second, are national identities indeed narrative characterizations maintained by variously egregious absences, or strategies of remembrance? Finally, do national identities clearly reveal second wave and third wave features, or can the identification of codes of the unsayable based on variously egregious absences provide the critical means for diagnosing publics?

The conceptual framework for this study will be based on a selective use and creative adaptation of a wide variety of contemporary rhetorical and

poststructural literary and political theories, and such a framework requires that special attention be paid to particular features of the discourse related to national identity. Clearly, the choice of primary texts (e.g. the speeches themselves) has been based on how directly they deal with matters related to national identity and because of their dramatically rejected status. Furthermore, the discourse in newspaper articles and national news broadcasts directly responding to the speeches will be analyzed until patterns of response emerge. Together, I maintain, the speeches and responses reflect the public negotiation of the respective collective national identities.

This study will proceed by first providing a history of nationalism in both Germany and Québec, providing a context for the analysis of more contemporary public discourse related to national identity. Next, I will analyze the speeches that were dramatically rejected, then analyze other discursive events that surrounded or were responses to the rejected discourse. Finally, I will compare the dramatically rejected speeches with relatively “successful” speeches, or those that were “dramatically” accepted, for I assume that successful speeches will reveal national identities that resonate with publics, and that certain potentially offensive features (those features repressed by codes of the unsayable) will be absent. Through this extended process I expect that a general outline of the limits (or the conditions of possibility) of national identity will emerge, an outline that will serve to illuminate the process of collective identity construction in general. My ultimate argument is that such narrative

characterizations of national identity occur in hundreds of forms throughout the globe. By combining the insights of contemporary rhetorical theorists and social philosophers, critics can begin to build a conceptual framework that will allow for the mapping of these various forms of national identity in such a way as to determine their variously productive and destructive potentials. What is important to keep in mind, though, is that what resonates and what offends publics is not assumed to be equivalent to “good” and “bad” nationalism. Rather, I assume that some nationalisms reveal sociopsychopathological tendencies, while others do not.¹⁷

Toward a Rhetorical Theory of National Identity Construction

Michael Stürmer, in an article published in the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, argues that “in a land without history anything is possible . . . [and] in a land without history, the future is controlled by those who determine the content of memory, who coin concepts and interpret the past” (History 16). I would add that whenever rhetorical critics are unable to determine which identities are being taken on by publics, it is difficult, if not impossible, to gauge the likely consequences of those identities. By not only determining the kinds of interpellations offered by the narratives provided by both Jenninger and Parizeau's speeches, but also through the careful analysis of reactions to those

speeches, the outline of accepted and rejected national identities should emerge.

Undoubtedly, there are limitations involved in this study as well, limitations that enable the analysis yet constrain the scope of the inquiry. For example, only engaging in a comparative analysis of two case studies severely limits the generalizability of any eventual claims. Furthermore, there are theoretical assumptions that also limit the study in ways that allow for generalizations to be made, yet undoubtedly repress significant absences in their own inevitable way. True to the spirit of an ethics of resistance, I would like to conclude with a brief discussion of some of these limits. First, it is clear that there are various levels of identification, and that (post)modern subjects have conflicting, composite identities. For this reason, it is difficult to determine the degree to which national (or gendered, or racial, or class) identity overrides lower-order (e.g. more concrete) identities. Therefore, this study will not seek to explain how national identity works to create action so much as describe how it is negotiated discursively based upon specific strategies of remembrance.

Second, the range of responses to the speeches will be limited to newspaper and television responses, along with any interviews that might be obtained over the course of the research. It would be impossible to obtain or retrieve all of the responses. While other discursive fragments from other institutional and private sites could likely be of use, my analysis focuses on the negotiation of national identity and therefore will focus on public discourse

articulating national identity and more or less direct responses to those articulations. Ideally, the critic would be able to interview all of the audience members, obtain every discursive reaction to the major discursive event under consideration, but when speeches are addressed to mass audiences this is, of course, an impossibility. Therefore the responses will be limited to those that were also addressed to large audiences, such as national newspapers and national news broadcasts, and responses from focus groups comprised of citizens of the states being analyzed. Ultimately, the patterns of responses and their relationship to the speeches themselves will necessarily represent only a sample of the potential field of responses, since it seems fairly certain that collective identities are also negotiated interpersonally and intrapersonally.

Third, another limit to this study concerns the fact that I have not been able to engage in extensive fieldwork in the states under consideration. In order to avoid the possible charge of being a "cultural tourist," I have sought feedback from citizens of both Germany and Québec. I have sought feedback both on the major addresses under consideration, as well as information on their own understandings of the political climate in their respective states. With these three caveats in mind, I feel confident that the following explorations into the negotiation of national identity specifically, and collective identities generally, is a valuable contribution to contemporary rhetorical theory.

Jon Simons begins his book with a statement that I feel best represents the continuing need for the analysis of processes of subjectification, especially the analysis of collective identities:

Firstly, in spite of all the dramatic shifts, very little has changed. We are still tied to the identities around which ethnic, national and racial conflicts are fought. The same forms of power that bind us to these identities, through a process Foucault refers to as *assujettissement* or subjectification, still operate. Secondly, just as we are bound by the same types of identity, we are also bound in our political thinking to the philosophies developed before the First World War, despite their failure to prevent the excesses of politics pursued around issues of identity (1).

If rhetorical theory can contribute to an identification of the politically significant absences that accompany hegemonic articulations of national identity, and in turn perhaps reveal some of the "excesses of politics pursued around issues of identity," then such a study must be of some practical use. If senses of "national belonging" are now unreflexively constrained by unrecognized strategies, then surely it is one of the more important tasks of communication scholars to understand the varieties of those strategies of their likely consequences.

Notes to Chapter One

¹ This is not to suggest that investigations into national identity and nationalism are rare. The opposite is in fact the case. Rather, comparative studies of the rhetorical dimensions of the social construction of imagined national identities are rare. In major speech communication journals, for example, rhetorical studies related to national identity are all but absent.

² A sample of important philosophical texts dealing with nationalism would include: T.W. Adorno. Negative Dialectics; Michel Foucault. Power/Knowledge. Ed. Colin Gordon. New York: Pantheon, 1980; John Dewey. "Freedom and Culture." In The Later Works. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1986; Henry James. The American Scene. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1969; Randolph Bourne. The Radical Will. New York: Urizen Books, 1977; and Jurgen Habermas. The New Conservatism. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988. In rhetorical studies, while Charland is alone in specifically addressing nationalism as a rhetorical phenomenon, others have engaged in theorizing about the nature of publics (McGee, People; McGee and Martin; McKerrow, Argument; Critical Turn).

³ Concerns about the role of the audience and situation are perennial in the field: Wichelns; Black, Persona; Bitzer; Jamieson and Campbell; Fisher, Genre; Miller.

⁴ There is another, more recent set of studies in the speech communication field that studies the ways in which monuments (and various “cultural performances”) attempt to construct public memory. For example: Katriel; Blair, Jeppeson, and Pucci; Dionisopoulos and Goldzwig. These studies, though, do not deal directly with the public negotiation of national identity, so much as the ideological implications of monument, museums, and commemorative events.

⁵ For an extended discussion of the differences between “second wave” and “third wave” modernity, see Toulmin, *Cosmopolis*, especially pp. 206-209. A revealing quotation, exemplifying the primary differences between the two approaches to nationalism appears on page 194: “In the social realm, the Newtonian [second wave] view called for stable institutions, unambiguous class structure, centralized power, and defense of the state’s sovereign autonomy from external interference. [But] today, once we begin to think in ecological [third wave] terms, we shall soon learn that every niche [e.g. nation] or habitat is one if its own kind, and that its demands call for a careful eye to its particular, local, and timely circumstances. The Newtonian view encouraged hierarchy and rigidity, standardization and uniformity: an ecological perspective emphasizes, rather, differentiation and diversity, equity and adaptability.”

⁶ McGee’s notion can be usefully compared with Anthony Smith’s (Ethnic) discussion of “ethnie.” Smith’s point also focuses on how nation-builders can use

historical episodes and shared cultural traits (ethnie) as inventional resources for the fabrication of national identity.

⁷ National identities are articulated through narratives that are necessarily shot through with absences (White). Strategies of remembrance are narrative strategies that cohere only through codes of the unsayable, or strategic narrative absences. My point here is simply that different kinds of absences may result in different kinds of motives.

⁸ For an interesting discussion of how the distribution of meanings creates an ideational economy, just as the distribution of objects creates a material economy, see Jean Baudrillard's "The System of Objects," in Jean Baudrillard: Selected Writings. Ed. Mark Poster. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1988. 10-28.

⁹ The terms are fruitfully complemented by the Foucauldian notion of "discursive formation" (focusing on the ways in which objects of truth, subject positions, concepts and strategies are discursively regulated). It is not, then, that Bitzer was incorrect in his assessment of "situational" constraints, but that his notion of constraints remained embedded within an intentionalist framework and was not conceptualized in sufficient detail.

¹⁰ While many rhetorical theorists and critics have incorporated Foucault's theories into their work, Carole Blair and Martha Cooper have led the way. See Blair and Cooper; Blair, Statement; Cooper, Discursive; and Blair, Brown and Baxter.

¹¹ This dissertation assumes that the reader is familiar with contemporary critiques that have devastated the Cartesian notion of a centered subject. For a brief summary of several challenges to liberal humanist ideology and Cartesian notions of fully conscious, rational subjectivity, see Belsey, esp. 130-137.

¹² As a working definition, an egregious absence can be distinguished from a necessary absence by the degree to which the absence impedes the public's capacity for critically analyzing politically significant issues. A politically significant issue would be one that, absent from public debate, would lead to serious public ills. Since the process of limit work requires that constraints be available for critique, strategies or codes designed to suppress public discussion of significant public issues would be egregious relative to the seriousness of those issues in relation to the healthy functioning of an informed citizenry. By "healthy" functioning, I mean to say that a citizenry maximally informed of their constraints are in the best position to justify or alter them (and not to be taken advantage of by special interests).

¹³ In this study, I make considerable use of Jon Simons's interpretation of Foucault's work. My fundamental reason for doing so is derived from what I believe to be Simons's exceptionally clear explication of Foucault's "ethic of permanent resistance" to the ways in which humans are "subjectified" by the various forces at work within the discursive economies in which "they find themselves." More importantly, Simons's clear explication of the notion of "limit work," I believe, is crucial to this study's focus on negotiation.

¹⁴ Following Laclau and Mouffe, I define a “hegemonic articulation” as an equivalency produced through language that interpellates a large enough number of individuals to be politically effective. In other words, whenever large numbers of people begin to believe that “this equals that,” they suspend problematization and “believe” in that equivalence to the point where they are willing to act upon it.

¹⁵ Put simply, I assume, following Foucault, that whoever is thought to be in possession of the truth is simultaneously invested with relational power. Human truth is socially constructed and generally serves the interests of various groups. There is an ethical relationship between being made subject to a discourse, subjecting others to a regime of truth, and the degree to which those made subject and/or subjected have a voice in the constraints that accompany the disciplinary practices that accompany those subjectifying discourses.

¹⁶ Following Toulmin’s (Cosmopolis) distinction between second wave and third wave nationalisms, national identities exemplifying second wave characteristics will be viewed as being more constraining than those exemplifying third wave characteristics. In particular, those forms of national identity that rely on state violence for the repressions of Otherness will be seen as more constraining than those that attempt to accommodate Otherness. Furthermore, more reflexive stances towards national identity will be viewed as more enabling than less reflexive stances.

¹⁷ By “sociopsychopathological” tendencies, I mean to say that some forms of nationalism are more likely to repress important aspects of the historical chronicle than others. See White; Adorno (Resignation); and Adorno (Bitburg).

Chapter Two

The Critical Rhetorical Analysis of National Identity as Hegemonic Articulation

Human beings not only live moment to moment in a material undergoing, but in an imaginary world as well.¹ That is, following Baudrillard, as subjects we are immersed not only in a material economy but in a general discursive economy as well, and there is a symbiotic relationship between the imagined ideational economy and the material economy (Objects). Contemporary poststructural rhetorical theories, premised upon the notion that language constitutes and motivates human action, are intimately concerned with the ways in which this imaginary world is constructed because of its impact on human motives and action.

Traditional rhetorical criticism has tended to focus on the positive effects of “successful” public discourse, but I argue that critics should also focus on the negative effects of identity construction in discourse and speeches that are dramatically rejected as well. In other words, the relative failure to seriously explore dramatically rejected discourse is a significant absence in the field of rhetorical criticism. If it is plausible that modern subjects are “constructed” in non-traditional ways², then Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe are correct in claiming that, “because there are no more assured foundations arising out of a transcendent order, because there is no longer a centre which binds together power . . . it becomes possible and necessary to unify certain political spaces

through hegemonic articulations" (187). I maintain that the analysis of dramatically rejected discourse is a means for isolating the significant political absences that accompany these hegemonic articulations. Furthermore, articulations of national identities are excellent examples of such hegemonic articulations for "National narratives," Donald Pease contends, "construc[t] imaginary relations to actual sociopolitical conditions to effect imagined communities called national peoples" (3-4).

Since all self-reflective conscious human experience of reality is mediated through language, and since language is fundamentally metaphorical, there is always a certain fictional quality to human experience.³ Kenneth Burke (1966), citing Jeremy Bentham, points out that "all terms for mental states, sociopolitical relationships, and the like are necessarily 'fictions,' in the sense that we must express such concepts by the use of terms borrowed from the realm of the physical" (46). Additionally, Burke notes that "if any given terminology is a *reflection* of reality, by its very nature as a terminology it must be a *selection* of reality; and to this extent it must function also as a *deflection* of reality" (45). In sum, the human's experiencing of the world is fictional because language, through its very use, variously "distorts."⁴ Once again, this is not to say that all language distorts equally, for it is very likely that some collective identities are "less distorting," but only to say that the deflective nature of collective identities is an underexplored phenomenon.

Laclau and Mouffe have carefully argued how the destabilization of “traditional” and relatively transparent identities has resulted in a changed social condition where subjects are now constituted through hegemonic struggles between public articulations, articulations that amount to a contest over the identity of the subject. Their discussion of how “historical interests” expressed in discourse have hegemonic effects helps to explain why commemorative discourse plays a significant role in the construction of national identity. Socially constructed individuals are interpellated, or “hailed,” by discourse, and such interpellations create consubstantiality among people, allowing for the construction of “historical blocs” and discursive formations.⁵

Traditional hegemonic articulations of national identity arguably are based on various strategies of remembrance that tend to smooth over social differences and perpetuate mass belief systems and are frequently in the service of those who control the variously legitimate means of authority within a state. My concern is with the various ways in which national identity is articulated in part because of the role of nationalist belief systems in promoting and justifying violence within and between states (prompted, say, by xenophobia), as well as potentially peaceful constructions of national identity. Here, the important distinction between “nation” and “state” should be made clear. The nation can be thought of as consisting of those who share a similar language and imagined “cultural” identity over a particular geographic area, yet having no centralized form of government nor internationally recognized territorial borders. The state

can best be understood as an internationally recognized sovereign geographic location. Many states are not nation-states in this sense. For example, the recent ethnic conflicts in the former Yugoslavia show how the arbitrary imposition of national borders over a diverse cultural blend of peoples can result in nationalist dissolution of the federal-state in favor of a smaller, more "culturally pure" nation-state (Kedourie 53). Such movements usually draw on historical episodes of the people being unified against the larger state, but frequently the historical episodes are highlighted in such a way as to make them quite fictional.⁶

Benedict Anderson argues that "all communities larger than primordial villages of face-to-face contact (and perhaps even these) are imagined. Communities are to be distinguished not by their truth or their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined" (6). These imaginaries are inscribed in discourse, and represent "not the system of the real relations which govern the existence of individuals, but the imaginary relation of those individuals to the real relations in which they live" (Althusser 155).

According to Catherine Belsey:

Ideology obscures the real conditions of existence by presenting partial truths. It is a set of omissions, gaps rather than lies, smoothing over contradictions, appearing to provide answers to questions which in reality it evades, and masquerading as coherence in the interests of the social relations generated by and necessary to the reproduction of the existing mode of production (57-58).

One significant shortcoming of earlier Marxist conceptions of ideology was the notion that ideology was imposed from those in control of the modes of production. I assume that ideology is more usefully conceived as circulating articulations that congeal in hegemonic articulations, and that institutional practices and constraints are a function of hegemonic articulations.⁷

In the previous chapter, I maintained that there are public struggles over the kinds of characterizations that comprise a national identity, and that a critical rhetorical theory was required for the analysis of those characterizations. Following the conceptual trail of Foucauldian archaeology, Baudrillard's notion of the relationship between the discursive and ideational economy, as well as Charland's notion of how discourse textualizes audiences, this study analyzes instances of articulations of national identity in order to understand the kinds of subject positions they offer. Ultimately, it is my contention that these speeches, speeches aimed at envisioning national identities, articulated significantly different kinds of politically consequential fictions.⁸

In order to prepare the theoretical ground for the claim that the articulation of national identity (as the articulation of a collective identity) has potentially significant political consequences, three preliminary arguments perhaps should be made. First, I will briefly discuss social developments over the last few hundred years that have led to the problematization of the fully rational subject who uses language as a tool and the consequent rise of theories related to the social construction of subjectivity. In so doing, I intend to show how the

processes of modernization involved a transformation of culture that involved both the “commodification of culture” and the rise of nationalism. Next, I review several aspects of “official” and critical uses of history as they relate to the construction (and deconstruction) of national identity. These identities constitute variously useful politically fictions that serve in part as a response to the effects of modernization on subjectivity. Finally, I discuss the fundamental differences between what I refer to as traditional and postnational identity, suggest criteria for judging hegemonic articulations of national identity, and conclude with an exploration of various perspectives on the *productive* destabilization of anti-democratic national identities.⁹

My fundamental argument is that the national identities formulated in West Germany between 1985 and 1988 and those articulated in Québec during the secessionist movement of 1995 provide a fruitful contrast for those interested in analyzing how public discourse interpellates subjects, or how a sense of national identity is constituted through discourse. These articulations, I maintain, are not only shot through with the kinds of necessary absences found in every narrative account (White), but are shot through as well with disparate strategies of remembrance; strategies of remembrance that arguably have profound effects on the construction and subsequent motivation of socially constructed subjects. Furthermore, these articulations necessarily manifest a sort of “selective memory” that has political consequences because of the kinds of forgetting they implicitly promote. According to Ernest Gellner:

[T]he study of ethnicity and nationality is in large part the study of politically induced cultural change. More precisely, it is the study of the process by which elites and counter-elites within ethnic groups select aspects of the group's culture, attach new value and meaning to them, and use them as symbols to mobilize the group, to defend its interests, and to compete with other groups (Nationalism 87).

This is a clear description of what Gregory Jusdanis otherwise calls the modern phenomenon of "culture wars" (52). For Jusdanis, the contemporary tendency is toward the destruction of the federal-state in favor of smaller, cultural states (such as was recently the case in Yugoslavia). But his fundamental point, as is Gellner's, is that culture is *used* as a means for mobilizing publics, and I will return to the ethical and political dimensions of such "uses" at the end of the chapter.

This study analyzes recent articulations of national identity in pre-unification West Germany and Québec during the 1995 separatist campaign in part because they provide instances of public articulations of national identity that were clearly rejected by the public and thus are excellent sites for the application of limit work. As the following critique of these addresses suggests, articulations of national identities are indeed accompanied by "codes of the unsayable," and these codes provide an account of the dominant fictions governing various national identities. These codes, in effect, serve as

constraints on speakers as well as publics, and vary according to the kind of national identity being articulated.

My goal is to come to an understanding of the kinds of fictional identities articulated in West Germany and Québec in order to engage in a critical appraisal of one type of hegemonic articulation comprising the sense of self. While some “language games” are tied to very specific material goods, require concrete skills and specialized knowledge, and manifest themselves in institutional contexts, there are other kinds of language games that create imaginary centers within discourses that have no concrete referent. As Alexis de Tocqueville noted over a hundred and fifty years ago, no society can exist without a set of unquestioned presuppositions. Many of these “general ideas” are a sign of human weakness, not strength, and highly abstract words are frequently the source of the greatest tyrannies (8-17). Conversely, social movements of all stripes may require the articulation of a collective imagined identity, and therefore could potentially be the source of the greatest liberties. That is, if a national identity is one of these “general ideas,” one of these collective identities, then it is arguably a potential source of significant “weaknesses” and “strengths” in the social fabric.

Human actions are motivated by our understandings of the world, and those understandings are constituted through language. In other words, forms of consciousness are constituted through language (Voloshinov 13). National identities, functioning as “god terms” (Burke, Religion) and “ideographs” (McGee,

Ideograph), can mobilize mass action because of their implicit and connotative associations. Since these ideographs are “characterized” through hegemonic articulations, and “character” is always a source of motivation, it is important to discover an effective means for critiquing those characterizations, especially since national identity is an especially strong source of identification for publics.¹⁰

Anthony Giddens (cited in Billig) argues that nationalist sentiments are activated when an individual’s “sense of ontological security is put in jeopardy by the disruption of routines” and “regressive forms of object-identification tend to occur” that lead individuals to invest considerable emotional energy in their national loyalties (44). Therefore, one danger of national identities is that they are “activated” in time of crisis, undercutting critical dialogue. John Breuilly discusses, for example, how nationalist politics support mass politics through a process he refers to as “mobilization,” a term which he defines as that “which make[s] it possible for politicians to establish contact with large numbers of people or which can create the expectation and capacity on the part of large numbers of people to insist on some sort of political representation” (19-20). One can argue, then, that national identity, as an abstract identity into which can be dumped many smaller, contradictory and specific identities, is a particularly important and explosive form of identity in modern society. De Tocqueville, in fact, argued that in democracies the tendency toward social equality also leaves individual subjects without legitimate authorities, thereby making them even more susceptible to such mass fictions (7).¹¹

Other theorists have discussed how identities are built out of fragments of discourse and available narratives. McGee (Text) discusses how the social subject constructs a complex identity out of fragments of discourse encountered over the course of their lifetime. Rather than having some kind of contained text presented to a predictably homogenous and contained audience, the posttraditional discursive situation is one in which the individual is bombarded with messages and is overrun in a maze of capacity-generating carceral practices. The social subject, rather than simply being “given” an identity (e.g. “son of the blacksmith”), is compelled to incessantly negotiate a compound-complex identity out of available cultural resources. One way in which this is accomplished is through one’s construction of beliefs about one’s “fatherland,” “homeland,” or “mother country.” To say “I am American” means nothing unless linked to some notion of what being an “American” means, and that meaning is constantly (or arguably *should be*) being contested within the general discursive economy.¹²

Paul Ricoeur speaks of the “narrative intelligence” humans possess, an incessant ability to self-interpret based upon the stories handed down to them by their cultures which constitute and provide the fundamental limits to the way they encounter their “languaged” world (436). But whereas Ricoeur focuses on the impact of such texts as novels and dramas, the following analyses attempt to show how state leaders articulate their own kinds of fictions; hegemonic articulations of national identity based on strategies of remembrance that

contribute directly to the narrative intelligence of those who might identify with the nation. These are hegemonic articulations that potentially repress important aspects of material political conditions (Jay 48), and they are hegemonic inasmuch as they gain acceptance from large enough numbers of subjects as to allow for concerted political action.¹³ Therefore, I am also investigating such “politically consequential fictions” as ideology, and their potential role in suppressing social contradictions and preserving existing social formations, or conversely, how they might contribute to the social requirements of a more just society (Belsey 45).

Again, articulations of national identities can be fruitfully understood as hegemonic articulations that build identifications among people that tend to unify subjects, suppress critical thinking, enable political action, and serve the interests of some citizens at the expense of others (Gellner 4). My argument is that these fictions can be categorized and critiqued according to the kinds of forgetfulness (and remembrance) that they promote. That is, while national identities are all fictions, various articulations have various effects. Since all narratives, all histories, are necessarily exclusionary, an important question is how to judge exclusionary practices. If it is true that changes in society have altered the ways in which human beings become subjects, that national identities have been a primary source of subjectivity in contemporary society, and that public addresses by state leaders play an important role in the construction of those identities, then surely a rhetorical critical analysis of those identities is in

order. My arguments up to this point have attempted to indicate that culture is “used” not only as a tool of mass mobilization, but that different national narratives may have important implications for the kind of actions they promote. It appears that people are more likely to invest considerable emotional energy into collective identities in times of crisis, and that these identities characterize events in such a way as to justify actions in the name of the state. In what follows I discuss how society has in fact changed, and how national identities have consequently become a new source of collective identity that require critical analysis in order to potentially prevent them falling again and again into violent totalitarianisms.

The Demise of the Subject and the Rise of Postconventional Identity

With the rise of capitalization, urbanization, industrialization, electronic culture, and the concomitant demise of “conventional” identity, there was (and still is) a crisis of subjectivity. Individuals, uprooted from localized settings (and relatively transparent identities) were confronted with others (both real and imagined) on an unprecedented scale through urbanization and the proliferation of communication systems. The process of industrialization was accompanied by the rise of nationalism, various democratic tendencies, and the “commodification” of culture (Horkheimer and Adorno; Jay 124; Laclau & Mouffe; Balibar and Wallerstein). The “capitalization” of the world disrupted traditional

identities, and the rise of various versions of the nation-state has been accompanied by articulations of how posttraditional identities, in part, will be imagined. One particularly important source of articulations of national identity are public speeches transmitted to state-wide audiences by state leaders that offer visions of national identity, articulations that help to build group identification and yet are based, oftentimes, on a kind of forgetfulness (Nietzsche, *Advantage*, 252; Browne 242; Billig 36-42).

Scholars argue that the process of modernization, and the resulting uprooting of individuals from more conventional surroundings, has resulted in an "identity crisis" (Gellner, *Nationalism*, 62; Laclau & Mouffe 138), and that, as mentioned earlier, in stressful times individuals turn to and identify with articulations of national identity. Anderson, for example, discusses how the "vernacularizing thrust of capitalism" and "print-capitalism" (or the way in which capitalism influenced consciousness through the development of vernacular languages and mass communication technologies) simultaneously mobilized publics for political purposes in ways that were simply not available in the pre-print-capitalist world (39-40). Similarly, public addresses electronically distributed to mass audiences also are arguably capable of mobilizing publics in ways "unimaginable" before the rise of radio and television. Gellner argues that modern, transversal national consciousness was not able to arise until the eighteenth century, after the creation of mass educational systems enabled by print technology (*Nationalism* 58-63), and Breuilly suggests that national

identities were enabled by the social changes brought about by industrialization, the creation of standardized skills, controlled systems of education, and uniform levels of literacy (22).

Over the last several centuries, then, there have been important social changes that have gradually led to serious alterations in the way in which humans experience themselves. These “alterations” have been accompanied by a proliferation of mass communication technologies, and these emergent communication technologies have had a significant impact on human subjectivity (Eisenstein; Havelock; Ong). Whereas identities were constructed in premodern societies from the limited discursive economy of the local village and nearby surroundings, identities constructed in modern societies are increasingly comprised of webs of seemingly infinite strands of information provided not only by an increasingly specialized discursive economy but by the mass media as well. Not only do subjects play a much wider variety of roles, and not only are subjects increasingly bombarded by otherness, there has simultaneously been a broadening of the imagined center of consensus through the rise of vernacular languages and transversal identities such as national identities. That is, whereas personal identity was once based on a rather narrow range of discursive constructs and social roles, modern society is increasingly comprised of individuals whose subjectivity is constantly under contestation yet is fabricated on another level on a mass scale.

By the term "discursive economy" I mean to suggest that there naturally arises in society various needs and desires the satisfaction and fulfillment of which require the production of goods (both in the material and imaginary realm). The production of these "goods" requires the construction and mastery of language games and material practices. As individual subjects learn various social roles and encounter various language games, their general sense of self emerges. But my interest is not in, say, the tax lawyer learning tax law, or the brain surgeon learning brain surgery, or a painter learning to paint (relatively "concrete" language games that Plato would have found clear enough), but what it means for socially constructed individuals to understand their social world in such a way that actions like "fighting injustice," "defending the weak," or participating in war are understood. What elements in the discursive economy motivate these actions? The discursive economy is primarily comprised of highly specialized language games and their accompanying "capacities," and these "capacities" enable individuals to produce goods for the satisfaction of needs and desires. At the same time, though, these "games" constrain individuals within increasingly complex language systems, and there are also elements in the discursive economy that transcend at times those more localized and practical identities. These "transcendent" identities are my target.

The Fabrication of Culture in Modern Society

Since the mid-twentieth century, individuals have been faced with messages that are simultaneously transmitted to thousands, if not millions, of people. Jean Baudrillard (1988) provides an interesting conceptual framework for understanding this transversal movement of language in mass society. Adding to Burke's description of the "deflective" capacity of language, and Honi Fern Haber's insight that language "is never merely discursive; it is also political in that it forces a choice between narratives" (116), Baudrillard discusses how a fictional, universal code is established through advertising and the mass media by which objects are given a "value" that is completely fabricated. Harkening back to the concerns of Gellner and others over the decline of traditional identities, Baudrillard argues that the "code" constructed by advertising creates, for the first time in history, a universal system of signification:

One may regret that [the code] supplants all others. But conversely, it could be noted that the progressive decline of all other systems (of birth, of class, of position -- the extension of competition, the largest social migration [to urban areas] in history, the ever-increasing differentiation of social groups, and the instability of languages and their proliferation --) necessitated the institution of a clear, unambiguous, and universal code of recognition (20).

Not only, then, do articulations necessarily serve as a selection and a deflection (as they have always done), and not only do choices between “narratives” have various political effects (as they have always done), these articulations have become “commodified.” Various “products” are given a “value” that is constructed through language (which is something relatively new on a mass scale).

While Baudrillard’s main concern is with the construction of object-identities through advertising, his theory can fruitfully be extended to include the construction of identities through hegemonic articulations in the general discursive economy. Baudrillard himself concurs that the “value” of an “object” (read “identity”) “is a systematic act of the manipulation of signs” (22). All this is simply to state what is obvious to rhetoricians: identities are created through language and these identities have implications for the ways in which individuals interpret and act upon their “world.” My concern, of course, is with the values which are attached to the “object” of the nation, and I argue that the mass media, mass educational systems, and public addresses by state leaders disseminated through either of these systems participate in the “commodification” of the nation.

Language, then, intervenes in all self-reflexive forms of subjectivity, but the precise ways in which that subjectivity is constructed changes as social relations change. As modern societies moved from illiterate to literate societies, and as societies moved from religious to secular concerns, nationalism became one particularly strong fictional component in the construction of modern

subjectivity (Gellner 11). These national identities were fabricated out of cultural resources, and fabricated in such a way that their “deflective” nature was concealed through their unifying power. The basic deception of nationalism, according to Gellner (1994) is that it is an imposition of high literate culture at the expense of the previous diversity and relative isolation of folk culture. But that is exactly the opposite of what nationalists affirm and frequently believe: that nationalism in service of an autonomous state is the only way of preserving folk culture from other hegemonic blocs that would assimilate it (65). Since “folk” culture has slowly given way to mass culture, the state becomes a surrogate for the lack of any kind of authentic heritage. Anything “truly authentic,” which usually just means old, is commodified and paraded before the public as the culture.

Richard Handler, for example, demonstrates how the Québec government actively sought to create a cultural policy. He discusses how nationalists in French and English Canada “generate their own perpetual motions, whether the constant doubts about national existence, the ongoing search for authentic culture, or the endless fragmentation of bureaucracies created to administer national existence and culture” (191).¹⁴ Expanding on Baudrillard’s discussion of the ways in which commodities are given a connotative aura by advertising, I would like to investigate how public speeches celebrating or reflecting on national identity supply succinct articulations of “collective identities,” and whether or not these articulations are indeed engaged in selectively

remembrance and forgetfulness, or have serious consequences for community visions and motives for action.

If it can be established that national identities are fabrications inasmuch as state leaders construct them out of commodified cultural building blocks, and if it can be shown that identities variously marginalize other positions, a question immediately arises. What features do these fabrications possess that pose significant problems for the maintenance of a more just global society?¹⁵ While it is important, and perhaps inevitable, to have some sense of self, some identity, in order to communicate and justify living and acting in the world, it would appear that national identity, as a form of mass identification, is a realm of rhetorical contestation requiring critique in light of the fact that millions upon millions of humans have died in defense of their nations, and millions more have participated in aggressive wars in part because of their nationalist beliefs.

In what follows I would like to show that those engaging in the construction of national identities simultaneously engage in "strategies of remembrance" based on codes of the unsayable, and that these strategies can be judged according to the kinds of forgetfulness they promote. In order to provide a framework for the investigation of this discursive dynamic, I will devote the rest of this chapter to a discussion of how "forgetfulness" can be conceptualized in such a way that the necessary absences following in the wake of any articulation can be distinguished from significant or egregious absences. First, I will briefly examine how forgetfulness could go hand in hand with

articulations of national identity. Second, I will provide examples of specific forms of “nation building” over the last few centuries. Third, I will review how Nietzsche and Foucault proposed alternative ways of thinking about identity that provide the conceptual means for making distinctions between different types of history; useful points of contrast between traditional articulations of national identity and “postmodern” politically consequential fictions. Finally, I will discuss how additional distinctions between politics and problematization (Foucault, Reader), second and third wave modernity (Toulmin, Cosmopolis), and “postmodern” and authoritarian personalities (Billig) can be fruitfully juxtaposed to “official nation building” to create an ethics of identity perhaps appropriate for the contemporary socio-political situation.

The “Amnesia” of Nationalism

If national identity is a fiction based on a selective remembering and forgetting (Billig; Belsey; Browne; Winichakul), and if it is true that nationalist leaders have consciously attempted to unify fragmented subjects for the purposes of the state, or used culture as a political weapon (Anderson; Hall; Jusdanis; Laclau & Mouffe), then it is arguable that national identities are indeed “fictional,” of varying types with varying effects, and need to be critiqued because they potentially involve various forms of mass “deception.”

In some ways it seems obvious that any history is a selective one, and any narrative account necessarily features some aspects of “reality” at the expense of others. Yet the depths reached by these “selective” and “deflective” features of the articulation of national identity arguably go unrecognized by the vast majority of the public. Numerous scholars, in fact, have noted the “forgetful” nature of identity construction and the “illusory” nature of national identity. For example, Thongchai points out that:

The presence of identity is merely a temporary discursive conjuncture in which certain discourses have stabilized their hegemonic forces upon the domain The study of nationhood should therefore dispense with the illusory notion of identity. Moreover, since the creation of nationhood is [or should be] full of contention, struggle, and displacement, a study of discursive identification becomes a study of ambiguities, misunderstandings, unstable moments of signification, and the extrinsic forces which nurture such identifications (173).

Michael Billig, from the perspective of a social scientist, argues that “ideology operates to make people forget that their world has been historically constructed” (37). Billig also notes that “once a nation is established, it depends for its continued existence upon a collective amnesia.” Furthermore, for Billig there is a “double neglect” in that “[h]istorians creatively remember ideologically convenient facts of the past, while overlooking what is discomfiting” (38). Stephen Browne, a rhetorician, also notes the “amnesia” that accompanies strong identification in

his discussion of “public memory.” He points out that “memory is likely to be activated by contestation, and amnesia is more likely to be induced by the desire for reconciliation” and that these memories “are formed in the crucible of ideology and the politics of identity, and . . . forgetting is itself integral to the work of public memory” (242).

Other critical theorists have given considerable attention to this “amnesia,” showing how it is more than simply “illusion” because of its ideological character. Belsey, for example, notes that:

Ideology obscures the real conditions of existence by presenting partial truths. It is a set of omissions, gaps rather than lies, smoothing over contradictions, appearing to provide answers to questions which in reality it evades, and masquerading as coherence in the interests of the social relations generated by and necessary to the existing modes of production The destination of all ideology is the subject (the individual in society) and it is the role of ideology to construct people as subjects (57-58).

Building upon Belsey’s notion that amnesias are capable of masking variously insidious political interests, Martin Jay shows how Adorno and Horkheimer were concerned that “In the allegedly democratic countries of the capitalist world, the dialectic of enlightenment produce[s] . . . forgetting in more subtle ways than in their authoritarian rivals . . . [through] the ‘culture industry,’ [where] mass

consciousness [i]s manipulated and distorted to the point where critical thinking [i]s threatened with extermination” (38).

Putting these various perspectives together the following argument emerges: national identities are indeed “fictions,” but fictions in a very specific sense. They are ideological in the sense that they smooth over social contradictions in such a way that critical thinking can be undermined. In particular, there is the possibility of a collective “amnesia” where “unpleasant” things are swept under the carpet in favor of unity in part for the sake of the potential mobilization of the public. When this unity is at the expense of critical thinking, or when people act without being aware of the linguistically (and hegemonically) constructed nature of their identities, problems arise that rhetorical criticism can address.

“Official Nationalism” and “Nation Building Policies”

Since ideology is a function of state legitimization, it appears probable that state leaders, in promoting ideological representations of the nation, reflexively articulate messages that construct audiences (rather than provide information for critical evaluation) in order to smooth over differences among citizens. It is equally conceivable that these articulations offer different kinds of identities that contribute to various kinds of motivational frameworks. Examples of how state leaders have in fact reflexively articulated such politically consequential fictions

in the past indicate how these “motivational frameworks” vary. In particular, Hugh Seton-Watson’s investigations into what he calls “official nationalism” (148) and Richard Handler’s and Frederick Dolan’s explorations of how state officials in Québec and the United States respectively sought to “mobilize” the public provide useful comparative cases. These examples provide support for the claim that articulations of the “nation” in public discourses have potentially significant consequences not only for social policy, but also for the kinds of “subjects” public leaders attempt to hail.

According to Stuart Hall, “Many nationalist leaders in the twentieth century have been . . . consciously aware of how to create an industrial society. They seek to break down the segments of the traditional order to create a common culture capable of integrating all citizens” (4-5). I would rather suggest that modernization itself has “broken down” traditional order and the rise of mass communication technologies has created the possibility for the fictional “integration” of citizens. It is simply the case that state and national leaders have “capitalized” on these occurrences. Anderson provides an excellent example of Seton-Watson’s “official nationalism” in his discussion of the Habsburg Empire. Official nationalism basically occurs when language is used as a tool to create a veneer of unity over a polyglot empire. According to Anderson, in the 1780s the Austro-Hungarian absolutist Joseph II decided to change the language of state from Latin to German because German “had a vast culture and literature under its sway and . . . had a considerable minority” throughout the Habsburg Empire

(84). Partially in response to the nationalist movement in France and elsewhere in Europe, Joseph II wished to “permit the empire to appear attractive in national drag” (87). That is, in response to the rise of competing states (e.g. France) through the mobilization of culture and the fabrication of national identity, Joseph II was himself forced to fabricate a national identity in order to offset competing nationalist narratives. In West Germany, as chapters three and four make clear, both historians and state leaders still sense a pressing need to *create* a sense of national identity. Michael Stürmer, for example, as an advisor to Chancellor Helmut Kohl, insists that educational policies should be directed to the construction of a strong sense of national pride that can be called upon in times of crisis (Stürmer, *How Much*).

Frederick Dolan provides a more contemporary example of what Anderson calls “nation building policies” (113). Dolan discusses how Paul Nitze, a member of the National Security Council during the Cold War, argued that Americans had to be “told what to think” because democracy was making them too unpredictable for the needs of the state. Nitze (cited in Dolan) wrote in a memorandum that formed a centerpiece for global planning in the 1950’s that “Information . . . must be made publicly available so that an intelligent popular opinion may be formed [and] the initiative in this process lies with the Government.” “We must see that our public is educated,” Nitze continued, “[and the] Press cannot do it alone. It must be done mainly by the government” (73-74). According to Dolan, “the government, and in particular the executive

branch, [was] to shape public opinion directly so as to recruit the electorate for 'containment'" (74).

Handler shows how, even more recently, members of the Québec government have been very concerned about the fabrication of a sense of being "Québécois." For example, in the late 1970s, when the *Parti Québécois* took power, members quickly realized that previous national identifications were "insufficient." In 1978, a white paper (an official government report) was created by the State Minister for Cultural Development entitled "A Cultural Policy for Québec." The white paper, overlooking the paradoxes of its claims, suggested that Canada could only create a national identity and a distinct culture through the "use [of] a certain ingenuity," and that the government of Québec had to "repatriate" jurisdiction over culture. According to the document: "We must draw up and promote a cultural policy which will be . . . *Québécois*" (cited in Handler 127).

Similar instances of "nation building" are discussed by other theorists of nationalism including Ernest Gellner and John Breuilly, but even these few examples show that absolutists, military officials, and members of democratic governments have attempted to *create* national identity for at least the last two hundred years. If Laclau and Mouffe are correct, such efforts contribute to a general struggle within the discursive economy over "loyalty" itself, and since what people believe (or unreflexively hold as part of their prestructure of understanding) motivates their actions, it is important to determine a means for

critiquing “loyalties” and the ways in which public articulations of national identity contribute to informing loyalties.

While it seems plain that these various “nation building policies” have sought to further “the interests” of the respective states, the ramifications of the policies are less easy to ascertain. Dolan, for example, points out that “Nothing could be farther from the idea of a liberal democracy [than state identity control], where the state is viewed as an instrument of public will, rather than as its manager” (74). Furthermore, Dolan argues that the Cold War ideology of the Right (fear of communism) and the Cold War ideology of the Left (fear of consumer capitalism) were both attempts to “protest the transition to a society of sheer artifice, where the model . . . not the original, is the only source of authority” (75). These judgments by Dolan recall a central issue: how are nation-building policies to be judged? I assume that Dolan praises what he calls “liberal democracy” not because of its capitalist dimension, but because of its relative potential for creating a critical public sphere. Clearly, Dolan believes that the state has no business “educating” the citizens for its own ends because the state should serve “the will of the people”, not vice-versa. But what is this “will of the people” and what ensures that their will is qualitatively superior to, or independent from, the “will of the state”? To approach these questions is to approach identity politics and political theory; therefore, this chapter concludes with a brief discussion of both. In what immediately follows, though, I would like to discuss how both Nietzsche (Advantage) and Foucault (Reader) characterized

history and its contribution to the construction of subjectivity. These two thinkers, I argue, provide the conceptual means for engaging in a critique of articulated identities that serves both as an ethics of identity and as a democratic politics.

Nietzsche and Foucault: The Critical Use of History vs. "Official" History

As the following analyses of addresses by state leaders in both West Germany and Québec will reveal, the ways in which history is articulated play an important role in the fabrication of national identity. It is not so much that events and traditions are completely invented, although sometimes they are (Billig 25), but that there are very different ways of conceptualizing the *function* of history. Two thinkers who contributed to the conversation on the function of history are Nietzsche and Foucault, and their contributions have important consequences for identity politics in general, and the public negotiation of national identity in particular. Nietzsche makes an important distinction between "monumental" and "critical" history that reveals two very different functions, and Foucault considerably develops Nietzsche's notion of critical history. Together, their contributions provide helpful starting points for developing criteria for judging various articulations of national identity.

For Nietzsche (Advantages), there are fundamentally three kinds of history, each used for a different purpose: monumental, antiquarian, and critical. Those who engage in monumental history, according to Nietzsche, construct a

past “worthy of imitating” and “use history as an incentive to action.”

Unfortunately, such a use of the past is always “in danger of being somewhat distorted, of being reinterpreted according to aesthetic criteria and so brought closer to a fiction” (17). State leaders, eager to acquire a general consensus among citizens in order to gain compliance in relation to the exercise of the legitimate means of violence, monumentalize history in order to create the “ideal citizen” or the ideal image of what the state stands for.¹⁶ These “national histories” are being (or arguably *should* be) constantly contested and the ways in which national identity gets articulated in these struggles reflect “current balances of hegemony” (Billig 71). Antiquarian historians, the second type, supposedly love history for history’s sake, and wish to preserve history rather than use it. Critical history, as the third variant, condemns and critiques history in order to right some perceived injustice in the social system.

Following Nietzsche’s classificatory system, various articulations of national history constitute a battleground of interests. State leaders, intent on fabricating a national identity that can be called upon in times of crisis to mobilize publics, engage in monumental history to suppress contradictory aspects of a nation’s history in order to create widespread support for state policies. Critical historians oppose monumental historians and expose contradictions in order to promote oppositional politics. My position is, in a certain sense, that of a critical historian. But rather than simply exposing contradictions for an oppositional

politics seeking to promote new special interests, I seek to begin an investigation into the question of whether or not various articulations of national identity promote “postnational” identities that support constitutional patriotism, or whether they promote the kinds of national identity that lead to the demonization or commodification of the other.¹⁷

Since monumentalists (e.g. state leaders) create ideal visions of history that smooth over important social contradictions, a valid critique begins by isolating those otherwise repressed contradictions in order to make reflexive judgments about potentially significant absences in the articulation. Such a position resonates with Catherine Belsey’s call for a new critical practice that focuses on the silences that necessarily accompany articulations. According to Belsey, “Ideology suppresses the role of language in the construction of the subject.” A critical practice, for Belsey and myself, attempts to reveal the ways in which ideology suppresses social contradictions in the interest of the preservations of existing social formations. Once again, such a critical practice is not required simply because state leaders frequently make conscious efforts at deception, but precisely because the national identities historically “monumentalized” are frequently taken for granted and *taken seriously* (and therefore all the more dangerous).

Foucault’s notion of “effective history” is useful here as a tool for an ideological critique that examines the ways in which state leaders articulate a fictional national identity. If state leaders and those in positions of authority “use

history” in order to construct a compliant and controlled citizenry, critics seeking to democratize those citizenries under the influence of such articulations need to “use history” as well. Foucault makes a clear distinction between “traditional” history and “effective” history. Whereas traditional history is thought to deal with reality (as historical events of Truth), continuity (usually of the Hegelian and neo-Hegelian type that posits a trajectory of continual human progress) and objective Truth, effective history holds that history should be used rather than discovered because history moves paratactically (from one system of domination and capacity to another) rather than hypotactically (progressively toward the *telos* of the Absolute Spirit or Absolute Same). Furthermore, critics working with the construct of effective history recognize that any articulation of identity is a politically charged interpretation. Rather than allowing traditional history (and traditional identity formation) to mask and mystify the effects of domination that occur when agreements are made and positions are taken up, critics can choose to “use” history in order to create the possibility of a future built on a more self-reflexive foundation (Reader 76-100).

Ultimately then, this study assumes that national identity is constructed to a significant degree by the articulations of state leaders and historians, especially when the articulations are disseminated on a mass scale. These articulations are simultaneously strategies of remembrance and forgetfulness, strategies that have implications for political action. Just as state leaders and historians use history (whether reflexively or not), so also must the postnational critic. But

whereas the Nietzschean critical historian seeks to engage in an oppositional politics in support of emergent special interest groups who themselves might like to create a new monumental history for themselves, the postnational critic seeks to investigate the suppressions involved in all unifying national fictions in order to determine their various characters, which in turn allows for a more reflexive understanding of the variety of ways in which national identity constitutes both a sense of self and a sense of otherness.

In the analyses that follow in chapters three through six, I analyze public speeches by state leaders in pre-unification West Germany, as well as those by Québec leaders during the secessionist vote of 1995, in order to determine the kinds of national identities they articulated. These texts were chosen primarily because of the fact that in both cases (West German and Québec) a state leader articulated a vision of national identity that was so dramatically rejected that the leader was forced to resign his office. By comparing these various articulations, I will not only isolate the strategies of remembrance that triggered the negative responses, but from there develop a notion of identity ethics as radical democratic political action.

The Critical Interpretation of Public Articulations of National Identity

This study is premised on the notion that some forms of spoken and written discourse have an inherently “revolutionary” character when inserted into

the general discursive economy. That is, some public articulations, by providing visions of identity, have the potential of either reinforcing or disrupting dominant social narratives. But more than this, these articulations frequently have their greatest impact through their being interpreted over time. Dolan, for example, suggests that an effective form of political action is “the narrative reinterpretation of the words and deeds of . . . men of action themselves, a reinterpretation so constructed as to bring to the foreground the distinctiveness and originality of their actions even at the cost of doing violence to their own understanding of them” (181). My goal is to analyze how public actors provide narratives of national identity, and to discover whether or not those narratives invite or suppress public discussion of the absences that allow them to cohere, absences that perhaps only emerge when brought into contact with competing narratives. The remainder of this chapter is devoted to the explication of criteria that can be applied in judging between these various articulations.

Hannah Arendt offers critics what Dolan refers to as “an indispensable textual strategy” that undermines the identities emphasized by historical actors themselves in order to draw critical distinctions between their “political innovations” and “the imperatives of the past” (182). Dolan argues that the significance of Arendt’s position is its being “grounded in discursive interaction that reveals principles and actors that persist because they are attractive to those who participate in the way of life they open up” (193). This argument resonates with the claim that publics find metaphysical comfort in certain

articulations of national identity and that these articulations vary in kind and tend toward various motives for action. Dolan discusses the theoretical position of Shoshana Feldman, for instance, who argues that individuals faced with social catastrophes such as the Second World War and the Holocaust are unable to articulate these events, and therefore “narration responds by twisting and turning about itself, exposing its own lacks and insufficiencies . . .” and that these contortions bear unwitting testimony to the political (fictional) requirements of the time (15).

Here the “political” refers to narratives that attempt to establish a certain kind of history, a potentially (if not inescapably) “distorted” version of historical events and their meaning. Furthermore, all narratives have a “political” quality. Haber, for example, in her discussion of postmodern politics, shows that “Language . . . is never merely discursive; it is also political in that it forces a choice between narratives” (116). The critic’s job is to work to “reveal,” through a competing narrative, distinctions between material conditions and the official state narratives that obscure those conditions. This critical process, of course, is never completed, because there is no “undistorted” version of historical events and their “meaning” and what is “revealed” by a critic’s discourse is yet another articulation that will (or arguably *should*) subsequently be subjected to another’s critique. One important question that remains unanswered by Dolan is how to judge between significant narrative distortions and the inevitable distortions involved in all narrative recounting.

As a move toward answering this question, I would like to suggest that metaphysically comforting narratives of national identity are “distorting” when they seek to build such strong identification that the necessarily perspectival nature of the articulation becomes significantly obscured and the critical appraisal of the articulation is thereby suppressed.¹⁸ According to Martin Matušík:

[Traditional] nationalism elevates national identity by constructing a homogenous public sphere into a normative principle of social integration. Because the nationalist principle bypasses deliberative democratic procedures, it is the nationalist determination of identity, not national or communitarian identity as such, that contributes to the weakening of cultures through their ethnic strife (24-25).

Matušík refers to these “principles of social integration” as “motivated deceptions” (xiv), and, following Habermas, suggests that only by coming to terms with the ambivalence of every tradition can a more honest appraisal of material conditions be achieved. This is a “democratic” impulse in that it assumes that identities whose limits are not available for critical analysis are potentially more unnecessarily constraining than those whose “meaning” unfolds in time through endless reinterpretations and appropriations. In his essay “The Rhetoric of Hitler’s ‘Battle,’” Kenneth Burke also indicated how there was considerable danger in unifying articulations, and yet considerable benefits in public contestation. I maintain that hegemonic articulations of national identity

(that is, the “successful” ones) have a unifying effect that potentially glosses over significant social differences, and therefore they are “dangerous” from the perspective put forward by Burke. The critical question concerns the kinds of “glossing over” that the articulations accomplish and what constitutes a “significant” absence. A radical democratic politics would be based on the notion that the health of the general discursive economy is relative to the degree to which reinterpretations are encouraged, and would support political policies and actions designed to maintain a healthy discursive economy. Therefore, some articulations of national identity, in their creation of strong unity that suppresses critique, are anti-democratic. Since all articulations of national identity tend to unify, one criterion for negatively judging an articulation is the degree to which the specific “unity” created damages or impedes the process of reinterpretation.

According to Raymie McKerrow, there is a “necessity for citizens to be constantly in a state of revolt with respect to the State, lest their rights be abridged and they be reconstituted as subjects” (58). I would adjust this statement to read: citizens need to be in a constant state of revolt with respect to the ways in which they are hailed as subjects, since the manner in which they are hailed has a profound effect upon not only the way they view themselves but in the motives that prompt them to act. McKerrow’s position is consistent with Foucault’s notion of the use of history. He states, for example, that “The critic engages in critique not as a centered subject originating thought but as a

contributor to the universe of discourse. As inventor of texts, the critic's role is to re-present texts from a collection of fragmentary episodes" (62).

This study follows McKerrow's advice in that it locates articulations of national identity, and contexts for the articulations, and analyzes responses to the articulations in order to isolate the selective absences they reveal. In doing so, I hope in part to weaken the unifying potential of egregious articulations in order to maintain their "democratic" development. It is not that cultural identification in itself is to be avoided (since arguably all social movements require some kind of collective identity and since some absences may be less egregious than others), but that certain forms of cultural identification, especially those that demonize the other, commodify the other, and/or mask important social contradictions must be avoided. As Haber points out, "difference can accommodate unity (structure) so long as unity recognizes its subservience to difference. The idea that any structure or unity is necessarily subject to redescription is also politically attractive because it renders problematic all claims to sovereignty and hierarchy" (117). What is required, then, is an articulation of the features of "unifying" postnational narratives that celebrate difference without precluding the necessity of incessant critique.

Toward a Politically Realistic Postnational Identity

As Nietzsche suggested in his essay "On the Advantages and Disadvantages of History for Life," ignorance is no obstacle to action, but overproblematization can render a person incapable of action. Some kind of identity is necessary for action, and the abolition of identity is equivalent to the abolition of language. So what remains is the distinguishing of "good" identities from "bad" identities, and the consequent basing of political action upon the distinctions. On the one hand, it is rather easy to see how certain forms of national identity are harmful to the global community; one need only consider various racial articulations of national identity in the twentieth century such as those that have informed Nazi Germany and Serbia. On the other hand, national identities in democracies such as West Germany and Québec might seem more sensible and self-critical, but are they?

Not only do state leaders engage in the articulations of unifying narratives that mask important social contradictions, but these strategies of remembrance could be anti-democratic if they encourage unity at the expense of reflexive critique when that unity does not take into consideration the kinds of absences it unwittingly promotes. In order to ensure the continued expansion of democracy certain strains of national identity, then, must be "destabilized." I would like to conclude this chapter, then, by offering various perspectives on how such a "destabilization" has been theorized, delineating between politics and

problematization (Foucault, Reader), national and postnational identity (Matušík), authoritarian personalities and postmodern personalities (Billig), and the differences between Newtonian and “ecological” perspectives on nation-building (Toulmin, Cosmopolis). These distinctions, coupled with an understanding of Laclau and Mouffe’s notion of radical democracy, provide useful ways of thinking about how rhetorical critics can productively “use history” by analyzing articulations of national identity in such a way as to minimize their danger to, and maximize their potential benefit for, a radical democratic world order.

In a brief interview between Michel Foucault and Paul Rabinow in May, 1984, just before Foucault’s untimely death, Foucault discussed what he believed were the principal differences between polemics and problematization (Reader, 381-390). According to Foucault, “Polemics defines alliances, recruits partisans, unites interests or opinions, represents a party; it establishes the other as an enemy, an upholder of opposed interests, against which one must fight until the moment this enemy is defeated and either surrenders or disappears” (382-383). Problematization, on the other hand, is “what allows one to step back from [a] way of acting or reacting, to present it to oneself as an object of thought and question it as to its meaning, its conditions, and its goals” (388). More specifically, problematization is the “development of a given into a question” (389). Such a distinction bears directly on the difference between polemic national identity as metaphysically comforting, as “natural”, and as a tool of the

state for the mobilization of "faithful" publics, and problematized postnational identity. A problematized postnational identity would not be "anti-action," but would base political action upon a reflexive understanding of the kinds of absences its hegemonic articulations promotes.

Matušík argues that the move from nationalism to postnationalism "emerges in response to the dead ends of the oppositionally constructed politics of identity and difference" (4), or the dead ends of traditional nationalist polemics. For Matušík, a "radically honest critique [of polemic nationalism] is a necessary precondition for one's embodying postnational identity in a deliberative democracy and mature political culture" (5). Such a "radically honest critique" is the exact opposite of "official" state nationalisms that seek to mask social contradiction in order to maintain the "legitimate" use of power. In other words, whereas "official" nationalism is based on a polemic form of unity, postnationalism is based on the problematization of unity to ensure that democratic processes do not devolve into totalitarian identity structures.

In a lengthy discussion of postnational identity and its relationship to Habermas' notion of constitutional patriotism, Matušík shows how "nationalism already exhibits limited posttraditional aspects: it appropriates traditions reflexively, it is at home in a democratic nation-state, and it lives in the tension between particular cultures and the universality of the republic." But the problem with traditional nationalism is that it does not go far enough in its posttraditional efforts; it functions in the realm of polemics rather than problematization.

According to Matušík: "Habermas envisions integrating isolated modern individuals into a radical republic, itself sustained by constitutional patriotism, not by homogenizing or xenophobic nationalism" (21).¹⁹ Still, while Habermas envisions a transformation of national identity from power politics to the universalization of democracy and human rights, he fails adequately to express how such a "rational" transformation can be achieved given the attractiveness of traditional nationalism and given the "identity crisis" precipitated by the globalization of society. This study suggests that the universalization of democracy and human rights can continue in tandem with collective identities as long as those identities are constantly available limit work. That is, as long as the significant political absences accompanying collective identity construction are incessantly and proactively sought after in order to ensure a maximally democratic public sphere, then there are few reasons to suppose that collective belonging and individual rights must be necessarily incompatible. Rather, it is when those constructing collective belonging fail to account for the kinds of absences such belonging promote that oppressive marginalization is most likely to follow. But again, this is likely more a job for rhetorical critics interested in radical democracy than for politicians interested in maximizing constituent interests.

Further distinctions between various kinds of "homogenizing and xenophobic nationalisms" and postnationalism are made by Billig in his

discussion of the ways in which “authoritarian personalities” differ from “postmodern” identities. Billig notes that authoritarians have the following characteristics: 1) they require a sense of order and hierarchy; 2) their psyche is marked by a brittle, emotional intensity; 3) they apprehend the world through rigid stereotypes; 4) they fixate on a single identity, especially that of race or nation; and 5) they demonize the other. Conversely, postmodernists: 1) subvert order and hierarchy; 2) enjoy an ironic and playful detachment; 3) problematize stereotypes and possess “shallower psyches;” 4) have no serious investment in particular identities; and 5) welcome, rather than demonize the other (137-138). The problem with Billig’s account is that he himself appears to demonize the Other as Authoritarian, while valorizing a postmodern attitude that has “no serious investment in particular identities.” This is problematic inasmuch as identities are part and parcel of human communication, and the question is not simply one of denigrating all identification practices, but coming to an understanding of their variously emancipatory and destructive capacities. Still, there are fruitful connections between Billig’s categories, polemics and problematization, and national and postnational identity: traditional nationalism is authoritarian and is marked by characteristics that tend toward violence, while postnational identity is postmodern and is marked by characteristics that tend toward communication.

Toulmin examines these differences from yet another perspective and makes a distinction between “the Newtonian view” of the social realm and “the

ecological view” that parallels Billig’s distinctions between authoritarian and postmodern personalities. Toulmin argues that “Newtonians” require “stable institutions, unambiguous class structure, centralized power, and defense of the state’s sovereign autonomy from external interference.” The Newtonian view encourages “hierarchy and rigidity, [and] standardization and uniformity.” The “ecological perspective emphasizes “differentiation and diversity, equity and adaptability” (Cosmopolis 194).²⁰

Taking the various perspectives offered by Foucault, Matušík, Billig, and Toulmin, I find that numerous potential criteria emerge for judging articulations of national identity. If, on the one hand, a particular articulation of national identity is polemic, based on power politics, homogenizes through xenophobic stereotypes, displays the qualities of an authoritarian personality, and follows a “Newtonian” world view, then it is a regressive form of national identity that demonizes or commodifies the other, tends towards violence, and inhibits “radically honest critique.”²¹ If, on the other hand, a particular articulation of national identity problematizes itself, is based on the “universalization of democracy and human rights,” supports constitutional patriotism, displays the qualities of a postmodern personality, and follows an “ecological” world view, then it is a progressive form of national identity that recognizes the other, tends towards communication, and encourages “radically honest critique.” Justifiable political action can only follow from such a critique, for in its absence political action necessarily falls into variously egregious forms of monological self-

interest. While self-interest, perhaps, can never be fully overcome, political action following problematization is likely less violent than political action based upon unreflexive polemics.

Unfortunately, as alluded to above, many of the political theories that attempt to conceptualize a “radically honest critique” of prevailing social inequalities fail to address adequately the material fact of herd mentality (or unproblematized overdetermined mass belief). Additionally, many of them are performative contradictions themselves in that they demonize those who “buy into” identity. In order to productively destabilize anti-democratic national identities it is not only important to isolate the criteria for regressive and progressive forms of nationalism (regressive identities being those that demonize or “consume” the other, and progressive identities being those that tend toward “radically honest critique”), but to determine “where the line is to be drawn” in the incorporation of the other and between “good” and “bad” identities.

To simplify, it would appear that there are potentially three types of nationalism: 1) those that demonize the other (fundamentalist and traditional heroic-patriotic nationalisms based on herd mentality); 2) those that appropriate the other (capitalist nationalisms, also based on the herd mentality, that “consume” the other); and 3) those that attempt to respect the other, recognizing that human growth is only possible through the dialogic (communicative) encounter with the other.²² While the first two are insufficient because they are not based on a radically honest critique, but mask significant social injustices

because of deceptions motivated by state self-interest, the third is also inadequate without sufficient criteria for judging the initially “welcomed” and respected other. Furthermore, the third is also inadequate in that it fails to respond to the problems created when the postnationalist encounters the radical nationalist (as arguably may have been the case in World War Two). It is to this final issue that I now turn.

The Productive Destabilization of Anti-Democratic National Identity

Numerous theorists have attempted to tackle how to deal with the identity crisis precipitated by the collapse of traditional sources of identity and the rise of mass culture and to formulate a way of thinking about identification processes in a posttraditional world.²³ Since I ultimately argue that some articulations of national identity promote modes of subjectivity better suited for the posttraditional age, many conclusions reached by these theorists are useful because they elucidate what I mean by the productive destabilization of anti-democratic national identity.

Haber’s primary goal is to articulate a vision of politics that moves “beyond postmodernism” in order to overcome the relativism of various versions of deconstruction.²⁴ Such an articulation resonates well with the notion of a *productive* critique of national identity, since the purpose of exposing the strategies of remembrance and the codes of the unsayable in articulations of

national identity is not to undo cultural difference, but rather to allow for a radically honest critique of social conditions that might otherwise be repressed by regressive (e.g. fundamentalist) articulations of national identity. According to Habermas, "The lesson to be learned from poststructuralism is that the logic of difference reveals the artificiality of any and all closure (structure). But this does not mean that we can do without closure and structure." Rather, "Naming is only 'terroristic' when the speaker or spokesperson denies this fact and treats the contingent as an absolute" (127). For Habermas:

A politics of difference does not then imagine that all conflict could be resolved. There will always be groups which are forced to the margins. What it hopes for, however, is the fluidity of positions of power; it hopes to encourage the proliferation of voices. Thus it hopes to encourage skepticism about closure, skepticism about the privilege and necessity of any particular community without denying the temporary necessity of closed positions. The latter is necessary for articulate speech, the former for the possibility of de-normalization. Both are necessary for the empowerment of otherness (131-132).

In other words, all identification practices marginalize, but that does not mean that all identification practices marginalize equally. National identities, for example, which demonize the other and mask significant social contradictions marginalize other voices and repress skepticism through the promotion of unity at the expense of radically honest social critique. A healthy postnational identity,

to the contrary, would invite skepticism, not in order to undermine cultural difference, but to ensure that cultural difference does not slide into totalitarian essentialism. But this openness is not enough since total openness to otherness would be tantamount to relativism.

Matušík gives considerable attention to the kind of radical honesty required of the postnationalist in his discussion of a permanent democratic and existential revolution.²⁵ According to Matušík, genuine communication always resists totalization, and that “Without some radical distancing from the individual and group identity formed by one’s region, culture, and personality, neglect, myopic universalization, and negatively differentiated identities can become the local seedbeds of the oppressive forms of politics of identity and difference” (250). Matušík offers the following solution:

Taking up Habermas’s procedural resistance to nationalism and fundamentalism, I offe[r] a programmatic proposal to complement political culture with a sobering transformation of the politics of identity and difference. This special case in the overall critique of leveling communication would operate as the middle term between deliberative democratic consensus and the lifeworld identities of local cultures

The principle of deliberative democracy and constitutional patriotism, if it is not to beg the question, requires a sustained existential critique of leveling communication and deception. In this fashion we may oppose the possible indifference of the universal point of view without at the same

time becoming communitarian in a problematic way (253 emphasis added).

Laclau and Mouffe engage in a prolonged and detailed argument as to the social conditions that would allow for such a sustained critique. For example, they argue that “in every case what allows the forms of resistance to assume the character of collective struggles is the existence of an external discourse which impedes the stabilization of subordination as difference” (159). That is, in order to prevent the leveling and homogenizing effects of certain forms of nationalist overdetermination from taking effect there must be some mechanism of problematization. According to Laclau and Mouffe, this problematization occurs primarily through “the critique of the category of the unified subject” (166). They furthermore argue that “The multiplication of political spaces and the preventing of the concentration of power in one point are, then, the preconditions of every truly democratic transformation of society” (178).

Anti-democratic national identities are those that display the features of what I earlier characterized as “regressive” nationalisms. They create mass unity at the expense of problematizations that might otherwise promote active public debate over potentially debilitating social contradictions. These regressive nationalisms preclude radical honesty in that they engage in strategic remembrance and codes of the unsayable. A “progressive” postnational identity, to the contrary, seeks a certain distance from “traditional” identities in order to provide the distance necessary for a “critique of the unified subject” promoted by

those “traditional” identities, which in turn provides a reflexive basis on which to justify political action. This is not to suggest that postnational identities are free from the marginalizing effects of identification practices. As Habermas indicates, human communication is impossible without some form of identification, but distinctions can be made between different kinds of identification practices.

Summary

The theory that informs this study, then, is based on the premise that in order to maintain a healthy democratic society (and conversely in order to avoid totalitarian essentialism and postmodern relativism), a means must be established for critiquing various articulations of national identity, and the welcomed encounter with the other can avoid relativism according to the findings of such a critique. It is not that identity in itself is bad, but that identity is always potentially dangerous. For Habermas, difference and solidarity are prerequisites to effective political action, but what must be kept in mind at all costs is the understanding that identities are socially constructed. Both essentialism and relativism are tyrannous in that the former fails to recognize its hegemonic status and the latter is politically ineffective in a “world” comprised of unreflexive hegemonic articulations. To *productively* destabilize national identity is not to simply destabilize national identity, but to destabilize articulations of national identity that “naturalize” and essentialize what it means to be a hero-patriot. In a

postnational world, the hero-patriot is transformed into the critical citizen-subject whose political actions are based on a reflexive understanding of the marginalizations that accompany their necessarily limited and perspectival subject positions.

The primary contribution this study seeks to make is the establishment of a concrete critical-rhetorical procedure for critiquing the “unified subject” that is potentially articulated in regressive forms of nationalism in order to provide a more reflexive basis upon which to justify political action. That is, if “traditional” forms of national identity seek to create mass unity at the expense of identity problematization and a radically honest critique of prevailing social conditions, a means for determining precisely what is being repressed would be of considerable significance. To this end, as discussed in chapter one, I propose an extension of Jon Simons’s notion of “limit work.” Stated simply, limit work presupposes that the limits imposed by any hegemonic articulation or discursive formation are only revealed when they are transgressed.

In order, then, to determine the strategies of remembrance embedded in hegemonic articulations of national identity, this study analyzes speeches that were dramatically rejected by public based upon the premise that these rejected articulations transgressed codes of the unsayable governing unifying national fictions. This, once again, is not to suggest that all codes of the unsayable are equivalent; rather, some codes promote forms of remembrance that stifle

radically honest critique while others promote forms of remembrance that are more conducive to postnational constitutional patriotism. Through a comparison of West German, Québécois, and federal Canadian articulations of national identity, the distinctions between regressive and progressive forms of national identity will hopefully emerge, thus providing rhetorical critics with the means by which to judge future articulations of national identity and thus maximize the possibility of maintaining the “permanent democratic and existential revolution” called for by postnational theorists.

Articulations of national identity can be judged according to the kind of remembrance they promote, therefore openness to otherness is limited inasmuch as others who demonize or commodify the other must be resisted. The productive destabilization of national identities seeks only to reveal significant social injustices that are masked by the unifying effects of articulations of national identity. Such a procedure helps to ensure that difference is respected and encouraged and that the violence of overdetermination is minimized. Through limit work, then, not only are strategies of remembrance revealed, but at the same time so are various state repressions. Such a critical procedure contributes to critical studies of nationalism by providing rhetoricians with the means for concretely judging various articulations of national identity.

Notes to Chapter Two

¹ The notion of the “political economy of the sign” and the realm of the “imaginary” is discussed in Jean Baudrillard’s Selected Writings. Basically, both notions assume that “[c]ulture is now dominated by simulations” (1). Rather than the Marxist conception of modes of material production, Baudrillard transforms the principle to feature symbolic exchange (or move from the economy of objects to the discursive economy).

² Before the rise of mass communication technologies such as print and the electronic media, individuals were normally socialized through local, interpersonal contact. With the rise of vernaculars and mass communication technologies individuals moved away from what Anderson refers to as “simultaneity-along-time” towards “homogenous-empty-time” (22-36). Put simply, with the rise of newspapers and books, for the first time in history large numbers of people were capable of receiving the same message at basically the same time, thus creating the potential for an “imagined” (rather than locally, and interpersonally undergone) sense of community.

³ The metaphorical (tropological) nature of human language is also at the heart of Nietzsche’s language theory (Behler, Nietzsche).

⁴ The term “distorts” should not be taken as meaning that there is an “undistorted” form of human communication. Every articulation necessarily highlights some features at the expense of others. My point is simply that some articulations tend to repress more potentially significant political issues than

others. One task for rhetorical critics is to find the means for identifying significant absences in order to make them available for reflexive critique. Ultimately this is a metaphysical issue related to whether or not there are objective material conditions that are subsequently represented through language, or whether the human "world" is so thoroughly "languaged" that the entire notion of "objectivity" must be discarded. In this study, I would like to posit a symbiotic relationship between the material and ideational economies, and that the former is only experienced through the "filters" provided by the ideational economy.

⁵ For a discussion of historical blocs as consolidated forces of will, see Laclau and Mouffe (36-42).

⁶ Of course, collective identities are variously useful, and this comparative study of nationalism in West Germany just prior to reunification and Québec during the 1995 secessionist referendum is intended to reveal how the absences maintaining a fictional national homogeneity can be variously egregious. Social movements in general could be conceptualized as requiring collective identities as well, and one could easily imagine how the emancipatory collective identity of the civil rights and suffrage movements might compare with militaristic social movements based upon the demonization and scapegoating of an Other. Nonetheless, according to the theoretical perspective informing this study, all collective identities are imagined, and national identity, rather than social movements, provides the model.

⁷ Foucault (Reader 60-61) also discusses other shortcomings with “traditional” notions of ideology that are taken into account in my analysis.

⁸ Following Laclau and Mouffe, I “will call articulation any practice establishing a relation among elements such that their identity is modified as a result of the articulatory practice” (105).

⁹ As discussed in detail toward the end of the chapter, anti-democratic national identities are those that create unity at the expense of limit work. That is, rather than encouraging the incessant critique of equivalencies, they promote unproblematized essentialisms that lead to the demonization or appropriation of (rather than an openness to) the Other.

¹⁰ The importance of national identity to the total make up of the modern subject, though, should not be overestimated. As Honi Haber notes: “subjects are never hostage to the effects of a single narrative or power regime. Since power can come from as many points as there are possible narrative constructions, and since the law of difference teaches that redescription is always possible, the points of power and resistance are always at least *potentially* infinite” (119). I simply want to suggest that the “homogenizing” and “unifying” effects of national identity frequently inhibit competing narratives. Publics are not mobilized through problematization but through the simplification of complex and contradictory social conditions.

¹¹ Laclau and Mouffe also note the “susceptibility” of democracy. They state that “the logic of democracy cannot be sufficient for the formulation of a

[critical] hegemonic project. this is because the logic of democracy is . . . only a logic of the elimination of relations of subordination and inequalities. The logic of democracy is not a logic of the positivity of the social . . . " (188). Democracy, in other words, through its leveling tendencies, dissolves traditional forms of authority and offers only problematized alternatives for legitimizing social authority.

¹² Again, it is important to reiterate that national identity is always only part of a subject position. Human's are positionally embedded in a complex material and ideational economy comprised of a vast and complex confluence of systems of governmentality. Nonetheless, as I have already stated, national identity and imagined patriotic obligations are highly motivating.

¹³ I also follow Laclau and Mouffe's formulation of the term hegemony: "Hegemony' will allude to an absent totality, and to the diverse attempts at recomposition and rearticulation which, in overcoming this original absence, made it possible for struggles to be given a new meaning and for historical forces to be endowed with full positivity" (7). In simpler terms, the "autonomization of the spheres" brought about by capitalist culture means that social unity "can only be attained through unstable and complex forms of rearticulation" (18). I assume that public speeches related to national identity are examples of such potentially hegemonic articulations.

¹⁴ Handler's discussion of the fabrication of culture in Québec will be discussed in detail in chapter five.

¹⁵ The notion of a "more just" society need not be utopian. Given that all articulations necessarily repress certain issues and highlight others, a "more just" society can be conceived as one in which different kinds of remembrance can be identified and their accompanying absences made available for public debate. If rhetorical critics can find the means for isolating the absences that accompany articulations of collective identity, then perhaps it might be possible to bring to light issues formerly enabling hegemonic groups yet unnecessarily constraining marginalized others.

¹⁶ The notion of the "legitimate use of violence" is an ironic one that pertains primarily to the power of the state to police the citizenry, impose variously justifiable laws, and wage war. Arguably, some of these restrictions are more "legitimate" than others, but from a Nietzschean perspective, the key is not for the state to truly be legitimate in its use of force, but simply for the state to appear legitimate in the eyes of the citizenry.

¹⁷ Of course, two examples can only provide the barest of beginnings for such an investigation; nonetheless, a principal goal of comparative nationalism from a rhetorical critical perspective is to determine the kinds of publics that are being fabricated in order to determine the likely actions those so articulated are likely to engage in. Matušík distinguishes between traditional nationalism and constitutional patriotism as follows: "[Traditional nationalism] expects a strong conformity of the individual to the group and . . . allows for a heroic-patriotic war. Habermas rejects a normative privileging of the descriptive-communitarian 'We'

over the deliberative-procedural we: one ought to be self-determined not by the nation-state, but rather in the common weal of citizenship. Constitutional patriotism admits only that love of nation which, in place of imperial warfare among nation-states, promotes a more rational postnational league" (229). In other words, Habermas promotes postnational, rather than essentialist-nationalist identity politics. Totalitarian and fundamentalist states, I argue, usually demonize the Other while democracies frequently "commodify" and appropriate the other. Another criterion for distinguishing between necessary and egregious absence would be whether or not the absences promoted the demonization of the Other.

¹⁸ While some might argue that such a perspective favors analysis over action, I would suggest that rhetorical criticism and ideology critique effectively intervenes in, and serves as its own form of, political action. Until criteria can be established for distinguishing between "better" and "worse" absences, political actions motivated by collective identifications are equally suspect.

¹⁹ The extensive discussions in political theory related to constitutional patriotism, communitarianism, and contemporary debates over various forms of community are beyond the scope of this dissertation. Those interested in exploring these various arguments can refer to Matušík for an introduction to some of these important issues.

²⁰ Interestingly, Toulmin also points out that Peter Drucker "invented the term 'post-modern' [t]o mark off the political and institutional limits of the

sovereign nation-state" (173), and I would argue that the nation-state is limited because its "legitimacy" is based on violent polemics rather than communicative problematization.

²¹ Nonetheless, this is not to say that oppressed minorities do not have serious incentives for separating from larger states that oppress them because of their traditional nationalist features. These criteria do not equate with the dissolution of strategic identities.

²² A complete investigation into the debates between those supporting dialogue as the paradigmatic instance of human communication and sceptical variants of poststructuralism and deconstruction is beyond the scope of this study. For summaries of these debates, see Dialogue and Deconstruction: The Gadamer-Derrida Encounter. Diane P. Michelfelder and Richard E. Palmer, Eds. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989; Hans Herbert Kögler. The Power of Dialogue: Critical Hermeneutics After Gadamer and Foucault. Paul Hendrickson, Trans. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1996; and John Stewart. Language as Articulate Contact: Toward a Post-Semiotic Philosophy of Communication. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995: 103-130. For the purposes of this study, I assume that dialogue is usually constrained by the incompatibility of unquestioned presuppositions. Limit work is designed to make the absences that accompany identities visible, thereby problematizing unquestioned presuppositions and making them available for reflexive critique. It

is assumed that the resulting discursive situation will not be a power-free dialogic situation, but a less violent and more dialogic one.

²³ Once again, the scope of these discussions is vast. For an introduction to these issues see Laclau and Mouffe and Matušík.

²⁴ Richard Bernstein (*Beyond*) has persuasively shown that there is both a tyranny in essentialism as well as a tyranny of relativism, and that radical deconstruction is just as dangerous for a democratic ethos as totalitarian essentialism. Habermas tries to articulate a middle ground between these two extremes, associating postmodernism with relativism.

²⁵ Matušík engages in a prolonged critique of the shortcomings in Habermas's "ideal speech community." These arguments culminate in the claim that Habermas presupposes honest individuals who argue rationally, but provides no mechanism by which to ensure such honesty (243-246).

Chapter Three

The Use and Abuse of History in the Construction of German Nationalism

In many respects, Germany, as a *nation*, has always been in the throes of an identity crisis, one considerably exacerbated by the military defeats of the twentieth century (Maier; Eley; Berger). In fact, military defeat rather than revolution has been primarily responsible for Germany's changing political, geographic, and ideational landscape, including its emergence into the current democratic government of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG). Perhaps the greatest defeat for the German people was the collapse of National Socialism at the end of World War Two, for not only did it lead to the physical division of Germany itself, but it also led to the forced division of German citizens into West German democrats and East German communists. For an exploration into the public negotiation of national identity, the situation resulting from this forced division of a historically unstable national citizenry seems a promising starting point.

Indeed, prior to Germany's reunification and the collapse of the Soviet Union, leaders of West Germany found themselves in both an international and intranational political situation that placed unique constraints on them when dealing with National Socialism, a situation perhaps representative of the ways in which national leaders generally must incessantly construct an image of the

nation for international as well as national reasons (Stürmer, History; Hartmann; Brockmann, Politics). That is, for leaders of West Germany between the years 1985 and 1988 (the years leading up to the reunification of West and East Germany), public discourse concerning national identity remained intimately related to Germany's defeat in World War Two and the manner in which German national identity was publicly articulated in light of National Socialism.

A representative example of the problematic relationship between German national identity and National Socialism at this time was President Ronald Reagan's decision in 1985 to participate with West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl in ceremonies marking the fortieth anniversary of Germany's surrender at the end of World War Two. This decision sparked controversy when it was learned that part of those ceremonies would include a visit to a cemetery outside of Bitburg, Germany where Nazi soldiers were buried. The ceremonies themselves included a number of controversial public statements concerning West German identity, and prompted numerous reactions from German intellectuals and historians. Another indicator of the difficult tensions between German national identity and National Socialism would occur one year later when the *Historikerstreit*, or the "debate of the historians" erupted in West Germany. This debate, which lasted for well over a year, resulted in the appearance of scores of letters and essays in the German press. Together, these two "events" help to explain what was at stake when the relationship between national identity and National Socialism was publicly addressed in West

Germany in the years prior to German reunification in 1990. In particular, Bitburg and the *Historikerstreit* reveal many of the international and intranational constraints affecting West German government representatives at that time, and help to explain both the dramatic failure and the dramatic success of public addresses delivered by West Germany's conservative leaders during this period.

In order to better understand public discourse in West Germany in the years just prior to reunification, this chapter surveys the background of conflicts between historians, philosophers, and politicians over the course of "German" history. Not only is it important to understand the history of nationalism in Germany in order to contextualize the controversies related to public discourse in the years prior to reunification, but it is equally important to understand the ideological context in which that discourse was embedded. In particular, I will show how the construction of German identity has historically been a matter of concern for German philosophers, historians, and politicians, and how public discourse related to West German national identity was highly coded between 1985 and 1988, imposing severe constraints on speakers. Ultimately, these constraints are mirrored by public speeches, and the public reactions to the speeches, by Germany's leaders during this time: Richard von Weizsäcker, Helmut Kohl, and Philipp Jenninger. Their public speeches dealing with the National Socialist period fundamentally sought to integrate West Germany into the democratic and capitalist West, as well as to allow the German people to deal with the *Kriegschuldfrage*, or the question of how to work through

the guilt of the German people in relation to their Nazi past. These two issues basically determined what could and could not be “factfully” said by public officials, and staked out the ideological battleground for West Germany’s imagined community.¹

Ultimately, I hope to investigate whether or not the success or failure of public discourse related to national identity in Germany during this time period hinged on the rhetors’ ability to maneuver within the discursive limits (constraints) resulting from the combination of post-war West German capitalist democracy and Germany’s National Socialist past. To undertake the investigation, I will begin by providing an overview of the history of German nationalism, followed by a detailed description of two representative episodes of pre-unification identity struggles in Germany (Bitburg and the *Historikerstreit*) in order to provide a conceptual matrix for a comparative analysis of the speeches of Jenninger, Kohl, and Weizsäcker. I then discuss the role played by German philosophers, historians, and politicians in German identity construction in order to contextualize the contemporary contributions of their counterparts. Next, descriptions of the material and discursive events surrounding Bitburg and the *Historikerstreit* help to explicate the limits on discourse that were imposed by international pressures, as well as by the various political factions within West Germany itself. Finally, the chapter concludes with an explication of the strategies of remembrance that appear to have dominated public discourse related to West German national identity in the years prior to reunification.

A History of the Construction of German National Identity

Germany provides an excellent site for analysis of competing discursive strategies related to national identity in part because of its relatively unstable nation-state history. Gregory Jusdanis describes in detail how the 314 states and free cities of the former Holy Roman empire were “held together as a common whole almost solely by the instrumentality of the men of [Latin] letters, by speech and writing” (38-39). Benedict Anderson builds upon Jusdanis’s observation by showing how the Austro-Hungarian absolutist Joseph II, as I noted above, decided around 1780 to switch the language of state from Latin to German because it was the only language that was sufficiently known throughout the area controlled by the Empire. While his decision was based on a desire to strengthen the empire (not a national consciousness), supporting a vernacular language provided the means “for stretching the short, tight, skin of the [future] nation over the gigantic body of the empire” (86).

Ernest Gellner (Nations) also helpfully analyzes the manner in which “Germanness” was constructed through the use of the German language. Gellner strongly advocates the position that national identity requires “a literate high culture which is coextensive with an entire political unit and its total population . . .” (95). But in “the classical Habsburg” form of nationalism

only the power-holders had access to the central high culture, while the fragmented German states were culturally weak compared to England or France, and it was only after the “mobilization” of the German language that a distinctly “German” nationalism began to develop (97-98).

Geoff Eley, in discussing the continuing malleable nature of “Germany” as a nation, points out that:

[A]lthough a ‘united Germany’ had some sort of continuity between 1871 and 1945, the Bismarckian ‘small-German’ state lasted only until 1938-9, when the annexation of Austria and the Czech lands substituted the ‘great German’ alternative previously defeated in the 1860s: and the variable politico-cultural content of the term ‘Germany’ in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as a whole makes the very category of ‘German history’ highly problematic (190).

Germany, then, has rarely enjoyed a stable geographical border, and, because it did not share a common high culture or vernacular language until the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, can arguably be seen as a belated nation.

Jusdanis claims that “Germany is quintessentially a delayed nation, late in comparison to both the industrialization of the Netherlands and England and the political evolution of France and England” and that “Germany has felt itself a latecomer earlier and more intensely than other societies” (42). In fact, according to Jusdanis, it was not until “the defeats and humiliations during the Napoleonic

Wars” from 1803 to 1815 that nationalist sentiment was ignited in the German territories (36). As late as 1840, though, over half of the population in both Britain and France (the two most advanced states in Europe) were still illiterate, suggesting that nationalism was not simply the result of the spread of the German language (since there were more illiterate people in Germany in 1840 than there were in Britain and France). Another factor contributing to nationalist sentiments was the fact that expenditures on state bureaucracies expanded significantly at this time throughout Europe (Anderson 75-76). Europe was also becoming increasingly industrialized and urbanized, which meant that individuals from isolated communities were coming together in large numbers and, along with the demise of localized identities (those linguistically confined to a rather small geographic area), individuals were increasingly taught vernacular languages and “national literatures” through expanding state institutions.

According to Gellner (Nations), “The alienated victims of early industrialization . . . require[d] cultural pools which [were] large, and/or [had] a good historic base . . .” (46), and with the increasing mobility and urbanization of many recently uprooted individuals from relatively stable community settings, “Germans” had to be created. Universal systems of state funded education marked another critical turn in the construction of this new, relatively context-independent, imagined community. Along with the impact of print culture, universal education allowed for the creation of a new kind of community comprised of an unprecedented number of shared ideas, or what Anderson

refers to as “horizontal-secular, transverse time” (37) communities (as opposed to more hierarchic, religious, immediate/geographic communities). Anderson also points out that it was the rising European middle class who, “in world historical terms were the first classes to achieve solidarity on an essentially imagined basis” (77). Therefore, the sense of belonging to the German “nation”, in effect, was gradually invented through the reflexive appropriation of a common language disseminated and valorized by expanding state institutions. In many ways, then, Germany was integrated textually (predominantly through the rise of print culture, the rise of the vernacular, and universal education) as it was being achieved politically.

This developing culture provided coherence and order for an otherwise alienated citizenry and was consciously seen as a tool for achieving “German” unity. German intellectuals, especially the historians, throughout the eighteenth century basically believed that a sufficient national culture was missing, especially in relation to Britain and France (Eley; Hamerow). Moreover, the German people have a long tradition leading back at least to the early part of the nineteenth century of using history as a means for political guidance (Brockmann, Politics; Berger; Eley; Hamerow). For example, Johann Gottlieb Herder, whom Charles Maier refers to as the “inventor” of German nationalism, argued for a German nationalism that would be “an expression of ethnic and linguistic community that [could] be counterposed to French cultural models” (142). In his pamphlet “Outlines of a Philosophy of the History of Man,”

published in 1774, Herder argued for a German community built on an ethnic basis, a collective identity provided by culture without the aid of the state.

Later, in the middle of the nineteenth century, Georg Gervinus sought to establish that the German people were on a special path, a *Sonderweg*, in order to provide “the strength which would inspire Germans to political parity with the other nations of Europe” (Brockmann, *Politics* 186).² Along the same line, Brockmann points out that Wilhelm Dilthey also suggested a similar idea of cultural uniqueness and difference from the nations of the West after the defeat of the 1848 March Revolution in Germany and the founding of the Second Reich. Some sixty years later, in 1918, the *Sonderweg* concept was employed yet again in response to the Russian Revolution:

[M]ost historians felt that in spite or even because of the 1918 collapse [in Russia] it was their duty to strengthen the consciousness of national identity and continuity, which had the function of creating a sense of meaningfulness with respect to history itself, while with respect to the present its function was to define meaning: national identity appeared tangible only through the medium of history. German history was stretched out into a *Sonderweg* to a large extent because of the need to determine and regulate German identity (Faulenback, cited in Brockmann, 186).

There was, then, from the late eighteenth century to the early twentieth century, a persistent concern among intellectuals and historians with the development

and maintenance of a unique German culture. Apparently this concern, given the events at Bitburg and the discourse comprising the *Historikerstreit* in the 1980s, persisted in the self-understanding of late twentieth century German historians.

But whereas Herder believed that culture could survive without the aid of the state, many contemporary German historians and politicians argue that it is precisely the state that must supply members of nation states with identities (Kohl, *Bericht*; Nolte, *Myth*; Stürmer, *History*; *How Much*). As far as these politicians and historians are concerned, citizens within the national borders of Germany have to be taught a history and provided with an identity, and this responsibility fundamentally belongs to the state. For example, the Kohl government decided to build two museums -- one in Bonn and one in Berlin -- to create a stronger sense of German identity (Maier 121-139), and Stefan Berger notes that Ernst Nolte and *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* editor Joachim Fest have "both written on the failure of western liberalism to build national identity amongst Germans" (202). Michael Stürmer, historian and advisor to Helmut Kohl, has gone so far as to state that "In a land without history, the future is won by those who are able to harness memory, coin concepts, and interpret the past" (*History* 16). As Stefan Berger notes: "from Heinrich von Treitschke [1834-1896] to Michael Stürmer, the highly public role of German historians has often been informed by a scarcely hidden desire to serve as policy advisers to Germany's political class" (188).

Not only is there a tradition in nineteenth and twentieth century German historiography of engagement in the creation of German national identity, it is equally true that politicians have been actively and consciously engaged as well in the prolonged battle over how Germany's cultural heritage should be appropriated for international and intranational purposes (Habermas, Settlement; Sontheimer; W. Mommsen). For example, it has been clear to German leaders since the end of World War Two that public proclamations of guilt are good foreign policy (Eley; Hartmann, Bitburg; Maier). Politicians have also been constrained by what Eley refers to as "the changing boundaries of the acceptable in West German treatments of National Socialism since 1945" (186), boundaries that translate directly into constraints on public discourse.

Eley describes how in the years immediately after the war pluralistic critique from the entire spectrum of anti-Fascist thought abounded, but that these early debates "failed to establish within the existing party structures any institutional space for dissenting socialist, left-nationalist, pacifist, and left-libertarian forces . . ." (171). The student unrest of 1968, for example, was accompanied by a brief irruption of intellectual energy devoted to investigating Germany's contemporary fascist potential, but this exchange was cut short by terrorist activities of the Red Army Faction known as the *Baader-Meinhoff* group. This student unrest was accompanied by a short-lived investigation into the possibility that fascist roots remained unexamined in West German society, but the terrorist activities on the part of the radical Left resulted in a backlash by the

conservative elements in the government that put an end to such investigations.

The conservative reaction included a shrinking of the history departments in Germany, increased scrutiny of those seeking public jobs (as educators, politicians), and a renewed drive for a sense of "national character" (186-188).

In sum, there is a considerable history of "contributions" on the part of German historians and politicians toward the construction of German national identity, and German playwright Heiner Müller claims "[T]here has never been a national identity encompassing one Germany" (16). The German national identity achieved textually by the decision of Joseph II around 1780 to adopt the German vernacular occurred before the German state was achieved politically by the collapse of the Habsburg Empire. Furthermore, German national identity has been undergoing continual crisis and upheaval since at least Napoleon's occupations in the early nineteenth century, crises that have only been exacerbated by Germany's long history of military defeat. According to Ulf Hedetoft, "If the UK is a nation with a long history of continuity, stability, and pragmatism, Germany's is one of disruption and hiatuses . . . [and there is] lots of war and death in Germany, but little cause for pride and heroism" (287). Wars and war memories, according to Hedetoft, play an important, but negative, role in Germany (287-288). Most importantly for this study, the crisis of national identity in Germany was only exacerbated by the division of the country after the defeat of the National Socialists, and public discourse concerning the relationship between German national identity and National Socialism could

arguably be expected to be uniquely constrained as a result of that division. In order to explore this possibility, I now turn to the discourse surrounding Bitburg and the *Historikerstreit*.

Bitburg and the *Historikerstreit*: Ideological Crisis in Pre-Unification Germany

Historical tensions over the construction of a sense of German nationalism and the meaning of National Socialism for German nationalists suggest how the topic constitutes a continual crisis within Germany. What follows is a brief introduction to two representative episodes of this ongoing "crisis" that occurred between 1985 and 1988: Bitburg and the *Historikerstreit*. These episodes involved government officials, historians, and various scholars dealing with the construction of German national identity, and are discussed primarily in order to reveal the intricate rules and strategies governing public discourse related to German identity in preunification West Germany.

On the one hand, Bitburg is an interesting example of state sponsored epideictic discourse designed to fabricate a particular understanding of Germany history. On the other hand, the *Historikerstreit* is an equally interesting example of a public debate relatively free of state influence, witnessed by mass audiences, and designed to negotiate an understanding of the meaning of National Socialism for contemporary German national identity. I focus on these two examples because they were broadly witnessed public "events" that help to

reveal the strategies of national remembrance that inform the political speeches of Philipp Jenninger, Helmut Kohl, and Richard von Weizsäcker (whose discourse is the primary object of the next chapter). This focus is not intended to minimize the fact that such critical ideological moments are constantly emerging, but simply to allow for a detailed analysis of the unique constraints on West German public discourse in the years leading up to reunification.³

While the crisis created at Bitburg was “satisfactorily” overcome by a speech given by Richard von Weizsäcker, President of West Germany, on May 8th, 1985 (Hartmann, Bitburg 256-273), the controversies comprising the *Historikerstreit* in many ways remain unresolved for a variety of reasons explored by this study. Furthermore, it would appear that Weizsäcker’s “success,” along with “failure” of the speech that Philipp Jenninger gave in 1988 at ceremonies marking the fiftieth “anniversary” of the pogroms against the Jews known as the *Reichskristallnacht*, can only be understood after one has come to terms with the public international strategy of the West German government revealed by the events at Bitburg, and the political motives of the disputants from both the Left and the Right within Germany itself in relation to the *Historikerstreit*. This is why I provide an extended discussion of the “trajectories” of discourse in relation to both Bitburg and the *Historikerstreit*. These “critical ideological moments” created enough discourse to provide rhetorical critics with the means to describe various politically significant aspects of the articulations that inform the imagination of community in Germany from 1985 to 1988; aspects related to

government strategies, political/cultural motives, and the resultant limits imposed on public speakers participating in the construction of the imagined community.

"The Wall of Silence" and Bitburg

The causes of both World Wars are difficult to pin down and are themselves the subject of considerable debate between the Right and the Left within Germany.⁴ According to Eley, "Addressing the place of Nazism in the German past is the very opposite of a neutral or academic process. And so is the business of conceptualizing the longer course of Germany history. How one formulates the nature of the German 'difference' that led to Nazism remains highly charged with political implications for the present" (182). The events surrounding President Reagan's visit to Bitburg, Germany, as part of a series of ceremonies produced by the West German government marking the fortieth anniversary of Germany's surrender at the end of the Second World War, provide an interesting window into the problematic relationship between National Socialism and contemporary German nationalism. In order to understand the intended and ultimate import of Bitburg, I would like to briefly discuss some of the pressures that bear upon those who are in the business of conceptualizing who contemporary Germans "are."

There are a variety of reasons for attention to detail in public discourse related to the *Kriegsschuldfrage*, or the "question of war guilt." Perhaps most

significant among these “details” are the expectations of the international community, especially the United States, Israel, and other NATO members. Brockmann (Bitburg) discusses how the United States, in part through its “reeducation programs” and its aborted “denazification” of Germany, proactively worked to construct a political fiction, or a “mythologized history,” whereby Nazi Germany was magically transformed into a stable and happy democracy (162-164). Brockmann states that:

According to Allied decree in 1945, the German Reich had ceased to exist, and as it was decreed so it came to pass. Suddenly there was no more German Reich, and there were no more Nazis, and the United States began to use the services of those who had ceased to be Nazis in the continued fight against Communism, the new Nazism (163).

Most significantly, Brockmann points out, “This magical transformation is possible only if Nazism is ignored” (163). If Brockmann is correct, then one significant constraint imposed on public discourse related to Germany identity must be that the national socialist period must be handled with particular care, and many other scholars agree with Brockmann that the Germans have built “a wall of silence” around themselves in relation to their National Socialist past (Domansky; Eley; Hartmann, Bitburg; Müller). Ultimately, the expectations of the Western democracies require that Germany maintain the public facade of a total rejection (and forgetting) of the crimes of National Socialism, and any moves to “normalize” or “relativize” National Socialism are immediately met with

near universal condemnation, including condemnation from the Germans themselves. Martin Broszat makes the same point when he states:

[It] was necessary for the Federal Republic to take a clear official distance from its Nazi past as a compensatory gesture toward the occupying powers and later allies. On the one hand, this gesture took the form of an indulgent forgiveness for - or silence about - concrete personal responsibility during the National Socialist period; on the other hand, it meant requiring any representative of the new state and society to reject Nazism unconditionally. However little willingness there may have been to confront the Nazi past in an honest way, open violations of this last norm were met with sharp sanctions (79).⁵

These two norms governing public discourse (the avoidance of any references to concrete personal responsibility for, and the unconditional rejection and dismissal of, National Socialism) are built upon the primary norm of taking great care with any public discourse related to the National Socialist period in order to maintain the required international and national fictions. These norms lead to a strategy of silence for the most part, and, at the very least, these norms/constraints/limits had to be dealt with by public officials if they wanted their public discourse to meet the expectations of certain members of the international and national community.

Eley argues that there is another reason for the "wall of silence" within Germany when he notes that, "In West German public discourse, Nazi anti-

Semitism has carried the full load of negative remembrance.” In other words, what public remembrance there is of National Socialism is recognized solely in relation to anti-Semitism and the Holocaust. Eley claims that:

. . . concentrating opprobrium in the Nazi crimes against the Jews tends to free other, less universally abhorred aspects of Nazism . . . from attention. Identifying Nazism with anti-Semitism, and in some cases with Hitler’s personal psychic and ideological obsessions, can obscure the relationship to a larger constellation of right-wing interests and beliefs (174).

Associating all of the German guilt over the Second World War with anti-Semitism and the Holocaust diverts attention away from the investigation of possible structural roots of Nazism remaining within German society at large, roots that were allowed to remain primarily because of the feeble “denazification” of Germany after the war.⁶

Bitburg provides numerous examples of overt government strategies for maintaining such a useful politically consequential public fiction. On May 5, 1985, President Ronald Reagan and Chancellor Helmut Kohl, marking the fortieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Europe, laid wreaths at Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, then traveled to Kolmeshöhe military cemetery at Bitburg where Kohl gave an address, and then both men proceeded to the U.S. Air Force Base in Bitburg where Reagan gave a short speech (Hartmann, Bitburg xv-xvi). According to Eley, “For Helmut Kohl and his

advisors, the Bitburg event was to complete Germany's post-war rehabilitation: commemorating Europe's liberation from Germany was turned into Germany's liberation from its past" (176). Maier concurs with Eley's claim and argues that "For Chancellor Kohl and his political advisers, the American president's visit was intended symbolically to wipe away that last moral residues of probation under which the Federal Republic still labored" (10).

Reagan and his advisors had other reasons for participating in the events. Brockmann points out that Bitburg was primarily an attempt "to construct a history useful to Cold War ideology" (Bitburg 161). In other words, the United States government was attempting to promote the image of West Germany as an ally against communism. Furthermore, Hartmann (Bitburg) makes the argument that ". . . the mechanics of commemoration [were] used to achieve a disburdening of memory, to 'construct' forgetfulness, and so - unfortunately - to forestall real, continuous thought about catastrophic events that mark our recent past" (1).

Not only was there a political will in both the Reagan and Kohl administrations for the Bitburg ceremonies, and not only were there numerous embarrassing statements and events resulting from the government efforts, but the Bitburg event itself created an awkward situation in which the differences between the West German and the United States public narratives collided.⁷ While Reagan balked at going to the cemetery at Bitburg publicly and eighty-five US Senators passed a resolution recommending that Reagan "reassess his

planned itinerary," his numerous statements in relation to the visit clearly revealed his intention to participate in the ceremony. For example, on March 21, 1985, Reagan claimed that "none of them [the German people] who were adults and participated in any way" in World War Two are still alive, and "very few . . . even remember the war" (quoted in Hartmann, Bitburg, xiii). Of course, such a statement was absurd in 1985, when thousands of former Nazi soldiers and functionaries would have only been in their sixties or seventies. Still, Reagan's statement articulates a vision of the West Germany as being "Nazi free." Hartmann quotes Reagan as saying on April 18, 1985 that, ". . . there's nothing wrong with visiting that cemetery where those young [SS] men are victims of Nazism also They were victims, just as surely as the victims in the concentration camps" (xiv). Both quotes indicate that in order to maintain the political myth that the Nazis suddenly became democrats, the agents responsible for the Nazi period had to disappear.

The Reagan administration was trying to contribute to the politically useful fiction of West Germany as an "ally" against communism, and in order to accomplish this goal National Socialism had to be forgotten. In effect, one strategy was to transform the actual military enemy of the United States in World War Two into a concentration camp victim! Brockman notes the irony of this transformation and explains that in order to maintain this form of mythologized history, Americans, much as the Germans themselves, must forget the fact that

hundreds of thousands of National Socialists were allowed to quietly reintegrate into West German society (Bitburg 168).

At first Reagan was reluctant to visit Dachau as part of his itinerary because he wanted “to focus on the future” and wanted to “put that history” behind him (xiii). It was only after the announcement of the visit to the cemetery that Reagan decided to visit a concentration camp as well (xiv). Anecdotes about the organization of the ceremonies reveal the trouble that was taken to manage this forgetfulness and “absent” those elements that might activate unwanted memories. Avraham Weiss relates a story about how Jews celebrating the Sabbath were ordered to leave Bergen-Belsen just before Reagan and Kohl's arrival:

At the end of the Sabbath, German police arrived at Bergen-Belsen. The officer in charge . . . told us with great emotion: ‘We have come peacefully. We have no weapons. You must leave and we have orders to escort you out.’ Although this was not the first time that German officers have been heard to say they were ‘just following orders,’ the directive to evict us, I was told later, had come from the White House (145).

Furthermore, according to Brockmann (Bitburg 168), on this day actual survivors of the concentration camp were forbidden by German police to enter the grounds of the camp as well. These “maneuvers” indicate that the ceremonies were indeed an attempt on the part of the Reagan administration to allow the world to

“forgive and forget” Germany’s National Socialist past in order to contribute to the construction of a useful Cold War fiction.

The German government was equally eager for the Bitburg ceremony. On April 15, 1985 the West German Bundestag voted 398 to 24 to defeat a motion by the Green party to eliminate the Bitburg portion of the commemorative ceremonies (Hartmann, Bitburg xv). The West German government as well wanted a well-orchestrated public ceremony to “close the book” at last on their National Socialist past, although for different reasons. Whereas the American narrative was based on the expectation that Germans suddenly became democrats (and therefore “the German people” are suddenly supposed to be Nazi-free), the Germans know that this has never been the case (although silence in this area is the preferred discursive strategy). Brockmann notes that what is “at the root of the West German narrative is the discontinuity of forgetfulness coupled uneasily with an unmistakable continuity (anti-Communists continue to be anti-Communists)” (Bitburg 168). German leaders, then, through Bitburg, were trying to get beyond (or past) Germany’s National Socialist past in part because of the need for relief from war guilt and in part to create the possibility for the kind of national consensus promoted by West German conservatives. In order to achieve both of these goals, anti-communism, along with a primary commemorative focus on the Holocaust, played pivotal roles.

The specific events related to Bitburg and the ideological purposes to which those events were devoted are not as important to this study as the ways

in which Bitburg reveals the strategic nature of public discourse related to National Socialism, and the way in which National Socialism was used to construct German national identity. According to Jürgen Habermas (Defusing), “Politicians – who no longer speak from the center of the political and public sphere but rather act as functionaries of a managerial idea that keeps them in power—founder when confronted with issues that concern the identity and self-understanding of the populace as a whole” (49). Habermas seems to have been correct in his judgment in relation to Bitburg, because, despite the conscious attempts by the Reagan and Kohl administration to forget National Socialism, their efforts met with a storm of criticism.⁸

The “managerial idea” that was botched by Kohl and Reagan could be interpreted as follows: At the end of World War Two in Europe, the United States decided to let the vast majority of Nazis reintegrate in the German society in exchange for the absolute rejection of National Socialism and a commitment to an anti-Communist, American-style, capitalist democracy. In order to transform Nazis into democrats, the National Socialist period had to be forgotten, replaced by the notion that communism was the new fascism. Once forgotten, West Germany could be transformed from a totalitarian fascist state into an anti-totalitarian (that is, anti-Communist) country. Habermas reveals the ultimate stakes of this “idea” when he points out that “Kohl was able to drag the American president in front of the cemetery cameras with a clear conscience. After all, he was only insisting on a symbolic recompense for [Reagan] having steamrolled

the stationing of [nuclear] missiles [in Germany], which also had a symbolic character” (Defusing 44). Brockmann contends that this missiles-for-forgetfulness move was the one that proved disastrous for Kohl and Reagan as “idea managers,” for “Bitburg was doubly an embarrassment because it showed that the very people who had not learned from World War Two and who wished to create a history in which the Holocaust and German war crimes did not exist were also the people who had urged the acceptance of U.S. missiles and the continued militarization of Germany” (Bitburg 170).

Ultimately, then, Kohl had hoped to turn the fortieth anniversary commemorating Europe’s liberation from Germany into Germany’s liberation from its National Socialist past, and Reagan had hoped to strengthen the fiction that democratic West Germany was a dedicated Western ally fighting communism, and the hopes of both administrations depended upon the erasure of National Socialism. Bitburg, as commemorative event, not only served to show Germany’s “reliability” as a Western ally, not only had to focus almost exclusively on German guilt in relation to the Jews (in order to divert attention from other aspects of National Socialism), and not only was meant to “close the books” on Germany’s National Socialist past, but also revealed important taboos related to public discourse.

In the end, Bitburg is a good example of public commemoration as a strategy of remembrance, a consciously planned narrative contribution to the construction of the imagined community for the benefit of the Kohl and Reagan

administrations in light of international pressures. As I will discuss later, one result of these pressures on the West Germans to maintain the public narrative “there are no Nazis anymore” was the production of various codes of displacement, or “spins” on the absence of National Socialism by both the Right and the Left. These codes are “displacements” inasmuch as they are political interpretations based on a denial of National Socialism, ways of reading history that are perhaps best revealed through a detailed analysis of the various narrative accounts of German identity provided by participants in the *Historikerstreit*. But before moving on to a discussion of the “historian’s debate,” I would like to summarize the constraints on public discourse suggested by Bitburg. Also, I would like to provide a brief introduction to German President Richard von Weizsäcker’s successful speech on May 8th, 1986 (just three days after the Bitburg ceremonies), primarily because Weizsäcker’s address was universally praised as a speech that “healed the wounds” of Bitburg.

The discursive events related to Bitburg help to clarify for rhetorical critics some important rules that informed public discourse related to the National Socialist era before the collapse of the Soviet Union and the reunification of Germany. The first rule governing public discourse in West Germany in the years prior to reunification was that any public acknowledgment of the crimes of the National Socialist era were problematic because the success of the public image of West Germany depended upon a forced forgetfulness and silence in relation to Nazism for both the Kohl and Reagan administrations. Second, to

acknowledge the perpetrators in any way was to work against the Western fiction that the Nazis had magically been transformed into good democrats.

The third rule governing public discourse at this time was that all government representatives had to reject Nazism unconditionally. If political leaders were to deal with National Socialism at all they had to be extremely careful not to provide explicit details of crimes or blame particular individuals; rather, they had to focus on the "victims." The reason why the focus must be on the victims, rather than the perpetrators, should be clear: *there were no more perpetrators left to address*, according to the conservative American and German myths. Finally, this "absence" of perpetrators contributed to the importance of Holocaust commemorations generally. Any reference to what Broszat refers to as "concrete personal responsibility" for National Socialism was not allowed, because the focus had to be on the victims, where social agreement could be reached more easily than in the attribution of guilt (79). Corroborating Broszat's observation, Elisabeth Domansky argues that:

West Germany's remembrance of the Holocaust . . . [served] the purpose of establishing its international reputation as a reliable member of the Western Alliance and of creating a consensus within the country about her newly achieved mastery in 'coming to terms with the past.' In order to serve this purpose, the Holocaust has to be remembered in a specific way, however. Although it had become publicly accepted to admit Germany's guilt, remembrance had to focus on the victims, not on the

perpetrators. Only the victims' suffering allowed for a unified and unifying response to Germany's Nazi past (70).

In other words, within West Germany it was relatively easy to get everyone to agree that the Jews were treated badly, and it was almost impossible to get anyone to agree on who did the mistreating.

Bitburg also revealed that if National Socialism were to be remembered it had to be remembered in a very specific way. And while Reagan and Kohl's public discourse ultimately failed (primarily because it was based on a forgetfulness that too many were unwilling to accept), Weizsäcker's speech on May 8, 1985 did not. In fact, two of the strongest critics of Reagan and Kohl, Geoffrey Hartmann (Bitburg 9) and Jürgen Habermas (Defusing 49), both believe that Weizsäcker's speech was a noble one, and I will return to Weizsäcker's address later in order to determine how he managed to succeed where Kohl and Jenninger failed. Before analyzing these West German articulations of national identity, though, there are a number of additional constraints on West German public discourse related to National Socialism that can be isolated by investigating the arguments put forward during the *Historikerstreit*.

The *Historikerstreit*: Additional Limits on Public Discourse in West Germany

While the Bitburg ceremonies reveal several constraints on public discourse resulting from international ideological maneuvering, the

Historikerstreit concerns battles between political factions within Germany itself over how national identity should be constructed. Whereas Bitburg revealed that the “West German miracle is dependent not on transformation but on the erasure of memory” (Brockmann, Bitburg, 170), the *Historikerstreit* revealed how that forgetfulness can be functionalized for other, more specific intranational political purposes. Arguably, this “erasure of memory” has resulted in wall of silence that Adorno refers to as a “cold forgetting” rather than a successful reprocessing of the past (Bitburg 124). By combining the more general constraints revealed by Bitburg with the specific posturings of the Left and the Right within Germany revealed by the *Historikerstreit*, I believe that most of the reasons why Weizsäcker’s, Kohl’s, and Jenninger’s speeches were variously “successful” will be more readily apparent.

The *Historikerstreit* was fundamentally a struggle between historians who were arguing for particular forms of imagined national culture.⁹ One of the two general camps engaged in this debate are those who represent the *Tendenzwende*, or the conservative turn in German historiography, such as Ernst Nolte, Michael Stürmer, Joachim Fest, and Andreas Hillgruber. Basically, these thinkers argued that it was the job of historians and public officials to proactively seek to construct a strong, conventional national identity which, coincidentally, required a “normalization” of the National Socialist period (Brozsat; Nolte, *The Past*; Fest). On the other side, opposed to these conservative historians, was a range of “critical” philosophers and historians

such as Jürgen Habermas, Hans Mommsen, Jürgen Kocka, and Heinrich August Winkler. Predominantly, these thinkers were concerned about the “packaging” of history by the Right, the importance of “learning from history,” and the importance of promoting constitutional, rather than culture-based, national identity (Habermas, *Settlement*; Mommsen, *W.*; Kocka; Winkler, *Eternally*).

Representatives of the Right argued that critical history and international pressures were dangerously undermining Germany’s national pride, and thereby the nation state’s political/hegemonic base. Something needed to be done, they argued, in order to come to terms with National Socialism and rebuild a sense of German identity from Germany’s rich cultural past. Furthermore, as indicated earlier, conservatives also wanted to please the West in order to maintain Germany’s international standing as a “reliable” member of NATO (Maier 10; Habermas, *Settlement*, 41). Again, avoiding the National Socialist period was an integral part of the conservative strategy for national identity.

The historian Ernst Nolte (*The Past*) transgressed the limits of the public conservative strategy of utter rejection and dismissal of the National Socialist period when he suggested in an essay that appeared in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* entitled “*Vergangenheit, die nicht vergehen will: Eine Rede, die geschrieben, aber nicht gehalten werden konnte*” (The past that will not pass: A speech that was written but could not be delivered), that National Socialism could likely have been a response to Russian communism.¹⁰ In other words, Nolte attempted to explain that, at least in a certain sense, National Socialism

was an “understandable” reaction to the rise of Bolshevism. This move, of course, went against the public strategy of totally rejecting and dismissing National Socialism altogether, and was uncomfortable for both the Right and the Left. While this was not the first time the conservative historian had made such a suggestion, Jürgen Habermas took objection to the essay and responded publicly in an article that appeared in the German newspaper Die Zeit on July 11, 1986 entitled “*Eine Art Schadensabwicklung: Die apologetischen Tendenzen in der deutschen Zeitgeschichtsschreibung*” (A kind of settlement of damages: The apologetic tendencies in German Historiography) (Habermas, Settlement). Together, these two essays are generally considered to be the seminal texts in the *Historikerstreit*.

Habermas and Nolte's articles initiated an extended public debate among historians, intellectuals, and politicians throughout 1986 and 1987, and as Ely notes, the “clash . . . occupied public space between summer 1986 and the elections of January 1987 with an intensity that is hard to imagine in the English-speaking world: one bibliography counts 136 separate items in this period, overwhelmingly from the quality press” (177). As the conservative responses from, for example, Nolte, Michael Stürmer, and Andreas Hillgrüber began to accumulate, it became clear that the Right had very specific strategies for dealing with National Socialism. Nolte, perhaps the most extreme of the conservative historians, basically argued that National Socialism was comparable to other genocidal movements of the twentieth century:

Did the Nazis carry out, did Hitler carry out, an 'Asiatic' deed perhaps only because they saw themselves and their kind as the potential or actual victims of an 'Asiatic' deed [to come]? Wasn't the Gulag Archipelago more original than Auschwitz? Wasn't 'class murder' by the Bolsheviks logically and actually prior to 'racial murder' by the Nazis? (The Past 22)

Nolte's comparison sparked a number of complaints from those who believed that such a move was tantamount to relativizing, and thereby seeking to minimize, the Holocaust (Habermas, Settlement; Kocka). Hans Mommsen and other moderates stepped in to point out that comparison in itself was unavoidable in historiography, but that steps should be taken to ensure that comparison is not tantamount to minimization (114). Still, the conservatives were constantly charged by the Left with the crime of minimization.

Stürmer, who, as stated earlier, was at one point an advisor to Helmut Kohl and who remains a spokesman for the conservatives, argues for the construction of a more positive view of German history (How Much 197). Eley argues that Stürmer wants to present a view of German history fundamentally without Nazism, for "only by circumventing Nazism will the historic bases of national identity be regained . . . and [unless the circumvention is accomplished] the German 'guilt-obsession' will continue to block a more balanced approach to the national past" (180).

Stürmer argued that the "national question" required the "affirmation and development of the Atlantic and European ties of our country," but also believed

that the government should play an active role in creating a sense of (conventional/cultural) national pride. Stürmer furthermore stated that "The search for a lost past is not an abstract striving for culture and education. It is morally legitimate and politically necessary. We are dealing with the inner continuity of the German republic and its predictability in foreign policy terms (Indictment 17). Jürgen Kocka responded to Stürmer's comments by arguing that such statements were proof that a "consensual past" (85) was being constructed by the Right, and Hans Mommsen noted that, "Only through the collective endowment of higher meaning by means of historiography could the endangered political consensus be secure for the long term. The alternative would be, Stürmer emphasizes, that the conflict between opposing interests and values could lead to a civil war" (108). Eley contends, and Bitburg seems to bear him out, that C.D.U./C.S.U. politicians were "engaged in the calculating normalizing of German history, the reappropriating for patriotic purposes of a national past whose availability was previously compromised by Nazism" (203).

For critics on the Left, Nolte was trying to minimize National Socialism "horizontally" through cross-comparisons, and Stürmer was trying to minimize National Socialism "vertically" by dispersing it within the entire "German tradition." Adding to such concerns was the fact that Stürmer (cited in Eley) explicitly argued for controls on education in order to achieve a certain level of patriotism.

If we [Germans] fail to agree on an elementary cultural curriculum, which can prepare the way for continuity and consensus in our country, and which can provide once again the measure and mode of patriotism, then the Federal Republic of Germany may well find that the best part of its history is behind it (181).

Stürmer's views were clearly shared not only by Andreas Hillgruber, who argued that West German historians had a responsibility to provide a "counterpart image" (160) to East German portrayal of history, but also by the political leaders of the CDU, of which Richard von Weizsäcker, Helmut Kohl, and Philipp Jenninger are members. For example, a campaign speech by CDU presidential candidate Joseph Strauss in January, 1987, made explicit calls for "a purified national consciousness," arguing that "German history cannot be presented as an endless chain of mistakes and crime, and our youth thereby robbed of the chance to recover some genuine backbone" (Strauss, cited in Eley, 182). Kohl followed the same discursive strategy, stating that "Whoever steals the younger generation's historical understanding also steals the future" (Kohl, cited in Eley, 194).

In the *Historikerstreit* then, the Right engaged in the following code of displacement: In order to maintain the political myth that Nazis had suddenly become good democrats, the period of National Socialism had to at least be minimized or relativized. Guilt over National Socialism was undermining a "healthy" national consciousness, a "patriotism" capable of being called upon in

case Germany had to “defend itself” (Glucksman, cited in Stürmer, *How Much*, 196), and something had to be done about it. CDU politicians generally managed the displacement of National Socialism by maintaining a repentant public posture, completely dissociating themselves from the National Socialist era, constantly apologizing on commemorative occasions related to the Nazi era (particularly the Holocaust), and focusing solely on the victims.

Of course, both the Left and the Right were “packaging” history. The Left’s narrative ran something like this: whatever the Right does in discussing National Socialism is risky right wing manipulation of cultural identity in the service of capitalist ideology and is tantamount to National Socialist relativization, and to some extent, justification. The “battle” between these competing narratives, though, was not necessarily entirely negative, although there were negative consequences. Some of the conservative historians did indeed see their job as engaging in “history wars” (Hillgruber 160; Stürmer, *How Much*), but as S.P.D. Secretary Peter Glotz stated in remarking on the *Historikerstreit*, “The need to take bearings and self-knowledge, but also self-confidence and pride from one’s own history is not automatically right-wing” (Glotz, cited in Eley, 196). In fact, according to Glotz, the reactions of the Left revealed the important role played by the Right in spurring West Germany to productive public debate, and the result was arguably a healthy battle of ideas in the public sphere (Eley 197).

Such a “battle” between Left and Right ideologies was also exemplified in the student revolts of the late sixties. According to Domansky:

In protesting the continuities between the Third Reich and West Germany and attacking the attitudes of denial and the overall silence about the Third Reich that were so characteristic of the 1950s and 1960s, the generation of 1968 not only rebelled against the West German political system but constituted itself *ex post facto* as the very resistance movement against the Third Reich that their parents had failed to create (72).

But Domansky also argues that these “efforts of uncovering” the structural and political continuities between National Socialism and West German democracy “became the magic ritual that liberated all those who participated in it from the burden of precisely that past that they were unearthing” (72). This “magical” discursive move results in the following fiction: “we” contemporary Germans are good democrats who had nothing to do with National Socialism, the burden of guilt falls on those who fail to confront the past, and the Right is charged with the legacy of Germany’s undemocratic past. Therefore another constraint on those engaged in public discourse related to National Socialism might be the necessity of avoiding accusing anyone on the Left from being associated with the guilt of the perpetrators, since the Left primarily sees itself as being the “resistance” to National Socialism, whose fascist roots are now reemerging in the ideology of the conservatives.

While both conservatives and liberals distance themselves from National Socialism for different reasons, they also have different conceptions of national

identity that are perhaps best contrasted through an explanation of the differing views of Stürmer and Habermas. Basically, Habermas follows in the socio-philosophical footsteps of Karl Jaspers, although he comes out of the Frankfurt school (of Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer). According to Wolfgang Mommsen, professor of modern history at Düsseldorf, from the end of the 1950s on there was a slow movement on the part of critical historians towards reorienting national consciousness, where “the newer generation. . . relentlessly laid bare the authoritarian traits of the *Kaiserreich* [rule of the Kaisers] and the antidemocratic mentality of the Weimer period” in order to open up space for a new democratic order (205). Karl Jaspers (cited in W. Mommsen) argued during the 1960s that the national idea “was outmoded” and that, “In the present international historical situation . . . a moral mission of leadership falls to the German people. They can fulfill this imperative by making a symbolic act and departing forever from the national idea” (206).

Along with the rejection of the Herderian notion of ethnic nationalism there was a move within German circles toward a rational form of “constitutional patriotism” (Leicht 245).¹¹ Habermas concurred with Leicht when he claimed that “The only patriotism that will not estrange us from the West is a constitutional patriotism” (Settlement 43). Lauding what he referred to as a “post-conventional identity,” Habermas asserted that Stürmer, other conservative historians, and the CDU were working instead for “a revisionist history in the service of a nationalist renovation of conventional identity” (42). These distinctions between

conventional and post-conventional identities played an important role in both Nolte's and Habermas's lines of thinking (Baldwin 6).

On the one hand, Habermas was concerned about the way in which conservatives were attempting, in his opinion, to create an ideological climate that built upon a purely "conventional" identity. On the other hand, Nolte was very much against any vague notion of postconventional identity, which he associated with the rise of capitalism *and* communism and the loss of traditional, conventional identity. On the Right, then, there was a profound distrust of the kinds of unstable identities that result from a post-conventional attitude where identities are recognized as socially constructed (in part because those identities cannot be called upon for collective action), and on the Left there was a profound distrust of those who would attempt to create a strong, culturally based national identity among Germans.

Amazingly, Nolte could be seen as arguing, through his notion of "transcendence," that National Socialism was a last stand, the last gasp of a form of cultural/ethnic/traditional identity against an encroaching, increasingly global, post-conventional identity embodied by both communism and capitalism.

According to Maier:

Transcendence has been a key Nolte concept. It refers to a sort of metaphysical modernization, to the progressive emancipation of humanity from existence as contingent creatures defined by family, village, workplace, or national loyalty -- all the rich specificity of roles that

conservatives celebrate -- to being autonomous individuals, unconstrained by traditional roles -- but atomistic and existentially lonely (26-27).

In many ways, then, conservatives in West Germany were arguably defending conventional identity, while liberals were defending post-conventional identity. That is, conservatives were defending the power of essentialism in constructing strong motivations in people and protecting them from atomization in the service of capitalism and communism, while liberals were attacking essentialism because of its association with overidentification and the tendency of authoritarians to use essentialism to further their own political aims.

Nonetheless, embedded within this struggle between traditional, conventional, cultural identity and post-conventional identity based on a "constitutional patriotism," what is the varying ways in which history is selectively appropriated. According to Domansky:

The Left and the Right argue their respective positions within radically different frameworks, but they both dehistoricize the Third Reich by only accepting for themselves and for Germany selected parts of Germany's history during those twelve years. In fundamentally different and yet very similar ways, the Left and the Right have again met in the effort to repress memory (74).

The primary reason why the National Socialist period had to be dismissed by representatives of both the Left and the Right (or those attacking and those

defending the Reagan/Kohl style of capitalist democracy) is perhaps most clearly explained by Brockmann:

It is not a coincidence that the dominant ideologies of both the Western and Eastern power blocks are incapable of dealing with the reality of fascism, for fascism as a third element necessarily destroys the symmetry of the ideological bipolar opposition. Hence Western ideologists [e.g. Kohl and Reagan] must view fascism as a kind of socialism (emphasis on *National Socialism*), a totalitarianism essentially equivalent to Soviet Communism, and Eastern ideologists [e.g. the official history of East Germany, and to some extent critics of the Kohl and Reagan governments] must view fascism as a kind of capitalism, the desperate ploy of the bourgeois capitalism *in extremis* (emphasis on *National Socialism*). For each, fascism becomes a kind of metaphor for the ideological Other (Bitburg 171).

Therefore anyone attempting publicly to “explain” National Socialism would at the same time be making some kind of ideological judgment along one of these two lines, making *any* explanation of the National Socialist era a controversial one.

To use Domansky’s words, within Germany itself the fiction of the Right is that “West Germany Remembers and Rejects the Holocaust” (thus allowing the fascist roots within West German capitalism to go unchecked) while the fiction of the Left is that “The West German Left Resists the Recurrence of Fascism” (thus

allowing the Left to completely dissociate itself from any traces of the fascist legacy within West Germany's capitalist democracy) (71). That is, while the Right rejects the National Socialist period in part to restore national/cultural patriotism and in part to maintain Germany's international image as a fascist-free democracy, the Left argues that such rejection and restoration amounts to little more than a smokescreen against the advancement of the political interests of the capitalist Right. In the same stroke, the Left manages to escape any real responsibility for, or ties to, the National Socialist era. Fascism, then, has been fictionalized by both the Left and the Right, and these fictions are mirrored respectively by the official histories of East Germany (GDR) and West Germany (FRG). The GDR argues that fascism was the result of capitalism out of control, therefore wiping its hands from National Socialist guilt. The FRG, on the whole, has placed its ideological stakes with NATO and/or the Western democracies, with conservative West German politicians identifying with NATO and promoting conventional identity and liberals identifying with the concept of democracy and promoting post-conventional identity.

Strategies of Remembrance in Pre-Unification West Germany

Before developing a detailed description of public speeches that exemplify how these strategies concerning the use of history by the Right and the Left in Germany play out in the public discourse of Germany's political

leaders, I would like to briefly recap how those strategies place particular limits (constraints) on public speakers who would address the National Socialist period. Within West Germany between 1985 and 1988 the strategy of the Right was to construct a historical fiction based on the narratives “Nazis suddenly become democrats” and “West Germany remembers and rejects the Holocaust.” In order to maintain the “correct” international posture, National Socialism was associated with totalitarianism that in turn was associated with communism. In exchange, the Reagan administration was willing to “forgive and forget” the National Socialist era as well as the remaining Nazis living within West Germany. Finally, the Holocaust carried the full load of negative remembrance in relation to National Socialism.

In order to maintain its “proper” public image, public commemorative discourse in relation to National Socialism for Germany's Right was expected to:

- 1) not concretely discuss the National Socialist period (because this would stir up memories of things best forgotten);
- 2) not discuss the National Socialist period, and if the National Socialist period were referred to then the statement had to be *immediately* followed by a condemnation and a dismissal;
- 3) not discuss the perpetrators of National Socialist crimes, for the speaker had to focus on the victims, not the perpetrators (because there were no more perpetrators);
- 4) not fail to speak of the “guilt” and “shame” of the German people, for public discourse had to be peppered with such phrases because commemoration was actually a way of getting around responsibility for National Socialism; and
- 5) not

directly accuse the German people generally, but find a way to praise "German" character despite the unfortunate past (because the ultimate goal of commemorative discourse was to rebuild a conventional national identity).

The strategy of remembrance for the Left during this period was based on the narratives "We are the resistance that never existed during the National Socialist era so we have nothing to do with it" and "The West German Left resists the recurrence of fascism within the Right." Conservative historians and politicians were seen as being the protectors of the guilty, the whitewashers of history, and the promoters of a militarized West Germany. Furthermore, the Left generally associated the National Socialist period with capitalism, and saw those who were trying to reconstruct a conventional national identity as a threat to constitutional patriotism and the freedom of postconventional identity. That is, the Left generally believed that the Right sought to construct an essentialized national identity in order to create an allegiance to the nation (based on the moral and/or ethnic superiority of the imagined national community) that would take precedence over individual rights protected by constitutional law and simultaneously obscure the socially constructed nature of national identity.¹² By promoting such articulations, the Left was able to dissociate itself completely from National Socialism, and lay the entire burden of guilt on the Right. Finally, constantly remembering the Holocaust was seen as a way of ensuring that an overzealous return to a conventional form of patriotism, a patriotism that could be appropriated for militaristic purposes, could be avoided.

In order to maintain its “proper” public image, public commemorative discourse in relation to National Socialism for Germany’s Left was expected to:

- 1) never accuse anyone in the Left of being a perpetrator (because the Left was the resistance);
- 2) avoid attempts to “explain” National Socialism (because any explanation could easily be used by the Right as a tool for minimization and/or justification);
- 3) follow any mention of the National Socialist period with immediate condemnation and dismissal;
- 4) focus on the victims, not the perpetrators (because the Right was the perpetrators, and the victims should be given voice);
- and 5) find a way to praise the new German democracy (because the ultimate goal of commemorative discourse was strengthen the liberal traditions embedded – although not necessarily promoted – within the capitalist system).

Conclusion

In the late 1980s, conservative West German historians and politicians were, perhaps unwittingly, using the Holocaust as a dumping ground for Germany’s war guilt, and the Holocaust was commemorated precisely in order to forget about National Socialism. Furthermore, this forgetfulness was strategically being “capitalized” on in order to build a new form of conventional German identity. Liberals, perhaps unwittingly, denied any complicity with the National Socialist era because they saw themselves as the opposition to capitalist/fascist/ethnic national identity in general.

Conservatives maintained that Germany needed to have a healthy national identity in order to be a stable international partner, while liberals maintained that the Holocaust had to always problematize Germany identity in order to ensure against a relapse into Fascist totalitarianism. Both conservatives and liberals agreed that National Socialism had to be dealt with very carefully, but they likely did not realize that the “care” was required because National Socialism was being used for the creation of an ideological Other for both camps. It was, therefore, almost impossible for a public speaker to successfully negotiate through these constraints, for any attempt to discuss the National Socialist period would likely transgress the limits imposed by either the Right or the Left. The challenges presented by such a difficult negotiation perhaps suggest why the speech of President Weizsäcker on May 8, 1985 was so universally admired, and Weizsäcker’s speech, I contend, will ultimately prove to be a helpful site for recognizing how these discursive limits *are* “successfully” negotiated.

The ultimate question, of course, is what a “successful” negotiation, a confirmation of both fictions, entails. Whereas Weizsäcker’s speech seemed to “heal the wounds” of Bitburg, Bundestag President Philipp Jenninger’s speech on the 50th anniversary of the *Reichskristallnacht* was a disaster (for Jenninger). But again, what does “disaster” mean if it is no more than the shattering of politically useful fictions? In the end, it is probably a matter of the uses to which the fictions are put. Regardless, what the preceding analysis has sought to

reveal is how public discourse related to West German national identity was highly constrained by National Socialism. There were, it would appear, established strategies of remembrance that, while contested to some degree, were nonetheless temporarily established for both the Left and the Right. I now turn to a critical analysis of public discourse by conservative West German leaders in order to investigate the ways in which these strategies were "negotiated" in the years leading up to German reunification.

Notes to Chapter Three

¹ The parameters of this investigation are not meant to suggest that the German identity crisis has not continued in reunified Germany, for it has.

² For an extended discussion of the German *Sonderweg* theory, and the general rejection of that theory among contemporary historians in Germany, see Maier esp. 102-115.

³ Not only has the reunification of the two German states significantly altered the nature of the public identity debates in recent years, but in 1996 Daniel Goldhagen's Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust, a best-seller in the United States, sparked a flood of discursive reactions. Goldhagen, Daniel J. Hitler's Willing Executions: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust. (New York: Knopf, 1996). While the controversy surrounding Goldhagen's book is beyond the scope of this study, it marks yet another chapter in the ongoing drama concerning German identity and the question of German guilt. At the University of Washington, on 6 June 1996, a colloquium was held by the German department to discuss reactions to the book. One elderly German in attendance remarked that "most people in Germany didn't know anything about the Jews -- a remark that sparked heated responses from others in attendance. Clearly, the issue of German identity in relation to the *Kriegsschuldfrage* has not been resolved.

⁴ For the sake of easy categorization of the basic constraints placed on German public speakers when dealing with the National Socialist period, I have

oversimplified the debate considerably by labeling various historians, politicians, and intellectuals as members of the Left or the Right. In fact, such dichotomies are only useful heuristically, since there is a large middle ground. Furthermore, within German politics the Right and the Left are themselves rather dissimilar to the Right and the Left in the United States. Basically, members of the CDU (Christian Democrats) are similar to Republicans in the United States, and generally attempt to enact a conservative agenda. Members of the SPD (Social Democratic Party) and the Greens represent the Left, which is frequently associated with workers rights, environmental issues, etc. Additionally, the Left is frequently associated with communism as much as with liberalism. In a sense, then, the Left in Germany can be more radical than democrats in the United States, and constitutional liberalism (as opposed to fascist or communist totalitarianism) belongs to neither the German Left or Right exclusively.

⁵ Broszat's essay (in German) originally appeared in 1985 under the title "Plädoyer für eine Historisierung des Nationalsozialismus." *Merkur*, 39, nos. 3-4, pp. 373-385.

⁶ There are historical schools that do deal with the social/structural roots of Nazism (e.g. the Bielefeld School; Wolfgang Mommsen's German Historical Institute in London, and the *Alltagsgeschichte* movement), but these schools are generally met with disdain and distrust by conservatives in Germany.

⁷ The various statements and events surrounding Bitburg were embarrassing primarily for those who were attempting to defend the notion that

Germany was willing and able to directly confront its National Socialist past; a notion that clearly ran counter to the strategies of the conservative Reagan and Kohl administrations.

⁸ For a sample of the numerous reactions to Bitburg, see Hartmann (Bitburg). His book reveals that the efforts on the part of both the Reagan and Kohl administrations were critically attacked by a wide variety of American and German commentators. Also see Brockmann (Bitburg), esp. 169-170.

⁹ The literature on the *Historikerstreit* is extensive. For fairly comprehensive treatments of the debate, see Forever in the Shadow of Hitler. Trans. James Knowlton and Truett Cates (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press International). This book is a translation of the original German edition compiled by Ernst Reinhard Piper entitled *Historikerstreit: Die Dokumentation der Kontroverse um die Einzigartigkeit der nationalsozialistischen Judenvernichtung* (Germany: Piper, 1987). See also Peter Baldwin, Ed. Reworking the Past: Hitler, the Holocaust, and the Historians' Debate. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1990); and Yad Vashem Studies, XIX, 1988.

¹⁰ Nolte's essay originally appeared in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* on June 6, 1986, and was written primarily as a response to his being denied an invitation to speak at the annual "Römerberg Colloquium" in Frankfurt. His "disinvitation" was seen as a direct rebuff to his attempts to compare the National Socialist period to Russian atrocities. See Eley, esp. 172-174.

¹¹ The notion of post-conventional identity and constitutional patriotism can be understood as the direct opposite of ethnic-nationalist patriotism based on an essentialist belief in the superiority of one's culture and/or race. Post-conventional identity recognizes the socially constructed nature of identity, and constitutional patriotism is a patriotism based on allegiance to a set of laws protecting certain individual rights (as opposed to a relatively blind allegiance to the state in the absence of constitutional protections). The primary shortcoming of these positions is the lack of attention to the problems created when the post-conventional constitutional patriot is confronted by the violent nationalist Other.

¹² Capitalism does not equal constitutional patriotism, although capitalism is usually accompanied by constitutional forms of government. Many members of the Left would argue that there is a significant difference between radical democracy and capitalist democracy. For an example of such an argument, see Laclau and Mouffe.

Chapter Four

The Remembrance of National Socialism in West German Commemorative Addresses: 1985-1988.

Between the years 1985 and 1988, three commemorative speeches related to the National Socialist era exemplify the ways in which ideological codes structured remembrance and articulated national identity in West Germany prior to reunification: Richard von Weizsäcker's address to the West German parliament on May 8, 1985 in a ceremony commemorating the fortieth anniversary of the end of the War in Europe; and Helmut Kohl's and Philipp Jenninger's commemorative speeches marking the fiftieth anniversary of the *Kristallnacht*. Weizsäcker's address met with universal acclaim, providing a model to which Kohl's and Jenninger's later addresses would be compared. Additionally, the speech corresponds closely with the strategies of remembrance outlined in chapter three. An exploration of these three speeches suggests that public discourse related to the remembrance of National Socialism in Germany can be conceptualized as being limited by particular generic expectations based on codes of the unsayable. That is, the relative success of Weizsäcker's and Kohl's speeches and the relative failure of Jenninger's can be understood according to the ways in which they either obeyed or transgressed prevailing strategies of remembrance.

After reviewing several of the ways in which strategies of remembrance are instantiated in Weizsäcker's address, I will compare that address with others

delivered three years later by Helmut Kohl and Philipp Jenninger. Together, the three speeches by conservative government leaders reflect how “success” and “failure” on occasions where statesmen were called upon to articulate visions of national identity were closely related to strategies of remembrance.¹ Success and failure in public remembrance of National Socialism mirrored at this time the degree to which speeches conformed or failed to conform to the dominant fictions of national identity related to the *Kriegschuldfrage* (literally, the war guilt question), and these fictions in turn were governed in part by strategies of remembrance. While the controversies surrounding Bitburg and those comprising the *Historikerstreit* focused on the uses for, and ramifications of, National Socialist remembrance, these three speeches exemplify the ways in which political leaders articulated visions of German national identity. Reactions to Weizsäcker’s address from critics and the press were very positive, but what kind of national identity was he advocating? Jenninger was condemned. But how did the national identity he advocated differ from Weizsäcker’s and Kohl’s? Are strategies of remembrance politically consequential, and are there “better” or “worse” ways of articulating a fictional national identity? These are some of the questions that the following analyses seek to investigate.

Richard von Weizsäcker: Remembrance for Reunification.

The most famous and successful commemorative address in West Germany between the years 1985 and 1988 was President Richard von Weizsäcker's speech in the Bundestag during the ceremony commemorating the fortieth anniversary of the end of the war in Europe on May 8th, 1985.² Most critics praised the speech and argued that Weizsäcker had broken new ground by publicly acknowledging the criminality of the Nazi regime (Friedländer; Ash; Habermas, Defusing). However, from the critical perspective of strategic remembrance, it would appear that Weizsäcker's speech was successful not because it encouraged a direct investigation into the causes and results of National Socialism, but because it encouraged a form of remembrance ultimately in the service of forgetfulness. That is, while Weizsäcker's speech is generally considered by many West Germans to be an exemplary model by which other commemorative addresses can be compared (Girnth; *Im Schatten*; Maier; *Blick*), I maintain that the address was successful at a certain price, for as Domansky has noted, "Weizsäcker . . . never challenged [the] new avoidance strategy of his country in his much acclaimed speeches, but rather expressed it quite beautifully" (75-76).

The occasion for Weizsäcker's address came just at the end of the ceremonies that had been marred by the controversial events at Kohlmeshöhe cemetery only days before, so critics of the conservative government had been

sharpening their knives and were eagerly waiting to see how Weizsäcker would handle the culminating ceremony in the Bundestag. The government had announced that the slogan for the event would be "Freedom or Totalitarianism," a slogan that allowed the government to avoid the use of the term National Socialism and at the same time vaguely suggest that the choice was actually between freedom and communism (Habermas, *Defusing*, 47). But according to most accounts in the German press, Weizsäcker's speech dealt "effectively" with National Socialism. Habermas himself, a long time critic of the conservative government, stated that "the address to the parliament by . . . Weizsäcker . . . strikes me as one of the few political speeches that does justice to the demands made on us by twelve years of Nazi rule and the forty years since' (49). Saul Friedländer, another staunch critic of Germany's "struggles with memory" argued that:

Richard von Weizsäcker [did] not avoid a detailed enumeration of Nazi crimes, and he stressed, with great sincerity and courage, the central place of the destruction of the Jewish people in Nazi ideology and practice. For the Western reader and certainly for the Jewish reader, Weizsäcker's address is an exemplary admission of the utter criminality of the Nazi state (33).

Timothy Ash, another of Kohl's critics, stated that Weizsäcker's speech was "magnificent," and that "[t]he problem of guilt was . . . addressed in an exemplary fashion" (200). Such comments, especially coming from those who normally are

critical of conservative policies and public addresses, point to how “successful” Weizsäcker’s address actually was.

Weizsäcker’s Commemoration of “The End of National Socialist Tyranny”

Weizsäcker’s address begins with the usual comments concerning the importance of the commemorative events generally, then moves into an introduction of the themes that will guide the address: the importance of looking at the “truth without distortion,” and the importance of focusing on the victims of National Socialism. Arguably, these two themes mask an important contradiction: focusing on the victims alone cuts out consideration of the perpetrators, thus “distorting” remembrance. Nonetheless, these two themes permeate Weizsäcker’s entire speech, along with a third which provides a series of consolations, mitigating factors, and justifications before ending on a mildly chastising note.

Weizsäcker focused on the first two themes in the opening paragraphs of his speech. He stated in the second sentence of the second paragraph that “We [Germans] must find our own standards. We are not assisted in this task if we or others spare our feelings. We need and have the strength to look truth straight in the eye - without embellishment and without distortion.” Immediately following these words, Weizsäcker added “For us, the 8th of May is above all a date to remember what people had to suffer” (Weizsäcker 262).³ Therefore, from the

very beginning of the address, Weizsäcker engaged in what could be read as a significant incompatibility. Although Weizsäcker suggested that he would “spare” no “feelings” and would “look truth straight in the eye without embellishment and without distortion,” his speech, as I endeavor to show through the following analysis, articulated a German identity that provided comfort to the German people by avoiding any detailed discussion of the National Socialist period. Furthermore, Weizsäcker “spared feelings” and “distorted” German remembrance by associating the commemoration of the end of National Socialism with victims rather than perpetrators. In doing so, Weizsäcker managed to avoid any discussions of responsibility for the suffering caused by the German people, and instead blended the suffering Germans caused with the suffering they endured as a result of National Socialism.

The second section of Weizsäcker’s speech consisted of a lengthy list of the various “victims,” and the list is instructive. But before enumerating the “victims” of National Socialism, Weizsäcker once again emphasized the importance of “undistorted truthfulness” when he stated that “Remembering means recalling an occurrence honestly and undistortedly so that it becomes a part of our very beings. This places high demands on our truthfulness” (263).⁴ Then, after reemphasizing the association between “undistorted truth” and a sole focus on “victimage,” Weizsäcker began to list the “victims:” the “dead of the war,” “the six million Jews who were murdered,” “all nations who suffered in the war (including the Soviet Union and Poland),” “German compatriots who died as

soldiers (or during air raids at home, in captivity or during expulsion),” “the Sinti and Romany gypsies,” “the homosexuals and the mentally ill who were killed,” those “persecuted for religious or political beliefs,” “hostages who were executed,” “victims of the resistance movements in the occupied countries (including the public, the military, the churches, the workers and trade unions, and the communists),” those “who did not actively resist, but preferred to die instead of violating their consciences,” those who suffered from “compulsory sterilization,” “during the air raids,” “during flight and expulsion,” “because of rape and pillage, forced labor, injustice and torture, hunger and hardship,” “because of fear of arrest and death,” and “grief at the loss of everything which one had wrongly believed in and hoped for.” Finally, Weizsäcker added that “Perhaps the greatest burden was borne by the women of all nations” who “mourned their fallen fathers and sons, husbands, brothers, and friends” (263-264).⁵

This passage was sophisticated in that it helped to identify a wide number of groups who could think of themselves as victims of National Socialism. Weizsäcker broke new ground by acknowledging the suffering of women, communists, Polish émigrés, and homosexuals. Usually West German National Socialist remembrance had been limited to Germans and Jews, so Weizsäcker not only expanded the number of people to be considered victims (thus widening the base of identification), but also simultaneously managed to place side by side the suffering of “all nations” with the suffering of “German compatriots.” This move helped turn perpetrators into victims.

Section three consisted of a series of statements that sought to minimize the active participation of the German people in National Socialism, and at the same time stressed the “unspeakable” nature of the Holocaust. While the previous section sought to identify and level the broad field of victims, this one sought to minimize and dismiss the field of perpetrators. Before the passages where he minimized German participation in National Socialism, Weizsäcker used a couple of carefully balanced sentences that foreshadowed the divisions in the *Historikerstreit* (those, like Nolte, who argued for relativization of the Holocaust, and those who argued for its singularity) by stating that “Hardly any country has in its history always remained free from blame for war or violence. The genocide of the Jews is, however, unparalleled in history” (Weizsäcker 264).⁶ This pattern of minimization followed by judgment, or conversely judgment followed by minimization, continued throughout the address. But in this section, minimization was at its peak.

Not only did Weizsäcker imply that other countries were also guilty at times, section three was peppered with phrases that directly worked at minimizing the guilt of the everyday German. For example: “At the root of the tyranny was Hitler’s immeasurable hatred against our Jewish compatriots;” “The perpetration of this crime [the Holocaust] was in the hands of a few people;” “There were many ways of not burdening one’s conscience, of shunning responsibility, looking away, keeping mum;” “Everyone who directly experienced that era should today quietly ask himself about his involvement then;” “. . . the

unspeakable truth of the Holocaust;" "The vast majority of today's population were either children then or had not been born" (264)⁷ Granted, these statements are nestled among numerous phrases claiming that all of the German people are affected by the consequences of the Holocaust and that remembrance is crucial, but nonetheless, underlying these phrases was a subtle subtext. Fundamentally, in this section Weizsäcker was saying that National Socialism can be reduced to the Holocaust, that the Holocaust can be reduced to Hitler and "was in the hands of a few people," that the majority of Germans were children or had not been born yet, and that the crimes are "unspeakable" anyway. Additionally, by asking those in the audience who might have been guilty to "quietly ask themselves about [their] involvement," Weizsäcker suggests that judgments of guilt (and responsibility?) for National Socialism should be "quiet" and personal (not "loud" and public).

So, in the end, the purpose of remembrance was not to uncover the causes of National Socialism nor to try to understand why millions of German citizens allowed, promoted, or actively supported the various crimes against humanity perpetrated by the National Socialists. Rather, according to Weizsäcker, "As humans we seek reconciliation . . . [because] there can be no reconciliation without remembrance" (Weizsäcker 265).⁸ That is, Germans sought to remember in order to be forgiven, not in order to understand how the crimes could have been committed in the first place. Finally, having determined that remembrance must focus on the victims, reduce National Socialist crimes to

the Holocaust, and reduce responsibility for the Holocaust to “a handful of people,” Weizsäcker concluded section three with yet another series of statements in support of “remembrance.”

Section four consisted of a series of statements suggesting that the state of Germany was not really the instigator of the Second World War, and concluded with a statement to the effect that the Germans were its ultimate victims. This section is a fine example of minimization followed by a “balancing” (if contradictory!) judgment. For example, the section included the following statements: “The 8th of May marks a deep cut not only in German history but in the history of Europe as a whole. The European civil war had come to an end, the old world of Europe lay in ruins.” “Along the road to disaster Hitler became the driving force. He whipped up and exploited mass hysteria. A weak democracy was incapable of stopping him. And even the powers of Western Europe – in Churchill’s judgment unsuspecting but not without guilt – contributed through their weakness to this fateful trend.” “. . . the Soviet Union signed a non-aggression pact . . . [which] gave Hitler an opportunity to invade Poland. The Soviet leaders at the time were fully aware of this. And all who understood politics realized that the implications of the German-Soviet pact were Hitler’s invasion of Poland and hence the Second World War.” But after all of these statements indicating that the Second World War was a “civil war” basically “contributed to” by both the Western powers and the Soviet Union, Weizsäcker asserted that “[These things do] not mitigate Germany’s responsibility for the

outbreak of the Second World War” (266-267).⁹ Weizsäcker concluded that “In the course of the war the Nazi regime tormented and defiled many nations. At the end of it all only one nation remained to be tormented, enslaved and defiled: the German nation” (267).¹⁰

Section four followed up the earlier sections (broadening the base of victims and minimizing the perpetrators) by enumerating a number of factors mitigating the responsibility of the German state for World War Two and then identifying the German people as the ultimate victims. With the Germans articulated as the “tormented and defiled” nation, the section ended with Weizsäcker telegraphing the ultimate subject of his speech: divided Germany. After asserting that the Germans “became the victims of [their] own war,” he quoted East Berlin’s Cardinal Meissner saying that “the pathetic result of sin is always division” (267).¹¹ In other words, Weizsäcker admitted to a “sin” (the National Socialist crimes perpetrated by a “handful”) and the “sin” had led to a divided Germany.

Having strengthened the underlying message that the Germans were the co-victims of National Socialism and opening up the issue of a divided Germany, section five dealt with the issue of the German people’s sadness over the loss of German territory (both East Germany and various parts of eastern Europe from where many Germans were expelled after the war). Weizsäcker asserted that:

The arbitrariness of destruction continued to be felt in the arbitrary distribution of burdens. There were innocent people who were persecuted

and guilty ones who got away. Some were lucky to be able to begin life all over again at home in familiar surroundings. Others were expelled from the lands of their fathers. We in what was to become the Federal Republic of Germany were given the priceless opportunity to live in freedom. Many millions of our countrymen have been denied that opportunity to this day (267).¹²

After drawing this image of free West Germans and “unfree” Germans in the territories controlled by the Soviet Union, Weizsäcker moved into a discussion of an even more delicate issue: the Polish question and the issue of revanchism (the recovery of lost territory). Without explicitly naming Poland, Weizsäcker argued that “the biggest sacrifice was demanded of those who had been driven out of their homeland” and that “The expellees’ own homeland ha[d] meanwhile become a homeland for others” (268).¹³

In a subtle way, then, Weizsäcker managed to tie West Germany’s concerns over East Germany with a conservative nostalgia over “lost territory.” Yet, repeating the pattern of stating in the end what has been contradicted or minimized by earlier statements, Weizsäcker concluded this section by stating that “An expellee’s love for his homeland is in no way revanchism” (269)¹⁴ and in so doing managed to address the concerns of those Germans who felt “victimized” when they were expelled from the occupied territories while simultaneously justifying the desire for reunification.

Weizsäcker then moved to the next brief section that asserted the importance of taking a proactive role in promoting peace. Following this, a lengthy section was devoted to elaborately praising West Germany. Weizsäcker stated that Germany had “put democratic freedom in the place of oppression” and that “The Federal Republic of Germany ha[d] become an internationally respected state . . . [and wa]s one of the most highly developed industrial countries in the world” (270).¹⁵ Next, Weizsäcker provided a list of the “lessons” that West Germans had supposedly learned: not to mistreat the mentally ill, to allow legitimate refugees a safe haven from oppression, to protect freedom of speech, not to be too critical of Israel’s repression of the Palestinians since the state of Israel was a direct result of National Socialism, and to respect West Germany’s “Eastern neighbors” (271).

Having established that Germany had “learned its lessons,” Weizsäcker then moved in section eight to call for the reunification of Germany, thus completing the transformation of a speech commemorating the defeat of National Socialism into a speech calling for the reunification of Germany. The section began with Weizsäcker pointing out that “Forty years after the end of the war, the German people remain divided,” (271)¹⁶ and concluded with the following:

We Germans are one people and one nation. We feel that we belong together because we have lived through the same past. We also experienced the 8th of May 1945 as part of the common fate of our nation, which unites us The people of Germany are united in

desiring a peace that encompasses justice and human rights for all peoples, including our own. Reconciliation that transcends boundaries cannot be provided by a walled Europe but only by a continent that removes the divisive elements from its borders (272).¹⁷

In this remarkable passage, Weizsäcker provided the conclusion for the syllogism that framed his address: The German people must remember National Socialism (as the Holocaust) in order for there to be “proper” reconciliation. “Proper” reconciliation meant a reunified Germany. Therefore the German people must remember National Socialism in order to reunify Germany.

Weizsäcker concluded his speech in section nine by drawing an Old Testament analogy between the forty years of exile for the Israelites before their arrival in the Promised Land and Germany's forty years of exile. Next, he reasserted that the younger generations were not responsible for National Socialism, although they were responsible for its historical consequences, and the speech concluded with Weizsäcker calling on the German people to “face up as well as we can to the truth” (273).¹⁸ To summarize, Weizsäcker's speech moved through the following stages in articulating his vision of the German people: First, there were a great many victims of National Socialism and there were only a handful of perpetrators. Weizsäcker did manage to expand the list of victims that could be publicly acknowledged in discourse related to National Socialist remembrance, but he characterized the German people as the ultimate victims (sections 1-3). Second, all nations have their bad moments, the German

state was not the only cause of the Second World War (section 4), and the German people were divided victims who understandably missed their homeland (section 5). That is, the Germans were not guilty and missed their "homeland," even though a recovery of that lost land was out of the question. Third, the German people needed to actively pursue peace (section 6), and West Germany was a great and well-respected country. Fourth, the Germans have learned their lesson (section 7), so they should be reunified (section 8). And finally, the younger generation was not responsible and the German people should soon see the "promised land" (meaning the reunification of East and West Germany that had been "promised" to the German people once they had proven they had "stepped out of the shadow of Hitler" and were no longer susceptible to National Socialist impulses).

Weizsäcker's Success and the Strategies of Remembrance

It is not surprising that Weizsäcker's speech was a tremendous "success." Not only did it manage to turn an event purportedly commemorating the end of National Socialist tyranny into a call for German reunification, but at the same time the speech appeared to expand the limits previously constraining National Socialist remembrance. Instead of merely "remembering" the Jews and the Germans, Weizsäcker broadened the base of victims to include many who had previously been left out of the picture. Less noticeable is Weizsäcker's smooth

blending of the victimized and the victimizer, which provides deserved absolution for younger Germans while simultaneously stifling public critique. More importantly for this study, Weizsäcker managed to articulate a German identity that resonated with the strategies of remembrance discussed in chapter three.

A brief review of Weizsäcker's instantiation of the code provides a useful lens through which to read both his success and the relative failure of Kohl's and Jenninger's later addresses. In fulfilling the narrative expectations of the Right, Weizsäcker: 1) avoided discussing the crimes of National Socialism; 2) focused on the victims completely and thoroughly, managing to blend the victims of National Socialism with the suffering of the German people themselves after the war; and 3) found a way not only to praise the German people, but to describe how they had "learned their lessons." Within these constraints, Weizsäcker subtly and artfully transformed an address ostensibly designed to commemorate the end of the Second World War into one calling for the reunification of the German people, a German people free to set the past aside and to reconstruct a "healthy" national identity.

According to the Left's strategies of remembrance, Weizsäcker:

1) avoided any discussion of the perpetrators; 2) called for reunification with East Germany and peace with the "Eastern neighbors," thus avoiding the scapegoating of communism; 3) made no attempt to "explain" National Socialism, except through the extended minimizations early in the speech, which he immediately followed with condemnatory remarks; 4) focused on the victims

in an artful and thorough way; and 5) found a way to praise the new German democracy and the liberal traditions embedded within the capitalist system.

All in all, Weizsäcker did everything “right,” not only by staying within (if not contributing to) the strategies of remembrance, but by artfully turning remembrance into an instrument for reunification. Whatever the potential positive and negative consequences of Weizsäcker’s articulation of German identity and its contribution to West German discursive identity management, it nonetheless provided a model by which the subsequent commemorative addresses of Jenninger and Kohl would be judged, addresses that articulated different versions of what it meant to be “German” in the years just prior to reunification.

Helmut Kohl’s *Kristallnacht* Address: Remembrance for Forgiveness

A little more than three years after Weizsäcker’s speech, in November of 1988, the fiftieth “anniversary” of the *Kristallnacht* created yet another set of occasions calling for National Socialist remembrance. Weizsäcker’s party, the CDU, was still in power under the leadership of Chancellor Helmut Kohl and *Bundestag* president Philipp Jenninger, and some of the commemorative tasks fell to the two men. Kohl gave a somewhat controversial yet generally well-received speech on November 9, 1988 at the Beth Hamidrasch Synagogue in Frankfurt, and Jenninger gave a disastrous speech the following day before the

parliament. Many Jews questioned Kohl's credibility and sincerity because of the not-so-distant events at Bitburg, and Kohl was heckled during the speech, but the speech was nonetheless praised in the German press. Jenninger's speech was considered so inappropriate that he was forced to resign his office the following day.

On the one hand, Kohl's address followed the strategies of remembrance (albeit in a fairly unremarkable way), met with slight praise, and was quickly forgotten. On the other hand, Jenninger's speech failed to follow the strategies of remembrance, and was vehemently and almost universally condemned by the German and international press. Weizsäcker had provided one example of a successful commemorative address that stayed within the boundaries of the codes of the unsayable, Helmut Kohl's address provided another, and Jenninger provided an anti-model.

While far less dramatically successful than Weizsäcker, Kohl at least managed to avoid any "false tones" (*Keine*). Kohl's address produced little reaction in the German press, but what reactions it did receive were generally favorable (Conrad; *Keine*; Scherer; *Wahnung*). German students at the University of Washington independently reported that "there was not much to say" about Kohl's speech because it was a "typical" commemorative address, filled with clichés, and probably was not written by Kohl (Barthel, 7 May 1996; Bockenford, 7 May 1996; Liesegang, 27 June 1996).¹⁹ Kohl's speech, then, provides an interesting "middle ground" between Jenninger's failure and

Weizsäcker's success.²⁰ Kohl (or his ghostwriters), from all accounts, seems to have understood the codes related to commemorative addresses well enough to get by, but was unable to "play" the codes for maximum effect.

It is not surprising that Kohl would be somewhat familiar with the constraints placed on public speakers when talking about National Socialism, for he is well known for his conscious attempts at constructing an official nationalism. As only one instance of Kohl's attempts to proactively influence the construction of national identity (beside the obvious instance of Bitburg), at a 1994 meeting of the Historians Association in Leipzig, Kohl had sought to deliver an official address to the association on the topic of the nation-state right before the general elections (Berger 219-220). Furthermore, as Jürgen Habermas has pointed out, alleviating German guilt over National Socialism was something that conservatives had long considered a primary task for the government (Defusing 43-44).

Evidence of Kohl's relative "success" at the conservative task of alleviating German war guilt, compared to Jenninger's relative "failure," can be found in editorial responses which asserted that Jenninger had been "the wrong man at the wrong place giving the wrong speech at the wrong time" (Greiner) and that Kohl had said "the right words at the right time" (Conrad). According to Conrad:

[Kohl's] clarity was a pleasant contrast to the awkwardness and confusion which Philipp Jenninger had raised . . . inside and outside of Germany,

above all in America. Jenninger had wanted to give a 'great speech' – and failed bitterly. The Chancellor, on the contrary, limited himself . . . to a confession of German shame and responsibility . . . [without any] slick contributions to the historian's debate.

Praise for Kohl's speech was echoed in other anonymous articles in Germany's main newspapers the day after the address. For example, the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung reported in an editorial entitled "Remembrance, not Guilt" ("*Wahrung, nicht Schuld*") that "The Federal Chancellor [had] concealed nothing in Frankfurt," and "[had] demanded remembrance, being vigilant, and facing that abysmal chapter [of the Nazi period] in our history." The Süddeutsche Zeitung reported that Kohl had "avoided all false tones" and that "[t]he memory of Bitburg is not extinguishable by the speech, but all of those involved, the Federal Chancellor and his critics, have evidently learned something from it" (*Keine*).

The occasion for Kohl's speech, not unlike Jenninger's, was fraught with controversy. At the Beth Hamidrasch Synagogue in Frankfurt, where Kohl eventually spoke along with Heinz Galinski (the Chairman of the Central Council of Jews in Germany who was not allowed to speak to the German parliament the next day) and Hessian Premier Walter Wallmann, the scene was tense. Police were everywhere. Surveillance cameras had been put into place, and security guards had been posted at all the entrances to the synagogue (Brill; Scherer). Adding to the tension was the fact that Kohl's presence at the event had been strongly opposed by members of the Jewish community who felt that gentiles

had no place in the hour of remembrance, and Kohl was frequently heckled during the address (Scherer).

Kohl's Address: "The People of Today Are No Better Than the People of That Time."

Briefly, Kohl's speech was a "success" because it played by the rules. Like Weizsäcker, Kohl focused on the victims, not the perpetrators. He did not try to "explain" the National Socialist period, but focused his comments on the "pain" and the "shame" of the German people. Furthermore, whenever Kohl mentioned the National Socialist period he immediately condemned and dismissed it, stressing the fact that members of the younger generation had no right to judge the older generations. Finally, Kohl found a way to praise the German people.

Kohl spent the majority of his time working to build consubstantiality between the Jewish and German members of the audience rather than working, as did Weizsäcker, to expand the definition of "victims of World War Two." The speech began with Kohl stating that "Fifty years ago today, the synagogues burned throughout Germany: Houses of worship, erected to the honor of the one Creator to whom both Christians and Jews confess" (Girnth 250).²¹ In the very next paragraph Kohl referred to his "Jewish fellow citizens," and throughout the address Kohl repeatedly referred to the Jewish members of the audience as

“fellow citizens.” Jews who opposed Kohl speaking at the event later remarked that they did not want to be fellow citizens of Germany, but only its citizens (Scherer).

While working within one of the constraints imposed by the strategies of remembrance (focusing on the victims), Kohl simultaneously called for Jewish and Gentile cooperation in Germany throughout the speech. Kohl quoted from Max Frisch, Martin Buber, Manes Sperber, and Heinrich Heine, each a Jewish writers with whom the Jewish audience would identify. Each German student interviewed at the University of Washington independently noted, however, that it was unlikely that Kohl was familiar with the works of any of these authors (Barthel, 7 May 1996; Bockenford, 7 May 1996; Liesegang, 27 June 1996).

Mirroring Weizsäcker, Kohl twice turned to the Old Testament in support of his arguments. Around the middle of the speech, Kohl stated that “Respect for the other demands from us that we ourselves, biblically speaking, make no false image of him [the Jewish fellow citizen], but accept him as he really is” (Girnth 255).²² And about ten sentences later Kohl said: “All too often one hears – even from the mouths of well-intentioned people – the erroneous thesis of the alleged ‘vengeful thinking’ of the Old Testament. Thoughtlessly we talk about Christian charity and forget that already in the Torah it is written: You should love your neighbor as yourself” (257).²³

It was during just such attempts at building consubstantiality between Germans and Jews that Kohl was heckled most vehemently. Perhaps the most

telling instance was when Kohl was interrupted by shouts of “hypocrite” and “you lie” (Brill) when he said:

We – Jews, Christians, all liberally disposed people here today – stand before a great future task: at the end of this century, with all its horrors, with so much unspeakable human grief, we build – a united Europe, whose fundamental values are jointly represented by Jews and Christians – one Europe, that frees itself from the scourge of nationalism”

(Girnth 256-257).²⁴

Some Germans would not believe Kohl here either. Charles Maier convincingly shows that the Kohl government was informed by the premise that: “historical narrative alone provides a community with the collective self-awareness it needs for future-oriented action” (150).²⁵ As additional evidence of Kohl's nationalism was the controversy surrounding the decision made by Kohl's government to build national museums in order to bolster national identity (121-159). It is likely, then, that Kohl was being very reflexive in his “national” speeches, concerned as he has shown himself to be with the relationship between historical narrative and national identity. In sum, the claim that he is against the “scourge” of nationalism is questionable.

But aside from Kohl's repeated attempts to reach the Jewish members of the audience, the majority of his speech was a series of moves paralleling those in Weizsäcker's address: “typical” moves that the West German people might have come to expect from commemorative addresses related to the National

Socialist period. For example, when Kohl stated that “anti-Semitism was at the heart of National Socialist ideology” (Girnth 250) early in his speech, he engaged in a strategy of minimization similar to Weizsäcker’s.²⁶ As noted earlier, when conservative public speakers associate National Socialism with anti-Semitism, they allow all of the other causes of National Socialism to fade into the background. Also, Kohl’s attempt to reduce the average German’s complicity to a passive rather than active role was typical, although Kohl did divide Germans into two camps: those who were “frightened” and those who were “guilty” of complicity through their silence. For example, Kohl stated that “The November pogroms were by no means a spontaneous venting of so-called ‘popular rage.’ It was triggered much more from a central place, from a place of organized action.” One paragraph later Kohl argued that “the majority of the population remained silent” because of “paralyzing fear on the one hand, indifference on the other” (Girnth 252).²⁷ Whereas Weizsäcker managed to reduce the number of perpetrators to a mere “handful,” Kohl sought to articulate instead an image of the German people as silent and paralyzed by fear. In both cases, “average” Germans living under National Socialism were certainly not perpetrators, and at worst were guilty of silence because they were so afraid.

Kohl’s speech, then, instantiated several of the strategies present in Weizsäcker’s address, and suggests that Kohl and his writers had at least a rudimentary understanding of the constraints at play in the commemorative setting. Furthermore, Kohl’s speech contained elements that answered to other

strategies of remembrance. First, not only did Kohl reduce guilt for the “majority of the population” to “paralyzing fear” and “indifference,” but he also praised the Germans living at that time, focusing on those who helped the Jews rather than persecuted them. Second, mirroring Weizsäcker, Kohl spent a portion of his time warning against any move by the younger generation to critique their elders who were living during the Nazi era. Kohl argued that living in a “liberal democracy” had blinded the young people to the situation confronting their parents and grandparents. Kohl smoothly combined both moves in one passage worth quoting at length:

There were those who were dismayed, and those who quieted their conscience with various arguments; some with the spreading prejudice against the “Jewish influence” that had to be driven back and eliminated. Some felt personally affected by the grief of their Jewish fellow citizens, while others thought that everything had nothing to do with them personally. There were those who watched full of malicious joy, who went along, to say nothing of profiting economically from it.

Also, however, we should not forget those who expressed their disapproval, or else sought to help within the framework of their possibilities. We remember today with high respect and gratitude the courageous men and women who fifty years ago and in the time after that, risking their own lives and often the safety of their families, stood by their

Jewish fellow citizens in diverse ways; in that they helped them, for instance, to a hiding place, or a saving flight abroad.

The present anniversary raises many questions. Also, the younger generation want to frankly examine for themselves what they would have done or wouldn't have done in such a situation. And if I say 'frankly,' then above all I mean without self-righteousness. The people of today -- this is my firm conviction -- are not better or more courageous than the people of that time (253).²⁸

According to the strategies of remembrance outlined in the previous chapter, this early passage is a fascinating one. Not only does Kohl focus on the victims, not only does he reduce German participation to passivity, but Kohl furthermore finds a way to talk about the "courageous men and women [Germans]" and then chastises the younger members of the audience not to be "self-righteous," implicitly suggesting that they have no right to judge the older generations. Coupled with Kohl's later statement that "The younger generations fortunately cannot know from their own experience what lack of freedom of discrimination means concretely" (259),²⁹ Kohl all but tells the younger generations that National Socialism is beyond their comprehension, so they should guard against being critical.

Kohl's implicit call for an end to critique is coupled with repeated declarations that Germany must never forget, and that it is *because* of the younger generation's ignorance that remembrance is so important. Whereas

Weizsäcker stated that people living during the Nazi era should “quietly” question themselves, simultaneously suggesting that the younger people not be publicly critical, Kohl associates the importance of remembrance with the inability of the young people to understand. Both strategies freed the perpetrators from being publicly acknowledged or critiqued, and both thus complied with the strategy requiring the absence of the perpetrators.

Kohl's *Kristallnacht* Address and the Strategies of Remembrance

There were several ways in which Kohl's commemoration of the *Kristallnacht* reflected dominant West German strategies of remembrance that served to maintain the hegemonic articulation of national identity in the years leading up to German reunification. Perhaps the most obvious feature of the speech was the way in which it paralleled Weizsäcker's address. But Kohl's speech was not nearly as successful as Weizsäcker's. While Weizsäcker enjoyed wide respect in West Germany, Kohl's public image was still tarnished from Bitburg, and while Weizsäcker was able to incorporate a larger number of victims and couple remembrance with reunification, Kohl had difficulty in building identification with immediate members of the Jewish audience and only managed to associate remembrance with implicit absolution for members of the older generation. Still, Kohl did stay within the constraints of the established strategies.

For conservatives, Kohl's speech was probably acceptable because: 1) he rarely concretely discussed the actual crimes perpetrated by National Socialists, and when he did he immediately condemned and dismissed them as "godless" and "merciless." Additionally, he balanced any mention of National Socialist criminality with the passivity of the "majority" of the citizens and the heroism of others; 2) he also focused on the victims, and spoke of the "shame" and "guilt" of the Germans while stressing the importance of (an unclarified form of) remembrance; and 3) he not only praised the "courageous" Germans who helped the Jews, but he also effectively told the younger critics of the National Socialist era that they should not be "self-righteous" and could not possibly understand what it was like for their elders.

As far as the Left was concerned, Kohl's speech also followed the established strategies of remembrance: 1) he never accused members of the West German Left of being perpetrators (although he did praise East Germany for accepting its part of the guilt); 2) he avoided any attempt to "explain" National Socialism; 3) he never mentioned National Socialism without immediately condemning and dismissing it; 4) he focused on the victims; and 5) he repeatedly praised the new German democracy, especially when pointing out how lucky the younger generations were to live in a "liberal democracy."

In short, Kohl's speech was very comforting for the dwindling number of perpetrators in Germany, for conservatives hoping to construct a more "traditional" form of national identity, and for liberals wanting to focus on

democratic principles. But what kind of national identity did Kohl articulate?

Kohl articulated a vision of the Germans of the National Socialist era as victims, paralyzed with fear, no worse than the people of today, in a position those of us who enjoy democracy can never understand. Weizsäcker also articulated a vision of the Germans of the National Socialist era as victims, with only a "handful" of perpetrators, and both Kohl and Weizsäcker articulated a vision of a contemporary Germany generally free of perpetrators.

As suggested earlier, such a vision of Germans as victims might likely have a chilling effect on critical investigations into National Socialist continuities under the surface of West German democracy. That is, if it is true that after the Second World War most National Socialists were allowed to silently reenter society, and if it is true that right wing currents still run deep in portions of West Germany, then it could be dangerous that the hegemonic articulations of national identity related to National Socialism deny that the perpetrators (and the mentality of the perpetrators) even exist. In other words, if there are potential neo-fascist tendencies within German society, then a dominant fiction that absents them might manage to effectively obfuscate continuities between National Socialism and West German capitalist democracy, and the critical public appraisal of the deeper social causes of National Socialism (not merely anti-Semitism) might be repressed by the clear message that young Germans should remember but not be "too critical."

Regardless of the potential of Weizsäcker's and Kohl's articulations for dissociating German identity from National Socialism, thereby clearing the way for a "healthy and traditional" national identity, their speeches were notable "successes" when contrasted with the Jenninger's "disastrous" speech. Whereas Weizsäcker and Kohl focused on the "victims," Jenninger focused on the perpetrators. They focused on forgiveness, he focused on guilt. And where Weizsäcker and Kohl focused on how good the West Germans had become, Jenninger focused on how bad the Germans had been. In other words, Jenninger, as opposed to Weizsäcker and Kohl, articulated a German identity that was *not* dissociated from National Socialism, but assumed instead that only a direct confrontation with that era would ensure a "healthy and traditional" German identity.

The Dramatic Failure of Philipp Jenninger's *Kristallnacht* Address

On the morning of November 10, 1988, in the Plenary room of the German Bundestag, *Bundestagpresident* Philipp Jenninger gave a speech to the German parliament and invited guests to commemorate the fiftieth "anniversary" of the anti-Jewish pogrom known as the *Reichskristallnacht*.³⁰ In that speech, Jenninger basically attempted to explain why the German people were drawn toward National Socialism, stressing that "the German people" should "face up to their Nazi past." Accused of tactlessness and lack of historical understanding

(*Bestürzender*), if not outright sympathy with Hitler himself (Bertram), Jenninger was forced to resign his office as president of the German parliament the following day (Schwehn; Girnth 4).

Before Jenninger walked to the podium in the Plenary room of the Bundestag, there had already been a good deal of discussion as to what the appropriate form for the ceremony should be (Domansky 64). First, public awareness of problems related to National Socialist remembrance had been considerably sharpened by the *Historikerstreit* that had been raging in the major national newspapers over the previous two years. Second, there had also been a good deal of in-fighting going on within the parliament about how to “manage” the commemorative event. Therefore, not only was the German public fairly well informed about the problems associated with such ceremonies (the Bitburg events had occurred only three years before), but members of the German parliament also were aware of the delicate nature of the situation.

Initially, it was clear to all of the major West German political parties that the ceremony was going to have an impact on international public opinion. While members of the CDU originally felt that an elaborate ceremony was not necessary, they were eventually compelled by the other parties to devote an entire session of parliament to the commemoration. There was also considerable concern over the fact that the East Germans were planning on having their own commemorative parliamentary ceremony on November 9th. The Greens, recognizing that having a highly respected Jew speak from the

podium in the Plenary room of the Bundestag would be a powerful symbolic gesture, made a motion to have Heinz Galinski, the chairman of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, speak to parliament on this occasion. According to Domansky, the CDU “adamantly refused” to allow Galinski to speak “in order to placate their potential right-wing voters” (64).³¹ Instead, Jenninger, who as Bundestag President was generally recognized as the one who ostensibly could speak for the entire parliament, was slated to give the address, leaving Galinski sitting as a member of the audience next to German president Richard von Weizsäcker.

There is considerable evidence to suggest that Jenninger was aware of the importance of the address, although his ghostwriter, Thomas Gundelach, was unable to provide Jenninger with a speech that could live up to the expectations raised by the occasion (Dreher). And expectations were high, especially because the West German government generally recognized that the way in which it publicly dealt with the Holocaust was “still the yardstick by which [its] political reliability was measured by the international community” (Domansky 69). President Weizsäcker’s earlier commemorative speech had already provided a praised model for commemorative addresses, and it is not impossible that Jenninger hoped to join the ranks of fellow CDU luminaries Weizsäcker and Kohl as a great public speaker in this area.

While oftentimes brutal in its detailed accounts of Nazi atrocities, Jenninger’s speech arguably does not appear to be deliberately misleading or to

be serving as a “justification for Hitler.” According to several observers, there really was not much that was *factually* untrue in the address (Bertram; Greiner; Hofmann; Nonnenmacher), but the vast majority of the reactions to the speech indicate that most critics thought otherwise. For most critics, the speech was oftentimes untrue, but in almost all ways inappropriate in style and content.

In the immediate audience, members of the FDP (Federal Democratic Party), the SPD (Social Democratic Party) and the Greens left the hall, while members of Jenninger’s party, the CDU (Christian Democrat Party) remained (Schwehn; Girth 4). Berlin FDP deputy Wolfgang Leuder said that Jenninger had “laid the foundation for a false understanding of history by the Germans.” According to Leuder, Jenninger had disregarded “the necessary degree of dismay for the victims of the National-Socialist terror [and had] avoided only a few historical mistakes.” Hubert Kleinert, the Greens’ parliamentary whip said that the speech was “embarrassing, verging on the tasteless [and] the most shameful event” he had seen in parliament (*Bestürzender, Bundestag*). FDP Chairman Otto Graf Lambsdorff stated that “over long passages, Jenninger gave the impression that he was trying to justify, or partly justify, the worst events in German history.” Additionally, parliament deputy Heinz Schwarz accused Jenninger of using “Hitler terminology too long, too broadly, and too often” (Schwehn). Almost immediately following the speech, members of all of the various parties met to discuss the “scandal” created by Jenninger, and quickly concluded that he should resign (Bergdoll; *Trotz*).

German newspapers, as well as most major newspapers from around the world, uniformly attacked Jenninger the following day. Some newspapers went so far as to proclaim that Jenninger had engaged in “Hitler worship,” while most others claimed that the speech had been very inappropriate (*Die Presse; Ein schwerer*, Girnth 6-21). The Köelner Stadt-Anzeiger reported:

Instead of thoughtfully penetrating the events of that night in November 1938, as was successfully done by Chancellor Helmut Kohl in Frankfurt, instead of clearly expressing sympathy with the victims, Jenninger tried to deliver a lesson in history between 1933 and 1945 in a misleading and thus inadequate manner. It could even give rise to the impression that he had tried to explain and excuse Hitler and show understanding for many Germans’ negative attitude against the Jews (Foreign 12 Nov 88).

An editorial in the Frankfurter Rundschau referred to the address as “perhaps the most unfortunate speech ever recited in the Federal Republic” (Reifenrath), and some critics claimed that Jenninger had delivered a “seminar” or a “lecture” rather than a “proper” commemorative address. For example, an article in the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung argued that “an hour of remembrance in the Bundestag [was] no place for a historic proseminar” (*Die Feierstunde*), and in an editorial in Die Welt, Manfred Schell argued that the speech was delivered “on the wrong day and at the wrong place. It would have been acceptable in a history seminar”. Finally, several critics negatively compared Jenninger’s speech with Weizsäcker’s (Janßen; Reifenrath, Mörbitz).

It is this disparity between the content of Jenninger's address (an "explanation" of National Socialism, its criminal nature, and the need for "Germans" to stop "repressing" the Nazi era) and its reception (Jenninger "justified" National Socialism, gave a completely inappropriate speech, and showed insufficient "sympathy for the victims") that is the focus of the following section. While a reading of the speech and its context suggests that Jenninger attempted to provide an *explanation* for National Socialism, the speech was received as a *justification* of National Socialism. To explore this claim, as well as to investigate whether or not the dominant reactions to the speech can be directly attributed to the rules governing the fictional construction of national identity in West Germany at this time, I will provide a detailed analysis of the text itself, pointing out how the negative reactions to the address correspond to the strategies of remembrance articulated in Weizsäcker's and Kohl's addresses. In the end, Jenninger's "failure" will be shown to be attributable not only to the style and delivery of the speech itself, but to his transgressing almost all of the highly nuanced constraints governing public discourse in West Germany related to the remembrance of National Socialism.

Jenninger's Address: Problematizing Remembrance

Jenninger's speech was a dramatic failure for a wide variety of reasons, not only because of its poor organization (e.g. internal inconsistencies), poor

delivery (e.g. lack of vocal variety leading to a confusion between personal opinion and quotations), and poor style (e.g. failing to use the subjunctive form or sufficient commentary to provide the “distance” required by the audience), but also because Jenninger failed to stay within the bounds of the unsayable. Jenninger confused almost all of the strategies of remembrance (the rules governing the public articulation of “German” identity), and in so doing gave an address that was highly “unreadable.” The speech itself was rather long (over 7000 words) and was arranged into eleven sections.³² But it was the content and delivery of the speech that led to Jenninger’s “scandal”, not so much the form, for as Domansky indicates, “Its composition should have met the occasion perfectly because the model on which it was based is the classic structure of a literary confession” (77).

In order to suggest how the content and delivery of the speech led to Jenninger’s downfall, I examine each section of the speech in detail, pointing out problems along the way. Various problems with the speech were suggested by responses from government representatives, the media, and through numerous discussions with the focus group of German graduate students. Together, the responses of these sources suggest how the content and delivery of Jenninger’s speech transgressed the limits, or failed to adhere to the constraints (or “codes”), related to National Socialist remembrance, and I argue that Jenninger’s address “*mismanaged*” the codes almost as dramatically as Weizsäcker “managed” them.

The first part of Jenninger's speech was simple and brief, and primarily consisted of formal introductions and a preview of the speech. In this section Jenninger indicated that his purpose was to interpret the meaning of the historical event with which the commemoration was concerned: the night of the pogroms against the Jews in which hundred of synagogues and Jewish businesses were destroyed and thousands of Jews suffered unprecedented physical violence. But Jenninger got off on the wrong foot with his very first sentence when he stated, "Today Jews in Germany and everywhere in the world are thinking back to the events that took place fifty years ago. We Germans, too, recall what happened . . ." (Girnth 225). Recalling Kohl's problems with his phrase "Jewish fellow citizens" rather than "fellow citizens," this was a fundamental error. At least one critic noted that this separation of "Germans" and "Jews" was inappropriate at such a commemorative occasion because it implied a division between Germans and Jews (Reifenrath). By saying "Jews in Germany and . . . [w]e Germans," Jenninger verbally reenacted the very separation between Jews and Germans that had been the precondition for the Holocaust.

Next, following his perfunctory salutations, Jenninger stated his specific purpose, and once again reenacted a division between Jews and Germans. Even more problematically, Jenninger simultaneously expanded on his initial division by explicitly stating that the Jews were *victims* (uncontroversial enough),

and implying that the Germans, as the collective addressees of the speech, were *perpetrators* (controversial indeed!). Specifically, Jenninger stated that:

Today, we are meeting in the German Bundestag to remember the pogroms of November 9 and 10, 1938 -- since not the victims, but we, in whose midst the crimes occurred, need to remember and account for what happened: since we Germans want to clear our minds with regard to the understanding of our history and with regard to lessons for the political structuring of our present and future (Girnth 225-226).³³

Since one of the dominant strategies of National Socialist remembrance in West Germany was to minimize the association between being German and being a perpetrator (if not to avoid discussing the perpetrators altogether), Jenninger's phrase "not the victims, but we" was a direct challenge to accepted convention. Inasmuch as his target audience was explicitly "*not the victims*", Jenninger was breaking a major "rule." As has been amply noted, one dominant fiction governing National Socialist remembrance prior to reunification was that *there were no more perpetrators*. So in effect, Jenninger was talking to a group that (fictionally) no longer existed. Jenninger's strategic decision to speak for and about the perpetrators was the polar opposite of Weizsäcker's. Weizsäcker strove to speak *only* from the perspective of victims and reduced the perpetrators to a "handful," seeking simultaneously to blend the suffering caused by National Socialism with the suffering endured by the German people. Jenninger, to the contrary, made a clear distinction early in his speech between "the victims" and

his target audience, thereby making a distinction between “being German” and being a victim.

In an editorial in Die Zeit on November 18, 1988, Mathias Greffrath complained that Jenninger had constructed a “false we.” According to Greffrath, while Jenninger had described the “oppressive majority” of the National Socialist era, that majority was certainly not equivalent to “we” Germans. Domansky summarized the dilemma that Jenninger unwittingly faced in his failed attempt to hail “the German people”:

It did not seem to have occurred to Philipp Jenninger that the very decision to have him as the only speaker created a twofold dilemma. [F]irst . . . he could not possibly speak for the victims . . . because he himself had not been a victim. [A]nd Jenninger could not possibly speak for the persecutors alone either, since that would have implied that the West German parliament was the political representative of the persecutors and their successors alone (65).

While Domansky may exaggerate here, since arguably Jenninger could speak for the persecutors and thereby imply that the West German parliament was the political representative of *some* persecutors, the strategies of remembrance would suggest that there are no *public* representatives of the persecutors in German politics. Regardless, as Jenninger’s opening remarks revealed, he was going to speak as a representative of the persecutors, and it was at this early point in the address that members began heckling Jenninger (Girnth 226).

Jenninger's problems quickly multiplied in sections two and three, where Jenninger "confessed" that the German people had willingly engaged in criminal behavior. First, Jenninger, mirroring Kohl, tried to minimize the guilt of the "average" German when he stated that "the violence involved [in the *Kristallnacht*] was not a manifestation of spontaneous mass anger, whatever the motivation may have been. Instead, it was a measure planned, instigated and promoted by the government" (226).³⁴ Such a strategy was mirrored in Weizsäcker's address as well, where he too worked to minimize public participation by claiming that the people were "fooled" by a handful of government leaders. The extreme form of this strategy is to blame National Socialism on Hitler alone, and in a later section Jenninger makes a confused move in this direction as well. Later, in section two, Jenninger continued this minimization by stating that "Only very few people joined in the violence" Then Jenninger seemed to temper his minimization by saying that "Everyone saw what was happening, but most people looked the other way and remained silent. The churches also remained silent."³⁵ But this too is a version of minimization, as Weizsäcker's and Kohl's addresses indicate, in that it reduces the complicity of the average German citizen to a passive silence, not an active and complicit role in the segregation and violence against the Jews. Jenninger concluded his minimizations in section two by stating that "Today the term '*Reichskristallnacht*' is rightly viewed as inappropriate" because it was not the

people, but “the party and government leadership [that] was obviously responsible” (228).³⁶

Section two confuses two codes: the conservative code of minimization and the liberal code of a tempered acknowledgment that the German people basically knew what was going on but did nothing. While Weizsäcker and Kohl made similar moves, Jenninger’s early dissociation between “victims” and Germans has left a shakier foundation upon which to build the remainder of his speech. Up to this point in the address, examples of concrete participation on the part of the perpetrators are all but absent, but in section three Jenninger seriously begins to confuse the code of minimization by directly speaking not only of the perpetrators, but actually quoting from a conversation that Göring had with Goebbels and Heydrich. Jenninger, quoting Göring, states: “I would have preferred it if you had killed two hundred Jews and had not destroyed so much valuable property (229).³⁷ In section three, then, Jenninger begins to actually speak the words of the perpetrators.

The use of direct quotes and indirect speech, stylistic choices repeated throughout Jenninger’s speech, were perhaps the most problematic aspects of the address, especially in the sections where Jenninger moved back and forth between direct quotes, indirect speech, and speaking in “his own” voice. There are two primary reasons why these rhetorical strategies created considerable problems: Jenninger’s delivery was very poor, and he failed to provide sufficient textual and vocal cues for the audience to be able to easily “read” the speech.

Regarding Jenninger's delivery, two days after Jenninger's address, on the front page of Die Welt, Manfred Schell argued that Jenninger's "mistake" had been his failure to use "quotations properly", confusing the audience as to when Jenninger was speaking of his own beliefs or the beliefs of others (Schell).

Several commentators besides Schell noted that Jenninger's delivery so lacked vocal variety that it was impossible to distinguish when he was quoting someone from when he was speaking in his own voice (Polenz; Jens; Herles; Gaebel).³⁸ Domansky points out that the stress of the situation, resulting in part from the heckling and in part from the parliamentarians leaving the Plenary room as the speech was being delivered, also had an impact on Jenninger's delivery. According to Domansky, "He grew more and more confused, seemed unable to read his manuscript, began to stumble over words, mispronouncing them, his South German accent becoming progressively more and more noticeable" (66). Other critics commented on Jenninger's "cold" delivery style, stating that his speech was more like a dry historical seminar than a compassionate commemorative address (Herles; Nonnenmacher), and that Jenninger spoke in a "completely disinterested [way] and without warmth" (Bertram). Arguably, speakers require at least some vocal variety in order to indicate whether or not they are speaking in "their own" voice or the voice of another, and from reactions to the speech it would appear that Jenninger failed in this area in part because his delivery lacked both enthusiasm and vocal variety.

In a lengthy article critiquing Jenninger's address, Peter Polenz points out stylistic aspects of Jenninger's use of direct quotes, indirect speech, and rhetorical questions that were also problematic. First, in quoting others in the German language, one should oftentimes use the subjunctive form in order to indicate that one is "distancing oneself" from what is being said, something that Jenninger did not do. Second, according to Polenz, because the codes related to National Socialist remembrance are so well established, speakers deviating from that code should provide constant commentary so that audience members know what is going on. Third, the use of indirect speech is a rather sophisticated literary device that is relatively unfamiliar to less educated audience members, especially without appropriate shifts in voice and textual cues.

Since Jenninger made frequent use of quotations and indirect speech throughout the address, these problems were simply magnified as the speech continued, but they could have been partially minimized through minor stylistic changes in the text itself and a more dynamic delivery. Concerning the lack of "distance" shown by Jenninger, he usually quoted individuals using the simple past instead of the subjunctive form. While in English there are no substantial differences between the two forms, in German there is. As an example, one could say: "*Er sagte das Hitler eine gute Führer ist*" or "*Er sagte das Hitler eine gute Führer sei*" (both of which translate into English as "He said Hitler was a good leader"). The former sentence uses the simple past, and is read by

German audiences as a more or less factual statement, while the latter sentence uses the subjunctive form, which the audience interprets as being merely the reported (and perhaps dubious) opinion of someone else (a more precise English translation for the sentences, then, would be “He said Hitler was a good leader” and “It was his opinion that Hitler was a good leader”). Jenninger’s failure to use the subjunctive form allowed some in his audience, as well as numerous critics, to wonder about the nature of Jenninger’s actual attitude towards the attitudes and opinions reflected in the quotes.

Polenz also notes that the German people have routinized public discourse related to the National Socialist period so thoroughly that the codes have become dangerously banal, and that the antecedent forms are so deeply ingrained in German consciousness that any deviation must be accompanied by considerable commentary (306). According to Polenz, Jenninger’s gravest mistake was in failing constantly to provide his audience with instructions on how to read his speech, and this was especially the case with Jenninger’s indirect speech in the simple past form (297).

In sum, sections two and three established three dangerous precedents that would continue throughout the address: Jenninger would continue to confusingly combine strategies of remembrance (thereby irritating government representatives of both the Right and the Left); Jenninger would continue to speak to the audience as if they were perpetrators (or at least non-victims); and

Jenninger would directly quote and indirectly speak from the perspective of the perpetrators without providing sufficient cues either in delivery or style.

Sections four through six trace the evolution of National Socialism in its early years, beginning with a brief description of the legal system that allowed for Jewish persecution, moving through Hitler's early successes and the German people's general satisfaction with his leadership, and ending with an extended discussion of anti-Semitism. It is in these three sections that Jenninger's "lecture" style is perhaps most apparent. Here again there is an obvious confusion of several codes, a frequent use of problematic terminology, and some particularly onerous instances of indirect speech.

Jenninger begins section four with a controversial quotation that follows a well-known conservative strategy based on the assumption that the years between 1933 and 1945 were an aberration in German history, rather than the result of deep-seated historical continuities within German society itself (Reifenrath). According to Jenninger, "Looking back it becomes clear that in actual fact between 1933 and 1938 a revolution took place in Germany -- a revolution in which a system of government based on the rule of law was transformed into a system of government based on injustice and criminal acts" Recall that one strategy of remembrance allows those on the Left to completely dissociate themselves from any responsibility for National Socialism because, they argue, the Right chose to repress National Socialism, so the task of uncovering structural and political continuities between National Socialism and

West German capitalism falls to the Left. Jenninger began section four, then, by controversially (for the Left) suggesting that the National Socialist period was an aberration in German history rather than a result of deeper social continuities, thus transgressing a limit imposed by the Left's strategy.

In section five, Jenninger attempted to explain how the German people were drawn toward National Socialism in part because of Hitler's successes between 1933 and 1938. According to the responses of critics in German newspapers the day after the speech, this section was one of the most offensive and confusing for the audience (*Auszüge*; Bertram; Gaebel; Janßen). As with other sections, Jenninger begins section five on a sour note:

Even more disastrous for the fate of Germans and European Jews than Hitler's misdeeds and crimes were perhaps his successes. The years from 1933 to 1938 are, even looking back on them from a distance and in awareness of what followed, still fascinating [*Faszinosum*] today in that there is hardly a parallel in history to Hitler's series of political triumphs in those first years (231).³⁹

Many critics noted that the word "*Faszinosum*" was a terrible choice because it connotes something wonderful and positive (*Auszüge*; Gaebel).

Later in the same section Jenninger used another stylistic device that would cause a level of confusion comparable to that caused by his use of indirect speech: the rhetorical question. Jenninger asks, "Was not Hitler actually doing what Wilhelm II had only promised, namely to lead the Germans towards

wonderful times? Was not he actually a product of divine providence, a leader such as is given to a people only once in a thousand years?" (Girnth 232)⁴⁰

Critics pointed out that there were at least four problematic issues raised by these rhetorical questions (Bertram; Dittmar; Polenz; Schell). First, since Jenninger failed to provide an answer for these questions, he apparently assumed that the audience would collectively understand that the answer was "no." Unfortunately, Jenninger's lack of "commentary" provided a space for right-wing audience members to answer "yes" (Schell). Paradoxically, while strategies of remembrance fictionally construct an image of Germans as victims, not perpetrators, there is apparently a large enough segment of the audience who cannot be counted on to provide a unified, negative, enthymematic response to such rhetorical questions. Second, critics pointed out that Jenninger, in using "Hitler terminology" ("a thousand years," "the greatest statesman in our history," "Jewish subhumans," etc.), was obligated to explain those terms, or at least could have expected audience members to be confused by the multiple connotations of such words (Bergdoll; Polenz).⁴¹ Third, as was discussed earlier, by making such statements, Jenninger confused many of his audience members. Were these Jenninger's beliefs, or those reported by others? And finally, regardless of Jenninger's intention, his speaking from the perspective of the perpetrators was simply considered to be inappropriate for the occasion.

But perhaps the most frequently cited instance of indirect speech from Jenninger's address came from a passage at the end of section five. There, Jenninger made the following statement:

And as for the Jews: hadn't they in the past arrogated a role unto themselves that they did not deserve? Wasn't there a need for them to finally start accepting restrictions? Hadn't they even perhaps merited being put in their place? And, above all, didn't the propaganda -- aside from the wild exaggerations not to be taken seriously -- correspond in essential points to people's own suspicions and convictions? (Girnth 233)⁴²

In an imaginary interview with Jenninger "conducted" by Walter Jens, the interviewer asks Jenninger what he meant by the passage quoted above, and whether it was his opinion "or the opinion of the people after 1933." Jenninger replies that it was "the opinion of the people, naturally. Perhaps I should have explicitly inserted 'so the people said at that time.'" But the interviewer responds, "That does not suffice. That is too little to indicate [the proper degree] of distancing." When Jenninger asks how he might have shown the proper degree of distance, here is what Jens (as the imaginary interviewer) suggests:

For example, 'Hadn't the Jews, so people said at that time, assumed a role that they didn't deserve?' Then you could have paused, Mr. President, and then finished the sentence: 'But at that time only 3/4 of 1% of Germans were Israelites; no Jews were Prussian mayors, only two

people of the Jewish faith belonged to the parliament out of 577 representatives, and of the 200 official ministers of the Republic only four were Israelites! Ladies and gentlemen, this was how things really were in our country.' Do you understand, Mr. President? Each anti-Semitic claim, together with its stereotypical associations, viewed as being correct by the masses, is counteracted and the truth is brought to light through your counterclaims!

Jens's "interview" indicates that Polenz is correct in his claim that commentary is required whenever there is deviation from the generally recognized codes related to public "remembrance" of the National Socialist period. Jenninger simply did not, in Jens's opinion, sufficiently clarify the purpose behind his rhetorical questions and passages of indirect speech. Jenninger had assumed, apparently, that the audience would be capable of providing a unified enthymematic response, but he was sadly mistaken.

Finally, at the end of section five, Jenninger concluded with a remark that could potentially offend conservative members of the audience. Just as members of the Left might have been upset by Jenninger's earlier statements to the effect that the crimes against the Jews were perpetrated by "only a few," conservatives, eager to maintain the fiction that "nobody knew what was going on" between 1933 and 1945, heard Jenninger say: "And when things got very bad, such as in November 1938, people were still able to say in the words of a contemporary, indeed still say: 'What does that have to do with us. Look in the other direction if

it chills you. It is not our fate”(Girnth 234).⁴³ Here, Jenninger explicitly states that people not only *said* things like this, but *still do!* And perhaps people do still say such things, as various discussions with German students suggested, but publicly admitting to such things was considered totally inappropriate. Also, once again Jenninger was quoting someone else, someone with the perspective of a perpetrator, without using the subjunctive form.

Section six continued in the “lecture” style that many found so offensive. Furthermore, Jenninger continued to employ the terms and express the attitudes of the perpetrators, and made several more statements that both the Left and the Right would find offensive given the constraints their politically consequential fictional identities required. Jenninger began section six, for example, by stating that “anti-Semitism existed in Germany long before Hitler” (234). Here Jenninger contradicted his earlier assertions that National Socialism reflected the will of the leader. Also, recall that for conservatives, any association between National Socialism and the failure of the Weimar Republic is problematic since capitalist democracy has to be completely dissociated from National Socialism. Jenninger seems to contradict himself here also, since earlier in the speech, at the beginning of section three, he had suggested that before 1933 Jews were treated as equal citizens.⁴⁴ Section six is filled with several such contradictions, with Jenninger on the one hand arguing that the Jews enjoyed certain rights and privileges under the Weimar Republic, and on the other hand arguing that anti-Semitism was always a problem in Germany.

Another portion of section six reflected the ways in which Jenninger could have been accused of using quasi-racist stereotypes of Jews. Not only did Jenninger continually separate “we Germans” from “the Jews,” but after explaining how the rapid industrialization and urbanization of Germany led to widespread dissatisfaction among Germans, Jenninger claimed that:

In this revolutionary process of change, perceived by many people as a threat, the Jews played an outstanding, indeed often brilliant role: in industry, in banking, in business life, as doctors, as lawyers, in the cultural sector as well as in science. This evoked a sense of envy and feeling of inferiority [among the German people].

In interview sessions with German students, both Liesegang (30 April 1996) and Bockenford (7 May 1996) corroborated the newspaper accounts by suggesting that this was another example of the “lecture” style, and one that was based on perpetrators’ stereotypes.

Jenninger continued to use terms that critics found objectionable. While in all of the printed copies of the speech many of these terms (e.g. *Faszinosum*, *Triumphzuges Hitlers*) were in quotation marks, it is doubtful whether the listening audience could determine whether these were Jenninger’s words or the words of others. For example, Jenninger stated that “The Jews became socially acceptable objects of hatred” and talked about “the Jewish ‘putrefaction,’ the ‘vermin,’ from which [Germany] needed to liberate itself by means of ‘extermination’ and ‘annihilation’” (Girnth 236).⁴⁵ Here again we see the use of

“Hitler terminology” that so many critics, as well as the focus group, found objectionable, and here again we see Jenninger using the voice of the perpetrators.

Section seven is an extended and confused discussion of Hitler, and, like the other sections, is written in a way that would offend members of the Left and the Right. On the one hand, Jenninger argues that Hitler was insane, ineffectual, and “sexually disturbed,” yet on the other hand Jenninger appears to continue the conservative strategy of establishing a direct causal relationship between Hitler, the Holocaust, and National Socialism. Jenninger begins section seven by stating that “Hitler’s so-called ‘world view’ lacked anything in the way of original thinking. Everything had been there before him: hatred of the Jews developed to the point of biological racism, emotional resistance to things modern . . .” (236-237).⁴⁶ As in section six, Jenninger seemed to contradict his earlier statement that Jews enjoyed equal status before 1933. Also, Jenninger contradicted a conservative fiction, mentioned earlier, that National Socialism was an aberration caused by Hitler and a handful of his henchmen, by calling attention to the continuities in German society that Hitler simply capitalized upon.

To make matters worse, after potentially offending conservatives with his suggestion that there were deep continuities between German history and the rise of National Socialism, Jenninger then embarked on a lengthy description of Hitler:

The misery of his childhood, the humiliations of his youth, the shattered dreams of the failed artist, the lowered social position of the unemployed and homeless vagrant, and the obsessions of a sexually disturbed individual -- all of this found one outlet in Hitler: his immeasurable and unceasing hatred for the Jews. The desire to humiliate, beat, eradicate, and annihilate controlled him right up to the last moment (238).⁴⁷

Here Jenninger appears to engage in a vague psychoanalytical defense of Hitler, and in a strategy that would offend the Left through the way in which it magnified Hitler's influence on National Socialism at the expense of other, potentially more important influences. Therefore, Jenninger managed to upset everyone, once again, in this passage. Jenninger would have offended the Left by attempting to reduce the Holocaust to Hitler's personality, and he would have offended the Right by suggesting that Hitler simply activated long standing prejudicial continuities within German society.

Section eight consisted of two sections: one in which Dostoevski and Nietzsche are tied to National Socialist ideology, and another lengthy section giving explicit and detailed accounts of the mass murder of the Jews. In the section on Dostoevski, Jenninger suggested that the notion that God is dead was a prophetic anticipation of the crimes of the Nazi era. What followed was an approximately 1000 word account of a mass execution, followed by a lengthy quote by Himmler to SS troops. These gruesome accounts flew directly in the face of the taboo against discussing the specifics of the perpetrators' criminal

actions, and Jenninger provided no commentary on these lengthy quotes until the end of the section. According to Polenz's argument, in order for such lengthy narratives of National Socialist crimes to be effective, German audiences would have to be told the function of the long quotes, and since Jenninger failed to comment "sufficiently" on these passages, many wondered why such a lengthy and horrible descriptions were necessary.

Perhaps most damaging for Jenninger, these long, detailed descriptions of the mass shooting of Jews (including women and children) were directly from the perspective of the perpetrators themselves. The first lengthy quote is from an eyewitness and explains how entire Jewish families stripped, lined up, comforted one another, and then were shot by SS soldiers who were casually sitting around smoking cigarettes between rounds of shooting. In the second lengthy quote, Himmler tells the SS troops that the ability to kill Jews in cold blood was a "difficult task" required out of "love [for] our people" (242). At the end of this section, the longest of the speech, Jenninger concluded by saying that:

These sentences leave us with a sense of helplessness, just as the millions of deaths leave us feeling helpless. Numbers and words do not help. The human suffering involved cannot be made good. And every individual who became a victim was irreplaceable for his loved ones. Thus, something remains for which all attempts to explain and understand fail (243).⁴⁸

Such a conclusion seems unsatisfactory for a number of reasons. Just as Weizsäcker had stated that the crimes were “unspeakable,” Jenninger stated that “words do not help.” Members of the Left could be offended, not only because Jenninger fails to adamantly condemn these long passages, but, as was seen in the historian’s debate, because many Leftist philosophers and historians feel that only through a continual confrontation with the past is national identity in Germany sufficiently problematized. To say that words do not help could be viewed as being tantamount to dismissing debate and analysis altogether.⁴⁹

Section nine is devoted to a discussion of how the perpetrators basically are unable to acknowledge their guilt. Jenninger argued that the end of the war was a “profound shock for the Germans,” and that “The dissociation from Hitler took place with almost lightning speed” (243). Additionally, Jenninger argued that, “Moral arrogance will not get us anywhere. Perhaps the German people were not capable of reacting any other way in the awful situation that existed in 1945 and perhaps in looking back we demand too much of ourselves with the demands we impose on that period” (244). Here, Jenninger seemed not only to give an excuse for the repressions of memory following the war, but also seemed to chastise those who would criticize the perpetrators.

Sections ten and eleven concluded the address by focusing on the confession and acceptance of guilt and how the German society, after acknowledging its guilt, could play a new moral role in international affairs.

Section ten began with Jenninger stating that there were “Many Germans [who] let themselves be blinded and led astray by National Socialism” (Girnth 245), but Jenninger then pointed out that young Germans wanted to accept the past without distortion because “self-liberation in confrontation with horror is less torturous than repressing it.” And Jenninger concluded the section by stating that “keeping remembrance alive and accepting the past as a part of our identity as Germans -- this alone promises both us members of the older generation as well as members of the younger generation liberation from the burden of history” (247).⁵⁰ Here Jenninger unwittingly contradicted the full force of West Germany’s avoidance strategies, since almost all of the fictions constructed around National Socialist remembrance were designed precisely *not* to keep remembrance alive, or at least certain versions of remembrance.

As this analysis of Jenninger’s speech indicates, Jenninger “failed” in a wide variety of ways. First, and perhaps most importantly, he attempted to speak to the perpetrators. Second, he used rhetorical questions, quotations, and terminology from the perspective of the perpetrators. Third, Jenninger constantly confused the strategies of remembrance of the Left and the Right, managing throughout the speech to constantly upset members of both camps. Together, these various problems resulted in a commemorative address that failed as dramatically as Weizsäcker’s had succeeded in 1985. Jenninger’s internal inconsistencies only fueled the critiques against his attempt to provide a “lecture” to the German people. Jenninger’s poor delivery, coupled with the fact that he

did not provide sufficient “commentary” whenever speaking from or of the perspective of the perpetrators, created an ambiguous situation for the audience. Jenninger assumed that the audience would be capable of unanimously answering his rhetorical questions with the correct, anti-National Socialist response, and that they could recognize that his frequent quotes were implicitly condemnatory. But these assumptions were not well founded.

Finally, Jenninger trampled over the codes of the unsayable for both the Left and the Right. As far as the Right was concerned, Jenninger had broken every rule discussed in chapter three: 1) he concretely discussed the National Socialist period, and, to make matters worse, he suggested that the causes of National Socialism could be traced to continuities within German society and that the Nazis were not an “aberration” in German history; 2) he did not immediately condemn and dismiss the National Socialists by not providing the required “commentary” and “distance;” 3) he focused on the perpetrators instead of the victims; 4) he failed to occasionally speak of the “guilt” and “shame” of the German people, and instead attempted to “explain” why the Germans did what they did; and 5) he did not find a way to praise the German people.

As far as the Left was concerned, Jenninger broke all of their rules as well: 1) he lumped the entire audience together as perpetrators (which, of course, is not a label the Left accepts); 2) he attempted to “explain” National Socialism (which is tantamount to justification). For example, Jenninger

frequently attempted to “minimize” National Socialism inasmuch as he, like Weizsäcker, claimed that “only a few participated in the violence,” and he engaged in a long description of Hitler that could be seen as an attempt to reduce National Socialism to Hitler himself; 3) he failed to provide sufficient commentary on the perspective of the perpetrators, therefore insufficiently condemning and dismissing the National Socialist period; 4) he focused on the perpetrators; and 5) he was unable to find a way to adequately praise the new German democracy, but instead suggested that the people were still in denial.

Conclusion

The history of public address reveals that epideictic speech usually serves to “strengthen” community ties, not to critique them. In this sense, Weizsäcker’s speech was successful. It was also successful in that it managed to break new ground in the public admission of guilt by German leaders in relation to National Socialism, an admission that had been more or less delimited for forty years. In another sense, though, Weizsäcker’s speech was so “reassuring” that it created little cause for the kind of public debate over the meaning of national identity that was sparked by Jenninger’s address. The questions that must be asked, then, revolve around how West German national identity was articulated and subsequently negotiated in public discourse and the ramifications of those negotiations for West German citizens. Should public discourses related to

national identity be designed to reconstruct a sense of national pride and identity, or should they stand in the way of a “forgetful remembrance?” And if public speakers cannot be expected to deal in “harsh realities,” but instead paint over those things that divide a people, what are the ramifications of that observation?

In many ways, Jenninger’s address was far from “artful.” Not only did Jenninger “fail” in taking on the challenge of a style of speaking that his delivery could not sustain, but he also chose content that his audience could not accept. Kohl, though, perhaps fell short of giving an “artful” address as well, and from most accounts was unable to convince the Jewish members in the audience of his sincerity. But Kohl did manage to “play by the rules,” and avoided those problematic areas that undermined Jenninger. Then again, there is Weizsäcker. He was artful. Not only did he manage to “play by the rules,” but he actually used those rules to subtly argue for German reunification, a reunification based on the repression of the social continuities that led to National Socialism and National Socialist elements remaining in West Germany.

In West Germany between 1985 and 1988, public speeches related to National Socialism were “successful” if they reduced National Socialism to anti-Semitism and the Holocaust, and then reduced responsibility for the Holocaust to as few people as possible. Furthermore, a speech was “successful” if it avoided any attempt to “explain” National Socialism, or discuss the particular crimes perpetrated by those who participated in that regime. Conversely, public

speeches were “failures” if they asked the public to confront the potential guilt of the many Germans who participated in the Nazi movement.

Interestingly, the logic underlying Weizsäcker’s repeated calls for remembrance and his compassion for all of the “victims” of the Second World War seems to have been overlooked by Weizsäcker’s critics, each of whom from both the Right and the Left only had words of praise for his speech. But the preceding analyses suggest that Weizsäcker’s ultimate purpose in speaking was not to actually face the past “without distortion,” but to face the past through the lens of victimage in order to justify the reunification of Germany. And again, it is not that anything Weizsäcker said was “untrue,” but the “truth” he provided conformed so well with the strategies of remembrance that the hegemonic function of the address was rendered invisible. As opposed to Jenninger’s equally “true” speech, a speech perhaps accidentally “designed” to face the past “without distortion” (but unwittingly failing to conform to the codes of the unsayable), Weizsäcker found a way to please everyone without ever having to confront directly either the deeper social causes of National Socialism nor the actual crimes perpetrated by that regime.

Whereas Jenninger assumed that the German people actually had learned their lesson and were able to condemn National Socialism for themselves, Weizsäcker and Kohl apparently knew better, turning their addresses instead toward remembrance for the sake of a selective forgetfulness. Weizsäcker implied that remembrance should be functionalized in order to justify

reunification, and Kohl implied that remembrance should be functionalized in order to justify forgiveness. Arguably, both reunification and forgiveness would effectively allow the “Germans” to step out of the shadow of Hitler, rather than to focus on the shadow in order to understand its causes.

The question remains as to whether or not there are sufficiently significant consequences arising from political fictions to warrant such analyses, and whether or not some articulations of national identity are to be valued more than others. But it seems clear that Weizsäcker, Kohl, and Jenninger offered significantly different articulations of German identity. Weizsäcker’s message, following the strategies of remembrance, was clear: Germans have been the ultimate victims of National Socialism, they have suffered long enough, and they deserve to be reunified. Kohl’s message was perhaps less clear, but also managed to avoid transgressing the strategies of remembrance: Germans must remember in order to be forgiven, and the young people should stop being so critical of the older generations. It is difficult to say whether Jenninger’s message was “clear,” but he “clearly” transgressed all of the strategies of remembrance: The German people must directly confront National Socialism in order to learn from history, and that confrontation requires focusing on the mindset of the perpetrators and the continuities between German history and Fascism.

While Weizsäcker’s speech was a “success,” Kohl’s was “typical,” and Jenninger’s was a “failure” (according to popular and critical responses), what

does this mean for the people being hailed by the popular articulation?

Weizsäcker appeared to break new ground in the public acknowledgment of German responsibility for World War Two, but articulated a vision of “the Germans” that would relegate critique to “quiet” self-reflection. Kohl appeared to have “learned his lesson” from Bitburg, calling for reconciliation between Jews and Germans. Furthermore, Kohl, as opposed to Jenninger, continually provided commentary on the National Socialist period. In just the first few paragraphs of his address, Kohl used the words “terror,” “merciless,” “racial mania,” and “godless ideology” when referring to the *Kristallnacht*, and he even attacked the term “*Kristallnacht*” because it “covers up what really happened at that time” (Girnth 250). In other words, Kohl, unlike Jenninger, provided the audience with plenty of adjectives, making his position “clear.” But Kohl too articulated a vision of “the Germans” that could potentially stifle critique when arguing that “the people of today are no better than the people of that time” and that the younger generation had no right to judge those living during the Nazi era because they “could not understand.”

Jenninger asked not for quiet reflection but for public scrutiny, not for reconciliation but for an end to the repression of memory. Jenninger provided no commentary, and thus left his position “unclear.” But whereas Weizsäcker and Kohl provided explicit commentary (National Socialism was godless, evil, monstrous), the ultimate goals of their speeches appear to betray a certain utilitarianism. That is, while Weizsäcker and Kohl explicitly condemn and dismiss

National Socialism, they appear to do so in order to “get on” with being German.

By contrast, Jenninger appears to have given a commemorative speech focusing on aspects of National Socialism that are normally forgotten. The question remains: can a German national identity, based on the repression of certain memories and facts, where obstacles to unity are removed by silence and forgetfulness, be used for other purposes? In other words, is there a qualitative difference between an identity based on a reassuring forgetfulness and an identity based on problematic remembrance?

As Adorno and Jaspers recognized, Germany is in a unique position to rid itself of traditional nationalism once and for all, and can use its Nazi period as a tool for problematizing its identity and as a means for moving toward the kind of post-conventional identity that arguably will be required for the peaceful maintenance of the global society of the Information Age. Conversely, Germany can continue to exist on the basis of the repression of certain memories and facts, and in turn create the conditions for a return to a conventional, modern identity. While Weizsäcker’s and Kohl’s speeches were “successful,” they also tend to stifle the problematization of identity and the exploration of continuities between National Socialism and capitalist society. Jenninger’s “failure,” however, significantly problematized the reassurances provided by the strategies of remembrance and perhaps contributed in a positive way to the disruption of the kinds of identification practices that support anti-democratic impulses.

According to the theoretical framework guiding this study, it would indeed appear that public discourse in West Germany was guided by a strategy of remembrance based upon the absence of National Socialist perpetrators, as well as a variety of “sub-strategies” based upon this primary absence. Additionally, the strategic “absenting” of National Socialists is arguably an egregious absence since National Socialism, being one of the most powerful and destructive political movements of the twentieth century, needs to be thoroughly understood so that people can avoid, to use Burke’s terminology, such “magic” in the future. By the Left and the Right mutually displacing blame for National Socialism onto each other, neither camp left room for an unconstrained public discussion of the causes and continuities of National Socialism in Germany.

Nonetheless, the existence of an egregious absence at the heart of national identity in West Germany alone cannot provide sufficient support for claims regarding the existence of strategies of remembrance in other nations. To investigate the possibility that other national identities are based on strategies of remembrance, as well as to investigate whether or not other articulations of national identity are based upon variously egregious absences, I will now turn to Québec. Whereas Weizsäcker’s strategy in 1985 sought to reunify a divided Germany, public discourse in Québec in 1995 sought to gain public support for secession from the Canadian federation. By comparing these two dramatically different cases, I hope that a clearer picture will emerge concerning the existence and functions of strategies of remembrance.

Notes to Chapter Four

¹ Again, the phrases “what went wrong” and “what went well” are not meant to suggest that Weizsäcker’s and Kohl’s addresses were “better” than Jenninger’s, but that they probably adhered to the strategies of remembrance or codes of the unsayable more “faithfully” than did Jenninger.

² The English version of this address is taken from Hartmann, Geoffrey. Bitburg in Moral and Political Perspective, Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1986: 262-273. A complete copy of the text in German can be found in Girnth, 277-298. My quotations are taken from Hartmann.

³ “Wir müssen die Maßstäbe allein finden. Schonung unserer Gefühle durch uns selbst oder durch andere hilft nicht weiter. Wir brauchen und wir haben die Kraft, der Wahrheit so gut wir es können ins Auge zu sehen, ohne Beschönigung und ohne Einseitigkeit. Der 8. Mai ist für uns vor allem ein Tag der Erinnerung an das, was Menschen erleiden mußten.”

⁴ “Erinnern heißt, eines Geschehens so ehrlich und rein zu gedenken, daß es zu einem Teil des eigenen Innern wird. Das stellt große Anforderungen an unsere Wahrhaftigkeit.”

⁵ “Wir gedenken heute in aller Trauer aller Toten des Krieges und der Gewaltherrschaft. Wir gedenken insbesondere der sechs Millionen Juden, die in deutschen Konzentrationslagern ermordet wurden. Wir gedenken aller Völker, die im Krieg gelitten haben, vor allem der unsäglich vielen Bürger der Sowjetunion und der Polen, die ihr Leben verloren haben.

“Als Deutsche gedenken wir in Trauer der eigenen Landsleute, die als Soldaten, bei den Fliegerangriffen in der Heimat, der Menschen, die um ihrer religiösen oder politischen Überzeugung willen sterben mußten. Wir gedenken der erschossenen Geiseln. Wir denken an die Opfer des Widerstandes in allen von uns besetzten Staaten.

“Als Deutsche ehren wir das Andenken der Opfer des deutschen Widerstandes, des bürgerlichen, des militärischen und glaubensbergündeten, des Widerstandes in der Arbeiterschaft und bei Gewerkschaften, des Widerstandes der Kommunisten. Wir gedenken derer, die nicht aktiv Widerstand leisteten, aber eher den Tod hinnahmen, als ihr Gewissen zu beugen. Neben dem unübersehbar großem Heer der Toten erhebt sich ein Gebirge menschlichen Leids, Leid um die Toten, Leid durch Verwundung und Verkrüppelung. Leid durch unmenschliche Zwangsterilisierung. Leid in Bombennächten, Leid durch Flucht und Vertreibung, durch Vergewaltigung und Plünderung, durch Zwangsarbeit, durch Unrecht und Folter, durch Hunger und Not, Leid durch Angst vor Verhaftung und Tod, Leid durch Verlust all dessen, woran man irrend geglaubt und wofür man gearbettet.

“Heute erinnern wir und dieses menschlichen Leids und gedenken seiner in Trauer. Den vielleicht größten Teil dessen, was den Menschen aufgeladen war, haben die Frauen der Völker getragen. Ihr Leiden, ihre Entsagung und ihre still Kraft vergißt die Weltgeschichte nur allzu leicht. Sie haben gebangt und

gearbeitet, menschlichen Leben getragen und beschützt. Sie haben getrauert um gefallene Väter und Söhne, Männer, Brüder und Freunde.”

⁶ “Gewiß, es gibt kaum einen Staat, der in seiner Geschichte immer frei bleib von schuldhafter Verstrickung in Krieg und Gewalt. Der Völkermord an den Juden jedoch ist beispiellos in der Geschichte.”

⁷ “Am Anfang der Gewaltherrschaft hatte der abgrundtiefe Haß Hitlers gegen unsere jüdischen Mitmenschen gestanden.” “Die Ausführung der Verbrechen lag in der Hand weniger.” “Es gab viele Formen, das Gewissen ablenken zu lassen, nicht zuständig zu sein, wegzuschauen, zu schweigen.” “Jeder, der die Zeit mit vollem Bewußtsein erlebt hat, frage sich heute im stillen selbst nach seiner Verstrickung.” “[D]ie unsagbare Wahrheit des Holocaust.” “Der ganz überwiegende Teil unserer heutigen Bevölkerung war zur damaligen Zeit entweder im Kindesalter oder noch gar nicht geboren.”

⁸ “Wir suchen als Menschen Versöhnung . . . daß es Versöhnung ohne Erinnerung gar nicht geben kann.”

⁹ Der 8. Mai ist ein tiefer historischer Einschnitt, nicht nur in der deutschen, sondern auch in der europäischen Geschichte. Der europäische Bürgerkrieg was an sein Ende gelangt, die alte europäische Welt zu Bruch gegangen.” “Auf dem Weg ins Unheil wurde Hitler die treibende Kraft. Er erzeugte und er nutzte Massenwahn. Eine schwache Demokratie war unfähig, ihm Einhalt zu gebieten. Und auch die europäischen Westmächte, nach Churchills Urteil ‘arglos, nicht schuldlos,’ trugen durch Schwäche zur

verhängnisvollen Entwicklung bei." ". . . wurde der deutsch-sowjetische Nichtangriffspakt geschlossen . . . um Hitler den Einmarsch in Polen zu ermöglichen. Das war der damaligen Führung der Sowjetunion voll bewußt. Allen politisch denkenden Menschen jener Zeit war klar, daß der deutsch-sowjetische Pakt Hitler Einmarsch in Polen und damit den Zweiten Weltkrieg bedeutete." "Dadurch wird die deutsche Schuld am Ausbruch des Zweiten Weltkrieges nicht verringert."

¹⁰ "Während dieses Krieges hat das nationalsozialistische Regime viele Völker gequält und geschändet [, a]m Ende blieb nur noch ein Volk übrig, um gequält, geknechtet und geschändet zu werden; das eigene, das deutsche Volk."

¹¹ ". . . wir selbst zu Opfern unseres eignen Krieges wurden." "In seiner Predigt zum 8. Mai sagte Kardinal Meißner in Ostberlin: 'Das trostlose Ergebnis der Sünde ist immer die Trennung.'"

¹² "Die Willkür der Zerstörung wirkte in der willkürlichen Verteilung der Lasten nach. Es gab Unschuldige, die verfolgt wurden, und Schuldige, die entkamen. Die einen hatten das Glück, zu Hause in vertrauter Umgebung ein neues Leben aufbauen zu können. Andere wurden aus der angestammten Heimat vertrieben. Wir in der späteren Bundesrepublik Deutschland erhielten die kostbare Chance der Freiheit. Vielen Millionen Landsleuten bleibt sie bis heute versagt."

¹³ "Bei uns selbst wurde das Schwerste den Heimatvertriebenen abverlangt." "Die eigene Heimat ist mittlerweile anderen zur Heimat geworden."

¹⁴ "Heimatliebe eines Vertriebenen ist kein Revanchismus."

¹⁵ "An die stelle der Unfreiheit haben wir die demokratische Freiheit gesetzt." "Die Bundesrepublik Deutschland ist ein weltweit geachteter Staat geworden . . . [and] sie gehört zu den hochentwickelten Industrieländern der Welt."

¹⁶ "40 Jahre nach dem Ende des Krieges ist das deutsche Volk nach wie vor geteilt."

¹⁷ "Wir Deutschen sind ein Volk und eine Nation. Wir fühlen uns zusammengehörig, weil wir dieselbe Geschichte durchlebt haben. Auch den 8. Mai 1945 haben wir als gemeinsames Schicksal unserer Volkes erlebt, das uns eint Die Menschen in Deutschland wollen gemeinsam einen Frieden, der Gerechtigkeit und Menschenrecht für alle Völker einschließt, auch für das unsrige. Nicht ein Europa der Mauern kann sich über Grenzen hinweg versöhnen, sondern ein Kontinent, der seinen Grenzen das Trennende nimmt."

¹⁸ "Schauen wir am heutigen 8. Mai, so gut wir es können, der Wahrheit ins auge."

¹⁹ Interviews were conducted with three German graduate students at the University of Washington who responded to an e-mail to the German department asking if anyone was interested in talking about German national identity in relation to National Socialism, the *Historikerstreit*, Bitburg, and the "Jenninger Affair." While over fifteen students responded, three were graduate students visiting from Germany who had done research in related areas (e.g. German

history, ideology critique). The three students were Eva Barthel, Torsten Liesegang, and Stephan Bockenford. Eva and Stephan basically considered themselves "liberals," and Torsten considered himself a "leftist." Each personally discussed the problems that come from being a "German" outside of their own country. Each student read the Jenninger, Kohl, and Weizsäcker speeches independently, made comments on the texts, and then met with me without discussing their observations with the other two.

²⁰ All excerpts of Kohl's speech are my translations from a German copy of the speech in Girnth, 250-260. No English translation was available. Another copy of the speech, for comparative purposes, was obtained from "Die Menschen von heute sind nicht besser oder mutiger als damals." Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung 10 November 1988: A5.

²¹ "Heute vor 50 Jahren brannten in ganz Deutschland die Synagogen: Gotteshäuser, errichtet zur Ehre des Einen Schöpfers, zu dem Juden und Christen sich bekennen."

²² "Die Achtung vor der Unverfügbarkeit des anderen verlangt von uns, daß wir uns - biblisch gesprochen - kein Bildnis von ihm machen, sondern ihn als das gelten lassen, was er wirklich ist."

²³ "Viel zu häufig hört man - auch aus dem Munde wohlmeinender Menschen - die abwegige These vom angeblichen 'alttestamentlichen Rachedenken.' Gednakenlos sprechen wir von 'christlicher Nächstenliebe' und

vergessen dabei, daß bereits in der Thora geschrieben steht: 'Du sollst Deinen Nächsten lieben wie Dich selbst.'

²⁴ "Wir - Juden, Christen, alle freiheitlich gesonnenen Menschen hierzulande - stehen vor einer großen Zukunftsaufgabe: Am Ende dieses Jahrhunderts mit all seinen Schrecken, mit so unsagbar viel menschlichem Leid, bauen wir - an einem Europa, dessen Fundament die von Juden und Christen gemeisam vertretenen Werte sind - einem Europa, das sich von der Geißel der Nationalismen befreit."

²⁵ Jane Kramer argues that the Kohl government's primary strategy of remembrance was "Germans as victims" as late as 1995 (1).

²⁶ ". . . der Anti-Semitismus zum Kern der nationalsozialistischen Ideologie gehörte"

²⁷ "Die Novemberpogrome waren keineswegs eine spontane Entladung des sogenannten Volkszorns. Es handelte sich vielmaher um eine von zentraler Stelle ausgelöste, vor Ort organisierte Aktion." ". . . der Bevölkerung geschwiegen hat . . . lähmende Anst bei den einen, Gleichgültigkeit bei den anderen."

²⁸ "Es gab jene, die bestürzt waren - und jene, die mit vielerlei Argumenten ihr Gewissen beruhigten: etwa mit dem verbreiteten Vorurteil vom 'jüdischen Einfluß,' der zurückgedrängt und ausgeschaltet werden müsse. Die einen fühlten sich durch das Leiden ihrer jüdischen Mitbürger persönlich betroffen - die anderen meinten, das alles gehe gar nichts an. Es gab jene, die voller

Schadenfreude zusahen, die mitmachten oder gar wirtschaftlich davon profitieren.

“Doch dürfen auch jene nicht vergessen werden, die ihre Mißbilligung ausdrückten oder gar im Rahmen ihrer Möglichkeiten zu helfen suchten. Wir erinnern uns heute mit hohem Respekt und mit Dankbarkeit an die mutigen Männer und Frauen, die vor fünfzig Jahren und in der Zeit danach unter Gefährdung ihres eigenen Lebens - und oft auch der Sicherheit ihrer Familien - ihren jüdischen Mitbürgern in vielfältiger Weise beistanden; indem sie ihnen beispielsweise zu einem Versteck oder zur rettenden Flucht ins Ausland verhalfen.

“Der heutige Gedenktag wirft viele Fragen auf. Auch die Jüngeren unter uns mögen sich ehrlich prüfen, was sie in einer solchen Situation getan oder unterlassen hätten. Und wenn ich ‘ehrlich’ sage, dann meine ich vor allem: ohne Selbstgerechtigkeit.

“Die Menschen von heute - das ist meine fest Überzeugung - sind nicht besser oder mutiger als die Menschen von damals.”

²⁹ “Die nachwachsenden Generationen können - glücklicherweise - nicht aus eigener Anschauung wissen, was Unfreiheit und Diskriminierung konkret bedeuten.”

³⁰ All excerpts of the Jenninger speech are taken from an English translation obtained compliments of the German Information Center in New York, New York. I have compared the translations with a German copy of the speech

in Heiko Girnth's "*Einstellung und Einstellungsbekundung in der politischen Rede: Eine sprachwissenschaftliche Untersuchung der Rede Philipp Jenningers vom 10. November 1988*," *Europäische Hochschulschriften* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lange, 1993). Girnth's version of the speech was compared with another German version of the speech which appeared in the November 25th, 1988 issue of *Die Zeit*, Nr. 47.

³¹ Anti-Semitism in West German should not be underestimated. In a survey cited in an article entitled "Im Schatten der Vergangenheit" (In the Shadow of the Past) from Der Spiegel, 23 November 1988: 22-28, 12% of the respondents stated that they would refuse to live with a Jewish family; 25% stated that they wouldn't approve of their children marrying a Jew; 33% stated that a Jew should not be allowed to become Federal Chancellor; and over 50% believed that "foreigners" should be kicked out of the country.

³² This arrangement follows the English translation of the speech provided by the German Information Center in New York, apparently following the divisions in the original text. Girnth's version is divided into seven sections, and the German version in *Die Zeit* includes no divisions. After reading numerous commentaries on the speech, I believe that eleven divisions is the correct number.

³³ "Heute nun haben wir uns im Deutschen Bundestag
zusammengefunden, um hier im Parlament der Pogrome vom 9. und 10.
November 1938 zu gedenken, weil nicht die Opfer, sondern wir, in deren Mitte

die Verbrechen geschahen, erinnern und Rechenschaft ablegen müssen, weil wir Deutsche uns klarwerden wollen über das Verständnis unserer Geschichte und über Lehren für die politische Gestaltung unserer Gegenwart und Zukunft.”

³⁴ “Bei den Ausschreitungen handelte es sich nicht etwa um die Äußerungen eines wie immer motivierten spontanen Volkszorns, sondern um eine von der damaligen Staatsführung erdachte, angestiftete und geförderte Aktion.”

³⁵ “Nur wenige machten bei den Ausschreitungen mit Alle sahen, was geschah, aber die allermeisten schauten weg und schwiegen. Auch die Kirchen schwiegen.”

³⁶ “Der Begriff “Reichskristallnacht” wird heute zu Recht als unangemessen betrachtet . . . liegenden Verantwortung der Partei- und Staatsführung.”

³⁷ “Mir wäre lieber gewesen, ihr hättet 200 Juden erschlagen und hättet nicht solche Werte vernichtet.”

³⁸ Also, each German student interviewed separately stated that they had trouble following Jenninger’s speech when reading it, and frequently had to reread passages in order to determine which passages were quotes and which passages were Jenninger’s direct speech.

³⁹ “Für das Schicksal der deutschen und europäischen Juden noch verhängnisvoller als die Untaten und Verbrechen Hitlers waren vielleicht seine Erfolge. Die Jahre von 1933 bis 1938 sind selbst aus der distanzierten

Rückschau und in Kenntnis des Folgenden noch heute ein Faszinosum insofern, als es in der Geschichte kaum eine Parallele zu dem politischen Triumphzug Hitlers während jener ersten Jahre gibt.”

⁴⁰ “Machte nicht Hitler wahr, was Wilhelm II nur versprochen hatte, nämlich die Deutschen herrlichen Zeiten entgegenzuführen? Was er nicht wirklich von der Versehen auserwählt, ein Führer, wie er einen Volk nur einmal in tausend Jahren geschenkt wird?”

⁴¹ Scholarly disputes over the ways in which the Nazis devastated the German language are fascinating. Because Nazi ideology was almost completely based on blatant propaganda, numerous terms gained connotations that left many of them entirely ambiguous (e.g. what it meant to be a “good German”). In the focus group meetings, I would ask the participants to name some of the terms whose use in the National Socialist period made them problematic for contemporary Germans. Some of the terms they listed were: erfolge (successes), faszinosum (fascination), Triumphzug (triumphal march), wunder (wonder/miracle), wohlstand (luxury/wealth), selbst-vertrauen (self-confidence), Geschenkt (gift), nur einmal (only once), heilige Zeit (wonderful times), die Juden (the Jews), Rasse (race). The students suggested that unless the specific meaning is spelled out, the intention of the speaker remains ambiguous, and that current Neo-nazis in Germany exploit this ambiguity in the language. For an intriguing study of the deformation of the German language during the National Socialist era see Victor Klemperer. Die unbewältigte

Sprache. Darmstadt, Germany: Joseph Melzer Verlag, 1966. For additional discussions, see George Steiner. Language and Silence: Essays on Language, Literature and the Inhuman. New York: Atheneum, 1986; and Haig Bosmajian. The Language of Oppression. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1983.

⁴² "Und was die Juden anging: Hatten sie sich nicht in der Vergangenheit doch eine Rolle angemäßt - so heißt es damals - die ihnen nicht zukam? Mußten sie nicht endlich einmal Einschränkungen in Kauf nehmen? Hatten sie es nicht vielleicht sogar verdient, in ihre Schranken gewesen zu werden? Und vor allem: Entsprach die Propaganda - abgesehen von wilden, nicht ernstzunehmenden Übertreibungen - nicht doch in wesentlichen Punkten eigenen Mutmaßungen und Überzeugungen?"

⁴³ "Und ween es gar zu schlimm wurde, wie im November 1938, so konnte man sich mit den Worten eines Zeitgenossen ja immer noch sagen: 'Was geht es uns an! Seht weg, wenn euch graust. Es ist nicht unser Schicksal.'"

⁴⁴ At the beginning of section three, Jenninger had stated that "The National Socialists assumed power in the German Reich on January 30, 1933. The five and a half years until November 1938 sufficed to destroy the equal status for Jews that had taken a century and a half to achieve." "Am 30. Januar 1933 hatten die Nationalsozialisten die Macht im Deutschen Reich übernommen. Die fünfeneinhalb Jahre bis zum November 1938 reichten aus, um die in anderthalb Jahrhunderten errungene Gleichstellung der Juden auszulöschen" (Girnth 228-229).

⁴⁵ "Die Juden wurden zu gesellschaftlich erlaubten Haßibheekten . . . [und] die jüdische 'Verwersung,' das 'Ungezeifer,' von dem es sich durch 'Ausmerzung' und 'Vernichtung' zu befreien galt."

⁴⁶ "Hitlers sogenannter Weltanschauung fehlte jeder originäre Gedanke. Alles war schon vor ihm da: der zum biologistischen Rassismus gesteigerte Juden-haß ebenso wie der Affekt gegen die Moderne"

⁴⁷ "Das Elend der Kindheit, die Demütigungen der Jugend, die ruinierten Träume des gescheiterten Künstlers, die Deklassierung des stellungs- und obdachlosen Herumtreibers und die Obsessionend des sexuell Gestörten - das alles fand in Hitler ein Ventil: seinen unermesslichen und niemals endenden Haß auf die Juden. Der Wunsch, zu demütigen, zu schlagen, auszutilgen und zu vernichten, beherrschte ihn bis zum letzten Augenblick."

⁴⁸ "Wir sind ohnmächtig angesichts dieser Sätze, wie wir ohnmächtig sind angesichts des millionenfachen Untergangs. Zahlen und Worte helfen nicht weiter. Das menschliche Leid ist nicht ruckholbar; und jeder einzelne, der zum Opfer wurde, war für die Seinen unersetzlich. So bleibt ein Rest, an dem alle Versuche scheitern, zu erklären und zu begreifen."

⁴⁹ Conversely, it should be pointed out that the act of calling something "unspeakable" nonetheless serves to remind the audience of that which is "unspeakable." As one German student stated at the Western Speech Communication Association convention in 1997, "it is true that National Socialism is absent in Germany, but it is a very present and palpable absence."

⁵⁰ "Meine Damen und Herren, die Erinnerung wachzuhalten und die Vergangenheit als Teil unserer Identität als Deutsche anzunehmen – dies allein verheißt uns Älteren wie den Jüngeren Befreiung von der Last der Geschichte."

Chapter Five

Separatist Rhetoric in Québec and the Construction of Québécois Identity

The previous analysis of West German public discourse exemplified how collective national identity can be negotiated through discursive practices, articulated in public discourse, and accompanied by strategies of remembrance. I would now like to see if dramatically rejected speech is a sign of significant narrative absences in another setting. Collective identity functioned strategically in West Germany just prior to reunification through its displacement of national socialists, but are strategies to be found in other articulations of national identity? Do strategies of remembrance differ in various kinds of nationalist movements? Can significant differences be found among various strategies of remembrance and the displacements they entail? In order to explore questions such as these, the nationalist unification rhetoric in West Germany is compared in the following chapters with the separatist nationalist rhetoric during the 1995 secessionist referendum in Québec.

On October 30th, 1995, citizens of the province of Québec voted for the second time in fifteen years to declare nationhood and secede from Canada.¹ As noted earlier, Québec nationalism differs from West German nationalism inasmuch as the former was a secessionist nationalism while the latter sought reunification. But the 1995 secessionist referendum in Québec does provide another example of dramatically rejected speech. In chapter six I will analyze a

number of speeches by Canadian and Québécois leaders, one of which was delivered by former Québec prime minister Jacques Parizeau to separatist supporters and a national audience on the evening of the referendum's narrow defeat. Parizeau's speech, like Jenninger's, was nearly universally condemned in the pan-Canadian press, and Parizeau was compelled to resign his posts as prime minister and nominal leader of the separatist Parti Québécois. Parizeau's dramatically rejected discourse will ultimately serve as a site from which to launch an investigation into articulations of national identity by Québec and Canadian leaders around the time of the referendum. But in this chapter I will explore the history of conflicts between the French and the English in Canada and their effect on nationalism in Québec to provide a context for the subsequent analysis.

In West Germany, strategies of remembrance revolve around at least one particularly salient absence: national socialists. Therefore, some strategies of remembrance are fundamentally "spins" on how to deal with this code of absence. But in Canada there are two opposed sets of strategies resulting for the most part from political and economic conflicts between the French and English over the last two centuries, and this chapter seeks to review those conflicts and their influence on Québec nationalism. To contextualize contemporary secessionist rhetoric in Québec, and to investigate how the articulation of Québécois identity compares with the articulation of West German identity, this chapter reviews the history of Québec nationalism, the ways in

which national identity has developed over the course of French Canadian history, and the ways in which language law and constitutional reform have reflected contesting constructions of peoplehood.²

I begin by tracing the political and economic history of the French and the English in Canada, suggesting how this history contributed to a shifting Québec nationalism. Historically, the French Canadians can draw upon a large number of legitimate grievances against the English, and some of these past grievances undergird the contemporary construction of the Québec/Canada dichotomy.³ Next, I examine representative contemporary examples of language and constitutional conflicts that have contributed to the current Canadian federal crisis. The chapter concludes with a discussion of how these “institutional” conflicts illuminate two very different conceptions of national identity related to the spatial deployment of political power.

Québécois identity has primarily been negotiated through provincial language laws, continuing battles over the Canadian constitution, and the active promotion and fabrication of “Québécois” culture through expanded ministries of education and culture within Québec itself.⁴ Québec’s language policies, constitutional maneuvers, and bureaucratic expansions have been continually contested by federal “cultural” policies, and the following discussion seeks in part to explore whether or not there is a relationship between provincial and federal policies, articulations of national identity, and strategies of remembrance;

relationships that might be reflected (and deflected) in contemporary Canadian public discourse.

Historically, Québec separatists have based their demands for secession on threats to French-Canadian culture because of assimilationist English policies, arguing that Québec must secede in order to protect “Québécois” culture. In reaction to the construction of ethnic-nationalist Québécois identity, the federal government has moved away from its assimilationist policies (policies intended to indeed assimilate French Canada into English Canada) toward a “multicultural policy” of pan-Canadian bilingualism and provincial “equality.”⁵ Ultimately, Québec nationalists seek to build a provincial identification that will override federal allegiance, while federalists seek to create a pan-Canadian identity that will override provincial allegiance.

Two Visions of Canada

It is a puzzle to many that Canada, one of the world’s most prosperous and peaceful federal states, has been wracked in recent years by continued attempts on the part of provincial leaders in Québec to secede. In a recent conference on the relationship between global capitalism and the exercise of state power, organizers discussed a central paradox of our times: while borders are becoming increasingly irrelevant with the rise of mass communication technology and transportation systems, larger political units are fragmenting,

states are trying to incorporate citizens, and numerous territorially smaller nation-states are emerging (Blanc). The most dramatic recent examples would include the former Soviet Union and the former Yugoslavia. But Canada?

Many English Canadians believe (and are encouraged to believe) that Québec is an integral part of an indivisible country composed of one nation: Canada. Conversely, many citizens of Québec believe (and are encouraged to believe) they are a conquered and colonized people, and the only way to overcome their minority status within English Canada is to obtain their own country through secession. There are a series of paradoxes here: 1) citizens of Québec are relatively prosperous and live in an economically and "culturally" successful province (e.g. leaders in Québec are fundamentally in control of education, the economy, and language laws within the province), yet they seek to secede because of a claimed oppressed status; 2) in 1991, a plurality of Québec citizens were polled as favoring sovereignty, yet eighty-three per cent agreed that "Canada is the best country in the world to live in;" and 3) citizens of Québec hold "an altogether privileged place in the federal political system from which they seem to be alienated" (Johnson 140). Why, then, given Québec's economic strength and privileged position in the Canadian Federation, should its citizens so adamantly seek to secede?

Québec's official motto, on every motor-vehicle license plate in the province, is "*Je me souviens*" (I remember), but who exactly is this "I," and what exactly do citizens of Québec remember? Hubert Bauch argues that nationalist

citizens of Québec see the Canadian confederation “as a mere extension of the British colonial boot,” and Bernard Landry, the vice-premier of Québec, stated in 1995 that Québec was “the last colonized nation in the western world.” The identity crisis between Québec and Ottawa has been summarized in Timothy Moore’s observation that Canada is a state in search of a nation, while Québec is a nation in search of a state.

Because of the relative strength of provinces in Canada, especially when compared with states in the United States, Canadians are constantly interpellated as belonging to two collective identities: the provincial and the federal. This leads to a problem of competing allegiances on a wide and abstract scale. Will Kymlicka has pointed out, “if citizenship is membership in a political community, then in creating overlapping political communities [e.g. federal and provincial], self-government rights necessarily give rise to a sort of dual citizenship, and to potential conflicts about which political community citizens identify with most deeply” (122). In Québec we see this kind of “dual citizenship,” and pan-Canadian identity may be more of a problem because of the strength of provincial identity in the predominantly French speaking province.⁶

Guy LaForest, a staunch defender of Québec secession, argues that French Canadians have historically devoted considerable energy “in the dream of two equal collectivities [the French and the English],” and that pan-Canadian “patriotism was possible as long as it permitted French Canada, Québec, to

remain itself -- as long as it did not demand that the Québécois renounce their primary allegiance to the society in which they were born" (Trudeau 5). The notion that Québec could "remain itself" is ultimately problematic since collective identity is constantly being restructured. But, as William Lawton points out:

The ideal conception of the nation-state is a political unit whose boundaries are coterminous with those of an ethnic group; the theory of and desire for such a political unit is the essence of modern ethnic nationalism. By this ideal definition there can be very few nation-states, and Canada certainly does not qualify (134).

In Québec, ancestors of white, Catholic, oppressed citizens of New France "ideally" identify with one another. Perhaps it is not intentionally based on ethnicity, but historically it has been assimilationist and tied directly to issues of ancestry. Part of nation building, then, in Québec (and ethnic-nationalism in general) is the articulation of a difference that requires its own sameness, and that sameness is constructed as a common "national" heritage. But that heritage can include an ethnic component that can lead to a monocultural, neo-racist nationalism. In what follows, I hope to show how this "ethnic" problematic led to and surrounded the 1995 secessionist referendum, and eventually guided the fundamental strategies of remembrance for Québec secessionists.

The Conquest of New France and the Emergence of Québec Nationalism

Over the course of two hundred years, these two competing “visions” were put into political practice through language legislation and constitutional reform. Many historians, journalists, and political theorists agree that the present relationship between the French and the English in Canada can be traced to the so-called Conquest of 1763, a military event that marked the beginning of tensions that persist to this day (Dufour; Gougeon; Legendre; Rioux).⁷ In many ways, it is the history of colonialism, reactions to perceived colonialism, and the role of the Catholic church in cultural affairs that have determined the evolution of Québec nationalist ideology. Christian Dufour argues that “Canada is profoundly dependent on the conquest of 1763” since “Québécois are still very much affected by the aftermath of the abandonment/conquest they experienced in the 18th century, which remains buried in their collective unconscious” (17-18).

Between 1608 and 1759 a French colony, New France, forming a fairly integrated colonial society, was settled on the banks of the Saint Lawrence river. But on September 12, 1759, English soldiers clashed with French and Canadian soldiers on the Plains of Abraham, with the English emerging victorious.⁸ France had decided that New France was too expensive to maintain, especially in light of Britain’s superior navy, and the English victory signaled the eventual colonial domination of the British in North America (Lahaise). French Canadiens,

therefore, were both conquered by the British and simultaneously abandoned by their "mother country." These events had a profound impact on the administration of French Canadian society, placing the French Canadiens "in the political status of a colonial minority, a minority status which they have retained within Canada to this day" (Legendre 5). In France, Canada was quickly forgotten, and it was not until De Gaulle's "*Vive le Quebec libre*" in 1967 that a publicly acknowledged political relationship was reestablished (Dufour 30-31).

No newspaper was published in New France prior to 1764, and Dufour argues that because of the absence of such an instrument "the young Canadian identity was not collectively . . . aware of the implications of the abandonment/conquest of 1760-63. The Canadiens could not, therefore, develop concepts or a relevant political strategy to enable them, over time, to rise above the event" (40-41). Isolated, the predominantly rural, Catholic, French speaking community first confronted English oppression in the form of the royal Proclamation of 1763 which stated that the Catholic religion was not to be recognized, effectively excluding French Canadiens from administrative positions (Legendre 6; Dufour 32).⁹ Camille Legendre points out that the balance of power between French Canadians and English Canadians has been "an unequal pluralism . . . from the beginning. Canadian society has been an ethnically stratified society within which the anglophone group of British origin has enjoyed a dominant position based on a relative monopoly of power, privilege and prestige established in the days of the colonial regime . . ." (4).

Whether this statement is true of contemporary Québec is open to speculation, but certainly was true at least until the mid-twentieth century.

In 1774, the British were compelled to relax their draconian anti-French and anti-Catholic measures in order to persuade the French Canadiens to help repel American revolutionaries. To halt French Canada's possible assimilation into revolutionary America, England adopted the Québec Act, reversing aspects of the Proclamation of 1763 by recognizing Catholicism and French Civil Law. The initially Britain's strict colonial authority over the French Canadiens would never return with the same force, for Canada was changed forever as a result of the refugee situation created by the revolution, when many British Loyalists fled to the north from America. Between 1780 and 1784, the English speaking population swelled from fifteen to forty-five thousand.¹⁰

In a certain sense, Canada was thereafter composed of two defeated groups of colonizers: the French Canadiens (who initially colonized the region by establishing New France) and the British Loyalists (who later were held to have "colonized" the settler of New France). But in the aftermath of the American Revolution, the population in Canada had been transformed from a predominantly colonized French Canadian society into a broader Canadian community where the British enjoyed colonial power and the French Canadiens became an economic minority. For the next half century the French Canadiens pursued farming and minor crafts, while the English minority became increasingly urban and secular.

Economic and cultural divisions became more pronounced at the beginning of the nineteenth century, when fledgling middle-class francophones were thwarted in their efforts to achieve and maintain social status. By that time, French Canadian nationalism had taken on a double nature. On the one hand, there was a conservative clerical nationalism that supported cooperation between the Catholic Church and English Canada, and on the other hand there was a separatist nationalism articulated by members of the thwarted middle class who argued that cultural and political survival could only be guaranteed in an independent French Canada.¹¹

Dufour argues that the basic dynamic between the French and the English at this time was simple: Canada consisted of a conquered francophone majority under political and economic British control (57). The rebellions of 1837-38, instigated by the separatist faction of French Canadian nationalists, were prompted in no small part by the fact that the British minority was benefiting from their links with England at the expense of equal opportunities for positions of wealth and power (Bernard 19). The rebellions, though, were put down quickly. Britain sent Lord Durham, also known as John George Lambton, a true villain for Québec separatists, to assess the situation. According to Legendre, Lord Durham came to Canada expecting to find a conflict between the population and the authorities, but found “two nations at war within one state.” Durham’s solution was quickly evident when he reported to Britain that the French Canadiens had to be assimilated. Durham was explicit:

I entertain no doubt of the national character which must be given to Lower [French] Canada; it must be that of the British Empire I should indeed be surprised if the more reflecting part of the French Canadians entertain at present any hope of continuing to preserve their nationality. Much as they struggle against it, it is obvious that the process of assimilation to English habits is already commencing. The English language is gaining ground, as the language of the rich and of the employers of labour naturally will (cited in Rioux 269-70).

Lord Durham's perspective was quickly reflected in British policy, and the result was the Act of Union of 1840, an act whose arrival signaled the beginning of a more subtle economic, rather than military, colonization. The Act united Upper English and Lower French Canada under one British government, but outlawed the use of French in the legislature.¹² In addition, an aggressive British immigration policy was initiated, as Britain engaged in a cultural war against the "character" of the French Canadian "nation." Still, by 1844, French was restored as an official language in the legislature, and relations between the French and the English were relatively good for the next twenty years.

The Act of Union spelled the end for colonial separatist French Canadian nationalism, as the call for independence from the British oppressor was replaced by the call for French Canadian cultural conservation through clerical nationalism (271). The leaders of the rebellion had been put down and the Catholic church resumed its role as the articulator of French Canadian identity.

Conservative clerical nationalism demonized the secular, urban, English and valorized Catholic, rural, French Canadian culture. In charge of education, the Catholic church sought to preserve and protect the French language. Jean-Paul Bernard notes that, "from the French Canadian view in 1850, the phrase *la langue, gardienne de la foi* – language, guardian of the faith – may have described reality," and that conservative nationalism initiated a counter attack in the ongoing language war between French and English language laws that continues to the present (22).¹³ Here the close relationship between language, identity, and the administration of public policy is especially evident.

Conservative clerical nationalism sought to preserve traditional French Canadian culture, and it was this form of nationalism that prevailed for the next century. This was a clericalism that, since it demonized secular English, was resigned to the economically subordinated condition of the French Canadians. This turn away from colonial separatist nationalism had fateful consequences for twentieth century nationalists, who rightfully came to realize by 1960 that Québécois society had been seriously crippled by a hundred years of acquiescence to British political and economic hegemony.

In sum, the "colonial" period of French Canada, between 1763 and the mid-nineteenth century, saw the suppression of separatist nationalists and the subsequent transfer of separatist energy from the political/economic sector to the cultural/religious sector (66-67). Rioux clarifies the import of this transfer by pointing out that, for the conservative clerical nationalists, "If the Québécois were

to realize themselves fully, to become what they really [were], it was out of the question to imitate the material successes of the English. It mattered little that they were conquered and poor, because they had a providential mission to accomplish in North America; to evangelize and civilize the continent" (272).

Ultimately, the conservative clerical nationalism that emerged as a result of the failed rebellions and the suppression of separatist nationalism allowed English Canadians to maintain their dominant position in politics and the economy, while French Canadians, as represented and articulated by the Catholic church, remained relatively rural and poor, focusing on their French Catholic traditions and being educated by the Catholic church.

Urbanization and the Quiet Revolution

In 1871, Québec was 77 percent rural, but by 1911 it was half urban. Nonetheless, the anglophone minority continued to hold the reins to wealth and power, in no small part due to the dominance of conservative clerical nationalist values. But the process of urbanization only served to intensify the exposure of French Canadians to business environments dominated by the English. This increased exposure in turn resulted in increased recognition on the part of French Canadians of English economic hegemony. Continuing hostility on the part of a frustrated but growing French Canadian lower middle class, coupled with the values of conservative clerical ideology, combined to maintain the

conception of a distinct French Canadian identity threatened by English hegemony.

Between 1900 and 1930 there was continued massive migration by the rural French Canadians to the cities (Legendre 9). At the same time, French Canadian literature spoke of the evils of the city, supporting the Catholic church's articulation of an implicitly white, rural, French Canadian identity. William Johnson notes that "ruralist" novels were very ideological:

They typically present a young man growing up on the farm who is tempted to go to the city or abroad, often because he is fascinated by an alien woman, usually an *anglaise*. But he eventually either mends his ways and comes back to the farm to marry the French-Canadian girl next door or he perishes miserably in the city. The lesson is that French-Canadian virtue flourishes only on the farm. The city is the domain of *les Anglais*, of industry, and of degradation, both moral and national (Johnson 143).

Johnson argues that the Québécois intellectual tradition has remained especially vulnerable to this brand of fiction. Before the mid-twentieth century and the emergence of the "Quiet Revolution" (the gradual replacement of the authority of the Church with the authority of the State, and the modernization of francophone Québec), "the scapegoating of *les Anglais* had the object of defending the reactionary Catholicism of a stifled society, and was a way of not calling into question archaic values in inappropriate institutions" (146-47). But

after the Quiet Revolution, new forms of scapegoating presented (and still present) *les Anglais* as a threat to Québec's language and culture, even though British colonialism is fundamentally a thing of the past, being replaced by an extended federal/provincial struggle for power.

The beginning of the Quiet Revolution can be associated with the end of the conservative Québec administration of Maurice Duplessis in 1959. The end of the Duplessis government marked both the end of conservative clerical nationalism and the reemergence of separatist nationalism.¹⁴ The Depression, followed by an expanded federal and provincial welfare state, along with over a century of economic inequality furthered by clerical nationalism, led to a sharp break in Québec's political and social history. Dufour summarizes the change in ideological climate:

The energy that French Canada of the pre-Quiet Revolution years invested in religious activities, and the spiritual mission adopted after 1840 to compensate for the fact that true power had escaped it, were transformed around 1960 into a political nationalism, based on the use of the powers of the Government of Québec (91).

The intellectual elite came to believe they had been misled by the "old myths," and that English values and institutions were perhaps more appropriate for modern society than their own. Johnson, echoing the concerns of early German historians over their "belated" national status, points out that a key word for the liberal movement was *rattrapage* (catching up), and it was in the 1960s that the

descendants of French Canadiens began to demand that their language and education rights be accepted throughout Canada.¹⁵ Simultaneously, the Québec government began actively promoting “Québécois culture” by expanding government departments of education and culture (Handler). Arguably, it is this combination of French language laws and the state production of Québécois identity through expanded departments of education and culture that set the stage for an articulation of Québec national identity with enough collective force to motivate many citizens of Québec to secede.

A Summary of Historical Articulations of “Québec” Identity

Marcel Rioux’s essay, “The Development of Ideologies in Québec,” provides a concise summary of the various ways in which national identity has been articulated in French Canadien, French Canadian, and Québécois history, moving from early separatist radicalism, through clerical nationalism, to two strands of contemporary secular nationalism. First, if there were a French-Canadien identity prior to the Conquest, according to Rioux, it was fundamentally isolated and unreflexive. Second, the Conquest led to the eventual formation of two branches of colonial nationalism: a conservative clerical nationalism seeking both to maintain Church authority and French Canadien culture, and a rising secular elite who defined Québec as a homogeneous French Canadien nation and sought political independence from British colonial rule. The latter faction

was suppressed after the Insurrection of 1837-38, which ended in the defeat of the separatists, and conservative clerical nationalism soon replaced the ideology of the separatists with the ideology of conservation.

The ideology of conservation as it existed as late as 1945 had the following characteristics: 1) in the absence of equal economic and political power, it defined the French Canadiens as the bearers of a culture, a group with an edifying history that had to be preserved intact to its descendants; 2) it supported the Catholic religion, the French language, rural living, and family values; 3) it warned of the dangers of English imperialism, industrialization and urbanization, and the means of mass communication; and 4) it sought respect for the “two founding societies” thesis (277). Finally, this ideology of the Catholic church argued that Québec had the best (church run) educational system, the best religion, the most humane traditions, and a messianic mission to preserve and export those traditions (280). But the regressive tendencies in this ideology, at least in the eyes of the rising middle class and labor, eventually led to the Quiet Revolution and the transfer of education and cultural transmission from the Catholic church to the provincial elite within Québec (Legendre 10).

Third and fourth, according to Rioux’s typology, came the ideology of recouplement and the ideology of separatism. The ideology of recouplement (seeking to “catch up,” “*rattrapage*”) was in part the result of industrialization and urbanization, a process that placed the French Canadians in more direct competition with the English Canadians who still predominantly ran the Québec

economy. In the ideology of recouplement, though, there was really no significant move away from the notion that Québec possessed a unique culture that had to be preserved. In this sense, the ideology of recouplement built upon, rather than replaced, the ideology of conservation. The majority of those following the ideology of recouplement wanted Québec to become a liberal democracy based upon the model in Ottawa, but also wanted actively to promote the French language and French Canadian culture. If Québec, as an ethnic group, had fallen behind English Canada, it was because its conservative clerical elites had misled them onto the paths of conservation, nationalism, chauvinism, and messianism. What those initiating the Quiet Revolution wanted was to integrate the Québécois culture into the emerging liberal political-economic order, and if Graham Smith is correct in his observation that most inter-ethnoregional tensions within federal systems result from the "politics of uneven development," then the tensions between Québec and Ottawa may be primarily motivated by the globalization of capitalism and recognition on the part of Québec's leaders that the strengthening of Québécois identity results in the strengthening of Québec's economy.

The final ideology discussed by Rioux is the ideology of separatism. Functioning during the 1995 referendum, the ideology of separatism emerged from and was built upon each of the previous ideological models, and I would argue is the principal result of language laws, constitutional struggles, and the active promotion of French Canadian culture arising from the expanded state

bureaucracies that arose in turn out of the political actions taken by those articulating the ideology of recoupment (Graham 22; Handler 52-108).¹⁶

According to Rioux:

Together with the ideology of recoupment, [the ideology of separatism] recognizes that elites of the past have perverted [the Québécois] heritage, that this culture and the ideology of conservation have become anachronistic, and that Québec must move smoothly into the twentieth century. It recognizes the lag between the social structure of Québec and its culture must be filled. But the resemblance with the other ideologies ends there. It reaches back across the years to rejoin the first ideology of Québec . . . [that it] is a society that must be self-determined and gain its own independence (283).

This new generation of separatists argued that the problems in Québec society came from its colonized status, and its subsequent inability to fulfill its “distinct society” status within the “two founding nations” thesis. They defined Québec as not only an oppressed culture, but as an emerging post-colonial modern industrial society that had been dominated economically and politically by the rest of Canada.¹⁷

The development of Québec nationalism, a development spurred in the past by colonization, later by industrialization and urbanization, and even later, as explored in the next section, by the fabrication of culture through language and constitutional conflicts, brings us full circle back to the paradoxes noted

earlier by Johnson. Contemporary separatists draw upon colonial injustices for the justification of secession, but today Québec enjoys disproportionate provincial power within the Canadian federation, is prosperous, and the protection and development of Québec culture rests almost entirely within Québec's jurisdiction. Stated otherwise, Québec presently holds considerable provincial power and enjoys a "distinct society" status in practice, although not formally within the constitution itself. This later absence was the sticking point in the constitutional debates preceding and surrounding the 1995 referendum, and was the latest in a long series of provincial/federal conflicts in the areas of language legislation and constitutional maneuvering.

Language Laws and the Negotiation of Federal/Provincial Allegiance in Canada

Battles over language primacy have been waged in Canada since the Proclamation of 1763, and have also played a primary role in the construction of state allegiance. These language policies reflect the different strategies of remembrance in Québec and Ottawa. According to LaForest (Trudeau):

[T]he battle over language rights between the Canadian and Québécois governments can be seen as a battle to establish the boundedness and homogeneity of the nation – that is, either Canada defined (in opposition to the United States] by the cultural characteristic of bilingualism, or

Québec defined as a unilingual French society (in opposition to English Canada) (174).

Furthermore, adds LaForest, Québec's language laws are a "safety net" against assimilation into anglophone North America (117).

The fear of linguistic and cultural assimilation has remained salient since the days of Lord Durham, and the most recent "colonial" action on the part of "English Canada," according to separatists, is former Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau's Official Languages Act of 1969. That Act brought the bilingual vision of Canada under the rule of federal law, infuriating Québec separatists. Trudeau, a leading proponent of pan-Canadian identity and the architect of federal nation building strategy since the 1960s, has written that "Bilingualism unites people; dualism divides them. Bilingualism means you can speak to the other; duality means you can live in one language and the rest of Canada will live in another language" (81). LaForest (Trudeau) notes that what has angered so many nationalists in Québec is the fact that Trudeau's efforts at the creation of a bilingual Canada is seen as a "rejection of duality" (4). Québec separatists were outraged, then, because they believed that the Act clearly sought to dilute the distinct society status of Québec.

Robert Young has spoken of the French language and its tenuous survival. Since the French language in Canada is surrounded by a vast Northern American majority speaking the world-hegemonic English language, it is like "a sugar cube placed beside an urn of coffee" (131). Such an assimilationist

concern echoes not only those of the conservative clerical nationalists, but also of the contemporary separatist nationalists, who until the 1995 referendum arguably saw their primary job being the preservation of French Canadian culture from colonial assimilation. Charles Taylor (*Reconciling*), for example, has argued that:

Québec has a strong sense of national identity, but of a kind that the majority of English-speaking North Americans find unfamiliar -- connected to a national language, and moreover one that is under threat. Because of this threat, the preservation and health of this language will always be one of the major national goals of French-speaking Canadians (100).

What Taylor fails to mention is the ethnic/cultural component accompanying the language component, and arguably it is the neo-racist connotations of an ethnic-national project of French Canadian preservation that has shaped the dominant strategies of remembrance in contemporary Canada.

During and after the period of industrialization and urbanization in Québec and prior to the Quiet Revolution, according to Taylor, French Canadians found themselves increasingly forced to play by English rules in most institutions. The language used by those in charge of the economy was English, and “the position of the French Canadian in large English-speaking enterprises [was] a generator of nationalist tension . . .” (11). The French professional class soon recognized that nationalist agitation increased their bargaining power substantially, and “the noise made around the separatist movement made English Canadians more

ready to make concessions in matters such as bilingualism and the use of French” (13).

Coleman details the evolution of Québec’s language policy after the Quiet Revolution and the way in which the Parti Québécois responded to federal bilingual laws. The *Charte de la langue française* was the first major piece of legislation to be introduced by the Parti Québécois after its election to power in November of 1976, and was introduced by the minister of state for cultural development in April of 1977. This legislation eventually became law as Bill 101, a law mandating that all Québec municipalities, school boards, local health and social service institutions draw up all official texts in French (Politics 465-469). Ramsey Cook argues that Bill 101 was the most important and controversial piece of legislation passed by the Parti Québécois, turning Québec into a unilingual state, and motivating many English-speaking professionals to leave Québec. According to Coleman (Politics), “Bill 101 left no barriers standing in the public sector to the creation of an integrated nation-state” (466), and perhaps most controversial was the fact that Bill 101 also held that all public signs, previously printed in both French and English, were only to be printed in French, “following a policy of unilingualism consistent with its view of Québec as an overwhelmingly francophone nation-state in embryo” (476).

Through language legislation, Québec leaders, for all intents and purposes, turned their province into a unilingual, francophone state. Just as colonial Britain had attempted to assimilate French Canadians in part by failing to

protect French language rights, Québec passed laws that, in effect, forced almost all Québécois to be educated and to do their business in French. As a counter-response to the federal strategy of pan-Canadian bilingualism, the Québécois strategy appeared to follow the advice of Dufour, who argued that “Francophones should not limit themselves to learning English; they should also impose their mother tongue.” According to Dufour:

For as long as the Québec identity does not appropriate what was then [during the colonial period] the English strength [colonialism], for as long as it does not become its own conqueror, it will be condemned, unfortunately, to lose the same battle . . . over and over again. This is a tremendous challenge: to stabilize the Québec identity in relation to the Canadian identity. It is the psychological equivalence of independence, the conquest of the Conquest (129).

Here the colonial period is drawn upon as a justification for contemporary language legislation, and it is only through the “stabilization” of “Québec identity” that the Conquest of 1763 can be “conquered.” What is left unstated is how the dominant notion of a “Québec” identity is based on French Canadian colonial history, how Québec’s privileged constitutional position allowed its exclusionary language laws to stand, how a “Québec” identity could not exist prior to the British North America Act of 1867, and how Québec’s French laws mirror the violence of earlier British colonial language policies considered to be so unjust as to call for secession.

Constitutional Battles and the Negotiation of Federal/Provincial Allegiance in Canada

Many of the constitutional battles that have been waged in Canada over the last twenty-five years reflect these differing strategies on the language front: the federalist attempt to articulate a pan-Canadian bilingual and multicultural identity, and the Québec separatist attempt to articulate a Québécois identity based on the French language, French ancestry, and, most recently, just prior to and in the aftermath of the 1995 referendum, multiculturalism. On the one side have been between federalists, such as Pierre Trudeau, who have sought to defeat Québec nationalism through the inclusion of a Charter of Rights in a patriated Canadian constitution that seeks to establish a multicultural, bilingual, and pan-Canadian state allegiance. On the other side, Québec nationalists have sought to maximize provincial power through the recognition of the “two founding nations” thesis and the “distinct society” status of Québec.¹⁸

In 1980, the Parti Québécois government of René Lévesque saw its goal of a sovereign Québec blocked when the first secessionist referendum failed. But whereas 59.6 percent of Québec voters voted against secession in 1980 (LeDuc), only 50.6 percent voted against secession in 1995, indicating that Québec was definitely moving toward becoming an independent state (Lett). For many, this movement toward sovereignty has been fueled in part by a series

of important constitutional maneuvers on the part of the federal government.

Perhaps the most significant of these constitutional moves was the patriation of the Canadian Constitution in 1982, a move that in many ways was a federal response to the 1980 referendum crisis.¹⁹ Donald Johnston notes that:

[F]ollowing the Québec referendum of May 1980 . . . the federal government under Trudeau's leadership set about to renew the Canadian Constitution by bringing it home from the United Kingdom (a process known as patriation) with its own amending formula and a Charter of Rights and Freedoms for the benefit of all Canadians (5).²⁰

Trudeau, in defense of his move to have Britain “free” Canada, maintained that many Canadian prime ministers had failed in earlier attempts at patriating the constitution because any amending formula had to be unanimously approved by all of the provinces, “permitting every province to hold the country to ransom”

(46). As Trudeau puts it, by September of 1980

[I]t had become obvious that the greed of the provinces was a bottomless pit, and that the price to be paid to the provinces for their consent to patriation with some kind of entrenched Charter [of rights] . . . was nothing less than acceptance by the federal government of the “compact” theory, which would transform Canada from a very decentralized, yet balanced federation, into some kind of loose confederation. That is when our government said, ‘Enough. We are going to move unilaterally and we are

going to give the people their Constitution and their Charter of Rights . . .'

(54).

Trudeau was hoping to create a form of constitutional patriotism, a charter patriotism, that was meant to "create values and beliefs that not only united all Canadians in feeling that they were one nation, but also set them above the governments of the provinces and the federal government itself" (46), but he decided to patriate the constitution without the consent of the Québec provincial assembly.

Separatists see the new constitution as a direct assault on Québec's "distinct" status. For example, Laforest (Trudeau) believes that "The Canadian Charter treats unequals in a uniform, symmetrical fashion. It treats unequals equally. It has fostered a political culture that reinforces the idea that Canada is a nation of ten equal provinces." Bauch argues that Québec's "great modern trauma is the 1982 patriation of Canada's constitution . . . and the enshrinement of a Charter of Rights at Trudeau's insistence. It has been as richly mythologized as the Patriote Rebellion[s of 1837-38]."²¹ Trudeau himself admits that "the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms [is] important to Canadian unity . . . [because it helps] Canadians to realize that they share with all other Canadians throughout the country the same set of fundamental values" (31). Trudeau's defends his decision to patriate the constitution without Québec's support because, in his opinion, the Québec government would never have agreed on the proposed constitutional reforms, especially since the failure of

reform could be called upon as a further impetus for secession. Furthermore, Trudeau has argued that the provinces actually gained considerable power from the Constitution Act of 1982 in areas such as resource management, indirect taxation, and external trade. Most importantly, the provinces obtained the right to opt out of certain constitutional amendments, especially those affecting local cultures (61).

Although the constitution was weakened considerably from the federalist's viewpoint by Québec's refusal to approve it and the inclusion of the "notwithstanding clause" that allowed individual provinces to "opt out" of a vague range of Supreme Court rulings, on April 17, 1982 the Queen gave her approval for the new Canadian constitution. The subsequent patriation of the Canadian constitution was a serious blow to Québec separatists. According to LaForest, the Act invited the Québécois "to commune at the altar of a Canadian national spirit whose genealogy goes back to an English-Canadian nationalism." In other words, it was quite clear to the separatists that the fundamental objective of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms was to "promote throughout Canada (including Québec) a political culture capable of reinforcing in each citizen the feeling of belonging to a single Canadian nation" (Fraud 133). Such an objective, and what was clearly to them a colonial English move, went directly against the two founding nations thesis, and Québec separatists soon responded with calls for constitutional restitution.

Such constitutional maneuvers reflect two fundamental strategies of remembrance being contested in Canada, both seeking to determine the proper balance of powers between federal and provincial governments, while simultaneously promoting contesting geographic allegiances. The federalists in 1995 sought to construct a pan-Canadian identity based on individual rights, bilingualism, and multiculturalism, while secessionists sought to construct a Québécois identity based on communitarianism, monolingualism, and French Canadian ancestry (Taylor, *Multiculturalism* 54-61).²² Many English Canadians believe that collective goals threaten to undermine individual rights, and for many non-francophone Canadians, Québec's Bill 101 was an exemplary manifestation of their concerns. In a liberal democracy, individual rights always come before collective goals, and a society with collective goals like Québec's violates the liberal model. But as Will Kymlicka points out, collective goals are oftentimes less important than shared identities:

Shared identity derives from commonality of history, language, and perhaps religion. But these are precisely the things which are not shared in a multination state In many multination countries, however, history is a source of resentment and division between national groups, not a source of shared pride To build a sense of common identity in a multination state probably requires an even more selective memory of the past (131).

Despite Québec's disproportionate power within the federation, and despite the fact that French is now recognized officially throughout Canada, the history of British colonialism, economic backwardness, and failure to have distinct society recognition and miscellaneous demands written into the 1982 Canadian Constitution drive Québec closer and closer to secession.

Federal and Québécois Strategies of Remembrance in Canada

This review of "Québec" ideologies and accompanying developments in language and constitutional law indicates that nationalism in Québec has developed in opposition to federal policies, which have been equated with English Canadian policies. During the 1995 secessionist referendum, Québec nationalists argued that secession was necessary in order to protect French Canadian culture from English Canadian assimilation, and in the remainder of this chapter I would like to discuss some of the implications of this line of argument. Particularly, I would like to discuss how the most recent articulations of national identity in Québec are potentially related to issues of race and class.

As mentioned in chapter two, Balibar and Wallerstein investigate the relationship between national, racial, and class identities. Basically, they contend that national collective identities are necessarily based on the establishment of a difference that is related to the construction of ethnicity. Additionally, the construction of ethnicity is seen as a response to economic

disparities (49). Rather than building national identity on an overtly racial basis (as was done in Nazi Germany), nation builders in Québec have traditionally sought to justify nationhood on an ethnic basis, and therefore Québec provides an interesting site for testing Balibar and Wallerstein's thesis.²³

Québec separatists, prior to the 1995 referendum, primarily sought to build national identity on the basis of the production of "culture," and the "culture" to be protected was French Canadian "culture." Unfortunately, in Québec, these "cultural" characteristics imply race (and are therefore potentially neo-racist), and in response to charges of ethnic-nationalism Québec leaders have recently begun to argue that they are "multicultural." Thus, strategic multiculturalism is a term I use to indicate my belief that such arguments are insincere, inasmuch as multiculturalism is used as a tool to mask the difference-creating effects of nation building. In other words, there is an incompatibility between the difference-creation necessary to justify sovereign nationhood and the difference-ameliorating implications of non-strategic multiculturalism (if such a thing exists).

While it is true that French Canadiens were conquered militarily in the late eighteenth century and oppressed politically and economically until the twentieth century, citizens of contemporary Québec can only with great difficulty be labeled oppressed or colonized. This is not to say that French Canadian culture has not been dramatically and negatively affected by its geographic position within predominantly English North America, nor that the federal government's colonial assimilationist policies were, and current multiculturalist strategies are, not

suspect. But due to the artful statesmanship of Québec leaders since the Act of Union, and particularly since the Quiet Revolution, Québec currently enjoys considerable power within the Canadian federation in matters related to the economy, language, culture, and constitutional law. Yet the people who identified themselves with the “Québécois” identity during the 1995 referendum passionately sought to create a sovereign state. What did it mean to be called a Québécois or a Canadian, and how were subjects hailed by the separatists and federalists during the 1995 referendum?

Public articulations of Québec national identity in 1995 drew heavily upon the traces of colonial memories of “conquest” and “abandonment.” As noted earlier, the early French Canadian colonial separatists rebelled against their English oppressors, but were conquered yet again, leaving the Church in charge of education and culture. These early inhabitants of what became the province of Québec were basically white, French-speaking, Catholic, rural, anti-urban, anti-material, and colonized, and it was this clerical articulation of “Canadian/French Canadian” identity that prevailed until the mid-twentieth century, when “traditional French Canadians” were drawn to the cities, recognized their economic disadvantage, and decided to transfer power from the church to the state.

As a consequence of the gradual urbanization and secularization of the province, the articulation of “Québécois” identity shifted. After the Quiet Revolution the terms Catholic, anti-material, and rural receded into the

background, and the French language, French Canadian ancestry, and the “colonized” aspect of Québécois identity were foregrounded. In other words, a true “Québécois” would be white, French-speaking, and free from English authority of any kind. Conversely, on the federal level, the initial colonial policy was also fundamentally neo-racist, promoting French Canadian cultural assimilation rather than a bilingual and bicultural pan-Canadian identity. For Lord Durham, the French Canadians were expected to give up “any hope of continuing to preserve their nationality” since English was “the language of the rich,” and assimilation was what the “employers of labor” naturally wanted, and various forms of assimilationist and anti-French policies were the order of the day outside of Québec well into the twentieth century. It was only after the early rumblings of the Quiet Revolution that federal policy shifted towards bilingualism and multiculturalism.

At a time when geographical borders are becoming increasingly irrelevant due to the gradual globalization of capitalism, ethnic-nationalist movements are multiplying, and the relatively recent emergence of “Québécois” identity exemplifies such movements. The “distinct identity” Québec separatists sought to have “recognized” was fundamentally based upon the economic colonization of the French Canadians prior to 1960, although at least one critic has noted the strategic ambiguity and interpretive power of that “distinct” identity (Bauch).

Masao Miyoshi, complementing the work of Balibar and Wallerstein, argues that the notion of an ethnically pure nation-state is a modern Western

construction, a function of the gradual decline of colonialism (731). Miyoshi contends that multiculturalism and postcolonialism are frequently simply ideological masks for a new colonialism on the part of transnational corporations (744).²⁴ One crucial question is how to balance the transnationalization of the economy and politics with the survival of local culture and history, and how to determine what potential value local culture might have in combating the leveling effects of cultural atomization (746). Even more troubling, according to Miyoshi, is the possibility that multiculturalism may simply be another, more subtle and effective version of neo-ethnicism and neo-racism.

As the next chapter's analysis of public discourse related to the 1995 referendum suggests, the strategies of remembrance surrounding Québec separatism reflect a difficult negotiation between neo-racist, ethnic-nationalist, difference-establishing discourse and the construction of a multicultural facade deflecting linguistic (and thereby economic) warfare. In other words, in order to articulate a sufficient cultural/ethnic/racial difference, nation builders draw upon a postulated common heritage. Unfortunately, these articulations of common heritage usually characterize the nation in ways that exclude others (for example, English Canada excludes French, but Québec, as argued below, excludes its own minorities). Language wars (and culture wars) help to maximize economic power for the "saved culture," but in the process exclude those who do not fit the definition, and multiculturalism steps in to mask the hegemonic moves.

Balibar provides a concise theory for understanding the ways in which neo-racist articulations of ethnic-national difference eventually lead to public multicultural articulations of collective identity. First, there is no state that has a homogenous ethnic basis, therefore “nationalism cannot be defined as ethnocentrism except precisely in the sense of a product of a *fictive* entity.” Nonetheless, imagined national unity always works in opposition to other collectively imagined unities that are very real in the sense that there are economic disparities and colonial maneuvers between groups. This leads to Balibar’s second point: nationalism is a fiction derived from and contributing to social relations. That is, there is a “historical system of complementary exclusions and dominations which are mutually interconnected.” Third, this “broad structure of racism,” or neo-racism as ethnic-nationalism, produces “the fictive ethnicity around which it is organized.” Finally, “societies in which racism develops are at the same time supposed to be ‘egalitarian’ societies, but this pseudo-equality ends at best at the border of the state” (Racism 49).

From such a perspective, Québécois identity is fictive, yet produced at least in part as a response to British colonialism and English linguistic, economic, and political hegemony. The fictional Québécois identity is necessarily a neo-racist ethnic-nationalism, because the establishment of a collective cultural difference denies in principle the notion that individual rights should always supercede collective rights. In order to mask this neo-racism, Québec could be expected to wear a multicultural mask. From another perspective, perhaps pan-

Canadian multiculturalism is simply a larger systems-level instantiation of the same principle. Taylor (Multiculturalism), for example, argues that “the supposedly neutral set of difference-blind principles of the politics of equal dignity is in fact a reflection of one hegemonic culture Consequently, the supposedly fair and difference-blind society is . . . itself highly discriminatory” (43). Taylor’s primary goal is to valorize “recognition” of (an essentialized) difference and to seek respect for communitarian political philosophy, arguing that liberalism may simply be one among different kinds of political philosophies. I would like to suggest, following Miyoshi, that liberalism may in fact be the ultimate multicultural mask for the leveling and homogenization of culture and the globalization of transnational corporate colonialism, but communitarianism may be no better due to its historically essentializing and unreflexive character.

The Canadian federal government is attempting to build a bilingual and multicultural pan-Canadian identity in part to accommodate the diverse imagined communities within its borders. But as Balibar and Wallerstein argue, the societies in which racism develops are at the same time supposed to be ‘egalitarian’ societies, in other words, societies which (officially) disregard status differences between individuals (49). Conversely, Québec leaders are attempting to build a unilingual ethnic nationalism at least in part to maximize Québec’s economic power, but in doing so state leaders tend to simultaneously construct a neo-racist and essentializing “national” fiction. Following such a theory, the federal government’s multicultural articulation of Canadian identity

could conceal its own colonial tendencies, while the Québec government's multicultural articulations could conceal its own neo-racist tendencies (or there could be traces of colonialism and racism in both articulations).

Conclusion

As in West Germany, state leaders articulating Québécois identity, up until the 1995 referendum, sought to build upon the nationalist ideologies of the past. As Wallerstein notes, "Pastness is a tool persons use against each other The real past, to be sure, is indeed inscribed in stone. The social past, how we understand this real past . . . is inscribed at best in soft clay" (78). Contemporary Québec separatists have drawn upon the colonization of white, French Canadiens to justify their secessionist agenda, but in doing so they risk articulating a racist national ideology incapable of incorporating anglophones and allophones (Benoit-Barné). Freely choosing from among and combining historical events ranging between the justifiable colonial revolt of the early French Canadian separatists, conservative clerical nationalism seeking to protect French Canadian language and culture, and the Quiet Revolution, contemporary Quebec nationalists seek to articulate a Québécois identity with sufficient collective force to create a new state imaginatively, and thereafter materially. Countering these efforts on the part of Québec leaders, the federal government in Canada passed national legislation supporting pan-Canadian bilingualism and

establishing respect for individual rights and multiculturalism through the patriation of the constitution. What remains to be determined is how these various elements combined during the 1995 referendum.

The history of “French Canada” reveals that the descendants of those who colonized New France suffered economically and politically under Britain’s colonial assimilationist policies. Furthermore, the conservative clerical ideology that dominated between the middle of the nineteenth and the middle of the twentieth centuries did little in the way of helping “French Canadians” gain economic and political ground in Québec. During the Quiet Revolution, Québec leaders secularized the province, gradually taking ideological control away from the Catholic church. At that time, it was true that “English Canadians” fundamentally controlled the economy within the province, and Québec statesmen, noting the assimilationist policies that had prevailed, moved to gain control of the province economically and “culturally.” What remains to be explained is why, having gained that control, many Québécois still wish to secede.

In the following chapter I will show that the vast majority of Québec citizens seeking secession are indeed the white descendants of the settlers of New France whose leaders now have control of most economic, educational, linguistic, and “cultural” policies. Their articulation of “Québécois” identity and desire to secede have a great deal to do with this seeming incompatibility. It is true that the conservative clerical ideology contributed to “English Canadian”

economic and political hegemony, and the articulation of a Québec nation as “French Canadian culture under attack” had definite merit prior to and in the early years of the Quiet Revolution. Such an articulation gave provincial leaders a powerful tool for recreating provincial/federal political relationships. But now that those provincial/federal political relationships have been transformed (Québec is unilingually French, business is conducted in French, education is in French, and unilingual English speakers are now at a political and economic disadvantage within the province), what is the value of the ethnic articulation of “national” identity today?

An ethnic-nationalism, based on the notion that “French Canadian culture” had to be “saved” from British colonial assimilationist policies, was useful for transforming political and economic federal/provincial relationships. Today, though, such an ethnic vision may have run its course. How might “nationalist” articulations adjust to the changing economic and political “needs” of the province? Most importantly, how does discourse function to transform and regulate these ever-shifting economic and political relationships? In order to answer those questions, and to ascertain whether or not there were strategies of remembrance at work in articulations of “Québécois” identity, I now turn to the discourse of the Québec leaders, and articulations of national identity during the 1995 referendum.

Notes to Chapter Five

¹ The exact meaning and political ramifications of a Yes vote remained ambiguous throughout the referendum. Opposition leader Lucien Bouchard publicly declared that Québec would negotiate an economic “partnership” with Canada, but Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chrétien countered that such a partnership was not on (Cox, Think). How the political/institutional arrangements between the former province and the federal government in Ottawa might evolve was not debated publicly.

² Among Canadian historians, labels such as French Canadiens, French Canadians, and *Québécois* have specific meanings. The list, as provided, mirrors the evolution of the label for collective national identity in the Québec region. The term French Canadien is reserved for the direct descendants of the colonial settlers of New France. The term French Canadian refers to citizens living in Lower Canada (as established by Colonial Britain), and later to anyone living in Canada whose primary language is French. The term “Québécois” refers to the identity fabricated for Québec citizens by provincial leaders in Québec. Colonial Britain played a primary role in the boundary drawing of present day Québec province, with the notion of “Québécois identity” only being possible once the provincial boundary was drawn. Thongchai’s work on the transition of “Siam” to “Thailand” suggests that nationalism and the construction of modern states requires the imposition of a colonial limit.

³ The immediate political relevance of these grievances is a matter of debate. The discussion on language laws and constitutional reforms later in this chapter indicate that Québec has considerable power in the Canadian Federation, enjoying a “notwithstanding clause” in the current constitution which allows them to “opt out” of some federal court rulings. Bill 101, also discussed below, is a case in point. The law, essentially making Québec a francophone state, was ruled unconstitutional by the federal courts, but due to the notwithstanding clause the law was legally retained within Québec.

⁴ As in Germany, historians also wish to play a role in the fabrication of collective identity in Canada. According to Michael Bliss, history professor at the University of Toronto, Canadians “are immersed in the most intense debate about [their] future as a people since Confederation. Through their academic writing, few Canadian historians are contributing much to this debate” (11). Bliss argues that there is a “hunger” on the part of Canadians “for help in understanding where we came from, who we are, and where we might be going. In my view we have a duty as scholars, university teachers, and citizens to do all that we can to meet that demand” (15).

⁵ Ethnic-nationalism can perhaps best be thought of as a monocultural identity imposed on variously heterogenous citizens, an imagined collective identity based upon variously shared physical characteristics, shared geography, and shared traditions. Since Québec national identity has historically been associated with the white descendants of New France, it can be characterized as

an ethnic-nationalism. As discussed in chapter six, problems related to these racial associations are at the heart of contemporary strategies of remembrance in Québec.

⁶ Pierre Elliot Trudeau makes a similar point in his essay "There Must Be a Sense of Belonging" in Pierre Trudeau Speaks Out on Meech Lake. 23-25.

⁷ A complete story of the history of Québec nationalism is beyond the scope of this essay. Nonetheless, there is a rich history of French Canadian nationalism stretching from Louis-Joseph Papineau to his grandson Henri Bourassa to the more recent leaders René Lévesque, Jacques Parizeau, and Lucien Bouchard. Key sources would include: Handler, Richard. Nationalism and the Politics of Culture in Quebec. Madison: Wisconsin UP, 1988; Gougeon, Gilles. A History of Quebec Nationalism. Toronto: James Lorimer and Company, 1994; Coleman, Willam D. The Independence Movement in Quebec: 1945-1980. Toronto: Toronto UP, 1984; and Rioux, Marcel. "The Development of Ideologies in Quebec." A Passion for Identity. Eds. Eli Mandel and David Taras. Agincourt, Ontario: Methuen, 1987: 267-288. My purpose is only to pick representative historical conflicts to show how political tensions paralleled economic tensions, and how those economic tensions were involved with various articulations of collective identity.

⁸ The term *Canadien* refers to French settlers and their descendants in New France, and is to be distinguished from the term *Canadian*, which refers to anglophone, francophone, and allophone ("immigrant") citizens of the Canadian

federation. I choose the date of the Act of Union (1840), when the British Parliament officially recognized and united French Lower Canada and British Upper Canada under one government, as a convenient marker for the transition from French Canadien to French Canadian. While problematic, since it was not until 1867 and the passage of the British North America Act that the descendants of the *Anciens Canadiens* obtained a government politically effective against the English, the English presence was sufficient in 1840 for a distinction to be made between the two dominant "Canadian" populations. Each label is politically significant and ideologically specific.

⁹ The importance of Catholicism for the development of the Québec "culture" cannot be overestimated. It was not until the 1960s that the Catholic church started to lose its grip on the French Canadien imagination when it lost management of the education system to the secular provincial authorities.

¹⁰ In 1760 the French Canadien population was approximately 70,000.

¹¹ Arguably, there is today a similar form of separatism on the part of the rising middle class, but in circumstances where the State has replaced the Church as the provider of welfare and education. Additionally, as discussed below, whereas the Church could be blamed for the unequal development of wealth in Québec prior to the Quiet Revolution, today only the "colonial" anglophones and allophones are available for the scapegoat role.

¹² There is a rather lengthy history of assimilationist language laws in English Canada. For example, just after the conquest, the Proclamation of 1763

stated that only English law would be recognized. By 1890, Québec had been reduced to one province among seven, with a population comprising only thirty-one percent of the country, and Catholic minorities lost their language rights between 1871 and 1890 in Manitoba and New Brunswick (Belanger 36). Bill 17, passed in Ontario in 1912, limited the use of French as a language of instruction and communication to the first two years of elementary school, effectively abolishing instruction in French in Ontario's bilingual schools.

¹³ A Gallup poll in January of 1989 asked Québec citizens the following question: "What do you think is more important – the rights of English-speaking Quebeckers to have freedom of speech or the rights of French-speaking Quebeckers to preserve their culture?" Seventy-two percent of anglophones assigned higher priority to freedom of speech, while seventy-eight percent of francophones assigned the higher priority to the collective right of preserving their culture (Young 131). Contemporary language laws reflect these different perspectives.

¹⁴ For a variety of discussions of the Quiet Revolution, see Desrosiers; Johnson 144-145; Coleman 91-129.

¹⁵ As noted earlier, in the battle of language laws, the British had a history of not respecting the language rights of francophones outside of Québec. The right to a French education was also denied to francophones outside of Québec. Early in the Quiet Revolution, political leaders set out to pass language and school laws that would correct this situation. See Taylor (Reconciling),

especially pages 12-22, for another discussion of the “new nationalism” of the French professional class, a group who sought increased French language rights in order to catch up with the English professional class in Québec.

¹⁶ Interestingly, it has been the “two founding nations” thesis, initially proposed by the early colonial-era separatists, that has played an important role in Québec politics from 1960 to the present. According to Laforest (Trudeau), “From 1960 to 1990, the dualist interpretation played a major role in defining the horizon of our intellectual and political leaders’ expectations with respect to Canadian federalism.” One problem is that dualism is contrary to the notion of provincial equality. There are ten provinces, but Québec leaders argue that Québec’s power should be “equal” to the power of English Canada (the other nine provinces).

¹⁷ The radical Left in Québec during the 1970s following this philosophy, arguing that Québec was “a colony in the grip of ruthless anglo-capitalist exploiters (Bauch).

¹⁸ A complete recounting of the historical developments of these two perspectives is beyond the scope of this paper. For a view of constitutional debates from the Québec perspective, see Guy Laforest (Trudeau). For a view of the constitutional debates from the federal perspective, see Pierre Trudeau.

¹⁹ For an inside account of the constitutional battles surrounding the patriation of the Canadian constitution from the federal perspective, see Trudeau’s “Say Goodbye to the Dream of One Canada” and “We, the People of

Canada.” Laforest (Trudeau) offers the perspective of the Québécois, see especially pp.103-4, 130-31, and 151-53. The term “patriation” refers to the process of acquiring ownership of a constitution initially developed by another state.

²⁰ The Charter of Rights and Freedoms guaranteed that French and English would remain co-equal official languages throughout Canada, and included several federal-provincial agreements.

²¹ For a strong critique of the patriation process from a Québec separatist’s perspective, see Guy LaForest (Trudeau).

²² The differences between liberalism and communitarianism are discussed in Kukathas; G.Smith. Basically, liberal political philosophy holds that individual rights always take priority over collective rights, and that the laws/procedures, not the aims, of societies should be regulated by the state. Communitarian political philosophy holds that collective rights may at times take priority over individual rights, since collective aims, as well as laws/procedures, are concerns of the state. Arguably, federal strategies of remembrance follow liberal theories and Québec follows communitarian theories.

²³ Another interesting area for future investigation is how the racial policies of Nazi Germany, although repressed, continue in contemporary Germany (as witnessed in the treatment of Turkish guestworkers and the behavior of skinheads in post-unification Germany). Additionally, race continues to play an important role in the construction of Québécois identity, although it too is being

repressed in contemporary articulations, as will be discussed in the following chapter.

²⁴ For a good introduction to issues surrounding the various iterations of “multiculturalism,” see Multiculturalism: A Critical Reader, Ed. David Theo Goldberg. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1994. In particular see Peter McLaren's essay “White Terror and Oppositional Agency: Towards a Critical Multiculturalism.” 45-74.

Chapter Six

The Public Negotiation of Québécois Identity During the 1995 Separatist Referendum

As the previous chapter showed, there are two dominant visions of national identity in Canada. The vision held by Québec separatists is that provincial identity should take precedence over pan-Canadian identity. This Québécois identity is fundamentally built upon French language and French ancestry. Drawing upon this vision, separatists Jacques Parizeau and Lucien Bouchard led Québec to its dramatic vote on October 30, 1995 to secede from Canada. The federal vision articulated variously by federalist leaders such as Pierre Trudeau and Jean Chrétien holds that pan-Canadian allegiance should take precedence over provincial allegiance. This identity has most recently been articulated as being bilingual and multicultural, and was called upon by federal leaders in their efforts to convince Québec citizens to stay within the Canadian federation. This chapter seeks to investigate the ways in which Québécois identity was articulated and negotiated during and after the referendum to explain how public discourse functions in the construction of collective identity.

Unlike the situation in West Germany, where Weizsäcker provided a "model" speech, Canadian state leaders have failed to provide an articulation of national identity satisfactory to both the Québécois and the rest of Canada.

Perhaps this inability is due to the current status of collective identity in Canada.¹

Nonetheless, since the primary focus of this study is to determine how discourse functions rhetorically in the construction of collective identity via strategies of remembrance, and how certain historical and political facts are suppressed in order to maintain fabricated collective identities, I have sought out a dramatically rejected speech so as to show how a particular discursive transgression reveals the limits of the fabricated Québécois collective identity. Jacques Parizeau's speech, delivered to separatist supporters just after the referendum's narrow defeat, along with responses from presses around Canada, will thus be the focus of this chapter.

Two fundamental themes provide the context for Parizeau's dramatically rejected speech: ethnic issues and economic issues.² Public statements by Bouchard and Parizeau in the weeks leading up to the referendum reveal traces of neo-racism or ethnic nationalism in the Québec separatist movement, and those traces suggest how this neo-racist component became problematized prior to the referendum. Furthermore, a brief look at several addresses by Bouchard and Parizeau in the months leading up to the referendum also suggests that there were strong economic incentives behind the separatist movement. That is, while secessionist arguments usually revolve around "cultural" issues, there is substantial evidence to suggest that economic empowerment is the primary impetus behind secession. After discussing how racial and economic issues dominated the public discourse related to the referendum, I analyze Jacques

Parizeau's dramatically rejected address and review numerous responses to Parizeau's remarks. In doing so, I intend to show the specific ways in which Parizeau transgressed the strategies of remembrance of the younger generation of Québécois separatists who recognized that ethnic nationalism based on French Canadian ancestry (the strategy of remembrance for Parizeau's generation) was unable to hail a sufficiently large section of the Québec citizenry to guarantee secession. In other words, separatists had come to realize that the articulation of Québécois identity used during the Quiet Revolution, which interpellated the Québécois as white descendants of the settlers of New France, had outlived its usefulness. Finally, to suggest the likely trajectory of Québec separatism in the near future, I review a number of speeches by Bouchard and Parizeau in the days and months following the referendum.³

Parizeau, like Jenninger, articulated a collective identity that was dramatically rejected both by Québécois separatists and pan-Canadian nationalists. Jenninger hailed a German public of perpetrators who had strategically "disappeared," whereas Parizeau hailed a "Québécois" public of white, French-Canadians who also were in the process of "disappearing."⁴ That is, many West Germans realized that unification with East Germany would not be possible as long as the crimes of National Socialism were foregrounded and the reintegration of Nazis into West German society was remembered, whereas Québec separatists realized that secession would not be possible as long as the "Québécois" were articulated as white descendants of New France. The chapter

concludes, then, with a discussion of the implications of the dominant strategy of remembrance at work in the public articulation of Québécois identity in October of 1995: multiculturalism as a mask for ethnic-nationalism. For while the strategy of remembrance of Québec separatism remains fundamentally based upon eighteenth and nineteenth century British colonial tyranny against the inhabitants of New France and Lower Canada, as well as the claim of a continuing colonial threat to Québec's language and culture (the language and culture of the descendants of New France), that strategy alienates the anglophones and allophones living in Québec. With the referendum's defeat, and the realization that ninety-five per cent of the non-francophone population had voted against secession, it became even clearer to the secessionists that their strategy had to change.⁵

As opposed to the rather complex set of strategies of remembrance in West Germany prior to reunification, there emerged one fundamentally new strategy for the Québec separatists: to deny that separatism is based on ethnic-nationalism (although it fundamentally is). Whereas West German remembrance is built on a code of silence concerning national socialist perpetrators and right wing continuities in contemporary German capitalist society, Québec remembrance is built on a code of silence concerning its neo-racist, ethnically-based justifications for secession. Most secessionists, though, avoid overt ethnic arguments, claiming instead that secession is necessary in order to protect the French language and French "culture" from assimilation into anglophone North America. What remains

unstated, however, is that the "Québécois culture" to be protected is the one belonging to the descendants of the settlers of New France.

My intention is to show that the new multicultural strategy is not only a mask for the ethnic-nationalism of contemporary Québec separatists, but that such a revised strategy logically contradicts the cultural protectionist strategy of the separatists. The separatists have claimed that secession is required in order to preserve the "distinct society" of Québec, and that distinct society is the one belonging to the white, French-speaking descendants of New France. If the Québec separatists are truly multicultural, then this reduces Québec's distinctiveness to the French language alone. But pan-Canadian nationalism is already based in part upon the protection of French Canadian culture within a multicultural state. In the end, I argue that Québec nationalism has less to do with protecting French Canadian culture from assimilation into English North America than it has to do with the maximization of economic power for the emergent white, French-speaking middle-class in Québec province.⁶

Neo-Racism, Ethnic Nationalism, and Denial in the Pre-Referendum

Discourse of Bouchard and Parizeau

As Etienne Balibar (Racism) has noted, there is an intimate relationship between nationalism and racism, especially if racism is conceptualized as overidentification with an ethnic identity (48-49). According to Balibar, theoretical

racism conceptualizes race or culture as a "continued origin of the nation," where the culture has to be "preserved from any kind of degradation." Unfortunately for ethnic-nationalists, such racism "run[s] directly counter to the nationalist objective, which is not to re-create an elitism, but to found a populism; not to cast suspicion upon the historical and social heterogeneity of the 'people,' but to exhibit its essential unity" (59-60). Contemporary Québec nationalism is no exception to these observations. Indeed, it is a representative example.

In chapter five I discussed how the "vision" of Québec nationalists is primarily drawn from the colonial period, and Québec's "Declaration of Sovereignty" exemplifies how that vision is consistent with what Balibar refers to as theoretical racism. The Declaration reads, in part:

The time has come to reap the fields of history. The time has come at last to harvest what has been sown for us by four hundred years of men and women and courage, rooted in the soil and now returned to it. The time has come for us, tomorrow's ancestors, to make ready for our descendants harvests that are worthy of the labours of the past The conquest of 1760 did not break the determination of [New France's] descendants to remain faithful to a destiny unique in North America. Already in 1774, through the Québec Act, the conqueror [of the white, French Canadiens] recognized the distinct nature of their institutions. Neither attempts at assimilation nor the Act of Union of 1840 could break their endurance.

Just as the clerical conservative nationalism sought to preserve French-Canadian culture from the English colonization, Québec's declaration of sovereignty claims that Québécois must secede in order to remain faithful to their unique destiny, although the term "French Canadian" is implied.

Except for a few years prior to the 1995 referendum, the articulation of Québécois identity centered on white, French-speaking descendants of the inhabitants of New France. Not only does the declaration of sovereignty imply as much, but the notions of "conquest" and "colonization" directly refer to the French Canadian past. Just weeks before the referendum, Asselin Charles noted that "Belonging in Québec requires not the subscription to a set of values, or the demonstration of a number of qualities, but rather a certain 'Québécoisité,' the exclusive essence of those whose French ancestors settled in that part of North America."⁷ As Charles indicates, Québécois identity is related to "blood and the land, and can be acquired only through birth, through descent from one who fought on the Plains of Abraham [in the Conquest of 1763]."

The comments made by Charles were echoed by others after Bouchard, generally acknowledged as the leader of the separatist movement (Mackie, Bouchard; Yes), publicly complained that white women in Québec were not having enough babies. In a speech aired on October 13th, Bouchard stated, "Do you think it makes sense that we have so few children in Québec? We are one of the white races that has the least children, [and] that doesn't make sense. It means something, it means that we haven't resolved family problems" (Ha, Remarks).⁸

Here, Bouchard clearly associated "we" (the Québécois) as a "white race," and at a Yes rally days later young women passed out pamphlets which stated that "Lucien Bouchard thinks only white Québécois are real Québécois" (Ha, Remarks).

Rather than apologizing for the remark, both Bouchard and Parizeau argued that there was nothing wrong with the use of the phrase "white races." Parizeau flatly stated: "How do you want to call it? The pale race? I don't know. What's the deal? I don't understand. I don't see what's shocking unless you're nitpicking." And Bouchard, obviously feeling the pinch of what many considered a gaffe, argued that "One of real problems is that there is a demographic problem in Québec. I quoted the technical term of demographers that among the population of white races, the rate is one of the lowest and I have said this is unacceptable because we must preserve the choice of couples to have children." Bouchard went on to argue that the No side was trying to make a mountain out of a molehill, arguing that it was "ridiculous" to consider him a racist (cited in Ha, Defends). The differences between the various "damage repair" strategies of the two men is telling, since observers argue that Bouchard is far more sensitive to the race issue than Parizeau.

As mentioned earlier, according to Balibar's (Racism) theory of neo-racist ethnic-nationalism, such racist foundations for the cultural protectionism required of separatist movements directly undermine attempts by separatists to build broad popular support for their cause. Therefore, although Bouchard and Parizeau both

attempted to defend the "white race" remarks, the denial of the ethnic basis of Québec separatism has evidently become a growing component in the separatist strategy. Tu Thanh Ha (Comment) notes that "sovereignists have soldiered on for years, trying to dispel the image of their cause as one born mainly to address the nationalist aspirations of the descendants of the New France settlers." For example, in the spring of 1994, when separatist member of parliament Philippe Pare publicly complained that ethnic voters could deprive "old-stock Québécois" of independence, he was demoted from a key referendum planning committee by Bouchard, primarily because Bouchard had been attempting to make the term "Québécois" more inclusive (Ha, Comment). In the first week of October, while campaigning in Val D'Or, when a radio host interviewing Bouchard used the word "Québecer" in a way that implied "francophone Québecer," Bouchard quickly corrected him (Ha, Remarks). Such "corrections" on the part of Bouchard suggest that he is well aware of the exclusionary meanings attached to the term "Québécois," and sought to make his "white race" remarks seem an aberration.

In the weeks leading up to the referendum there was considerable contestation over the content of the term "Québécois" and "Québecer." On the one hand, Toronto journalists such as Charles and Ha were quick to point out the fundamentally neo-racist character of the separatist movement. On the other hand, Bouchard, despite his "white races" remark, was struggling to make the term appear to be more inclusive, for as Charles noted, "The more lucid among the nationalist elites know that minorities and immigrants are an asset to the province.

They must send them a more inclusionary message." Nonetheless, in an anonymous editorial in The Globe and Mail on October 17th entitled "Mr. Bouchard's Ethnic Nationalism," the writer argued that, although s/he believed neither Bouchard or Parizeau were racists:

If Mr. Bouchard and Mr. Parizeau occasionally talk this way, it is because their movement, whatever its fervent denials, is rooted in ethnic rather than civic nationalism. Blood is more important than citizenship. While they claim to embrace the wider world, the independentistes advance an essentially insecure vision. Their language and culture may be safer than ever before, but they are unable to admit it because it would expose the emptiness of their cause.

The writer also noted that "There has been a long strain of racial intolerance among militant nationalists. Invariably it becomes a question of 'we or them.' Today, more precisely, it is a question of Oui or them."⁹ This comment would prove prophetic, especially for Parizeau, in the weeks to come.

The Economic Basis for Québec Secession

As discussed in the previous chapter, the contemporary separatist ideology emerged along with the Quiet Revolution in Québec, when a rising francophone middle class encountered a corporate glass ceiling in Montreal. As more and more of the descendants of the New French, previously under the sway of conservative

clerical nationalism, moved to urban areas, they increasingly became aware of the fact that English Canadians were basically in control of the economy. Justifiably angered and frustrated at the economic remnants of British colonialism, leaders of this marginalized group decided that the time had come to transfer cultural production from the Catholic church to the provincial state. Whether or not the "cause" of Québec separatists is "empty" is debatable, although it does appear that the claim that French culture is still seriously threatened by colonial assimilation may be an empty cause. If it is true that the French language has never enjoyed greater strength in Québec than it does today, as admitted by Bouchard himself, then what else might be at stake?

Cornel West argues that, ultimately, identity is about "the distribution of resources" (17), and Immanuel Wallerstein (Class) concurs when he states that:

The fundamental role of the state . . . as an institution in the capitalist world economy is to augment the advantage of some against others in the market – that is, to reduce the 'freedom' of the market [T]he state is a special kind of organization. Its 'sovereignty'. . . is the claim to the monopolization (regulation) of the legitimate use of force within its boundaries, and it is in a relatively strong position to interfere effectively with the flow of factors of production" (122).

In other words, the primary function of the construction of a sovereign state is to take control of the economy in a way that maximizes economic advantage for certain groups living within the geographic borders of the state (although the

metaphysical comfort derived from an assumed essential identity appears to be a side "benefit").

While the justification for the transfer of cultural production from the church to the state was built upon the earlier ideology of cultural conservation, its impetus had arguably come from the recent awareness on the part of French Canadians of their economic marginalization. According to Hubert Bauch, "Today's separatist movement initially drew much of its moral currency from the overwhelming English dominance of the provincial economy between the two World Wars." But as Bauch points out, the Quiet Revolution was not only a movement towards the modernizing the French Canadian identity, it was also a rejection of conservative clerical values. As a result, "Québec fully asserted itself as a modern French industrial state, yet in doing so it came to resemble the rest of Canada as never before."¹⁰

There was, then, an interesting and problematic ideological transition within French Canadian society during the Quiet Revolution. In recognizing their economically marginalized status, and in attempting to gain economic control of the province, French Canadians basically adopted what had previously been considered "English" values, especially the secular desire for economic advancement. At the same time, it was clear that certain traces of British colonialism were still at work in the province. The result was a confused militant separatism that sought to preserve French culture while simultaneously taking on "English" values. According to Bauch:

The first serious Québec separatist party . . . reinvent[ed] Québec as a colony in the grip of ruthless anglo-capitalist exploiters. But in the tradition of their theocratic precursors, Québec's new-left ultranationalists insisted above all on a uniform Frenchness of their new country: instead of a holy city on a hill, their dream French state was a people's socialist republic. So Québec separatism became a strange mix of ultra-right-wing French nationalism, seeking to preserve French Canadian culture, while at the same time wresting control of the Québec economy.

The reason this is a "strange mix" is because the new separatist nationalism was fundamentally brought about because of the desire on the part of French Canadians to modernize, and simultaneously, despite the remnants of conservative clerical nationalism, to become more "English." The perceived threat, then, was not only from the real English economic colonialism at the time, but from the equally real possibility that in modernizing itself economically Québec would be assimilated into English North America culturally. There was a double movement then: a move toward "English" economic policy and a continued strengthening of French Canadian culture in order to avoid total assimilation.

The economic undercurrent of Québec separatism is perhaps clarified when one looks at the backgrounds of Parizeau and Bouchard. Parizeau received his doctorate from the London School of Economics in 1955 and was an economic and financial advisor to the prime minister of Québec from 1961 to 1969.

Furthermore, between 1976 and 1984 he held the following posts: President of the

Treasury Board, Minister of Revenue, Minister of Financial Institutions, and chairman of the Ministerial Economic Development Committee. Bouchard received his law degree in 1964, and in the 1970s worked in the areas of labor relations and collective bargaining. Additionally, he has sat on the boards of General Society of Québec Finance (Société générale de financement du Québec) and the Canada Development Investment Corporation.

On the political front, Parizeau was elected President of the Parti Québécois in 1988, and was the leader of the official opposition in the Québec National Assembly through 1994, when he was elected Prime Minister of Québec on September 26th. Bouchard was elected to be a member of parliament in 1988, and in 1993 he became the leader of the official opposition in Ottawa. Together, then, both men began their careers in the economic sectors and only later went in to public office, eventually becoming leaders of the official opposition to the federal government on both the provincial and federal levels.¹¹

But perhaps the surest sign of the economic basis for Québec secession is to be found in various addresses by Bouchard and Parizeau in the months leading up to the 1995 referendum.¹² I maintain that the primary function of the construction of Québec as a sovereign state is not only to protect the cultural heritage of the descendants of the inhabitants of New France, but primarily to take economic control of the state for the advantage of the rising white French Canadian middle class, and I believe that the addresses by Bouchard and Parizeau prior to the 1995 referendum indicate as much. Indeed, the speeches

given by Bouchard and Parizeau in the months leading up to the referendum were dominated by economic concerns.

Lucien Bouchard delivered a speech at the opening session of the National Convention of the Bloc Québécois in April of 1995 that exemplifies the centrality of the economy in the secessionist agenda.¹³ While Bouchard begins the address by reminding his audience of the failure of federal reforms (e.g. Meech Lake) and the success of the Bloc Québécois, and follows this by noting that the Québécois "are a people . . . in a land where our ancestors settled almost four hundred years ago" (thus reconfirming the fundamentally ethnic character of the Québécois identity), Bouchard devotes almost half of his address to the creation of a "common Quebec-Canada economic space." Drawing upon "the model of the European Union," Bouchard argues that, "Americans . . . [and] responsible Europeans . . . are discovering that the new challenges of our day, whether they relate to economic stagnation and the growing inequalities it entails, or to the new international competitiveness, require . . . an even greater solidarity within the national communities." And after discussing the implications of the North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), concerns over the value of the Canadian dollar, and the "centralizing appetite of the federal state," Bouchard concludes by arguing that "the young people . . . [will be] the first victims of an economic slowdown," but that "[w]hen one has . . . a language and a culture of [one's] own . . . [one has] all that is needed . . . to exploit [one's] potential to the full."¹⁴

Here Bouchard explicitly argues that in order to "exploit" the contemporary economic situation, nationalism must be strengthened, and according to Bouchard's own statements at the beginning of his address, this nationalism is an ethnic-nationalism. Nonetheless, true to Balibar's thesis on the problematic relationship between ethnic-nationalism and the need to deny its neo-racist basis, Bouchard included the following qualifications:

The Québec that we want to build is a Québec for all Québécois. We must also see to it that cultural diversity is preserved in that society. But all of that must be in accordance with a fundamental priority; that priority is to integrate and combine all the components of our society in order to make a nation . . . a predominantly francophone unity The nationalism of the Bloc Québécois . . . is an open and welcoming formula, respectful of differences, enriching itself from cultural diversity, rather than fearing or fighting it.¹⁵

Bouchard ultimately appears to argue that economic empowerment is possible through the creation of a French-speaking nation, regardless of its ethnic make-up, but this argument is made after clearly articulating "the people" as being the descendants of New France.

The confused relationship between ethnic-nationalism, multiculturalism, and economic empowerment is simplified in Parizeau's addresses, where the "diversity" issue is all but absent. In his address for the inauguration of the National Yes Committee on October 7th, 1995, Parizeau appeared primarily

concerned with preventing Montreal from becoming an "anglophone city," whereas in his speech to the student body of the University of Montreal on October 17th, he appeared primarily concerned with persuading his audience that their economic futures depended upon a Yes vote in the upcoming referendum.

In his address to the Yes Committee, Parizeau argued that "Thanks to a Yes vote, we will immediately be able to create 25,000 jobs in research and development simply because we will have put an end to the federal injustice that appropriates our tax dollars and gives us less than our fair share, short-changed return on developing structures." He then followed up with a long list of the ways in which the "No Clan" had consistently stood in the way of Québec's economic empowerment, enumerating over a dozen examples, ending the list with a lengthy discussion of how the "No Clan" fought against Bill 101, and how the federalists "took [the Québécois] to the cleaners" after the defeat of the 1980 referendum. Parizeau then concluded his speech by reinforcing the major theme of his address; that a No vote would mean "accepting that Montreal will no longer be a largely francophone city within twenty-five years."¹⁶

Parizeau's address, then, focused on two themes: the preservation of the French language, especially in Montreal, and the economy. In his address to the students at the University of Montreal, though, he focused solely on the economy. After opening with remarks on how "the labour market is less than receptive," Parizeau argued that the referendum constituted "a new beginning" and that a sovereign Québec would belong to the students. Parizeau then launched into a

lengthy discussion of the many economic benefits that were to be derived from secession. For example, after discussing how the "Youth Commission on the future of Québec heard over 5000 young students, entrepreneurs, unemployed people and volunteer workers," he argued:

We must provide you, the young people of Québec, with the economic power to go into business. We must provide you, the young people of Québec, with the political power and management power in many public and parapublic organizations Yet the important point in economic power for youth that interests me most, is to see the emergence of small businesses created by young workers for young employees. If I were to tell you that within six months, 3,200 young Québec women and men like yourselves will receive a total of 125 million dollars as start-up money for small businesses, would you believe me? Well, we're not going to do it because it has already been done! Over the past six months, 3,200 young Québecers have had access to 125 millions dollars . . . that will create 17,000 jobs mainly for young workers This is the spirit that will guide our approach in a sovereign Québec.

There are other examples that could be extracted from the speech, but the main point should be clear: secession means jobs.

It would appear, then, that the anonymous writer of the editorial in The Globe and Mail on October 17th was wrong: the separatist cause is not empty, since its actual purpose may primarily be the acquisition of economic and political

power, not simply the protection of French Canadian culture. It may be the case that the cultural protectionist justification for secession in 1995 Québec was fundamentally empty, but the economic impact of secession was not.

Nonetheless, the ultimate economic impact of secession remained unclear, even though the focus of pre-referendum speeches by both Bouchard and Parizeau indicated the important role of the economy (Ha, Yes; Stinson; Freeman).

For example, just days before the referendum vote, Chrétien painted a bleak picture of the economic consequences of secession, arguing that a Yes vote was a "very dangerous gamble," whereas Bouchard painted a rosy picture, arguing that a Yes vote would lead to a friendly economic partnership between equals. Of course, such a divergence in characterizations is not surprising, but given the significant economic impact secession would likely have, confusion over the likely economic implications of secession so near to the actual vote is telling, and there was never a public debate between federalist and Québécois separatists over the economic consequences of secession.

Only two days before the referendum, editorialist Jim Carr stated that he could not find "a single argument in Bouchard's rhetoric that conclude[d] how Québécois [would] be better off in a separate Québec," and his statement was echoed in Chrétien's plea to Québec citizens on October 25th. Similarly, federal Finance Minister Paul Martin asserted that sovereignty would put one million Québec jobs in jeopardy (Ha, Comment), yet Parizeau told the Chamber of Commerce in Montreal that Québécois would have saved \$42 billion had they

voted Yes in the 1980 referendum (Sequin and Mackie). The simple fact may have been that no one really knew what the ultimate impact of secession would be, but it is odd that such an important aspect of secession remained inadequately clarified and was never publicly debated.¹⁷

I contend that these speeches suggest that, prior to the 1995 referendum, Québec nationalism was in a state of transition, fluctuating between an older ethnic-nationalism and a newer economic nationalism, with Bouchard being more sensitive to the need for including those who fell outside of the ethnic articulation of "Québécois" identity. Put more strongly, contemporary Québec separatism is almost entirely an economic matter, although its justification has historically been based on British colonialism and English economic control of the Québec economy. That is, at the dawn of the contemporary separatist movement, English speakers indeed dominated the economic sector of Québec society, and separatist aspirations were justified accordingly. But with the passage of time, Québec leaders wrested control of language and education, which in turn gave French Canadians more power in the economic sectors.

Today, the French language and French culture may be stronger in Québec than ever before, and French speakers similarly enjoy a greater economic advantage within Québec than ever before. Still, the agonistic relationship between the federal government and Québec continues. Separatists have continued to draw on relatively obsolete claims of being "colonized" in order to maximize their economic control of the province because they have worked so well

in the past. Unfortunately, such an ethnic-nationalism has now reached its limit, primarily because it alienates too large a segment of the non-francophone Québec population and stands in the way of the ultimate economic power move: secession.

Jacques Parizeau's Dramatically Rejected Speech: The End of the Ethnic Strategy

On October 30, 1995, Québec citizens voted for the second time in less than two decades on whether to secede from Canada, and for the second time they voted to remain Canadians. But unlike the vote in 1980, where the No vote won by almost twenty per cent, in 1995 the No vote won by just over one per cent (Lett and Nairne, *Close Call*).¹⁸ Burning Canadian flags, smashing car windows, and chanting "Québec for Québécois," thousands of Yes supporters surrounded the No headquarters in Montreal, and the riding office of Liberal Leader Daniel Johnson was burned to the ground. Others openly wept in the streets, and one forty-five year old worker in the Yes campaign, one of the over two million who voted for secession, stated that he would "remember this as the day we lost our country and were conquered by Canada" (Nairne).

Many in the crowd said they were angry at anglophones and ethnic minorities in the province, who they believed ruined the Yes side's chances in the referendum (Lett and Nairne, *Rage*). Almost every region outside Montreal voted to separate, as did sixty per cent of francophones, but allophones and

anglophones voted ninety-five per cent No (Ouimet). Newspapers noted that the Yes side had indeed lost because of the anglophone and allophone vote (McKenzie, Ouimet, Sanger), and Québec's deputy premier Bernard Landry acknowledged that the sovereignty movement needed to appeal to groups besides francophones, stating "We must make the immigrants and cultural communities re-evaluate their reflexes" (Sanger).

The separatists had failed to persuade the non-francophone citizens of Québec to vote for secession, but apparently the blame for the referendum's defeat could not be placed on the non-francophones too forcefully by the leaders of the Québec movement. Nothing brings this latter fact more clearly into focus than the reactions to Jacques Parizeau's address to the Yes supporters on the evening of the referendum's defeat.¹⁹ Before addressing the crowd, Parizeau had spoken briefly with Bouchard by telephone, and Bouchard attempted to discuss strategy with Parizeau, but Parizeau decided to set aside the written conciliatory text that had been prepared for him (Lessard). The Yes supporters, who had been on an emotional roller coaster throughout the day, were very animated during Parizeau's remarks, and although Parizeau only spoke briefly, he was continuously interrupted by chanting, singing, and cheering. Still, his decision to set aside the prepared remarks led to an address that in turn led to the end of his political career.

Parizeau began his address by acknowledging that the referendum had gone down to defeat, and then stated "let's talk about us. Sixty per cent of us

voted in favor.” The crowd cheered. Then, after stating that the separatists would not “wait for another fifteen years” before the next referendum, Parizeau made the following brief remark:

But what has happened is wonderful. In one meeting after the next, people were saying that the future of their country wasn't all that important, but more and more of them were coming along and were saying we want a country of our own, and we will get it. We will end up with our own country. It's true. It is true that we have been defeated, but basically by what? By money and by the ethnic vote. Basically that's it.

The remainder of his speech was devoted to a reiteration of the fact that sixty percent of the francophones had voted for secession, and that “solidarity” was “picking up speed.” He concluded by listing a large number of groups who had joined the Yes camp, a list that included “the small and medium sized business sector, and the artists and the students, the union members and the bosses, the unemployed and those who have jobs.” Among those groups conspicuously absent from the list were *large* businesses, and anglophones and allophones, but it was his comment about “money” and “the ethnic vote” that would ultimately spell his doom.

Reactions to Parizeau's remarks by the television commentators immediately after his speech were universally negative, as were reactions in the press the following day. Furthermore, the negative responses came from separatists as well as federalists. As soon as Parizeau ended his speech, the

news commentary began with a reporter noting the “money and the ethnic vote” remark. Another reporter immediately followed saying:

Mr. Parizeau also said at the beginning of his speech that sixty per cent of *us* voted Yes. The history of Québec in many quarters over many years has been a story about us and them, and who is a Québecer and who is not a Québecer, and it’s a great sensitivity in Québec, and Québecers have great difficulty talking about this and dealing with this because on the official level Québec politicians have always told the rest of the province that if you pay taxes in Québec and if you live in Québec then you are a Québecer.

Another reporter representing the separatists stated that “Mr. Parizeau [was] pathetic. His words, to me, do not ring true. This is not how nationalists have envisioned Québec. Nationalists have envisioned Québec in a much more pluralist way, and in terms of leadership obviously here Mr. Parizeau is not leading the nationalist movement I do know.” Yet another respondent argued:

What Mr. Parizeau did tonight was an appeal to ethnic nationalism which is really out of tune with the modern nationalism that has evolved There are many schools of nationalism . . . but there’s one nationalism, they are the modern sovereigntists, and the Parti Québécois absolutely dissociate themselves from the kind of vindictive, vicious, ethnic nationalism that this man appealed to tonight.

All in all, each of the respondents argued that Parizeau had made a terrible error, even though the major Canadian presses reported the following day that in fact

Parizeau had spoken the truth inasmuch as “big money” and the “ethnic vote” had indeed been the principal factors in the referendum’s defeat.

Responses to Parizeau’s remarks in Canadian newspapers in the following days were no kinder. The front page story in the Québec paper La Presse discussed how, in the morning after the address, Parizeau “had to undergo a certain displeasure on the part of the most influential ministers meeting in the priorities committee”²⁰ and that “certain deputies said frankly that Parizeau had to leave after such an outburst” (Lessard).²¹ Additionally, La Presse was inundated with calls and letters of protest against Parizeau’s remarks, many from secessionist supporters (Gagnon).

Ironically, many of the comments appearing in the newspapers were not so much concerned with the actual racist message conveyed by Parizeau, but with the “image” that such remarks would project (Gagnon). Echoing the remarks made by commentators after Parizeau’s speech by those supporting secession, Donald McKenzie noted that “The Parti Québécois has gone to great lengths in recent years to win over cultural communities to its cause. The PQ has gained some credibility with ethnic groups but is still viewed as an ethnocentric party.”²² Therefore, according to McKenzie, while Parizeau was correct in his claims numerically speaking, such a “swipe” was a “no-no” because it gave renewed credence to the fear that the separatist movement was racist. In an editorial in La Presse, Andre Pratte lamented, “What image will Canada and the world, who observed us Monday, and from whom we hoped in the case of a Yes vote would

give us respect and recognition, keep of Québécois nationalism? That of a racist and vengeful force."²³

The concerns over "image" were not unfounded, for the charge of racism was everywhere. Gerald Alfred, a Mohawk political scientist at Montreal's Concordia University argued that "We're starting to see there is an ethno-nationalist sort of racist element to the whole [sovereigntist] program . . . [and] the intent of the Parti Québécois . . . had been exposed as one of imposing culture and imposing the language and will of French Canadians on various ethnic groups" (Bueckert).²⁴ Representatives of B'nai Brith Canada also condemned Parizeau's remarks, arguing that "Parizeau's disdain for minority communities is extremely harmful" (Lett and Nairne), and spokespersons for the National Congress of Italian-Canadians, the Chinese Association of Professionals, the Jewish Congress in Canada, and the Québec Alliance each made statements condemning the racist character of Parizeau's remarks (Gingran).

Summarized most sympathetically, these reactions could suggest that the Québec separatists have been truly attempting to create a more tolerant and multicultural identity, and that Parizeau's remarks were inappropriate because they were untrue. Conversely, it could also be argued that Parizeau's remarks were inappropriate because they publicly revealed the continuing neo-racist and ethnic character of Québec nationalism. Probably both elements are present in the "modern sovereigntist movement" alluded to by the separatist commentator at the

end of Parizeau's address on the evening of the referendum's defeat, for as one observer noted:

It is not a matter of denying the existence of the linguistic/ethnic cleavages around the question of sovereignty. They are evident [But] the Yes camp is no longer perfectly homogenous. It includes a certain number of partisans who are not '*pure laine*.' But, in all honesty, sovereignty remains in large part an ideal which only speaks to French Canadians. The reason is very simple: that is what connects them to their history of themselves, and they would be the ones who would benefit most in acquiring a majority status (Gagnon).²⁵

Modern secessionists recognize that public representatives of the Parti Québécois cannot publicly acknowledge these tensions. Whereas in Germany, state leaders are not allowed to acknowledge any possible continuing existence of National Socialism, in Québec state leaders are no longer allowed to publicly articulate a Québécois identity based primarily on French Canadian ancestry, but instead must articulate a Québécois identity based on Québec citizenship, French language, and French culture (broadly and vaguely defined). In the remainder of this chapter, then, I would like to explore this tension between the creation of an "us" and a "them," and the tension between ethnic-nationalism and multiculturalism in Québec, and how the tensions relate to strategies of remembrance in contemporary Québec.

Shifting Strategies of Remembrance in Québec Separatism: Paradoxes and
Incompatibilities in Post-Referendum Articulations of Québécois Identity

Perhaps what can be witnessed in the rejection of Parizeau's address is the shifting movement of strategic remembrance of Québec separatism away from the colonial arguments (white French Canadian culture must be preserved from English cultural and economic hegemony) toward what could be referred to as a "strategic" multiculturalism. I say "strategic" because there would appear to be a fundamental incompatibility between Québec secession and Québec multiculturalism.²⁶ Parizeau's comments on "money" and "the ethnic vote" were not rejected because they were untrue, but because they reinforced the neo-racist, ethnic-nationalist image "modern" sovereigntists have been working hard to dispel.

But again, as pointed out earlier, Balibar (Racism) argues that separatist movements are justified around the fictive construction of a "difference" that requires protection, and that the articulation of that difference simultaneously tends to exclude those citizens living within state borders who fail to meet the criteria for that difference. Therefore, secessionists might be expected to construct another fiction, a fictive multiculturalism based on pseudo-equality. The fictional "logic" would run something like this: we need to secede in order to protect our unique difference (as the descendants of French Canadiens), but we will never secede as long as the non-white, non-francophone populations fail to identify with that difference, therefore we will claim to be multicultural in order to provide greater

room for identification with the separatist movement. The problem with this “logic” is that the very articulation of the “difference” is incompatible with the notion of multiculturalism, especially given the fact that the form of pan-Canadian nationalism is already (albeit it only recently) bilingual and multicultural.

During the 1995 referendum Québec separatists found themselves in a difficult ideological position. What they most likely wanted to achieve was greater economic power for francophone capitalist interests, just as their predecessors had attempted to achieve through the Quiet Revolution. But the established means of acquiring that power was based on colonial arguments that were becoming increasingly less relevant as they gained greater economic leverage through greater control of provincial cultural policy. Québec’s economic strategists, leaders such as Parizeau and Bouchard, recognized that secession was a means for gaining total economic and political control, but their colonial arguments were incapable of hailing a large enough percentage of the population to secure secession. Even though control of cultural policy had a profound impact on the fabrication of “Québécois” allegiance, something else was needed, and that something else was multiculturalism.²⁷ It was for these reasons that Parizeau “had to go.”

Ethnic-nationalism and the articulation of “Québécois” identity as “*pure laine*” descendants of French Canadiens were no longer sufficient for the greater economic purposes of the separatists, and a brief review Parizeau’s resignation speech and of the more recent discourse of Bouchard indicate that the articulation

of “Québécois” identity has indeed shifted toward a more “inclusionary” message, and a message even more boldly focused on economic arguments.²⁸ In his resignation, Parizeau publicly acknowledged, but did not apologize for, his ethnic-nationalism. Parizeau stated that:

[There are these] frontiers that, very humbly, I have been incapable of crossing. I have not succeeded in acting in such a way that a significant proportion of our anglophone and allophone citizens feel solidarity in the struggle with their neighbors It is for me a very great deception, for I know the efforts that we have all put in for seven years to transform this reality. This also explains that I was able yesterday to formulate this deception in terms that could have been much better chosen.²⁹

Parizeau recognized that he had blundered by saying that “money” (read big English business) and “the ethnic vote,” because for him it gave credence to the “deception” that Québec separatists were ethnic-nationalists, and that if he would have chosen his words more precisely he might have been able to avoid that “deceptive” impression.

Additionally, Parizeau, whether or not his perception of the “deception” is accurately placed, also recognized that the separatist movement needed a “new content.” He stated that:

Finally, we [separatists] knew, it seems to me, how to give a new content to sovereignty, a new economic content . . . for we knew how to reconcile our

instinct for solidarity and mutual assistance with the actual rigors of the economic and financial situation . . . [and] we have enriched and diversified our sovereigntist movement, and that is why I think it has succeeded in touching so many people.³⁰

As he resigned his office, then, Parizeau recognized both his inability to overcome the problems associated with his generation's brand of ethnic-nationalism, as well as the need to give the Québec separatist movement "a new content," that is, a new economic strategy.

As additional evidence that the fundamental strategy of remembrance had shifted for the Québec separatists, less than half a year after Parizeau's resignation, his successor, Bouchard, gave an address designed specifically for the anglophone community. That address, entitled "Québecers Must Not Forget How To Live Together," perhaps best reveals not only the shift away from ethnic nationalism and towards multiculturalism, but also the fundamental incompatibility at the heart of the contemporary separatist movement. In that speech, Bouchard argued, "We [Québecers] have to create a new atmosphere" based upon "a better understanding of how linguistic and cultural diversity make our metropolis vibrant and unique" (21).

The deep incompatibility is as follows: Canada is already multicultural, so why would Québec need to secede if it too is multicultural? That is, Québec nationalism has been fundamentally based for the last two hundred years on English colonial oppression, and Québec separatists have consistently maintained

that secession was required in order to preserve the "cultural" difference threatened by that colonialism. But as Earle Gray has noted:

The colonial rivalry of the French and English [is] about as relevant to the twentieth century as the fur trade . . . Bouchard, of course, knew exactly what he was doing with his persistent talk of "English Canada." He was raking old coals to stoke the smoldering embers of resentment But there were problems It was the unintended irony of those who, in resisting assimilation by excessively promoting their own distinct society, were also promoting their own forms of assimilation (71-72).

Such an observation seems especially telling when Bouchard addresses the anglophone community in Montreal by saying that "As a francophone, I am deeply troubled when I hear that anglophone neighbors on the street next to mine have such a deep fear of living in a country called Québec that they would prefer to erect ethnic boundaries" (24). Why could the above statement not be uttered by the federalists, who could say "As Canadians, we are deeply troubled to hear that our francophone neighbors in the province next to ours have such a deep fear of living in a country called Canada that they would prefer to erect ethnic boundaries?"

But Bouchard, having learned his lesson from the narrow defeat in the last referendum and the insufficiency of the ethnic-nationalist strategy continues:

It should be known that the Québec nationalism that we are building no longer defines itself as that of French-Canadians, but as that of all

Québecers; it no longer seeks homogeneity but it embraces diversity and pluralism; it no longer focuses on political aims alone, but is not also concerned with social and cultural issues that bind us all (25).

But once again, federalists could make the same claim, saying that Canadian nationalism no longer is attempting to assimilate French Canadians into English Canada (as was admittedly the case in the colonial period up to the Quiet Revolution). Rather, Canada now seeks to embrace diversity and pluralism, promoting pan-Canadian bilingualism and multiculturalism. Why secede?

There is one final twist to the story of Québec separatism. Making matters even more interesting and complicated are the recent conflicts that have emerged between members of the First Nations (native American groups such as the Mohawks and the Crees) who have recently begun to argue that they will seek to secede from Québec should Québec secede from Canada (Walsh; Clayton, Natives; Canadians; Trueheart; Turner; Langan). In 1994, Parizeau asserted that the borders of Québec would remain intact after secession, and that native lands within those borders would become part of an independent nation of Québec (Clayton, Canadians), but the First Nations, to the consternation of the separatists, are finding their own arguments for sovereignty in Québec nationalism (Trueheart). Contrary to recent multicultural claims, just after being sworn in as the new premier of Québec in early 1996, Bouchard argued that no part of Québec could declare itself sovereign from the province, stating that "Canada is divisible because it is not a real country."

One can assume that Bouchard would argue that Québec is a “real country,” but it is unlikely that the First Nations would agree. It is an intriguing situation. French Canadians felt marginalized by English hegemony, so they took control of education, language, and culture, sought to create a Québécois identity with sufficient force to combat English hegemony, and in the process created a new set of marginalized groups within the borders of Québec. It would be interesting to see how the First Nations would respond if Québec were actually to secede. Would they in turn attempt to secede from Québec? And if so, would their unifying articulation marginalize various tribal subgroups, who in turn would want to secede from acknowledged tribal lands?

Conclusion

Parizeau’s address on the evening of the referendum’s defeat was dramatically rejected by federalists because of its exclusionary articulations of an ethnic-nationalism that created a dichotomy between an “us” (rising middle class francophones) and a “them” (big business, anglophones, and ethnic minorities), whereas separatists rejected the address because it exposed once again the ethnic-nationalist strategy of remembrance that was no longer useful for the separatist’s economic agenda. While Bouchard himself made his “white race” remarks just weeks before the referendum, other actions both before and after the referendum indicate his superior sensitivity to the need for a shift of strategy. Even

Parizeau, upon resigning, admitted that he was unable “to cross the frontier” out of ethnic-nationalism, and realized that “a new economic content” mixed with a more “diversified” sovereigntist movement was in order.

According to Bouchard, the “new” Québécois identity, the “modern” nationalism, is multicultural. Read most generously, one could argue that Québec separatists have truly learned the error of their ways, the insufficiency and problematic nature of an identity based on ethnicity and race, and have truly become open to diversity. But if that is the case, why secede from a multicultural Canada devoted to the protection of French language and French Canadian culture within Canada? Read more critically, one could argue that Québec separatists are engaging in what I have called a strategic multiculturalism, a strategy of inclusion to ensure that secession will secede with the next referendum. A middle position might also be argued. Undoubtedly there are many separatists who truly believe in the value of French culture, the French language, and some vision of what it means to be “Québécois” and multicultural. In other words, it is possible that some separatists envision a nation of Québec that assimilates its citizens into a pluralist francophone society that, while respecting French Canadian traditions above all else, is nonetheless multicultural. Nonetheless, it is difficult to understand why secession would necessarily follow from such a perspective, especially given pan-Canadian liberal federalism and the present balance of power between the provinces and the federal government.

But even more sceptically, one could argue that multiculturalism is not only a mask for Québécois ethnic-nationalism, but a mask for Canadian federalists as well. Historically, the colonial British, such as Lord Durham, and subsequent federalists who denied French rights outside of Québec, all sought to assimilate French Canada into English Canada. Furthermore, English Canadians maintained economic control within Québec well into the twentieth century. It was only after the Quiet Revolution and the rise of French power, or the economic and political power gained by Québec leaders after the 1960s, that federalists such as Pierre Trudeau attempted to rearticulate pan-Canadian identity as bilingual and multicultural. Furthermore, Québec separatists have argued that pan-Canadian bilingualism was actually an attempt to dilute the newly acquired powers obtained by Québec. In this sense, both federal multiculturalism and Québécois multiculturalism may be viewed as strategies, moves in a vast economic power struggle, rather than sincere efforts at equal opportunity.

And yet, perhaps multiculturalism is simply a strategy that is found in states where capitalism is more firmly entrenched. First, there is the colonial moment of exploitation, followed by a reactive solidarity on the part of the oppressed. Second, the oppressed Other fabricates a collective identity with sufficient force to combat the oppressive colonial forces, resulting in the acquisition of enhanced political and economic power. In this phase, the original colonizer typically withdraws, and/or assumes a multicultural strategy in order to maintain some share of political and economic control. Third, the newly emergent collectives

become their own colonial force or a smaller scale, creating newly oppressed groups within a smaller geographic area. These smaller oppressed groups then engage in identity politics in order to enhance their own political and economic power, and the second wave oppressors (those who had formed collective identities in response to first wave oppression) would withdraw, and/or assume a multicultural strategy in order to maintain some share of political and economic control over what gradually becomes increasingly smaller geographic/identity spaces, and so on.

If such a perspective is plausible, strategic remembrance may sometimes take the form of strategic multiculturalism. Such a strategic multiculturalism might most likely occur in democracies where agonistic relations (e.g. federal/provincial or federal/state) are permitted, if not constitutionally supported. Additionally, such a strategic multiculturalism, following the theories of Miyoshi and Wallerstein (Class), might be related to the globalization of capitalist democracy. Strategic multiculturalism, then, might ultimately be a "good thing," inasmuch as the colonized eventually are increasingly empowered economically and the geographic colonial spaces increasingly shrink in size. The greatest threats to such a democratic globalization would be ethnic overidentification and excessive capitalist exploitation, since either "excess" would stop the dialogic process driving the move from neo-racist collective identity construction and the demonization of the Other toward strategic multiculturalism and the gradual empowerment of the previously colonized.

Whether such a thesis is defensible, or whether such a historical development is desirable, is of course debatable. If Québec is an example of the “second wave” of strategic multiculturalism, there are certainly some significant dangers on this level. Québec separatists, if they are successful, could disrupt the dialogical federal/provincial tension that creates the need for the multicultural strategy. Isolated, Québec might create a system of government where the potential for overidentification might be enhanced because of the absence of a dialogic Other (the previous federal government). On the other hand, the First Nations might become that dialogic Other, being the newly oppressed group created by secession.

If Québec separatists are able to articulate a multicultural Québécois identity that persuades even a small percentage of its non-francophone population to vote for secession, Québec’s next secessionist referendum may be its last. In the final analysis, leaders in Québec are now almost completely in control of language, education, and culture within the province, and voting trends from the 1980 referendum to the 1995 referendum indicate growing support for secession. Arguably, over time, as more and more citizens become enculturated within the Québec educational and cultural system, support will eventually be sufficient for secession. If and when this occurs, it will be interesting to see if Québec leaders seek to rearticulate a form of ethnic nationalism or maintain a multicultural strategy that allows for the further geographic partitioning and economic empowerment of the third-wave oppressed.

But it is the relationship among discursive practices, the construction of collective identities, and political practices that is the ultimate concern of the critical rhetorical theory that undergirds these analyses. In West Germany, public discourse sought to displace responsibility for the crimes of National Socialism, while in Québec public discourse sought to deflect attention away from the economic and ethnic motives behind secession during and after the 1995 referendum. In other words, public articulations of collective national identity in both West Germany and Québec appear to have functioned in such a way as to deflect attention from important socio-political facts, and these two examples suggest that discourse surrounding national identity may serve fundamentally deflective, if not purposefully deceptive, purposes. This is not to suggest, though, that fervent nationalists intentionally set out to deflect attention from important political facts, or purposefully deceive publics; rather, it is to suggest that, regardless of the intentions of nationalists or the potential benefits of national belonging, it might be important to analyze other nationalist discourses in order to determine the kinds of absences they contain.

As noted earlier, all narratives, all characterizations are necessarily “shot through” with absence, but the important question for those concerned with the critique of publics is whether or not there is a difference between necessary absence and egregious absence. I would argue that, according to the analysis of West German and Québec articulations of national identity, some collective identities are certainly based on egregious absences. On the one hand, there is no

doubt that horrible crimes were committed by National Socialists, but it would appear that, prior to reunification, the citizens of Germany were incapable of publicly addressing the issue. Arguably, a group of people who are unable to discuss a problem are unlikely to find a way to solve the problem. If both East and West Germany were displacing the blame for National Socialism on each other, who would be able to address the social roots and possible remaining remnants of that political attitude? On the other hand, perhaps the absences in Québec are not egregious. The evidence would suggest that French Canadiens were indeed oppressed economically and linguistically by English Canada well into the twentieth century, and that French power has been of considerable utility in empowering many of the citizens living in the province of Québec. The problem for Québec leaders is that they are unwilling, and perhaps unable, to recognize the fundamentally economic nature of the secessionist movement, masking it instead behind the continuing and increasingly irrelevant call for cultural preservation.

The principal danger in Germany might be that in not addressing the causes of National Socialism its roots might remain untouched, whereas the principal danger in Québec might be that in not addressing the economic roots of secession its "cultural" aspects, aspects that despite all efforts to the contrary are based on the protection of French Canadian traditions, might lead to ethnic violence. These dangers appear to be exacerbated by discourses that seek to articulate collective identities that "strategically" function to displace attention away from important political facts: many Germans were willing participants in National

Socialism and the causes and remnants of that movement fundamentally remain unaddressed and misunderstood, and Québec separatists have historically been motivated by the desire for economic empowerment. If collective identities function, intentionally or not, to deflect attention away from important political facts, then surely it is important to come to a clearer understanding of the various kinds of deflections collective identities entail, for the quality of the public sphere may be seriously and negatively affected when important dangers are not publicly recognized and debated.

Notes to Chapter Six

¹ Major televised addresses by Chrétien and Bouchard just prior to the referendum indicate how difficult it would be to articulate a vision that would be acceptable to all Canadians, since both sides accused each other of deception. On October 25th, only days before the referendum vote, federal prime minister Chrétien and opposition leader Bouchard made their respective pleas to the citizens of Québec. Chrétien gave his address in English (although it was broadcast simultaneously in French and English), and Bouchard gave addresses in both English and French that varied considerably in content (Cox, Think; Carr). Both men gave differing interpretations of the economic consequences of secession and the ultimate meaning of the referendum, and Bouchard included no discussion of the specific content of Québécois identity in either version of his address. Chrétien focused on bolstering pan-Canadian unity while Bouchard focused on the consequences of a Yes vote and the construction of a new partnership between equals: Québécois and Canadians. Chrétien's address was relatively brief compared to those made by Bouchard, yet he provided an interpretation of the referendum and an articulation of Canadian national identity that starkly contrasted with Bouchard's. According to Chrétien, a Yes vote would have the following consequences: 1) it would break up Canada; 2) it would mean that Québécois would no longer enjoy Canadian citizenship; and 3) it would result in the destruction of the political and economic union between Canada and Québec. Conversely, in Bouchard's English address, he argued that a Yes vote

would mean that: 1) Québec would create an economic partnership with Canada; 2) Québec would maintain an economic and monetary union with Canada; 3) Québec would automatically constitute a sovereign people; and 4) the partnership with Canada would rapidly grow into a friendly relationship.

² I determined that these were the principle issues to be investigated after reviewing the discourse immediately preceding and surrounding Parizeau's address. Almost every newspaper article appearing in the Canadian presses concerning the referendum were principally focused on these two themes.

³ Three of the speeches are taken directly from national telecasts of the addresses. Lucien Bouchard's and Jean Chrétien's addresses on October 25, 1995, as well as Jacques Parizeau's address of October 30, 1995, were televised by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. The French version of Bouchard's address was translated by Professor Barbara Warnick. Other speeches are taken from various issues of Canadian Speeches, or are discussed in various articles by Canadian journalists.

⁴ Contemporary scholars supporting Québec secession recognize that there is a difficult tension between the notion of "Québécois" identity and pluralist, multicultural democracy. Some argue that tolerant ethnic pluralism within Québec will only be possible after secession. Since the hegemonic articulation of Québécois identity within Québec has traditionally been associated with the protection of the cultural legacy of the descendants of New France, minorities within Québec have not been able to identify with the secessionist

movement. The new generation of secessionists recognize this problem and seek to distance themselves from ethnic issues by focusing instead on language and "culture," arguing that the valorization of French language and culture is not inconsistent with ethnic pluralism. Thus the gradual "disappearance" of ethnic nationalists. See Labelle, Micheline; François Rocher, et Guy Rocher.

"Pluriethnicité, citoyenneté et intégration: de la souveraineté pour lever les obstacles et les ambiguïtés." Cahiers de recherche sociologique, no 25, 1995.

⁵ This is not to suggest that the new generation of separatists decided to move away from ethnic nationalism solely as a result of the referendum. Some separatists recognized the problematic nature of the association of "Québécois" with ethnic nationalism beforehand, at least this is suggested by many of Bouchard's actions in the months prior to the referendum where he distanced himself from those articulated a strong ethnic nationalism.

⁶Bouchard himself stated in a speech to the anglophone community in Montreal on March 11th, 1996 that "We have here now [in Québec], in a sense, a francophonie. Close to 95% of Québécois can carry on a conversation in French." Canadian Speeches (March 1996): 27. While Bouchard correctly remarks that maintaining a purely French culture in Montreal is difficult given the international character of the city, Québec laws, as discussed in the prior chapter, have created a unilingual French Québec that remains protected due to the "notwithstanding clause" in the Canadian constitution.

⁷Charles also refers to a term frequently used by Québec nationalists: pure laine. The term literally means "pure wool" but generally refers to "old stock" Québécois, or the descendants of the inhabitants of New France.

⁸ For an interesting discussion of the relationship between capitalism and conservative political concerns over "family values," see Wallerstein (Household). Bouchard's comments were made in a speech aired on Le Réseau de L'information, the French language all-news television station. While I was unable to obtain a copy of the speech myself, and had to rely on the translation in the Toronto Globe and Mail (16 October 1995), the comment sparked an outcry from federalists across Canada.

⁹Bouchard's comments were not widely reported in the French Canadian newspapers, although they were front page news in the Toronto press.

¹⁰ It is possible that the strong focus on the preservation of "culture" partially results from the secularization of French Canadians. That is, if West and Wallerstein are correct, Québec nationalism may be primarily economically motivated. Therefore, the focus on "tradition" might serve not only to deflect attention away from economic motives, but simultaneously fortify a seriously weakened conservative clerical nationalism. In other words, separatists may be becoming more "English" as they seek to gain more and more power within capitalist society, and the focus on "culture" may serve as a compensatory device.

¹¹Biographical information on Parizeau and Bouchard is taken from the Parti Québécois home page:<http://198.168.84.30/en/gens/chefs> (11 July 1996). The newest and youngest leader of the separatists, Mario Dumont, has a degree in economics from Concordia University.

¹²The speeches to be analyzed are also taken from the Parti Québécois home page: <http://198.168.84.30/en/idees/disc> (11 July 1996). In particular, I will review the speech Bouchard delivered at the opening session of the National Convention of the Bloc Québécois on April 7th, 1995, and speeches delivered by Parizeau on October 7th, 1995 for the inauguration of the national Yes committee and on October 17th, 1995 before the student body of the University of Montreal.

¹³ The following excerpts from the speeches by Bouchard and Parizeau are taken directly from the translations provided on the Parti Québécois homepage.

¹⁴There are many fascinating elements in the speech. For example, Bouchard focuses on the "two founding peoples" thesis, how the 1982 constitutional reforms made Québec "a province like all the rest," how the "European Union would never have been able to impose upon one of its members the equivalent of the 1982 coup that the federal government dealt to Québec," and how "the balance of power has to be restored . . . in the referendum." Each of these statements is directly related to strategies of remembrance. As to the "centralizing appetite of the federal government," in an address by Stephane Dion,

Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, to the Liberal Party of Canada on March 2, 1996, it was noted that "Decentralization is well underway. Federal program spending has fallen from 1.5 times provincial and municipal spending in the 1950s to 3/4 in 1990 and 2/3 in 1996." See Canadian Speeches 9 (March 1996):18. Therefore the "centralizing appetite" may not be as great as Bouchard suggests.

¹⁵ Here Bouchard states that the "fundamental priority" is the establishment of a francophone society, suggesting that the Québécois identity is linguistic, leaving out the "cultural" aspect. Others, such as Labelle, Rocher and Rocher (1995), argue that Québécois identity centers around the French language and Québécois culture (although this "culture" remains undefined). In fact, these scholars argue that is only through secession that Québécois identity will be recognized for what it "is," thereby providing the identity-security necessary for pluralism. The new sovereigntists contend that this Québécois identity can nonetheless be multicultural.

¹⁶ How Montreal would become an "anglophone" city without secession is somewhat unclear given that Quebec, enjoying the "notwithstanding clause," is in charge of language laws and education.

¹⁷ After the referendum, Reform Party leader Preston Manning argued that the federal government was totally unprepared for Québec secession, and proposed a Canadian Position on Terms and Conditions of Separation. Manning believed that that only way that the political and economic repercussions of

secession could be managed was through proactive measures on the part of the federal government.

¹⁸ The official result had the No vote at 50.6 per cent of the popular vote and the Yes side with 49.4. The one per cent victory represented just under 50,000 voters out of a total of nearly 4.7 million.

¹⁹ Parizeau's remarks were aired live by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation in French, with English translations provided. Additionally, there was a brief roundtable discussion by journalists and commentators immediately following Parizeau's remarks. My uncited quotations are from a transcription of the broadcast.

²⁰ " . . . avait dû essayer un mécontentement certain de la part de ses ministres les plus influents réunis au comité des priorités."

²¹ " . . . certains députés disaient sans détour que M. Parizeau devait s'en aller après une telle sortie."

²² All translations of the articles appearing in La Presse are by Professor Barbara Warnick, University of Washington.

²³ "Quelle image le Canada et le monde, qui nous observaient lundi et dont nous espérons, en cas de OUI, respect et reconnaissance, garderont-ils du nationalisme québécois? Celle d'un raciste rageur et revanchard."

²⁴ The reactions by representatives of the First Nations are an interesting component in the overall separatist picture, since the First Nations also claim distinct society status and argue they are marginalized by French Canadians just

as French Canadians argue they are marginalized by English Canadians. I will return to this topic at the end of the chapter.

²⁵"Il ne s'agit pas de nier l'existence de clivages linguistico-ethniques autour de la question de la souveraineté. Ils sont évidents. . . . Le camp du OUI n'est pas non plus parfaitement homogène; il compte un certain nombre de partisans qui ne sont pas des «pure laine». Mais il reste qu'en gros, c'est vrai, la souveraineté est un idéal qui ne «parle» qu'aux Canadiens français. La raison est bien simple: c'est que cela se rapporte à leur histoire à eux, et qu'ils seraient les seuls à pouvoir y trouver leur intérêt en acquérant un statut de majorité."

²⁶ Some Québec scholars argue that secession and multiculturalism are not incompatible. For example, Labelle, Rocher and Rocher (1995) argue that multiculturalism in Québec is *only* possible with secession. Basically, they argue that until Québécois identity is recognized officially by the international community, (*pure laine*) Québécois will be too insecure to allow for pluralism.

²⁷ Exemplifying how control over language policy has had an impact on identification with "Québécois" identity, Oiumet points out that those under the age of forty-five, those who have been most affected by the cultural policies emerging out of the Quiet Revolution, most voted for secession, while those over forty-five mostly voted against secession. According to Oiumet, "If one looks at the map of Québec with the results of the referendum, it goes along with language." Francophones, that is, mostly voted for secession, while ninety-five per cent of non-francophones, as noted earlier, voted against secession.

²⁸ Parizeau's resignation speech is taken from La Presse, 1 November 1995: B3, and Bouchard's remarks are taken from a copy of a speech delivered to "the anglophone community" at Centaur Theater in Montreal on 11 March 1996 that appeared in Canadian Speeches (March 1996). Parizeau's speech was translated by Professor Barbara Warnick, and Bouchard's speech was delivered in English (although portions not cited here were in French).

²⁹ "Et il y a une de ces frontières que, bien humblement, j'ai été incapable de franchir. Je n'ai pas réussi à faire en sorte qu'une proportion significative de nos concitoyens anglophones et allophones se sentent solidaires du combat de leurs voisins. . . . C'est pour moi une déception très grande, car je sais les efforts que nous avons tous mis depuis sept ans à transformer cette réalité. Cela explique aussi que j'ai pu, hier, formuler cette déception dans des termes qui auraient pu être beaucoup mieux choisis."

³⁰ "Finalement, nous avons su, il me semble, donner un contenu nouveau à la souveraineté. Un nouveau contenu économique . . . car nous avons su concilier notre instinct de solidarité et d'entraide et les rigueurs actuelles de la situation économique et financière. . . . [N]ous avons enrichi et diversifié [notre souveraineté] et c'est pourquoi, je pense, il a réussi à toucher autant de gens.

Chapter Seven

Strategic Remembrance and the Fabrication of National Identity

Almost a century ago, Vladimir Lenin argued that nationalism was a direct result of economic inequalities between states (Neumann 100). In recent years political theorists have argued that, given the fact of human inequality, the central questions facing those investigating nationalism revolve around how to manage the violence that accompanies inequality. In this study, these two perspectives combine to form the following question: what is the relationship between nationalism as a rhetorical phenomenon and the overall quality of the public sphere? Are some forms of nationalism better than others? How can one tell? I have suggested that through the analysis of dramatically rejected discourse, rhetorical critics can identify strategies of remembrance, which in turn reveal the kinds of absences that accompany articulations of collective national belonging. Furthermore, through extensive comparative analyses, a typology of absences and the kinds of public spheres those absences are likely to promote will emerge. This study begins such comparisons.

Frederick Dolan, drawing upon Hannah Arendt's The Origins of Totalitarianism, argues that "the most fateful characteristic" of the contemporary world order is "the replacement of experience by fiction," and that those who would seek to deal with the violence of inequality must first deal with the

fabrication of collective identities. According to Dolan, "Ideology and the atomization of individuals combine . . . to form a 'fictitious world,' one that replaces the real world constituted in a genuine public sphere. Such a fiction . . . conceals the radical contingency of public life" (168). What Dolan means by a "genuine public sphere" may perhaps indicate a nostalgic utopianism, but it is not unreasonable to assume there are public spheres that are "more or less genuine." I have argued that "less genuine" public spheres are those where the fabrication of national identities are based on particularly egregious absences, whereas more genuine public spheres would be those where the fabrication of national identity is accompanied by incessant efforts at uncovering the absences that invariably accompany articulations of sameness. Such a claim, however, requires criteria for the term "egregious," and in order to avoid idealism would have to account for the fact that state self-interest is hardly a motive for limit work.

Chantal Mouffe provides useful guidance in this regard. Mouffe maintains that "the political community is crucial, but it should be conceived as a discursive surface and not as an empirical referent," and that "what is really at stake in the question of pluralism is power and antagonism and their ineradicable nature" (Democratic 36). For Mouffe, "[t]he main question of democratic politics becomes, therefore, not how to eliminate power, but how to constitute forms of power which are compatible with democratic values" (42). In analyzing nationalism in West Germany and Quebec, I have followed Mouffe's thinking

inasmuch as I too have conceptualized the political community as a "discursive surface" where articulations of sameness appear to have been incompatible with democratic processes. That is, if one considers a radically democratic public sphere as being one in which political motives are available for reflexive critique, and unjust marginalizations of others is minimized, then collective national identities that suppress significant political facts or arbitrarily demonize others in order to achieve solidarity are anti-democratic.

This study, then, has built upon theoretical perspectives that resonate both with older Marxist conceptions and contemporary conceptions of national identity by engaging in an investigation into public discourses that have sought to negotiate fictional political communities. Following Benedict Anderson's position that collective identities are imagined communities, and working from this position by arguing that national identities are politically consequential fictions produced, maintained, and transformed by rhetorical processes, I have endeavored to analyze the ways in which public discourses contribute to the negotiation of imagined communities. More importantly, I have attempted to develop a critical approach whereby rhetorical critics can identify the significant political absences that accompany articulations of national identity.

Various theories of publics and constraints in the rhetorical studies literature have only rarely been applied to the phenomenon of national identity, even though national identity is perhaps one of the most significant forms of collective identity functioning in contemporary society (Smith). Coming to the

study initially influenced by a variety of rhetorical and critical theoretical perspectives that focused on ideology and absence, I found that available conceptualizations of publics and constraints in the speech communication literature were inadequate for an investigation into national identity construction.

As a response to the paucity of research into national identity construction and the seeming inadequacy of theoretical approaches to the social construction of national identity, I have engaged in a comparative analysis of two instances of contemporary nation building in which articulations of national identity were dramatically rejected. One result of these analyses was the emergence of an outline of a theory whereby the principal absences maintaining the “coherence” of national identity could be isolated through the analysis of dramatically rejected discourse. That is, this study drew upon Hayden White’s observation that all narrative characterizations are necessarily accompanied by a field of absence by attempting to show that politically significant absences can be isolated through consideration of discourse. By analyzing dramatically rejected speech, rhetorical critics can identify what I have referred to as “strategies of remembrance” or “codes of the unsayable”

National identities, constructed primarily in response to economic exigences (Balibar and Wallerstein; Laclau and Mouffe; Neumann) and the human desire for metaphysical comfort (Nietzsche, *Beyond*; Smith), are fundamentally tools of the state.¹ Such a perspective is similar, although not identical, to what Anthony Smith refers to as “situational” theories of nationalism.

More precisely, the perspective guiding this study combines two of the three categories of theories of nationalism enumerated by Smith.

Smith argues that there are basically three categories of theories related to the "origin" of nations: Romantic, situational, and historical/symbolic.

Romantic theories of the nation maintain that each nation has a unique and immutable essence, and that each nation must "realize" its unique personality. Guided by these theories, nationalists seek to "protect" their nation from being "polluted" by the Other. The assumptions informing this category can be viewed as the polar opposite of the assumptions guiding this study, and such Romantic assumptions arguably lead to relatively undemocratic public spheres. Second, according to Smith, are "situational" theories of the nation. Situationalists argue that the nation "is a matter of attitudes, perceptions and sentiments that are necessarily fleeting and mutable, varying with the particular situation of the subject." The problem with "situationalists," though, is that these theorists hold that national identities shift as people's geographic situation changes. Smith argues that such a perspective "makes it possible for ethnicity to be used 'instrumentally' to further individual or collective interests, particularly of competing elites who need to mobilize large followings to support goals in the struggle for power. In this struggle ethnicity becomes a useful tool."

Smith goes on to argue that "Between these two extremes lie those approaches that stress the historical and symbolic-cultural attributes of ethnic identity An ethnic group is a type of cultural collectivity, one that

emphasizes the role of myths of descent and historical memories, and that is recognized by one or more cultural differences like religion, customs, language or institutions” (National 20). The point Smith wishes to make, I believe, is that ethnic identities upon which national affiliations are built are neither pure “essences” nor pure fabrications on the part of state leaders. While agreeing with Smith, I would tend to stress the instrumental dimension of national identity nonetheless. In other words, I believe that national identities are “constructed” by state leaders out of available historical and symbolic-cultural attributes for instrumental purposes, and that the purposes are variously useful and harmful. More specifically, as a result of unique economic and emotional pressures, ideological constraints are placed on public speakers articulating a characterization of the national persona that works against the instrumental purposes of the state. The constraints result in “strategies of remembrance,” or politics of memory, that maintain a fictional characterizations of what it means to be a citizen of the state. If the limits (constraints) are transgressed, then the discourse will be dramatically rejected.

The preceding analysis has shown that articulations of national identity, at least in West Germany and Québec, are indeed accompanied by politically significant absences: in West Germany those absences concern the causes for, continuities of, and responsibility for National Socialism. In Québec they concern the neo-racist foundation of Québécois identity and the economic basis for secession. Furthermore, when responses are incoherent or contradictory, it

appears that these politically significant absences can be isolated through the analysis of dramatically rejected speech. For example, in both West Germany and Québec, national newspapers critiquing Jenninger and Parizeau noted that neither men had actually said anything untrue, rather, what they said was inappropriate. Nonetheless, the ideological function of “propriety” remained unexplored. In both countries these absences appeared to be instrumentally motivated: in West Germany public remembrance of National Socialism ultimately appears to have been in the service of reunification, and in Québec articulations of national identity appear to have been in the service of maximizing the economic power of the rising francophone middle class.

Ultimately, this study has been concerned with the various functions of propriety in the public negotiation of national identities, especially since it is arguable that national identities are primarily used in the consolidation of state power based on variously egregious absences, and that different absences promote different kinds of subjects and publics. Another concern of this study has been with the process of identity negotiation, since I maintain that national identities change over time, are susceptible to critique, and can be fruitfully transformed for the betterment of human relations.

The Use and Abuse of National Identity

When one considers the general malleability of publics, as witnessed by the wide variety of national allegiances observable in the world today, rhetorical theorists and critics cannot help but wonder about the ramifications of constructing publics in ways that may frequently, if not always, preclude certain politically significant issues from being publicly acknowledged and addressed. Publics can be constructed for a variety of purposes, and different kinds of absences may reflect the kinds of action publics might be expected to engage in. In some ways, then, it is unfortunate that both the West German and Québec case studies found what are arguably serious and egregious absences, for such an outcome could give the impression that all national identities are evil. While that may be the case, I think it is more likely that all national identities require the suppression of politically consequential facts, but that not all of those suppressed facts are equally egregious.

National identity is probably capable of attaining both a “healthy” and an “unhealthy” state, and nationalism may be used as a tool for a variety of useful and harmful purposes. The early nineteenth century Russian political theorist Nikolai Bukharin argued that nationalism should be generally acknowledged as an effective coopting device for the bourgeoisie (Neumann 99), and Trotsky argued that the state always is a tool in the hands of the ruling forces and that

national sentiment is the primary means of consolidating their power (86). These bleak perspectives are countered by Smith who points out that:

We could, equally, catalogue the benign effects of nationalism: its defence of minority cultures; its rescue of 'lost' histories and literatures; its inspiration for cultural renaissances; its resolution of 'identity crisis'; its legitimation of community and social solidarity; its inspiration to resist tyranny; its ideal of popular sovereignty and collective mobilization; even the motivation of self-sustaining economic growth (National 18).

Unfortunately, the two cases explored in this study do not seem to be the most useful sites for defending the potentially positive capacity generating functions of nationalism given that both West German and Québec identity are based on politically significant absences.

Nonetheless, the two case studies do indicate several fundamental issues that relate to the wide variety of ways in which nationalism manifests itself, and they suggest criteria that might be used in future attempts to identify "better" forms of nationalism. Smith provides a useful typology for comparing different forms of nationalism by maintaining that there are two basic types of national identities: "Western" and "Asian." According to Smith, "Western" models of the nation are based on historic territory, a legal-political community, legal-political equality of members, and common civic culture and ideology, whereas "Asian" models of the nation are characterized by common descent, popular mobilization, vernacular languages, and shared customs and traditions. The

former might be characterized as constitutional nationalisms (where civil rights outweigh ethnicity and “cultural” membership), while the latter could be characterized as ethnic nationalism (where ethnicity and “cultural” membership outweigh civil rights) (National 8-15). This study suggests, however, that clear distinctions between “Western” and “Asian” nationalisms are problematic (as Smith admits). Furthermore, it suggests that national identities display the characteristics of the two general types in various proportions. Additionally, these proportional variations may have a direct impact on the kinds of absences constraining public discourses and the kinds of publics (and the motives for actions on the part of socially constructed subjects within those publics) likely to be expected from those variations.

Smith's bifurcation is nonetheless a useful starting point for an investigation into different configurations of national identities, since in West Germany and Québec, both “Western” nations, there appears to be many “Asian” characteristics, and there appears to be a struggle within national movements between constitutional patriotism based upon the rule of law, civil rights, and freedom of speech on the one hand, and ethnic allegiances based upon respect for and protection of unique ethnic and cultural characteristics on the other.² West Germany and Canada are states based upon constitutional law, yet both, at some time in their history, sought to strengthen national identity through educational and cultural ministries, language policies, and the promotion of issues related to descent, and Québec leaders certainly used many “Asian”

characteristics in their drive to fabricate Québécois national identity. A question then arises as to whether or not there are “better” and “worse” configurations of the “Western” and “Asian” characteristics.

Investigations into national identity construction suggest that there are potential problems associated with both “Western” and “Asian” models. Constitutional patriotism potentially leads to atomization of subjects and the commodification of culture (Baudrillard), and may ultimately be in the service of corporate neo-colonialism (Miyoshi; Balibar and Wallerstein). That is, behind the “mask” of individual freedom may lurk an uncivil capitalism that “capitalizes” on the lack of community affiliation and group solidarity usually found in publics fabricated around ethnic and cultural issues. Conversely, ethnic nationalism potentially leads to the demonization and scapegoating of others, violent xenophobia, and state constrictions on the public sphere. Also, both forms allow for the manipulation of public consciousness through monological forms of persuasion: capitalist societies produce mass messages where the primary goal is profit rather than information, and totalitarian societies produce mass messages where the primary goal is the unification of public opinion at the expense of critical thinking. In neither system is the primary goal of public discourse maximally informing the citizenry in order to facilitate the highest quality decision making.

While this study has not been focused primarily on political theory, there is an intimate relationship between political communities and the social

construction of subjects. More directly, there is an intimate relationship between processes of human communication and the quality of human life. This study has added to the literature by suggesting that national identity is indeed fabricated and that state functionaries proactively contribute to the construction, maintenance, and transformation of the identities. Additionally, this study has shown that some, if not all, national identities are accompanied by strategies of remembrance where the goal is to maximize “national” self-interest rather than to build a harmonious global community. In West Germany the concern was not to deal effectively with the root causes of fascism, but rather to “emerge from the shadow of Hitler” in order to get on with the business of democratic capitalism (regardless of the possible affiliations between capitalism and fascism). In Québec, the concern was not to deal effectively with racial and cultural discord within the Canadian federation, but to deny the ethnic basis of secessionist arguments in order to maximize the economic power of descendants of the French Canadiens. Perhaps most seriously, the xenophobic hatred directed towards immigrants (especially Turkish “guest workers”) in Germany, and Anglophones in Québec, is exacerbated by the ethnic components of nationalism in both states.

The forms of nationalism analyzed in this study could be viewed as “abusive” because in the drive to construct local patriotism there was a simultaneous repression of politically significant issues. That is, West Germany and Québec have provided two examples of what could arguably be considered

“abusive” forms of national identity inasmuch as they both were centered around the repression of significant political issues that their citizens would need to confront in order to construct a healthier public sphere.

In the end, the criteria one would use in determining whether collective national identity is productive or abusive (or absences necessary or egregious), is, of course, contestable. Nonetheless, as a communication scholar I would argue that communication promoting the construction of national identity should be judged according to the following criteria: 1) the degree to which economic motives are exposed and publicly analyzed and critiqued; 2) the degree to which dialogic communication is maximized both within and between “national” communities; 3) the degree to which essentialism is productively problematized; 4) the degree to which the demonization and scapegoating of others is avoided; and 5) the degree to which human capacities are maximized and unnecessary constraints minimized. I would like to conclude, then, with a brief discussion of these issues, their relationship to public discourse and the processes of identity negotiation, and suggestions for future studies.

Beyond Masked Economism and Essentialism in the Construction of National Identity

There appears to be a complex relationship between the globalization of capital and the changing functions of national identity, a tension between

conservative nationalist essentialism and liberal constitutional patriotism, and a fundamental economic incentive behind transitions from nationalism to multiculturalism. Each of these issues has been touched upon in this study in ways that provide criteria for critiquing the fabrication of publics. In other words, West Germany and Québec provide useful anti-models for the construction of a postnational form of collective identity construction more appropriate for the increasingly interdependent global society than those forms of nationalism based upon the repression of issues such as the causes and continuities of Fascism and neo-racist and economic motives for secession.

In both Germany and Canada, nationalism arose primarily as a result of military conflicts and economic inequalities with other communities. German nationalism was prompted in no small part by the French Revolution, a series of subsequent military defeats culminating in defeat in World War One, and perceived economic backwardness in relation to England and France. Québec nationalism was prompted in no small part by military conflicts with the English and perceived economic backwardness in relation to English Canadians. National sentiment was mobilized by political leaders in each state in order to remedy these perceived inequities. Furthermore, as the conclusion of chapter six suggested, there appears to be a pattern that sometimes develops in relation to nationalism and the globalization of capital. First, there is the initial moment of colonization and/or confrontation with the Other. Second, there is the responsive moment where Self is constructed in relation to the Other, and the simultaneous

constructions of geographic and ideational borders. Third, there is the retreat of the colonizer, leaving the newly constituted “self” of the “people” with the geographic and ideational border created by the initial conflict between “peoples.” Fourth, a new elite emerges among the rising middle classes within the post-colonial state, marginalizing other “native” groups who fail to fall within the colonial articulation of the “national character.” In this fourth stage there is a movement away from interstate war toward terrorism and identity politics.

Unfortunately, while the pattern suggests that interstate violence is gradually replaced by identity politics, the essentializing and “ethnic” tendencies at the heart of most nationalist movements, especially when combined with interstate military alliances, suggest the lingering threat of world war.

Nonetheless, as the situation in Canada suggests, there is the possibility of a fifth stage where identity politics are transformed into strategic multiculturalism (where the state agrees to respect marginalized groups in order to maintain power). Although strategic multiculturalism may yet be another mask for the maintenance of political and economic hegemony, it would still appear to be the most enabling and least constraining form of collective identity currently available.

But as was witnessed both in West Germany and Québec, economic motives were never directly associated with nationalism, and important economic issues were not included in public discourses related to national identity. In West

Germany, protecting the fiction that “National Socialists magically became good democrats” required the forced repression of National Socialism which in turn precluded any responsible public discussion of the potential continuities between capitalism and fascism,³ while in Québec the economic ramifications of secession were never publicly debated in a responsible manner. Arguably, then, a “healthier” nationalism would be one that publicly acknowledged its economic motives and allowed them to be debated. Of course, given the distinct possibility that such a move on the part of self-interested state bureaucrats, and given Wallerstein’s observation that the primary role of the state is maximizing the economic power of certain select citizens, such public acknowledgements are unlikely. Rhetorical critics, or political scientists using the kinds of rhetorical critical methods developed in this study, would be the likely sources of such information, revealing the limits imposed by implicit constraints on public discourse and making them available for public debate.

Besides masked economism (where the state fails to publicly acknowledge the economic motives behind certain political actions), the gravest danger posed by constitutional patriotism and liberal forms of government is that they might be in the service of corporate neo-colonialism through the atomization of subjects and the lack of oppositional communal solidarity, while the gravest danger of ethnic nationalism is xenophobic demonization of the Other. These issues are directly related to the twin dangers of relativism and essentialism. On the one hand lies the danger of total social atomization, cultural relativism, and

the disruption of community to the point where corporate neo-colonialism can flourish unopposed by an organized and principled public. On the other hand lies the more obvious dangers that result from violent xenophobia. In the past, Germany has clearly displayed the most heinous features of violent xenophobia, while recent developments in Québec suggest that secession might indeed lead to the strengthening of French Canadian identity at the expense of anglophones, allophones, and the First Nations living within the province.

Conversely, as the Canadian analysis indicated, the dialogic agonism between the federal and provincial levels of government has led to the development of strategic multiculturalism on both levels. Such a development suggests another criterion for “healthy” nationalism. According to Honi Fern Haber:

[T]here is no ideal community or subject which is not subject to deconstruction. If this is suppressed, then community or the ideal of a ‘normal subject’ is indeed repressive. But it is repressive because it presents the subject and community to be something they are not. A politics of difference does not then imagine that all conflict should be resolved. There will always be groups which are forced to the margins. What it hopes for, however, is the fluidity of positions of power; it hopes to encourage the proliferation of voices (131).

Building upon Haber’s theory, then, a “healthy” national identity would be one that fosters a proliferation of voices, of subject positions, of sites of

knowledge/power, whereas an “unhealthy” national identity would be one in which the state so restricts the public sphere as to limit the voice of the public to only one position or a few.

Kenneth Burke’s analysis of Hitler’s rhetoric is instructive at this point. In an early warning to his American critics, Burke argued that:

Already, in many quarters of our country, we are ‘beyond’ the stage where we are being saved from Nazism by our *virtues*. And fascist integration is being staved off, rather, by the *conflicts among our vices*. Our vices cannot get together in a grand unified front of prejudices; and the result of this frustration, if or until they succeed in surmounting it, speaks, as the Bible might say, “in the name of” democracy (Hitler’s Battle 330, italics in original).

Fascism, then, could be associated with the unification of prejudice. Later in his essay, however, Burke makes an additional comment that strikes at the heart of this study when he states:

The desire for unity is genuine and admirable. The desire for national unity, in the present state of the world is genuine and admirable. But this unity, if attained on a deceptive basis, by emotional trickeries that shift our criticism from the accurate locus of our trouble, is no unity at all (340).

But according to the theoretical framework informing this study, all national identities may be “deceptive” inasmuch as they “shift our criticism from the accurate locus” of the ultimate motives underlying their construction.

Furthermore, when publics are unaware of those motives, the constraints imposed by strategies of remembrance may go unrecognized. Note for example how Germans on both the Left and the Right embraced Richard von Weizsäcker's address, even though it played directly into the hands of those who would deflect attention away from responsible critical analyses of National Socialism.

State support for the proliferation of voices may require support for a relatively unconstricted public sphere, but this alone does not adequately address the issue of cultural relativism and the atomization of subjectivity. In other words, the proliferation of voices alone does not ensure a radically democratic public sphere protected from the ravages of corporatism. The protection of those who incessantly find themselves at the margins of processes of identity construction requires that the state also assumes a "limit attitude," or a reflexive attitude toward the necessarily marginalizing aspects of national identity construction that might initially constitute a strategic multiculturalism, but over time might evolve into a genuine multiculturalism. Of course, the problem with such an expectation is the simple fact that such tolerance, given the current plethora of violent, xenophobic nationalisms, is potentially always under the threat of being disrupted by imperial colonial invasion.

In sum, this study suggests that the current state of nationalism in "advanced" Western countries is far from "healthy," and the best that can be

hoped for given the current "world order" may be strategic multiculturalism.

Worse yet, perhaps, is the fact that the theory concerning the "development" of international relations from brute colonialism to strategic multiculturalism smacks of what Smith refers to as "optimistic material evolutionism," or the belief that nationalism evolves to the point where it is no longer necessary (Nations 11).

Yet I do not believe that communal regeneration will ever become unnecessary, rather, I believe that it is important to find ways to manage the racism and economic advantage-taking that historically accompanies collective identity formation. By identifying those nations who construct collective identities that publicly debate their economic motives, who encourage the proliferation of voices while simultaneously guarding against corporate colonialism, who valorize the celebration of cultural diversity when that diversity is not won at the cost of demonization of the Other, and who assume a "limit attitude" towards those who are incessantly marginalized by hegemonic articulations of collective belonging, rhetorical critics may be in a better position to understand the relationship between the negotiation of national identity and the construction of variously "healthy" publics.

To that end, rhetorical critics should work to ensure that national identity is truly negotiated rather than merely fabricated in a Machiavellian way by state leaders, and this requires the incessant critical analysis of existing and emergent nationalist movements. For the time being, one possible site for a fruitful extension of this study would be a comparative analysis of the break up of

Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. The former federation broke up peacefully, while the latter broke up in a decidedly ugly and violent way. By coming to a better understanding of the kinds of collective national identities constructed in these two situations, critics might be in a better position to distinguish more clearly between “healthy” and “unhealthy” forms of nationalism. Regardless of which sites are chosen for future study, it is imperative that “healthy” nationalisms, if they exist, be located. That is, comparative studies of nation-building must continue until those forms of state are identified that truly protect the interests of those who are incessantly being marginalized, that allow those marginalized voices to participate meaningfully in the construction of state policy, and that maximize opportunities for all citizens. Finally, political activists, as well as theorists, must find ways to work proactively toward the construction of state systems fostering those features of national identity that maximize universal human capacities while minimizing unnecessary constraints on human action.

There are many dangers facing our increasingly interdependent world arising from nationalism, and given the fact that communal regeneration in the form of ethnic, neo-colonial corporate, and fundamentalist nationalisms are proliferating, there is a daunting challenge in the next century for rhetorical critics. While rhetoricians perhaps can do little to stop the kinds of economic and ideational violence that wracks humankind, as Burke's critique of Hitler written in advance of World War Two so poignantly testifies, the development of critical tools for evaluating nationalism would be unlikely to exacerbate such violence.

In the end, it is humans who create systems of governmentality, and in the end it is humans who will have to make them more humane. Perhaps the isolation of strategies of remembrance is a productive move in the eventual production of more humane systems of human governance, and the development of more humane guidelines for the public negotiation of national identity.

Notes to Chapter Seven

¹ Following Foucault's formulation (Subject), I assume that power is relational. Knowledge has no necessary relation to Truth, but wherever the Truth is thought to reside, there also resides the relational power. Nationalism, especially of the ethnic variety, tends to create a sense of Truth in socially constructed subjects. In this study, German historians and conservative clerical nationalists in Québec both argued that their respective "nations" were on a "special path" or had a unique "spiritual mission."

² Recent events in the former Soviet Union suggest that Russian nationalism also reveals an interesting, if dangerous, mixture of "Western" and "Asian" characteristics. Many Russian nationalists are currently attempting to construct an "Eurasian" national identity (Neumann). Also, such distinctions between constitutional patriotisms and ethnic nationalisms mirror many of the arguments found in debates between those advocating liberalism and those advocating communitarianism.

³ For example, it was a frequently cited fact that many large Jewish businesses in West Germany that were taken over by National Socialists are still in operation yet were never returned to their rightful owners, and large corporations that were known to use Jewish slave labor during the war (e.g. Volkswagen) are still in operation, were never officially sanctioned, and reparations were never paid.

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Michael Lane Bruner received his bachelor's degree from California State University, Northridge in 1990, his master's degree from Louisiana State University in 1993, and his Ph.D. from the University of Washington in 1997. Before returning to college, he founded two somewhat infamous performance poetry troupes in Los Angeles, California: the Lost Tribe and the Carma Bums. Their most recent book Twisted Cadillac was named Southern California's poetry book of the year in 1996 by Next Magazine, and Lawrence Ferlinghetti praised the book as "a real hotrod." He also was executive director of Pipeline Theater, an experimental theater under the artistic direction of Living Theater member Scott Kelman, from 1985 to 1989. In addition to poems in various underground poetry magazines nationwide, he recently published scholarly articles in Rhetorica and Argumentation and Advocacy on poststructural norms and identity ethics. Having accepted an Assistant Professorship at Babson College in Wellesley, Massachusetts, he intends to pursue teaching, research, and professional work in rhetorical, performance, and religious studies.