

### **“I don’t like the Germans” – Even Herzog Started in Bavaria**

When Werner Herzog was interviewed by Jonathan Demme in the TimesCenter in New York on June 10, 2008, he took every opportunity to express antipathy toward Germany and sympathy for Bavaria, the region of Germany in which he grew up.<sup>1</sup> This chapter investigates the reasons behind Herzog’s bifurcated relationship to his homeland—to his *Heimat*—and for his eventual emigration to California. It also analyzes the special meaning Herzog’s Bavarian heritage holds for his work.

Bavaria has a particular significance within the Federal Republic of Germany. In terms of square area it is Germany’s largest region, and it is the most powerful economically. However, it is also the most politically and religiously conservative of the German states (*Bundesländer*). Prior to the establishment of the German Empire under Otto von Bismarck, the Kingdom of Bavaria long maneuvered between Prussia and Austria, central Europe’s two major powers, with the goal of protecting its autonomy as much as it could.<sup>2</sup> Their desire for sovereignty has continued to this day and expresses itself in the often-heard slogan, “we are who we are” (*wir sind wir*, or *mir san mir* when said in the Bavarian dialect). On the political level the typical Bavarian consciousness expresses itself in the fact that the regional political party, the Christian Social Union (CSU), which was founded in Würzburg after World War II, has resisted subordination to the larger national party, the Christian Democratic Union (CDU). Even today the CSU operates as a sister party to the CDU, which allows it to act as a spearhead against both national and European federalisms.<sup>3</sup> Two businesses whose calling cards directly refer to their Bavarian origins are the soccer team FC Bayern-Munich (FC Bayern München), founded in 1900, and the car and motorcycle manufacturer BMW (Bavarian Motor Works, or Bayerische Motoren Werke AG), which was first formed under the name Rapp Motorworks in 1913. Both organizations claim to embody the top of their class. Within Germany Bavaria is infamously proud of having the country’s ostensibly—and perhaps genuinely—most challenging secondary school exam (*Abitur*). For these reasons, it was hardly surprising when Edmund Stoiber, Bavaria’s Minister-President from 1993–2007, uttered the following sentence in the course of the 2005 federal elections: “If everywhere else things were as they are in Bavaria, we would have no problems at all. It’s only that, ladies and gentlemen, we have large parts of the population who unfortunately aren’t as wise as we.”<sup>4</sup> This sort of unflinching arrogance has likely been an obstacle to having a Bavarian Minister-President elected to the office of Chancellor.<sup>5</sup>

The task the CSU assigned itself from the very beginning, and which it still today attempts to discharge, is the building of a democratic peoples' party that the political right can claim, one not perceived as standing for extreme positions and—more important—for extreme actions. Munich, Bavaria's capital, was after all the site of Hitler's *Putsch* in November 1923 when the Nazi Party (the NSDAP) made their first brutal stab at usurping power. Ernst Röhm, who was born in Munich in 1887, played a prominent role in the attempt. As a veteran officer of World War I, Röhm led the Nazi thugs, Hitler's "Storm Division" (the *Sturmabteilung* or SA), until he was murdered in 1934. Munich is also home to the building that served from 1930 to 1945 as the NSDAP headquarters, otherwise known as the "Brown House," in which Adolf Wagner, the party's infamous regional director resided. Wagner's repressive measures clearly surpassed the "usual" ones. The counterpart of this brutish and inane twentieth-century tradition was the intrepid and uninhibited Anarchist movement that shared many members with Munich's Soviet Council (*Räterepublik*), and which established itself in April and May 1919, only four short years prior to the *Putsch*. Most of that group's participants met with a grim demise. And of course the Scholl siblings—Hans and Sophie—along with their fellow resisters from Munich's renowned Ludwig Maximilian University have not been forgotten long after the Nazi era. Their group, "The White Rose," refused to be silent, and they paid for their refusal with their lives.

Years after World War II, in June 1963, the "Schwabing Riots" broke out in Munich. In the tradition of Schwabing—the city's bohemian district—the riots served as a prelude to Europe's subsequent youth rebellion. Peter Fleischmann's documentary *Autumn of the Dead-beats (Herbst der Gammeler, 1967)* offers a striking portrait of the "asocial" element that converged in Schwabing over the course of that decade. Rioters clashed not only with the police but with the city's "normal" citizens as well. It is no wonder that large numbers of people gathered in Munich at the time; the fresh cultural winds of the Federal Republic were rushing in, as was typified by the numerous filmmakers who found themselves there.<sup>6</sup> Among them was Herzog, who was born in Munich and has repeatedly emphasized that the city has changed for the worse over time. Herzog declares: "Munich is a chic and empty city. It is empty of meaning" (2008: 64). He links the city's transformation to a distortion of its original Bavarian character. In conversation with Laurens Straub, Herzog observes: "As you describe [the Bavarian character], it no longer exists. Its traces have been washed away. Munich, for example, the Bavarian capitol, is more or less predominantly occupied by Prussians, the enemies, so to speak, of Bavarianness."<sup>7</sup> What has been washed away is the sometimes absurd give and take between the extremisms of tradition and individualism. This is surely what Herzog is referring to when he speaks of the Bavarian soul. According to him, both of the Munich personalities, the comedian and film-producer

Karl Valentin as well as the writer, director and painter Herbert Achternbusch, gained—or were granted—a deep insight into that soul. In the latter case, the author’s insight is apparent in the template he provided for Herzog’s film *Heart of Glass* (1976).<sup>8</sup>

Herzog’s early twelve-minute short film *Precautions Against Fanatics* (1969) clearly speaks to the Bavarian nature. According to Herzog the film deals with “people who are under a great deal of pressure. The pressure comes, first of all, from the fact that they are prominent people and see themselves that way, and second, that they have been put under the external pressure of a foolish task. Then, all at once, something pours out of them ... ! Like physicists who experiment with materials when they are trying to learn about an alloy inside and out—how it responds to extreme heat, extreme pressure, extreme radiation and the like” (Herzog 1976: 125—126).<sup>9</sup> Herzog’s film portrays various men protecting racehorses from a vaguely defined group of “fanatics.” The horses’ guardians make silly speeches in the company of animals and they make themselves look ridiculous. An old and apparently confused man, who speaks in the Bavarian dialect, tries repeatedly to disrupt the horse-keepers’ work and drive them from the racing field. The question soon arises: who is really the fanatic and who is helpless; is it the horses or their ostensible protectors? This *inversion*, if one may formulate things this way, refers not only to a meteorological phenomenon often found in Bavaria, but also describes a rhetorical figure, one by which principles of uncertainty and reversal come into play. It is in some respects particular to Bavarian culture, where social pressure and personal freedom appear as extreme poles. Herzog returns to this trope in almost all of his films—often relying on the presence of animals, which makes us take note of animalistic characteristics in people—such that one may be tempted to refer to a “Herzogian inversion.” Since the start of his career Herzog was fiercely attacked in the public sphere, and inversion arose as a stylistic means of defense in his films. It subsequently came to be employed as a strategy for defending himself in interviews. In a workshop conducted in 1979 by the film critic Roger Ebert in Chicago, Herzog recounted: “In Germany, in my *own* country, people have tried to label me personally as an eccentric, as some sort of strange freak that does not fit into any of their patterns” (Walsh 1979: 9). But Herzog rejects such reproaches; precisely because they come from the majority, they are wrong. History has proven that mass tastes are the material of eccentricity. Along precisely these lines one can point to an interview six years earlier in which Herzog said:

I believe it is the rest of them who are the outsiders. The real eccentric of our time is Peter Alexander. When they look back from the year 2010, he will seem completely laughable, eccentric and unhinged, just as it looks to us today in the case of Wilhelm II, who at that time seemed to stand at the center of things. Now he seems ridiculous and wildly eccentric, whereas an apparent outsider, like the Swiss author Robert Walser, who lived at the edge of

the world and sat for thirty-five years in a madhouse, formulated things in his time that remain valid for us today (Borski 1973: 6).<sup>10</sup>

In the mid-1970s it was still an act of anarchic inversion to call Peter Alexander, the beloved singer, actor, and entertainer, who so many mothers once longed to have for their son-in-law, an eccentric.<sup>11</sup> Today, however, Alexander's pop-hit films from the 1960s including *And Get This One to Bed by Eight* (... *und sowas muss um acht ins Bett*, Werner Jacobs, 1965) are indeed happily consumed as "trash cinema." Those who grab the limelight of the Zeitgeist will be silly in retrospect, but those who create something unique in opposition to fashionable trends, will survive over the long haul, even if they are only taken seriously after their deaths. Along these lines the voice of courage must have spoken to Herzog over the course of those years when his films were, by and large, harshly criticized. He made efforts to sensitize the public to its own shortsightedness by refashioning the concept of eccentricity, which is commonly used to refer to people who move *beyond the norms*. Herzog applied it instead to those people who find themselves going beyond that which is *meaningful*. An eccentric is, to Herzog, not someone who has a boat hauled over a mountain in the jungle for the purposes of a film with the aim of accomplishing something lasting, but is instead someone who looks nice on television and wiles away the viewers' time with harmless diversions.<sup>12</sup> One is not automatically an eccentric because he or she works with freaks and dwarfs. Herzog employs characters of this sort so viewers of his films can actively achieve a degree of inversion; so they can reflect on or see themselves in Kinski, in Bruno S., or in one of the dwarfs of *Even Dwarfs Started Small* (1970). Jay McRoy and Guy Crucianelli approach the question from this perspective where they analyze Tod Browning's *Freaks* (1932), a film that Herzog lauds (Cronin 2002: 60, 136), alongside *Gummo* (1997), directed by Harmony Korine (in whose film *Julien Donkey-Boy* [1999] Herzog played a leading role). McRoy and Crucianelli describe matters thus:

To paraphrase David J. Skal and Elias Savada, when seen in the right light and from the proper angle, virtually anyone can be made to appear extraordinary, abject, or "freakish." Consequently, Tod Browning's *Freaks* and Harmony Korine's *Gummo* require audiences to recognize the inequities intrinsic in the very practice of film spectatorship. At the very least, they necessitate a re-examination of the extent to which film viewers, like the filmmakers whose visions they consume, project their own (pre)conceptions of "normalcy" and "freakishness" upon the projected images that have come to define the very shape and politics of cinema (2009: 271).

Bavaria has a history of so-called eccentrics, who passionately pursued that which they took to be *meaningful*. As Herzog might express it: they pursued their interests *ecstatically*. Where he identifies himself as Bavarian, he is inscribing himself into a lineage that includes figures such as King Ludwig II, the so-called "Moon King," who—most likely owing to his homosexuality—never married. Ludwig II also let

the business of governing be neglected, gave himself over to alcohol, and was ultimately declared mad. He either drowned himself or was drowned by others in Lake Starnberg under circumstances that remain mysterious to this day. As a newly crowned King in 1864 his first act of office was naming Richard Wagner, who was deeply in debt and whom Ludwig considered a genius, his personal State-composer.<sup>13</sup> He hoped his regency would be defined by its great artistic accomplishments, rather than by the wars in which he more or less involuntarily participated in 1866 and in 1870–71. Herzog overtly constructs connections with King Ludwig and his over-powering, kitschy creations, which even today are among Germany's biggest tourist attractions.<sup>14</sup> Herzog asserts: "The most imaginative Bavarian of all was King Ludwig II. He was totally mad and built all those castles that are so full of this quintessentially Bavarian dreaminess and exuberance. I always felt that he would have been the only one who could have done a film like *Fitzcarraldo*, apart from me" (Cronin 2002: 23).<sup>15</sup>

Yet another facet of Bavarian culture that resonates with the style of Ludwig II is the Catholic Baroque, a tradition with which Herzog associates himself. It tends toward the atavistic, rhapsodic, and fairytale-esque and can be found in the architecture—especially the religious constructions—of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which often employ onion-shaped spires. The grandest realization of the style is Neuschwanstein, Ludwig's unfinished dream-castle. When it comes to Catholicism, Bavaria is known as the most "fundamentalist" German State.<sup>16</sup> For example: in contrast with Germany's other states, a crucifix hangs in most every Bavarian schoolroom. A judgment of the Federal constitutional court from May 16, 1995 (generally referred to as "the crucifix-decision") received popular nationwide support for repealing the corresponding Bavarian school regulation. In practice the court's judgment changed little. Crosses hang in Bavarian classrooms as they had before, and they are removed only after specific complaints and in individual incidents. In this case, one suspects that the façade of religious tradition conceals another example of the typically Bavarian attempt to hold firm to its perceived autonomy. However, in the above quotation about Ludwig Herzog is referring to the distinctive cultural imprint left by the powerful convergence of Germanic and Celtic heroism that forms a basis for Roman Catholic Christianity. In the equally Catholic Rheinland region, the pagan inheritance emerges when winter is driven out during Carnival (*Mardi Gras*), which functions as the annual release of elemental forces. In Bavaria the burden is borne by the world-famous Oktoberfest, which was held for the first time in 1810 at the Theresienwiese in order to drink the beer that was brewed in March and could no longer to be preserved. Today Munich's festival stands alongside Cologne's Carnival as the uncontested high point of rollicking, or even "ecstatic," drunken German festivals. German beer culture, which was decisively shaped in Catholic cloisters during the late middle ages, is undoubtedly at its most

colorful and meaningful in Bavaria, which is home to five of Germany's six oldest operational breweries. Moreover, along with the Oktoberfest, Bavaria has a tradition of beer gardens, which likewise lies close to Herzog's heart. The director's filmic self-portrait *Portrait Werner Herzog* (1986) begins at the Oktoberfest, and a very archaic scene of Bavarian beer culture is found in *Heart of Glass*: Two men sit in a tavern across the table from one another, each "armed" with a beer mug (Figure 10.1). One smashes his mug on the head of the other, who in turn empties his beer over his companion's head. At one point in an interview with Paul Cronin, Herzog states: "Dammit, now you've got me thinking about warm Bavarian pretzels coming right out of the oven with some good butter and a thick beer. You just cannot live without things like that. This is what being Bavarian is really all about" (Cronin 2002: 24).

In this respect what is true for Herzog goes for Ludwig II as well. As Wolfgang Till notes: "[Ludwig] was Catholic, one could say: through and through, but not in the confessional sense; he was Catholic in a way that corresponds to the essence of Bavarian-Baroque piety" (2010: 63).<sup>17</sup> Rainer Werner Fassbinder, who came from the Swabian part of Bavaria, possessed a similarly extravagant imagination anchored in popular cultural traditions. Herzog observes: "You see this kind of baroque imagination in Fassbinder's films, the kind of unstoppable and ferocious creativity he had. Like his work, my films are not thin-blooded ideological constructs that we saw a lot of in German cinema in the 1970s. Too many German films of that era were thin gargling water instead of real thick stout" (Cronin 2002: 23). In *Reverse Angle: Rebellion of the Filmmakers* (Dominik Wessely, 2008) Herzog narrates how the nineteen-year-old Fassbinder came to his office to screen his short films and ask whether Herzog would act as his producer. Herzog says he told Fassbinder he would have to produce his own films; the two of them were so different that they would certainly end up in conflict with one another. Herzog later reflected: "Fassbinder and I had different political perspectives. But as person I always appreciated him" (Herzog 2008: 57). Both of them have in common that they are autodidacts (Herzog cut short his university studies in Munich, while Fassbinder, at around the same time, was being rejected from the newly established film academy in Berlin [the *dffb*]), and that they occupy positions at the edges of New German Cinema's spectrum.<sup>18</sup> In contrast with Herzog's contemplative and mystical cinema and his fascination with the opera, Fassbinder made films that were rooted in the contemporary political culture and in his so-called "Anti-Theater."<sup>19</sup> For his part, Herzog never wanted to be political; unlike Fassbinder he did not contribute to the omnibus film *Germany in Autumn* (1978), and by his own account he cannot stand the theater (Cronin 2002: 220-21). While Herzog avoids filming nude scenes, car trips, and telephone conversations as much as possible, Fassbinder, a fan of Hollywood and genre films, took a passionate interest in interpersonal relationships and in the banal details of everyday life.<sup>20</sup> One can

assume that his timely critical melodramas exerted an important influence on people like Hans W. Geissendörfer, one of Fassbinder's partners at Filmverlag der Autoren who became the creator, producer, and initially even a director of *Lindenstrasse*, the first German soap opera (which has aired continuously on public TV since 1985). By contrast, Herzog worked from the very beginning of his career on a particular fusion of fictional and documentary forms. In their combination of powerful symbolism and unmediated authenticity, his films exceed TV's diminutive frame. While Herzog places a lot of value on the choice of locations and seems pleased when his productions are obstructed by that natural world he transforms into "inner landscapes" on the editing table, the chain-smoking Fassbinder sought mostly tight interiors, which created a kind of hothouse atmosphere in which personal, "inner worlds" were staged.<sup>21</sup>

But both filmmakers share a sense of regional rootedness and a certain rural resolve that has enabled them to successfully pursue their completely personal visions of filmmaking in the face of both obstacles and critics' reservations. No other German filmmakers of that generation polarized the public sphere to the extent that these two did for years. While Herzog was chided for indulging in a neo-fascist Romanticism, mainly during the filming of *Fitzcarraldo*, 1982 (which was released the year Fassbinder died), Fassbinder's play *Garbage, the City, and Death* (1974) unleashed a scandal, in the course of which its writer-director was labeled a "left-fascist" and an anti-Semite (Baer 1982: 128). Since the beginning of their careers both filmmakers' productivity was hardly outmatched. In Fassbinder's case the unilateral overstrain contributed to an early death that posthumously gave him a legendary status akin to a number of 1970s rock stars. By contrast, Herzog succeeded in being the only New German filmmaker—unlike his colleague Wim Wenders—who, through emigrating and rediscovering himself at the age of fifty, successfully averted creative decline. Evidently, Fassbinder had also played with the idea of "getting out of Germany" and "shooting a film in America" (Binotto 2002: 74). Whether he would have been able to establish himself there, given his directing style and his history of authoritarian relationships with actors and collaborators, is yet another matter.

What mainly disturbs Herzog about theater productions and TV programs are the patterns of speech practiced there (see Rost 1986: 71, 126). In *I Am My Films—A Portrait of Werner Herzog* (Christian Weisenborn and Erwin Keusch, 1979), Herzog reproaches his interviewer Laurens Straub that his questions are, "too much like a talk show." In his own films, starting with *The Great Ecstasy of Woodcarver Steiner* (1973), Herzog voiced the narration himself (usually in the form of extradiegetic commentary), rather than leaving everything to professionals schooled in rhetoric. In all cases the question was one of authentic expression, not eclipsed by vanity or other charades. Communication—or

its impossibility—is generally a leitmotif in his films, and one should not underestimate the role in that interest played by the fact that the upper-Bavarian dialect is in fact Herzog’s mother tongue, and that German is in some respects the director’s first foreign language.<sup>22</sup> Although the Bavarian dialect, alongside that of Berlin, is among Germany’s most beloved (and among those most often heard in films), speakers of southern German tongues always run the risk that they won’t be taken seriously by their northern countrymen. Even for German audiences, one of the great charms of *My Best Fiend* (1999), Herzog’s narrative about his relationship with Klaus Kinski, lies in the contrast between the serious tone of Herzog’s voice and his southern inflection. One could go so far as to assert that a reason for his flirtation with a vague anti-intellectualism lies with tendencies on the part of German-speaking academics to hold against Herzog his linguistic rootedness in the more coarse and direct—arguably less abstract and ironic—Bavarian dialect. He did not learn Bavarian in Munich, but rather in Sachrang, in the Bavarian Alps bordering Austria, where he grew up in what could be described as the German jungle (especially when one takes into consideration how removed from civilization and surrounded by mountains and forests the village was in the 1940s and 1950s). The freedoms associated with the postwar period, which coincided with a dearth of reliable authority figures, clearly had something to do with Herzog’s extraordinary self-confidence.<sup>23</sup>

Sachrang is currently a pleasant place with a number of completely renovated or newly built farmhouses, a ski school, a well-maintained cross-country ski run, and a handful of taverns. Because the hillsides can hardly be described as dangerous, and because Sachrang does not lack for snow and sunshine in winter, the town has established itself as a holiday destination where one can engage in winter sports with one’s children. Herzog also partook; in the district known as “Berg” (*mountain* or, in this case, *alp*) he lived nearly adjacent to a ski jump that still exists today and upon which he must have first discovered his enthusiasm for “ski-flying,” the sport to which *The Great Ecstasy of Woodcarver Steiner* is devoted. But Herzog’s name is hardly known to Sachrang’s contemporary residents. As great an impression as the town seems to have had on his personality, is as little of an impression he left there. It seems that this widely traveled man has nowhere left fewer traces behind than there. The star in Sachrang is not Werner the ecstatic, but rather “Peter the Miller” (Der Müllner-Peter), born Peter Huber in 1766. Huber had an extraordinary education for a miller, which included knowledge of music and medicine upon which he seems to have come inexplicably. In the 1970s Carl Oskar Renner wrote a novel based on the sparse set of details that are known about this folkloric figure, and Bavarian Broadcasting (Bayerischer Rundfunk) adapted the novel at great expense as a three-part miniseries—from a teleplay by Oliver Storz and under the direction of Wolf Dietrich—entitled *Sachrang: A Chronicle*



*from the Mountains* (1978).<sup>24</sup> In Renner's fiction the unusual miller is grossly caricatured; his pride and his will to defy authorities are so pronounced that it is difficult not to think of the motivating forces behind Herzog's work. Herzog likes to stylize himself similarly as someone to whom knowledge and abilities come in secret ways, and as someone who is virtually fearless.<sup>25</sup> Moreover, because—with the exception of Fini Straubinger in *Land of Silence and Darkness* (1971) and Juliane Köpcke in *Wings of Hope* (1998)—few female figures are central to his films, one wonders whether Herzog would have been impressed by the story of Peter's strong and assertive wife, who was always in the shadow of her husband's unusualness, or "eccentricity." Maria Hell was a good deal younger than her husband; he married her at the proud age of 48, although he was repeatedly warned away from her. She led an inappropriate life for a farmer, which means, simply put, that because she had musical and artistic talents similar to those of her husband, she was, against the social conventions, unwilling to wither away. The bedroom furniture that she brought into the marriage (in accord with tradition), she is said to have painted herself. According to the oral lore she was a carpenter, but historians apparently strongly doubt this because at the family property—the *Ertlhof*—the requisite tools are not to be found. Without having given her husband a child Maria Hell drowned in 1824 in the high waters of the Prien River, and for this as well—according to the legend—she may have been responsible. Was it a despairing suicide owing to the impossibility of self-realization?

Herzog's declaration that he is a Bavarian thus leads back to an array of attributes connected with the region. There is: the claim of singularity, or, the will to a special status; the particularly pronounced tension between individualism and the extremes of authoritarianism and anarchy that became the basis for Herzog's system of inversion and for his eccentricity of the meaningful; and the overarching Catholic Baroque tendencies associated with dreamy, fairytale mysticisms and with rural environs (the coarse dialect and the mountainous woodlands of the upper Bavarian south where he grew up). From this ancestral pool Herzog culled the themes and images of his works. While it was optimal for the development of his character, it also seems to have prepared him to go his own way. This unique background also kept him from participating in the same existential struggle as others of his generation; it kept him from paying heed to the dominant *Zeitgeist* and kowtowing to a certain political correctness. For this reason, from the end of the 1960s through the beginning of the 1990s, Herzog was subjected to massive attacks from critics and intellectuals as well as from leftist activists, who only rarely demonstrated a nuanced understanding of his life and his films. Instead they argued against him on purely emotional or ideological levels, and selectively reproached him for his exploitation of defenseless persons, particularly the handicapped and the indigenous; they said that he "aestheticized" suffering,

and reviled him as a fascist.<sup>26</sup> “There’s so much hatred there against my films that you probably wouldn’t even believe it,” Herzog lamented during a trip to the United States in 1979 (Walsh 1979: 9). In that same year Herzog spoke openly about leaving Germany, but his claim was conditional: “I will not, don’t want to and can’t emigrate to Hollywood. I don’t want to and don’t intend to leave my culture—my country perhaps, yes” (“Wir sind nicht mehr der Jungfilm” 1979: 183). Approximately fifteen years later Herzog finally emigrated to California, first to San Francisco and then to Los Angeles, where he found greater recognition, established himself as a king of independent cinema, and worked with Hollywood luminaries including Christian Bale, Nicolas Cage, and Willem Dafoe. Has this been the unbelievable story of an integration one would never have thought possible, or is it the opposite: the logical endpoint of a predictable development? How did Herzog shift from being Bavarian to being Californian?

At the beginning of the 1960s, when Herzog came to the United States for the first time, he was a student of history and literature at the University of Pittsburgh. He came with a fellowship but returned it shortly after his arrival (Cronin 2002: 20). Later Herzog filmed *Stroszek* (1977)—in New York, in Plainfield, Wisconsin, and in Cherokee, North Carolina—so that he could “define his position on this country,” as he himself expressed it (Walsh 1979: 11). He also emphasizes the role played by the New York Film Festival, which opened its doors to him and to his first feature film *Signs of Life* (1968), and by Tom Luddy, program coordinator and later director of the Pacific Film Archive.<sup>27</sup> He made both of these claims in 1979 during the workshop organized for him in Chicago by Roger Ebert. His friendship with Ebert, the *Chicago Sun Times*’s film critic, who in 2005 was the first member of his profession to receive a star on Hollywood’s Walk of Fame, contributed decisively to his rising popularity in the land of boundless opportunity. While Herzog told Jonathan Demme in 2008 about his aversion to Germany, Demme read to him from an effusive letter of admiration Ebert had recently written (Ebert 2007). Herzog never had a spokesperson like that in his homeland. A few film critic, like for example Hans Günther Pflaum, have passionately defended Herzog’s work since the early 1970s, but they did not have a standing comparable to Ebert’s. The famous film critic and film historian Lotte Eisner praised his debut *Signs of Life* up until her death in 1983. She was a European film legend, but from her exile in the Parisian Cinemathèque Française, she had little influence on German public opinion. The recognition that Herzog enjoyed in the U.S. film scene following *Aguirre, the Wrath of God* (1972) is an indirect display in the short film *Werner Herzog Eats His Shoe* (Les Blank, 1980), made in Berkeley, California. More than anything, that film documents Herzog’s self-confidence; it is a downright ridiculous “action-advertisement” for the work of Errol Morris, who was at the time a budding but wholly marginal

American filmmaker. Herzog had promised Morris, should he finish his first film, *Gates of Heaven*, which he ultimately did complete in 1978, that he would eat his shoe. This exploit should not be dismissed all too quickly as a meaningless private joke. People like Morris (or even Michael Moore), who have an understanding of the staged, documentary narration of the so-called “new documentary film,” work along exactly the same front as Herzog himself.<sup>28</sup> This distinguishes the United States from Germany, where a more classical documentary methodology, one that distances itself from fictional film, is encouraged.

“Front” is yet another significant keyword, especially if one thinks of the term frontier and broadens it to include the term “frontier spirit.” It stems from a quality of U.S. culture, emerging from the very recent settlement of the country by Europeans under adventurous conditions—a journey into the unknown with which Herzog can well identify. And while the director bemoans the “culture of complaint” in Germany (Herzog 2008: 64), in California, his adopted homeland, Herzog still encounters what he describes as a “permanent optimism” (Sponsel and Sebenig 2006: 52). In the 1990s another well-known southern German with the “frontier spirit” moved, like Herzog, into the Los Angeles area. The former professional soccer player Jürgen Klinsmann, who was born in 1964 in the Swabian city of Göppingen, has lived in Huntington Beach with his Californian wife since 1998. From 2004 to 2006 Klinsmann was coach of the German national team, which he revolutionized. He also brought change to the German Soccer Association, which is among the biggest and richest individual sports organizations. Klinsmann imitated the commitment of American sports coaches and led the 2006 German national team to a surprising third place finish in the world championship (the FIFA World Cup), which was held in their own country. After that, in July 2008, he was taken on as coach by the German soccer champions FC Bayern Munich in order to bring in fresh ideas and new formations. The arrangement fell apart owing to the team manager’s impatience, and Klinsmann was let go only ten months after being hired. Despite the dissimilarities between Herzog and Klinsmann, they share a common “pioneering” spirit—a spirit of discovery—alongside an enthusiasm for positive thinking (on a rational basis) and an unbelievable conviction in their own creative powers. California, and especially Los Angeles, quite obviously represents an environment well suited to such qualities.

When making his first feature length film, *Signs of Life*, Herzog, at age twenty-five had set forth for Greece, which had yet to be overrun by tourists. Since then he has grazed every continent for unused images, and has even sought out footage from outer space and from the depths of the ocean (as in *The Wild Blue Yonder* [2005]).<sup>29</sup> He shares a constant longing to be on the road, crossing boundaries and pushing limits, akin to that of the famous South Tyrolian Alpinist Reinhold Messner, about whom he

made the cinematic portrait *The Dark Glow of the Mountains* (1984). At that time the two planned a collaborative film project in the Himalayas, which never came about.<sup>30</sup> Both Messner and Herzog grew up in little locales surrounded by mountains. One recalls that Herzog comes from the district known as *Berg*, and in fact the mountains have long served as the German frontier (as the boundary to the south) and the *Bergfilm*, or “mountain-film,” can even be seen as the German western.<sup>31</sup> This parallel also expresses itself in the work of individual directors. The last film and consequently the legacy of the Austrian-born Fred Zinnemann, the Jewish émigré who today is best known for the western *High Noon* (1952), is the mountain film *Five Days One Summer* (1982). The film picks up motifs that can already be found in films from *The White Hell of Piz Palü* (Arnold Fanck and Georg Wilhelm Pabst, 1929) through to *Föhn* (Rolf Hansen, 1950). In this case, frontier spirit denotes a mixture of courage and the capacity to coolly calculate dangers, qualities that—dissociated from their national and historical associations—Herzog ascribes not only to himself and to Messner, but also to two other émigrés, the protagonists of *Little Dieter Needs to Fly* (1998) and *Wings of Hope*, Dieter Dengler and Juliane Köpcke.<sup>32</sup> Köpcke was the sole survivor of the crash of a plane on which Herzog was originally supposed to be flying. Afterward, she walked for days through the Peruvian jungle until she was finally discovered in a state of complete exhaustion. About her, Herzog says: “What I like very much about Juliane is that she did everything right in order to survive her ordeal” (Cronin 2002: 268). He adds, “the only reason she survived [...] was because of her ability to act methodically through those absolutely dire circumstances” (270). With Dieter Dengler Herzog’s veneration goes even further. As Ian Buruma notes: “Dieter is himself a marvelous narrator, whose German-inflected voice blends interestingly with Herzog’s to the point of becoming almost indistinguishable. This is more than a simple case of the director’s identification with his subject; he almost becomes Dieter” (Buruma 2007: 26).

Similar to Herzog, Dieter grew up during World War II in the Black Forest (*Schwarzwald*), a rural and mountainous region in southern Germany. He left Germany for the United States shortly after the war with the stated goal of becoming a pilot and was, during the Vietnam War, shot down on his first mission after only forty minutes. Dengler became an involuntary hero because he was the lone American POW to escape imprisonment in the jungle. Herzog marveled at this deed, which Dengler seems to have achieved primarily for reasons of his unflappably positive attitude, so much so that he chose him as a role model. Not for nothing Herzog tells how during the filming of *Rescue Dawn* (2006), the feature film remake of his documentary about Dengler, when he did not know what to do, he would ask himself, “what would Dieter do?”<sup>33</sup>

Without a doubt it plays a significant part in Herzog's decision to emigrate that his films have met with a more positive reception in the United States and especially in California.<sup>34</sup> He has also found an enormous creative wellspring there, which he seemed not to find in Germany. Nonetheless, at first glance there is a tremendous contrast between his nostalgia for Bavaria and his life in California. In California Herzog probably finds it difficult to undertake his inspirational constitutionals. But just as he consistently emphasizes an athletic approach to filmmaking, the activity of a director is primarily to create "substitutes for dreams."<sup>35</sup> In Herzog's case the claim is entirely literal: he maintains that he suffers from not being able to dream (Cronin 2002: 61). Where else, then, would he be better off than in the city that is home to Hollywood, the so-called "dream-factory"? Even if Herzog still remains deeply bound to his Bavarian homeland, it clearly offers him too little room for his visions. In exchanging Bavaria and California, Herzog traded what was beloved but unbearably parochial for a culture that was ugly on its surface yet came equipped with an enormous imagination.<sup>36</sup> According to Herzog a significant part of the human dreams and cultural trends from the last fifty years have come from Los Angeles, which also include, "idiotic behavior like hippies and pot smoking ... Or skateboards and aerobics" (Herzog 2008: 87). But the prerequisite for Herzog's exchange of homelands was a process, during which concrete elements that were associated with his ancestry had to be brought to an abstract level—a level of dreams—in order that they might be resurrected elsewhere. This transformation is documented through *Heart of Glass*, Herzog's very personal "Heimat" film based on Achternbusch's screenplay. That Herzog takes distance from the figures of his childhood in that film is evinced in the fact that he hypnotized all the actors, with the exception of Josef Bierbichler, who plays the seer (and who is, for that reason, an alter-ego of the director). Consequently, his actors communicate with him and with us as if through a veil of fog. We interact similarly with the Bavarian landscape, which we first encounter in a time-lapse sequence. Clouds cover the landscape and then are supplemented with slightly visually distorted images from Alaska, Yellowstone National Park, Monument Valley, and Niagara Falls.<sup>37</sup> Herzog explains, "This is Bavaria, but so stylized and crafted that you can not recognize it as that. Basically it is the landscape of a western."<sup>38</sup> Through his presence-manipulating hypnosis and through the appearance of distorting optical tricks, the specifically local characteristics of otherwise familiar landscapes become bodiless, internalized images that can be reconstructed as various locations of the earth. Brad Prager notes: "While the film may be construed as a comment about German *Heimat*, the director's expressed intention is to universalize his landscapes of the mind" (2007: 98). It seems imperative to expand this claim to include his "characters of the mind." Herzog is not an explorer in the sense that he would be interested in continually accumulating new impressions from a manifold of lives or simply in collecting

landscapes. He is instead interested in repeatedly identifying certain patterns, ones sought and found in a variety of forms and in different places.

The hypnosis in *Heart of Glass* is not primarily directed at the viewer, as it is in Lars von Trier's hypnotic *Europa* trilogy.<sup>39</sup> Instead it assumes, next to the narrative formalization—its “somnambulist journey into the sunset” (*schlafwandlerische[n] Hineingehen[s] in den Untergang* [Hortmeyer 1976: 48])—the function of a reflection on memory. As a sideline the film deals with the forgotten formula for the manufacture of ruby glass. Not coincidentally Klaus Wyborny's visual effects are similar to those that Chris Marker manufactured with an analog image-synthesizer for his *Sans Soleil* (1983), an essay film that “contemplates the nature of memory, history, and representation” (Lupton 2005: 149).<sup>40</sup> In von Trier's *Europa* (1991) the hypnotist-narrator directly addresses the viewer, although this is more of a commentary on the hypnotic qualities generally attributed to the film than a serious attempt to hypnotize its viewers. Herzog had actually once played with the idea of hypnotizing the public before the beginning of screenings, but he refrained (Cronin 2002: 130). “Hypnotic” films like *Heart of Glass* tend not only to lull the concentration of the viewer, but demand, for precisely that reason—in contrast, for example, with action films—the highest degree of concentration, and they make great demands on the conscious mind. Eric Rentschler does not account for this when he alleges that Herzog has, in the case of *Heart of Glass*, taken on exclusively the negative side of those Weimar films that demonstrate a predilection for hypnosis (such as *Dr. Mabuse the Gambler* [Fritz Lang, 1922]) (Rentschler 1986: 160). The parallels between Herzog and von Trier (who is quoted on the German DVD packaging of *Heart of Glass* as saying, “a fantastic film”) are not exhausted by their mutual fascination with hypnosis. The sacrifice that Emily Watson's character, Bess McNeill, undertakes on behalf of her husband in von Trier's *Breaking the Waves* (1996), for example, is somewhat similar in its spiritual and downright ecstatic qualities to that which Herzog had to undergo when he walked on foot from Munich to Paris in winter of 1974 in the hope of saving Lotte Eisner's life. The coastal Scottish highland, which plays a supporting role in von Trier's film, lies both geographically and conceptually close to the Skellig Rocks, which are near Ireland and are where the closing sequence of *Heart of Glass* was filmed. Herzog describes filming the pivotal point of the scene, where, “there was one man, who stands on the peak of a cliff and stares at the ocean, into the unknown.” He adds, “This small figure, seen from the distance is a self-portrait” (Paganelli 2008: 122). In this portrait, one can imagine the young Herzog, living in his Bavarian village where he had not yet heard of technical achievements like the telephone or the cinema (Cronin 2002: 4). He explains: “At the very end [...] some people venture out in a boat, in a very fragile boat, onto the open ocean, because they want to explore, they want to see, where the world ends. Does it end in an

abyss or not? And there are a few who have the courage to set out. [...] I recognize myself in some way in the film, just like that, as though I had been there as an actor too.”<sup>41</sup> One can interpret this simultaneously heroic and tragically staged sequence and view it as an adumbration of Herzog’s own emigration to the new world; it anticipates his decampment.

Initially no one in the United States applauded Herzog’s film, but in France they did. “Herzog consciously chose Paris as the world showcase for his newest film. He felt more comfortable in France because he was sooner understood there than in the Federal Republic” (Schütte 1976). As a matter of fact the *Frankfurter Rundschau* reported on April 12, 1977 that the film had “in seven Parisian cinemas in the first two weeks more than 40,000 viewers—more than any other German film in past years”. The critics and the public in Germany presented themselves as at best irritated, and many were positively indignant: “*Heart of Glass* is a feeble amalgam of Achternbusch’s raw, anarchic imagination and Herzog’s pseudo-mystical, undulating visual falderal. Underscored by the cosmic music of the group Popol Vuh, the film attempts to send the viewer on a fog-filled journey” (Limmer 1976: 143).

The fog-filled journey that resulted from Achternbusch’s “raw, anarchic imagination” together with Herzog’s “visual falderal” may on one level be his completely personal rhapsodizing, but it is also connected to his baroque and spiritual “folklore.” Herzog emphasized this years later, noting that *Heart of Glass* deals with “the story of my childhood” and “the mysterious world outside” upon which the seer Hias, an actual figure from the pages of Bavarian history, tries to impose some order, albeit by way of mystical prophecies (Paganelli 2008: 98). Prager notes that, “This type of mystical character would not likely have found a place among the Heimat films of the 1950s” (2007: 96). Even if Herzog does not condemn the Heimat film genre in principle, his interest lies more with mountain films from the prewar period than with Heimat films of the postwar period.<sup>42</sup> Both are typically German and are rooted in similar—sometimes even the very same—places. However, while Heimat films deal with the reconstruction of a nation in a picturesque landscape, mountain films, originating in the 1920s, deal with individual heroism in a transcendent landscape. One film from the period during World War II particularly impressed Herzog: *Wally of the Vultures* (*Die Geierwally*; Hans Steinhoff, 1940).<sup>43</sup> The heroine of the title is a young woman, Wally, whose ostensibly masculine talents, as well as her stubbornness and her courage, would have impressed the wife of Peter the Miller from Sachrang. When watching the power struggle between Heidemarie Hatheyer and Eduard Köck, who plays Wally’s father in the film, one would almost describe *Wally of the Vultures* as “ecstatic,” and it is not surprising that Herzog likes the film. Also dominant, in contrast to those Heimat films of the 1950s, is the depiction of the harsh and hardscrabble life in the country, which is far more typical of mountain films. Contributing

to this spiritual sense—to the film’s nature-mysticism—is a sequence that presumes the existence of mountain sprits and begins with a depiction of clouds that the time-lapse sequence in *Heart of Glass* may have used as a model. The interest in mysticism is likely what separates Herzog from most other German filmmakers of his generation, who, at more or less the same time, were producing their “anti-Heimat films” like *Hunting Scenes from Bavaria* (Peter Fleischmann, 1969), *Mathias Kneissl* (Reinhard Hauff, 1970) and *The Sudden Wealth of the Poor People of Kombach* (Volker Schlöndorff, 1971).

The aforementioned essay by Eric Rentschler appeared in the mid-1980s and was part of a wave that gained steam during the course of the early reception of *Fitzcarraldo*. The reproach of fascism was being leveled at Herzog with increasing frequency. Rentschler seems almost personally confronted by Herzog’s rejection of academic discourse and allows himself a somewhat strong reaction, the tenor of which is that Herzog instrumentalizes people and landscapes for the sake of his own “steely romanticism” (Rentschler 1986: 178). Whoever fails to perceive this, it seems, must be “overcome by Herzog’s ministrations” (167). Here Rentschler does not shy away from comparing Herzog’s team meetings, about which he only has second-hand knowledge, with Hitler’s table talks (*Tischgespräche*), speaking of a “*Gleichschaltung* on the heterogeneity of existence,” and bringing Goebbels’ name into it, because the latter said: “we are all more or less romantics of a new German mood” (175). As Rüdiger Safranski correctly observes in his book about Romanticism (at least indirectly) it is an analytic error to assert that certain attitudes can no longer to be tolerated in the fields of creative activity and thought, because those attitudes of art production and speculative philosophy had reached into the practical policies of National Socialism and brought with them devastation. Romanticism and mysticism have a tradition that extends far beyond the Nazi body of thought and is not automatically discredited by them. It also speaks against Rentschler’s diagnosis that he adopts elements of Nina Gladitz’s argument. For a time she tried to promote herself on Herzog’s coattails with her documentary *Land of Bitterness and Pride* (1982) in which she draws parallels between Herzog’s use of Indian actors and assistants in *Fitzcarraldo* and Leni Riefenstahl’s deployment of interned Sinti and Roma in *Tiefland* (1944).<sup>44</sup> Gladitz’s documentary is rife with one-dimensional and transparently black and white depictions, to which she adds not a shred of reflection on her own position. Here, one has to wonder who has really adopted Nazi rhetoric.

To return to the starting point of my reflections: the difficult relationship between Herzog and his homeland is, on the one hand, indebted to an identification with the almost separatist role his Bavarian ancestral region traditionally plays in German history, and on the other hand, to the opposition between the protective-conservative and the anarchic elements that are ostensibly inherent in the



Bavarian nature. The basis for Herzog's capacity to adapt well to an environment like California, and especially to Hollywood, which is at first glance diametrically opposed to his lifestyle, may be rooted in his enthusiasm for both the pagan characteristics of Bavarian folk and Baroque culture and in the myths of the mountain films (and, consequently, in his frontier spirit). Herzog's former double-role, which earned him so much animosity in the Federal Republic of Germany, is now divided between two countries: In Germany, he still plays the part of the misunderstood, sensitive poet; while in the United States he presents himself as an ultra-tough Germanic lone wolf. For both positions he draws from the cultural capital of his contradictory Bavarian homeland, and both are driving forces in his films—films that he not incorrectly labels Bavarian.<sup>45</sup>

## Notes

1 For this interview see the DVD Extra *Jonathan Demme Interviews Werner Herzog* included with the DVD *Encounters at the End of the World* (Discovery Communications, 2007).

2 On this see Prinz (1997: 381–387).

3 Apart from the governing period of Wilhelm Hoegner, member of the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD) from 1954–57, the CSU has always held the office of Minister President. From 1962 until 2008 the government oversaw Bavaria with an absolute majority.

4 See “Das war ja Stoiber im Bierzelt in Bayern” (2005). In the election Stoiber was particularly criticizing the population of the five new German states, i.e. the former German Democratic Republic.

5 Franz Josef Strauss, Stoiber's political mentor, who was prime minister from 1978 to 1988 in Bavaria, also failed to win the national election. In an interview in May 1988 Herzog calls Strauss, “the only ‘Baroque’ politician, in a comprehensive and positive sense, in Germany today” (Quaresima 1988: 88).

6 With *Die Zweite Heimat* (1992) Edgar Reitz made a filmic memorial to the general sense of elation in Schwabing of the 1960s. In 1971 the Filmverlag der Autoren, a union of young directors, was founded in Munich. According to the homepage of the distributing arm of the organization, Herzog worked closely with them from *Aguirre* on (“Der Filmverlag”). Herzog himself describes their relationship as less close: “I was invited to be a part of the organization, but I said no. [...] Later on they did take over some of my early films and distributed them” (Cronin 2002: 35). On the rise and fall of this

unusual authorial collective, see the documentary film *Reverse Angle: Rebellion of the Filmmakers* (Dominik Wessely, 2008).

7 See the commentary on the German language DVD of *Heart of Glass* (Kinowelt Home Entertainment Inc. 2004, at 52:16).

8 See the commentary on the German language DVD of *Heart of Glass* (at 38:45). Beyond Achternbusch and Valentin one could also cite a number of other figures such as the authors Ludwig Thoma (1867–1921) and Oskar Maria Graf (1894–1967); the humorists Weiß Ferdl (1883–1949) and Gerhard Polt, who was, like Herzog, born in Munich in 1942; the musicians Hans, Christoph, and Michael Well, who founded the Biermösl Blosn, their band for “new folk music” in 1976, or Hans Söllner (born 1955), who is known above all for his “Bavarian Reggae” and for speaking out in favor of the legalization of marijuana.

9 Herzog makes a similar comment, comparing his work to that of a physicist, in Cronin (2002: 19).

10 Almost 30 years later in conversation with Paul Cronin, Herzog repeated the statement he made back then: “When you look at my films you see there is absolutely nothing eccentric about them. [...] In comparison to me, all the rest are eccentric” (Cronin 2002: 68).

11 Ten years later it remained that way. Herzog told an audience: “This Peter Alexander, with his perky countenance, denies the existence of the first and second world wars. This man stands for a world in which the historical disasters of this century are declared null and void. [...] All my wrath and all my conceptions of what constitutes an enemy, I direct toward Peter Alexander (*laughter*)” (Rost 1986: 61–62).

12 According to his friend Gerhard Bronner, the Vienna composer and cabaretist, Alexander sold himself short his whole life, and sacrificed a potentially challenging career for fantastic sums of money, which overwhelmed him. Since 1996 he had been completely withdrawn and, like the late Marlene Dietrich, would not even let himself be photographed. Friends spoke of him as though he were dead. See *The Man Who Was Peter Alexander* (Birgit Kienzle, 2006). Alexander actually died on February 12, 2011.

13 Till notes, “[Ludwig II] spoke and thought in Wagnerian phrases and thus became the pioneer of a fashion that practically the entire educated class of Europe had embraced at the turn of the century” (2010: 13). In 1987 Herzog staged Wagner’s opera *Lohengrin* in Bayreuth for the first time. In Herzog’s films Wagner (his *Parsifal*) appears as early as 1977, in *La Soufrière*.

14 “Richard Wagner and the buildings, in either order, are the two great cornerstones of Ludwig’s life. Next to those, everything else—political life, the Bavarian people, his family life—are mere episodes” (Till 2010: 13).

15 In a different interview Herzog points to *Fitzcarraldo* as, for this reason, the one among his films in which the presence of Bavaria comes out most strongly (Quaresima 1988: 87).

16 Pope Benedict XVI, alias Joseph Ratzinger (born in 1927) comes from upper Bavaria, the rural region in the south in which Werner Herzog grew up.

17 On Herzog’s Catholicism, see his comment to Cronin: “I had a dramatic religious phase at the age of fourteen and converted to Catholicism. Even though I am not a member of the Catholic church any longer, to this day there seems to be something of a distant religious echo in some of my works” (2002: 10).

18 For this reason Herzog speaks of the “New Bavarian Film” (Quaresima 1988: 87).

19 Fassbinder recruited some of his closest film collaborators from his “Anti-Theater,” which he founded in 1968.

20 On the commentary to the German DVD of *Scream of Stone* (Kinowelt Home Entertainment Inc, 2005, at 55:16) Herzog remarks on the first and only nude scene of his career. Herzog here means nude scenes in the sense of classic love scenes. Sonja Skiba as Ludmilla appears naked in *Heart of Glass*, and many actresses and extras appear partly nude in his “colonial” films such as *Cobra Verde* (1987).

21 On “inner worlds,” see Elsaesser (1996: 22). Elsaesser adds: “[It] is not the Germany of Rhine castles [...] and Bavarian mountains (*Heart of Glass*), of romantic Caspar David Friedrich Landscapes (*Kaspar Hauser*) or the Black Forest (*Woyzeck*) that we look for in Fassbinder. [...] Karsten Witte once rightly remarked that in Fassbinder ‘you find everything of Germany that is not the Lorelei and Neuschwanstein’ [...]” (1996: 22). Elsaesser is referring to Witte’s essay on Fassbinder (1985: 159).

22 Herzog explains: “at the age of eleven I had to learn *Hochdeutsch* which was a painful experience for me” (Cronin 2002: 23). He adds: “[German] is of course my culture, my language, although in truth my first language is Bavarian. What I miss most in Los Angeles is the Bavarian dialect. [...] I don’t miss Germany, but I miss the Bavarian dialect” (Herzog 2008: 63).

23 Herzog adds: “It was anarchy in the best sense of the word. There were no ruling fathers around and no rules to follow. We had to invent everything from scratch” (Cronin 2002: 5).

24 The premiere was on December 26, 1978 on the station ARD. Since then there have been many airings, most recently in January 2007. Owing to the continuing success of the TV movie there is now even a Müllner-Peter-Museum in Sachrang, which opened its doors in 2001.

25 See on this point Herzog (2008: 71–72).

26 On the reproach that he has mistreated handicapped persons, see, for example, Koch (1986); on the claim that he mistreated indigenous persons, see in particular the filmic accusation *Land of Bitterness and Pride* (Nina Gladitz, 1982); the suggestion that Herzog “aestheticizes” horror has been made largely with reference to *Lessons of Darkness* (1992). For his thoughts on this, see Sponsel and Sebenig (2006: 58) as well as Cronin (2002: 245); on the accusation of “left-fascism,” see Wahl (2011).

27 On the New York Film Festival, see Walsh (1979: 34). Tom Luddy directed the Pacific Film Archive from 1975–1980. See Herzog (1979).

28 On the “new documentary” see Williams (1993).

29 When he appears in Wim Wenders’s *Tokyo-ga* (1985), Herzog speaks about his readiness to seek out the most remote places for new images for our civilization. He continually emphasizes the necessity of this undertaking.

30 Instead Herzog filmed *Scream of Stone* (1991) on Cerro Torre in South America, which is based on an original idea by Messner.

31 See Barnouw (1993: 100). For a definition of the mountain film as its own genre, see Rapp: “There are and have been many feature films in which high mountains serve as a motif or setting, but the authenticity of the alpine scenery was only given such prominent importance in the German mountain film. Distinct from the alpine films of other countries, it was only the German mountain film that succeeded in developing into its own film genre and being successfully distributed to cinemas. Because most of the films were made in the Swiss and Austrian Alps, the label ‘German’ had to be added to the productions. They were regularly produced by German companies and were initially intended only for the German market” (1997: 7).

32 On his readiness to take risks, particularly during the filming of *La Soufrière*, see Cronin (2002: 19, 150). On Reinhold Messner, see Herzog (2008: 76–77).

33 See the featurette entitled *The Making of a True Story* on the DVD of *Rescue Dawn* (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer-Studios Inc. 2007). The last of the featurette’s four chapters is called “What Would Dieter Do?”

34 For more on the reception see Wahl (2011).

35 This phrase, “the substitute for dreams” (*Der Ersatz für die Träume*), refers to Hugo von Hofmannsthal (1979 [original 1921]).

36 On this point, see Göttler (2007). Herzog asserts: “In no case do I want to live in a sleepy place like Florence or Venice. These cities are over. They have wonderfully beautiful surfaces and are

museums at actual size. Los Angeles has absolutely no surface. It is just ugly and lacking in style. But there's a lot beneath the surface that hasn't yet been seen."

37 The time-lapse images were shot at the peak of Lusen Mountain in the Bavarian Forest and were captured over a period of ten or twelve days through combining a number of individual images. See the commentary on the German DVD of *Heart of Glass* (at 2:23). Distortions effected by, for example, the experimental filmmaker Klaus Wyborny's use of wide angle and telephoto lenses simultaneously, were implemented earlier in Herzog's *The Enigma of Kaspar Hauser* (1974).

38 See the commentary on the German DVD of *Heart of Glass* at 6:38.

39 On the comparison, see Bellour (2009: 400–410). Von Trier's trilogy consists of *The Element of Crime* (1984), *Epidemic* (1987) and *Europa* (1991).

40 The distortions caused by the synthesizer stand for the unraveling of time. They reduce the original images more and more to ghostly outlines, and the reduction is intended as the equivalent of human memory. See Lupton (2005: 153).

41 See the commentary on the German DVD of *Heart of Glass* at 1:05:52. With these words Herzog—over a decade after his arrival on the Californian coast—breaks off his commentary, even though the closing sequence to which he refers begins 20 minutes further into the film.

42 See Herzog in Borski: "I have nothing against films such as *Green is the Heath* (Hans Deppe, 1951); a public need for sentimentality is satisfied in them, a need that is calculable, similar to the need for toilet paper and for coffins" (1973: 6).

43 See the commentary on the German DVD of *Heart of Glass* at 16:22. Despite Steinhoff's prominent role in the Nazi cinema, this film is primarily a successful mountain film rather than a fascist media product. It is based on Wilhelmine von Hillern's novel *Geier-Wally. Eine Geschichte aus den Tyroler Alpen* (1875), which was not only adapted for the theater and the opera, but also many times for film and TV. These adaptations included: *Die Geier-Wally* (E. A. Dupont, 1921), *Die Geierwally* (František Cáp, 1956), *Die Geierwally* (Walter Bockmayer, 1987) and *Die Geierwally* (Peter Sämman, 2005).

44 For a balanced account of the affair surrounding *Fitzcarraldo* see Carré (2007: 82–87).

45 On this, see Beier. Herzog says, not for the first time: "I have never left my culture. Wherever I go, I make Bavarian films" (2010: 135).

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